Wozu all das Theater?

Drama and Theater as a Method for Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in the United States

vorgelegt von

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To my sons Benny and Cameron
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Chapter I: Setting the Stage

“Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire!”

(Sir Butler Yeats)

Teaching should be such that it ‘sparks’ students’ interest and inspires them to keep on learning independently. It should also help them take pride in their accomplishments. For foreign language teachers, this means motivating and retaining students by presenting dynamic, creative, meaningful, and enjoyable language classes. When language instruction takes place outside the target country, teachers need to immerse the students in the foreign language and culture as much as possible by assigning them tasks that encourage language production in real and meaningful contexts. In order to achieve these goals on a consistent basis, teachers need to frequently test their teaching practices with regard to effectiveness and student appeal. At the same time, they should strive to develop and implement new techniques that will make student learning even more successful and their own teaching more rewarding.

Since the 1970’s, language teachers in the United States have been encouraged to use a communicative approach to foreign language teaching, which posits that language is a “form of social behavior and sees the aim of language teaching as teaching learners to communicate fluently, appropriately and spontaneously” (Brumfit and Roberts 1983, 182, paraphrasing Shier 1993). It has been the teacher’s task to help language learners go beyond merely learning a linguistic system while engaging them in genuine communicative interaction in the target language.

In practice, however, what takes place in the classroom often looks quite different from what the communicative method advocates in theory. Many textbooks still do not provide enough material that involves students not only intellectually, but also emotionally and physically in their learning process, and that is personally relevant to them. I agree with
Schewe, who pinpoints the problem: “Die meisten Konversationsstunden kranken daran, dass die Studenten sich persönlich nicht betroffen fühlen. Es mangelt an bedeutungsvoller Interaktion im (entsinnlichten) Unterrichtsraum” (Schewe 1988, 430). Often, communicative exercises end up being more like communicative ‘drills.’ In a great number of institutions, the main objective of language classes still seems to be to prepare students for upcoming written tests, which can be evaluated easily, quickly, and objectively. It is not uncommon for students to graduate from their university or college German program with the ability to write an essay about Goethe, but without the self-confidence to communicate verbally in the language.

In order to fulfill the objectives of communicative competence, teachers must—from the outset—equip students to express themselves spontaneously and appropriately in meaningful interactive encounters and thus involve them with “head, heart, hand, and foot” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 7, my translation) in their learning process. Because it is difficult to create the same total immersion environment that exists in the target country, it is imperative for teachers to try out new approaches that will nonetheless ensure genuine language acquisition and rewarding learning experiences.

In this dissertation, I intend to explore one such alternative approach, namely the use of drama and theater as a method for foreign language learning, in particular German, at the university level in the USA. I will argue that drama and theater-based learning and teaching provides an excellent setting for foreign language acquisition and application. Furthermore, it can serve as a means of generating genuine conversation as well as a positive environment for social learning and the promotion of the German language and culture in the United States.

In an educational context, drama and theater are not primarily seen as an art form; rather, the drama and theater approach takes principles from the field of theater and uses them to initiate educational processes. Drama is concerned with the different dimensions of the
learning process in dramatic classroom activities, while theater also has a product-oriented component: it involves a performance in front of an audience outside the classroom.

*Personal background and motivation*

In choosing the topic for this dissertation, I was strongly influenced by my own positive experiences with drama-oriented exercises and theater projects while teaching German to university and college students in the US for many years. When I first experimented with a few drama-oriented exercises in my language classes years ago, I did so on the basis of my own intuition (‘aus dem Bauch heraus!’) without reflecting much upon the rationale behind it. Afterwards, I realized that it actually worked!

A few years later, while I was teaching a literature class at the University of Hawaii, I decided to modify the traditional teaching approach. Instead of assigning a long reading list and then discussing each work for a short time (“filling the pail”), I reduced the reading requirement to just a few books, giving the students a chance to really involve themselves with one literary work in a theatrical way. Bringing the text to life by acting out the characters and imbuing them with feelings and physical movement seemed to be a worthwhile approach. The class culminated in a performance of a classic German literary play. Two years later, the students and I produced a German cabaret, which became part of the curriculum. These projects proved to be a huge success with the students and were very well received by the audience, and the foreign language department. They had a highly positive impact on many dimensions of learning, but most importantly, on students’ oral proficiency and on their level of self-confidence and motivation in using the German language.

Although I was now able to attest to the benefits and popularity of such projects with more certainty, my knowledge was still based to a large extent on my own practical experience. It was then that I felt inspired to research in detail the theory that would
better explain the potential of theater and drama in foreign language acquisition and teaching. My work in this area has come to fruition in the form of this dissertation.

Although my research utilizes a more systematic approach, I still consider it to be ‘practice-based research’, as defined by Bräuer (2002): “Language practitioners become reflective researchers in order to deepen their own and the reader’s theoretical understanding of their work and to develop practical consequences” (vii). One of the main questions I wish to answer is the one I was often asked by other educators: *Wozu all das Theater?* (Why all this fuss about theater?)

In particular, I would like to provide a theoretical foundation for the following hypotheses:

1. Several characteristics of the drama and theater approach can be found in well established and scientifically proven language learning theories as well as in both traditional and modern teaching methodologies.

2. There are many significant parallels between language teaching and the theater arts which are beneficial to language learning and which justify and strongly support the application of theater arts in foreign language teaching.

3. The use of drama and theater in foreign language teaching primarily benefits the following areas of language learning:
   - communicative competence
   - appreciation and understanding of foreign literature and culture
   - emotional and social development
   - motivation and enthusiasm for learning a foreign language

4. Drama-oriented exercises that incorporate theater techniques can be integrated into daily German instruction in many ways and in many forms without special theater training.
(5) Larger theater projects, such as productions of an entire play, can be incorporated into German language curricula at American universities and colleges. They can offer students a valuable learning experience and bring about marked improvement in students’ foreign language skills.

Structure of the dissertation

I have structured this dissertation as follows: Chapter I consists of a general introduction to the topic at hand. Chapter II describes the development of German language instruction at universities and colleges in the United States. A summary of the major historical trends in German language instruction is followed by an analysis of the situation faced by German language educators today. It is against this background that I discuss the teaching approach proposed in this dissertation. As the research pertains to post-secondary language learners, one subchapter briefly deals with the special needs of adult learners in regards to foreign language acquisition.

Chapters III and IV lay out the theoretical framework for the drama and theater method and its practical applications as a tool for foreign language teaching and learning.

In Chapter III, I first present an overview of the history of theater and drama in education as well as its most influential trends and pioneers. I examine how theater and drama developed, first within general education, then later within the fields of ‘first,’ ‘second,’ and ‘foreign’ language education. Subsequently, the theater and drama approach is viewed in conjunction with established language learning theories as well as traditional and contemporary teaching methodologies with the intention of uncovering reciprocal influences. I will also look at studies done in the field of neurology that pertain to language learning and find out if “affectively-coded techniques” (Danesi 1988, 454), such as drama and theater, correspond to brain processes involved in language learning.
The next section analyzes the mutual relationship between the fields of Theater Arts and Foreign Language Learning. It will reveal many similarities, for example, the use of (verbal and nonverbal) ‘language’ as a tool for communicating meaningfully, and the creation of fictional situations, as well as the portrayal of roles.

The following section of Chapter III begins with a general exploration of the cognitive, emotional, and physical dimensions of foreign language learning. It then examines the way in which principles of theater and drama methodology could have a positive impact on these aspects of learning and thus foster the language learning process. I have chosen to discuss communicative and linguistic aspects, cultural aspects, as well as psychological, social, and physical factors, because I believe that they benefit the most from the theatrical approach.

In Chapter IV, I begin to explore practical applications of drama and theater as a tool for foreign language teaching and learning. The chapter discusses two approaches:

(a) using theatrical techniques and drama exercises in everyday teaching as a supplement to other forms of instruction, and

(b) preparing and implementing larger theater projects (e.g., entire play productions or the performance of scenes or skits) within the German language or literature class and the curriculum.

In Section 1.1 of this chapter, I search for ways to incorporate drama-oriented exercises into foreign language or, in particular, German lessons. I begin by examining some basic theatrical techniques, such as pantomime, improvisation, and role-play. Subsequently, I offer suggestions and ideas on how these techniques could be instrumental in developing, practicing, and applying foreign language skills and foster holistic learning.
In Section 1.2 of this chapter, I present a list of verbal and nonverbal exercises for classroom use. Research has shown that only a few of the publications currently on the market provide drama exercises with detailed objectives and other didactic materials for the German language (e.g., Tselikas 1999; Fitzgibbon 1993; Schewe 2002; Eckert and Klemm 1998). Most of the material available pertains to teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), or to first language instruction (e.g., Kao and O'Neil 1998; Maley and Duff 1979; Wessels 1987; Smith 1984; Culham 2002; Wagner 1992; Wagner 1995; Wagner 1998 and others). Thus, I developed some exercises, as well as adapted or altered several existing ones for the German language classroom and included objectives, the language level, and the phase of the lesson, that it is best applied in. I also demonstrate how they can be used without previous theatrical training.

Section 2 of Chapter IV describes the rationale for incorporating larger theater projects in German classes and into the German curriculum at American universities and colleges. Furthermore, it gives suggestions for the preparation, execution, and evaluation of such projects. These reflections are based on my own experiences, on the available literature, and to a large extent on the results of a national survey in form of a questionnaire that I developed and sent out to a list of German departments at American and Canadian universities and colleges. The results of this survey were expected to reveal a favorable pattern with respect to the impact of theater projects on language learning and personal growth, and offer practical information on how to approach and implement such projects.

Chapter V summarizes the main points of this dissertation and discusses considerations for the future of this teaching method.
Chapter II: Learning German at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States

1. Historical Overview and the Present Situation of German Language Instruction in the United States

“I say tomato, you say Tomate.”
(Advertisement slogan for German, created by German students)

The general framework for this dissertation is the field of foreign language instruction, in particular, the instruction of the German language at American universities and colleges. In the following, I will summarize the historical development of German instruction in the USA and briefly discuss the current situation of the field.

German language learning has long been on shaky ground in the US. Enrollment and interest in the German language—and in foreign languages in general—have fluctuated throughout the last centuries.

One of the main reasons why German came to be taught in this country was the massive immigration of German speaking people, especially in the late nineteenth century. In the German settlements, the language was taught to immigrant children as the native language, and not as a foreign language. Other reasons included an interest in German philosophy, the creation of the American research university in the 1870’s (modeled after German universities), and the fact that the German language was an entrance requirement for higher academic studies.

Around the turn of the century, German was the dominant foreign language in the US. In 1870, the US Commissioner of Education stated that “… the German language has actually become the second language of our Republic, and a knowledge of German is now considered essential to a finished education” (Zeydel 1961, 294).
The two World Wars in the twentieth century were turning points in the interest and reputation in the German language and the development of German studies programs. The outbreak of World War I brought about a severe decline in the popularity of the German language and culture and student enrollment.

Sauerkraut became ‘cabbage’ and the German shepherd dog became an Alsatian hound…German music was no longer played; German-language newspapers were subjected to the first press censorship in our national history. The teaching of German was banned in twenty-two states; scholarly journals suspended publication (Sammons 1983, 26).

Owing to the structure of American universities, however, German studies eventually recovered, not as a separate department, but as part of foreign language departments and professional language associations, such as the Modern Language Association, MLA (Hohendahl 2003, 12). The foundation and support of the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) in 1926 was also important in promoting interest in the language.

With the advent of World War II came a further time of trial. "Not only German politics but also German scholarship had lost its credibility. In the internal American debate, German Geistesgeschichte was held responsible in part for the errors of the German mind" (Hohendahl 2003, 13). Although National Socialistic Germany tried to manipulate German studies in the US towards ideological goals, German scholars in America sided with the Allies and helped protect the profession (Hohendahl, 13). In addition, the immigration of educated German professionals and scholars helped to salvage the reputation of German studies in the US and its development in an American context.

Foreign language instruction, and especially German language instruction, was given a boost in the early 40s, when the US government introduced the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) for intensive foreign language training to prepare thousands of military personal who were sent to be stationed in occupied Germany. Many returning
GIs had become interested in the study of German, and pursued undergraduate or graduate degrees in the language with the financial help of the new GI Bill.

In 1959, a total of 121,855 university and college students were enrolled in German courses throughout the US (Zeydel 1961, 304). Participation in German language studies increased further with the financial support of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

When the money from NDEA ran out in the late 60s, enrollment in German courses – which had been steadily increasing – tapered off once again. This time, however, enrollment in other foreign languages programs, such as Russian and French, declined as well. At the same time, college language requirements were abolished, which exacerbated the drop in enrollment numbers.

In the late 80s, German enjoyed a brief period of popularity, mainly due to the fall of the Berlin wall, but declined again during the 1990s. Between 1998 and 2002, however, enrollment seemed to stabilize and increase slightly (by 2.3%). Enrollment in French studies showed a similar trend. Since the peak in enrollment of 1968, German has lost 57% of its total enrollments in the United States.

There are currently 1,360 two-and four-year German departments in the United States (Modern Language Association 2004). As of 2002, a total of 91,100 students were enrolled in German courses in US colleges and universities (undergraduate and graduate programs). German ranked third (6.5%) after Spanish and French in terms of total foreign language enrollment in the United States (Welles 2004). Recent developments notwithstanding, there has been considerable fluctuation in the interest and enrollment in German courses over time, which has been a major concern for the German academic community in the US. The reasons for these changes in the last century can largely be attributed to the involvement of Germany in the two World Wars; however, there have been other factors, including the number and variety of other foreign languages available,
regional influences, teaching methods, textbook selection, as well as the frequency, length and time of classes in comparison with other languages. Factors such as these can be examined and dealt with. At the same time, other problems are threatening the enrollment and departmental structure, namely “uncontrollable forces in the academic and social environment” (Hohendahl 2003, 18). For example, there is a growing number of Spanish-speaking immigrants who work to keep their heritage alive (similar to the German immigrants at the turn of the last century), and interest in Spanish in general has grown (53.4 % of the total language enrollment in 2002, see MLA survey 2002). Competing with this trend has become a major challenge for all other foreign languages.

According to Hohendahl, one way of coping with the factors mentioned above has involved “a collective effort [of German educators] to treat it as a challenge” (Hohendahl 2003, 18). German educators have continued to promote German language studies, applying new effective teaching methods and revival strategies. In the 90’s, language classes focused more on culture in an attempt (which was partly successful) to hinder the administrative separation (see e.g., Kramsch 1998) of language classes and literature/culture classes at the universities.

Only time will tell if the structure of many German departments at US universities will remain intact, and if German studies will continue to be offered as an independent program within the general humanistic curriculum—rather than becoming absorbed by other departments such as Linguistics, English, or Literature, as has already happened, e.g., at University of California San Diego or the University of Tennessee (Hohendahl 2003, 51).

In order to provide a better understanding of the reasoning behind this dissertation, I will now briefly present some facts about the American university system and current post-secondary German instruction in the USA.
Chapter II: Learning German at Institutions of Higher Education in the United States

The structure of higher education in the USA is much different than in Germany. In North America, education is divided into an undergraduate and a graduate program. Most students finish their studies when they complete the four-year undergraduate program and receive a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.); a much smaller percentage of students go on to earn a masters degree (M.A.), which requires an additional two-year program of study.

Many—but not all—universities and colleges have a one-to two-year foreign language requirement. The courses that fulfill this requirement include beginning and intermediate courses in any foreign language. Students who continue with 3rd and 4th year language courses are usually working towards a major or minor in German at the university, an Associate Degree or a certificate at the college, or are simply pursuing their own interest in languages. The biggest challenge for all foreign language programs is to motivate students to study beyond their language requirement and to attract students for their M.A. programs. Just as for high school German teachers, a major task for many university and college German instructors is to advertise their program and stimulate interest in German, as increased enrollment contributes to the growth (i.e., increase of faculty) and reputation of the German program or foreign language department. Besides offering an interesting and appealing curriculum, many language departments need to provide access to extracurricular language activities, such as German club activities, lectures by renowned scholars, Octoberfests, or other German festivals on campus. Many college and university teachers need to be involved in high school outreach activities in order to ensure full enrollment in their beginning or intermediate German classes. For assistant or full professors and some instructors, these tasks often take away time from professional research and do not always count towards their requirements for promotion.

German classes at an American university typically consist of learners between 17–30 years of age (my estimation). At the same time, the number of students with a cultural heritage other than American, as well as older students, is growing (new statistics were not found). Most of them speak the same native language, and most have gone through
the US educational system. Compared to second language learners in Germany, the student body here is usually more homogeneous.

Many students support themselves through several part-time jobs and quite a few are married with children. On the average, college students in the US are a little older. Many hold full-time jobs and take late afternoon and night classes at the college. They study to finish their language requirement, to take courses for their major or minor, to get a promotion at work, or simply to enrich their knowledge.

All of these students learn German as a ‘foreign’ language. Unlike ‘second’ language learners, they are not surrounded by a German community and are usually not able to practice learned material in a natural setting right after learning it. They are limited to what teachers (as well as audio and visual materials) can offer them about the German language and culture. In order to serve these students and to encourage them to continue studying German, teachers need to be familiar with their reasons for choosing this language and their individual needs. In a pilot study by a university in the Midwest in the fall of 2001, the three highest-rated descriptors of why students were motivated to begin German in college or in high school were “seemed like fun,” “seemed interesting,” and “liking for the German language.” The three highest factors for continuing the language at the university were “liking for the German language,” “learning German was enjoyable,” and “German learning was interesting” (Andress 2002, 11). The results resemble the data gathered in an AATG national survey of high school students enrolled in upper-level German courses in 2000 (Andress, 1ff). Both studies suggest that ‘affective’ variables (“fun,” “interesting” and “liking”) play a major role in students’ decisions. I agree with the committee’s description of fun as not being mindless or shallow “but a feeling that requires active input on the part of the person having fun” (Andress, 3).

These studies also suggest that it is the teacher’s task to engage students in activities that spur their interest and attention while providing them with an enjoyable and rewarding
experience. The Committee urges teachers in America to conduct similar studies at their local university or high school and consider these data for class and curriculum design and recruitment.

First-year German language classes usually meet 4 to 5 hours per week, while intermediate language classes (second year) as well as advanced language or literature classes meet 3 hours per week, distributed over 2-5 weekdays. The lower language classes usually have a maximum capacity of 20-30 and a minimum of 15 students. Students are evaluated through multiple assessment tools, such as chapter tests, quizzes, a mid-term exam, and a final exam; in literature classes, means of evaluation include tests and essays (no statistical numbers available). Usually one or more textbooks as well as additional handouts are used. Most undergraduate and graduate language classes are taught as seminars, with a few graduate classes given as lectures.

The main goal of German language teaching in the US is ‘communication’. A high amount of language input and language use in interactive situations is recommended (Schulz 2003, 210 and Strategic Plan for Basic Language Instruction, Cal State University San Marcos). Teachers are encouraged to draw on many different sources of knowledge besides the field of German studies itself (Schulz, 210). Of course, grammar should still be taught; but there is a great deal of controversy as to whether students learn better and faster when grammar is taught as the main content of lessons rather than through communication (Doughty and Williams 1998; Schulz 2003, 210).

Language assessment is done through multiple and mostly objectives measures. Communicative language use is often evaluated through so-called “authentic or performance assessment[s]” (Schulz 2003, 210), which are currently surrounded by fierce debate in pedagogical circles. Moreover, multi-channel language learning and individual learner aspects (psychological, sociological, etc.) have received increased attention (Oxford and Ehrmann 1993). They are discussed in chapter III, 6.3 and throughout this dissertation.
For the first time in the history of foreign language instruction in the US, National Standards for Foreign Language Learning were established in 1996 and revised in 1999. These standards, which were funded by the Ständiger Ausschuss Deutsch als Fremdsprache (STADaF; Standing Committee for German as a Foreign Language), apply to foreign language instruction in primary and secondary learning institutions (Kindergarten to 13th grade). However, they are not mandatory, and it remains to be seen what impact the standards will have on students’ achievement. Unfortunately, foreign language standards for colleges and universities do not currently exist. It is therefore still the responsibility of each college or university instructor to set his/her own standards and objectives.

In summary, the flagging demand for German language instruction, as is reflected in relatively low enrollment numbers, the cutbacks in German programs at all levels, and the low interest or indifference towards learning a foreign language in general are current issues of concern (Schulz 2003, 208). However, there are alternate approaches, such as drama and theater in foreign language teaching, that are student-centered, practical, and appealing. By immersing students in the foreign language, these approaches have the potential to increase the interest and enthusiasm for the German language, literature, and culture and to motivate students to continue their German studies beyond the language requirement. A specific research study on the possible benefits of using drama and theater to address the problems currently plaguing the profession could yield interesting results. Unfortunately, such a study would exceed the scope of this dissertation. In the following chapters, however, I will suggest and analyze many reasons that show the value and importance of such an approach for foreign language learning.

2. The Adult Learner

Because university or college teachers deal with adult learners (defined here as post-adolescent learners), they have to be mindful of how adults learn and which factors can
interfere with the learning process. One thing that is certain is that adults learn differently than children and adolescents.

There has been some debate as to whether age-related neurological factors can impact language learning. For a long time, it was believed that older people would have a more difficult time learning a foreign language because brain function was thought to deteriorate with increasing age (Löwe 1973). This theory has been questioned and revised numerous times in the last decades. Newer neurological studies have not been able to establish a clear connection between biological age and the deterioration of mental ability in any area. Quetz goes even as far as to state that “on the contrary, the increasingly complex synaptic network of adult’s brains enables them to learn a foreign language more successfully than children, and that pronunciation is the only aspect to which this does not apply” (Quetz 1995, 453, my translation).

It is also important to consider social, psychological, and biographical factors, as these clearly differ in children and adults, and influence each individual’s learning process.

Adults learning a foreign language bring along their own individual biography. Their learning process is influenced not only by their age, but also by their experiences and life circumstances. They have acquired some work experience, perhaps started a family, and dealt with financial and personal responsibilities. Through these experiences, adult learners have formed a stronger sense of self than children or teenagers, and their ego-permeability (renouncing your sense of self) is usually lower. The openness required to learn a foreign language and accept different perspectives can feel threatening to an adult’s sense of identity, whereas children are usually more open and unbiased when it comes to new experiences. Therefore, the adult learner may show resistance and be more inhibited which can influence the learning process (Klein 1984, 22). Freeman/Long suspect that many adult learners never lose their native accent because they protect their sense of self—either consciously or unconsciously—by identifying with their native language (Larson-Freeman and Long 1991, 163).
The past experiences of adult learners also imply a certain social and professional competence, which is a success factor when it comes to new, organized learning processes. In other words, adults are more autonomous learners than children. Most of the time, adult learners have determined for themselves how to approach new material, i.e. which learning style to use.

Adult learners usually have clearer goals for learning a foreign language than children (e.g., to make new social contacts; to learn about literature, culture, history, or social and political developments; to use the language on travels, etc.). Their satisfaction in learning the language is thus more dependent on the extent to which their expectations or their goals are met. “It is here that appraisals of the language learning situation (according to novelty, pleasantness, goal relevance, coping ability, and self and social image) are crucial” (Arnold 1999, 39). The aforementioned factors can have either a positive or a negative influence on the effectiveness and pace of learning. Age and life experiences often bring greater emotional maturity and a familiarity with learning processes as well as the ability to reason logically, think abstractly and critically, and understand complex facts. “…insgesamt gesehen spielen die Vertrautheit mit Lernprozessen und die Übertragung von Kenntnissen und Fertigkeiten auf neue Situationen eine positivere Rolle als altersbedingte Schwierigkeiten” (Quetz 1988; Ewel 1993, 7).

At the same time, adult learners can be challenged by circumstances and responsibilities that do not affect children can also present many challenges to the adult learner. Factors such as personal stress, financial problems, fatigue, feeling overwhelmed or psychological barriers can interfere with the learning process and motivation (see Chapter III, 5.3.1 Czerniawska 1989, 50ff; Ewel 1993 and others).

Many adult learners like to hold on to their individual, internalized learning style, even if it does not prove to be effective in language learning. Often they are under the assumption that a language is learned just like any other subject “- a collection of facts that you stuff inside your brain and which somehow—hey presto!—comes out in an
acceptable form” (Wessels 1987, 20). As a result of change in the way people learn that takes place during puberty, adults prefer to use cognitive-analytical strategies as compared to the more associative approach that comes naturally to children (Elek/Oskarsson cited in Quetz 1995, 452). Having gone through traditional language classes in the American school system, adults have typically acquired a fair amount of grammar-oriented, written language skills; however, they find it difficult to produce fluent, natural, and spontaneous speech. Consequently, they tend to cling to grammar rules, and frequently monitor their language output to correct errors (see Krashen 1981, monitor theory, chapter III, 3.1). The inability to communicate well in the foreign language, and the unwillingness or inability to accept new or different learning styles, can decrease an adult’s motivation to learn. This in turn can lead to disappointment, frustration, and heightened inhibition (see Affective Filter Hypotheses by Krashen 1982, Chapter III, 3.1).

As can be seen from the above discussions, there are many factors that impact adults’ ability to learn a foreign language. These include affective and personal aspects, as well a lack of familiarity or experience with effective learning strategies. Despite those more challenging conditions, researchers believe that there is no reason why adults should be incapable of learning a foreign language.

Thus, an important objective of classes that are geared to adult language learners is to help adults overcome the obstacles described above. Creating a positive learning environment in which students cooperate, and which fosters a sense of achievement and enjoyment, will support this process. Learning topics and materials should be varied, creative, and relevant to the experiences and interests of the adult learner. They will be easier to comprehend if they are well-structured and introduced in context.

The teacher should address different learning channels and provide students with information about various learning strategies. His/her goal should be to acknowledge learners’ individual learning styles in the class while teaching them new effective ones to
draw upon for more successful learning. This needs to be done in small steps, initially within well-structured contexts (see warm-up exercises, Chapter IV, 1.2.1.). Since adult learners are always interested in ‘why’ they are doing a certain exercise or using a particular strategy, the teacher can eliminate possible skepticism and fear by providing frequent explanations of objectives, or facilitating discussions about learning problems. ‘Learning about learning’, as well as hands-on exercises (e.g., the performance of a play or other interdisciplinary projects), will lead students to become independent and creative learners.

At first sight, a theatrical approach to learning languages might seem somewhat at odds with the way many adults learn. At second look, however, it becomes more obvious that such an approach addresses just what the adult learner needs: psychological aspects of learning (such as inhibition, low self-esteem, fear, motivation, etc.), application of the language in meaningful comprehensible situations, development of oral language skills, and an enjoyable way to learn.

Adults benefit from ‘formal’ learning situations more than children do, but they need additional practice in ‘informal’ communicative ones. A drama or theater-oriented lesson combines both of these elements while offering more structure, and lets learners experience that the use of gestures, mimicry, and body movement can foster comprehension and use of the language. Moreover, students will discover that this approach to language learning is highly enjoyable.

Provided the teacher keeps in mind the special needs of individual adult learners, and introduces new learning concepts gradually and with sensitivity, the drama and theater approach can be very beneficial to the adult learner’s sense of identity. It creates a low affective filter and encourages students to take on new roles and perspectives, as the following chapters will show.
Chapter III: Theoretical Framework for Drama and Theater as a Method in Foreign Language Education

In the following chapters, I will present the research that has been done in the field of drama in FL education and discuss the different influences and benefits that together build the framework that holds and justifies the potential of drama and theater as a valuable teaching approach and learning tool for the FL classroom. The theoretical framework of the dissertation is divided into the following parts:

1. Definition of Terms
2. From Drama in General Education to Drama in Foreign Language Education: A Historical Overview
3. The Drama and Theater Approach within Foreign Language Learning Theories and Teaching Methodologies
4. Neuro-psychological Findings on Foreign Language Learning and the Impact of the Drama and Theater Approach
5. Parallels between Theater Arts and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning
6. Dimensions of Foreign Language Learning and the Impact of the Drama and Theater Approach

1. Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this dissertation, the following definitions have been chosen:

Drama: ‘Drama’ or ‘dramatic activities’ can be defined in a number of ways. In most related British or American literature, as well as in my dissertation, the word ‘drama’ is used for the German term ‘darstellendes Spiel.’ This meaning should not be
confused with the German usage of ‘Drama,’ which pertains more to a specific form of literature.

In general, drama is concerned with the world of “let’s pretend.” For this dissertation, I follow Esselborn’s definition that describes drama in the following way:

“[Drama ist] das freie, experimentierende Umgehen mit Sprache in fiktiven dramatischen Situationen, die durch das magische ‘wenn’ (wenn ich in dieser Situation wäre), auf die Realität des Ichs bezogen sind” (Esselborn 1988, 22).

**Drama in Education:** Drama in education, or in German ‘Dramapädagogik,’ uses the means of theater for pedagogical/educational use, i.e., to initiate or enhance learning processes. Since ‘drama’ comes from the Greek and means ‘action’, drama in education is a pedagogy, which creates action-based, ‘holistic’ learning. Not so much the quality of performance is important, but rather the different dimensions of the learning process.

**Drama-oriented exercises:** They include a wide range of verbal or nonverbal activities and techniques taken from the theater arts and being adapted so that they can be useful in the foreign language classroom.

**Theater:** “Theater is communication between people for the benefit of other people” (Via 1987, 313). In this dissertation, theater is differentiated from ‘drama’ through its product-oriented component. Theater is concerned with ‘presentation’ and an audience is a necessary part of any theatrical event.

**Theater in Education:** Theater in education is used for the German term ‘Theaterpädagogik.’ The following definition has been adopted for this dissertation:

Theaterpädagogik umfasst pädagogische Konzepte, die nicht nur auf Zuschauer/innen gerichtet sind, sondern auch auf Entstehungsprozesse von Stücken, Probenarbeit, auf die Schauspieler/innen und v.a. auf
Method: The terms ‘method’ and ‘approach’ are used interchangeably in literature and are often not precisely defined. Used in a strict sense, ‘method’ has to have an ‘approach,’ a ‘design,’ and a ‘procedure’ (Richards and Rodgers 1986, 15). Since I intend to take these three levels into account, I will refer to the described form of language teaching and learning as the ‘method.’ I will use the term ‘drama and theater method,’ because both drama and theater are suggested as FL learning techniques in this dissertation.

Foreign Language: Throughout this dissertation, the term “foreign language” is often abbreviated through “FL”, e.g., foreign language teaching = FL teaching.

Learning and acquisition: In this dissertation, the terms ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ are used in a more general sense (for every way of acquiring a language) and are applied interchangeably. They do not follow Krashen’s Monitor Theory (see Chapter III, 3.1) unless specified.

2. From Drama in General Education to Drama in Foreign Language Education: Historical Overview

In the following chapter, I will give a brief overview of the history of drama in education. It is the connection between drama and education that created the possibility for applying drama and theater first to speech development in general, and subsequently, to foreign language learning and teaching. It will become apparent that the concept of using drama as a tool for learning is not new, but has been around for quite some time.
In my opinion, the British theory of drama in education, and the educators who promoted it, had the greatest influence on the development of drama as a tool for foreign language learning. This view is shared by others, such as Bolton, Schewe, Verriour, Hawkins et al. Because the British approach provides both theoretical foundations and practical applications, it provided the basis for my research. Also, drama in Education has a longer tradition (and higher rate of acceptance) in Great Britain than in Germany and other countries.

Since the history of drama in Education is very lengthy and replete with contradictions, I will not attempt to provide a detailed account. Instead, it is my intent to summarize the major trends and highlight important pioneers, as well as their methods and concepts.

2.1 Drama in General Education

According to some publications, the use of drama in educational settings dates back to the turn of the 20th century. Bolton (1993) and Schewe (1993) mention two early British educators who published descriptions of their innovative work and their visions. Harriet Finlay-Johnson, an elementary teacher in a small public school, had an interdisciplinary approach to drama in the classroom, and applied it to a variety of subjects. She considered the greatest value of drama to be not in the performance or the ‘end product’, but rather in the very process of practicing drama. Her students did free improvisations or acted out texts, but an audience was irrelevant.

Caldwell Cook (1917), an English teacher at a private school, shared Finlay-Johnson’s view that drama is an important foundation of education, but concentrated instead on stage work and performance of texts in English. His goal was to have children actively experience and enjoy their native language, which for him represented a “play-way to education” (Bolton 1993, 26). These early beginnings of educational drama already
illust rate two different approaches. On the one hand, there was ‘free dramatic play’, which is based on findings in developmental psychology (as advocated by Slade 1954) and emphasizes dramatic action. On the other hand, there is the “Speech and Drama” movement that stressed speech, i.e., articulation techniques for speech and mimicry. These approaches, as well as others, either alternated, coexisted, or competed with one another throughout the 20th century. During the first half of the 20th century, the ‘speech and drama’ approach enjoyed more official recognition. A government publication, dated 1905, and entitled “Handbook of Suggestions for the Considerations of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools,” emphasized drama in schools as a means of improving pupils’ speech. It was followed by an era characterized by speech festivals, the establishment of the British Drama League, guidelines for examinations in “speech,” employment of speech teachers in secondary schools, and the advent of private speech-training businesses. In the second half of the century, the movement shifted away from the “skill-oriented practice of speech training” (Bolton 1993, 28) towards a greater emphasis on ‘language’ (not foreign language!) in the curriculum; i.e. learning “broad skills related to expression, thinking skills, interpretation, knowledge of and responsiveness to the English language” (Bolton 1993, 27, paraphrasing parts of the government-sponsored document, called The Plowden Report [1967]). Thus, free verbal expression through drama and learning via the dramatic process—as Finlay–Johnson had practiced—came to be seen as an important facet of education.

Peter Slade, whose findings later developed into an entirely different philosophy, experimented in the 1930s with other forms of dramatic activity in educational settings while closely observing the children. Slade was regarded by many researchers as the first major force in emphasizing drama methods in education. He was critical of the speech and acting techniques for audience-centered performances that characterized the "Speech and Drama" movement, stating that this approach did not correspond to the natural language development of children. Already James Sully expressed this
opinion: “The idea of a child playing as an actor is said to ‘play’ in order to delight others is a contradiction in terms” (Sully 1897, cited in Bolton 1993, 29). Based on psychological findings, Slade evolved his theory of child development through drama, which he called “Child Drama” (Slade 1954). At the same time, while psychologists like Piaget (1956) or Kohlberg (1963) were studying children’s play to define stages of intellectual and moral growth, Slade attempted to develop the first theory of “dramatic growth” (Bolton, 29).

Slade’s approach was participant-oriented rather than audience-oriented, and brought ‘creative drama’ into the classroom, using situational natural play and free expression. “He believed that every child has within himself/herself his/her own drama, the expression of which promotes healthy growth.” Slade himself added: “The child creates theater in its own way, own form, own kind. It is original art of high creative quality. Most adults are stubbornly blind to the loveliness they will not see” (Slade 1954, 183).

The most important element in ‘Child Drama’, besides the absence of an audience, is spontaneity. According to Peter Slade, spontaneity is set free in the make-believe play of children, and brings out “truly existential moments” (Bolton 1993, 30). At the time, the interest in spontaneity resulted from observing not only children at play, but human behavior in general. Spontaneous drama and theater, also called ‘experimental theater’ or ‘improvisational theater,’ started to develop outside of classrooms, and was heavily influenced by educators from many different countries. The main differences between their ideas and improvisation techniques hinged on the presence or absence of an audience.

Before World War I, Meyerhold in Russia and Copeau in France attempted to revive an art form from the 16th and 17th century called Commedia dell’arte. This type of comical theater was highly stylized and improvisational and required an audience.
Copeau also used improvisation in rehearsal, with the goal of preparing actors for a performance. His work is considered to have been very influential for experimental theater in Great Britain as well as in Russia. Constantin Stanislavsky, one of the most famous directors and teachers, used improvisation in his First Studio of the Moscow Arts Center, founded in 1911, in order to achieve “naturalistic acting” (Bolton, 30).

In his ‘Actor’s Studio’, the American Lee Strassberg used improvisation as a tool to help actors “find their own ‘center,’ to unblock their psyche and ‘close out’ the audience” (Bolton, 30).

Through the influence of these educators and others, such as Michel St. Denis, George Devone at the Royal Court Theater (England), Keith Johnstone from Canada, and Clive Barker (1977), the art of improvisation has become an integral part of training for most actors.

In the early 1920's, two American women, Viola Spolin and Winifred Ward, used an improvisational approach to drama that shared some aspects with Spade’s ideas. While Spolin worked in various educational/therapeutic community settings in Chicago using improvisational ‘games’ without an audience, Ward did her dramatic work in the classroom (Northwestern University, Chicago). Ward also coined the term “creative dramatics” which suggests an informal atmosphere in classroom drama as opposed to the disciplined, rule-governed atmosphere of a play rehearsal. In her classroom, students spontaneously acted out scenes from stories they had read and were free to interpret them as they saw fit. Both women believed that there was some kind of existential quality to drama games in which “the participants ‘submit’ to the game experience in order to make it happen” (Bolton 1993, 33). Spolin (1963, 5) explained: “We learn through experienced experiencing and no one teaching anyone anything.”
The Austrian, Jacob Moreno, used an improvisational dramatic approach as a form of psychotherapy. In his 'psychodrama,' patients spontaneously acted out scenes from their past in front of a supportive and receptive audience. Moreno also opened two Impromptu Theaters—one in Vienna and, after emigrating to America, one in New York.

The approaches described above differ not only in how they view spontaneity, but also, and more importantly, in the direction and intention of the improvisational moment. Is the experience of improvisational drama geared primarily towards the actor/actress, or does it aim to engage an audience as well? The history of drama education, says Bolton, who can be called a critical observer of Drama in Education in Great Britain, “is marked by confusion between these two” (Bolton 1993, 32). Although the ‘speech and drama’ movement in the British classrooms still called for the performance of scripts, and labeled improvisational theater as ‘sloppy,’ a slow change in favor of the existential and experimental quality of theater began to take place outside the classroom.

Since then, Slade’s ‘free or dramatic playing’ theory has become the foundation of teaching ‘Drama’ as a school subject. However; it has often been criticized for its open class structure: “The activity of ‘child drama’ appeared to be without content and without form and the drama lesson without structure apart from a loose sequence of relaxing and releasing activity followed by dramatic playing" (Bolton 1984, 35). Schewe (1993, 83) criticized the “Let’s do a game-aspect of drama” where the teacher grabs into his big “treasure chest” and pulls out “this or that game” (my translation).

Another pioneer, Brian Way, a former colleague of Peter Slade, went against Slade’s “light entertainment” approach (Way 1967, 130). He promoted a humanistic approach of learning through “creative drama.” For Way, the goal of using drama in the classroom was to enhance the development of the students’ ‘whole’ personality.
To achieve these goals and make them applicable to the classroom, Way promoted the concept of ‘pair work’ for his ‘creative drama’ experience instead of using the whole class (as in Slade’s model). He introduced ‘exercises’ in which students worked with one partner or in a small group, so that as many students as possible would have the opportunity to speak and learn. “With thirty pupils, ‘exercises methods’ produce opportunities for fifteen to speak at one time and this is deeply significant for Second Language (L2) teaching” (Hawkins 1993, 59). In pair exercises, the “uniqueness of the individual” (Bolton 1993, 34) is respected much more than in an exercise involving the whole group, and there is far more scope to develop that uniqueness. Bolton (1979) saw an inherent contradiction in the term ‘drama exercise.’ For him, drama should be a holistic ‘experience’ and not a set exercise with rules. Often, role-play is reduced to modeling a learned speech or behavior (e.g., a textbook dialogue) that no longer has anything to do with the 'immediate experience' of a situation or an ‘existential feeling.’ He concludes, however, that a role-play can become a drama ‘exercise’ if it is set up as a “direct experience” rather than an “example of something” (Bolton 1993, 35). For more on this topic, see Chapter IV, 1.1.2.1 of this dissertation. Despite criticism, Way’s approach introduced various techniques, such as relaxation, warm-up and interactive games to the language lesson. His concept of ‘pair work’ can also been seen as a precursor to the ‘role-play’ method which is still used in many educational institutions and communicative textbooks.

Thus far, it has been shown that drama in educational settings has been influenced by several different theoretical approaches since the turn of the century. In his book *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education* (1979), Bolton summarized three different approaches that were being used in school drama classes in the 70’s. To some extent, these approaches reflect the ideas that had evolved during previous years (Bolton 1979, 1-11):
Type A: Exercise
Individual exercises which are short, easy to understand with clear rules, and are often real, e.g., walking through a muddy forest, interviewing people in the street, imagining sounds outside in the street, concentration games, e.g., ‘buzz.’

Type B: Dramatic Playing
This type of exercise is very similar to children’s make-believe play. It is spontaneous ‘free play’ that takes place in school. It does not have a specific goal, nor is it limited to any particular length.

Type C: Theatre
Rehearsed scenes are shown for and in front of an audience

In 1979—the year that Bolton published *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education*—Dorothy Heathcote, another main figure, appeared in Drama in Education. For Bolton, she was ‘the greatest drama teacher of all times” (Bolton 1993, 36). Heathcote’s method was based on the ‘whole class’ format, and the activities were topic-based (single topic focus). Her goal was for students to solve specific problems on their own through improvisation and through the potential of theater as an art form, which enabled them to take on different roles, have emotional experiences, and participate in group reflection. This would lead them to an understanding, a “deeper knowledge” of themselves (Heathcote, paraphrased by Johnson and O’Neill 1984, 12) and the world around them, and possibly to a shift in perception. She believed that people acquire deeper knowledge if what they learn has an impact on them or is significant for their life in some way. Such special 'moments of learning' are hard to describe since they cannot be grasped by the intellect, but only holistically (on a social, skill-oriented and cognitive level). According to Heathcote, however, this kind of learning, would only take place if the teacher consciously used elements of the art form ‘theater’ (e.g., improvisations) at the ‘right’ time and worked towards those special moments when “deeper knowledge” can take place. The metaphor provided by Johnson/O’Neill helps to illustrate her idea of learning:
The patient, student or child struggles to produce the infant creative knowing. Dorothy (Heathcote) is there, sleeves rolled up in charge of the event, alternately urging, cajoling and comforting the patient. When the moment of knowing is born, Dorothy weighs and measures it, pronounces it fit and then, most difficult and important of all, gives it back to the person who made and fought for it. The product is not the property of the teacher/midwife but of the student/mother (Heathcote 1984, 13).

Together with Bolton, she was the first to examine the creative, cognitive, emotional, social, aesthetic, and (senso-) motoric aspects of learning through theater that went far beyond the approaches that had been used in the classroom prior to that time. This type of dramatic teaching, which Bolton named “Type D: Drama for Understanding,” is still practiced today in the school subject “Drama” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 87).

Two of the techniques that Dorothy Heathcote developed for her drama approach are “teacher-in-role” and “mantle of expert.” In the first technique, the teacher takes on a role in the fictional context of the improvised scene. The teacher can assume this role, e.g., the role of school principal or conference leader, quite spontaneously. His goal is to create the “dramatic tension of theater” (Bolton 1993, 36) and to trigger reactions from the students within the scope of the topic at hand. This technique is also very useful in FL teaching, e.g., when the teacher jumps into the role of the ‘waiter’ or ‘policeman’ and asks students to respond in the given situation.

In the “mantle of experts” technique, students take on the role of experts in a field during the improvisation of a particular scene. For example, in a scene concerning ‘dangers to the environment’, some students would be ‘biologists’, ‘politicians’, or ‘trash men’, etc., giving information and showing different perspectives. This technique allows students to learn about various aspects of life and become more empathetic.
The topic-based and problem-solving method that both Bolton and Heathcote advocated can also be useful to the FL teacher, because they are “more linguistically prescriptive, a way of targeting language needs through focusing on one topic and the language associated with it” (Hawkins 1991, 23).

Two main methodologies have emerged from the research of these pioneers: the role-play method and the topic discussion method. Hawkins (1993, 60) used different terminology for the methods, and described them as follows: (1) the “topic method”, characterized by information gathering, problem solving and by a linguistically prescriptive nature, and (2) the “exercise method”, with its short games, small groups and a speech intensive style.

There are positive and negative aspects to both methods. In the topic method, students use speech that is real, articulate, and creative. They are not asked to imitate phrases or patterns found in the language textbooks. Instead they are encouraged to freely express their own opinions and feelings. Some critics have felt that the method is not speech-intensive enough for some learners, as some students are linguistically active and some are passive when participating in whole-group discussions. This can also stem from the fact that some types or topics of discussions are threatening for some students. Some language teachers, therefore, have argued that in many cases, this method is more concerned with solving social problems and does not leave enough room for individual language learning or meeting grammatical/linguistic objectives. Moreover, some have criticized the fact that physical activity does not play a significant role in the topic method (Bell 2000, 6-7).

According to many educators, students learn more intensively when teachers utilize the exercise method because an optimum number of students are simultaneously engaged in real-life conversations—for example, in role-plays—which in turn encourage the students to speak more. Other educators are critical towards partner-
based exercises as it is often difficult to control language output and numerous mistakes go uncorrected (Bell, 7). If used wisely and appropriately, both methods have their place in FL teaching.

Although Bolton and Heathcote enjoyed widespread influence, there were also critics of their approach. The most outspoken of these was the Marxist David Hornbrook with his concept of “Dramatic Art.” When the Great Britain Education Reform Act (1988) lowered the status of drama as a school subject (drama, unlike music and art was not considered one of the ten basic subjects of the curriculum), Hornbrook felt that Bolton and Heathcote’s Drama in Education concept was to blame. In Hornbrook’s opinion, Drama in Education was preoccupied with developing practical or methodological aspects instead of further elaborating broader theoretical concepts. His ‘deductive’ concept of Drama in Education, where ‘theory’ is the foundation for all practical actions, strongly contradicts the ‘inductive’ orientation of many researchers at the time (see Bolton, Heathcote, Schewe, Gillham). Furthermore, he criticized the over-emphasis on the “privatization of feelings” (Hornbrook 1990, 6), the “mystification of self” and the creation of a “morality of introspection in the Bolton/Heathcote approach” (Hornbrook 1989, 66). In his own approach, emotions were to be examined in the context of social interaction. In his opinion, psychology as a science had too great an influence on the concept of art.

Hornbrook’s publications (1989; 1990) evoked widespread discussion among British proponents of Drama in Education. Many drama educators felt offended by Hornbrook’s harsh accusations and what they considered to be false conceptions. Bolton defended his own concept by saying: “The first is that drama is never about oneself; it is always concerned with something outside oneself. And secondly, drama is a social event and not a solitary experience” (Bolton 1990, 2). Gillham (1991, cited in Schewe 1993, 105) also rejected Hornbrook’s accusations: “Drama is both social and individual at one and the same time”, but a “social activity first and foremost.”
The social aspect, which Hornbrook largely ignored, comes into play, for example, in
the numerous group exercises and periods of reflection on individual feelings in a
group context. Whereas Bolton and others attempted to build a bridge between
classroom drama and ‘theater’ as an art form, Hornbrook saw drama mostly as a
‘theatrical’ form of art, and not as an artistic tool to be implemented in teaching and
learning processes. Drama in Education should orient itself primarily toward theater
techniques and theater skills, which students acquire when putting on plays (but not
during dramatic improvisations in class!). For students taking drama as a school
subject, the goal is to become skilled in the art form ‘theater’ and to prepare for
possible careers as directors, actors, writers, etc. Bolton, on the other hand, prioritized
the educational content of school subjects and the achievement of specific learning
objectives and believes in using the ‘affective’ components of drama to better attain
these goals. Bolton, Gilham, and others recognized the importance of giving teachers a
practical framework for using the drama concept in their classes and criticized
Hornbrook for not providing the same in his Dramatic Art approach: “He [Hornbrook]
is incapable of so much as offering a paragraph in teaching method. The reader [of his
book] is left thirsting for examples of practice showing how the teacher as a guide,
interpreter, and critic operates in a drama lesson.” (Gillham 1991, cited in Schewe
1993). Whereas Hornbrook questioned the use of drama as a learning tool in other
school subjects and was mainly concerned with establishing drama itself as one of the
other recognized ‘artistic’ fields, Bolton and Heathcote strongly suggested that drama
be used not only in ‘drama courses’ but also as a method for teaching other school
subjects, e.g., the English language (or language in general).
2.2 From Drama in General Education to Drama in First Language Education

In the 1960s, researchers became increasingly interested in studying language development in children. Teachers used the ‘theoretical’ findings of British researchers, for example, Holbrook (1961), Creber (1965), Wilkinson (1971), Halliday (1975), Tough (1979), and Wells (1986) in their classrooms (see Bolton 1993, 39), but they were not particularly concerned with the use of drama. However, according to Bolton (39), only a small number of influential linguists, such as Hourd (1949), Britton (1972), Dixon (1975), Rosen (1973), and Moffett (1968) took interest in drama as a tool for developing children’s language abilities.

In James Moffett’s opinion, drama and speech is “central to the language curriculum, not peripheral” (Moffett 1968, 60 - 61). He described drama as “the matrix of all language activities, subsuming speech and engendering the varieties of writing and reading.” Moffett created a model for classroom drama in language education of which the key features are best summarized by Verriour (1993, 44 - 45). They include:

1. recognition that the dramatic pedagogical approach to teaching language is superior to an expository teaching methodology in so far as children have to use language in order to learn about language, rather than being told about it;

2. an emphasis on the importance of the improvised dialogue is ‘the major means of developing thought and language,’ and involves the kinds of operations among participants that are responsible for this development;

3. an acknowledgment that dialogue or conversation in drama is ‘verbal cooperation’ which involves different kinds of operations or ‘cooperation’ such as question-answer;

4. a recognition of the importance of the dialogue about the drama that is generated before, during, and after work in the dramatic context concerning ‘both the task itself and ideas embodied in the material.’
Chapter III: Theoretical Framework for Drama and Theatre as a Method in FL Education

One can conclude from this model that the child is not regarded as an ‘isolated’ creature, but instead is seen as a ‘social’ being who learns through interaction. The ‘active’ (not passive) and ‘cooperative’ use of language is important and should take place at the same time as the child is internalizing the syntactical structures of the target language. This also holds true for second and foreign language learning.

Moffett’s model became known throughout Canada and the United States for its emphasis on ‘dialogue’ and ‘social discourse’ in children’s language development. However, the importance of ‘drama’ in language learning was largely ignored. British researchers (such as Wells 1986, Bruner/Haste 1987) concentrated mostly on the importance of optimum conditions for learning that result from a collaborative style of learning and teaching—conditions that, as Verriour points out, “are already extant and inherent in classroom drama” (Verriour 1993, 47).

For the next several years, developments in the use of drama to foster language learning came primarily from Canada (Carrol 1980; Booth 1989) and Australia (Parsons 1984).

In Great Britain, the introduction of the “National Curriculum” in 1990 led its English Language working party to reinforce the dramatic method as a tool for English teachers in the UK (Bolton 1993, 40). At that time, the best known researchers in this field were Seely (1976), Fleming (1982), Byron (1986), and Neelands (1984), all of whom were British.

As can be seen from the above remarks, most researchers in the field of Drama in Language Education came from English-speaking countries. This is due to the fact that in English-speaking countries, the relationship between the fields of Drama and Education has been much closer, and goes much farther back, than in non-English-speaking countries.
2.3 From Drama in First Language Education to Second and Foreign Language Education

There has long been a connection between second and foreign language learning and teaching and drama and theater. Chapter III, 5 demonstrates that for quite some time, both teachers and students have been ‘putting on acts’ and stepping into the ‘roles’ of people in everyday situations. The greatest act of all is to pretend that the conversation in the FL is ‘real’ or authentic!

Another pivotal figure in the history of Drama in Education is the French foreign language researcher/teacher, Francois Gouin. In his book, *L’Art d’enseigner et d’étudier les langues* (Gouin 1897), he describes a “eureka experience” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 8) he had while watching his son at play. It inspired him to develop a new language learning/teaching method, which can be considered one of the first to follow dramatic principles. Gouin took his son on an excursion to a local flourmill. The son, wanting to play ‘miller’ afterwards, begged his parents to build him a small mill with a functioning mill-wheel, sew small sacks, etc. On this made-up ‘set’, the son began to play make-believe.

When the mill was definitely mounted and set agoing, the littler miller filled his sacks, loaded them on his shoulders with a simulated effort accompanied with a grimace; then bent and grunting beneath the weight, carried his grain to the mill, shot it out and ground it, so reproducing the scene of the real mill—not as he had seen it, but as he had afterwards ‘conceived’ it to himself, as he has ‘generalized’ it. Whilst doing all this, he expressed all his acts aloud, dwelling most particularly upon one word—and this word was the verb, always the verb. Ten times the sack was emptied, refilled and carried to the mill and its content ground in imagination. It was during the course of this operation, carried out again and again without ceasing, ‘repeated aloud’, that a flash of light suddenly shot across my mind, and exclaimed softly to myself, ‘I have found it! Now I understand!’ And following with a fresh interest this precious operation by means of which I had caught a glimpse of a secret so long sought after, I caught sight of a fresh art, that of learning a language. Testing at leisure the truth of my
first intuition, and finding it conform more and more to reality, I wandered about repeating to myself the words of the poet, ‘Je vois, j’entends, je sais’ (quoted from Titone 1968, 33-34).

Gouin’s language teaching method focused on the natural connection between ‘action’ and ‘language’ production. Dramatic principles formed the basis for language learning:

The new element that Gouin brought into teaching of modern languages was intense activity through dramatization of the sentences to be drilled. Language was no longer considered a construct of isolated pieces, something abstract to be anatomized and pieced together again. “Language is behavior,” Gouin could say today. Therefore association, mimicry, memorization constituted the pivotal activities of language learning (Fitzgibbon 1993, 8).

Although Gouin’s method might be seen as too rigid, structured, and self-contained by modern standards, it nevertheless had a significant influence on the development of Palmer’s “English through Actions” (Palmer 1925/1959/1962), and it later impacted the conception of Asher’s TPR - Total Physical Response method (Asher and Adamski 1982). I have chosen Gouin here as an example, but also wish to emphasize that there were other early educators, who saw the important connection of dramatic playing and Second/FL language learning (see, e.g., German overview in this chapter).

Of course, it is difficult to trace the history of drama in education to determine with certainty who first tried out drama in a FL class, as it is not specifically documented. As pointed out earlier, most of the major players (also for the ‘szenisches Spiel’ in Germany) came out of the Drama in Education movement in Great Britain which in turn influenced methods in English as a Second language (ESL) in England before the concept was tried out on FL teaching. The British theory of Drama in Education seemed to be the most suitable, because it did not merely imitate professional theater methods but instead applied them to teaching. In other words, some of the exercises
had an explicit pedagogical purpose and took into account the relevant learning processes. Other countries, such as Germany, had not yet ventured in this direction. Schewe (1993, 116) praised the British Drama in Education model, as it was very practical and allowed theories about teaching to develop inductively, i.e. through practical application and experimentation. Moreover, throughout the last century, drama has been recognized as a school subject much more in Great Britain than in German speaking countries, for example.

Starting in the 70’s and 80’s—largely due to the work of Bolton and Heathcote—the cognitive aspect was no longer the sole focus of learning. Instead, the emotional, creative, social, physical, and aesthetic elements were considered to be increasingly important when it came to educating young people.

Even more importantly, the late seventies saw an important shift towards the communicative/pragmatic approach in FL language teaching and learning. This shift set the stage for more action-oriented, interactive and context-oriented forms of teaching as well as the recognition of other, more alternative teaching methods, such as the drama and theater method (see Chapter III. 3.2). Suddenly, the ‘context’ and the ‘linguistic context’ of a situation became important. Both verbal and nonverbal communication was thought to play an important role in the language learning process. The new goal for the language learner was to produce spontaneous, context-appropriate speech that enabled effective communication. ‘Correctness’ was no longer given top priority (for a more in-depth examination of the Communicative Method, see Chapters III.3.2.3 and 6.1). On the basis of these new findings, and the theoretical concept of Bolton and Heathcote which evolved primarily from the observation of native English speakers, some educators, such as Alan Maley/Alan Duff (1979), Susan Holden (1981), Susan Stern (1983; 1981), Stone McNeece (1983), Stephen Smith (1984), Richard Via (1985), John Dougill (1987), Tony Butterfield (1989), Barry Hawkins (1991; 1993), etc., used the Communicative Method to analyze and
demonstrate the potential of the art forms ‘drama’ and ‘theater’ for Second Language Education. However, these publications did not provide concrete descriptions on how to use specific dramatic techniques in FL instruction.

For the last 15 years, Manfred Schewe, lecturer of German as a Foreign Language at the University College Cork/Ireland and at the University of Oldenburg, Germany, has been the leading proponent of Drama in ‘Foreign’ Language Education. Schewe’s book *Fremdsprache Inszenieren* (1993) was, to my knowledge, one of the first that provided concrete models for the practical application of dramatic principles within FL teaching. In his “Unterrichtsphasenmodell,” he described dramatic lesson sequences on the micro-level (not just on the macro and meso-level). Individual activities were transformed into concrete instructional practices, which in turn were integrated into what he called the “Sensibilisierungsphase,” “Kontextualisierungsphase,” and “Intensivierungsphase” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 277ff). Schewe defined FL teaching as both a ‘scientific’ and an ‘artistic’ discipline, and encouraged FL educators to see themselves not only as scientists but also as artists (Schewe 1993, 118). He saw the “Gestaltung von Fremdsprachenunterricht als eine Form pädagogischer Kunst” (118). His approach to perceive the whole teaching process as a “gestaltete szenische Improvisation” is desirable but, in my opinion, not easy to implement for the average undergraduate FL instructor without experience in theater.

Since then a few good publications have appeared describing in more or less detail the different dramatic approaches that attempt to bridge the fields of theater arts and FL teaching and learning (Fitzgibbon 1993; Kao and O’Neill 1998; Tselikas 1999; Bräuer 2002; Even 2003). However, a comprehensive, systematic typology and terminology for drama-based foreign language instruction is still in its initial stages (Even 2003, 150).
Short Overview of Developments in Germany

By the end of the nineteenth century, German educators had already begun to address the concept of action-oriented teaching for FL instruction, even touching on the importance of the interplay between mind and body for FL instruction. For Vietor (1982) the main goal for modern language teaching was “aktives Sprachkönnen” (active language ability) as he proclaimed in his treatise “Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren,” which initiated the first modern language reform. Max Walter (1931) also emphasized understanding linguistic structures through “Erfahrung an dem eigenen Leibe” (similar to the anthropological theme of the ‘Leiblichkeit der Sprache’) and discussed the importance of producing theater plays so that students would have a chance to act out their imagination and develop language skills. Although he was unfamiliar with dramatic teaching methods at the time, he still recognized the ‘creative’ or ‘affective’ element in language learning:


The second modern language reform, which took place in the 1920s, also emphasized the connection between ‘action’ and ‘language learning.’ Ernst Otto (1921) suggested ‘getting a feel’ for the new language and culture by acting in fictitious contexts:

In 1927, Domann published a whole collection of English one-act plays and suggested that it be used as “ein ganz neuartiges Hilfsmittel für unseren englischen Unterricht” (1927, 39). However, he had no concrete ideas on how to incorporate the plays methodologically into an English lesson (Fitzgibbon 1993, 130). Albrecht (1929) and Mathes (1929) were against using fixed scripts, as Dormann had suggested, and instead advocated the “Stegreifspiel” (ad lib improvisation) as “eines der besten Mittel, die Sprechfreude zu wecken und die Sprechfreude zu fördern” (Mathes, 33). Mathes believed that the natural progression for implementing dramatic teaching techniques was to start with free, improvised games/playing, and then—once the students have achieved the necessary linguistic proficiency—to move on to script-oriented performances.

During the Third Reich, these new, more ‘open’ approaches to education were suppressed. Even in the 1950s and 1960s, they did not fit in with the established language teaching methods, although several of these methods incorporated some elements of theater methodology. Not until the communicative and pragmatic-linguistic approach was implemented in the 1970s was there a shift towards more playful, open, and alternative forms of teaching, as explained earlier in this chapter.

At that time, several publications appeared on the market which favored an action-oriented and fun approach to FL teaching, and advocated learning games, role-plays, simulations, etc. (see Löffler 1979; Spier 1981; Lohfert 1983; Neuner, Krüger, and Grewer 1981). Compared with the number of articles and books about other topics in teaching theory and methodology, there were few such publications, as Hoppe’s quantitative research has shown (1984). However, they introduced and discussed teaching approaches such as “Erfahrungsbezogener Unterricht” (Scheller 1981) or
“Handlungsorientierter Unterricht” (Jank and Meyer 1991)—two methods that are very similar to the British Drama in Education concept. From this time on, FL textbooks were full of (pseudo-) communicative, authentic dialogues and exercises. Role-plays and games concentrated on developing both the ‘verbal’ aspect of communication as well as the new ‘social learning’ component. Nonverbal elements (body language) were given more attention than before, but were not yet actively emphasized in communicative exercises, most likely because teachers (and learners!) were hesitant to ‘act’ in class. Despite the claim for more action-oriented techniques and exercises, many textbooks contained “geschlossene-didaktische Dialoge” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 139) instead of active role-plays. Schewe criticized the way in which these exercises were implemented (137) and presented examples from different textbooks (138ff). For a more in depth discussion of how role-play can be made more dramatic and effective, see Chapter IV, 1.1.2.1 in this dissertation.

In the 1980s, there was a growing interest in drama/theater exercises in FL education, which Esselborn (1988, 394) attributed to the popularity of ‘free’ or ‘alternative’ forms of theater, as well as psychodrama and social drama and the influences of ‘alternative’ language learning/teaching methods (see Chapter III, 3.2.5). The Freies Theater or Theater der Erfahrung, for example, had developed during the protest movements of the 1960s. This approach rejected the dramatization of literary texts in favor of free expression of body and soul through acting.

Some of the first attempts in Germany to use ‘drama and theater’ as a tool in learning a new language had been undertaken in the field of German as a Second Language (Deutsch als Zweitsprache) to help foreign immigrants in Germany with cultural integration, reflection, and self expression. As in Barkowski/Harnisch/Kumm's project (1980, 150-166), short cultural scenes were often combined into theater plays, which were then performed by the language learners. Since then, many language classes and
intercultural drama projects involving foreign children and adolescents have used drama and theater as a tool to foster social and linguistic integration in Germany.

In the last 20 years, some universities (University of Oldenburg, University of Hamburg, Technical University of Berlin, etc.) have also offered FL conversation courses, which use creative drama and play writing/performance. To my knowledge, workshops for teachers or trainees on the topic are offered at a regular basis only at the University of Oldenburg and from time to time at DAF (Deutsch als Fremdsprache) organizations (like the Goethe Institute) throughout the country.

The brief summary above shows that for quite some time, an action-oriented and dramatic approach to FL teaching has been a topic of discussion in Germany. Some of the theories and research have led to a more favorable view of drama as a tool in FL learning, and have yielded practical applications. However, the German educational system is still trailing behind Great Britain when it comes to using drama as an accepted and natural form of foreign language learning and teaching. More didactical material is needed to inspire and assist DAF teachers in Germany and overseas.

Summary
In this chapter, it was my intention to offer an overview of the history of drama as an educational tool from drama in general education, to drama in speech training, to drama in second and foreign language education. The British drama in Education approach seemed to be the most suitable starting point as it provided a theoretical basis and led to significant new developments. It, therefore, has been most influential for the drama method. In addition, the fields of drama and education have been more closely intertwined for a longer time in Britain than in other countries.

Despite the long history of drama in education in Great Britain, and despite the publications by the aforementioned educators, the list of publications on drama
methodology over the last 30 years is not very long, especially when compared with the quantity of publications on other didactical and methodological teaching approaches. It is difficult for interested FL teachers with little or no theater experience to find reference material that offers teaching aids, such as an overview of dramatic techniques, planned exercises with information pertaining to objectives and language level for the foreign language lesson, or assistance in executing a play production within the foreign language curriculum. The lack of suitable drama material for FL classes is all the more baffling and disappointing, because educators who have used drama and theater in their FL teaching have raved about the enormous educational benefits of drama (see national US survey in the appendix of this dissertation). This dissertation attempts to address some of these needs.

3. The Drama and Theater Method within Foreign Language Learning Theories and Teaching Methodologies

Language teachers constantly strive to develop new and better teaching techniques and test existing approaches for their effectiveness and student appeal. Throughout the years, teaching methods and the theories of language learning on which they are based have come and gone. All of these methods and theories were valid and important in their day. Teaching approaches are influenced by research about learning theories, by the political, social, or cultural climate, and by the perceived educational benefit. Looking back at older theories helps to understand how modern theories have developed, and where language learning methodologies are headed in the future.

In order to put the newer drama and theater method in context with existing language learning theories and methodologies that are prevalent in the US, I feel it is important to:
(1) briefly explain the main ideas of the best-known established language learning theories and point out which characteristics are reflected in the drama and theater method;

(2) explain the main teaching methodologies in the US and show how views have changed over the years to make room for the drama and theater method in current trends in FL teaching;

(3) examine some of the elements of theater/drama methodology that are found in the established L2 methods.

3.1 Major Foreign Language Learning Theories in Relation to the Drama and Theater Method

The drama and theater method did not create an entirely new theory of how a language is comprehended or taught. It draws on some ideas from well-established language learning theories, which I shall examine in this chapter.

Traditionally, there has always been a clear distinction between the empiricist/behavioral view and the rationalist/cognitivist view of language learning. B.F. Skinner believed that environment or the learner’s experience is mostly responsible for language learning. Language consists of concrete signs that can be described (Omaggio Hadley 1993, 73). In Skinner’s view, a language is characterized as a sophisticated response system that humans acquire through automatic conditioning processes. The mind is thought to be a tabula rasa onto which are stamped associations between various stimuli in the environment and responses chosen from outside the organism for reinforcement (Omaggio Hadley, 46).

The behaviorists believe that language instruction therefore has to be controlled and formal. The language learning process happens as a habit formation through imitation, operant conditioning, practice, memorization, and repetition (Bell 2000, 12). This
behavioral view of language learning can partly be applied to FL learning through
drama, as a performance only happens if the lines of a play or scene are imitated,
memorized, and repeated (unless it is an improvisation). Language learning takes place
through operant conditioning or repeated listening to the correct usage of the target
language. Of course, there are other elements involved in the successful delivery of a
dialogue, but in theater, text is mainly learned through repeated practice (imitation).

Opposing the empiricist/behavioral view of language learning, the rationalists/
cognitivists of the 1960s drifted away from Skinner’s stimulus-response behaviorism
and adopted Chomsky’s view of language learning. Chomsky (1965) believed that
people have an innate capacity to learn a new language and are “genetically
programmed to develop their linguistic systems in certain ways” (as cited in
McLaughlin 1978, 19). Language is not a structure but a rule-governed creativity
(Chomsky 1965). Unlike the behaviorists, rationalists emphasize the meaningfulness
and understanding of real rules of grammar rather than rote learning. In his Universal
Grammar Theory (1965), Chomsky claims that each human being has a specific
linguistic capacity based on fixed abstract principles that are common to all natural
human languages. All languages must operate within these limited options, yet each
language has its own parameters whose settings are learned through exposure to
linguistic data (based on Chomsky 1965), which in turn is provided through
environmental input. A child needs to hear the language spoken so that he/she can set
the parameters correctly. Although the Universal Grammar Theory concerns itself with
child language acquisition and not with second language acquisition, other rationalist
researchers have applied principles of this theory to their view of second-language
learning.

Stephen Krashen, perhaps the most prominent of the rationalist school of
methodology, developed the highly influential Monitor Theory (Krashen 1982), which
divides the language learning process into two distinct and independent parts:
Language acquisition and language learning. Acquisition is a subconscious process, similar, if not identical, to the way children develop ability in their first language and learning refers to conscious knowledge of the rules of grammar of a second language, and their application in production (paraphrased by Omaggio Hadley 1993, 50). In order to achieve language acquisition, the teacher has to create a language environment, which is as natural or authentic as possible, i.e., which resembles a real communicative situation in the target language. When rehearsing for a German play, language acquisition is guaranteed in two ways: (1) during play rehearsals, which take place as often as possible in the target language, students discuss how the play should be spoken, acted, and staged. The communication is real—it has a purpose and develops according to students’ input—and it does not have the artificial character so typical of exercises in the foreign language classroom, (2) most plays show realistic people who communicate with realistic language, which also guarantees a certain degree of authenticity.

Each of these communicative situations thus offers students the opportunity to acquire language by subconsciously ‘taking in’ new language material. Acquisition occurs in many areas, such as intonation, pronunciation, grammatical correctness, semantics, reading, and listening. The impact of drama and theater on the success of language acquisition in some of these areas will be explained in Chapter III, 6.1.

Krashen’s model also suggests that the learned system functions as a monitor for the acquired system and that it does not initiate speech situations, i.e., it shows that there is no transfer possible from the learned system to the acquired system. Unlike Krashen, however, I believe that such a transfer is entirely possible, and even highly desirable for the language learning process. I agree with Ellis (1985, 80) who extends Krashen’s theory: “It may be that communicative opportunity is necessary as a switch that starts the flow of learned to acquired knowledge.” He concludes that informal communicative approaches to foreign language learning make both acquisition and
learning possible—*language acquisition* by creating opportunities for communication and a transfer from the *learned* to the *acquired* system. My experience, for example, shows that play rehearsals in the foreign language are perfect informal communicative situations that fulfill both functions. During rehearsal or technical discussions about the play (about scenery, costumes, lighting, advertisement, etc.), communication is unavoidable if students are to achieve their goals (i.e., performing a play). It is this necessity that encourages or switches on the flow of conscious knowledge from the *learned* system to the *acquired* system. Optimally, learning and acquisition blend together to create real communication that is uttered without conscious consideration of language rules or structure, just as native speakers experience everyday. This ‘fusion’ phenomenon is, in my opinion, greatly responsible for the success of FL learning through drama or theater.

Another part of Krashen’s Monitor Model is his "Affective Filter Hypothesis" (1982, 9-32) which has great relevance to the drama and theater method. In this hypothesis, he states that “…comprehensible input can have its effect on acquisition only when affective conditions are optimal: 1) the acquirer is motivated; 2) he has self-confidence and a good self-image; and 3) his level of anxiety is low” (Krashen, 9-32). These socio-psychological factors encourage students to accept the language and enable them to actively use the learned material.

> “Simply hearing a second language with understanding appears to be necessary but not sufficient for *acquisition* to take place. The acquirer must not only understand the input, but must also, in a sense, be open to it.” (Krashen, 21).

When I taught English to 5th graders in an elementary school in Berlin, I had a student who sat under his desk during the first days of my language class. He was very defensive and fearful. Due to the novelty of the foreign language, myself as a teacher, and other personal problems his *affective filter* was so high that it simply was not
possible to provide him with input that he would be able to comprehend. Only after several weeks, when he became aware that the class atmosphere was nonthreatening and most other students were supportive and relaxed, was he able to sit with the class and participate. Resistance and fear is not always shown through physical behavior, as in the example above, but through a general shyness and refusal to learn.

In a drama classroom, students work on exactly those attitudes and feelings in order to ‘open up’ and be able to speak their roles well. “Drama encourages the operation of certain psychological factors in the participant, which facilitate self-esteem, motivation, spontaneity, increased capacity for empathy, and lowered sensitivity to rejection” (Stern 1981, 81). Using certain drama exercises in the FL classroom and applying some of the same goals can help to keep the affective filter in the classroom low and, according to other researchers, promote successful language acquisition (Stern, 80). For a more in-depth look at these factors in connection with language learning, please see Chapter III, 6.3.1. Although some of Krashen’s hypotheses and assertions have been challenged in recent years (Munsell and Carr 1981; McLaughlin 1987), most of his ideas still influence practitioners and researchers today and are valuable for a drama-assisted classroom.

Another theory based on rationalist ideas is the Cognitive Theory, which views the learner as one who “acts, constructs, and plans rather than only responds to stimuli from the environment, as in the behaviorists’ view” (paraphrased by Omaggio Hadley 1993, 55). Skills to be acquired first go through controlled processing (attentively practiced) which sets the base for automatic processing (making the skill a routine where attention is not needed? (See Schiffrin and Schneider 1977, cited in McLaughlin 1987, 135.) Like Krashen, Mc Laughlin, and Anderson contend that language acquisition can only take place if students are exposed to the most natural situation possible and to the authentic use of the target language, and in addition are able to conceptualize the language in the same way as it is utilized in real life. Moreover,
learning material has to be ‘meaningful’, i.e., it must relate to what we already know and not just what we have independently learned by heart in order to be integrated into existing cognitive structure (see Ausubel 1968, an early proponent of applying general principles of cognitive psychology). In order for learning to be ‘meaningful’, the learner has to be willing and motivated to approach a task (as in Krashen’s theory) and relate it to other information he/she already has. These ideas are in accordance with drama-based FL teaching for the following reasons:

(1) Tasks in drama exercises or theater productions are normally not isolated (like the rote learning of vocabulary) but are embedded in a context and are actively practiced. The context could be set by the type of exercise that is prepared or enacted, for example, a role-play, a topic-based exercise (as advocated by Brian Way), or a theater play. It involves often authentic situations, authentic vocabulary, and body language as could be encountered in the target country. Drama and theater offer the means for “an expression of ‘real’ people in a time and a place” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 270). It is one of the most authentic tools that can be applied in FL teaching because it provides the learner with “abbreviated examples of human situations, and the rituality of theatrical production is persuasively real” (Schlunk 1978, 52). Even if the play shows a different time period or has elements from different literary genres, students learn the role of fictional characters who still converse on a linguistically authentic, genuine level, and are not forced to simply memorize verb conjugations or words that are not related to the overall context.

(2) Many words or structures that students learn in a drama/theater-based FL classroom are ‘meaningful’ for the students; there might be a connection to other scenes in the play, to literary, cultural, or linguistic information about the target country that they already have learned, or to their own personal experiences. As
a result, these words and structures now find greater meaning through their application, and can therefore be integrated into the cognitive system.

(3) The motivation to learn also stems from the fact that drama and theater give students a reason to learn—i.e., a common goal—as well as the responsibility for making a group activity a success (for other factors, see Chapter III, 6.3.1).

As the previous discussion showed, the drama and theater method is not based on its own independent language learning theory, but instead incorporates some elements of known FL learning theories. The next chapter will discuss how drama and theater methodology relates to traditional and modern teaching methodologies.

3.2 Major Foreign Language Teaching Methodologies in Relation to the Drama and Theater Method

A look at the history of language instruction reveals that the teaching of foreign languages has had at least two major aims: on the one hand, teachers were to provide information about the culture through the study of grammar, literature, and geography; on the other hand, they sought to have their students actively master the colloquial spoken language. The degree to which these two aims have been emphasized in the classroom has depended on a wide variety of factors, such as the political, social, or cultural climate, or the perceived educational value.

Until the beginning of this century, the basis of language instruction was “the written literary language” (Neuner, Krüger, and Grewer 1981, 10). Foreign languages were learned by memorizing logical rules. These rules of descriptive grammar were meant to be understood intellectually and then applied. This method was called the grammar-translation method. It was first applied to classical languages, and was later transferred to the teaching of modern languages.
At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, a controversy arose about foreign language teaching methodology, which has generally come to be called the “modern language reform movement” (Gosewitz 1984, 108). The proponents of this movement (Vietor et al.) favored a new kind of practical language instruction emphasizing ‘spoken’ skills.

In the following, I would like to show the connection that drama and theater methodology has with several established foreign language methods of the 20th century, a number of which already contain elements of drama methodology.

3.2.1 The Direct Method

The *direct method*, similar to the *natural method* (not described in this dissertation), developed primarily as a reaction to the grammar orientation of the grammar-translation method. Like the natural method, it emphasized the oral-aural faculty of language learning as well as speaking skills. It was based on the ‘natural’ way of language learning, e.g., the way children learn their natural [native] language. Therefore, language instruction took place exclusively in the target language. Language was “learned through the direct association of words and phrases with objects and actions without the use of the native language as intervening variable” (Omaggio Hadley 1993, 92). The vocabulary was explained in the target language with the help of culturally oriented pictures, paraphrases, and miming, and other visual/oral devices. Translations were not permitted. Listening to and repeating complete, meaningful sentences in simple discourse was considered to be of utmost importance for the learning process. Words and phrases were not taught separately from the text, but instead were explained in context. Greater emphasis was placed on dialogue, as well as on cultivating accurate pronunciation from the beginning, which was often achieved through phonetic notation (Rivers 1981, paraphrased in Omaggio Hadley, 93). Grammar rules were not taught as a main part of the lesson. Although the
method does not reject the formal study of grammar, students were supposed to learn grammar through inductive methods. They were supposed to intuitively form their own generalization about grammar, and if grammatical rules were discussed at all, it was to be done at the end of a unit. Writing was kept to a minimum, with the exception of free composition, and reading skills were enhanced through the direct understanding of texts without the use or dictionaries or translation. In summary, one could say that three catchwords best characterize this method: “imitative” (miming), “inductive”, and “monolingual” (Rösler 1994, 102).

After the method had been introduced to language educators, it was criticized for being too time-consuming, for containing too little systematic practice or in-depth treatment of structures and vocabulary, and for dealing with students in a childish way (Skidmore 1916, 218). Other problems included a concern over the potential “fossilization of the language” (Rivers 1981, paraphrased in Omaggio Hadley, 94) and the difficulty of finding teachers with a perfect oral command of the language who also possessed the creativity and high energy level required by the direct method. However, the development of the direct method had an impact on textbooks. It introduced the use of text passages with an overarching context instead of single sentences that have no apparent connection. The method also gave rise to new exercises, such as comprehension questions that follow a text and other functional exercises.

All these problems and controversies resulted in a reemergence of the grammar-translation method, which remained the most popular approach until the audio-lingual method brought back many features of the direct method during World War II. Many aspects of the direct method can also be seen in some of the modern alternative teaching methods (see later in this chapter).
Parallels between the Drama and Theater Method and the Direct Method

As its name implies, the direct method approaches language directly, using inductive strategies of the here and now, very much as drama and theater does. Like the direct method and the natural method, the drama and theater method emphasizes oral skills.

Words, phrases, and sentences are contextualized; they are learned through the direct association with classroom objects, pictures, real-life situations, and through paraphrasing and miming—without using the native language. The drama-based class is taught with the same goal; the one difference is that in the monolingual approach, these skills are not exercised as exclusively or intensively as in the direct method. In both methods, the teacher has to be very creative, an excellent communicator in the language in question, and able to function on a high energy level. Like acting students analyzing a theater play, language students often study complete, authentic discourse in contextualized situations. Correct pronunciation and intonation is important as it is in learning the lines for a play.

A crucial element in both methods is “miming” or “learning by doing.” Both are active methods—in other words, the underlying belief is that oral language is acquired if speech is simultaneously accompanied by the appropriate action. “At its best, the Direct Method provides an exciting and interesting way of learning a language through activity” (Rivers 1981, 33). That same statement could also apply to teaching foreign languages with the help of drama techniques.

As seen above, there are obvious parallels between the drama and theater method and the direct method. Different elements of the direct method, such as ‘contextualization’ and ‘miming,’ can also be found in a drama—or theater—oriented classroom as well as in other alternative methods.
3.2.2 The Audio-Lingual Method

The *audio-lingual method* of the 1950s and 1960s was the first method in which the theory of language learning was based on scientific research that combined the findings of phonetics, linguistics, pedagogy, psycholinguistics, and educational psychology (Gosewitz 1984, 108). Its foundation was the systematic analysis of spoken language or “verbal behavior” (Neuner, Krüger, and Grewer 1981, II). This behaviorist/empiricist theory of learning holds that a foreign language is acquired through stimulus-and-response conditioning. Oral skills are developed through the imitation and manipulation of phrases and mode sentences, using pattern and substitution drills. Behaviorists believed that humans react similarly to animals, and that learning happens as a mechanical process. Therefore, students learn the structural patterns of the language through the process of habit formation, which in essence contradicts previous beliefs that language acquisition involves cognitive or mental activity.

A typical textbook using the audio-lingual method consists of three parts: a) dialogues, b) pattern drills (e.g., repetition drills and transformation drills), and c) application activities in which memorized material is repeated, manipulated, and transformed in order to meet minimal communicative needs. These exercises include dialogue adaptations, open-ended response drills, conversation stimulus activities, etc. The native language was not allowed in the audio-lingual classroom, the goal being that the target language would eventually be used on an unconscious level. However, despite its revolutionary new approach at the time, this method had a number of flaws. The main problem was that it did not produce bilingual speakers as promised. Other issues included the monotony of constant repetition and memorization, as well as students’ dissatisfaction with the absence of meaningfulness, contextualization, and classroom thinking in favor of rote learning.
Parallels between the Drama and Theater Method and the Audio-Lingual Method

The main characteristics of the audio-lingual method that are reflected in the drama and theater method are ‘imitation,’ ‘repetition,’ ‘persistent correction of pronunciation,’ and ‘memorization.’ Important elements of a play rehearsal and performance in the foreign language include imitating the teacher’s model or a taped dialogue (especially with students that are not very advanced), and memorizing the script of a theater play or role-play (unless scenes are improvised). To some extent, the students also produce language in response to a stimulus – namely, the other students in the play, who provide them with cues to which they respond either verbally or nonverbally. As in the audio-lingual method, grammar is not the topic of discussion, but is simply learned through repetition and osmosis. Certain techniques, such as choral repetition for achieving good pronunciation or certain drills of authentic communicative structures, are also helpful in a theater/drama-based class, especially since intonation, rhythm, and pronunciation can be crucial for the understanding of the dialogue and should be practiced prior to memorization. In the theater and drama method, imitation in a chorus is used, for example, in the initial stages of text learning as an ‘ice-breaker.’ The group protects individual students from feeling vulnerable, and helps them to model the teacher’s example in a nonthreatening way. In my introductory German classes at the university, I often invite students to shout, moan, whisper lines, or speak according to the contents of the line, for example in a brave, shy, laughing, crying, or loving voice. After several so-called drills in a chorus, students practice the lines with a partner or in a smaller group, which acts as the audience (see also dramatic exercises, Chapter IV, 1.2.). When students are later asked to use certain lines in dialogues, they are often able to manipulate these lines from the initial exercise and use them in a dialogue with much more emotion, better intonation, and less hesitation, thus abandoning their monotonous, careful speech. While rehearsing for the play *The Physicists* (Dürrenmatt) and a cabaret with German students at the University of Hawaii, I frequently observed students applying their
memorized lines from the play to real or made-up dialogues with their fellow students during the rehearsal breaks or informal get-togethers. They were even able to take their classmates’ lines, which had been subconsciously ‘drilled into their heads’ during rehearsals, and spontaneously apply them to different situations.

The audio-lingual method was often criticized for its monotonous drills and meaningless rote learning. The drama and theater method still borrows some of those exercises; however, it: (a) contextualizes them from the start, and—in the case of a play performance—takes them out of the often inflexible and monotonous classroom environment, and (b) usually combines speech with simultaneous actions (as in the direct method) and body language. As a result, repetitive drills become more meaningful, real, and less monotonous.

3.2.3. The Communicative Method

In the early 1970s, the communicative-pragmatic change took place. The idea of how a language should be taught underwent modification, in that spoken language began to be defined in terms of the components involved in communication. Instead of focusing on the structural description of language, as in the audio-lingual method, FL teaching methodologies now began to consider the practical aspects of FL learning.

Since the 1970s, the main focus of foreign language instruction has been on communication skills with the goal of achieving communicative competence. The concept of communicative competence appeared for the first time in (Hymes 1971). Communicative competence extends the concept of linguistic competence, defined by Chomsky (1965, 10) as “accuracy of pronunciation, range of vocabulary, and extent of grammatical control,” to include an understanding of those rules that determine the appropriate use of the language in real-life situations. For Chomsky, linguistic competence is an innate, mental system that exists by itself without any contextualization. Hymes argued, however, that the context of a conversation,
including the speaker's location, occupation, and social position, as well as the impetus for the conversation and its effect on those involved, need to be considered for meaningful speech. He stated: “It is not enough for the child to be able to produce any grammatical utterance. It would have to remain speechless if it could not connect utterances to their contexts of use” (Hymes 1971, 110). Hymes called communicative competence the ability of a speaker to decide on the ‘What, Where, How, and Why’ of his speech, making speaking and understanding possible as a meaningful social activity (Hymes, 11).

Many other researchers came up with their own definition of communicative competence on the basis of Hymes’ concept. Habermas, e.g., utilized the idea in his essay “Vorbereitende Bemerkungen zu einer Theorie der kommunikativen Kompetenz” (Habermas 1971, 101-141) and says: “A theory of communicative competence must explain the message which the speakers or hearers attempt when they transform sentences into utterances” (103).

Hüllen (1976) understands communicative competence to be an ability

“…to use language descriptively and systematically in a situation according to the expectations of the speech partners or to contradict these expectations with one’s own opinion so that mutual understanding is achieved and nonverbal actions in accordance with motives, goals, and the choice of means to this end become clear.” (Hüllen, 16).

In contrast to more scientific theoretical definitions, Piepho’s concept of competence is oriented more to methodological considerations. For him communicative competence is

“…the ability to make oneself understood, without fears or complexes, by linguistic means which have been recognized and proven in their effects, also the ability to recognize communicative intentions when
they are uttered in a code, which one has not yet mastered and which exists only in part in one’s own idiolect.” (Piepho 1973, 9-10).

Rivers uses the term communicative competence synonymously with “spontaneous expression” (Rivers 1972, 72), while others (e.g., Paulston 1974, 349) have equated it with the ability to carry out linguistic interaction, stating that communicative competence is not simply a term, it is a concept that is essential for understanding social interaction. Van der Geest (1975, 15) elaborates:

“Given that a speaker wishes to produce a sentence, he has to judge the context and what knowledge the hearer can be presupposed to have in order to be able to decide how the information ought to be formulated and in order to arrive at a sufficient degree of adequacy.”

A major theme inherent in these definitions is reflected in Savignon’s statement (Savignon 1972, 13) that communicative competence is

“…the ability to function in a truly communicative setting... in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total information input, both linguistic and paralinguistic.”

On the basis of these descriptions, communicative competence can be defined as the body of skills that enable a speaker to be communicatively competent in a foreign language:

- a knowledge of grammatical rules;
- the ability to give and receive information;
- the ability to respond to a social context with appropriate usage;
- the ability to perform in a communicative setting.

Hymes’ (1971) definition of communicative competence takes into account each of these criteria.
In the quoted definitions of communicative competence, which have been taken from the respective theoretical concepts, communicative competence appears as “a hypothetical construct, a model for an internal rule system, at the bottom of which lies communication” (Gosewitz 1984, 115). Here it should be stated, however, that in FL education, communicative competence is regarded as a capacity that can be acquired, in other words, taught as well as learned (Gosewitz, 117). In the foreign language classroom, the objective of the communicative method is to teach both ‘linguistic’ and ‘communicative’ competence.

The general goal of instruction, which aims at communicative competence, is to improve speaking ability and listening comprehension. The teacher has the task of providing practical material for conversation and creating a situational framework for authentic communication within the classroom. Because such interactions presuppose unique conditions (e.g., events, places, and people outside of the classroom, such as clerks at a train station or travel agency or a saleswoman in a department store), they can only be simulated in the classroom. Although the ‘as if’- situations are artificial, simulating certain aspects of real communication can function as a ‘training field’ for the student, and is considered to be highly effective. Whenever possible, native, real-life communication partners should be brought into the lesson. One suggestion is that the teacher tries to make the artificial classroom situation resemble the real one as much as possible, e.g., using sound effects in the background, bringing tangible objects to class (clothing, money, etc.), or recreating the real situation by using props (simulating countertops or box offices with chairs and tables etc.), thus bringing ‘drama’ into the classroom.

In order to instill in the students the ability to speak appropriately in any given situation—thereby teaching them communicative competence—the teacher should possess an understanding of the various components of the communicative situation and be able to pass that knowledge on to the students. It is very important for students
to have a picture of the purpose of their utterances; i.e., it should be clear to them what they are expected to say to whom, how they are expected to say it, and under what circumstances. This is what will enable them to carry on a meaningful conversation. It is also important to provide them with instructions as to the communication procedure (asking, requesting, reporting, etc.), as well as some background information on the subject and the roles of the other students. Desselmann and Helmich, for example, divide the act of communication into four major categories (1981, 237, my translation):

1. Elementary forms of conversation, e.g., formulating desires and requests, receiving and providing information about time, place and concrete objects;

2. Dialogues that focus on receiving a particular service, e.g., a conversation involving a purchase;

3. Dialogues in the form of an informal conversation, e.g., talking about oneself, activities, events and experiences, etc. or a formal conversation transmitting and exchanging knowledge, experiences, opinions, etc.;

4. Discussions, e.g., analyzing problems to clarify facts and find solutions, taking a position on certain points of view, etc.

There are many other concepts for categorizing communication acts; however, these will not be discussed further at this juncture (see Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983; Richards and Rodgers 1986). It is suggested that students practice modes of speaking that are needed to achieve various communicative intentions (e.g., to justify, to express doubt, to ask for information, to request, etc.). These can be practiced in mini-situations, drills and other exercises.

Communication skills must be built up gradually. Instruction should provide drills that help students prepare for, expand upon, structure, and simulate communication, and should help them transition from guided dialogue to spontaneous communication. There is an unlimited range of activities that are compatible with the communicative
method. Classroom activities are practiced in social settings, such as working with partners or in small groups, and include role plays, simulations, interactive and social language games, information-sharing activities, task-based activities, functional communication practice, etc. (Richards and Rodgers 1986).

In selecting topics for dialogue practice, teachers should use situations from various social or communicative settings within German culture. The goal is “to prepare students for living in a German speaking country by focusing on everyday situations in which students will find themselves” (Vail and Sparks 1978, VI). The content of communicative situations, however, should not relate exclusively to the country of the target language. Topics of conversation that are brought up by the students and the teacher during the class should also be pursued. When it comes to developing proficiency in the spoken language, it is important for students to be able to apply the target language within the context of their own experience.

According to the school of communicative competence, successful communication is defined by its effectiveness, rather than grammatical correctness. However, this does not mean that the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the German language should not be practiced. These kinds of exercises actually provide a basis for the communicative process of language. New grammatical forms are not introduced and practiced separately, but instead are always used in a communicative context.

The teaching principles mentioned above represent an example of foreign language instruction with an orientation towards communication and communicative competence. Since the communicative approach represents a repertoire of teaching ideas rather than a fixed, validated set of methodological procedures, it is not easy to be defined or evaluated. Critics over the years have pointed out that the understanding of the term ‘communicative’ is often too narrow. As a result, there is a danger that other aspects of language learning will be neglected, such as the importance of
They have also criticized the trend during the late 1970's and early 1980's, e.g., in Germany, which went to the extreme of dividing the “speech act” into the smallest communicative units, and as a result made the language seen too fragmented and overly complex. This made an independent language study almost impossible (Schewe 1993, 202).

Despite the criticism, researchers and practitioners agree that the communicative method made room for what had been neglected in previous teaching methodologies. There is consensus that the main objective in FL teaching should be to develop communication skills in contextualized, meaningful situations, and to focus more on the learner as an agent in the learning process.

I consider the communicative method to be the foundation of the drama and theater method. Consequently, the connection between the two will not be discussed at this point, but will instead be explained in detail in Chapter III, 6.1. The teaching methodologies that have evolved since the 1970s are all based on the communicative method, although owing to a variety of influences each has taken its own direction.

3.2.4 The Natural Approach

The natural approach is based on the language learning theory put forth by Krashen (Krashen 1981; 1982) The main focus is on natural communication. The term ‘natural’ refers to the naturalistic way in which young children learn their first language. In this approach it is argued that foreign language acquisition happens in the same way. Little emphasis is put on structural accuracy. Terrell (1977), the founder of this methodology, suggested that the whole class period should be used for communication and other activities that evoke communication, such as role plays, dialogues, sentence-completion responses, games, improvisations, and others. Those activities should give students the opportunity to ‘acquire’ rather than ‘learn’ the language (see Krashen’s
Monitor Theory). Class time should not be used for the explanation and practice of grammatical structures; instead, such exercises are to be done outside of class. Error corrections should be kept to a minimum since, according to Terrell, “there is no evidence to show that the correction of speech errors is necessary or even helpful in language acquisition” (Terrell 1977, paraphrased by Omaggio, 109). On the contrary, he believes it to have a negative affect on students’ motivation and attitude.

In the beginning, students are given a great deal of listening comprehension practice before they are required to produce language on their own. Comprehension is monitored through TPR (Total Physical Response) activities, gestures, and visual aids, etc. The intention is that once a student has acquired sufficient vocabulary, he/she will learn to comprehend well and start to speak, “even if his knowledge of structure is for practical purposes nonexistent” (Terrell, 333). Games, humanistic-affective activities, and other exercises that involve the students personally are used to create a low-anxiety atmosphere, which in turn encourages more speech production. Language activities are always put in context, and are personalized and meaningful.

The natural approach has been criticized for its lack of form and corrective feedback of speech. In the last 10 years, however, Terrell has modified his approach to include some explicit instruction of grammar, especially if it is used as an “advance organizer” and/or as a “monitor” in students’ speech (Omaggio Hadley 1993, 111).

Parallels between the Drama and Theater Method and the Natural Approach

The natural approach and drama and theater method in the classroom are both based on the belief that communication and communicative competence are the most important factors in language learning. Each method utilizes contextualized communication exercises, and actively involves students in the learning process. The exercises allow students to create or experiment with the language, even if the
'linguistic form' is not always correct. Both methods make use of dramatic exercises, such as miming and gestures. Language is acquired subconsciously through interactive oral exercises and the creation of a warm, nonthreatening atmosphere (a low affective filter, see Krashen 1982). Also, ‘affective’ factors are considered to be more important than ‘cognitive’ factors when it comes to language learning. Terrell writes that “the goal [of language instruction using the natural approach] is that the members of the group become genuinely interested in each other’s opinions, feelings and interest, and feel comfortable expressing themselves on the topic of discussions” (Terrell 1977, 14). This same goal applies to the drama approach.

While corrective feedback is given much more often in drama exercises than in the natural approach, it is usually done after the students are finished with their game or exercise. It should never interfere with fluency, the affective filter, or the dramatic reality of the exercise. Grammatical correctness is mentioned but not stressed (as in the modified natural approach). However, factors such as grammatical correctness, good pronunciation, intonation, and corrective feedback, as well as good practice in listening comprehension skills take on greater importance when the students are rehearsing for a play in the FL class.

3.2.5 Alternative Methods
A new discussion on FL teaching methods started in the 1980s. These methods include, among many others, Silent Way, Communicative Language Learning, Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia. The term ‘alternative’ referred to the political Zeitgeist of being different than the established approaches to teaching and learning, and evoked a more progressive image (especially for the potential buyer of language programs!). These methods do not fall under the category of linguistics or language teaching, but instead are based on movements in the field of psychotherapy. Consequently, they were surrounded by a great deal of methodological debate. The theories were a response to the need to acknowledge the ‘affective’ dimension of the
language learner, and to develop a more holistic form of education. None of these methods aim at replacing the other teaching methods or views of learning; rather, they offer new tools that enhance language learning so that the “information learning and formation of the person go hand in hand and can co-exist” (Arnold 1999, 5). The influence of alternative language learning theories and teaching methods in the FL class created a heightened interest in the drama and theater method for FL teaching. In the following, I shall describe the main points of the major alternative methods and show the corresponding elements that influenced drama and theater-based FL teaching.

1. **Community Language Learning (CLL)**

   *Community Language Learning* emerged as a reaction to structural approaches and to methods such as the audio-lingual method in the late 1970s. Such methods failed to include ‘affective’ aspects of learning and did not succeed in teaching learners to communicate in the foreign language. “Community Language Teaching appealed to those who sought a more humanistic approach to teaching, one in which the interactive process of communication receives priority” (Richards and Rodgers 1986, 83). CLL was developed by Charles Curran (1976). The basis for his method is the belief that “the human individual needs to be understood and aided in the process of fulfilling personal values and goals” (Omaggio Hadley 1993, 112), a premise borrowed from psychological counseling. This is best achieved in a group where other individuals strive for the same goal. Techniques are used which reduce anxiety and create a learning environment of rapport and free expression of thoughts and feelings. The teacher’s role is rather passive. He only counsels the students on the language skills they need to “express themselves freely to say whatever it is they want to say” (Omaggio Hadley, 112). In practice, students discuss a topic of their own choosing in a group. The teacher does not actively participate in the discussion; rather, it is his/her role to listen and be available to give help when needed. Afterwards, the teacher summarizes the conversation and uses sentences uttered by individual students to
discuss certain grammatical problems and functions. Important vocabulary that was used in the conversation is also reviewed and practiced through learning games and interactive exercises.

One problem with this methodology is that the contexts selected by the students often do not give them enough practice in coping with situations that might arise in the target culture. The teacher can counteract this tendency by encouraging the students to use such topics. (For more information on this method, see Curran 1976.)

2. Silent Way

Another method in which the teacher plays a subordinate role is Silent Way. This approach is based on the belief that the teacher should “teach, test, and then get out of the way” (Stevick 1980, 56).

The method, introduced by Gattegno (1976), has a cognitive orientation. The responsibility for learning lies solely with the student, whose mind draws from “his/her own inner resources (i.e., existing cognitive structures, experiences, emotions, knowledge of the world) to absorb learning from the environment” (Omaggio Hadley 1993, 114). Subsequently, the learned information is tested, judged, and revised. Working in groups, students must interact with the other group members and pay close attention to their own utterances as well as those of their classmates. Often, so-called ‘Cusenaire rods’—colored sticks of different length—are used to teach and practice basic structures in open-ended sentence manipulation exercises. The teacher uses the rods to explain the exercise silently; the students use them as a device to elicit speech. A low-anxiety, cooperative atmosphere is absolutely necessary if students are to meet their own proficiency goals and achieve the three main objectives of “independence, autonomy, and responsibility” (Omaggio Hadley, 114).
Potential drawbacks of this method include the lack of authentic native speech and the opportunity to practice everyday situations in the target culture. This can be remedied by the teacher, as manuals on this method are generally not available, and he/she alone is responsible for designing the lessons. (For a thorough discussion, see Gattegno 1976).

3. Total Physical Response (TPR)
This method, developed by James J. Asher in the early 1970s, is in some ways an extension of the direct method. The major belief underlying this method is that students should develop an understanding of the language before beginning to speak, just as children learn their native language. A student is asked to speak only when he/she is ready to do so. The desired level of understanding is achieved most quickly and efficiently through body movements. The goal of the TPR method is to break down language barriers by shifting the main focus away from language and concentrating on physical actions. Students hear commands and respond with pantomimes to show their understanding. Schewe (1993, 296) writes:

> At the core of this theory [TPR method] is the learning-psychological view that greater feats of memory can be achieved in foreign language learning the more frequently and/or intensively that (short-term) stored knowledge is tapped: e.g., by repetition and rote learning. Particularly high memory retention is achieved when this tapping not only occurs verbally, but is associated with motor activity.

The teacher uses words and structures that are based in the ‘here-and-now’ and can easily be imitated through mime. After about ten sessions, students are encouraged to use commands on their own. In the next stage, they are asked to perform skits. Later on, problem-solving activities are implemented, followed by writing and reading exercises that practice the relevant vocabulary.
Proponents of this method believe that the lack of pressure to speak at the beginning creates a warm, low-anxiety environment. Because TPR does not adequately teach students how to use the foreign language in real life, it is best used not as a method by itself, but instead as a technique that can be integrated into various other methods to fulfill particular instructional purposes. Other drawbacks to this method include the heavy emphasis on commands and the frequent use of contexts that are not natural or not relevant to the target culture. (For a more thorough look at this method, please see Asher, Kusudo, and De la Torre 1974.)

4. Suggestopedia

This method, which was developed in Bulgaria, is also known as Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching (SALT), or the Lozanov Method. Lozanov, a psychotherapist and physician, believed that a teaching method should uncover learners’ subconscious resources and help them to retain a broad range of vocabulary. Learning targets both the left and right hemisphere of the brain. He suggests using relaxation, concentration, and drama techniques in an atmosphere of soft lighting, baroque music, and comfortable seating for the presentation of ‘natural’ language. Such an environment should create an anxiety-free, nonthreatening atmosphere “that is liberated from the restrictive influences that students experience in more traditional classroom settings” (Omaggio Hadley 1993, 117). Lozanov’s teaching method is based on two principles: ‘infantilization,’ which aims to bring students back to the kind of learning capacity that they had in their childhood, and ‘pseudopassivity,’ which refers to “a relaxed physical state of heightened mental activity and concentration” (Chastain 1988, 104). Students first go through a relaxation exercise, and then the teacher reads dialogues that involve the target language and situations typical of the target culture. The teacher modulates his/her voice to reflect changes in the background music (shouting, whispering, etc.). In the active phase, students read along, and in the passive phase they listen with their eyes closed. The two phases are used to encourage absorption of the material on an unconscious level. This is followed
by an “activation phase” that lasts for several hours (Lazanov 1978) and includes role-plays and other interactive language exercises. Grammar is practiced prior to the relaxation exercise and during the “activation phase.”

One criticism of this teaching method is that it uses prepared passages in place of authentic texts for listening and reading. Furthermore, the format of the exercises often does not fit the typical classroom schedule. However, these difficulties can be remedied by adapting the method as needed, as shown by (Bancroft 1982). (For more detailed information on this method, see Lazanov 1978).

**Parallels between the Drama and Theater Methods and the Alternative Methods**

Although the alternative methodologies described above are different in style, they all have several things in common; namely, a focus on group processes, their approach to correcting mistakes, and the altered role of the teacher (Pürschel 1987, 271). Many elements of these methods correspond to the main ideas of the drama and theater method.

The most important common view is that the FL learner is looked at as a ‘whole’ person, including not just his intellect but also his emotions, his body, and his energies—the ‘affective’ elements of his personality. The goal is to address different types of learners through different learning channels (mind and body).

In addition, all of these methods, including the drama and theater method, try to target both sides of the brain. In other words, they activate not just the left side, which is responsible for logical-abstract thinking, but also the right side, which processes the affective elements (as used in music, movement, and sound). This helps students understand and internalize the foreign language with lasting effect.
A central part of both the drama and theater method and the aforementioned alternative approaches is the goal of creating a positive, low-pressure, cooperative learning atmosphere where language learning is experienced as a fun, relaxing, and satisfying activity without much mental effort.

The methods slightly vary in the way they create this kind of environment. *Suggestopedia* attempts to create it through ‘infantilization’ and ‘pseudopassivity’ (baroque music, soft lightening, comfortable seating, etc.). *TPR* reduces anxiety by initially taking the pressure off students to speak and by introducing fun, active exercises. *CLL* achieves a similar effect by relying on the counseling skills of the teacher and encouraging the free expression of thoughts and feelings on the part of the students. In *Silent Way*, the pressure on individual student is reduced by making them responsible for their own learning and their own corrections, while the drama and theater method relies on role simulation, the expression of mind and body, and a high degree of student-student interaction and cooperation. All of these methods use various types of verbal or nonverbal relaxation exercises. The nonthreatening learning atmosphere is also enhanced through the ‘new’ role of the teacher—in most cases a more passive one than the traditional role—and the greater student-student interaction.

The following characteristics of the alternative methods can also be found in drama and theater based FL classes:

- teaching is subordinated to learning;
- learning is often instigated through non-traditional techniques and, in some cases, away from the traditional classroom setting;
- students working in groups is the preferred learning style;
- most exercises require students to be ‘active’ participants in the learning process.

The degree of body movement varies among the methods (drama often works with the whole body and plenty of action);
• learning is contextualized and personalized;
• communication exercises are of paramount importance for language learning;
• learning is very student-centered and students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning;
• students use language to ‘create.’ (Dramatic warm-up activities, role plays/skits, improvisations, etc. are used in TPR and some of the other alternative methods, as well as in the drama and theater method);
• correction is done in various ways, but without sacrificing affective concerns, e.g., in the Silent Way Method, the teacher does not often correct students, as the students are assumed to have developed their own inner sense of correctness, and are therefore expected to correct themselves. In the drama method, some correction by the teacher or other students is considered to be important; however, it should be given after the dramatic exercise or during a break so as not to interrupt the dramatic process. Corrections are more frequent and crucial when the students are rehearsing a play in the foreign language.

The last several chapters have shown that using drama and theater in FL teaching is not a new concept. Several elements of the drama and theater method can be found in some of the traditional and modern language learning theories and methodologies.

4. Neuro-psychological Findings on Foreign Language Learning and the Impact of the Drama and Theater Method

How Our Brain ‘Acts’

“Father, what’s the name of that beautiful singing bird over there?” a little boy asks. “If I knew,” the father answers, “I would tell you the name in all the languages. But then you would only know what other people call it. You would
really know nothing about it. You need to look at the bird, listen to it, try to understand what it is doing, and maybe touch it if you ever can. Notice everything! Only then you will remember its name for a long time”.
(Quote from the film “Infinity,” 1996)

Learning a foreign language is a highly complex process. In the 1990s, the researchers in the field of language acquisition have shown an increased interest in neuro-physiological and neuro-psychological research. Since the brain is the site of language acquisition, knowledge of how the brain works is crucial to a better understanding of the language learning process. This knowledge allows us as teachers to better synchronize our teaching practice with neurological findings and develop more effective teaching styles.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, we have advanced in our understanding of mental processes. New imaging techniques (e.g., PET—Positron Emision Tomography and MRI—Magnetic Resonance Imaging) now are able to provide new insights into the brain’s hemispheric functions.

The brain is split up into two parts that have different functions: the left hemisphere which is responsible for abstract, analytical, and logical thinking, and the right hemisphere with its emotional, creative, and figurative aspects of thinking. It was only in the nineteenth century that neuro-physiologists discovered the different functions of each of the brain’s hemispheres, largely based on clinical experience with brain-injured patients.

The left hemisphere was viewed as the dominant one since most language functions were assumed to be in that side of the brain. This view or, in fact, ‘myth’ of “cerebral dominance” had an impact on education throughout almost the entire twentieth century.
Education has traditionally thought of learning as an orderly type of cognitive left-brain activity. The left hemisphere of the brain tends to function in ways that are logical and linear. It goes step-by-step, in a straight line, emphasizing the parts, the details that make up the whole. It accepts only what is sure and clear ... It was associated with the masculine aspects of life. This is the only kind of functioning that is acceptable to our schools and colleges (Rogers 1983, 20; Dodson 2002).

Left-brain-oriented school subjects, such as Mathematics, were regarded as more important and notable than more artistic/creative right-brain subjects. The functions of the two brain sides were seen as rather separate from each other.

New research with “split-brain” patients in the 1960s and 1970s (e.g., Sperry et al., 1968-1973) provided clinical evidence that the right hemisphere was equally important for human cognition and even further that both sides interact and complement each other. The research suggested that education should take into account the bimodal nature of the human learning system or, as Danesi called it, the “concept of neurological bimodality” (Danesi 1988, 454). These new findings influenced our view of the learning process and new teaching styles and offered insights into performance variables of language learners.

During the 1980s the function of speech was still mostly associated with the left side, the one for pictures or figures more with the right side, i.e., “the left hemisphere is an analytic device and the right hemisphere a Gestalt device” (Hatch 1983, 218). In the last 15 years, neuro-scientists such as Linke (1996) began to view the brain as a much more complex body than as a clearly categorized dual-functioning apparatus.

Während bisher jedoch die Strategie der Hirnforschung darin bestand, einzelne Systeme auszugliedern, beispielsweise eben das visuelle System, das Gedächtnissystem oder das Sprachsystem, entdecken wir jetzt, das diese Systeme ihre hohe Potenz darin besitzen, dass sie interagieren. Wir haben also nicht ein einziges Perzeptum in
Computermodulen vor uns, das für einen spezifischen Wahrnehmungsbereich geschaffen ist, sondern die hohe Leistung des Menschen gegenüber bisherigen Computersystemen liegt darin, dass er Funktionen zwischen verschiedenen Modalitäten verschieben kann...So kann das Sprachzentrum bunte Variationen und Verteilungsmuster aufweisen (26-28).

The classic understanding that only the more dominant side of the brain could perform speech functions was proven wrong.

Baur (1990, 19) therefore presented a functional ‘asymmetrical’ concept (picture) of the brain which shows the specialized speech and language functions of the two brain hemispheres as well as points out the necessity for cooperation and interaction of both:

Table 1. Functional asymmetry of the brain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left Hemisphere</th>
<th>Right Hemisphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech/language</td>
<td>Speech/language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grammar</td>
<td>Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verbal concepts</td>
<td>Concrete notion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linguistic motor activity</td>
<td>Expression/intonation/voice recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of language</td>
<td>Communicative understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language production</td>
<td>Speech intention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of details</td>
<td>Singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gesture/mime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition of faces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forms/images/shape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overall situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetical tasks</td>
<td>Geometrical tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>Emotion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The chart makes clear that the left side of the brain without an integration of right side functions would produce a language, which could not be used for communication. Baur emphasizes that right-side brain skills such as “recognition of the person one is talking to, observation and assessment of his emotional reactions, an accurate sizing-up of the overall situation, etc.” are absolutely required for developing communicative competence in the foreign language. Left-brain oriented teaching approaches block the flow of communication, as can be seen in countries such as Japan, which prefer traditional left brain-oriented teaching. As Shimizu in his article subtitled *Working against the historical neglect of fluency in language learning in Japan* (Shimizu 1993) shows, it is possible for learners to overcome such barriers, e.g., through right-brain oriented drama methods.

Baur provides a further comparison of the brain hemisphere functions (1990, 24). As seen in Table 2, it also leads to the strong conclusion that if the goal in language teaching is to achieve communicative competence, the teaching method must especially stimulate learning functions from the right side of the brain.

Table 2. Integration of brain hemispheres for the development of communicative competence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Left Hemisphere</strong></th>
<th><strong>Right Hemisphere</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>linguistic competence</td>
<td>communicative competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>linguistic skills</td>
<td>nonverbal, interactive, contextual skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge of the grammatical system</strong></td>
<td>recognition of faces, perception of facial expression, response to changes in facial expression, production and perception of vocal characteristics, production and perception of linguistic gestures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So, how do we learn, especially a foreign language? What happens in our brain and how can we influence the functioning of the human brain? What does this all have to do with the theater arts?

Whereas in former times the brain was described as several individual units that were independent from each other, each of them performing different functions, it is the most recent belief that the brain is organized as a big network of around 100 billion nerve cells that are connected through approximately the same amount of synapses (Figure 1). No process in the brain functions independently but it is always connected within this network. “Man kann durch moderne bildgebende Verfahren auch nachweisen, dass nichts in unseren Köpfen geschieht, bei dem nicht immer viele verschiedene Hirnbereiche beteiligt sind” (Pöppel 1992, 3).

Figure 1. Nerve cell in the brain. (Thimm, in Der Spiegel, 2002 /27, 69)

Steinmetz (2001) uses the term “Emergenz” to describe the network of nerve cells:

Emergenz bedeutet, dass in einem lebendigen komplexen System durch das Aufeinander-einwirken der Elemente oder Bausteine des Systems neue Systemeigenschaften entstehen, die vorher nicht zu beobachten waren, die aber - sind sie einmal entstanden - als neue Bausteine des Systems in Erscheinung treten. Das lebendige Zusammenwirken der
Bausteine führt also zu neuen Bausteinen, auf immer komplexeren Ebenen, wobei vor allem das Prinzip der ‘Rückkopplung’ wirksam wird (33).

Every impression, every information or perception, in short, every stimulus that the human brain is exposed to changes that delicate network in our brain by strengthening, weakening, or differently combining certain neuron connections. Modern researchers, such as Menzel and Roth (1996) believe that individual smaller networks of nerve connections most likely do not represent individual units, such as words, but rather concepts and processes, which means that we most likely learn more often in “chunks” and through cohesion of words instead of separate words, parts of words, or morphemes (Götze 1999, 11).

Before information is learned, it is censured by a system in the brain that is composed of both functional and emotional components, not just left-brain processes, as psychologists asserted for centuries. New neuro-psychological research has shown (Maturana and Varela 1987; Pöppel 1992; Linke 1996) that due to the influence by emotions and affect, the brain does not function like a computer—as some neuro-computer scientists still like to believe (Steinmetz 2001). A computer stores all information; it does not also assess emotionally if something is important/necessary or unimportant/unnecessary and it does not throw out information according to this assessment. The computer does not have a ‘soul’ as Götze (1999, 5) dares to put it figuratively. If then an individual is confronted with a piece of information, situation, or any kind of stimulus, the assessment system of the brain (network of cells and the memory) decides automatically if the stimulus is new or known, important or unimportant, and relevant or irrelevant for only that individual and not for any other. The term important or relevant refers to what the individual has experienced as positive or negative in the past, and to what is innate (see also discussions on stimuli appraisal by Schumann 1999; Menzel and Roth 1996). The relevant and known information then activates the already existent nets, possibly initiates reactions or
actions, according to previous experiences and is then categorized and stored. Known but unimportant information (rituals, routine actions etc.) is erased or forgotten. Unknown and unimportant information (traffic noise, pieces of a dialogue etc.) is perceived but is, if at all, only stored in the short-term memory. Information that is assessed as unknown and relevant receives the highest level of conscience; it is registered and stored in the long-term memory so it can be re-activated, if needed. Here the element of ‘surprise’ is sufficient for the assessment system of the brain to label it as ‘interesting’ or meaningful.’

For Roth (1996, 235) this rational-emotional assessment process happens on three levels which influence each other and which are always interconnected:

- strikt genetische Determination (Anlage, Begabung)
- Determination durch die Umwelt (Sozialisation)
- epigenetische Determination (Selbstreferentialität)

The basis for the assessment system of the brain involves, as Roth describes above, experiences from the environment and innate skills. However, learning and storing information is not only determined by the evaluation of genetic or environmental factor—as always assumed—but in Menzel/Roth’s opinion (1996, 259), by the “Selbstreferentialität” or ‘self-organization’ of the brain as well. The biologists and cognition researchers Maturana and Varela also see the brain as a self-organized and spontaneous entity and not as a processor or computer that works under exact and strict rules and patterns, as other colleagues or “artificial intelligence” researchers have suggested (Maturana and Varela 1987).

Neuro-scientists speculate that the development of the brain already starts before the person is born. First, nerve connections already develop in the brain of the embryo. The “Lernfenster für Sprachen”, as Goetze (1999, 7) calls it, is assumed to already been established before birth. During early childhood, the network is built up and
intensified through “self-organization” (epigenetic determination). At age two, the brain of a child shows a network of more than one billion nerve connections. During the time of childhood and approximately puberty, nerve connections that have not or little been motivated or stimulated in different ways, disintegrate, or die. Others that have often been activated by new perceptions, experiences, or learning impulses are kept intact and strengthened. These neurological changes happen constantly—nothing stays unless it receives special attention.

Figure 2. Development of the synapses in the brain
(Thimm, in Der Spiegel, 2002 /27, 69)

Also each individual has a different neuron circuit or network; one could say, everyone is ‘wired’ differently. Therefore everyone reacts differently to impulses and stimuli from the outside, i.e., everyone has his/her own individual learning system. How long our brain is able to develop ‘new’ nerve connections is controversial. Many scientists assume that for most people the age of eighteen set the limit; afterwards learners have to rely on their already developed network (Thimm, 72). That's also the reason why information for which no network has already existed and which is acquired later in life is generally harder to store in the brain. Learning a new language, for example, which is different to any already earlier acquired language, is much harder later in life, because no nerve connections had been previously stored (e.g., a middle-aged Spanish speaker learning Russian). However, if the same individual
attempts to study the related language Italian, the brain can use the already existing network of neurons from the experience with Spanish to learn new words and rules in Italian. Usually this will be faster and easier for the individual Götze (1997, 8). Other scientists, however, suspect that the possibility of developing new nerve connections extends far beyond puberty if the new information approaches the brain with high motivation and is therefore assessed by the brain as being very important.

Since the way we receive and process information is individually different, it is safe to say (it is obvious) that we have many different kinds of learners which makes it impossible to assign them to one of the classical ‘learner type’ categories. “die Art und Weise, wie unser Gehirn arbeitet, ist ähnlich charakteristisch wie unser Fingerabdruck” (Schumann 1999; Kleinschroth 1996, 14).

So what we learn and how well we learn depends on our own individually wired network of the brain and the brain’s assessment system and on how much and in how many different ways the nerve cells are stimulated. After having received a piece of information or stimulus, it is important that the brain takes it out of the short-term memory and stores it in the long-term memory so that the information is accessible at any time. This means that material has to be so interesting and meaningful that our assessment system finds it worth storing for longer. “Nur wenn ein Sachverhalt für den Organismus in einem bestimmten Augenblick eine Bedeutung besitzt, hat es überhaupt eine Chance, auf die Ebene des Bewusstseins gehoben zu werden (Pöppel 1992, 3).

For example, if vocabulary is practiced always in the same way, such as visually learning it by heart, the brain will only be able to assess it mechanically, without any emotion, affect, or real meaning. It will have to be repeated several times which consequently takes much longer till it is possibly integrated, in most cases, only in the short-term memory (Vester 1976, 88; Maturana and Varela 1987). However, if the vocabulary is ‘used’ in different ways and connected to different associations (sound, taste, smell, body language, colors), images and feelings, or to different emotional circumstances, it is often unconsciously ‘promoted’ to the long-term memory. This is
called “multi-channel” learning”. The more familiar the association is with previously stored material and/or used means of learning or the more intense the feelings are, the stronger is the connection to the already existing synapses. “Wenn wir daher das geistige Arbeiten und die Lerninhalte mit Freude, Erfolgserlebnis, lustvoller Anregung, Vertrautheit, Neugier, Spass und Spiel verbinden, dann setzen wir also Lernhilfen ein, denen bekannte Reaktionen im Organismus zugrunde liegen” (Vester 1988, 57). Learning through different meaningful channels secures many interconnected “Suchpfade” (Eckert and Klemm 1998, 27) in the brain. The tighter the net, the easier and faster information can be recalled and the better we have acquired the language. In addition, “... je öfter ein Verzeichnis geöffnet, eine Information abgerufen wird, desto schneller und sicherer wird unserer Zugriff” (Eckert and Klemm 1998, 27; paraphrasing Kleinschroth 1996, 25ff; Vester 1976).

In a study by Kleinschroth (1996, 75) students learned best, i.e., remembered the most and forgot the least, when the mastering of new material was also accompanied by body movement (Eckert and Klemm 1998).

Figure 3. Behaltensquote (Krämer and Walter 1998, 29)
So, how should we teach so that the brain of our students works most efficiently? Is the Drama method an effective way to go?

In the following paragraphs, I shall list what are in my opinion the most important principles of brain-compatible FL teaching and I shall examine how far the drama method can help achieve each individual goal.

*Teaching should take into consideration the bimodal nature of the human brain when learning a foreign language.*

Having shown that affective components, located at the right side of the brain, have a considerable influence on learning, I agree with Asher (1982), who demands that “activities directed by the right hemisphere of the brain should form an integral component of the foreign language class” (as paraphrased by Schewe and Shaw 1993, 297). The drama method is a holistically-oriented teaching style that tries to link logical/rational thinking with intuitive/creative functions or, as Krumm (1995, 8) puts it, “bei dem die kognitiven Fähigkeiten linkshemisphärischer Prägung ebenso wie die gestalthaft-affektiven Fähigkeiten der rechten Hemisphäre aktiviert werden.” Drama-oriented exercises motivate the learner to show emotions, become aware of them and connect them to a language situation. They provide a language learning that uses all senses and evaluate the language material with 'mind, body, and soul.'

Theatrical techniques deal with the language material not in a linguistic, literal (left-brain sided) but in a more creative and affective (right-brain sided) way. Language is not ‘analyzed’ but ‘expressed’ in a Gestalt-way (figuratively). It stimulates language learners to "lead an exhibition into the wilderness of the right brain—a region where interrelationship is what matters” (Eckert and Klemm 1998; Wagner 1978, 149).
The use of metaphors, emotional expressions and the focus on intonation and voice is encouraged. The language is dealt with in a communicative, interactive, and contextualized way. Drama is in line with the bimodality of the brain, since it takes linguistic competence/skills with its rules and patterns (learned through the left-hemisphere) and puts it into meaningful, real contexts (right-hemisphere, see also Table 2.). This happens, for example, through the enactment and staging of the language and through the use of all kinds of visual aids, such as costumes, sounds, and other props. Drama exercises also incorporate another contextualization technique—problem-solving. The exercises provide situations (e.g., improvisations to practice ‘survival skills’ in German, simulations) in which the learner has to show insight based on feelings, intuition, and observation, and needs to act in a meaningful direct way (see Danesi 1988, 465). Asher (1982) describes maybe best how in theater arts the involvement of the right side of the brain is crucial to achieving a successful performance:

It is not enough for the actor to read lines from a script. There must be a performance in which the audience ‘believes’ in the character the actor is playing. A convincing portrayal comes from the content of the dialogue integrated with appropriate intonations, gestures, facial expressions, costumes, and body movements. Actors create a mood of believability in the audience, a relaxation of the critical thinking in the left hemisphere and heightened sensitivity of the right hemisphere. Actors construct a reality for the audience with talk, behavior, props, costumes, and music. The audience can then relax their normal skepticism and enjoy the assimilation of a new experience (Asher and Adamski 1982, 28-29; Kleinschroth 1996).

Foreign language learning can only profit from a teaching approach, such as the drama method, because it complements the often dominant left side of the brain and assures brain compatible learning.

2. *Teaching should address as many types of learners and learning as possible.*

*The multi-channel approach should use many senses and contexts.*
If in a German preschool the number “sechs” is “gesungen, geturnt, gereimt und gehätschelt” as described in an article about brain research and learning in the German magazine *Der Spiegel* (see Thimm 2002 /27, 73), the concept for numbers will easily be stored in the long-term memory of most of the kids. It is sad but obvious, that FL learning at the university level cannot necessarily happen in such a multi-faceted way. However, when students study verbs and use them, for example, in a self-written poem, read them in a “Reader’s Theater” exercise, hear them spoken on a video with authentic speakers, use them creatively in a role play, act them out as a pantomime, and/or “experience” them in a theater play, they might not learn through all but at least through several channels. Each of the differently wired learners has a greater chance of finding a way to store the new information in his brain. Drama-oriented teaching has those options and offers many ideas for multi-channel learning (see Chapter IV).

3. *Teaching must foster communication and interaction*

Since the objective of modern FL teaching is to build up communication skills, it is necessary to often activate functions from the right brain hemisphere (see Table 2). From the outset, the language learning process should include as many components of natural communication and language acquisition as possible, e.g., eye contact between the learners, speech accompanied by body movement, and emotional involvement, so that the new material can be ‘anchored’ in the brain (see Baur 1990, 25; Wagner 1978).

Drama and theater are very beneficial for the development of communication skills and communicative competence. They create learning situations that promote natural interaction, although they are in ‘fictitious’ contexts. The aforementioned components of natural interaction are all engaged in a drama-oriented approach.
4. Teaching should be active and foster independent, hands-on, and student-centered learning.

Learners gain knowledge much faster, for a much longer time, and with more motivation if they try out learning material on their own and actively use their body (see Table 3). Using the activity-oriented and student-centered drama method, the learners receive the chance to ‘experience’ and ‘experiment’ with ‘spoken language’ and ‘body language’ and the immediate fusion of both; there is attempt at 'Sprachhandeln.' The expression: “Selbstspiel ist Probehandeln” (Mairose-Parovsky 2000, 62) characterizes it nicely. Improvising or acting in a role-play gives students a chance to discover things about the foreign language and culture (e.g., pronunciation, intonation, new vocabulary, typical habits) and their own way of communicating with other people. Other drama exercises, such as video projects, skits, or a play production motivate learners to work actively and independently in a team, share ideas and experiment. They foster intensive social and individual learning. For the staging of a theater play, for example, students learn by ‘doing’ and become self-motivated (which stimulates positive assessment by the brain). Such performances (or puppet shows, readers theater, or simple skits) offer effective opportunities to actively apply the acquired knowledge in different contextualized situations, which evoke fresh perceptions and emotions and activate the nerve connections once again. “Wer also neue Wörter bei Liebesgeflüster oder anderen aufgeladenen Situationen nutzt, der befördert sie dabei, ohne sich dessen bewusst zu werden, ins Langzeitgedächtnis” (Thimm 2002/27, 73).

Since the drama method fosters student-centered learning, the activity of the teacher using drama is greatly reduced; he/she functions as an initiator, organizer, communication partner, and only at the beginning of the FL learning process as an information specialist.
5. *Teaching should relate and build upon previously stored (inherited or learned) information or stimulate the brain with the ‘Überraschungseffekt.’*

Drama connects to the learner’s background, interests, and talents. It does not treat learners like “cognitive learning machines” (Danesi 1988, 466) but it inspires the whole personality to experience and grow (see Chapter III, 6.3). It is sensitive to the student’s own affective make-up which is important for language acquisition to occur. The exercises connect to personal experiences and information and inspire learners to incorporate them in their verbal and nonverbal actions in class. Zitzlsperger stated that each lesson can utilize the idea that “Sinneserlebnisse erinnerbar und verbal oder über das Handeln reproduzierbar sind” (Zitzlsperger 1989/1991, 29; Asher and Adamski 1982).

Drama and other alternative methods also use the “element of surprise.” The exercises are innovative and some are most likely different to anything a learner has ever experienced in a FL or general university class. They break up the daily learning routine of a university student and ask the learner to work with the learning material in a new, non-traditional and more active way. This way the new language material has a chance of being evaluated by the brain as “unknown but important and interesting” and to become an affectively coded experience (maybe with the motivation for more), which is easily registered and stored in the brain. One of my students explained it best when he said at the end of the semester: “Your class was cool. It was definitely different but really interesting. I’ll never forget it.” However, I suggest to use drama carefully and sensitively and not necessarily over the entire lesson (unless it is a rehearsal for a play), since the exercises that are innovative and possibly perceived as ‘strange’ for some learners, can also create an uncomfortable or even boring atmosphere. On the other hand, the exercises are very effective against too much familiarity and repetition of left-brain activities.
6. *Teaching should make language learning a pleasant and comfortable experience and create a nonthreatening, safe, and warm classroom atmosphere.*

Drama and theater exercises are play-oriented activities. They allow students to “play” in the language/body language and with the language/body language. Since they present learning material in a creative, nonthreatening and playful way, students experience a more joyful and relaxed language learning. Exercises are embedded into fun, meaningful and often goal-oriented situations that distract from the potential difficulty and pressure of learning the language. Material is presented through a variety of communicative and creative-intuitive exercises and learning channels that help to prevent boredom and repetition. The exercises often foster active, self-reliant, and innovative learning with more room for individuality and personality of the learner, which make them more satisfying and meaningful.

One of the main benefits/goals of drama exercises is that they create a class atmosphere with a low *affective filter*, a learning environment that is sensitive to the individual personality of the learners, that helps to reduce anxieties and inhibitions connected with the language learning process, and fosters nonthreatening interaction among the students. Such a learning environment creates joyful and motivated FL learners and helps to store the new learning material faster in the long-term memory.

7. *Teaching should, as much as possible, be flexible and not limited by a closed, tight, text book-dependent curriculum with an already-programmed language learning process and progression.*

As brain research has shown, language learning is not a linear process (see Steinmetz 2001, 37; Baur 1990). Therefore, it is very important that teachers try to move away from a dogmatic application of methods (as often proclaimed by textbooks) and use varied techniques, sources, and exercises to accommodate as many types of learners as
possible. A flexible, open teaching approach corresponds much more to the learning processes of the human brain.

The drama and theater approach presents one of those tools, since it offers a creative variety of open, multi-channeled exercises. It offers an innovative way to approach the learning material, and aims to leave more room for individual development and progression of the learning process. The drama approach can take textbook material and apply it through more than one ‘channel’; the outcome is often unpredictable and exciting (see e.g., improvisations, Chapter IV, 1.1.2.2).

In conclusion, results from neuro-psychological research are significant for the understanding of foreign language learning and teaching. Neuro-psychological research should be taken as the basis for any innovations in curriculum development. Since every learning process is accompanied by a change in the brain, it is of utmost importance that teachers become familiar with brain functions and understand when and why changes occur. Unfortunately, many traditional cognitive-oriented educators still believe that students learn best through repetition (‘Vokabelnpauken!’) and other left-brain techniques. Intuitively they most likely know, however, that students acquire knowledge in many different ways, but they have a difficult time accepting new scientific findings as relevant proof to change their teaching methods. Most teacher training programs in the US or Germany do not incorporate enough about multi-channel and holistic learning techniques in their classes; the education is still too theoretical, as just recently criticized in reaction to the Pisa Survey (2002) and in a survey of the German Economy Institute (Berliner Morgenpost 2003). Although there cannot be one best method for teaching a foreign language, one can say with certainty that the ones that resonate with the learner’s neural system will most likely be more effective.
As seen above, drama-oriented teaching, which is a holistic or affectively coded technique, satisfies all of the above listed criteria for brain-compatible FL learning. It is mainly the sensitivity to the ‘affective’ right brain-sided components of learning, but also the insight that students learn best the more ways the information is presented to them, which qualifies this approach to correspond to brain processes.

It is not suggested here to use the drama and theater method exclusively in FL teaching. If the teacher’s mind-set for teaching, however, becomes more holistically oriented, he/she will be able to teach more brain-compatibly and therefore more successfully. Using just a few drama exercises in class will make the teacher realize that this approach can create more successful learners, which also will likely result in more satisfied and motivated instructors.

5. Parallels between the Theater Arts and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

Figure 4. The many faces of a teacher.

(Drawn by one of my German language students at Grossmont College, CA)
The main hypothesis of this dissertation is the notion that theater arts can be very useful in the field of FL teaching and learning. One important reason for this assumption is the close relationship between both fields. Many concepts that are applied in FL teaching are also important in the field of theater. At first glance, this relationship is not particularly apparent, but the more closely one looks at both domains, the more parallels one finds.

As language teachers, how often have we felt like clowns, motivational speakers, sales people, singers, or dancers—like an actor in different roles performing as a ‘one man show’ or in a scene with students? How often have we used our entire body and every muscle in our face in order to get a point across without slipping into the native language of our students?

Our students act, too! They assume roles in simulated situations (Als Ob-Situationen) that take place in the foreign country so that they can ‘get a feel’ for the scene and experiment with certain modes of speech. Our students become waiters, party guests, food vendors, policemen, parents, etc., and try to ‘act’ like them, not as professional actors, but with the intention of supporting their speech in the foreign language. Students memorize, improvise, watch, listen, move, and rehearse—just like actors do! So in both foreign language classes and drama classes, teachers and students alike ‘put on an act’ and pretend that their conversations are ‘natural’ or ‘real.’ In the following section, I will take a closer look at the main similarities between the two fields. It will become apparent that the theater arts have much to offer to the FL teacher.

The main tool common to both domains is the element of 'language,' which is necessary for effective communication. Therefore, the actor on stage as well as the FL learner must pay close attention to how they say things, so that the content of their speech will be understood. They need to understand and learn to draw on the many,
often subtle, aspects of communication. Smith (1984, 2) formulates three things that make people successful communicators:

1. they have to be able to decide what they want to communicate, i.e., what is appropriate for the given situation?
2. they must then decide how to communicate that message;
3. they must have the flexibility to implement their decisions, or in other words, they must be able to perform with competence. This is perhaps the most difficult task of all.

Actors as well as FL learners need to learn these things in order to communicate meaningfully through language.

On stage or in the FL classroom, both learners have to strive for the best possible pronunciation and intonation and the appropriate use of gestures, facial expressions, and emotions in different speech contexts. They have to learn to overcome common obstacles in communication, such as “their own inhibitions and co-founding habits, and the ability to control their bodies, voices and minds” (Smith, 2). They can utilize some of the same strategies to deal with those obstacles. In the classroom, the foreign language and the drama exercises in themselves offer a kind of safe haven, helping students to break down some of the communication barriers so that they can more readily engage in situations that might otherwise be strange or embarrassing.

These similarities are better understood when one realizes that even actors must constantly learn a different, new language. The language used on the stage is not their own. In addition, different characters do not speak the same language, meaning the same ‘English.’ Actors have to study a whole range of language variations (e.g., accents and dialects), i.e., Shakespearean, Texan, Mexican, African-American, or Italian-English, the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of each dialect, as well as the personal speech patterns of their characters. They almost have to study a ‘new
language’ for each new character they play. The vocabulary that an African-American in Alabama uses, for example, might be different from that of a Caucasian living in New York. Hours of pronunciation and intonation practice are needed to learn the new language. Thus, both FL students and actors are “students of language” (Smith 1984, 44).

But language learning involves more than just linguistic competence. In order to communicate successfully on stage or in the classroom/foreign environment, FL students as well as actors also have to study the cultural and personal differences between people, e.g., body language, how a character greets others and makes small talk, how and what he/she eats, what he/she wears, etc. Students of both disciplines have to become sensitive to how different people interact in a different context, environment, and culture, and how they can change their language and behavior accordingly. Using this knowledge, FL learners—like actors—can actually ‘portray’ the characters and not just recite memorized lines. They do this by ‘slipping into their character’s skin,’ i.e., taking on the role they are playing mentally, physically and emotionally. In most cases, the characters will initially seem new and strange to the actors. In a drama class, imaginative worlds and fictional contexts are created, in which actors can practice and experience themselves. The same thing happens in a FL class. The teacher creates fictional scenes, ‘as if’-situations, that take place in the foreign country so that students can assume roles in those situations. This enables them to practice their language skills, experience the fictional ‘reality’ of the cultural situation, and overcome the affective filter that tends to be especially high at the beginning of the class due to the novelty of the language and the situational context. Schlunk (1978, 52) said it best when he wrote:

“Theater is the liveliest form of spoken language. It provides abbreviated examples of human situations, and the rituality of theatrical production is persuasively real in a way that classroom teaching can never be.”
In a drama/theater rehearsal, actors have to practice a process of “aussteigen—
einsteigen—aussteigen” (Tselikas 1999, 16); in other words, they leave behind their
everyday reality and jump into the ‘theatrical reality’, once again assuming their usual
role in the real world once the rehearsal is over. Students who learn a foreign language
and culture go through a similar process. In class, they leave their familiar world and
dive into the ‘strange’ world of the foreign language, which in most cases, they step
out of when class is over. FL learners, just like actors, assume for a time a new role,
which is often quite different from the role that they play in their own everyday reality.
Sometimes, the ‘new’ world can touch a student more intimately, becoming more real
than certain experiences in ‘everyday’ life, because the fictional situation creates room
for possibilities that have been suppressed in the student’s everyday world
(Tselikas, 16). Fictional worlds can create situations that feel ‘safe’! They can
motivate both drama/theater and FL students to actively practice communication, work
on language barriers, and experience the new self as part of their own being, without
having to risk negative consequences. Therefore, the theatrical approach of
‘pretending’ is also of great value to FL students.

Using spoken language and body language is very personal. It means showing
emotions and expressing a part of yourself. It is even more difficult to express this
very personal side of oneself in a new language in which one’s speaking skills are
limited.

In order for FL learners in a class—or actors in an ensemble—to learn to apply language
meaningfully, spontaneously, and freely, the atmosphere in which the learning takes
place needs to be relaxed, nonthreatening and comfortable; the affective filter needs to
be low. The learners should be able to let go of their inhibitions and fears, and feel safe
to express themselves. They should also be open to different ideas and to having their
mistakes corrected. In a theater/drama rehearsal as well as in a FL class, students
should be willing to “take chances, be wrong, look silly, then try again” (Smith 1984, 6). Students have to work on breaking down their inner defenses. For acting students, this means allowing their emotions to flow freely so that they can become empathic, as this is important for understanding the characters they play. For FL students, it means moving past the fear of bruising their ego and self-esteem by making mistakes, acting out ‘silly’ roles (see Smith, 5), as well as becoming ‘empathic’ with respect to the cross-cultural experience. These goals can be achieved in theater/drama or FL learning only when the affective filter is low. Teachers in both fields can apply many of the same techniques and concepts to overcome some of these common communication barriers.

Like their students, communicative language teachers and drama teachers/play directors also have much in common. They both work in a learning environment that fosters active involvement, emphasizes group work, and should be student-centered rather than teacher-centered. Consequently, in FL teaching as well as in drama, the instructor plays a less dominant role than in certain other fields. This permits, and even forces, the students to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers in both fields deal with people, and must therefore work with some of the more sensitive aspects of the human psyche. In my opinion, both FL teachers and drama teachers serve as ‘actors’, ‘directors,’ and ‘psychologists/ facilitators’ in their respective learning environments.

Successful FL teachers have to do some acting in class, although they don’t have to excel at it. Acting out a corny scene at a party, pretending to sell train tickets, or pantomiming the new vocabulary for kitchen appliances can help to get the attention of the students. Exercises like these will motivate the students, get their ‘laughing muscles’ working, and teach them the concepts of the foreign language.
FL teachers also take on a role similar to ‘theater directors.’ They have the task of setting the stage, that is, the language learning environment. It is their job to create an organizational/methodological framework for communication, to provide the impetus for communication, and to help and encourage students to attain their goals of becoming independent and competent communicators in the ‘new’ language. The teacher’s most important task, in my opinion, is to be a good psychologist/facilitator/counselor, as well as a good communicator. In working with actors or FL students, it is up to the teacher to reduce or eliminate the pressures; namely, students’ fears and inhibitions, so that they can enjoy the new language and culture, and feel encouraged to experiment with it in front of their peers.

For a theater/drama teacher who directs a play or just teaches acting, it is crucial to create a ‘close ensemble’ in which students and teachers respect and trust each other, and in which they don’t feel threatened when emotions are shown. The director must work with the students on creating a class atmosphere that allows for mistakes—since this is what rehearsals are for—without the feeling of being pressured or ridiculed. Smith writes about the director’s tasks: “Actors’ self-esteem must be preserved in order to facilitate continued honesty, openness and flexibility in rehearsal” (Smith, 6). The Russian Director, Konstantin Stanilavski, believed in the importance of relaxation for all actors. “Because of the artificial atmosphere of the stage, in front of a mass of people an actor’s senses are often prone to paralysis” (Moore 1960, cited in Via 1987, 111). As discussed earlier, a positive atmosphere is also very beneficial for students in a FL class. Thus, the FL teacher, like the theater/drama teacher, has the challenging task of creating an environment where students and teachers trust one another, and where constructive criticism from peers or the teacher will not shatter the students’ self-esteem. The FL teacher must therefore be willing to take the time, especially at the beginning of the learning process, to mold the class into a good working ensemble. A theater play cannot be great without a ‘tight ensemble’ and a strong director. The same is true for a language class; it will not produce enthusiastic, independent and
communicatively competent learners without rapport among the students and with the teacher, a supportive class atmosphere, and an enthusiastic and trustworthy teacher who is not afraid to form a ‘relationship’ with the class. This clearly illustrates how similar the two kinds of learning environments should be, and how many tasks and goals are shared by both FL and drama teachers. Surely then, it can be useful for FL teachers to apply certain theater methods and techniques in their classrooms.

Games are one such technique. A lighthearted atmosphere, which is characteristic of theater rehearsals or drama courses, is equally valuable for the FL class. It helps to overcome the affective filter and allows the students to become more playful, spontaneous, and responsive in the new language. Tselikas (1999, 17) writes: “Die spielerische Atmosphäre kann die Identifikation mit dem fremden Milieu fördern und mimetische, sprachliche und gestische Aktivitäten in Gang setzen.” It helps participants to ‘step into the role’—for actors, their role in a play; in the case of FL learners, their role as a FL speaker!

Wessels (1991) differentiates between “structure games” that reinforce particular areas of grammar, and “drama games.” In drama games, more emphasis is put on production rather than on reception. The learners are actively involved, and are encouraged to use their imagination and express emotion. In contrast to “structure games,” drama games encourage both learning and acquisition, as they practice more than just the core vocabulary and generate discussions among the students. Most importantly, drama games foster in students a need to speak and to express themselves with their whole body and soul, and are therefore considered equally valuable in FL teaching—a view which is propounded in this dissertation as well as in other literature sources (see e.g., Smith 1984; Wessels 1991; Tselikas 1999; Via 1976; Hawkins 1991).

Games are often used in drama rehearsals to introduce peers to each other, to get acquainted, to warm up at the beginning of class, to relax, and help start building the
trust and cooperation that are needed to form a tight ensemble. These “ice-breakers” have the same effect on students in a FL class. They can be played in the other language or with no language at all. (For examples of ice-breaker exercises, see Chapter IV, 1.2.1 of this dissertation.) Teachers can also draw on drama games to supplement the course book, make the characters in course book dialogues become ‘alive’ and ‘real,’ or review and practice material that had been previously taught. Finally, drama games can be used at any point in the class to help students unwind and relax, or to liven up the lesson by having them participate physically.

Other drama exercises include role-plays (with dramatic elements), improvisations, simulations, dramatic play reading, creative dialogue, play/scene writing, and play production, which are described in more detail in Chapter IV of this dissertation. Even theatrical techniques like vocal warm-ups, such as chanting, choral reading, singing, and tongue twisters can help FL students to improve their pronunciation and intonation. Concepts such as observation or monitoring (with senses), character development, method acting, and sequencing can also help to prepare for a role. Theatrical exercises fulfill the students’ needs to experience and experiment, aspects which are important for any type of learning, but which are indispensable when it comes to mastering a foreign language.

The above discussion has shown that actors and FL learners, like drama teacher/play directors and FL educators, share many common goals and principles (concepts). These include the use and importance of (new) ‘language’ as a tool for communication; the creation of fictional worlds and the portrayal of different roles that function in these worlds; the need for a cooperative, nonthreatening learning environment; similar goals and tasks; the teacher’s role in the learning process; as well as techniques which apply to both fields. Smith summarizes in a list the communicative elements that are taught in a drama rehearsal, most of which would also be on the wish list of any FL teacher:
In the drama rehearsal, we have a language class that teaches: grammar; language functions; culture; pronunciation and intonation; language “coping” strategies; like circumlocution and paraphrasing; role playing and underlying meaning, that is, how to analyze individuals and situations using available linguistic and extra-linguistic data; appreciation of nonverbal communication; interpretation of subtext, that is, reading between the lines; using the script as literature and analyzing it as a chunk of discourse; observation skills; communication, i.e., self-expression; empathy; exploitation of the memory, including kinesthetic memory, tonal memory, and sense memory; sensitivity to speech dynamics like tempo and rhythm; self-confidence in using the second language; lexical, physical, and emotional vocabulary (Smith 1984, 5).

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated the close relationship between the two fields. Consequently, the FL teaching profession should consider various concepts and techniques that are involved in the drama and theater process and make them available and applicable for FL learning.

6. Impact of the Drama and Theater Method on Dimensions of Foreign Language Learning

*Learning on a cognitive, emotional and physical level*

In this chapter, I will analyze cognitive, emotional, and physical aspects of learning that are affected by using the drama and theater in FL classes. These aspects allow us to integrate speaking, thinking, and acting with psychological processes to create language and communication.
The following discussion will show that the use of theater and drama not only gives rise to genuine, realistic conversation, but also provides an excellent setting for the acquisition and application of a foreign language, as well as an environment for social learning and promotion of the German language and culture in the US.

6.1 Communicative and Linguistic Aspects

“English [or German] is not just words, structures and idioms; it is a lively dramatic and versatile means of communication.”

(Case and Wilson 1979, 3)

Drama and theater can provide unique possibilities for practice and expansion of the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking/communication, and listening), especially speaking/communication. Still, writing skills can also be improved when students, for example, are asked to write their own theater scenes, role-plays or a short play, do journal entries about their experience rehearsing for and performing a play, or note down lists of needed supplies, props for a play or scene. Reading skills are practiced when students read instructions for drama-oriented exercises, a theater script, the original book of classic literature, or other theatrical dialogues, as well as background literature that is needed to understand and analyze the text. Such reading is much more intense than reading a text book dialogue, because it has to be analytical/interpretational ‘content’ reading before or after the experience of performance (see Chapter IV, 2).

In general, drama and theater create an experimental context for the four skills in the foreign language. In the following, I will concentrate on the acquisition of communicative skills and the phonetic areas of speaking skills since both, in my opinion, benefit the most from drama-oriented teaching.
6.1.1 Communicative Aspects Pertaining to the Drama and Theater Method

In the context of FL learning and teaching, the communicative approach and the drama method have a reciprocal effect on one another. It has been suggested that FL teaching must be communicative if drama methods are to be implemented effectively. On the other hand, a communicative classroom needs drama exercises, as they have considerable impact on the development of communication skills and communicative competence.

In the following, I will describe briefly the main characteristics of communicative language learning and teaching, and show how drama can enhance communicative FL skills.

Why is communication between people important? Because people need to communicate! In his communication theory, Ulrich Steinmüller (1977) outlined the following reasons as to why communication is necessary (excerpt from Hwang 1999, 128-130):

*Kommunikation als Grundvoraussetzung für das Überleben gesellschaftlicher Individuen*

Ohne erfolgreiche Kommunikation, d.h. ohne eine gelungene Verständigung zwischen Individuen ist ein gemeinsames, koordiniertes Handeln nicht möglich. Ohne die Organisation der Individuen in gesellschaftlichen Systemen ist aber das Überleben der Einzelnen, die Erhaltung und Reproduktion seines und des Lebens seiner Nachkommen nicht gewährleistet.

2. *Kommunikation als Basis der Herausbildung eines Bewusstseins und zwischenmenschlicher Beziehungen*

Durch ihre Funktion als Medium des Austauschs von Informationen über Planung, Ablauf und Ziel der Produktion ermöglicht sie den Prozess der Verständigung über die Notwendigkeit des Kooperierens bei der gemeinsamen Sicherstellung der Bedingungen zur Sicherung des Lebens…
Jeder Austausch von Gedanken, jedes Erzielen von Verständigung und Verständnis basiert auf der Fähigkeit der Menschen, miteinander kommunizieren zu können.

3. Kommunikation als Basis für das Zusammenleben der Menschen

Kommunikation ist erforderlich, um die soziale Unsicherheit, die aus der Unvorhersagbarkeit des Verhaltens fremder Individuen entsteht, zusammen mit ihren Folgeerscheinungen, wie Unruhe, Furcht und daraus resultierenden Aggressionen auf ein Minimum zu reduzieren.

Communication is therefore both an indispensable requirement not only for life in the human community, but also for the development of people’s awareness of themselves as individuals. Language is the most important means of communication, but not the only one. Nonverbal communication is also very important, especially when it comes to understanding a foreign language and culture (see Chapter III, 6.2). In FL learning, the need to acquire speaking skills is, of course, of primary importance. In order to obtain communication skills, the learner should understand the processes involved in speech. Speaking is a basic activity used in everyday life to solve a wide variety of communicational objectives. Usually, the speaker has a particular intent or purpose in mind. He or she may, for example, be trying to obtain or provide information, elicit a certain kind of behavior, get some kind of verbal response, stimulate certain emotions, or express his or her own feelings and impressions. The speaker may also want to establish certain interpersonal relationships, or work at keeping them. Michael Halliday (1985, paraphrased by Schewe and Shaw 1993, 288) divides basic language functions into seven categories:

- The instrumental function: using language to get things;
- The regulatory function: using language to control the behavior of others;
- The interactional function: using language to create interaction with others;
- The personal function: using language to express personal feelings;
- The heuristic function: using language to learn and discover;
The imaginative function: using language to create a world of imagination;
The representational function: using language to communicate.

I agree with Schewe (1993) that all of these functions are addressed to some extent in the drama and theater method, but that the interactional, the personal, the heuristic, and the imaginative functions are given a particular focus.

The content of a speech act is determined by the speaker’s purpose and the social setting. The latter comprises the person being spoken to, the situation, the social climate, the place, and the time (Neuner, Krüger, and Grewer 1981). The speaker relates the message by utilizing various communicative processes, such as asking, reporting, describing, etc., in addition to expressions of speech, such as “in my opinion,” “I assume that,” or “I’m not sure whether...” etc. An important aspect of communicative language learning, therefore, is that students have an awareness and understanding of the aforementioned speech act components that enables them to speak appropriately in different situations, i.e. to acquire communicative competence (see Chapter III, 3.2.3 and 6.1.1). Communicative language instruction therefore aims to help students not merely to reproduce the language mechanically, but to “develop communicative abilities in the target language which enable them to use very different styles in very different social settings with very different people” (Steinig, cited in Wierlacher 1975, 128) and thus achieve communicative competence. The drama and theater method regards pragmatic components of speech as very important, because it is absolutely necessary for the learner/actor to grasp the ‘what, where, when, why and how’ of speech in order to speak and act in a realistic, meaningful, and believable way. This is equally true when conducting dramatic exercises, or when staging a play. How often do we as teachers ‘throw in’ a little role-play without giving much detailed information about the context and manner in which this role-play should take place? Instructions like: “Sie sind in einem Hotel. Sie stehen an der Rezeption und brauchen ein Doppelzimmer. Spielen sie einen kleinen Dialog zwischen dem Gast und dem
Empfangschef, ” are probably familiar to all of us. What we often get from the students is stiff looking and unnatural-sounding conversations in which they parrot dialogue from rote memory. Using drama or theater forces us to discuss the 'wh-questions' of speech with our students and therefore help them enter into a more ‘real’ and meaningful communication in the target language. Directions for creating a scene (not an improvisation!) should look more like this:

You are on your honeymoon touring the Romantic Road in Germany in the wintertime. You are trying to find the perfect hotel room, one that provides a lot of luxury and comfort. You are now standing at the reception of a historic hotel to find out if the hotel has any rooms available, and which room would suit you best. You ask the receptionist many questions. Because you are traveling during the Christmas season, the hotel is busy and there many more people standing in line behind you. The receptionist has five more minutes until their shift ends and she has little patience.

Clearly, students can create a more realistic scene with all this information. They have to use a variety of emotions and practice problem-solving in order to achieve their goal of getting a perfect hotel room.

Another important component that contributes to achieving communicative competence and the understanding of a foreign language and culture is the use of nonverbal communication, i.e. gestures, facial expressions, intonation, and emotions. Leontiev (1971) believes that a good grasp of nonverbal behavior is required to fully master the foreign language. Beginning FL students often forget this important component, because they concentrate so much on their linguistic performance. Drama and theater provides language learners with a greater range of nonverbal language, and enables them to practice using it. Relating the language of a particular character with nonverbal behavior can also improve cultural awareness.
Another key aspect for acquiring communicative competence is interaction. If there is a need for interaction, communication will follow. If a student in a language class has something to share with another student or the teacher, it will be his or her goal to communicate a message to that person. If real interaction is to take place, the listener has to be interested—in other words, has to pay attention to the communication and feel the desire to communicate a personal message back. Interaction also involves understanding other people’s ideas and not just one’s own. It is an interplay of listening and responding, and this interaction is, as Rivers (1987, 4) points out “always understood in a context, physical and experimental, with nonverbal clues adding aspects of meaning beyond the verbal.” It is therefore important that language teachers who wish to foster communication skills create “lively attention” (Rivers, 4) and active involvement among the students. In order to achieve natural and desirable communication, activities should stimulate students’ interest and attention more deeply and for a longer time than a short textbook exercise in class can do. Only then will students learn to speak without constant attention to grammar rules—that is, fluently and naturally. The use of drama or theater exercises (in class, in a stage play, or in rehearsals) will generate a high degree of interaction between learners (and between learners and teacher). Rehearsals in particular create a real need for intensive and longer-lasting interaction, as students tend to be highly motivated to work together when it comes to learning their lines, creating the scenery and costumes, putting on make-up, etc. in order to achieve their goal of giving a good performance.

Students will feel the interest and desire to interact and communicate only if the affective filter in class is low. In other words, teachers need to minimize anxiety about speaking with and in front of the other students or the teacher, and to reduce the fear of failing in class, and make students feel comfortable and safe in the classroom community. As I will discuss in Chapter III, 6.3.2, such a group atmosphere is just as important for a group of actors rehearsing a play as it is for a group of language students trying to interact and communicate in a foreign language.
In my opinion, teachers who are willing to work towards a nonthreatening classroom atmosphere (e.g., by engaging students’ imagination and actively involving them in interactive exercises such as drama and theater) will be able to offer dynamic and exciting language classes that truly foster communicative language learning.

In addition, communicative language teaching that is supported by drama and theater is responsive to learners’ needs and preferences, as well as to their culture-specific attributes. In the context of this dissertation, it is important to ask what is appropriate for a university student living in the US (see Chapter II). It is crucial to always remember the difference between ‘foreign-language learning’ and ‘second-language learning,’ as the goals and topics of the teaching approach will most likely be different. University students taking a German class in the US are foreign-language learners. They live in a place where the language is rarely heard, except in recorded form (on cassettes, videos, TV, etc.) or through occasional German visitors/friends. Since foreign-language learners are not surrounded by people that speak the language in order to satisfy their everyday needs (using it with family, in shops, in school, etc.), the extent to which they are able to acquire communicative language skills depends on what language learning material the teacher offers and what style/technique the teacher uses. As is reflected in Krashen’s theory, foreign language acquisition occurs almost subconsciously in contextualized situations that are as ‘authentic’ as possible, resembling real-life encounters in the target country. It is therefore the teacher's task to set up such ‘as if’-situations. Despite their artificiality, they offer students a learning ground to practice their speaking skills and overcome their fears and inhibitions so that they can communicate in the foreign language and master real-life situations. If the teacher does not deny the artificiality of the communication in the class, simulating certain aspects of real communication can be very helpful for developing communicative competence. The language class can even be a kind of ‘protective zone’ or a training field for the students, where certain elements of speech can be practiced to avoid potentially embarrassing/difficult situations in Germany. Simulated
role-playing can prevent learners from becoming tongue-tied, and make them more self-confident when meeting Germans or visiting a German-speaking country. Thus, communication in the form of simulated speech situations in the classroom is very effective, and the principle of creating a context for spoken interaction in the FL classroom is important for FL language teaching. McLaughlin confirms: “By dealing with related units of information rather than isolated bits, more efficient processing becomes possible” (McLaughlin, cited in Omaggio Hadley 1993, 152).

Drama and theater are such conceptualized ‘as if’-situations. Within this ‘real’ situational context of drama and theater, the student can experiment and learn to speak and act communicatively. Where else can he/she find a more authentic atmosphere to argue, refuse, persuade, explain, or make inquiries than in the theater? The student can also apply the acquired grammar skills to scenes that are usable in real life; something they cannot easily do in fill-in-the-blank exercises or other question/answer exercises.

Scenes that are theater/drama-based can be used from beginning to advanced proficiency levels. At an intermediate level, a drama exercise could present a situation such as this:

You and your friend order food in a restaurant. When you start to eat, you notice that the potatoes are overly salty and inedible, which makes you angry. Deal with the situation!

In this situation, which should be spoken and acted out, students/actors have to use small talk phrases for ordering food as they are used in real situations in Germany, and in addition, express an emotion—anger! Students have to use meaningful language while applying a human emotion and solving a problem. If students are to practice authentic scenarios, it is necessary to use a drama technique, such as ‘Störfaktoren’ (in this case ‘overly salted potatoes’), and deal with a resulting emotion (feeling angry).
Such techniques are commonly used in acting classes, and are equally helpful for exercises in a FL class.

As seen from the above remarks, communicative language learning happens in student-centered rather than teacher-centered activities. The teacher should promote learner autonomy, enabling and encouraging students to become their own managers. His/her main task is to motivate, provide incentive, and promote the process of communication, not to drill students with questions and answers. In the drama/theater-based classroom as well, the teacher does not mainly teach, but he/she also facilitates learning and fosters communication and interaction among learners. The role of the teacher is therefore quite similar in both disciplines.

In summary, it can be said that in order for students to learn communicative skills in the foreign language, the teacher has to provide students with numerous opportunities to communicate in contexts and situations that are not only authentic, but also interesting, meaningful, and useful to them. A teacher who incorporates drama and theater in his/her lesson creates such situational contexts in which learners speak and act communicatively. Drama and theater also provide language learners with a perfect environment in which they can speak with an intention.

Drama-based FL learning is communicative FL learning for reasons summarized below:

- in both methods, the teacher strives to create interaction between students (and between students and teacher) so that communication is possible;
- the activities for both are mainly student-centered;
- in both methods, learning is action-oriented; active involvement of students is a key element;
- a low affective filter is regarded as the prerequisite for the success of both;
both utilize contextual and textual exercises to put greater emphasis on conveying meaning through independent speaking and nonverbal language, and less on practicing linguistic elements.

Drama-based FL teaching uses familiar communicative forms of exercises like short dialogues, interaction games, role-plays, and simulations. However, it often gives these exercises a more open structure. I agree with other advocates of the drama and theater method (Schewe, Smith, Bolton, et al.) that communicative exercises should consist not only of the "Einbettung sprachlicher Äußerungen in Verständigungsanlässe mit Kommunikationspartnern" (Schewe 1993, 204; Rivers 1987), but should also incorporate other teaching forms and teaching materials which create 'real'communication:


I also feel strongly about the importance of freely encouraging creativity and imagination in communicative language learning. Communicative exercises cannot end up as communicative ‘drills.’ Using drama or theater in a FL classroom can avoid some of those potential problems. The communicative method and the drama and theater method support and complement each other, resulting in foreign language learners who are motivated, culturally open-minded, and communicatively competent.
6.1.2 Linguistic Aspects: Pronunciation and Intonation

"When I said ‘Ich liebe in San Diego’ to my new roommate in Munich, I got a weird look from her at first which was embarrassing until she realized that I meant ‘Ich lebe in San Diego!’”

(German student after her stay in Munich)

Drama provides the motivation and context for acquiring communication skills in the foreign language, as discussed in the chapter above. I will now discuss two linguistic aspects of speech—pronunciation and intonation, first in general and then in respect to the drama and theater method.

Since the 1970s and 1980s, the main goal for language learners has been to acquire communicative competence. Consequently, teachers have not emphasized correct pronunciation and intonation. For many teachers it was (and still is) unrealistic or unimportant to expect students to imitate native pronunciation. For Kelz (1991), it is more relevant

\[
\text{ein Ziel für die Ausprache zu definieren, das sich weder an größtmöglichen Abweichungen von der ausgangssprachlichen Lautung, noch an größtmöglicher (produktiver)Annäherung an die zielsprachige Lautung orientiert, sondern vielmehr an größtmöglicher (perzeptiver) Akzeptanz durch den Sprecher der Zielsprache} \text{" (Kelz, 1991, cited in Rösler 1994-46).}
\]

He continues pointing out that the question is not “inwieweit sich der Sprachlerner den artikulatorischen Vorgaben des native-speakers annähert, sondern viel mehr, inwieweit der native-speaker die Sprachsignale des Sprachlerners verarbeiten kann” (cited in Rösler 1994, 46).

Herbst (1992, 6), however, has pointed out that if the native recipient were to judge, for example, the social status or overall intelligence of the foreigner on the basis of
his/her pronunciation, the communicative-functional goal for pronunciation could create problems of perceptions.

Beginning in the 1990s, language books have again included pronunciation and occasionally intonation exercises. Moreover teachers seem to have realized that in order to achieve good communication skills and avoid communication problems in the foreign language, the learner needs to acquire a somewhat accurate pronunciation. The level of 'accurateness' that is strived for depends on the learning objective of the individual class (a specialized pronunciation class, e.g., for music students at the university level versus a beginning FL class required by a foreign university) and on the objectives that are set by each individual teacher or program.

The "deutsche Standardsprache" (as referred to in the Duden: Aussprache-Wörterbuch 1990) has been the pronunciation model for the teacher (as well as for audio-visual means of instruction). At the same time it is also important to teach phonological variations, such as regional (Hessian, Bavarian etc.), registered (e.g., a business versus a colloquial dialogue) or emotional differences (anger, surprise, happiness, etc.), since students should learn 'real German' right from the start rather than 'stylized school German.'

Both pronunciation and intonation normally present considerable difficulties for English speakers studying German. The main reason is that the native language or other previously acquired languages interfere with the new foreign language (interference). Learners often transfer sounds and intonation directly without differentiating between the two languages, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native German speaker:</th>
<th>An English speaker often pronounces it:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boot [o]</td>
<td>Boot [u]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zug [tz]</td>
<td>Zug [z]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other reasons can be age-related perception and articulation problems, difficulties due to missing sounds in the learner's native (such as the Umlaut vowels, the 'ich-sound' and 'ach-sound'), long and short vowel pronunciation, or simply the result of a badly planned or executed lesson (see also Heyd 1990, 69). Wrong or unclear pronunciation or intonation can hinder or completely interrupt communication and can be frustrating and annoying for both the speaker and listener. Mebus (1990, 71) believes that pronunciation and intonation problems are more of an obstacle to communication than mistakes in grammar.

Difficulties in pronunciation can also result in social problems, since FL learners with incorrect pronunciation are less accepted by others (most likely unconsciously), as mentioned above. This can lead to inhibition and fear of speaking at all. On the other hand, the more accurate or authentic the pronunciation is, the better the learner will make him/herself understood and the more success, satisfaction, and self-confidence he/she will derive from learning the foreign language.

"Das Besondere an der Phonetik ist also, dass es sich hier nicht nur um eine Gedächtnisleistung handelt, sondern dass in physische und psychische Prozesse eingegriffen wird, die eng an die Persönlichkeit (-sentwicklung) gebunden sind" (Hirschfeld 1995).

The connection of FL learning and personality factors will be discussed in Chapter III, 6.3.

Even more than pronunciation, FL textbooks and FL teachers tend to neglect intonation exercises. According to Göbel/Graffmann (1977), intonation has been treated like a "Stiefkind." Although this metaphor referred mostly to the methodology of the 1970s and 1980s, it might, in my opinion, just as well be applied to the present times. German language textbooks available in America contain exercises on the
different individual sounds, but most of the time neglect to practice the different parts of intonation, such as rhythm, word and sentence accents, or melody. Correct intonation can actually be more important than correct pronunciation, since it is crucial in language perception and processing. Problems with accent, rhythm, or melody, for example, are less likely to be tolerated and processed by the listener than pronunciation problems. Here are some examples that illustrate the difficulty of many phonetic aspects and their importance for correct speech and understanding of the language:

**Word accent**
A word accent can lie on different syllables in different words. Although there are fixed rules in German that can help students with the word accent (see e.g., Dieling and Hirschfeld 2000, 171) there are also word accents that do not follow a certain order, e.g., where the accent changes the meaning of the word:

Examples: **August** (first name) und **August** (month)  
**umfahren** (to knock over or down) und **umfahren** (to go around)

German students who do not have a flexible word accent in their native language seem to have particular problems with word intonation. In my opinion, it would be very useful for students if more books would note word accents in the vocabulary sections.

**Sentence accent**
The intonation of words in a sentence is crucial for the understanding of the language and for communication (see also empirical research by Missaglia 1998). Wrong sentence intonation can make a sentence difficult to understand or even incomprehensible. However, since the sentence accent changes with each situation or context, it is very hard to apply fixed rules. For statements of fact a few rules apply...
(e.g., the main accent lies at the end of the sentence), but any time the sentence expresses emotions or a contrastive attitude, those rules are useless, for example:

Ich gehe heute ins Kino.
Ich gehe heute ins Kino.
Ich gehe heute ins Kino.
Ich gehe heute ins Kino (factual/neutral).

In order for the speaker to set the right intonation for what he/she wants to express or for what he/she is reading, the speaker needs to know the content of his/her utterance or understand the content of the sentence or paragraph in a written text.

**Pause**

Punctuation marks, such as exclamation points, question marks, commas, periods, etc., can be expressed in reading or free speech with a pause and the right intonation. They are an important means for expressing the right meaning in a written or freely spoken language. Pauses structure the sentence and can change the meaning:

Christian sagt, Dieter kommt immer spät.
Christian, sagt Dieter, kommt immer spät.

Er geht nach Hause.
Er geht nach Hause?

Es geht ihm gut.
Es geht ihm gut!

Foreign language learners often pause too many times or at the incorrect time and read over punctuation marks, since they are concentrating on pronouncing and understanding the new words. Pauses are closely connected with the melody and rhythm of a sentence.
**Melody**

There is a sung melody and a melody for speech, which is also called "inflection". The speaker chooses his/her own inflection for a given sentence. The speaker can express a question, a demand, a statement, or the end of a sentence using one of the three basic inflections - the voice goes either up, down, or stays the same.

- **Was willst du?** (sentence with question word, a statement, or explanation)
- **Spielst du heute Tennis?** (yes/no question)
- **Ich telefoniere, bis Papa sagt...** (connected sentences, e.g., by comma).

(Arrows show the intonation.)

The speaker can also express emotions, such as happiness, sarcasm, interest, or sadness through inflection. Foreign learners often have a difficult time interpreting the meaning of the inflection. They also do not have the courage or concentration to inflect in their own speech, or they simply forget because they are concentrating so hard on pronouncing the words correctly. Many students read a text or speak a dialogue in a monotonous way unless the teacher reminds them of different ways of inflection.

**Rhythm**

Each language has its own rhythm, which characterizes the sound of a language. It is important for understanding a particular language. German has an accent-counting rhythm, as compared with the syllable-counting rhythm of Spanish, French, or Japanese. In German there is a big contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables; they are not of the same length. The stressed ones dominate; they are spoken clearly and with more emphasis. The unstressed ones are spoken quieter, faster, and more mumbled. This way the gaps between the syllables are similar in length (see Dieling and Hirschfeld 2000, 26-28 und 115-117), for example:
One important task of a German teacher (or any other language teacher) is to give students the feeling for the rhythm of the target language and to help them use this rhythm in their speech; in the case of an accent-counting language such as German, this involves articulating strong contrasts between stressed and unstressed syllables.

As seen from the above examples, it is important to model good pronunciation and intonation, make students more sensitive to the significance of both, and have students practice them in different fun situations so that they can become successful communicators in the FL.

In talking to colleagues, I found that they are aware of the need for pronunciation and intonation exercises, but find it hard or too tedious to practice them in class due to the lack of interesting, varied, and contextualized exercises and exercise methods, and/or the lack of time for those particular activities. In their experience, isolated textbook exercises are often tiring and de-motivating. I join Witte (1998, 104) in her suggestion:

\begin{quote}
Ausspracheschulung sollte deshalb nicht isoliert erfolgen, sondern in einen kommunikativ-emotialisierten Rahmen gestellt werden im Sinne einer ganzheitlichen Unterrichtsmethodik, die der Sprach-und Sprecharbeit gleichermassen Raum gibt, den Lerner aus seiner oft allzu passiven Rolle herausnimmt und ihn zum Akteur macht.
\end{quote}

It should give the learner the opportunity to practice what is needed and what can be used in 'real' life. Pronunciation and intonation should be practiced in an active...
manner, involving hand and body movements, which help learners to become aware of and exercise phonetic characteristics of the FL.

As for FL learning in general, it is also important that students have a goal, a reason for practicing pronunciation and intonation, as they will then be much more open to corrections and willing to endure the often 'dry' and repetitive exercises. The drama and theater method provides, in my experience, one effective way to fulfill those objectives for more integrated and fun pronunciation and intonation practice in FL classes.

6.1.2.1 Pronunciation and Intonation Pertaining to the Drama and Theater Method

"Onkel Zuber zieht neben den Zoo."
"Utes Pudel frisst nur Nudeln."
(from German textbooks used in the US)

versus

Sie: "Liest du was?"
Er: "Im Moment nicht".
Sie: "Dann lies doch mal was..."
Er: "Nachher, vielleicht nachher..."
Sie: "Hol dir doch die Illustrierten..."
Er: "Ich möchte erst noch etwas hier sitzen..."
(From the skit Feierabend by Loriot, 1981, 120)

Both foreign language education and theater arts use 'language' (as well as body language) as the primary means of initiating communication. Two important aspects of speech are pronunciation and intonation, which in both FL learning and theater must be practiced in order to facilitate communication. Pronunciation 'on stage' has to be clear, correct, and expressive for the audience to hear and understand. One emphasis of theatrical training, therefore, is intensive phonetic practice. Since good pronunciation and intonation is also beneficial for successful communication and interaction in a foreign language (see Chapter III, 6.1.1), FL teaching can take
advantage of a variety of approaches and exercises that are used in training actors. The following explains in greater detail the benefits of drama for FL pronunciation and intonation practice.

1. Theater/Drama provides FL learners with a goal and the motivation for phonetic practice

In drama/theater and in FL teaching, the learner's primary goal is to understand and interact with one another through verbal and nonverbal language. In theater, plays are performed in front of an audience, and the actor on stage must give a great deal of attention to clear and correct pronunciation and intonation. Theater arts students recognize this necessity, since incorrect pronunciation or misplaced sentence stress and intonation can be detrimental to the audience's understanding of the play. In a drama-oriented FL class, the motivation to practice those linguistic features also increases because the learning situations (e.g., role plays, improvisations, plays or scenes of a play) are interactive and are acted out with or in front of class members or a wider audience. Both the 'actor' and the 'foreign language learner' need to watch how they say things so they can be understood. The audience can give immediate feedback, and there is the realization that one day the student may face an actual target language audience. Therefore, as Witte (1998, 104) points out, it is easier to persuade the FL learning 'actor' to commit to practicing pronunciation and intonation, as he/she has the goal of achieving successful communication and performance.

Moreover, a drama-oriented FL teacher will most likely have more interest and desire to motivate and sensitize students with regard to good pronunciation and intonation, and will inspire in them an appreciation for these aspects of language.

2. Drama provides a context for pronunciation and intonation practice

Both in practice and performance, theater students deal with communicative situations set in a particular context. These situations comprise a wide variety of different forms
of speech (formal or colloquial), as well as differences in pronunciation due to emotional stress, the region the speaker is from, or the register being used. They also include various speech dynamics (like tempo and rhythm) and other linguistic features. Moreover, they offer a wonderful opportunity to learn about, understand, and practice the different facets of language, as well as provide unique possibilities for FL learning, in that they create an "experimental context for a foreign language" (Schewe and Shaw 1993, 11), an ideal framework in which the FL learner can become aware of, try out, and acquire a much wider range of pronunciation and prosodic features than he could by reading the texts in the student textbooks.

If one of the aims of teaching English [German] as a foreign language is to acquaint learners with the bewildering but nonetheless important range of intonation patterns and resulting semantic differences, and to improve their own active command of such patterns, it seems only natural to do this within the context of a dramatic dialogue (Hall 1982, 147, my italics).

When a student must communicate in a situation, for example, as a member of the Royal Court in the exercise "Who killed the king" (Wessels 1987, 40), he/she automatically gives the words an emotional inflection and natural sounding melody, as words are connected to thoughts and feelings, and most of the time words are uttered in the context for a reason. 'Active' oral practice in a dramatic context is very helpful in preventing the all too familiar mumbling, droning through, or rattling off a text with hardly any intonation, and it makes text seem more natural.

Learning to act in a foreign language means, in addition, concentrating on those most neglected areas of language learning; namely, intonation, register and rhythm, which are often more so than incorrect pronunciation, the cause of miscommunication (Bulmer 1982, 146).

My experience as a German instructor shows that students are in a much better position to use the language effectively after only a few dramatic exercises. Their speech becomes more fluent and more lively, their intonation more varied. Also,
dramatic readings, e.g., in a rehearsal for a play or in Readers Theater, are an effective method for practicing different aspects of pronunciation (pitch, tempo, volume, etc.) and intonation (accent, melody, rhythm etc.).

A great deal of language learning, in particular pronunciation and prosody, occurs during the preparation of a dramatic performance. Since it is the end goal to believably communicate something to the audience (the fellow classmates or any other audience), a big part of this preparation involves analyzing not only the context (e.g., through Wh-questions) but also the linguistic aspects that convey meaning. A drama-oriented FL class asks detailed questions about 'how' the individual protagonists speak the roles, e.g., in what rhythm, tempo, loudness, with what emotional stress, and sentence/word accent. Also, subtle phonetic differences that can change the understanding of the text are pointed out.

The memorization and performance of both of the following excerpts from texts would be preceded by a discussion of these questions.

Er: Ich möchte jetzt nicht lesen...
Sie: Mal möchtest du lesen, mal nicht...
Er: Ich möchte einfach hier sitzen...
Sie: Du kannst doch tun, was dir Spass macht...
Er: Das tue ich ja ...
Sie: Dann quengle doch nicht dauernd so rum...Hermann, bist du taub?
(Loriot 1981, 120)

Stell das sofort wieder weg
pass auf
nimm die Finger weg
sitz ruhig
mach dich nicht schmutzig
bring das sofort wieder zurück...
(with an accompanying pantomime, Timm 1984, 41)
In the process of memorizing their roles, the students internalize these linguistic features. They learn to monitor their own pronunciation and intonation and become aware of how linguistic aspects and nonverbal expression work together to produce meaningful speech. Whereas in a traditional FL class frequent corrections of wrong pronunciation/intonation can sometimes hinder active participation and fluency and create embarrassment for the student, it is not as problematic for them when rehearsing; they accept a continually changing process of experiment, modification and re-experiment (see Hawkins 1993, 62) which is normal in theatrical practice. "Constant interruptions need not be seen as a barrier to the tenor of the discourse, but as a means of improving flexibility and increasing personal confidence" (Hall 1982, 147).

Although dramatic exercises are usually integrated in a context, they do sometimes isolate phonetic components (see Chapter IV, 1.2), but only with the goal of soon reintegrating them into the text and context. In this way, the exercises do not practice some unconnected pieces of language, but are seen as a part of a communicative situation.

Intonation and pronunciation are learned in part through listening to contextualized speech. Students assimilate a lot of pronunciation/intonation structures, as well as vocabulary, by listening to the teacher and the other students during rehearsals, discussions about the play/text, or to native speakers on a cassette tape, video, or computer. Many students who participated in the German play production that I directed at the university had subconsciously and unintentionally learned their classmates' entire roles—correctly intonated and pronounced—and could have been used as understudies. "The passive side of learning is itself highly important since a great deal of what is ever learnt is unspecifiable and hence has to be picked up or acquired at a less than fully conscious level" (Dunlop 1977, cited in Wessels 1987, 12) Thus, the opportunity to blend contextualized listening with oral intonation and pronunciation practice is a great benefit of the drama method. It brings the FL learner
closer to the natural rhythms of the target language. Such situational practice of pronunciation and intonation with its spontaneous utterances can be used as a diagnostic tool, i.e., a mean to view the internalized rule system of each student" (Ellis 1985, cited in Hawkins 1993, 63).

3. Drama emphasizes body movement, which also facilitates successful pronunciation and intonation in the FL.

"Stimmübung ist auch Leibesübungen"
(Coblenzer and Muhar 1976, 19)

As discussed in Chapter III, 6.3.3, the production of speech, which includes pronunciation and intonation, is supported by body movement or paralinguistic features. These are synchronized and genetically somewhat related (see Baur and Grzybek 1984, 29). For the FL language learner, body language makes it much easier - or even possible in the first place - to correctly pronounce and intonate words or phrases, and it is essential for FL learning that the two are taught together wherever possible. In a narrow sense, body movement is needed to produce sounds. Lips, tongue, jaw, etc. have to move together in order for us to speak. These speech movements, which are different in every language, are essential for correct pronunciation and memorization. In a wider sense, body movements, such as gestures and mimicry, can accompany and support pronunciation and other prosodic features (rhythm, stress, sequencing, etc.). Synchronized hand and foot motions help to express, practice, and memorize sentence melody, vowel length, and stress variations in words and sentences. I encourage my students to stomp on the floor with one foot to better pronounce words containing the letter 'z', which is remarkably effective. The same can be achieved through hand clapping, jumping, or knocking. Of course, students' cultural differences must be taken into account when choosing appropriate body movements.
In theater arts, expression through synchronized speech and body movement is one of the major areas of practice and many of these exercises are utilized. Body movement, in the form of relaxation and breathing exercises, is also very useful as a warm-up for speech and pronunciation practice. "Durch Körperübungen, in denen Spannung beim Einatmen und Entspannung beim Ausatmen abwechseln, können angespannte Muskulatur gelockert und innere Resonanzräume erweitert werden" (Reiss, Susenberger, and Wagner 1994, 51).

Foreign language teaching can benefit from this by selecting movement exercises that can be helpful in practicing the phonetics of the respective foreign language. Moreover, music in combination with movement, which is sometimes part of a dramatic performance (e.g., a cabaret), helps to memorize sentence accent, speech rhythm and pronunciation (see e.g., approaches by Fischer 1995 and others).

Dufeu (1983) perfectly combines the acquisition of pronunciation and intonation with body expression in his training program. His exercises include, for example, breathing exercises in combination with movement, or rhythmic beating (tambourine dialogue or long sticks) while reciting words and sentences, especially poems, and "doubling" (see Chapter IV, 1). This method has been successful for FL workshops (e.g., Sprenger 2002), and some exercises can be integrated into the FL classroom; however, Hall and Renaud's approach seems more suitable since it is based more on ‘natural’ intonation and is used more in the context of dramatic scenes (see also Esselborn 1988, 401-403).

4. Drama adds fun to pronunciation and intonation practice in the foreign language

The Drama Method in foreign language teaching offers fun, hands-on activities that help distract the students from the often monotonous, repetitive phonetic practice. Through their playful, interactive character, students are often unaware that a skill is being practiced (see Chapter IV, 1). Other exercises, such as voice exercises (chanting,
choral-speaking, singing, or screaming, etc.), rhythm exercises, or relaxation exercises practice obvious skills, but still work well, because they are either so different from what the students traditionally experience in a FL or simply fun to do.

Students enjoy play or skit performances because of the group experience and the common goal for learning; therefore, they tend to be more motivated to practice even repetitive pronunciation and intonation exercises than traditional phonetic drills.

5. Drama creates a learning atmosphere that promotes successful pronunciation and intonation

In its exercises and projects, theater/drama stresses a positive, warm, and nonthreatening atmosphere to facilitate frequent, open, and anxiety-free speech and body movement. One of the main emphases of a FL teacher using drama as a teaching tool is the creation of a comfortable and supportive class atmosphere. Such a group atmosphere encourages students to try out the foreign pronunciation and intonation without feeling embarrassed and scared in front of their classmates and the teacher. "Group cohesion is therefore a pre-requisite of success," as Hall (1982, 157) summarized his experience in teaching a series of Creative Drama courses at the Central Institute of Languages at Hamburg University with a special emphasis on pronunciation. Giving students the courage and the confidence to pronounce foreign words can eliminate speech and communication barriers, and the FL can be learned most effectively.

In conclusion, the Drama Method used in FL teaching is very beneficial as a tool for foreign language intonation/pronunciation practice. It brings a sense of authenticity to the language learning process and helps to acquire correct pronunciation and intonation in a contextualized, interactive, and fun manner. Theater is, after all, "a true living process" which is "persuasively real!" (Schlunk 1978, 52).
6.2 Cultural Aspects

"Students get culture through language in context"
(Prof. from Arizona)

Language cannot be taught without cultural content. It develops in its own socio-cultural context, and thus language and culture are inextricably intertwined.

“Language is at once an outcome or a result of the culture as a whole and also a vehicle by which the facets of the culture are shaped and communicated” (Gladstone 1969, 114). In the following paragraphs, I will first examine cultural aspects in general before I discuss them with regards to the drama and theater method.

In order for learners to communicate effectively in the target language, they must acquire and develop not only linguistic and strategic skills, but also cultural competence. This is not an easy task, particularly for foreign language students who are studying outside the target country, as they do not have the opportunity to learn about cultural phenomena through direct and immediate or 'local' experience. Consequently, the teacher and his/her teaching materials and strategies are an important source of cultural information for the students.

For many years, educators and researchers have acknowledged the importance of including culture in the foreign language lesson, especially since language teaching methods emphasize the importance of communication, and social interaction in particular. The teaching of culture, however, has been a much-debated issue in journals and at conferences. Although there are many models and principles for teaching culture as a part of the foreign language curriculum in the United States (see, e.g., Nostrand 1967, 1974; Seelye 1993; Lafayette 1988; Crawford-Lange and Lange 1984; Byram and Fleming 1998; Kransch 1993), researchers cannot agree on what aspects of culture should be taught and how these should be integrated into foreign language teaching and learning. For educators and scientists, the teaching of culture is
a “unendliche Geschichte” (Pauldrach 1992, cited in Rösler 1994, 66). As a result, Dale Lange (1999, 57) criticized the fact that “culture still remains a superficial aspect of language learning in K-12 and post-secondary language programs” in the U.S.

One reason for this neglect might be, that educators are still faced with various problems when it comes to teaching culture. Some of these problems include time constraints in an already overextended curriculum; concerns that teachers are not even familiar with the target culture; reluctance to deal with students’ attitudes; and inadequate training in the teaching of culture. The most pressing problems, however, have been the lack of standards for cultural content, as well as effective teaching methods. Hopefully, some of these problems will be solved by applying the National Standards for Kindergarten-12th grade, which include some standards for the teaching of culture, and which are now being implemented. Unfortunately, standards for teaching at the college and university level have yet to be established, and post-secondary educators have always chosen their own methods for language teaching and decided how and what cultural content should be included.

Drawing on the vast literature on the teaching of culture, I have chosen to summarize what I consider to be some of the most important principles of cultural learning.

(1) Cultural competence is seen as cultural awareness.

Students need to understand that the ways in which people behave, think, and react are intimately linked to their culture. In order to develop cultural awareness it is important to implement methods that support aspects, such as "contact with otherness, comparison and appreciation of similarities and differences, identifying with otherness, and finally [taking] an objective view of their own culture" (Byram and Fleming 1998, 5). By comparing their own culture with that of others, students learn to recognize and accept similarities and differences. It enables students to successfully interact with people from other cultures beyond the exchange of basic
information, to become empathic and sensitive towards otherness, and to largely avoid stereotypes. Furthermore, the “reflexive impact” (Byram and Fleming, 5)—reflecting upon one’s own language and culture—is important and valuable for the personal growth of the individual.

(Kommunikative Kompetenz in einer Fremdsprache schliesst ein, in der Begegnung mit einer anderen Kultur die Grenzen des eigensprachlichen und eigenkulturellen Verhaltens zu erkennen und sich auf andere sprachliche wie auch nichtsprachliche Verhaltensweise einzulassen (Krumm 1995, 157).

(2) The teaching of culture must be more than just a presentation of facts.
Although cultural instruction must include facts, it is best if students discover these facts themselves through their study of cultural contexts and interpret them using a problem-solving approach, rather than examining them in isolation from cultural values or attitudes. In doing so, they will be less likely to form stereotypes.

(3) Emphasis on cognitive and affective approaches to cultural learning
Both cognitive and affective processes play a role in developing an awareness and understanding of another culture. In addition to comparing, analyzing, or synthesizing aspects of a culture, students also need to experience, experiment, evaluate, perceive, and respond to cultural issues and characterize their own values. “Cognitive knowledge alone seems to have little effect on an individual's ability to cope with or adjust to different patterns of behavior” (Galloway 1985 cited in Omaggio Hadley 1993, 358).

(4) Importance of nonverbal cultural elements
Cultures are also defined by nonverbal cultural expressions and concepts, such as gestures and mimicry, the proximity between people when they are conversing, as well as mannerisms and dress. It is very important to understand and even experience these elements if one is to achieve cultural awareness and interact with people from different cultures.
I am talking of behavioral patterns: the use of certain gestures, the use of facial expressions, the expression of feelings, and everything else that portrays an entire way of life. This should be an integral part of every class; it cannot be any other way (Jaramillo 1972, cited in Mahler 1979, 10).

The overall long-term goal of language/cultural instruction is to create “intercultural speakers” (Kramsch 1998, cited in Byram and Fleming 1998, ) who are able to “establish a relationship between their own and other cultures, to mediate and explain difference, and ultimately to accept that difference and see the common humanity beneath it” (Byram and Fleming, 8). This cross-cultural understanding, I believe, is so extremely important in our global society. For Brook (1996, 250) it is “die Kraft, die ein Gegengewicht zur Zersplitterung unserer Welt schaffen kann. Ihr geht es um die Entdeckung von Beziehungen [...]”

I suggest that educators utilize teaching strategies and techniques that do not treat culture as mere ‘information’ but instead regard it as an integrated and evolving aspect of language learning. Students should be encouraged to use their intellectual and affective capacities to develop an awareness of the other culture. In my opinion, drama and theater offer strategies and tools for exploring cultural differences and similarities, as well as fostering intercultural understanding and awareness.

6.2.1 Cultural Aspects Pertaining to the Drama and Theater Method

By simulating real-life experiences, drama and theater provide a context for speaking a foreign language. At the same time, they offer possibilities for integrated cultural learning by portraying “images of a culture” (Fitzgibbon 1993, 281). The drama approach enables learners to experience and then actively reflect on situations so that they can better understand their world and human behavior(Byram and Fleming 1998, 143). By taking on the role of a foreigner, e.g., in role-plays, skits, or improvisations,
learners can experience and practice not just linguistic but also cultural behaviors and peculiarities. “They [students] emphasize with fictional characters better, thus learning is most complete” (Wickersham, Rosemont College, PA, in survey). The social context of an interaction (the what, where, when, why, how) plays a very important role in drama-oriented exercises as well as in theater rehearsals. Because the social framework is what gives language its human and cultural reality, one of the goals of the drama and theater approach is to discuss the context in detail and use the language appropriately. “A classroom that uses Drama is not only concerned with the words and expressions that English speakers [or other speakers] use but with the situations in which the words should and should not be used” (Via 1976, xiv).

Drama and theater give the learner a chance to participate in social contexts in a way that involves their emotions, as well as change their way of perceiving the world while utilizing the distance created by the ‘fictional’ situation to reflect and explore. The safety of the ‘als-ob-’ situation allows learners to explore and examine cultural experiences more deeply and closely than would be possible in the real world. This safety zone is therefore very useful for experiencing the foreign language and cultural phenomena.

“Real communication particularly in public contexts with strangers may be full of sub-texts, innuendo and self-consciousness which in drama can be subject to more conscious control and manipulation” (Fleming 1997, 149). Even shorter drama-oriented exercises, such as brief role-plays or improvisations, can make students aware of typical behaviors or mechanics of daily life in German-speaking countries. They can then experience these situations within the safe zone of the fictional world; for example, how to make telephone calls or set up a date or business meeting, perhaps dealing with complications that could arise. Such exercises also motivate them to compare and examine their own cultural habits. By improvising real-life situations, acting out scenes in a role-play or creating statues and sculptures (see Chapter IV, 1)
students can also get a feel for more fundamental aspects of culture. For example, it will be easier for students to understand and discuss the concept of ‘family’ in the target culture if they mirror feelings about family relationships or problems experienced by young couples in improvisations or dramatic role-plays etc. (see Moeller 2002, 87-90). With respect to the topic “Beruf und Arbeit in Deutschland,” students will experience a job interview more fully through acting it out, and dealing with possible scenarios while trying out and discussing appropriate/ inappropriate body language in pantomimes or statues (frozen images). Schewe (2000, 72) provides a good example of how drama can be used to teach the cultural topic “Youth in Germany.” He gives a wonderful illustration of a lesson called “Gefährliche Mutprobe—S-Bahn Surfers” and shows how much more effectively certain objectives for cultural learning (e.g., insight and empathy towards other cultures or people, recognition of cultural patterns, etc.) can be reached by employing drama techniques (such as improvisations from different perspectives and reflection of the topic through statues /sculptures).

Drama and theater also raise cultural awareness by emphasizing the connection between spoken language, body movement, and body language. Learners learn to notice, analyze, and imitate culture-specific gestures or other nonverbal cultural behaviors. Acting out such gestures in specific scenes is much more real and impressive for the learners than hearing them explained by the teacher or on a video. It also fosters a friendly nonthreatening class atmosphere.

Cultural differences with regards to spatial, temporal, and thematic orientations in different countries; for example, in greetings and farewells, can also be addressed in simple skits or drama exercises. Statues and pantomimes, in which students create nonverbal images of particular scenes; for example, the various ways in which people greet each other and get to know other people in Germany (maybe by ‘doubling’ the static figures with words, see Chapter IV, 1), enable learners to think about, observe,
and experience cultural peculiarities (What is correct? A hug or a handshake? Formal or informal speech? What body language is appropriate, how much space should there be between the speakers, etc.? in an interesting, fun, and effective way. The style of humor that characterizes the target culture is also one of the themes that can be illustrated well through the use of drama (e.g., Loriot skits, Erich Kästner, etc.).

Drama-oriented exercises also allow for the use of more ‘artificial’ theatrical methods to shed light on various aspects of the target culture or to better explore the differences between cultures. Such techniques include doubling to bring out inner thoughts and emotions, slowing down a scene, creating an emotional statue of a particular moment within the scene, or manipulating a scene by altering the level of linguistic difficulty or approaching it from a different perspective.

Finally, drama-oriented exercises can also be very useful for preparing students to study abroad. Students can experiment with situations, which they might encounter during their stay in the foreign country. Dramatic activities that promote risk-taking or deal with negative emotions such as shock, self-doubt, or fear can help students learn to be aware of their communication styles. They can then use this knowledge to alter their response and become more self-confident when coping with real-life situations that might trigger similar feelings (e.g., miscommunication, culture shock, etc., see Sprenger 2002, 2).

As I have demonstrated above, students can more easily absorb and understand the socio-cultural context of the target language if learning is not only cognitive, but also involves the body, the voice and the entire sensorimotor system (see Tselikas 1999, 15). Because foreign language learners do not live in the target country, they do not have many opportunities to experience the culture firsthand. Therefore, fictional scenarios must be created or recreated in their language classes. The literature from the
target country can be a source of fictional scenarios that are often culturally rich and are thus a good tool for promoting cultural learning.

*Exploring literature through the drama and theater method*

Literature is one aspect of culture. It reflects how the culture in question interprets and copes with social conditions and individual experiences. In a traditional FL literature class, learners are first introduced to the text, and then asked to read it silently or aloud in class. Vocabulary is assigned in hope that it will aid the understanding and discussion of the literary text. At the next class session, the teacher asks questions to determine the level of comprehension. Often, no other relevant projects are assigned, and after some form of testing has been completed, a new literary text is introduced. This was how many students, including myself, experienced German Literature during their studies at an American university or college. “Students are rarely allowed to view a text as anything but an abstract, flat piece of printed matter, isolated from and irrelevant to their lives” (Heathcote 1982, paraphrased by Wessels 1987, 93). Rück (1990, 16) demands that we give up “die quälende Durchnahme von Literatur, wie sie jahrzehntelang den Schulalltag beherrschte” and integrate “das lernende Subjekt als Individuum mit je eigenem Erfahrungshintergrund.” Although text analysis and reading cannot be omitted from FL teaching, the teacher needs to breathe life into the words on the paper and the cultural setting. Using the theater and drama approach is, in my opinion, a very effective way to ‘experience’ literature (and culture) instead of just reading it. It offers students the chance to see beyond the surface of the printed page and become much more ‘intimate’ with the text than they often do in traditional literature classes.

There is all the difference in the world between literature and drama. A play’s sound, music, movement, looks, dynamics and much more are to be discovered deep in the script, yet cannot be detected through strictly literary methods of reading and analysis. (Langham 1983, cited in Lys et al. 2002, 208).
This can involve incorporating drama-oriented exercises that highlight cultural aspects of the literature, utilizing Readers Theater, or even producing an entire play in the foreign language. In all cases, text analysis is combined with “expressive doing” (Dodson 2002, 176). The tool of theatrical expressiveness is used to convey information about the target culture and to facilitate an understanding of the text.

Both drama-oriented exercises and theater let students identify with the literary characters and make them seem ‘real.’ By acting out authentic discourse, students participate in the target culture, with the result that they often feel a greater affinity to it. Susan Stern describes it as follows: “Play production can also be a source of integrative motivation by fostering cultural proximity” (Stern 1981, 79). Also, affective elements within a culture can be conveyed more successfully in a class that employs artistic forms of expression than one that is limited to reading and discussing cultural texts. Drama therefore enables students to reach a deeper understanding and appreciation of the foreign culture and language.

The most intense way for students to experience literature—and the culture in which it is immersed—is by re-enacting it on stage. When students perform a play or a scene, they must examine the motives of the characters in the play, which gives them insight into cultural behavioral patterns and personality characteristics. Students’ intellectual and affective cultural understanding is furthered by theatrical activities, such as discussing and implementing stage directions, cultural gestures, proxemics, etc., or choosing scenery and costumes that are appropriate for the time period and context of the literature. Theater invites learners to mirror their own experiences, recognize and examine social, political, and economic conditions or contexts that are presented in the literature, and become aware of potential misunderstandings and misconceptions of the customs in the target country.

Most literature is not factual, but instead provides a fictional account of a certain culture and time period. Nonetheless, it portrays characters from many social backgrounds with different beliefs or values. It also contains many cultural peculiarities as well as social, political, or philosophical statements that foster cultural understanding and appreciation: “The vivid imagined world can quickly give the foreign reader a feel for the codes and preoccupations that structure a real society.”(Collie and Slater 1992, 4).

While the literary text might not be factual, the writer is (or was) a real person, with real thoughts and feelings. By actively working with a literary text, learners also gain a deeper understanding of the writer’s intentions, ideas, and personal life, as well as insight into the culture in which he/she lived. Classic novels, plays and poems, but also fairy tales and popular literature constitute an important source of information about life and values in different historical time periods and cultures (e.g., Goethe, Lessing, Brecht, Frisch, Büchner, Grimm, Böll, Handke, Loriot, etc.). Folk songs, such as “Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust,” and Oktoberfest songs; melodies from musicals, cabarets and operas, such as Brecht’s “Mecky Messer,” Ludwig’s “Du sitzt mir gegenüber,” or Die Prinzen’s “Deutschland” also reflect cultural aspects of the target country. All of them can present a “culture capsule” (Mahler 1979, 5), a culturally rich source preserved over a period of centuries. On stage, they can enrich cultural learning in foreign language classes in a more intense and effective way.
Finally, performing important literary works from Germany at an American university or college increases the visibility of the German language and culture. At the same time, it is a cultural resource for the university and the community at large.

In summary, drama and theater provide a cultural context for language learning. The drama approach enables students to understand human behavior and cultural phenomena in a deeper and more complex way, whether in the form of drama exercises in the classroom, or by rehearsing and performing a literary play or musical. When students explore the cultural aspects of literature not only through the intellect, but also through emotions and other channels of learning, they have the chance to develop a deeper understanding of people from other cultures. The resulting empathy toward the target culture in turn reduces the likelihood of stereotypes or misconceptions. "The arts (e.g., theater arts) can provide a way of bridging the gap between classroom and culture, both the student's own culture and the L2 culture "(Shier 2002, 194, paraphrasing Shier 1993 ).

6.3 Psychological, Social, and Physical Aspects

The importance of cognitive learning and assessing language performance in a FL class is, in my opinion, often overstressed. Other factors that influence the language learning process, such as psychological, social, and physical factors are frequently overlooked. They benefit language learning while fostering the education of the ‘whole’ human being with his/her intellectual and emotional dimensions; in other words, they also promote subjective, personal, and interpersonal learning, which could be labeled ‘learning for life.’ Aspects that were of marginal importance in many language theories and methodologies, in particular in the context of FL teaching, take on new relevance and meaning in more “humanistic approaches” such as the Drama Method. “[In a language class] success depends less on materials, techniques and
linguistic analysis, and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom” (Stevick 1980, 4).

In the following chapters, I will first summarize the psychological, social, and physical aspects that are involved in language learning, and then describe how they are affected by learning through drama and theater. I will try to show how theater and drama provide the opportunity for cognitive, emotional, and physical learning to occur simultaneously.

6.3.1. Psychological Aspects

For many years, educators created FL teaching methods that were mainly based on the science/structure of the target language, rather than on didactic principles. At present time, the relevance of individual psychological and socio-psychological aspects is also taken into consideration. Researchers ask what personality traits and social factors influence the language learning process and, conversely, how certain teaching methods can positively enhance certain personality traits. In my opinion, however, practitioners often forget how important it is to always take into account the individual personality of their students, changes they may be going through, and possible psychological problems. It is equally important to observe the group dynamics during the FL learning process. It may not always be easy for the teacher to be sensitive to the learner’s and learning group’s psychological needs, particularly in the middle of a stressful semester when faced with testing and curriculum pressures, but it is crucial for the learning progress.

I will begin by looking at some psychological factors that concern the learner as an individual. It is not my intention here to analyze the psychological nature of speech processes. Rather, I would like to discuss briefly certain personality traits or other
emotional factors that influence FL learning and show how using dramatic exercises can help to tap into those traits in a way that benefits rather than hinders FL learning.

Individual psychological factors

“Learning a language can be a scary thing”, confessed a German language student of mine several months ago. He was referring to learning French, his first foreign language experience, “... but I am not afraid to say something in your class—it’s different”. A wave of relief swept over me.

Teaching a foreign language is quite different than teaching many other subjects. Especially at the beginning of the learning process, the class atmosphere is emotionally charged. Language is a very personal expression of oneself. A foreign language is learned not only through passive memorization and understanding like many other subjects, but also through active participation, the almost immediate implementation of the learned material through speech and actions, and a psychological ‘openness’ towards learning that language (a low socio-affective filter, see Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982). These characteristics of language learning stimulate certain individual personality traits, which can either facilitate or hinder learning. The following aspects are of special importance for FL learning. Although here they have been split up into different sections, it will become obvious that they are all interrelated.

Inhibition and empathy

Students often come to our classes ready to assimilate the subject material by listening and taking notes. When they are suddenly asked to ‘produce,’ or even get up and move, they are inhibited and highly self-conscious. This is especially true with adults. By contrast, young children have less inhibition and much fewer problems with taking
risks. This changes when children become aware of their ‘self’, which makes them different from others. They suddenly feel the need to protect their ‘self’, their ‘ego’, from anything that might threaten it (such as criticism, ridicule, laughter, etc). Guiora et al. (1972) use the term “language ego” to describe language barriers which become firmer and less permeable with age. Therefore, if certain aspects of the second or foreign language do not overlap with the individually established language ego boundaries, they will be rejected. Adult students are often afraid of pronouncing the language and possibly sounding ‘stupid’, of making grammar mistakes, or of not being understood. They know that they are not able to express themselves as well as in their native language and feel embarrassed, threatened, and afraid of rejection by the teacher and the classmates. “Ego and self-esteem are on the line in the foreign language classroom” (Smith 1984, 5), just as they are in the emotional atmosphere of an acting course or drama rehearsal. Researchers in the 1970s and 1980s (Guiora et al. 1972; Guiora et al. 1980) tried to prove the hypothesis that substances, such as alcohol and tranquilizers, would promote inhibition breakdown and improve pronunciation. Although the results seemed to uphold the hypothesis, the researchers found that a human element, namely teachers or other educators with certain characteristics, seemed to make a bigger difference. Consequently, it can be hypothesized for FL teaching that teachers play a role in protecting the “exposed egos” of their students and “breaking down students’ defenses so that they are able to take chances, make mistakes, sound silly, laugh, and then try again” (Bell 2000, 9).

If students are successful in getting rid of their inhibitions, they can become 'empathic', which is hypothesized to be an important factor in language learning. A high degree of empathy for another person or a situation depends on the ability “to partially and temporarily suspend the functions that maintain one’s separateness from others (usually called ego-boundaries)” (Guiora et al. 1972,142). Empathy thus means giving up these ego-boundaries and feeling the emotional state of someone or something outside of one’s own ego; in other words, the ability to be flexible and take
on a new identity (Stern 1983, 211). For FL learners, this means that if the ego-boundaries are open or transparent (and the “socio-affective filter” is low), they will put much more effort into [re]producing native intonation, putting themselves ‘into the shoes’ of a native speaker, and sounding and acting as authentic as possible. The learner will be open to understanding and appreciating the new culture, without giving up his/her own (perhaps very different) way of feeling or understanding. Such cross-cultural empathy will not only benefit language learning, but is an essential trait for living together in harmony in a society of many cultures, races, and individual differences.

_Anxiety_

The 5th grader that sat under his desk for several weeks at the beginning of his language study (as described previously) and the adult learner who hides in the last row in a corner of his Beginning German university class both come into the FL learning process with a great deal of anxiety. It is often very difficult to pinpoint the origin of such intense feeling. Such students might have been laughed at in another language class, or performed unsatisfactorily – either in their own eyes or in the view of another - in earlier encounters with the same or another language. The reason for the anxiety may lie in current or repressed emotional problems that are unrelated to the language.

Since students in a communicative FL language class actively participate and show so many more aspects of their personality (e.g., feelings) than in other disciplines, they are much more prone to feeling vulnerable and anxious.

Anxiety in FL learning can result from frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, stress, fear, nervousness, and worry (Collie and Slater 1992), which can have a highly negative effect on performance and create a vicious downward cycle. It can impair sensory, cognitive, and motor capacities of the body; for example, it can prevent the
proper function of memory and thought in the brain, which consequently slows down the learning process. This debilitating anxiety (Scovel 1978, 139) often motivates the learner to 'flee' the learning task and avoid certain behavior.

I believe Heron’s three components of anxiety are very applicable to a group situation in a FL language classroom: (a) “Acceptance anxiety: Will I be accepted, liked, wanted…? (b) Orientation anxiety: Will I understand what is going on? (c) Performance anxiety: Will I be able to do what I came to learn?” (Heron 1989, 33). FL learners, in my opinion, will all feel these forms of anxiety at certain times in their learning process but experience them to different degrees. As research shows, a low level of anxiety is actually favorable because it stimulates and activates concentration, interest, and language performance in general (e.g., Scovel 1978; Leontjev 1971; Heckhausen 1988).

An individual student with a high level of anxiety can present a significant problem that the teacher should try to address. In general, however, it is important to provide a nonthreatening atmosphere with as few anxiety-provoking situations as possible and to use a teaching method that facilitates interpersonal, cooperative learning and encourages good group dynamics.

Motivation


(Adult learner in a drama-oriented FL class, Tselikas 1999, 136)

Most language teachers will agree that a student’s motivation level, another affective variable, is the most important factor for success or failure in learning a language. In the last 20 years, numerous concepts have been developed to explain motivational
aspects of language learning (e.g., Brown 1990; Crookes and Schmidt 1991; Dornyei 1990, 1994; Oxford and Shearin 1994; Tremblay and Gardner 1995; Williams and Burden 1997). Many of these theories still have to be empirically proven and components further elaborated.

I will briefly describe some of the established concepts used to explain motivation in the context of FL teaching/learning in order to provide an overall understanding of this affective component in the FL classroom situation, as well as provide a framework for discussing drama as a didactic tool.

Hilgard et al. explain motivation in a broad sense as a bundle of factors that “energize behavior and give it direction” (1979, 281). Other concepts link motivation to the student’s attitude towards the target language, its native speakers, and their culture. Gardner (1985) combines these two approaches and defines motivation as the “combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language.” He measures the level of motivation by the “extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and a satisfaction experienced in this activity” (12). Effort alone can be produced, for example, by the desire to please a teacher, a high need for achievement, or social pressures (tests, rewards for achievement, etc.). By the same token, the desire to learn the language does not truly produce motivation, because the student might want to learn but is not willing to strive for it. Neither ‘effort’ nor ‘desire’ alone necessarily signifies motivation. Only when both are present can one speak of a truly motivated individual (12).

What motivational reasons does a student have to learn a FL? Gardner and Lambert’s (1972) breakdown of the complex term 'motivation' is helpful to the educator in understanding the range of factors that motivate students. They divide motivation into two aspects: "instrumental motivation" and "integrative motivation." Instrumental
motivation exists if the learner has practical reasons for learning the language, such as economic or social benefits, like a promotion at work or a good GPA at school. One speaks of integrative motivation if the learner has a genuine interest in the target language and/or culture and desires to relate to them.

Krashen uses both motivational factors in his "Affective Filter Theory" (see Chapter III, 3.1; 3.4). If motivation is low, the affective filter is high and therefore the brain will not be receptive to language input. The teacher’s goal should be to reach a low affective filter in class to ensure the best atmosphere for motivated language learning.

Motivation can either be internally generated or prompted by outside forces. Researchers differentiate between ‘intrinsic motivation’ and ‘extrinsic motivation’. With intrinsic motivation, the learning experience or satisfaction comes from within, so that the student does not need any stimulus from the outside. “Intrinsic motivation is in evidence whenever students’ natural curiosity and interest energize their learning” (Deci and Ryan 1985, 245). Students are typically more motivated when they can apply what they have learned in their own life, in a realistic situation, or if they have a reason to communicate. In the case of extrinsic motivation, the desire to learn is primarily the result of an external stimulus, such as the promise of a reward, or the threat of punishment. Although extrinsic motivation can also have a positive effect on learning, research has shown that for long-term retention, intrinsic motivation is far more beneficial.

The psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1990) has tried to find out what makes an activity intrinsically motivating. His concept of “flow” means a “state of effortless movement of psychic energy” (Csikszentmihalyi, cited in Arnold 1999, 15). Goleman (1995), summarizes:

In ‘flow’ the emotions are not just contained and channeled, but positive, energized, and aligned with the task at hand. ... Because ‘flow’
feels so good, it is intrinsically rewarding. It is a state in which people become utterly absorbed in what they are doing, paying undivided attention to the task, their awareness merged with their actions (90, 91).

The state of “flow” can be reached if the challenge level and the skill level are about equal, or if the challenge level is just slightly higher than the perceived skill level. If there is too great a discrepancy between the skill level and the challenge level of the activity, it can create either anxiety or boredom, which hinders the ‘flow’ or intrinsic motivation.

I agree with Arnold (Arnold 1999, 14) in that it is unfortunate that many educational institutions put a greater emphasis on extrinsic motivation, creating a situation in which students work primarily to satisfy their teachers or authorities, rather than independently for their love of knowledge. It is hoped that more teachers will strive to foster the growth of intrinsic motivation. Brown (1994, cited in Arnold 1999, 15.) gives the following suggestions:

(1) help students develop autonomy by learning to set personal goals and to use learning strategies;

(2) rather then over-rewarding them, encourage learners to find self-satisfaction in a task well done;

(3) facilitate learner participation in determining some aspects of the programme and give opportunities for cooperative learning;

(4) involve students in content-based activities related to their interests which focus their attention on meanings and purposes rather than on verbs and prepositions; and

(5) design tests which allow for some student input and which are face-valid in the eyes of the students.

Students are typically more motivated when they see possibilities for applying the learned material in their own lives, when they can be creative, and when they feel they have a reason to communicate.
Intrinsic motivation is desirable not only for the language learner, but also for the teacher. If teachers participate in the learning process, show deep enjoyment and genuine satisfaction in the activities involved, they will be the best role models for their students.

*Self-Esteem*

Self-esteem is the evaluation of one’s own worth. Terms like self-respect, self-confidence, or self-worth are more or less synonymous. Self-esteem is a prerequisite for proficiency in speaking a foreign language. The foundation for self-esteem is acquired in early childhood and throughout one’s life. It develops both through inner experiences and through contact with the world around us. Our concept of ‘Self’ and self-esteem is shaped through our beliefs, attitudes, experiences, etc. “Self-esteem begins with the approbation and reliable attachment of important others but is eventually internalized so it can be maintained relatively independently of the outside world” (Ehrman 1999, cited in Arnold 1999, 12). Heyde distinguishes between “global” or “general” self-esteem, “situational” self-esteem, where one evaluates oneself in a specific situation (work, school, etc), and “task” self-esteem, which refers to the level of self-esteem while performing a task in a specific situation (Heyde 1979, cited in Arnold 1999, 12). Heyde’s research indicated that all three were linked to successful oral FL performance. A student who often has felt successful in life or in past language learning will most likely have high self-esteem, and will be more willing to take a risk and speak in the new language, as his self-concept will not be shattered so easily when he makes mistakes. A student, on the other hand, who has experienced many failures, will be reluctant to risk another one. Such a student would rather not volunteer to say anything in the foreign language because this would threaten his/her negative self-concept even more (see also ‘anxiety’ in this chapter). According to Canfield and Wells (1994)
...the most important thing a teacher can do to help students emotionally and intellectually is to create an environment of mutual support and care. The crucial thing is the safety and encouragement that students sense in the classroom. Further, they must recognize that they are valued and will receive affection and support (cited in Arnold 1999, 12).

It is also recommended that teachers carefully choose a teaching approach (or a variety of them) that helps to improve self-esteem and self-concept by offering positive learning experiences and by taking into account the affective needs of the learners.

Thus far, I have examined some important psychological aspects/personality traits that students bring to their language learning experience. Together with cognitive aspects, these factors can either enhance or hinder the learning process. It is impossible to give one single answer to the question of how affective aspects influence teaching/learning, because, as Leontiev (1971, 47) points out, a whole range of conditions are involved:

1. the correlation between motive and aim of the activity; the more they diverge, the greater the likelihood of emotional tension disrupting the activity;

2. the presence in a given situation of standard emotion-generating factors, such as the evaluation of a task as being difficult (‘too difficult’), or entailing great responsibility (‘the early assessment’), a subjective insufficiency of time, a negative remark from a teacher or friends, etc.

3. the emotional ‘background’ of mood, affective traces from previous successes or failures, an established emotive attitude to a given teacher, etc.

4. the peculiarities of the student’s personality, and above all, of the type of higher nervous activity.

Therefore, teaching methods should be conducive to various positive emotional factors, such as self-esteem, motivation, empathy, risk-taking, etc., because these will greatly assist the students’ language learning process. As a foundation, the teacher
needs to create a class atmosphere which reduces anxiety and inhibition as much as possible, stimulates self-confidence, encourages the students to discover the language through experimentation and risk-taking without fear of embarrassment, and which makes the students feel comfortable and secure in general.

6.3.1.1 Psychological Aspects Pertaining to the Drama and Theater Method

It is my hypothesis that the drama methods used for FL teaching facilitate the development of positive psychological factors, which in turn enhance FL communication skills. I believe that students benefit psychologically from either being involved in a drama project or by participating in dramatic exercises in class.

Susan Stern (1981) concluded from her psycho-linguistic studies that:

"drama encourages the operation of certain psychological factors in the participant which facilitate communication: heightened self-esteem, motivation and spontaneity, increased capacity for empathy, and lowered sensitivity to rejection" (77).

In the following, I will explain the beneficial relationship of both in greater detail.

During one of the first lessons of my Elementary German class, I usually ask the students at the beginning of class to get out of their seats, walk around the room, greet the fellow students with a handshake and a couple of sentences (e.g., ‘Hallo, ich bin Susi. Wie heißt du?’ or ‘Wie geht’s?’) I also give them different situations in which they imagine they are meeting another person, e.g., at a funeral, at the governor’s ball, on the street after many years, in the disco, etc. (see also similar exercises by Maley and Duff 1979). Why start a language class in this way? A dramatic warm-up exercise gets students on their feet and moving while they speak. It puts language in a realistic context and warms up their voices. But most importantly, it helps them to break down their inhibitions with regard to speaking and interacting and makes them laugh, which can reduce anxiety in the process. It helps to build a group feeling of familiarity and
trust. On an individual basis, students have a chance to experiment with the foreign language without being put on the spot. Exercises like this seldom take more than 10 minutes, and can substitute for the usual teacher-student warm-up questions where students often feel much more pressure to ‘perform.’

In another situation, the teacher introduces the following exercise (from the 3rd/4th semester on): The students are told that each of them is a new student at a German university who is looking for three roommates to share an apartment or house. Everyone gets a role card with a brief description of the situation and his/her persona. They all meet at the housing office, with the goal of talking to the other students (about lifestyles, hobbies, smoker/non-smoker, etc.) and finding three compatible roommates. Once they have formed groups, each student will receive a particular task, for example: 1. deciding who gets which room; 2. creating house rules; 3. assigning cleaning tasks; and 4. assigning who buys groceries and who cooks (adapted from Bjornstad and Karolle 2000, 134-136). After this has been discussed in the group, the results are briefly reported to the other groups. Afterwards, the students have a short time to think about a problem that could come up for the roommates and improvise it for the rest of the class. Problems could also be shown in form of a ‘statue’ (frozen image, see Chapter IV, 1.1.1.1) without language, or one sentence that reflect emotions of the people in the statue. The problems are discussed by all of the students at the end of the exercise.

In this dramatic improvisation exercise, communication in the foreign language is put into context. Drama sets the mood and scenario, which should be quite realistic for the students, as several of them have most likely experienced such a living situation, if not in Germany, then in their own country. The exercise gives the students not just random questions and answers, but instead offers them a reason for speaking the foreign language. It is more goal-oriented than language-oriented, and the spirit is “we need to get something done”, rather than “concentrating on producing correct grammar.” It is
therefore highly motivating and gives them a feeling of accomplishment. The role cards, the assignment of tasks (e.g., come up with a schedule for cleaning tasks), and the small group atmosphere encourage all students to participate. When I do the exercise in class, my students are always very engrossed in the situation and forget to stop when class is officially over (they are intrinsically motivated, or in a state of “flow”, see also ‘motivation’ in this chapter). Students have told me that they feel like they have accomplished something, and that they are amazed at what they are able to do in the new language (increased self-esteem). “The feelings of success and satisfaction derive from the students’ realization that they are able to interact with others and that they are being understood and that they understand others” (Via 1976, xiv).

The progression from the given role, to the more open task of negotiation with just a few guidelines, to free communication about and in the final role-play helps students to gain self-esteem (each has a task, a problem to solve), build confidence in spontaneous interaction and risk-taking, and encourages creativity and empathy. Newly gained confidence in one interaction (exercise or individual task) stimulates further communication attempts and leads to a greater openness towards the FL, and in many cases, to improved speaking skills (Hawkins 1993, 63).

Such an exercise also practices discourse strategies, since the given personality traits on the role cards (smoker/non-smoker, etc.) create conflicts, and the students feel the need to negotiate, empathize, and compromise—skills that are character-building in general.

Dramatic role-play changes the power structure in the class. Instead of the usual teacher-student relationship in communication, the exercise leads the students to an equal partnership between students, with the teacher acting as a consultant. Students learn better, says Tönhoff (1995, 14)
(a) wenn Unterrichtaktivitäten die Eigenständigkeit und Initiative der Lernenden fördern,

(b) wenn die sprachliche Interaktion zwischen den Lernenden (z.B. durch Gruppenarbeit, Rollenspiele, Drama) erhöht wird.

The improvisation at the end of the exercise helps the students react spontaneously in the target language, without thinking much about grammar and vocabulary, and without trying to be perfect. In a nonthreatening, trusting class environment, improvisations encourage learners to let go of their inhibitions and take risks (personal and language risks). In that state of spontaneity, students ‘let go’ of their own self-consciousness and quickly become empathic towards the characters they are playing. Often in improvisations, nonverbal elements are automatically added to the character, as they help to convey meaning when certain FL vocabulary is missing. This also makes speech seem more real, as “improvisation is a characteristic of any human interaction” (Brumfit 1984, cited in Shimizu 1993, 146). Through improvisation students learn not only about communication and discourse strategies, but also about their ‘Self’, which enriches their personal life.

All of the above-mentioned aspects of personal learning through drama exercises are intensified when FL students perform in a play.

"When the curtain came down and the audience applauded, I felt so immensely proud of myself and of our whole group. I couldn’t believe that I just played in two German skits and sang two songs in “German” and the audience understood me and loved it!” (German language student from Hawaii.)

The purposefulness, goal-orientation and ‘realness’ of performing a play is what attracts the students’ interest. “Drama is a purposeful activity because it gives the students something to do that has a beginning, a middle, and an end, even if the end is a performance before their own classmates” (Lester, cited in Via 1976, xiv). Students
have personal goals (to succeed in playing a role) as well as common goals (to put on a good production together). They are responsible for their own learning and for the success of the whole play, which gives them motivation and pride in their own work. Students arrive at these sensations not by receiving good grades but by the intrinsically rewarding feeling that they can make themselves understood, and that they can succeed in a more complex language task (see integrative and intrinsic motivation). "The performances gave them a tremendous sense of accomplishment and a heightened awareness of their potential to do the improbable" (Prof from Virginia, see survey). Students usually put more effort into learning their lines for a play than into studying a list of vocabulary words for a test! They are also challenged to try out their creative side and are encouraged to take risks in using their verbal and nonverbal skills, as well as in their personal behavior. Shy students, in my experience, often come out of their 'shell' when stepping into a role, which almost seems to protect them from their own frightened self. During a scene in the German Cabaret production of “So ist das Leben” at the University of Hawaii, one of my colleagues was rendered speechless by the performance of two of his students who, in his words, “hardly ever dared to say a word or a full sentence” in his class.

Through acting a role in a play or dramatic exercise, students also learn to use not just their verbal skills but their whole body as a means of expression, which helps them to break down inhibitions and experience themselves as a 'whole' person more intensively.

For staging a play, the students and the teacher should be one group, one ensemble (see Chapter IV, 2). Students have the chance to take part in the decision-making process. Some of the students in my Literature Performance class, for example, surprised me one day during rehearsals with a different, even funnier rendition of the skit “Das Ei” by Loriot (1983) (they had changed some of the words and the emotions) and they asked to have the skit added to the cabaret. After a discussion with the whole
class (in German!), it was decided to perform two different versions of the skit, both of which turned out to be a huge success and were received with more laughter than any other skit. The cabaret also contained two skits that were written, acted, and directed by the students, with myself being involved only as the language consultant. Students worked very hard (much harder and longer hours than in a regular language class!), and were highly self-confident, completely motivated and committed to making those scenes in particular a success—and what a success they were! These examples and other experiences made it very clear to me that delegating responsibilities and decision-making to the students, as well as giving them room for creativity and risk-taking, engendered much more personal and academic learning, and in addition transformed a regular language class into a “very supportive, self-motivating group” (Lester, cited in Via 1976, xiv).

Summarizing the literature pertaining to drama, the results of the national survey and my own experiences, the main individual psychological benefits of dramatic exercises or performance in foreign language learning are the feeling of pride in one’s own work, higher self-esteem and fewer inhibitions about speaking, empathy for other people, high intrinsic motivation to learn the language and enjoyment in the process, as well as a good deal of social learning (see Chapter III, 6.3.2). These important personal aspects of language learning tend to develop much more in a drama-oriented class than in a traditional FL setting, primarily because the exercises taken from theater arts demand and contribute to the creation of a nonthreatening, fun atmosphere. The playful atmosphere of drama helps to reduce the affective filter and raises the motivation to communicate with others.

Personally, I feel that the motivational aspects of drama/theater in FL learning are most important and valuable. Dramatic activities in the FL class not only inspire students to learn in class, but also to continue with the foreign language. Stern (1981, 79) writes: “They’re curative for the frustrating and lagging interest which often
occurs during L2 learning, and they facilitate acquisition of the target language as a result.”

My experience with two German theater productions, several theater evenings, and dramatic exercises in class, as well as the results from the survey (Chapter IV, 2) also validate this motivating effect. The dramatic ‘edge’ helps to generate enthusiasm for the language, advertise the language program not only on campus but in the local community as well and thereby increase enrollment at universities, colleges or high schools—an important goal for most German programs in the US. "A vital drama course can only raise the number of students taking a foreign language; it will hardly turn them away" (Faulhaber 1973, 39).

6.3.2 Social Aspects

"I am not a very social person and I was so afraid at the beginning of class that I have to speak in front of the others. Now [at the end of class] I feel much better. The atmosphere was relaxed and I even liked the theater exercises. This is the only class that I made friends in and that I really liked going to."

(16-year old German language student from who took my German language class for pre-college credit)

In the 1980s, language teaching methods shifted from teacher-centered to communicative student-centered activities; in other words, students learned not only through the transmission of information/knowledge by the teacher, but also by participating in communicative, cooperative exercises. Since then, cooperative learning has been implemented in a multitude of language learning classrooms, mainly because it improves the classroom atmosphere and provides greater opportunities for students to use the language.
In the context of a foreign language class, cooperative learning happens during group work. Therefore, it is the teacher’s task to focus not only on presenting the language material, but also to be sensitive to socio-psychological factors, such as the emotional climate of the group (or class), group dynamics, or the cohesion of the group. Group cohesiveness can be defined as “the strength of relationship linking the members to one another and to the group itself” (Forsyth 1990, 10). It is important to look at factors “that bind a group together and give it a unity, a dynamic which is different from the sum of characteristics of the individuals which comprise it” (McDonough 1981, 85). Getting to know one another is one of the most important factors in promoting group member relations. Other factors include:

Table 3: Factors of Group Member Relations (Arnold 1999, 160, my summary).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>(physical distance);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>(situations where individuals can meet, in and outside the classroom);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>(situations in which the behavior of each person influences the others’);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-operation</td>
<td>(between members for common goals);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful completion of whole group tasks</td>
<td>(sense of group achievement);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergroup competition</td>
<td>(brings together members of the small groups);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint hardship</td>
<td>(a special case of group achievement, such as carrying out a difficult task together);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common threat</td>
<td>(e.g., the feeling of fellowship before a difficult exam)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Groups that stay together for a longer time, in which the individual members build personal relationships and work towards a common goal (such as a class that works on
a play) are also called “Wir-Gruppen”. Students develop an informal affective structure within their group and their own “social casting” (Leontiev 1981, 125). Group members have to adhere to group norms and group pressure, and need to learn how to deal with them appropriately. They learn not only to understand and predict the behavior of others and become empathic, but also to defend their ideas and their own role in the group. The individual learner in the group develops or uses already acquired social and group interaction skills, such as taking turns, negotiating, listening, encouraging, helping, accepting others’ opinions or disagreeing respectfully. These social learning skills are closely correlated with the psycho-physiological state of the individual learner (self-esteem, motivation, etc.), and help to create group trust and teamwork. Good group dynamics encourage the more anxious learner to let go of inhibitions, open up, try, and have fun; in short, a favorable group situation impacts the learning outcome (short or long term) for each student, and can therefore be considered as a prerequisite for effective language learning in a FL class. Group dynamics can be more powerful than the teacher.

Schiffler (1980, 11) stresses the importance of forms of teaching that enhance social interaction of the students. Interactive forms of teaching are all activities in the class, which lead to:

- interaction between the learners;
- learner-driven communication: i.e., all statements and utterances whose content is determined by the learner himself;
- self-sufficiency, decision-taking and joint decision-taking on the part of the learners;
- co-operation of the learners in responsible partner work and interactive group work.

Baur (1990, 30) also suggests that teachers practice social forms of learning that alleviate fear and inhibition:
Social learning is also fostered when the teacher transcends the limits of traditional social forms of teaching (i.e., teacher-centered learning, individual, partner, and group work) and uses group work in a more relaxed, creative, and active form (such as in statues, improvisations, etc.).

Teaching a foreign language using the Drama Method incorporates more open social learning structures and affective exercises, thereby promoting the positive group dynamics that are so crucial for successful learning.

6.3.2.1 Social Aspects Pertaining to the Drama and Theater Method

“Theater hat unsere Gruppe näher zusammengebracht und ich wusste, die Gruppe hilft mir, wenn ich Fehler mache.”

(German language student from Hawaii in an oral interview after the cabaret production)

Drama exercises and theater are in many ways ideal for social learning in a FL class. Most importantly, they help to reduce the affective filter, in other words, lower or eliminate anxiety and inhibition, which, as seen earlier, have a particularly detrimental impact on foreign language learning. Since Drama mainly involves working in groups of various sizes in a much more open, intensive, and creative way, this method constantly activates dynamic group processes, while stimulating and shaping social as well as other types of learning. Theater techniques are communication techniques where everybody is asked to interact in a playful way. Students learn in and through the group. The objective is cooperation rather than competition. Since the group activities are mostly goal-oriented, students must cooperate closely, be it to create a suitable 'statue' (see Chapter IV, 1.1.1.1). The relative freedom of student interaction
inherent in many dramatic exercises generates or enhances social relationships within the group. This in turn leads to a greater sense of achievement. As in a real theater group, students working on drama-oriented FL exercises need to get to know each other, and to learn to trust and accept the other group members.

Play or skit rehearsals also provide wonderful opportunities for intensive individual and group learning. Individually, students get the chance to stand before a group and observe themselves (not to mention their classmates’ reaction) as they play different roles and try various forms of behavior, (e.g., in the role of a doctor they portray in a scene, in the role of the carpenter building the scenery, and of course the role of a FL speaker). Together they practice their lines and give each other language and acting advice. They also form their social identity/role within the group of classmates (the role of the motivator, group clown, etc.). The preparation of a performance also encourages social learning within the group on a more practical level that benefits students beyond the scope of the language class:

Studenten lernen Verantwortung zu übernehmen. Organisatorische Fähigkeiten, wie Termine gemeinsam festzulegen und auch einzuhalten, pünktlich zu sein und verschiedene Aufgaben produktiv aufzuteilen, müssen von vielen erst gelernt werden, um das Projekt zu einem erfolgreichen Abschluss zu bringen. Für mehrere meiner Studenten war dies fast die wichtigste Lernerfahrung (Ronke 1993, 217).

They also cooperate in tasks such as constructing scenery, deciding which make-up to use, or developing an advertising plan. Such intense group work creates the ‘Wir-Gefühl’—the feeling of solidarity and trust among students. “The intensity of the theatrical experience and the very special bonding that is created by the team work leave a far more lasting mark on a student’s language learning career than traditional approaches” (Claire Kramsch, Prof. of German, see survey). A play production approach in FL learning permits a higher level of student participation than
conventional language learning exercises. Everyone has the feeling that he/she is needed and must actively work towards the goal. The students realize that unless they 'travel' together in this learning 'adventure' and stay intact as a group, the common goal will not be reached. The 'traveling' metaphor is often used in educational drama, because—just like on real trips—learners are bound to often “touch new grounds” in the course of their learning process (see Tselikas 1999, 53). Even students in smaller roles recognize that they are indispensable for the development of the plot, which gives them a feeling of pride and self-esteem. "It was their show," said a professor from Canada in response to the survey. “An unbeatable feeling of togetherness and cooperation” wrote a professor from Ohio in the survey. The students feel empowered to succeed on their own, with the teacher as a counselor/coach in the background. Students develop close relationships and friendships that endure even after the class is over, and the social skills acquired during this experience help them manage their lives outside the classroom.


6.3.3 Physical Aspects

"Put words into action and action into words."

(Prof. from Colorado)

Sitting still und upright is, in the eyes of many, still an indication of concentration and hard work. Unfortunately, in many university classes students are passive receptors of information. During class time, students remain in their seats, moving only to tilt back in their chairs, turn around for partner/group work, or go to the restroom. When
students are asked to stand back-to-back, walk around the room for an exercise, or even rearrange the chairs into a different seating arrangement, they usually grumble about having to get up (as I observe everyday in my college classes at the beginning of the semester), because they are not used to doing physical activity while learning. In my opinion, this is sad but not surprising, as teachers have not been sufficiently educated on how to involve students actively and creatively in class, aside from the usual role-play activities from the textbook or an occasional game. In the credential program for high school teachers, or in university-level academic courses for FL instructors in Germany or the US, emphasis is put on teaching cognitive acquisition of theoretical knowledge, while the physical or holistic dimension of learning and teaching is neglected.

So, why is the physical component so important for the FL learning process? The newer, more innovative teaching methods (e.g., TPR, the drama method, or other alternative methods) take a more holistic approach, emphasizing the importance of physical action during the learning process. They look at language acquisition research (e.g., brain research and 'whole person' learning, multi channel learning, etc.), at the importance of body movement and body language for achieving communicative competence, and at motivational factors. I will briefly explain some of the benefits that support an action-oriented FL learning method.

If one examines how the brain works in respect to FL learning (see Chapter III. 4), it becomes obvious that learning happens not only on the cognitive level but also on the emotional and physical level; in other words, our body and soul are also part of the learning process. All levels of learning are to some extent connected; for example, physical movement can stimulate intellectual ‘movement’ (learning by doing) or emotional learning (stress relief). Gudjons (1987, 10) sees the ‘actions’ of the learner as the “Vorform des Denkens, und das Denken ist letztlich verinnerlichtes Handeln”, which means: “Einlagern von Formen des Tuns in den Prozess des kognitiven
Erfassens” (Gudjons 1987, 10). Actions broaden perception and enhance understanding.

Research has also been done on the different learning channels and on how much language material learners can memorize. A study by Kleinschroth (1996, 25ff) showed that students memorized the most (90%) and forgot the least (10%) when the learning of cognitive material was supported by body movement or actions, in other words, when the kinetic learning channel was activated at the same time. This knowledge is age-old, as expressed in the Chinese proverb: “I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand!”

Taking neuro-psychological findings into account, Bleyhl (1989) refutes traditional educational principles, such as isolating problematic aspects of the language or progressing from simple to difficult exercises, with the idea that “Sprachliches [ist] um so leichter fassbar ist, je mehr Momente gleichzeitig wirken” (1989, 37, paraphrased slightly to fit the text).

One can also find evidence to support the importance of action-oriented language learning by looking at pragmatic aspects. Language is a form of social ‘action’ that is imbedded in a special socio-cultural context. When we greet people, we usually ‘move’ (shake hands, wave, or hug), speak, and have some facial expression depending on who, how, and why we meet. For example, "Guten Tag” can show happiness, respect, pure politeness, or disapproval. Most of the time, motor functions, posture, mimicry, and gestures are involved. Even in a more purely linguistic sense, there is a connection between verbal actions and physical actions, as in the case of the German idiom “an eine Person heran - “treten” (to approach a person with words or literally to ‘step’ up to a person)! People need vocal expression and/or physical expression to communicate with others.

It is not easy to synchronize a foreign language with physical movement, but this is what makes speech real and believable. During childhood, people learn to speak and act simultaneously, which thus comes naturally to them as adults when speaking their native language. In the foreign language, however, it needs to be experienced and practiced. Without practice, FL learners usually concentrate on only one; typically, they are fixated on correct grammatical speech or correct pronunciation and forget to make the appropriate movements. However, the more they get the chance to practice language in combination with physical actions (e.g., through drama exercises), the more fluently, freely, and naturally they will speak, and their fear or inhibition will subside. Together, language and movement will happen more subconsciously, as they do in real life situations in our native culture. “Verbessertes nonverbales und kommunikatives Verhalten kann nur im Tun entstehen, das heißt in der Sinnes-Wahrnehmung und im aktiven Handeln” (Müller 1995, 44).

One can also argue the importance of physical actions for the FL process by looking at personal and educational benefits in general. Active/interactive exercises foster the personal growth of the language learner. Through active participation and experimentation in different class situations, students learn new behavioral strategies. For example, they may have to problem-solve (verbally and nonverbally) in the foreign language or practice appropriate behavior in general life scenarios. They learn to make themselves understood, to trust people, to be self-confident, to take risks, and to let go of inhibitions and anxieties.
Physical or active learning also increases students' motivation to learn. The exercises are often fun and stimulating as the students do not always know what to expect. In their motivation research, Gardner and Schmidt hypothesize that physical learning is the ‘motor’ for both the ‘integratively’ motivated and the ‘instrumentally’ motivated learner (Gardner 1988; Schmidt 1991).

Body movements can also relieve stress, which has a positive effect on the brain. New research shows that in particular body movements involving 'touch' decrease a stress hormone in the brain, which is very beneficial for language acquisition (University of S. Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2003).

Along with the challenge of learning to express themselves verbally and nonverbally, foreign language learners also become skilled in observing the behavior of others. They learn to reflect on the coherence and reason as well as the context in which body movements occur while training their sensory perception skills. Ultimately, personal growth in these areas will foster more empathy for various communication situations and communication partners, especially for those from different cultural backgrounds, and will help to break down clichés. It will assist students in developing 'intercultural competence'.

Body language

"Alle gesprochenen Sprachen sind Sprachen, aber nicht alle Sprachen sind gesprochene Sprachen"
(Augusto Boal)

According to one theory, humans that lived three million years ago did not have vocal cords and had to express themselves through their bodies. Dance and other gestures were a common means of communicating the need for food or protection. In some
local tribes around the world, body movements are still more expressive and important than language. “Dance and bodily expression are a representation of culture and a reflection of society—a culture’s microcosm” (Bell 2000, 4).

Each culture has certain verbal and nonverbal forms of communication (gestures, mimicry, posture, etc.) that are important for experiencing and understanding the specific rituals and habits of that culture. These forms of communication can teach about cultural differences and similarities, for example with respect to forms of physical touch, emotional expression, eye contact, cultural beliefs, identities and values, and many others.

Although verbal language and body language can both function independently, they are closely connected, as they often depend on one another. “In a sense, language is orchestrated to a choreography of the human body” (Asher and Adamski 1982, 94). Together they can communicate cultural behaviors and emotions much more precisely and effectively.

Since people talk with their hands, feet, shoulders, head, upper body, etc. in everyday life, why would we not teach foreign language learners to do the same? If we want them to function successfully in the foreign culture, and look and sound as authentic as possible, we need to teach both language and body language that are specific to the target culture. “Physical poses, gestures, and movements support and reinforce oral production” (Feldhendler 1993, 174). Many FL students however, are instead ‘glued’ to the language book pages or other written text when speaking a dialogue; body language is almost absent, and the conversations sound and look rather “stiff” and “unreal.” During role-plays, students often do not really talk to each other, but instead concentrate only on producing their own text without paying much attention to what their dialogue partner is communicating. The reasons for this are simple: a) the synchronization of language and body movements is not easy for the FL learner and b)
most likely students are not given enough encouragement by the teacher to use gestures and facial expressions while speaking. We need to give learners the chance and the support to experiment with body language—something that needs to 'flow' together with the foreign words. In fact, communication does not need to start with spoken language. We can learn about a culture first through body language.

Heidemarie Schoffer (Schoffer 1977, 22-34) divides gestures relevant for FL learning into three simple categories:

(a) Solche, die der Unterstützung des Verbalen dienen, evtl. auch Sprachlücken kompensieren können und in ihrer kulturspezifischen Ausprägung eher rezeptiv anzueignen sind;

(b) Gesten mit quasi-lexikalischen Funktionen (wie Bejahen, Begrüßen, usw.), die meist anstelle des Verbalen gebraucht werden und auch produktiv zu verwenden sind;

(c) Gesten als situationsangepasste Substitute zur Verständigung in ‘Notfällen.'

A more in-depth and complete list of functions can be found in Baur and Grzybek (1984, 64). In a more general sense, we can differentiate between a) natural body language that is specific to the language or culture, b) personal gestures and mimicry for individual expression, and c) those that are used in specific business or everyday situations, or in specific social roles. All of these functions of body language are either important for communicating in a certain culture and society, or they reveal one’s own emotional expression as a human being. Integrating them into FL lessons will support verbal speech and help to avoid misunderstandings and misconceptions. In Europe and America, for instance, gestures have had a long tradition and are used quite frequently. Weggel (1994, 295) points out that in the Far East, by contrast, gestures are often seen as aggressive behavior for communication: “Asiaten schätzen leises und zurückhaltendes Auftreten, ruhiges bis samftes Sprechen, ‘würdige’ Bewegungen—also Disziplin und Selbstkontrolle in allen Äusserungen.” In another example, the
German gesture for “a lot of money” or “too expensive” can be mixed up with a very similar gesture in Spanish speaking countries which means, “it was very crowded” or “a lot of people”! A similar misunderstanding could occur with the gesture that means “OK” in Anglo-Saxon countries; a Japanese would most likely interpret it as “money”, a person from Malta as referring to a “homosexual male,” and if a Frenchman does not smile while making the gesture but instead looks serious, it would mean “zero”, “nothing” or “worthless” (Krohn 1988, Morris 1978, cited in Van de Sand and Bovermann 1988, 408). Many more examples can be found in the literature, also pointing out differences and similarities with respect to eye contact, posture, and distance between people. Eye contact, for example, is important for communication and conveying respect in many cultures, and foreign language learners should be reminded of it when applicable.

It should be obvious that there are times in FL classes when it is necessary to talk about and experience gestures and facial expressions that are specific to a particular culture or situation.

In the preceding section, I have demonstrated the importance of physical movement and body language for communication in a foreign language. Combining verbal and nonverbal forms of expression motivates students to learn the foreign language and boosts their success rate. In addition, it provides for a more ‘real’ encounter between different cultures, which in turn promotes the empathy and understanding that is so essential for living in our modern global system. I have suggested that many students have not learned to consciously be aware of their nonverbal abilities and do not use them for communication and (self)-expression as many classrooms emphasize mainly verbal and cognitive/intellectual aspects of learning. Drama exercises incorporate active movement of the whole body as well as body language, and can therefore benefit foreign language learning as well as the learner’s personal growth.
6.3.3.1 Physical Aspects Pertaining to the Drama and Theater Method

“It was funny how the numbers in German just came out of me! I didn’t even concentrate on saying them, I just concentrated on hitting that cup!”

(Beginning German language student after the ‘Cup Exercise’, Ch. IV)

The word “drama” comes from Greek and means “action” (or in German “Handlung”). In drama exercises, the learner is no longer an observer or a passive receptor of the language, but instead a mentally and emotionally engaged participant who experiences foreign language situations. When the students, for example, are asked to stand in a circle and hit a cup flying in the air while shouting out the German numbers (see chapter IV), find a new partner by asking certain questions, they are already ‘on the move’ and motivated ‘to do and speak.’ There is a clear connection between theater and foreign language learning. In theater, the body is one of the main instruments. In the language learning process, body movement and body language are also important tools, as I have shown above. In FL teaching, therefore, it makes sense to use theater as a means of fostering the students’ ability to express themselves verbally and nonverbally.

The strength of the drama and theater method is that it creates situations—away from the book—in which students have to combine both forms of communication. These situations or exercises help to diminish the intense fixation on the FL; learners do not concentrate exclusively on the language but on the situation, and learn subconsciously in a natural, uncontrived manner. Rehearsing for a theater play or skit is, in my opinion, one of the most effective ways to practice synchronized speech, whole body movement, and body language, as I observe when comparing the beginning and end of rehearsals for a play or a short skit.
Drama exercises also offer additional skills that can be personally useful for each individual learner. In pantomimes, dramatic role plays, or improvisations (see also Chapter IV, 1), for example, students get the chance to become aware of, experiment with, change, understand, and expand their own individual range of nonverbal expressions (body movement, gestures, mimicry etc.) as a means of communication, as well as practice their sensory perception skills. This experience helps students to become more confident and less fearful in communicating in the foreign language, within the social group of the class, and in the outside world.

In dramatic warm-up exercises, for example, physical actions can also serve to satisfy the body’s need for movement, activate the brain, or relieve stress so that learning can take place. This is equally important for an actor and a FL learner.

Another important argument for fostering the physical, nonverbal aspect of communication through drama is that the objective of both FL learning and theater is for the learner to act realistically within a fictitious context, i.e. to react appropriately and credibly in a variety of cultural situations using all means of communication. Kinesics (body movements, especially gestures and mimicry) and proxemics (distances between people or their surrounding) are just as important as speech for an ‘authentic portrayal’! For example, maintaining eye contact when appropriate is an important focus of any acting class, and is also a valuable skill in FL learning. Just as in theater, many situations in a FL class can be highly uncomfortable for the learner, making it difficult to maintain eye contact. Drama exercises help to build confidence and practice holding someone’s gaze.

Theatrical (re)enactment practices the awareness and adaptation of genuine body language that is specific and appropriate to the language or culture in question. During the discussion and rehearsal of the famous German play “Die Physiker” (Dürrenmatt) in a 4th year German university class, my students first had to analyze and understand
the body language of the characters in regards to cultural and social habits, the historical time period, and character specifics before they could give a realistic and convincing performance. In a traditional language class, students are usually asked to analyze the text without discussing important information in the stage directions. The theatrical approach thus gives a more complete and meaningful picture of the foreign language and culture than a traditional FL setting. Even less complex dramatic exercises, such as pantomimes, improvisations, and role plays, offer opportunities for the language learner to try out and enhance their body language so that it is appropriate for the given situation and context.

Another way of using drama is to ask students to first act out a dialogue nonverbally. This reduces or eliminates the fear of speaking in the foreign language, and students may get ideas about how to support their gestures with language. Other exercises or games have students use either body language or speech to solve a problem within the group (for similar approaches, see Schoffer 1977; Klippel and Schwertfeger 1987). Statues and pantomimes also help students to express themselves without speech. Two students can also share and split up body language and speech: one speaks the text; the other provides simultaneous body movements and body language. All these approaches sensitize students to nonverbal behavior as one form of communication.

In this chapter, I have shown the importance of integrating physical aspects of learning into FL education and have briefly explained how this way of teaching is supported by modern findings of learning psychology and neuro-psychology. Since the integration of body, intellect, and emotion is also of primary concern in the theater arts, the drama approach with its emphasis on verbal and nonverbal experiences can be a very useful technique. It offers the field of foreign language methodology a wide variety of exercises that bring movement and change into foreign language classes, giving the foreign language process more authenticity, and teaching a more complex, coherent
and ‘real’ way of communication. Finally, it offers a fun way of learning, which truly motivates students to become proficient in the foreign language.

Summarizing chapter III, 6 have shown the beneficial relationship between drama and theater and many aspects of the FL learning process. The examples presented showed that language learning through drama and theater fosters learning in a more holistic sense: on an intellectual, emotional, and physical level.

On the one hand, drama and theater are effective tools to improve students’ speaking and communication skills. They teach them about communication in a more complex way, and include vocal, emotional, corporeal, cultural, intellectual, and sensory elements. The exercises offer students many opportunities to use and experiment with language in a natural and meaningful context. They also help students to pronounce and intonate clearly, speak more fluently, and better correlate language with appropriate actions.

On the other hand, I demonstrated that drama exercises and theater projects positively influence personality and social factors, which are absolutely necessary for the successful acquisition of language skills. Drama and theater promote, i.e., confidence, motivation, and the breakdown of inhibition and anxiety, and foster social growth of the learner.

Finally, I pointed out that an action-oriented, interactive, and affective teaching method, like the drama and theater method, offers a fun way of learning which naturally fosters motivation towards learning or continuing with a particular foreign language.
Chapter IV: Practical Application of Drama and Theater as a Method for Teaching Foreign Languages

Auf in die Arena!

In the previous chapters, I discussed the theoretical background and the objectives for using the drama and theater in FL teaching and learning. My intention for this part of the dissertation is to show how the rationale behind this teaching approach can be put into practice.

In the following chapters, I will provide suggestions on how teachers can successfully incorporate drama and theater into their university foreign language classes and the FL curriculum, and thus make their teaching more effective, creative, and enjoyable. The two main topics that I will elaborate on are:

(1) using theatrical techniques and drama-oriented exercises in everyday teaching (as a supplement to other techniques or forms of exercises);
(2) setting up theater projects for the foreign language class and curriculum.

Therefore, I have divided this part of the dissertation into two sub-chapters. The first chapter presents various verbal and nonverbal theatrical techniques, explains the underlying principles, and offers examples for working with them in the foreign language class. It is followed by a description of selected drama-oriented exercises which use these techniques, as well as suggestions on how and when they should be applied in everyday language teaching.

The second chapter examines the practical aspects of preparing for and implementing a theater project (e.g., an entire play production or the performance of skits) within the foreign language/literature class and curriculum. It also explains the benefits of such an endeavor and makes suggestions for implementation.
Both sub-chapters are based on my own experiences with drama and theater in American university classes, ideas by other educators and researchers, as well as results from a survey conducted with American and Canadian universities in 2001.

1. Theatrical Techniques and Drama-oriented Exercises

1.1. Theatrical Techniques for Foreign Language Learning

As was shown in Chapter III, 5, there are many parallels between the fields of theater and foreign language learning. Thus, a number of techniques that are used to teach acting can also be applied effectively in the foreign language classroom. It is not the goal, however, to only copy these techniques, but to change and adapt them so that they align with the contents and objectives of the foreign language curriculum. These techniques may be verbal or nonverbal, and can be designed to achieve a variety of goals. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have focused on theater techniques that teachers can easily apply in standard communicative language classes at American universities or colleges, many of which are already suitable for beginners. Moreover, I have chosen techniques and exercises that do not require the teacher to have an extensive background in theater.

1.1.1 Nonverbal Theatrical Techniques

"Language is not only a matter of the tongue alone"

(Wolf 1993, 201)

At first glance, it may seem contradictory to use nonverbal techniques in FL teaching. After all, the main goal for FL learning is to teach students how to speak the foreign language. However, words are not always enough. 55% of what we communicate to others is conveyed through kinesics (Stewik and Büge 1994, 105). If students are to
achieve communicative competence, language teachers should teach both verbal and nonverbal language, as these modes of communication complement and support each other by conveying important meaning. Both are necessary to foster a sense of ‘real life’ communication. “The essence of human relationships is determined by gestures, poses, glances, and silences”. I strongly agree with other FL educators who propound that body movements and body language stimulate and reinforce not only oral language production, but also a wide range of social and psychological aspects of language learning. Given that our students are not particularly inclined to use gestures and mimicry during simple dialogues or role-plays in the foreign language, I feel it is especially important to use techniques that foster the awareness of nonverbal language, and to practice kinesics in combination with spoken language.

Two of the most common nonverbal techniques that are suitable for foreign language teaching are the creation of statues or body sculptures, and the use of pantomimes. These theater techniques offer a slow and gentle approach to speaking the foreign language. They can also motivate students to use and comprehend the new language.

1.1.1.1 Statues and Body Sculptures

Creating statues or sculptures is a basic theater technique that was originally developed by the Brazilian theater director and author Augusto Boal in 1980. Sculptures or statues can also be called frozen images or still images. As is the case with pantomimes, they are nonverbal—that is, created with the body and not words. Unlike pantomimes, however, there is normally no movement once the statue or sculpture is built. It is a visualization of a state or action, like a photo or a freeze frame in a video. Statues and sculptures can be integrated easily and quickly, even for teachers who have had little experience with theatrical techniques.
Statues and sculptures depict relationships, emotions, concepts, key moments of a story, or social situations involving individuals or groups. “Die Statuenbilder können Gedanken sichtbar und begreifbar machen, wozu gesprochene Sprache oft nicht in der Lage ist” (Boal 1989, 55). Students are encouraged to use gestures and/or facial expressions to convey meaning.

Whereas sculptures express the general basic setting, title or theme of a scene or relationship in a spoken or written text, statues represent the interpretation of a particular perspective (Scheller 1998, 59). In both sculptures and statues, students work either alone or in small groups. In individual statues, the student assumes a pose and freezes in that position, expressing certain feelings. In pair or group work, the poses complement each other and form a group statue. Certain characters or roles can develop out of these poses, which can be discussed afterwards. Students can also step out of a group statue or sculpture and make adjustments to it while commenting on their actions. The members of a statue can regroup if they feel that changes are necessary.

Situational statues and sculptures can also be built by a “sculptor”. He/she chooses one or more people from the class whose appearance fits the picture. These participants act like puppets with no will of their own. The sculptor can create the statue or sculpture by communicating nonverbally (or verbally) with the other participating students to guide them in assuming the desired pose and facial expression. He/she can also physically put them in pose, which requires sensitivity on the part of the sculptor. He/she can also model the mimicry for the participant to imitate. The still image should be practiced beforehand during warm-up and ‘getting to know’ exercises. After the statue or sculpture is complete and the actors are frozen in their poses, the sculptor evaluates his creation, makes corrections if necessary, and then explains the picture or his/her perspective of it to the observers. Afterwards, the still image can also be interpreted by the observers or by the ‘creation’ itself.
Working with Statues and Sculptures in a Foreign Language Class

In theater, the preparation for a sculpture or statue is normally nonverbal. In my opinion, it is appropriate to utilize verbal communication when working with statues and sculptures in foreign language teaching. Moreover, once the still image has been built, the students in the statues or sculpture—as well as the observing students—can immediately associate the physical expressions with actions and words. “Poses and statues serve as projection surfaces for verbal associations. They are therefore triggers for projective and associative speech.” For example, students can use the frozen picture as a springboard for communication in the following ways:

- Observing students can respond to the statue or sculpture orally or in writing. They can ask the statue or sculpture questions (e.g., Who are you? How old are you? How do you feel?) or come up with an interpretation of the statue/sculpture (e.g., She looks as if she is angry. I think she is arguing with the other person. Maybe they are married; maybe they work together).

- After statues and sculptures are built, they can be brought to life! They can become active and verbal, either acting out their image as a pantomime or verbalizing their emotions while being in their image (like bubbles in cartoons). An observing student can also step behind the statue, put his/her hand on the shoulder of a student in the statue, and express in the I-form what the statue might say or feel (similar to 'doubling'). They can also start a conversation with other statues (lover's talk, father and son arguing, etc.).

- After the initial verbalizing, the statue or sculpture could be dissolved into an improvised mini-scene, or students could write a story about the still image (which could be performed afterwards). Conversely, the dialogue of a role-play can be frozen at a crucial moment (like taking a snap shot) so that observing students can describe the image, ask questions (e.g., Why are you doing that?) or verbally express what the person thinks, is saying, or should be saying at this moment (See also Scheller 1998, 59).

- One group can create a statue (spontaneously or with a sculptor) to show the other students how or from what perspective they perceive a conflict, an important issue, or the context in which a situation is embedded. For example, before or at the end of a role-play discussion on the topic "Werbekampagne: Das beste Verkehrsmittel zum Verreisen", each group in my class advertised the main advantage of their
vehicle by creating a statue, which the "tourist commission" had to interpret. The creators also gave their statues a title.

- Group statues can aid in the understanding and discussion of literary texts by artistically illustrating relationships between characters, depicting the main plot, pointing out cultural differences, or seeing characters from different perspectives.

- A small group can present a series of statues or sculptures (like snap shots) that are connected (through sequence, theme, or different time periods). These can then be described and interpreted to provide a framework for an oral or written story (Schewe 2000, 89).

- Statues can be also created to show a situation or feeling as it is imagined in the past, present, or future.

**Examples of Exercises Using Statues and Sculptures in the Foreign Language Class**

**Images of opposites**

Two students work together to create contrasting feelings or situations (I like you – I don't like you; I am dependent on someone – I don't need anyone). The class can also split in two groups and create group statues about opposite concepts expressed in a text or discussion, such as freedom and oppression, war and peace (Wolf 1993, 206), summer and winter, youth and old age. These images can be used at the beginning, middle, or end of working with a text to visualize and interpret various themes and concepts in the text. This in turn can lead to a discussion in the foreign language.

**My feelings**

While working on foreign adjectives for expressing feelings or opinions, students improvise statues showing situations such as: In an (crammed) elevator, during a school class, during a robbery, at a soccer game, etc. These situations are given to the groups beforehand on small cards, but concealed from the observing students, who must guess and interpret the images and name the emotions they perceive. They can also ask to simply invent a statue that shows their perception of certain feelings, such as 'anger,' 'fear,' or 'jealousy.'

**Living pictures**

Pictures or paintings can be lifted off the page by recreating them in a sculpture (see e.g., Chapter IV, 1.2.2, (1) *Story around a Picture or Object*).
Die Wunschfigur

Individual students or small groups built a statue which expresses an important realistic or fictional personal wish (examples from my German Conversation class: "I want a nice family and two kids," "I wish I could fly for a short moment," "I would like to win much money in gambling." The other students guess, interpret, and ask the statue questions.

I am a tree

In the exercise "I am a tree" students spontaneously create a statue in progress. Students sit in a half circle. One student gets up, stands in the middle, assumes a pose and tells the others what he/she represents (e.g., "I am a tree"). One after the other (in big classes, this exercise is best limited to only a part of the class), the students position themselves in a way that adds to the picture and say what/who they portray, e.g., "I am the apple that hangs on the tree"; I am the bush next to the tree" I am the dog that pees on the tree", etc. The first person always sets the theme for the statue, e.g., "I am a circus tent", "I am a student in our German class," "I am a train." The individual statues can come alive when, for example, an observing student taps them on the shoulder, whereupon each member of the statue spontaneously makes a statement fitting to their image (e.g." The apples on me are heavy"; "When is the class finally over?"). Besides nonverbal expression, this exercise practices improvisational speech, as well as vocabulary and sentence structure. (Eckert and Klemm 1998, appendix 11.2.2).

More exercises using statues and sculptures can be found in Chapters IV, 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.

1.1.1.2 Pantomime

"Pantomime"—from the Greek—means “an imitator of (all) things.” Originally it referred to a performer, not a theatrical style. Its origins can be traced back to the 16th and 17th century, in Italian improvised comic drama called Commedia Dell'arte. For the purposes of this dissertation, I have adopted the modern American definition of "pantomime" as a basic theatrical technique that creates actions without words as a means of expression (as opposed to the British definition— “festive entertainment”). A pantomime creates a "fictional reality through movement" (Wolf 1993, 202). It can portray or express an idea, mood, or character entirely through gesture and bodily movement without the use of words.
The miming performer selects, outlines, and exaggerates in order to get across his/her own ideas. The activation of the imagination is essential just as much for the process of performing as it is for the act of beholding, guessing at the meaning of and recognizing an act or a scene (Wolf, 202).

Pantomimes can be created by individuals or groups. They can portray a simple stand-alone action, such as brushing your teeth, or a series of actions that together tell a story or show a more complex situation, e.g., visiting a dentist.

*Working with Pantomimes in a Foreign Language Class*

Most teachers are unaware that they already use small pantomimes in class to convey the meaning of words or phrases in the foreign language. Especially in beginner classes, teachers need animation through pantomime, as students have limited vocabulary and proficiency in oral language comprehension. In addition, pantomimes offer students a perfect tool for foreign language learning. They teach students to use their body to support their speech and cultural understanding, i.e., to emphasize the meaning of speech, fill language gaps, and show emotions that correspond to the meaning of words. Communication becomes more interesting, more convincing, and – most importantly of all – "real" and successful! On the other hand, pantomimes can create a purposely fictional framework where there is room for humor, dramatization, exaggeration, and extremes. It stimulates individual imagination, risk-taking, and laughter – which are also important elements of language learning.

It is important for students to understand that when words are eliminated, they can compensate with gestures. People naturally gesticulate more and more when they are not being understood. In my German classes, older students often cling to correct grammar and lack the ability to speak spontaneously and take risks. These students in particular need to practice using body language, and they must be reminded to do so. It is equally important to 'read' body language. Practicing observation skills helps students with their comprehension. By watching a speaker's nonverbal demeanor, e.g.,
in a pantomime, the foreign language learner can pick up important clues (cognitive and affective) and enrich their linguistic and cultural understanding, which in return gives them more self-confidence and motivation to learn the foreign language. Through pantomimes, cultural behavior patterns become more tangible to the students, because they can be 'experienced' rather than merely understood on the cognitive level.

Of course, it is not the goal of FL teachers to train students to become professional pantomimists! FL teachers should use pantomimes with their students mainly to connect to the spoken language, as well as to foster spontaneity and personal expression. Pantomimes are very useful as a trigger to verbal speech. They stimulate the pantomimists to explain and defend their actions, and evoke in the observing students the need to describe, examine, and interpret the pantomime. Especially while preparing for a group pantomimic scene, students need to communicate in detail about the performance, and a great deal of "real" language is created. I agree with Wolf (1993, 202), who states that even the silences which develop naturally during a pantomime can be beneficial as a "congestion of articulation" for the observer and the performer.

As is the case with statues and sculptures, pantomimes used in a foreign language class can be brought to life. They can start out nonverbally, and become verbal and later add speech (through dubbing or a traditional role-play). A dialogue can also be spoken by some students while others simultaneously mime the actions to the dialogue, provided it contains sufficient action and emotions. Pantomimes are also an excellent tool for repeating or practicing vocabulary and grammar in a fun, innovative way (see Charades in this chapter). Finally, pantomime is also an important technique when it comes to rehearsing for a play. It helps students to move on stage appropriately and confidently as they prepare for their roles. Through pantomimes, students can try out different ways of expressing their character's emotions, which helps them to understand the character and portray him/her convincingy.
Examples of Exercises Using Pantomimes in the Foreign Language Class

Warming up Body and Mind and Spirit
Students move and mime individually or in groups to warm up body and mind, get to know each other, and establish a fun and comfortable class atmosphere. For example, they might be asked by the teacher or a fellow student to walk through the room in different directions or at different speeds, or through imaginative areas and situations (see exercise [2] Walking through the clouds Chapter IV,1.2.1). In group situations, they can pretend to throw different balls at each other, or carry an imaginary object together.

Charades and Similar Games
The basic goal of this exercise is for individual students or a small group to mime a word, sentence, or concept to the observers (often to the non-acting students in their group) who guess aloud what the actors are doing. It is fun to play this drama game with two groups as an in-class competition, where student mime to their own group and win points for the group. There are many ways in which this can be played, and every teacher should use a system that works for his/her class. Items to be mimed include verbs or verb phrases (e.g., bittere Medizin trinken), adjectives and adverbial phrases (ärgerlich sein, schnell auf dem Rad fahren), prepositions (zwischen dem Stuhl und dem Schreibtisch stehen) or situations (a customer arguing about a meal in a restaurant). These items are written on little pieces of paper by the teacher (controlled language practice) and handed out to the students, who keep them confidential. Groups could also write out situations for the competing group to act out and guess.

If the intent is to practice grammar or vocabulary, the teacher can give points for each correct guess, as well as additional points, e.g., for the correct present perfect form of the guessed verb or correct conjugation of the verb in a sentence. The acting student can also help by miming the number of syllabi in a word, the number of words in a
sentence, or the type of word (verb, adjective, etc.) to the observers. Other variations can be found in (Wessels 1987, 41; Smith 1984, 100; Maley and Duff 1979, 38)).

*Other Classroom Strategies*

Start the class off nonverbally, miming to the students what you have done on the weekend (last night, during vacation etc.). Students shout out individual words or sentences, pointing out all the details about what they think the teachers is trying to convey. Afterwards, the students can do the same exercise with a partner or small group. The nonverbal behavior motivates students to speak, since they are genuinely interested to find out if they guessed right. This can be an effective warm-up alternative to the usual small talk questions asked by the teacher. In the same way, many other situations or words can be mimed to the partner at a later point during the lesson, e.g., standing in a crammed elevator trying to reach the floor buttons (see exercise [3], Chapter IV, 1.2.2) or things that Lindbergh brought into the plane (in Der Ozeanflug by Brecht, see Lys et al. 2002, 226).

Students watch a story on a video without sound. They can mime the actions with words, describe or retell the mimed scene orally or in written form, or write a dialogue to the silent actions and perform it.

Students rehearse a role-play or scene and present it to the class first as a pantomime without words. This can alleviate the fear of speaking the new language while introducing the dialogue to the observing students. The other students or the teacher can follow up with questions (e.g., Where do you think the scene takes place, How old do you think the characters are? etc.) before the dialogue is performed verbally. In rehearsing for a FL production, it is advantageous to act out a scene first as a pantomime, so that students can experiment with their character's demeanor, habits, moods etc. and decide how to portray them. It will then be easier for the students to
bring verbal and nonverbal actions together and act convincingly. For more exercises using pantomimes, please see Chapter IV, 1.2.

**Benefits of Using Statues/Sculptures and Pantomimes in the Foreign Language Class**

- Nonverbal activities, such as statues/sculptures and pantomimes, serve as an excellent springboard for student-centered verbal communication.

- Students use 'real', contextualized language in preparing, describing, or interacting with the statue/sculpture or pantomimes.

- They bring the foreign text alive for the students by visualizing key moments, attitudes, ideas, and conflicts of a story. Statues/sculptures and pantomimes are 'affective/physical' techniques that support students' intellectual understanding of a scene in a text or context. They are also an excellent means of preparing students for a foreign text, a dramatic exercise, or a full-length play, and they help students to reflect on these activities afterwards.

- Pantomimes in particular are an important tool for fostering intercultural learning. They can be used to engage students in cultural encounters and confrontations or reveal stereotypes (students can mime cliché images of different countries, see also Van de Sand and Bovermann 1988);.

- Statues/sculptures and pantomimes serve as an outlet for students' personal expression. Students become more conscious of their own body and learn to talk with it. The dialogues and role-plays performed by the students become more real and animated – a definite improvement over the often wax figure-like and emotionless performances that typify traditional FL classes. In addition, these techniques sharpen the student's perception and observation skills.

- Students learn more effectively by having the material presented in different ways and through different channels (see multi-channel learning, Chapter III, 4).

- The use of statues/sculptures and pantomimes inspires students to be creative and imaginative. They learn to improvise and experiment with the foreign language. Students can gain confidence by exhibiting some of their other creative talents, which they may have previously kept hidden.

- Such nonverbal activities offer a more sensitive, gentle and effective introduction to speaking and acting the foreign language (see also the TPR approach, Chapter 3.2.5), in that they can help students to overcome barriers (e.g., the fear of
speaking), low self-confidence, stress, or other personal handicaps all of which are common obstacles to language learning. They encourage students to take risks in class.

- Statues/sculptures and pantomimes foster group dynamics by helping students to open up in front of their peers and the instructor, and by promoting greater receptivity to the foreign language in general.

- They make learning fun because they create a playful atmosphere and introduce some variety into the lesson (e.g., with practicing grammar and vocabulary).

- The techniques in their simple form are flexible and easy to adapt for the teacher and the student, since body language itself (e.g., gestures and mimicry) is innate and therefore requires no instruction. Nonetheless, students need to be introduced to this kind of teaching approach in small steps. For example, pantomimes can evolve from short, simple physical actions with a partner to more complex emotional expressions (if desired), mimed individually or with a group in front of the class. The exercises need not be time-intensive.

**When to Use Statues/Sculptures and Pantomimes in the Foreign Language Class?**

- as a warm-up to speaking and introducing a specific topic, or to vitalize body and mind;

- when introducing, preparing for, or analyzing a text (see also Waldmann 2001, 172, example of building statues in "Besuch der alten Dame" by Dürrenmatt; Schewe 2002, 81, on using pantomimes in a text by Linus Reichlin);

- in guided practice to refresh and practice vocabulary, grammar, and speech functions (mostly pantomimes);

- in the language application phase, e.g., at the beginning, middle, or end of an improvisation, role-play, or other exercise as a means of preparation, analysis, or reflection (see e.g., Chapter IV, 1.2.2 [9] Communicating with Extraterrestrials);

- as an introduction to more advanced applied exercises, such as the enactment of larger scenes or a full-length play;

- any time in a lesson when concentration is faltering or variety is needed.
Language Skills Fostered through Statues/Sculptures and Pantomimes

- Oral language skills, contextualized real speech, prepared and improvised;
- Creative use of the language;
- Lexis and grammar skills, (more with pantomimes);
- Cultural learning (if applicable);
- Listening comprehension skills (see also TPR, Chapter III, 3.2);
- Writing skills (if applicable).

1.1.2 Verbal Theatrical Techniques

1.1.2.1 Role-play

Role-playing is commonly used in the realm of theater to cast actors for a play and to prepare them for their roles during rehearsals. It helps actors to experience and understand what it feels like to be in someone else's shoes and gives them an awareness of how others behave, think, and feel. They learn about themselves and how others perceive them. Role-playing, as actors do it, is not a performance; rather, it helps them to further explore the character they will play as well as find alternative ways of portraying the character. "Two goals of role playing are to expand the actor's vocabularies of behavior and to increase their comprehension of a wider range of behavior in others" (Smith 1984, 9).

Through role-playing, a variety of emotions or problems, certain body language, and language structures that arise in the interaction between people can be isolated and discussed.

Working with Role-Plays in the Foreign Language Class

As in the world of theater, it is also assumed in foreign language learning that students benefit from playing roles in different situations, but in comparison they use the
foreign language. Role-play is seen here as a technique that utilizes such role-playing. Many FL teachers and textbooks use role-plays in their lessons.

In class, students prepare and act out roles that may be similar to or different from their personal life using the foreign language. In most cases, they project themselves into the identity of another person, e.g., a waiter, a sales person, a landlord, a mother. For the students, these ‘as-if’ situations create a bridge between the world of the known and personal to the new and less known (see Tselikas 1999, 36). Most importantly, role-plays offer students many opportunities to practice and apply the foreign language and experience different forms of communication. "Role-play seemed to stimulate them [the students] to activate their passive competence of the language," (Stern 1981, 85) as well as help them master new language situations more easily.

There are many approaches to the role-play technique, not all of which can be discussed in the scope of this dissertation. The tasks, problems, roles, and situations, as well as the interaction itself, can range from the simple to the highly complex. Generally speaking, role-plays are either based entirely on a written script (such as a course book dialogue, a text written by the teacher, or a literary text), there may be some guidelines, or they may be entirely open for the students to interpret creatively.

In the most structured type of role-play, students act out predetermined roles in fixed situations using controlled language. This form of role-play usually focuses on certain grammar structures or vocabulary in keeping with the lesson topic. However, there is a difference between having learners merely read or speak the words exactly as they are given in the text and having them use body movement/body language or interpretation beyond the printed page (i.e., elaboration on the context, tone of voice, intonation, paralinguistic features, or emotions of the different characters.). I agree with other educators that the former type of exercise should be referred to as ‘dialogue’ instead of
‘role-play’ (Bell 2000; Eckert and Klemm 1998; Schewe 1993 and others). Dialogue will not be discussed further in this chapter.

Most role-plays are guided by the teacher in some way. They may still be based on a text or videotaped conversations between native speakers, and often focus on communicative functions, grammatical structures, or vocabulary topics from a certain learning unit (e.g., buying a train ticket, making a date, ordering a meal, asking for information at the tourist office, etc.), but they leave room for students’ own interpretation. The objective is for the students to adapt the role-play to their situation or purpose and use their own words.

Open role-plays normally provide a topic, but students freely create their own scenario, characters, and dialogue, while experimenting with the language they have already acquired. For example, they may have to resolve a conflict and decide the outcome, make a decision, or lodge a complaint. The teacher's goal is to lead students from modeled role-plays to open/improvised ones. To facilitate this transition, students can be given ‘role cards.’ These cards may contain the exact dialogue (which can produce stilted conversations!), key information about the role with vocabulary hints, or only a description of the people, their personal attitudes, and the situation—in which case the student is responsible for inventing the details of his own role.

Role-play exercises should be structured. They should consist not only of the exercise itself, but also involve preparation and feedback stages. A solid preparation for role-playing is indispensable, especially for the lower levels. This phase should introduce the topic, the situation, vocabulary words, and grammatical structures. In addition, warm-up exercises that lower the affective filter within the group are always necessary, as they boost students’ self-confidence when it comes to performing in front of their classmates.
To lead lower level learners into role-plays, teachers often use model “mini-situations” that deal with a similar topic and provide examples of the required type of language. These mini-situations are acted out in pairs, and in most cases are performed in front of the class. In the next step, the mini-situations are combined into a more complex situation—a role-play, which is then practiced and presented in its entirety by each group. The role of the teacher is to assist each group with language problems and to motivate the students to try to 'act' out their roles using movement, gestures, and mimicry rather than just repeat them from memory like robots.

Follow-up activities include a period of reflection and discussion during which students express their feelings about the role-plays and talk about any successes or problems they experienced (e.g., social interactions within the group). The teacher also comments on the presentations and corrects serious mistakes. If applicable, audio or video recordings of the students' role-play (or the same role-play performed by native speakers) might be played and discussed. Role plays can be evaluated by the teacher, e.g., on the basis of students’ command of vocabulary and structures, comprehension, fluency, level of communicative competence, as well as originality, creativity, and effort.

Unfortunately, the role-play instructions found in textbooks do not always reflect an underlying structure for this type of exercise. They do not adequately discuss or even mention the different aspects of role-play, or give any suggestions for the teacher. Many books provide only the scenario with the title "Rollenspiel" with no further explanation in the annotations for the instructor (e.g., Kaleidoskop by Moeller 2002, 89; Vorsprung by Lovik 1997). In some instances the teacher’s manual gives instructions, such as "Dialoge erarbeiten und dann vorspielen lassen (Deutsch Aktiv 2, Lehrerhandbuch, cited in Schewe 1993, 149) which does not help the instructor to plan an effective role-play. Consequently, it is my experience that many teachers use role-plays here and there in their classes to give students the feeling that they are applying
the foreign language, but that they do not really follow a structure or set specific learning objectives. When asked, a number of German instructors admitted that they often do not prepare the role-play adequately, set learning goals, motivate students to physically act out the texts, or get to the feedback/reflection phase. It is my hope that in the future, books will provide teachers and students with more role-play guidance, so that this type of exercise can be more effective.

The most important factor for determining the success of a role-play exercise is, in my opinion, the choice of the topic and the characters. If students can identify with the part they are playing, they will be motivated to speak and enjoy what they are doing. However, the role does not necessarily have to originate from the student's realm of experience. In some cases, the distance between the students and their roles makes it easier for them to portray novel behaviors and experiment with new verbal and nonverbal communication under the guise of their roles (like putting on a costume and using props). The most important thing is that the topic and the characters appeal to the students in one way or another.

Unfortunately, teachers do not always have the time to come up with interesting and creative role-play topics. Moreover, many textbooks do not provide realistic and/or appealing role-play activities, but instead “geschlossene didaktisierte (Alltags-) Dialoge” about “singularly undramatic situations of everyday life” (Schewe 1993, 9).

Examples:

*Was und wie ist das?*

Deutschprofessorin: Hören Sie jetzt gut zu und antworten Sie auf Deutsch! Was ist das?
Jim Miller: Das ist der Bleistift.
Deutschprofessorin: Welche Farbe hat der Bleistift?
Susan Smith: Der Bleistift ist gelb….

*(Wie geht's ? by Sevin and Sevin 2000, 5)*
Chapter IV: Practical Application of Drama and Theater as a Method for Teaching FL

In der Konditorei (3-4 Personen)

It is difficult to understand why textbook dialogues or role-playing exercises are often banal, obvious, uneventful, and undramatic! People in life argue about issues or are in a bind about how to act; situations become tense, explosive und change due to unexpected influences. They do not all reach an agreement or have a happy ending. Why is it that nothing unusual, unexpected, or bizarre happens in textbook role-plays when these language situations are supposed to reflect "real" life? I agree with Schewe (1993, 9) that students find unusual or dramatic situations much more appealing and exciting. In the following, I will offer some suggestions on how a typical FL role-play can be made more dramatic by applying simple theatrical principles and techniques:

(1) Developing the role
Role-play instructions in textbooks or method books assign learners roles in a given situation, but in many cases students are not given detailed information about the individual character or what is needed to develop the role and make it more real or believable. At best, such textbooks offer vague information about the scenario, but the characters often remain elusive (see example below)! Schewe (Schewe 1993, 161) critically points out: "Diese Grundvoraussetzungen für die Entwicklung einer Rolle werden in den Übungsanweisungen unserer Lehrbücher kaum erfüllt, so dass es nicht wunder nimmt, wenn etliche Rollenspiele ‘verflachen’.”

Beispiel:
(Neue Horizonte by Dollenmayer and Hansen 1999, 420).
Dramatic role-play asks students to empathize with the role they are playing, which they can do only if they have access to information about their character. This will in turn enable them to develop the context for the role-play. This information can have many sources—it can come from the textbook itself, the students can do their own research on the character, or they can invent it. Students should be motivated to think about who the characters are, how they may feel, think, look, move, speak, in what time period they live, and what relationship they have with other people in the role-play. Knowing this information will make the characters “stand up from the printed page and become people with real-life feelings and needs” (Wessels 1991, 53). Students will have a much better sense of how to convincingly step into the shoes of an imagined character and what kind of language and gestures are appropriate for the scene they are acting out. If this information is missing, the students are "working in a kind of vacuum in which the piece of information has no real foundation.” (Wessels, 55).

For Scheller (1989, 15ff) character development is based on “innere Haltung” (inner state, e.g., wishes, moods, interests, social, cultural, and political orientation, etc.) and “äußere Haltung” (persona, e.g., physical and linguistic expressiveness). Schewe (1993, 165) speaks of various “role aspects” (Figure 5), such as biographical details, status, intention and attitude that are necessary for character portrayal.

Figure 5. Preparation of role-portrayal (Schewe 1993, 165)
Although it would be wonderful if students always had time to spend on developing their character as suggested by the above educators, I believe that for many high school and university-level FL classes, this is not a realistic goal. However, it is realistic for teachers to make the effort to encourage their students to discuss the background of their character and develop the context as much as possible in the time available. This in turn will make the role-play situation more real, meaningful, and enjoyable (e.g., ‘How does your character feel at this moment?’; ‘Why is he storming out of the room?’; ‘Do you think he is married? Why?’; ‘Why is this word emphasized?’; ‘Is he self-confident?’). Students can also be asked to introduce themselves in a short monologue or write a role biography before the role-play begins (examples, see Scheller 1989, 118; Waldmann 2001, 121). They can also use other exercises to get into the role as suggested by Scheller (1998). This way, when they act out the role-play, they feel, as if they are in the situation. They are much more motivated to play the role, rather than merely complete the assigned task (see also Chapter III, 6.1.1.). Likewise, textbook authors are encouraged to provide a clearer and more comprehensive description of the role-play characters, so that students can use this information in preparation for their roles—provided the exercise is intended to be a role-play and not an improvisation!

(2) Introducing the elements of surprise and the extraordinary

Situations in life do not always go as planned, and they are certainly not unemotional. Unfortunately, too many role-play situations for FL learners, as mentioned above, do not reflect this reality. By adding the unexpected—e.g., surprise, tension, or conflict—the role-play becomes more realistic, or at least more compelling for the learner. Even the bizarre, which is so typical of drama, can spice up FL role-plays. More important, such elements challenge learners to respond to a variety of situations through their speech, their emotions, and their body. A picky customer, a tooth in the soup, or a defiant child can transform an otherwise obvious, banal role-play situation into drama.
For example, two of my college students were asked to role-play a situation in a travel agency. They changed the normally friendly travel agent to a ruthless crook who cheated his customers out of their money. Judging from the students’ concentration in acting out the roles as well as from the reactions of the audience, the role-play captured everybody’s attention; moreover, it did far more to prompt a discussion in the target language than several other uneventful role-plays done by other students (see also # 7 The Haunted Castle in this chapter). "Überraschendes wirkt wie Schokolade!“ (Eissele 2003, Stern magazine, 147) . This quote explains precisely the effect that the element of surprise in role-play can have on the students.

It is important to always encourage students to role-play situations where things do not necessarily go as planned (see [1] Hallo! Wie geht's? in this chapter). Even a small diversion can make the role-play more eventful, e.g., if one of the characters sneezes frequently, something slips out of his/her hand, or a baby is fussy in the background.

A role-play does not always have to be realistic to be dramatic. A bit of the surreal, an outrageous twist—a passenger in the bus turns out to be Tarzan or God—can often be much more motivating and enjoyable for the students.

"Je ungewöhnlicher und unalltäglicher die Figuren im Rollenspiel aufeinandertreffen, desto weiter wird das Spektrum der sprachlichen Interaktionsmöglichkeiten und desto spannender wird die dramatische Szene" (see Schewe 1993, 168).

If role cards are used, it is advisable that each student gets to see only his/her own instructions. This forces them to use their speech to discover and respond to the intentions and emotions of the role-play partner. Unfortunately, both role-cards are often printed in the text book (e.g., in Treffpunkt by Widmaier and Widmaier 2003, 185) or even on one page (e.g., Deutsch Aktiv 2, 92 see Schewe 1993, 156), which takes away the element of surprise. I agree with Hawkins (1993, 65) that it is often the
teacher and not the student who is afraid to give a situation a dramatic focus. Students normally adapt to the given task quite easily, are successful in using the vocabulary and grammatical structures on their own individual level, and are often much more creative and daring in their role-play approach than we would expect. The famous Swiss dramatist Friedrich Dürrenmatt (1991, 48) summarizes best what is meant by utilizing the elements of the unexpected and extraordinary to make a role-play situation more dramatic:

If I show two people having a cup of coffee and talking about the weather, about politics or fashion, however brilliant their conversation may be, this does not in itself make a dramatic situation or a dramatic dialogue. Something more has to be added to make their chat so special, dramatically charged, double-tracked. If, say, the spectator knows that there is poison in one of the cups, or indeed in both, making the conversation one between two poisoners. Then by this stratagem the coffee-time discussion becomes a dramatic situation, on which basis dramatic dialogue becomes possible …Without the addition of a dramatic charge, an especial situation, there can be no such thing as dramatic dialogue (translation by Schewe and Shaw 1993, 9-10).

(3) Narrowing the scope of the role play

Instead of providing a long but general description of the role-play situation and the characters, the students should be given a limited choice of characteristics and actions, which they can use to develop the character they will play. For example, in a role-play between a renter interviewing a new male roommate, the role-card could say the following: he just moved out of his girlfriend’s house because there were too many parties and he couldn’t study; he does not really want to live with other people, but has to due to financial constraints; he/she hates pets and is addicted to cigarettes; prior to being interviewed, he had a terrible fight with his girlfriend and still feels angry and resentful. Limiting the scope of the role-play creates a certain tension, and can also be used to have the learner focus on specific language learning goals.
(4) **Bringing in the emotional and physical aspects of language**

The teacher should suggest that students use the classroom as their stage, encourage them to move around freely (possibly involve the audience in their play as props), and experiment with different ways of showing emotions during the rehearsal. In other words, students should practice acting and speaking the text with some emotion and body language (and not as emotionless robots!). Prior warm-up exercises are absolutely necessary (see Chapter IV, 1.2).

(5) **Creating stage directions**

Stage directions help learners to combine verbal and nonverbal language features. They also sensitize them to different ways that feelings can be expressed in the foreign language, and remind them to get out of their chairs and be ‘act’ive. Stage directions can be added to the scripted text by the teacher, or formulated by the students according to their interpretation of the text or their own role-play script (vocabulary practice). In addition to or instead of written stage directions, each student group can appoint a director who suggests stage directions and makes sure that the role-play does not become too static.

(6) **Utilizing props, as well as sounds and smells, if applicable.**

Students should be motivated to use authentic or appropriate props, sounds, and smells to help create the role-play situation and aid in the understanding of the action.

(7) **Emphasizing the importance of correct intonation and stress**

It is the teacher’s task to make students aware that intonation and stress are of utmost importance for expressing a particular emotion or attitude, for avoiding misunderstandings, and in general for the meaning of the text. Intonation exercises prior to the role-play are imperative (see Chapter IV, 1.2.). The instructor should also help students in preparing for the role-play, but then teach them self-monitoring skills.
(8) Combining role-plays with other theatrical techniques

Other techniques such as pantomime (acting out the text without words), statues/sculptures (isolating and emphasizing important moments in the role-play), improvisation, doubling, stopping (exchanging characters through classmates, see Forum Theater), and role-switching (to engender empathy and understanding for both characters) can be successfully used in conjunction with role-play activities.

(9) Simulcasts

For simulcasts, a short play is broken up into continuous scenes, which are assigned to student groups. After rehearsals, they are performed one after the other in the correct order. Students sometimes have to adjust to playing opposite genders if needed for the scene, which adds fun. The play should be discussed prior to this role-play exercise. It is an exciting approach that offers maximum student involvement.

(10) Manipulating the text in different ways

Scripted texts can be altered by the teacher or student in a variety of ways:

- Leave the text open-ended or create information gaps, which add room for creativity and tension. Lengthen or shorten dialogues. Give 6-8 words from a text as cues for the role-play.
- Reverse some of the events in a role-play. Change the time period in which the text takes place (e.g., a futuristic fairytale). Give the text a different location or context. (For ideas on changing literary drama texts, see Waldmann 2001, 145.).
- Have students write in or add characters that bring in an element of surprise, or emphasize certain ideas or types of people. My students added an irritating teenager to the skit “Der Feierabend” by the German comedian Loriot [1885,120] to underscore the feelings of the annoyed father.
- Change the emotions in the scene. (See [2] Show your emotions in this chapter).
Examples of Role-Play Exercises for the Foreign Language Class

One can find numerous lists of role-play topics in literature. I have chosen the following role-play ideas, because they are either in themselves dramatic or have the potential to become more appealing to the students when some of the aforementioned dramatic principles are added. With my students, these role-plays were successful in terms of fostering language acquisition and motivating them to use the language in oral and written form.

(1) 'Hallo! Wie geht's?'
Role-plays about a simple topic, such as "sich kennenlernen/sich verabreden" (meeting and arranging a date) are found in most German textbooks. These role plays can be spiced up to produce more interesting and communicative results if just a few dramatic principles are incorporated into the instructions and into the execution of the role-play: Instead of the following instructions: "Du lernst eine Person kennen und möchtest dich mit ihr verabreden. Nach einem kurzem Gespräch (Hobbies, Alter, Herkunft, etc.) versuche mit der Person ein Datum, eine Uhrzeit und einen Ort für ein Treffen zu arrangieren." the teacher can provide more specific goals and information about the preparation and execution of the role-play, which could look like this:

Rollenspielanleitung

"Zwei Personen lernen sich kennen (Ort nach eurer Wahl). Nach einem kurzem Gespräch (Hobbies, Alter, Herkunft, etc.) versucht die eine Person sich mit der anderen zu verabreden und etwas gemeinsam zu unternehmen. Sie arrangiert ein Datum, eine Uhrzeit und einen Ort für das Wiedersehen. Es kann eine persönliche Verabredung (a date) oder nur ein normales Treffen sein."

Die folgenden Kriterien sind wichtig bei der Vorbereitung:

1. Das Leben läuft nicht immer wie geplant! Es ist voller Komplikationen, Überraschungen, und es passieren ungewöhnliche (unusual) Dinge. Denkt daran in eurem Rollenspiel!
2. Lasst eure Personen Emotionen zeigen!
Zum Beispiel können eine oder beide Personen so sein:

- verliebt
- intensiv
- launisch (moody)
- unfreundlich
- ärgerlich (angry)
- schwerhörig
- nervös
- jung/alt
- merkwürdig (weird)
- schüchtern (shy), etc.

**Vorbereitung:** Vor dem Schreiben des Dialogs diskutiert (und macht Notizen) mit eurem Partner über:

- eure Rolle: biographische Informationen, Aussehen, Charakter, Absichten, etc.;
- den Inhalt: Ort, Situation, Tag und Uhrzeit, Zeitperiode (Vergangenheit, heutige Zeit, Zukunft), etc.

Vor dem Vorspielen beschreibt bitte für die anderen Studenten eure Person (Rollen-Monolog).

**Probe:**

By mentioning (orally and in writing!) just these two criteria and goals for the preparation, the results of this otherwise quite predictable role-play usually change ‘dramatically’! The short role monologue (before the role-play or even before the actual writing of the role-play) emphasizes to students the importance of good role development. At any point during the preparation or right before the role-play, students could also be asked to create a statue in which they show where their role-play takes place (taxi, spa, prison, school counselor, etc.). The other students guess the location.

During the role-play, some students could be asked to role-play twice. The second time around, they can involve the audience by using techniques, such as stopping the action to change it or doubling the emotions of the characters. The extent to which
these techniques are utilized will depend on the available class time, the familiarity with the techniques on the part of the teacher, and the class atmosphere. However, it is worth trying one of these techniques, if for no other reason than to get students to speak while breaking up the monotony of having to watch one role play after another.

Comments
The students in my beginning German college class (ages 17 to 62!) came up with the most unusual scenarios for where and how people can meet (as zoo keepers in a monkey cage, during a car accident, sitting on the same cloud in heaven, etc.!) The dialogues were creative, varied, and anything but boring! Many students were able to use verbal and nonverbal language simultaneously. They showed good language fluency while using language structures and vocabulary appropriately (as video recordings also proved) in oral and written form. After frequent reminders to not behave like robots, most students put some actions in their role-play. When asked, most students commented that thinking about possible complications and emotions of the characters made it much more interesting and meaningful ("We had a lot of fun contemplating of what could go wrong!").

(2). 'Show Your Emotions'
Take a simple, short dialogue in the target language (see below). Students in pairs or small groups rehearse and perform the same role-play, but each group must try to show different emotions in the relationship between the characters, which is either assigned by the teacher or chosen by the students, e.g., love, hate, disgust, tragedy, flirtation, superiority/inferiority, etc. Thus, each performance will be different. The observing students can try to guess the expressed emotion (practice of adjectives). Students can also be asked to perform again, taking their interpretation to a different level, e.g., using an exaggerated style instead of a realistic one. This exercise is very useful for practicing intonation, stress, and emotional expression in the target language. It also relieves the monotony that is often felt when the same scripted text is
performed over and over again. In a more advanced version of this exercise, students can be asked to alter the emotions (and maybe even words) according to cues from the teacher (e.g., on cards) or the audience during the role-play (see exercise by Smith 1984, 97, adapted and translated into German).

**Dialogue**

A: So, du bist jetzt also fertig, nicht wahr?
B: Ja, Fertig.
A: Geht du dann jetzt?
B: Meine Taschen sind gepackt.
A: Willst du dich nicht bei den anderen verabschieden?
B: Bei wem?
A: Na ja,… bei allen.
B: Warum?
A: Warum nicht?
B: Na ja,…hm…, ich weiß nicht. Ich glaube, ich werde nur dir auf Wiedersehen sagen.
A: Na gut.
B: Auf Wiedersehen.
A: Auf Wiedersehen.

(3) 'Decision Drama'

Taken from ESL literature, this kind of role-play exercise can be used with more advanced German learners. Students play characters that participate in a meeting to solve a problem or come to a decision (e.g., meeting between the school principal, teachers, parents and a students who might be suspended from school). The role-play is partly guided (some information is presented on role cards) and roles should be prepared for a short while beforehand, but students also improvise during the discussion. The topic has to be introduced and vocabulary practiced prior to this exercise.

Usually, not everybody in class can play a role. However, if the exercise is altered so that the audience is allowed to intervene (e.g., through stopping or role switching),
everybody is involved in the action and can have a chance to speak. Each character can also be prepared by two people who alternate, or the number of roles can be expanded (e.g., instead of one best friend there are two or three). Due to the nature of the topics, this type of role-play can become quite dramatic!

(4) Let’s Complain!
Each group gets a complaint card (made up by the teacher or taken from Hayes 1984, 67-75). The students have to prepare and present a role-play with the objective of finding a solution for the complaint situation. Ideas for complaints are endless, e.g., a noisy neighbor, having to wait too long in a doctor’s office, a misbehaved son/daughter at the principal’s office; an incorrect weather report, etc. Students can usually relate to the roles and the situation as most of them have had some experience with complaining in their mother tongue. Statues and short pantomimes could be used to isolate or accentuate certain aspects of the problem. Since the complaint situations are all different, some situational vocabulary could be added on the cards. Language structures that have been practiced beforehand (making and receiving complaints, arguing, etc.) can be applied in this role-play. The exercise also practices the expression of emotions through verbal and nonverbal language. It is best used from the intermediate stage on.

(5) 'Opposite of Reality'
Students are asked to create a role-play in which everything is the opposite of how they perceive it or how it is commonly perceived. They work in groups of three or four students. The topic yields some very interesting results that often provoke spontaneous, heated discussion, e.g., switching gender-specific behavior, personal scenarios of family relationships; atypical German behavior in a German situation; reversing good and evil, etc. Although this role-play exercise could be used with some beginning language students, the best results can be achieved from the intermediate learning stage on.
(6) 'Positive or negative consequence'
To create this open role-play, students are asked to find characters that are somehow connected to each other, e.g., buyer and seller, parent and child, train/bus conductor and passenger, policeman and driver, etc. The objective is that something happy or positive (or funny, sad, tragic, or mean/negative) should happen to one character as a direct result of what the other says or does. The teacher can also provide more guidance by deciding on either the roles or the resulting emotion (e.g., if all groups portray buyers and sellers, they decide on the emotion; if they play different roles, the emotion is determined by the teacher). The ensuing discussions, many of which are quite interesting, take place in the target language. It is helpful for students to have a good knowledge of different language functions and vocabulary, i.e. buying and selling, requesting and giving information, etc. Again, it is possible to do this exercise with advanced beginners, but it is most effective with intermediate and advanced students.

(7) 'The Haunted Castle'
Students work in groups of four or five. They receive the following scenario and the beginning of this conversation.

Einleitung


Susi: Das ist wirklich ein wunderschönes altes Hotel hier!
Thomas: Ja, das stimmt! Ich hätte nie gedacht, dass wir noch so eine schöne Unterkunft finden.
Nina: Also…ich finde es ein bisschen gruselig hier …
die merkwürdigen Bilder an der Wand, die Ruhe…
Markus: Ach Quatsch, sei nicht so ängstlich!

Das Licht geht aus!
Thomas: Was ist passiert? Wer hat das Licht ausgemacht?
Nina: Der Strom muss durch den Wind ausgegangen sein.
Susi: Oh gut, dass du die Kerze angezündet hast, Thomas.
Thomas: Hm? Wo ist denn Markus?
Nina: Komisch! Er war doch eben noch hier.
Susi: Guckt mal, das Fenster ist offen!
Thomas: Ja...a... und was ist das für ein Licht, das immer weiter wegzeh...?

Wie kann es weitergehen?

The dialogue breaks off when a person disappears from the scene. Students have to understand the scene and practice speaking the scripted text. Subsequently, they write and rehearse the continuation and end of the dialogue, which is then presented as a role-play. The topic and scenario (missing person, dark castle, and rain) inspire surprises and twists in the story and evoke feelings in the students, reminiscent of horror movies. Most students have lots of fun creating and acting out what often turns out to be an outrageous or bizarre ending. (In one of my students role-plays, the missing person was killed, cut up and served for dinner!) A role-monologue given by each of the characters makes the scenes even more dramatic. This role-play is suitable from the intermediate level on.

(8) Sensory cues for role-plays
Role-plays need not always follow a written scenario. The following can also be used to suggest a location or atmosphere and serve as a springboard for a role-play or an improvisation. The cues can either initiate the role-play or be embedded it.

- A sound produced by the teacher or tape recorder (e.g., an alarm clock, an urgent sounding door bell, an animal sound, a scary cry, footsteps, or an unrecognizable sound) or a taped sequence of sounds (can also be recorded by a student) that together can create a picture and inspire a dramatic role-play (for more ideas, see Holden 1981, 46; or Maley and Duff 1979, 70ff);
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- **A smell** brought to class (a smell of something burnt, a food product, an animal, a flower, a cleaning product, etc.);
- **A touch** (teacher lets students quickly feel an object hidden in a sack, e.g., a feather, a doll, a stone, a wet object, etc.);
- **A visual object**, e.g., a painting, statue, an advertisement, cartoon, or real object.

Linguistic and overall benefits for the use of role-play and improvisations in foreign language lessons can be found at the end of Chapter 1.1.2.2.

1.1.2.2. Improvisation

In an improvisation students act out roles just as in a role-play, but the words and actions are ad lib. Improvisation (< lat.improvisus = unforeseen, unexpected) means to invent or provide something on the spur of the moment. In the theater arts, it is used for "a performance, especially in verse or music, given extempore without planning or preparation [or at least very rough drafting]" (Webster Dictionary). The tradition of improvisation goes back to *Commedia dell' arte*, street artists, charlatans, etc. (Nickel 1992, 429). When actors or students in different fields do improvisations, they assume a role at a particular moment, connect it to their prior personal experience, and symbolically create a plausible world around it (e.g., the seats put in a row are the bus, and I am the driver in front of the rows). They invent rather than imitate, and each improvisation is unique.

"Improv is a technique designed to deflect intelligence and the quotidian rationality we tend to believe assures us control of our lives in order to release imaginative energy that, we hope, will transform rather than merely conform to existing circumstances" (McNeece 1983).

Throughout the years, the concept of improvisation has been influenced by Andersen (1996), Spolin (1963), Boal (1989), Johnstone (1998), Stanislavski (1961), Moreno (1970), and others.
There are two different types of improvisation: free and guided. In free improvisations, the setting is flexible and there are not many guidelines. Players are free to develop the situation, location, time, characters, etc. In guided improvisations, the teacher provides more support with regard to the initial setting, the characters, and the process. The teacher can introduce certain changes within the scene, or even jump into a role and intervene when the scene has gotten stuck. Such guidance gives the participants a sense of security and self-confidence in performing the tasks and portraying the characters. Guided improvisations are anticipatory; in other words, the actor has an idea of what could happen thanks to the information provided, but the actions are still spontaneous and creative. The less experienced the group, the more guided the improvisations will be.

Anderson (1996) identifies four factors that contribute to successful improvisation, summarized as follows:

1) Spontaneity
Spontaneity is the ability to act and react on a sudden inner impulse. It also means using ideas that evolve voluntarily without prior reflection or evaluation. These ideas need not be ingenious, original, or even appropriate. Rather, the actor uses what is available.

2) Creativity
Creativity is the capacity to create something new. It is closely related to spontaneity. Both happen on the spur of the moment with no pressures involved, and both require letting one's imagination roam, giving it space without judgment. Time pressure, tension and self-criticism can hinder creativity, and thus a comfortable and trusting atmosphere is essential.
(3) Affirmation
Actions or ideas that a fellow actor comes up with should not be criticized, evaluated, or rejected. No matter how different or surprising they are, the other members of the group should accept these suggestions and use them to continue the improvisation.

(4) Cooperation
In order to create an improvised composition of a dialogue or action, it is essential for players to cooperate, support each other and share responsibility for the improvisation.

Those four skills can be trained in dramatic games and through different forms of improvisation. They are not only important for the Theater Arts but also for instruction in many other fields and areas of life.

Improvisations can be used in dramatic exercises, as a form of theater, as well as in play rehearsals. In the latter instance, although the actors are following a script, they can experiment with the text and body language in order to get a better feel or understanding for their roles. In improvisational theater, actors do not have a script, and instead give an ex tempore performance before and with an audience, with almost no previous rehearsals or preparation (e.g., Theater Sport; Forum Theater; Playback Theater, etc).

Working with Improvisations in the Foreign Language Class
When we speak our native language, most communication is improvised. Although we do not follow a script, we normally have contexts in which we function spontaneously. We go shopping and by chance meet an old friend with whom we might improvise a conversation. We have to improvise at work when something does not go as planned. We have to improvise on the phone. In real life, we can never fully predict events. We can practice what to say in certain situations, which gives us self-confidence, but often we have to react spontaneously, quickly, and differently than we had planned. People
use improvisational strategies every day to reach certain goals. "Improvisation is a characteristic of any human interaction" (Brumfit 1984, in Shimizu 1993, 46).

Learning to improvise is even more important when we learn another language. Students do not always have all the relevant vocabulary in a given situation, and they have to come up spontaneously with some form of communication (verbal and nonverbal) to get their meaning or intent across. Therefore it is very important for FL learners not only to practice communication in structured role-plays or standard textbook situations (‘Im Geschäft,’ ‘Im Restaurant,’ etc.) without too much emphasis on correct grammar or studied phrases, but also to practice communication on the spot. Improvisational exercises and games can close the gap that typically exists between "thought and expression" (Stern 1981, 24). They offer students the opportunity to practice the acquired language without a script so that they can develop more spontaneous speaking skills, greater fluency, more confidence, and can better function in the foreign culture. "The learner's acquisition of oral fluency in any language must build precisely on the creative process of improvising" (Shimizu 1993, 146). Improvisation gives them the chance to test the appropriateness of their language in different situations, moods, and contexts, and it forces them to practice nonverbal as well as verbal communication. All of these things are important for acquiring communicative competence and understanding language behavior.

The most important aspect of improvisation is that it allows students to let go of their inhibitions and self-consciousness. In the state of spontaneity, students have no time to be mindful of correct grammar and syntax, or what the audience will think of them, but instead must react immediately. "… persons in the spontaneity state completely forget about the existence of the audience or cease to be concerned about its reactions" (Stern 1981, 85). This enables them to speak more fluently and naturally.
In improvisational exercises, students are asked to simulate situations or experiences that could happen in an authentic setting. These situations can also be chosen by the teacher with the intention of practicing specific vocabulary or grammar. Most improvisations have a goal and revolve around a problem to be solved or an obstacle for the students to overcome. This makes the situation meaningful and thus motivating for the students. The situation should also be open enough to allow for several different solutions.

Improvisation prompts students to express feelings in certain situations and use unique modes of speech that have been shaped by their own previous personal experience. In cases where students lack certain FL vocabulary, they are forced to paraphrase or compensate with expressive gestures and mimicry in order to get their point across, something all of us do in real life. As McNeece points out, "…one must be sure not to deprive the student of the privilege of experiencing such things as 'being at a loss for words' in a foreign language….which will result in halting or fumbling speech" (McNeece 1983, 836).

Most improvisations in beginning to intermediate German classes will be guided, and will be relatively short in length. The students are partly or fully provided with information about the ‘Who?, What?, When?, Where?, How?’ of the situation that is to be improvised, which gives them more security and confidence while learning the language and the art of improvisation.

Improvisations are done with a partner or together with a whole group. They can be geared towards a variety of situations and settings, or extrapolated from a text and rounded out with the students' own ideas. Statues, sculptures, and pantomimes that come alive can also provide opportunities for improvisation as students must then spontaneously verbalize the emotions or ideas of their character in the still image, or respond to questions from the observers. Improvisations in the form of Playback
Theater can also be integrated into the FL lesson. Students can either act out their interpretation of another student's personal story, or they can let the storyteller guide the scene by providing directions of what to do and what to say (see example by Feldhendler 1993, 185). Students like this exercise, as it is relevant to their own lives and uses 'real' language. Certain techniques used in Psychodrama—those with a psychodramatic rather than a psychotherapeutic intention—can be interesting for the FL lesson, e.g.:

- **doubling**  → A student (a double) stands behind a player, identifies with him/her and expresses certain feelings or ideas for the person.

- **mirroring**  → The student who is acting can observe him/herself when another student mirrors or imitates him. This can also happen in form of another medium, such as a video.

- **role change**  → Students switch roles in a role play (A→B, B→A) and have the opportunity to better understand both roles or characters

(excerpted and translated from Eckert and Klemm 1998, 100).

For examples, see Chapter IV, 1.2, (3) *Mirrors*; (7) *Follow the Impulse*, as well as Dufeu (1983) and Feldhendler (1993, 189).

For advanced FL groups, the Forum Theater also offers an interesting and effective alternative to traditional class discussions, since it fosters active (verbal and nonverbal) participation on the part of the audience, which can intervene and suggest that changes be made. The students' oral language production is substantial in this form of theatrical exercise, and their speech is goal-oriented, and meaningful (see Feldhendler 1993, 189ff; Sprenger 2002; Gipser 1988, 12). However, the teacher must be familiar with the above-mentioned forms of improvisational theater in order to utilize them correctly and efficiently.
Finally, it is important to emphasize that improvisation can be quite intimidating and discouraging for the FL learner. Therefore, students need to be adequately prepared if this technique is to be used successfully. Exercises that foster a low affective filter in the classroom and practice kinesics are well-suited to this purpose (verbal and nonverbal warm-up exercises, such as [9] Cupball; [3] Mirrors, and other warm-up exercises, Chapter 1.2.1). "Wenn ihr die anderen in der Guppe nicht kennt, müsst ihr das Eis brechen, auch körperlich" (Andersen 1996, 13). In general, it is advisable to start with improvisations where students improvise all at the same time or within a group, and only later implement exercises that require students to act (individually or in a group) in front of the entire class.

**Examples of Improvisations for the Foreign Language Class**

**Circle improvisations**
Students sit or stand in a circle. Each student improvises a certain task or situation by saying a sentence or a few words, and/or showing an action, which relates to the previous student’s improvisation. Together, students create ad hoc a story, biography, letter, or event, or combine a spontaneous movement, gesture or feeling with words, etc. (see e.g., [10] Create a life; [7] Follow the Impulse; [1] Show me your Emotions).

**Object improvisations**
In this exercise, an object triggers speech. The object can be anything—a pen, plastic bottle, stone, or tissue. The simpler the object, the more potential it has and the more creative the students can get. Students can be asked to talk to the object, (as well as smell, touch, hear, or move with it), describe it, create a scene, story, or character around the object, comment on different functions of the object, advertise or sell the object (Chapter IV, 1.2.2, [1] Story around a Picture or Object).
Keyword or key scenes improvisations

The teacher gives out one keyword or introduces a specific scenario or certain characters, and asks the students to improvise. The situation can be chosen to reinforce certain speech patterns (introducing, asking for advice, negotiating, etc.) or can be taken from a literary text or course book dialogue. The improvisation can take place before the reading of the text as an introduction to or speculation about it, or after the reading with the goal of expanding on the text. It can happen in different ways:

(1) Students all improvise at the same time, interacting with various partners or groups. Some examples include walking around class and introducing themselves to the other students, or reacting to various scenarios that the teacher calls out, e.g., “You haven't seen the person in a long time, you are at a wedding, funeral,” etc., (see Chapter IV, 1.2.1, [10] Hallo-Good-bye).

(2) Students improvise simultaneously, using the same partner or group, see, e.g., Chapter IV, 1.2.2, (4) Hallo, hier ist Meyer!; (2) Rotating Discussions; etc.

(3) Only some students are asked to act in front of the class while the others watch and comment, see, e.g., (2) The Elevator 1.2.2.

Instead of describing a scenario orally, the teacher can also distribute cards with specific information about the situation and /or characters and the goals to be achieved. Alternatively, students can prepare such information on cards as a written exercise and have other students use them for their improvisation.

The teacher or the students can incorporate disruptions that prompt further improvisation into a situation. For example, during small talk improvisation at a soccer stadium, I played a soda/snack salesperson going through the rows loudly advertising his/her merchandise (One of my students jumped up and called me over for "fünf Bier und fünf Würstchen, bitte"!). In another situation one of my students acted as a stewardess on an airplane. She interrupted the conversations of the passengers asking
for their dinner choice. Such interruptions practice spontaneous, natural speech and make the class atmosphere lively and real!

**Benefits of Using Role-Plays and Improvisations in the Foreign Language Lesson**

- In role-plays and improvisations, students get a chance to try out various ways of acting in and reacting to different situations and roles (in their own role and the roles of others).

- Role-plays and improvisations facilitate the understanding of cultural values and behavior codes of both the target culture and the students' own culture. They also support the development of empathy towards other people.

- Learners practice social interaction, which is especially beneficial in our fast-paced technological world, where many students seem to be more comfortable with computers than with human beings. They practice recognizing and confronting problems and conflicts, and working to resolve them within the peer group.

- Role-plays and improvisations reduce some of the anxiety connected with speaking the target language and speaking in front of people (provided they have been introduced to role-playing slowly and with sensitivity). This in turn builds confidence. Students become much more emotionally involved and comfortable with the language. They learn to take bigger risks; language is experienced on the emotional level.

- Role-plays and improvisations allow learners to find and try out new avenues for nonverbal perception and self-expression.

- Both techniques are student-centered instead of teacher-centered, which fosters motivation and self-esteem.

- Role-plays and improvisations make language learning fun because they create a playful and relaxed atmosphere (low affective filter) and introduce some variety into the lesson.

- Both can be presented by the teacher in such a way as to address the needs of different learners.

Learners become more involved with a text, e.g., they attain a deeper understanding of literary works. Role-plays are also an effective and creative way to liven up and extend
course book dialogues. Learners can gain confidence by exhibiting some of their other more hidden creative talents.

When to Use Role-Plays and Improvisations in the Foreign Language Class?
Role-plays are typically used from the advanced-beginner stage on, i.e. when students have enough language skills to create and execute short dialogues. Improvisational exercises are usually not done before the intermediate language learning stage. However some very short improvisations are also effective with beginners, e.g., greeting people in formal and informal situations, small talk situations. During the lesson, most role-plays and improvisations are used when students are ready for independent practice or language application. If a role-play or improvisation is connected to a text, it can take place prior to reading (as speculation about the text), during the reading (for analysis), or after the reading (for analysis). Improvisations can also be used during the introductory, preparatory, or analytic stages of class topic discussions (see the example about "Die Mutprobe. Youth in Germany," by Schewe Schewe 2000, 76 and 101). At the intermediate and advanced levels, certain improvisations can be used as warm-up exercises, whereas at the beginner level they take up the main part of the lesson.

Language Skills that are Fostered through Role-Plays and Improvisations

- In both techniques, students practice speaking, listening, and writing skills (mainly for role-playing); they can experiment with and practice vocabulary, syntax, and grammar in culturally and linguistically significant contexts at their individual language level.

- As these two techniques often involve problem-solving, students practice vocabulary specific to particular communicative strategies, such as arguing, defending, clarifying, persuading, compromising, expressing an opinion, or negotiating, etc. as well as conversational skills, such as turn-taking or topic-changing.
• Role-plays and improvisations generate realistic or fictitious communication situations, where students can reflect upon their intention for communicating and come up with appropriate communicative strategies to express their intentions. Therefore, these techniques foster communicative competence (Löffler 1983, 29).
• Improvisations in particular promote responsiveness and spontaneity in using the foreign language.
• Role-plays and improvisations practice the synchronization of verbal and nonverbal language skills.

1.2 Selection of Drama-Oriented Exercises for the Foreign Language Classroom

Drama-oriented exercises can be instrumental in the development, practice, and application of listening, reading, speaking, writing, and cultural skills in different phases of the lesson. However, the area of language acquisition that receives the most benefits from involving dramatic principles is, in my opinion, the area of speaking and communication skills. A prerequisite for the development and application of these skills is the existence of a low affective filter in the learning environment and the operation of certain psychological and social aspects of the learners (see Chapters III, 6.3). Therefore, the exercises that I have compiled in this chapter mainly (are oriented to) foster the following objectives:

(a) communicative competence in the foreign language;
(b) the creation of a supportive and comfortable environment for language acquisition.

Many of the exercises foster both of the objectives as they affect not only the cognitive, but also affective and psychophysical dimensions of learning.

Based on the five-step lesson plan by Hunter (1982, 17), which divides the FL lesson into the phases of 1. setting the stage/warm-up; 2. presentation; 3. guided practice; 4. independent practice/language application, and 5. evaluation/closure, I suggest that
the proposed exercises work most successfully (but not exclusively) towards fulfilling the mentioned objectives in the following two phases:

- warm-up
- language application
  (transition from guided to free speech as well as in free/independent speech)

The exercises were selected as examples from my own teaching practice or were taken from or inspired by ideas for ESL instruction (e.g., Maley and Duff 1979; Wessels 1987; Smith 1984), or for general language or German language instruction (e.g., Tselikas 1999; Eckert and Klemm 1998; Schewe 1993). Several exercises were borrowed from acting classes and altered to make them useful for the foreign language learning process. They can all be easily integrated into every-day course-work, without much experience in theater.

Before teachers can successfully employ these exercises, they need to consider certain aspects in preparing for them.

**(1) Room Set-Up**

Most drama-oriented exercises need space as they often involve physical action. As is the case with all communicative activities, students need to see each other and easily be able to move their chairs to form groups. The traditional arrangement of chairs/desks in rows is therefore not very suitable. “Sitting in regimented rows under the eagle eye of a magisterial teacher, addressing all the remarks to or through the teacher—this is a scene that destroys all hope for communication” (Morrow 1983, 59). It is therefore better if chairs/desks can be pushed to the side and the open space in the middle can be used as a meeting ground for various activities. It also becomes easier for the teacher to interact with individual students. I prefer to place the chairs/desks in a wide half or full circle, with the teacher at the open end or seated amidst the students. This arrangement is possible in most university classrooms and students like it, even if they initially complain about setting it up every time. If such a room set-up is not
possible, the teacher can still make use of drama-oriented exercises that do not require much movement.

(2) Time Conditions
The length of university language classes varies. Classes that are only 50 minutes long usually meet 4-5 days a week; dramatic play sequences must be short, and the preparation or reflection for role-plays can be done the day before or after. Many classes, however, meet 2-3 times a week for 1 ½ - 2 ½ hours, so there is enough time to involve dramatic activities. Whatever time there is available, I agree with Tselikas (1999, 54) that it is important for students to have at least one dramatic play experience per class period.

(3) Role of the Teacher in a Drama-Oriented Classroom
In a drama-oriented classroom the teacher is no longer "the source of all knowledge, nor the sole arbiter of what is ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ “ (Maley and Duff 1979, 17). Most of the time he/she will not take a ‘center-stage’ role, nor guide or direct every moment of the learning process. Although the teacher still plans, organizes, and sequences many exercises, his/her main role is to help create and maintain a low affective filter (see Krashen 1981) in class, as well as initiate and encourage the language learning process. He/she becomes more of a facilitator who works with the students and stimulates them to use the language and have fun with it. Often the teacher switches from being an active participant in some exercises to being a "referent" (Wessels 1987, 24)—a little more in the background—in others.

In an exercise such as Hello-Good-bye (# 10, 1.2.1 in this chapter), where all students participate or act at the same time, the teacher is also in character (as in Heathcote's approach, see Chapter III, 2). In a way, he/she has already assumed the role of a foreign language speaker, but now enters the world of drama together with the students. Instead of standing on the side observing, the teacher participates in the exercise, greeting people in different situations. In a decision drama about drug
misuse, e.g., he/she may act out the role of a school principal or police officer and in this way help with the understanding of the topic and the flow of the drama exercise. Through interacting with the students in character, he/she will be in a much better position to determine whether they understood the exercise, to observe their language progress, to reinforce their language skills, and to feel whether or not they are enjoying the dramatic exercise. However, the teacher needs to always be conscious of his ‘original’ role.

When students work in groups preparing a role-play, e.g., the teacher moves from group to group, lending his expertise if necessary. His/her role is also to encourage the students to show emotions in their speech, to use body movement and body gestures, and to take risks using the language. Besides giving them some ideas and some incentives to organize or shape the role-play, he/she needs to let the students work independently and learn from each other. The teacher should not interfere/interrupt but still keep the activities in the group moving.

The teacher's role is also to correct mistakes. It is crucial, however, to wait until the dramatic exercise is over to correct the students. "There is no value an interrupting an activity to correct mistakes when they can be corrected afterwards "(Finocciaro and Brumfit 1983, 100). In drama-oriented exercises students are encouraged to take risks, show emotions, and communicate ideas in the foreign language even if they know they will make some mistakes. Therefore, it is important for the teacher not to intervene during the dialogue as this can easily disrupt the flow of speech, make the speaker uncomfortable, and have negative effects on self-confidence and spontaneity. Teachers should take mental or (hidden) written notes during the play, and offer their most important corrections or critique in a positive and constructive way after it ended.

In general, an important aspect of being a successful facilitator and initiator is the teacher's attitude towards his/her teaching approach. He/she needs to believe in his/her
teaching goals and style. It is important for the teacher to feel comfortable with actively participating in class, interacting with students sometimes on a more personal level than in traditional classes (although by the same token interactions should not be too personal), and spontaneously taking on a role and confronting students in the exercise. "Lust am Spielen und Sensibilität" (Scheller 1986, 30) are necessary to inspire students to participate in drama-oriented activities. Teachers who are inexperienced or afraid, but are interested in using the dramatic approach in language teaching, can start by using just a few simple ice-breakers or other warm-up exercises (see Chapter IV, 1.2.1) that involve simple theatrical techniques, such as creating a statue or pantomime. My own experience coincides with Scheller's opinion that "Die Lust und das Interesse, dass die Teilnehmer bei der Arbeit zeigen, fördert schnell die Bereitschaft der Lehrperson, auch andere Verfahren auszuprobieren" (Scheller, 30). In addition, the teacher needs to take the following points into consideration:

- It is important to prepare and plan an exercise, but it is even more important for a drama-oriented teacher to be flexible with regard to the students’ needs and ideas. The outcome of an improvisational exercise or a role-play, as well as students’ interest and motivation, will most likely be different with each group of learners. “Jede Übung, jedes Stück, jeder Mensch, jede Gruppe ist immer wieder anders, neu und ungewohnt” (Ehlert 1986). The teacher needs to embrace this ‘originality’ and be open for change.

- The teacher needs to communicate to the students that their participation in the drama-oriented exercises is voluntary. He needs to be sensitive with students, especially those that are shy or afraid to speak and act in front of the classmates. A good warm-up in combination with an adjustment period can ease those students into learning through drama.

- If at all possible, the teacher should develop his/her own acting skills, i.e. becoming comfortable with self-expression through body language, consciously using the voice, stepping into a role, etc.
1.2.1. Drama-Oriented Exercises for the Warm-up Phase

Eine gute Aufwärmung lohnt sich, sie ist wie Dünger, der einen guten Boden schafft, aus dem Ideen, Fantasie, sprachliches Material wachsen können (Tselikas 1999, 61)

Actors need to warm up in a variety of ways before performing. In order to release some of their own individual tensions and fears (in order to learn), they must warm up to the group, their role, the character, and the language. Likewise, it is essential for FL learners to prepare so that they will feel comfortable learning the language and taking on the “role” of a foreign language speaker. A good warm-up is the foundation for learning, and sets the tone for the way in which the students approach the new language. In (dramatic) FL learning, the goal of this phase is to warm up the individual learner, the group as a whole, and to the language or theme of the lesson.

Warm-up for the Individual Learner
Often we forget that not every student comes to class willing and ready to learn. Many students can be nervous, tense, shy, and/or tired and stressed from their job, other classes, or private matters. It is very helpful if the teacher eases them into the learning process. The goal for students is to open up towards the language, their classmates, and the teacher, and be as ready as possible for learning mentally, physically, and emotionally (see Chapters III, 6). Physical movement as well as fun vocal warm-up exercises can help the student to “wake up” and get stimulated, or "relax" and unload stress and problems. Starting out with nonverbal (e.g., pantomime) or simple verbal/nonverbal exercises sensitizes students to more extensive verbal communication later, lets them overcome initial resistance towards speaking the language, fosters self-confidence, and gets them into the mood to play.
Warm-up for the Group (as a Unit)
The goal is to create positive group dynamics—a low affective filter within the group, as well as a comfortable, safe, and supportive atmosphere that promotes trust, mutual respect, and a feeling of belonging. The closer and more comfortable the group, the easier it becomes for the individual to let go of inhibitions, take risks, accept corrections, and be willing to work with others. Exercises are geared towards getting to know the classmates (ice-breakers) and creating a group spirit. They also prepare students for interactive and interpersonal experiences and common exploration within the framework of the foreign language.

Warm-up to the Language
Exercises to warm up the voice (projecting, loudness, clearness, etc.) can enhance pronunciation and intonation, communication skills, as well as the attitude towards speaking the language. Verbal warm-ups can review grammar and vocabulary, prepare for the theme of the lesson, or present new learning material. They encourage the language learner to experiment and be creative with the language. As much as possible, language exercises should include physical and affective components. In foreign language teaching that uses a dramatic approach, the warm-up can also help students to prepare for certain theatrical techniques that are used later in the lesson or unit (improvisation, role-play, etc.).

The group or the individual student can warm-up in a variety of ways. An actor’s warm-up consists of preparing body, mind, and spirit. Since foreign language learning happens also not just on the cognitive level, it is important to include also all three levels in the warm-up as well.

The exercises for warm-up are for the most part structured and directed by the instructor. They include verbal as well as nonverbal activities and are recommended for the beginning of the lesson or any time during the lesson to reactivate the learners
(for example, they are effective in evening classes with tired students!). The following considerations should help instructors to select and plan the warm-up:

- The exercises should not be difficult, since the goal is to stimulate students for learning rather than overtaxing them.
- Warm-ups have to be enjoyable for the students and get them motivated. Laughter is highly recommended!
- They should be introduced gradually and sensitively, with few demands in terms of language and movement, since students need to get used to moving around and speaking at the same time. The exercises should never be forced on the learner.
- It is advisable to choose two or three short exercises of a different kind instead of one long one. Tselikas (1999) recommends that they not be longer than 10-15% of the class time.
- All students should be active most of the time.
- The teacher needs to feel at ease with the warm-up exercise, believe in its success, and introduce it with confidence. Students very quickly pick up on a teacher’s discomfort or insecurity (Wessels 1987, 21), which will make the exercises less effective.
- It is often helpful if the teacher initiates some kind of reflection (spontaneous reaction, questions and answers) after the warm-up, which helps students to understand the objective of the exercise.

The following exercises show the diverse applications of theatrical aspects and techniques for a warm-up in the foreign language class.
1.2.1.1 Primarily Nonverbal Exercises

Exercise 1: 'Let's stretch!'

**Objectives:**
- to relax and relieve stress through physical exercise (e.g., university students often come to class straight from an exhausting day of work!);
- to subconsciously practice listening comprehension and vocabulary.

**Language level:** all

Start out the class with students standing anywhere in the room, stretching according to the verbal directions from the teacher for a few minutes ("Kreist eure Arme vorwärts und rückwärts; lasst euren Oberkörper locker nach unten hängen; atmet tief durch den Mund ein und aus; streckt euren linken Arm nach rechts oben", etc.). The directions can also be given by a student in the target language. The movements should not be outrageous but relaxing and healthy (pay attention to older students in class).

See also Tselikas (1999) and other TPR (Total Physical Response) exercises!

Exercise 2: 'Walking Through the Clouds'

**Objectives:**
- to become confident in using one's own body for expression (later together with speech), which is very important as a preparation for animated and realistic role-playing and improvisations;
- to practice listening comprehension and vocabulary;
- to develop sense of body and space;
- to stimulate the mind through physical actions (pantomime).

**Language level:** all

Students move and mime individually or in groups to warm up their body and mind. All students are asked by the teacher or a fellow student (preferably in the target language) to walk through the room in different ways:

- in different directions, rhythms, or speeds (walk forwards, backwards, left, right, in a square, diagonal, in a grid pattern; look at your feet/at the ceiling; walk in small steps, on tip toes, at a fast pace or in slow motion, etc.); Light rhythmic music can be played;
- walking through imaginative areas and situations: through high snow, hot sand at
the beach, in a parade, as a robot, running to get the bus, walking on a rocking boat, walking through a park in sunshine, running for shelter in heavy rain, on tiptoes to not be heard, etc. Students in groups can also pretend to throw different balls at each other and catch them or carry an imagined object together (a coffin, a piano, etc.).

If the situations are announced in the target language, students need to have knowledge of some vocabulary (e.g., rückwärts, vorwärts, heißer Sand, etc.).

Exercise 3: 'Mirrors'

**Objectives:**
- to experiment with nonverbal language;
- to practice stepping into somebody else's shoes through movement;
- to practice observation skills;
- to connect with classmates, which fosters positive group dynamics.

**Language level:** all

Two students sit or stand across from each other. Partner A mimes a mirror image of the activities, body movements, mimicry and gestures of Partner B. After a few minutes the roles are reversed. Language and sounds, which have to be imitated correctly, can be added at the end. The partner exercise can be followed by the whole class mirroring together. While one student waits outside, the others select a leader from the group who begins mirroring. The classmate, who is called back in, has to guess the leader (see also Culham 2002).

Exercise 4: 'Human Chains'

**Objectives:**
- to stimulate the mind through physical exercise;
- to develop a sense of body and space;
- to practice concentration;
- to create positive group dynamics.

**Language level:** all

— Students walk through the room shaking hands and greeting each other. The goal is to have body contact with at least one person at all times.
— All students stand in a circle holding hands. One student breaks off the circle and leads the chain of people through the room. Students follow, crossing under arms until they are in a big knot (Gordische Knoten). They try to not let go of each other’s hands. The knot can be opened by reversing the movements or by breaking off.

— All students stand in a circle holding hands. Together they form different shapes and pictures, such as a triangle, a pentagon, a star, the number eight, etc.

— Students in a circle act out the ‘wave’ (like at sports games). Alternatively, students can act in rapid succession, making a gymnastic move and try to find a rhythm within the group (circle one arm, knees lightly, circles the other, knees lightly, circles both arms, knees lightly, etc.).

Exercise 5: 'Stay in touch'

Objectives:
• to practice vocabulary (body parts) and listening comprehension;
• to stimulate the mind through physical exercise;
• to promote teamwork, sense of fun, and relieve inhibitions.

Language level: all

As a prerequisite, students should be familiar with the body parts in German. It is also important to have an uneven number of participants. For the exercise they all walk through the room at the same time. One announcer (the teacher or a student depending on the number of participants) shouts one command about how the partners should touch each other, e.g., "Kopf an Kopf," "Knie an Bein," "Ellenbogen an Fuß." Everyone has to quickly find a partner and touch the appropriate body parts. The person who remains single is the next announcer.

1.2.1.2 Nonverbal/Verbal Exercises

Exercise 6: 'Start Up With Mime'

Objectives:
• to get students' immediate attention through the element of surprise;
• to be motivated to speak (nonverbal behavior stimulates speech);
to practice vocabulary in context (everyday phrases, adjectives that express emotion).

*Language level:* Second semester and up (previous introduction of the present perfect tense is helpful.)

This is an effective warm-up alternative to the usual small talk questions by the teacher (Was hast du am Wochenende gemacht?). Instead of a verbal beginning, start out the class nonverbally miming (pantomime) to the students what you have done on the weekend (last night, during vacation, etc.) or will do for upcoming holidays or events. It helps the students if the general context is written on the board (e.g., "Mein Wochenende"). Students shout out individual words or sentences, pointing out all the details about what they think the teachers in trying to convey ("zu Hause, Frühstück essen, du hast pancakes zum Frühstück gebacken, du hast lange geduscht," etc.; whole sentences are preferred, but individual words or phrases work, too). Students are genuinely interested to speak and find out if they guessed correctly. The teacher can vary his actions according to grammar and vocabulary that the students have previously learned. Afterwards students do the same exercise with a partner or small group.

An alternative to acting out pantomimes is the following short exercise:

'Image About Me'

As a warm-up or in another phase of the lesson, students show their partner in a frozen image (statue) how they felt during the day, what emotion is predominant for them at the moment in class, or what they dreamt of last night. The partner observes and uses words (in the foreign language) to describe and interpret. The acting student reacts and both talk further and ask questions about the emotion or action.

Exercise 7: 'Following the Impulse'

*Objectives:*
- to verbally and nonverbally respond to an impulse;
- to practice the combination of physical action and speech;
- to get to know each other's names and practice eye contact, which is important for communication and loosening up an often stiff and inhibited class atmosphere.

*Language level:* all

A student claps and then passes the clap sequentially around the circle. This should be done at a fast pace without any interruptions. Students should have eye contact when
handing over the clap. The clap can also be given through the legs, from the back or over the head. Let students be creative! After a couple of rounds, a student can refuse a clap by squatting down for a second or giving it back and changing the direction of the clap.

This next exercise can follow: Students are standing in a circle (or later in smaller circles). One student after the other says his/her first name (later on, other German words and sentences can be used) and simultaneously makes a distinct gesture. The others immediately do a group imitation of the exact words, posture, and gesture (like mirroring). This can be done with other German words or sentences that students spontaneously come up with. Students usually come up with funny body language and laugh a lot!

Exercise 8: 'Writing in the Air'

**Objectives:**
- to relieve stress stimulate the mind through physical exercise;
- get to know the other classmates;
- to practice simple vocabulary.

**Language level:** all

This is an innovative alternative to # (1). Students introduce each other to a classmate (or a group) and warm up their body at the same time. Instead of saying each other’s name, they write it in the air, using their finger, elbow, knee, hip, head, ear (against a wall), etc. The partner(s) guesses verbally. The exercise can be extended to writing words or expressions (see Eckert and Klemm 1998, 11.2.2).

1.2.1.3 Primarily Verbal Exercises

Exercise 9: 'Cup Ball'

**Objectives:**
- to warm-up of body and mind and practice simultaneous speech and body movement;
- to practice or review vocabulary (numbers or the alphabet);
- to liven up class and foster positive group dynamics through interaction and laughter.

**Language level:** all
Students stand in circles of 6-8 students and hit a polystyrene cup (for a ball) straight into the air. Their goal is to not let the cup fall to the ground and together shout out the numbers or the letters of the alphabet, each time the cup is thrown in the air. The groups can compete against each other and see which group is able to count the most numbers/letters (see also Wessels 1987). The exercise does not take up much class time (5-10 min at most) and is very popular.

Exercise 10: 'Hello-Goodbye'

Objectives:
- to practice formal and informal ways of speech and behavior (Sie and Du);
- to experiment and practice using verbal and nonverbal language adequately in different social situations; prepare for more advanced improvisations;
- to break the ice; to foster relaxed and fun atmosphere in class.

Language level: all (for intermediate or advanced students as a warm-up, for beginners during the language application phase.

All students walk through the classroom at the same time, greeting different people and saying one or two small talk sentences. Then the teacher sets up different scenarios, e.g., you are meeting your mother; an older professor from college; a friend you haven’t seen in 5 years; your lover; someone from work that you don’t like, etc.

Students’ task is to greet and say good-bye according to the situation, experimenting with the appropriate words and gestures (formal handshake, hug, wave, etc). Instead of greeting people, the students’ goal could be to invite students or to ask for help or information (“Entschuldigung! Können Sie mir sagen, wann die Post aufmacht?”).

Exercise 11: 'What Do We Have in Common?'

Objectives:
- to be motivated to speak the language, since the context is meaningful and goal-oriented;
- to use learned vocabulary (e.g., for hobbies, physical appearance, family, food preferences, etc.) and grammar (e.g., forming questions) on students’ individual level;
- to get students acquainted and promote positive group dynamics.

Language level: Second semester and up

Students walk around the room, and hum (and later scream) the first letter of their
name and look for others with the same beginning letter to form a group. It is advisable for the teacher to check beforehand to ensure that the groups would have at least two members; if not, selected students can be told to use their second name so that groups can be formed. Once the groups have been established, students sit down and find five things that the group members of each group have in common (hobbies, hair and eye color, age, children, food preferences, etc.). They discuss the characteristics in German and write them down.

Example:
Isst jemand gerne Hamburger? Ja, ich esse gern Hamburger.
Ich spiele gerne Karten—ihr auch? Nein, aber spielst du gern Basketball?
Wieviele Geschwister habt ihr? Ich habe vier und du?
Wer hat auch grüne Augen? Okay, alle haben grüne Augen. Das haben wir gemeinsam.

Their last task is to mime their common attributes to the other groups, which guess the answer. Instead of pantomimes, students can also form statues or write a poem, song or riddle about what they have in common. My students enjoy this exercise very much, and use spoken German throughout the exercise (adopted from Tselikas 1999, 160).

Exercise 12: 'Back to Back'

Objectives:
• to practice or review learned vocabulary (clothes, physical appearance, furniture, classroom items, etc.);
• to create attention and motivation through surprise tasks;
• to practice concentration;
• to create positive group dynamics.

Language level: all

Students are asked to walk around the room and closely observe and memorize as many details about each other's appearance. After a couple of minutes the teacher tells them to stand back to back with someone and try to describe the partner's appearance. The partner should not commend but can ask questions: "Welche Farbe hat meine Jacke?" When finished students turn around and compare. The exercise uses the dramatic element of surprise, since it is different to the usual face-to-face description. In a large class (and some room!) I would suggest splitting the class in half and have the students concentrate only on the members of their group (see Maley and Duff 1979, 30).
Variations:
This exercise can also add a spontaneous moment to pair or group work. In the middle or end of an unrelated group activity, some or all students can, at the spur of the moment, be asked to close their eyes and describe details about the appearance of the person who is sitting next to him/her in the group. Instead of observing the appearance of classmates, the task can be to concentrate on things in the classroom. In pair work (or as a whole class), one student is asked to close his eyes and describe as many details as he/she remembers. The partner (or the teacher) asks questions.

Exercise 13: 'Let’s Dream Together'

Objectives:
- to relieve tension and calm down;
- to build group concentration and develop a positive group feeling;
- to practice grammar (e.g., past tense verbs) and the creative use of vocabulary in context.

Language level: Second semester and up.

Students sit or lie down (if possible) and close their eyes. One student makes up the plot of a dream. With their eyes closed, the other students join in and add sentences about details of the plot or change the plot. Together they develop a group dream (adapted from Bell 2000, 50).

Example:
Ich bin auf einer einsamen Insel…
Der Strand ist weiss und das Wasser wunderschön blau.
Ich sitze in meinem Baumhaus und esse eine Kokosnuss.
Da klopft es: bumm, bumm…

Intonation/pronunciation and voice warm-up

As mentioned in Chapter 6.1.2, intonation exercises, although highly important for the successful acquisition of the language, are often neglected in foreign language courses. The following exercises present just a few examples of how intonation practice can be effective and enjoyable for the students. It is very important for the teacher to make sure that the students "shape" the text with an eye to content and speech pattern, rather than mumbling it quietly. Body movement and body language should be used to support speech. Students need to understand what they are saying and translate this
knowledge into action. Speaking in a chorus helps the individual learner to overcome resistance and build confidence. As a warm-up, it helps students to open up to the language without any pressure.

Exercise 14: 'Show Me What You Mean'

Objectives:
- to practice pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and grammar
- (e.g., comparative); to support speech and comprehension through gestures;
- to warm-up the voice (projection, loudness, clearness, etc.);
- to practice listening comprehension and concentration.

Language level: all (The exercise can be adapted to different levels.)

Students and teacher stand in a circle. After brief stretching and conscious breathing exercises, the teacher introduces several short pronunciation exercises, with students imitating the teacher. They are asked to read the words and short phrases aloud, try to convey the appropriate emotion and combine their speech with a suitable gesture. The exercise can be repeated in a different session or in the same session with a partner (students get a script). Discussing the exercise before or afterwards helps the students to understand the objectives.

Kurze Wörter und Ausdrücke, hintereinander gesprochen, z.B.:
- “sosososo”,
- “neinneinnein”, (shake head),
- “dochdochdochdoch,” (nod)
- “dadada” (show with the finger),
- “gutgutgutgut” (show thumb)

Simple Sätze aus 3-5 Wörtern, z.B.:
- “Was ist los” (shrug shoulders or hand motion)
- “Ich bin müde” (yawn and stretch)
- “Ich habe Hunger” (rub tummy)
- “Was sagst du?” (hand to the ear)

Grammatik oder Vokabelthemen können eingeführt oder wiederholt werden, z.B.:

Steigerungsformen

— Zeig und sprich!
klein – kleiner – am kleinsten
lang – länger – am längsten
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— Lauf und sprich!
schnell – schneller – am schnellsten
langsam – langsamer – am langsamsten

— Variere die Lautstärke!
laut – lauter – am lautesten
leise – leiser – am leisesten

Wortfelder
sprechen: flüstern – murmeln – rufen - schreien
gehen: schleichen – schlurfen – latschen - rennen

Präpositionen
Stelle dir ein Object vor, z.B. “eine Vase”.
- auf den Tisch stellen,
- auf die Erde neben eine Person stellen,
- auf den Kopf stellen

Gegensätze
— Mach sie fühlbar!
kalt – warm;  nass – trocken;
hoch – tief; alt – jung

Exercise 15: 'Let's Do That Rhythm!'

Objectives:
• Foreign language learners often have difficulties placing the word accent correctly on multi-syllabic words. The objective of this exercise is to practice and ingrain the speech melody and word accent (the change between long, short, soft and hard) in a fun way by combining known rhythm pattern and body movement.

Language level: all

Students stand and speak the words while simultaneously moving arms or feet in rhythm (dancing, walking, etc.). They can imitate the teacher as a whole group or practice on their own, reading the words from a paper. Each word should be spoken several times in a row (see Tselikas 1999, 153-154).

a. in the Tango-rhythm, 4/4 tact with four-syllable words, such as:
   angefangen, aufgeschlossen, angebraten, einverstanden, weggegangen etc.
b. in the waltz-rhythm, ¾ tact, with three-syllable words, such as:
gefunden, gesehen, geschwommen, gewaschen, gerufen, zertreten, bekommen,

Exercise 16: 'Get Into the Mood'

Objectives:

- to explore and experiment with different aspects of pronunciation (pitch, tempo, volume, etc.) and intonation (word and sentences accent, melody, rhythm, and emotional stress);
- to speak more fluently, lively, realistically, and self-confidently;
- to warm up the voice;
- to loosen up and let go of inhibitions to speak aloud.

Language level: all (The exercise can be adapted to different levels.)

Students stand for this exercise (to get better resonance). They are asked to read the short phrases aloud, try to convey the appropriate emotion and use body language to support their speech. The material is chosen in such a way as to include variety of different forms of speech (formal or colloquial), as well as differences in pronunciation and intonation that result from emotional stress and speech dynamics. At first, students speak the text in a chorus, imitating the teacher; later they are asked to recite the same text several times with a partner.

Below are some examples of phrases that my students have practiced. Each teacher should create their own or take them from textbook dialogues or literary texts. In some phrases I underlined the words that are stressed or have the students suggest placing the stress. I encourage teachers to incorporate such exercises (maybe in a shorter version) in every lesson.

Variation:
The teacher can introduce only one or a few sentences or phrases and ask the students to read or recite them (improvise) using different emotions, e.g., loving, hateful, sad, evil, laughing, etc. The emotion does not reflect the content of the word; in fact the sentence can be nonsensical. This exercise called “Show me your feeling” can be used in the warm-up or language application phase (see a description in chapter 1.2.2.).

— Oh Gott!
— Ach du liebe Güte!
— Du lieber Himmel!
— Klasse!
— Was soll das?
— Zurückbleiben!
— Vorsicht!
— Mensch!!
— Wie geht’s dir? Lange nicht gesehen!
— Ich bin sooooo müde!
— Das tut mir aber leid.
— Deine Party ist mega cool (geil, krass, etc.)!
— Ich liebe dich!
— Sein oder nicht sein, das ist hier die Frage!
— Es lebe die Freiheit! Es lebe die Freiheit!
— Räum jetzt endlich dein Zimmer auf!
— Aber das ist ja entsetzlich!
— Der Sohn antwortet seiner Mutter:
  Mein Kinderzimmer ist mein Kinderzimmer!
  Da kann ich machen, was ich will!
  Und da räum ich jetzt nicht auf?
— Milch macht müde Männer munter.
— Du bist mir so (total) egal.
— Ich flehe dich an. Komm zu mir zurück!
— Lass mich…Wenn du nur wüstest, wie egal du mir bist…,
  du mit deinen blöden Weibern!
— Ach, ist das schöööööön hier!
  Und diese Einsamkeit! Wunderbar!
  Ein Traumurlaub!
— Leise zieht durch mein Gemüt
  liebliches Geläute.
  Klinge kleines Frühlingslied,
  kling hinaus ins Weite.

Chants

Chants and songs that include some form of body movement are effective ways to use the language. Learners should always be standing while singing, since the diaphragm and the lungs can pull more air in, which then makes good singing possible. Chants are often less inhibiting to students than singing and younger students consider them more ‘cool’ since they resemble ‘Rap’. Finger games and other short children's rhymes are also suitable to be used as chants or songs. Even more mature adult learners enjoy children’s texts.

In the following, I used the text of a children’s book for a chant.

Exercise 17: 'Der Hase mit der roten Nase'

Objectives:
• to practice pronunciation, speech dynamics (tempo and rhythm), and fluency;
• to warm-up the voice;
• to loosen up individual students and the group as a unit.

Language level: all

The text by Helme Heine, a famous children’s book author, was written in simple rhyming language. (There is even a moral behind the text, which may be discussed at a later point.).

*Der Hase mit der roten Nase*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Es war einmal ein Hase</th>
<th>Da freute sich der Hase.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mit einer roten Nase</td>
<td>“Wie schön ist meine Nase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>und einem blauen Ohr.</td>
<td>und auch mein blaues Ohr,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Das kommt ganz selten vor.</td>
<td>das kommt so selten vor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Die Tiere wunderten sich sehr:  
wo kam denn dieser Hase her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Er hat im Gras gesessen</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>und still den Klee gegessen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Und als der Fuchs vorbeigerannt,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hat er den Hasen nicht erkannt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students first read the text and vocabulary questions are resolved. Before chanting, the teacher establishes a steady beat by tapping two fingers on the open palm of one hand or tapping the foot /moving the knee. Using a regular speaking voice, the teacher chants the first four lines of the text in rhythm. Students join in, chanting the rest of the text four lines at a time. Encourage the students to keep a steady beat with their finger (foot, knee, etc.) the whole time!

Chant the text several times, but use the following variations (suggested by Lazano 1999, 7):

— The high/medium/low chant (Darth Vader)—show the range of voice with your hand  
— The loud/quiet chant (hand motion)  
— The emotional chant (teacher shouts a particular emotion; everyone chants in the style of that emotion, e.g., frightened, angry, determined, etc.)  
— The conductor chant (Class is divided in two groups. Teacher signals which group is to chant; once this has been established, the groups can switch—even in the middle of a verse). Another variation is to chant as a round, four beats apart. This creates a rap-like fun effect.  
— The Radio game (if the “radio” is on, students chant out loud; if it is off,
the music only continues in the student’s heads (as a help, students can move their lips without sound);

— Students also have fun changing some or all words of the text (keep the same verse length and grammar, e.g., for “der Hase” use “der Vater,” for “kam” "sprang”, etc.) and chant their newly created version. The original and the newly created line(s) should be written on a transparency or the board. The crazier the more enjoyable!

1.2.2 Drama-oriented Exercises for the Language Application / Independent Practice Phase

After "guided practice" of the foreign language (Hunter 1982, 15), where students have frequent opportunities to practice specific grammar, language functions, and vocabulary in controlled activities, and where their comprehension and correct language usage is still modeled and monitored, it is the teacher's task to help students make the transfer to free speech. The teacher needs to create situations for partly-independent as well as fully-independent contextualized language use. Students have a chance to apply what they have learned to "generate their own language in order to convey their own message" (Hunter 1982), i.e., students' work is now mostly original. They are offered opportunities to create with the language, take risks, and practice problem-solving in the foreign language. In this phase, the main objectives for the students are to acquire fluency and spontaneity, and practice using verbal and nonverbal language adequately in different social situations while becoming self-confident and comfortable with the language.

Exercises in this phase are student-centered and stimulate cooperative work with the task to create a group product. They require active participation by all students. Teacher involvement is minimal; he/she mainly observes students' interaction in the target language and provides occasional feedback.
Exercise 1: 'Story Around a Picture or Object'

Objectives:
- to apply learned vocabulary and grammar (e.g., sentence structure, verb forms and tenses, commands, etc.) within a context;
- to encourage creative, fluent, and spontaneous use of the language;
- to apply verbal language together with nonverbal language;
- to foster positive group dynamics.

Language level: Intermediate and up

Students work in groups (size of group determined by the picture). Each group receives a picture (painting, photo, story, etc.) and has just a couple of minutes to improvise a short scene that begins or ends with the group positioned as the picture. The observing students decide at the end if the group has successfully copied the picture (adapted from Wessels 1987).

In another exercise individual students or partner groups receive or choose an ordinary object. The class becomes a big market square. The students' goal is to advertise this object on the market, inventing a name and its various functions. For example, a credit card can become a piece of magic soap, a special cell phone, or a mouse—there are no limits to the imagination!

Variation:
One object is passed around. Each person holds the object and says a couple of sentences about it. He/she can change the appearance, qualities, functions, or name of the object.

Exercise 2: 'Rotating Discussions'

Objectives:
- to respond quickly and appropriately in the foreign language;
- to apply a variety of different vocabulary and grammar topics;
- to get to know one's classmates, fostering positive group dynamics.

Language level: all (The exercise can be adapted to all levels.)

Students (the whole class or two groups) form an inner and an outer circle (standing or sitting). They are asked to spontaneously make small talk, getting to know the person across from them. After a couple of minutes, the student in the inner circle rotates, i.e. he/she moves one person to the right and a new round of talks starts. It ends when all
students have met. Ideas for questions and answers should be reviewed before the rotation begins (e.g., with overhead transparency).

Variation:
The topic of the short dialogues can be changed before each rotation. This way, many of the vocabulary or grammar topics introduced during the semester can be reviewed and learned vocabulary and phrases applied in a short small talk (e.g., for beginning students: clothes/colors, hobbies, interrogative words, time, daily activities, etc.).

Exercise 3: 'The Elevator'

Objectives:
• to respond quickly and appropriately in the foreign language;
• to apply different vocabulary and grammar;
• to get to know classmates, fostering positive group dynamics;
• to apply problem-solving strategies in the foreign language;
• to express emotions verbally and nonverbally.

Language level: Intermediate and up

The teacher introduces a specific scenario, such as "In the elevator". He/she asks several students to stand in a very small (possibly demarcated) space and improvise the scene when the elevator gets stuck on the 15th floor. This improvisation can be repeated with different groups of students. Each group will borrow some ideas or vocabulary from the last one and/or add a new direction or materials to their improvisation. The students who do not perform also participate by discussing the different solutions and variations, asking questions, or giving suggestions to the next performing group ("Warum haben sie nicht...? gemacht/gesagt." or "Ich hätte so und so gehandelt."). Therefore everybody is involved. Similar topics/situations include, for example: “Who is at the door?” and “In the doctor’s waiting room” (see Sprenger 2002).

Example of an improvisation:
Context: “Who is at the door?”
Student #1 rings, students #2 opens; student #1 improvises a reason for ringing, student #2 reacts; a conversation, such as this, could develop:

Ding, dong!
“Hallo?”
“Guten Tag, Frau Meier. Vor dem Haus läuft eine Katze herum. Ist das Ihre?”
“Nein, meine Muschi ist hier in der Wohnung. Sie liegt gerade vor dem Ofen.”
“Oh, dann entschuldigen Sie bitte die Störung.”
“Kein Problem. Auf Wiedersehen!”

Variations:
— Instead of describing a scenario orally, the teacher can also distribute cards with specific information about the situation and/or characters and the goals to be achieved. Alternatively, students can prepare such information on cards as a written exercise and have other students use them for their improvisation.

— As an alternative, student groups of four or five receive several random pieces torn out of a magazine or newspaper (preferably tabloids) and have to improvise a short skit about an item - for example a picture, an advertisement slogan, a headline, or a sentence or word from the paper.

Exercise 4: 'Hallo! Hier ist Meier!' (Telephone conversations)

Objectives:
• to respond spontaneously and appropriately in the foreign language;
• to apply a variety of different vocabulary in changing contexts;
• to foster projection and clear articulation;
• to improve comprehension skills
• to prepare for more elaborate improvisations;
• to foster positive group dynamics.

Language level: Second semester and up

After having introduced phrases for telephone conversations in the target culture, students improvise conversations. They sit in circles, working in groups of six. Each student receives a card with his telephone number and a list of the other students’ numbers in the group (without matching them with students’ names). One student in each group starts, miming to take the receiver and dialing any number on his list (saying the number aloud). The appropriate student answers and both act out a small dialogue. The teacher should suggest different situations, such as: you are trying to set up a date with someone; you are talking to your mother who has a request; you are calling Legoland for information; a prank call, etc.

Students can also mix and match the telephone numbers in the group. Gestures to imitate being on the phone are important. Students can sit back to back which makes the exercise more realistic, depending on the number of students and the loudness in the room.

Variations:
— The exercise is done with a partner and students sit back to back!
— Students receive role cards with different scenarios or phrases they have to integrate into their dialogue.
— Students get a dialogue with only certain exclamations, such as “Oh, no!”, “My God!”, “Really!”, “What a shame!”, etc. and have to improvise a dialogue around it. (This could also be prepared in form of a written exercise; for more ideas, see Wessels, (1987); Maley and Duff (1979), Tselikas (1999) and others).

Exercise 5: 'Small Talk and Beyond'

Objectives:
• to respond spontaneously and appropriately in the foreign language;
• to apply different vocabulary, grammar, and speech functions in context at students’ individual language level;
• to practice listening comprehension skills.
• to foster positive group dynamics.

Language level: all (The exercise can be adapted to all).

Instead of being on the telephone, students improvise different scenarios 'in person' with a partner or in small groups. These situations can draw on certain vocabulary topics or speech functions (introducing yourself or someone else, negotiating, asking for information, etc.), or they can expand on a literary text or course book dialogue. There are numerous topics, e.g., at a birthday party, watching a soccer game of your son/daughter, being in a crammed airplane seat, or asking questions at the foreign student office at the university.

Examples of small talk phrases:
Context: In an airplane. A man and a woman talk to each other.

Fliegen Sie oft nach Deutschland?
Haben Sie Freunde in Deutschland?
Wen besuchen Sie in Deutschland?
Wo in Amerika leben Sie?
Wie lange leben Sie schon in Amerika?

Disruptions that prompt further improvisation can be incorporated into a situation by the teacher or the students (e.g., the stewardess asking questions, see 1.2.2).
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Exercise 6: 'Creating Machines'

Objectives:
- to use the foreign language in a creative context;
- to apply different vocabulary, grammar, and speech functions (e.g., buying and selling);
- to practice expressing actions through body movements;
- to foster teamwork and group dynamics;

Language level: Intermediate and advanced

Using statues, pantomime, and improvisation, groups of students are asked to create a machine (real or unreal) and then exhibit it. This is an exercise typically used in acting courses, which mainly uses sculptures and pantomime, with each student playing an integral part of the machine (Maley and Duff 1979, 73). To add language to this mostly nonverbal exercise, students can create a sales dialog in groups of three, with one student playing the sales person advertising and demonstrating the machine, one the customer who is asking questions and the third one the machine, acting out the movements. The students discuss the functions and set-up of the machine in the target language.

Exercise 7: 'Guess What We Are Doing'

Objectives:
- to express actions nonverbally through body movements;
- to use oral language in a meaningful and goal-oriented way (pantomime triggers speech);
- to review a variety of different vocabulary in changing contexts;
- to practice observation skills;
- to foster team work and group dynamics.

Language level: Intermediate and up

This exercise is done in pair work or in groups of two. One or two students are miming a certain situation, provided by the teacher; the other(s) need to guess what is happening and point out all the details (where, when is the situation happening, who is doing what, etc.) using speech. Scenarios for such pantomimes are endless (see also Wessels 1987).

Some of my suggestions are:
- two people moving a big aquarium into their house; a hairdresser cutting a nervous customer's hair;
• a waiter serving a demanding customer;
• two people crossing a wild stream;
• a man sitting in the same café as you trying to get your attention;
• a mom arguing with her daughter about how long she can go out at night;
• standing in a cramped elevator trying to reach the floor buttons.

Students can form new groups after each round.

Exercise 8: 'Countries Through Pantomime'

Objectives:
• to initiate cultural insight, oral discussion, and reflection;
• to express ideas and actions nonverbally, through body movement and body language.

Language level: all

Students work in pairs or small groups. They each get the names of two countries that they have to portray using a pantomime or statue. The others guess the country. Especially having students from different countries makes this exercise very interesting. This should be followed by a class discussion about students' impressions and reasons for stereotyping. The exercise can precede a unit about a cultural topic (a country, customs, clichés/stereotypes, or literary text, etc.) or be used as a warm-up exercise at the beginning or in the middle of the lesson.

Exercise 9: 'Communicating with Extraterrestrials'

Objectives:
• to practice improvisational speech;
• to apply learned vocabulary (for simple actions, daily activities, food, adjectives expressing emotion, etc.) and grammar (e.g., commands, modals, verb forms, etc.) in context;
• to practice problem solving strategies;
• to use body language to support speech;
• to foster team work and group dynamics.

Language level: Second semester and up
The class is divided into groups of four students. Two are from outer space and have just landed on our planet (masks optional). They cannot talk, but they can see and hear. The task of the two "earthlings" is to cooperatively teach the extraterrestrials basic things, for example how to walk, sit, breathe, greet others, eat, show them some basic objects they need for life on our planet (chair, bed, books, money, etc.) or even human feelings, such as to be happy, sad, angry, excited, etc. This can be done using a combination of physical action through pantomime and speech (in the foreign language). The two from outer space mimic what is shown to them (adapted and changed from Maley and Duff 1979).

Exercise 10: 'Create a Life'

Objectives:
- to apply learned vocabulary and grammar (e.g., past tense, passive, sentence structure); to practice spontaneous and creative use of the language;
- to practice listening comprehension
- to foster positive group dynamics.

Language level: Second semester and up

Students sit in groups (6-8 per group). Together they invent a biography of a person or thing. One student or the teacher starts with the sentence, for example:

"Am 12. Dezember 1960 wurde ein kleines rot-haariges Baby mit zwei riesigen Ohren geboren." or "Es war einmal eine kleine graue Maus…"

Students then take turns adding each one sentence that connects to the previous one and create a life from beginning to end (circle improvisation). Students can let the person/object die at any time:

"Es war so traurig, als die kleine Maus ins Sektglas fiel und ertrank!"

The answers should be improvised without long thoughts about the content. Students together take responsibility for the story. The teacher can also set up the exercise so that students practice a certain grammar topic (e.g., prepositions).

Variations:
Instead of a full sentence, students say only three words before they give the turn to someone else (Es war einmal—ein kleiner Elefant—der hatte einen Menschenfreund…). Individual students get cards with words that they have to use in their sentences.
Students improvise a letter to an imaginary person. Students can improvise a skit from their invented story and perform it in class.

Exercise 11: 'Show Me Your Emotion'

**Objectives:**
- to experiment with different aspects of intonation (e.g., word and sentences accent, melody, and emotional stress) and pronunciation (pitch, tempo, volume, etc.);
- make students understand that words in another language also can and need to be intonated in various ways to express emotions;
- to practice spontaneous expression of feelings through words and body language;
- to prepare for meaningful, lively and genuine speech
- to foster positive group dynamics.

**Language level:** all

Students sit in circles of 8-10. One student in each group receives a sheet with a list of different emotions that the group members attempt to express during each round). One after the other, students are asked to turn to their left neighbor and speak a nonsensical German sentence, such as “Die Maus ist im Haus.” or “Walle du Welle und wiege.” with a certain emotion. Eye contact is important. Each round the emotion to be expressed changes, e.g., loud, quiet, high voice, low voice, loving, hateful, courageous, scared, crying, and laughing. Each student can try to express the emotion through body language and intonation several times until he/she is satisfied.

Exercise 12: 'Mascarade'

Working with masks adds an element of surprise and breaks the monotony of some lessons. The teacher needs to collect masks (from a toy box) or acquire cheap ones at a party store or thrift shop. The masks can be added as props to role-plays, improvisations or pantomimes, or represent certain characters in a dramatic exercise. The student steps into the character’s shoes and tries to act accordingly.

**Objectives:**
- to initiate speech and contexts through masks;
- to be motivated to experiment and be creative with the language through the element of surprise and the unusual;
- to encourage students to use both nonverbal and verbal language to create their character.

**Language level:** Second semester and up
The following are some examples of how masks can be used in a foreign language lesson:

- Each student wears a mask and is asked to develop his/her character, writing down or thinking about a short description of him-/herself. Everyone then meets at a masquerade ball (music in the background) mingling for a couple of minutes, before sitting down with one person to find out more information about each other (taking notes). At the end students introduce the person who they met to the other ball guests.

*Example of an introduction (context: masquerade ball):*


This exercise could, for example, be followed by forming groups of 4-6 masked characters and writing a skit where their lives are intertwined (Sprenger 2002, 10, adapted and expanded).

- Students stand in a circle. Several masks lie on the floor in the middle of the circle. One student leaves the room. The others agree on one mask. Back in the room, the student tries to find the right mask by commanding the other students to move like the mask, make a typical hand motion, speak like the mask, sing, dance, etc. (Sprenger, 10). In large groups, this exercise can also be done in two or three groups simultaneously.

- For the game “Personenraten”, where each student has to guess which famous person or character he/she is, some students can wear a mask instead of having their character’s name written on a paper pinned on their back. The mask has to be put on them with their eyes closed.

Exercise 13: 'Mix and Match Role-Play/Improvisation'

*Objectives:*

- to practice spontaneous speaking and acting with the help of role cards (for guided improvisations);
- to apply learned vocabulary and grammar (e.g., present and past tenses, passive; sentence structure) and to stimulate creativity in oral and written language usage;
to foster team work and positive group dynamics.

Language level: Intermediate and advanced

Each student creates a character by writing the information on individually colored cards, e.g., red card: name and age; blue card: profession; yellow card: habit; white card: one characteristic; purple: place of residence; green card: genre (the scene should be played as a crime story, love story, opera, etc.), and golden card: a sudden event (to be incorporated in the scene, e.g., an accident). Additional cards can be added. The funnier or more unreal the created characters, the more interesting the exercise. All cards are collected and sorted by color. Students form groups of seven (according to the number of colored cards) and the cards are randomly distributed so that each group member gets a different color, a different characteristic. After each student has read his/her card aloud to the group, they start discussing a story about their character that is then acted out in front to the class, either as an improvisation, a role-play, pantomime, or animated reading (like reader’s theater).

2. Incorporating Larger Theater Projects within the Foreign Language Curriculum

"Putting students' learning center stage."

(Shier 2002, 186)

In the previous chapter I discussed how certain theatrical techniques can be incorporated into the everyday FL language classroom, and how they can help to develop foreign language and social skills. This chapter will focus on how the application of theatrical techniques in foreign language classes can also culminate in larger theatrical projects (literary or student-written play productions) performed before an audience. Whereas the use of drama exercises in class fosters more process-oriented learning, the goal of theater projects in FL learning is both the product and the process. The end-product is the performance, but in order to get there, students must go through a process which involves learning different skills. This learning process
happens during the study, interpretation, and rehearsal of a text (or during play-wrighting). It is most valuable in regard to students' language proficiency and social learning. Drama-oriented language exercises, as described in the previous chapters, are also used to enhance this learning process.

FL theater projects are based on a communicative, interdisciplinary, and collaborative approach to learning with the goal of expanding students' knowledge beyond a traditional FL language or literature class. They combine intense language practice with the study of several other fields, such as culture, literature, history, and theater.

Language learning happens consciously and formally while students learn and rehearse their lines, as well as subconsciously and informally as they discuss and interact in the target language in preparation for the performance (language acquisition, see Krashen's language learning theory). Pronunciation, intonation, sentence structure, vocabulary, and grammar are practiced not through textbook exercises, but in an active, meaningful, and goal-oriented way. The different language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are not separated or practiced individually, but instead are integrated into natural and relevant contexts (e.g., discussing ways to advertise the play, or creating posters).

Literature is not merely read; it is 'experienced' it in its cultural and historical context. Students get the opportunity to lift the text off the lifeless pages and step into it by taking on different roles. This enables them to comprehend it and reflect upon it from different perspectives. "In a minuscule way she/he [the student] has got inside the culture and experienced it from within. In the microcosm of the play, she/he has lived that other world" (Bourke 1993, 229).

Moreover, theater projects provide a setting in which each student can grow and learn both individually and as part of a group. Most importantly, the goal of such projects is
not only to facilitate the “transfer of knowledge from faculty to student” (Barr /Tagg 1995, cited in Lys et al. 2002, 208-209), but also to actively engage students in their own learning process and take responsibility for their progress.

As the results of my national survey will show, there are teachers in several American and Canadian universities and colleges, who have successfully staged theater productions with their students in German. However, there have been only a few publications in recent years that discuss in detail the production of theater plays within the German language curriculum (e.g., essays in Bräuer 2002; Bell 2000; Eckert and Klemm 1998, etc.). German teachers who are interested in trying this teaching approach will find little reference material (course outlines, preparation and production ideas, lists of annotated plays, etc.).

The national survey, which will be discussed below, was undertaken to provide more information about the effectiveness, value, and feasibility of such theatrical undertakings in university German classes in the US and Canada, as well as to support the ideas propounded by this dissertation.

2.1 "Theater as a Tool for Foreign Language Teaching—A National Survey"

After successfully executing two theater projects as a part of a 3rd year course entitled "Introduction to German Literature" at the University of Hawaii in 1989 and 1992, I created and sent out a questionnaire (1990) to 300 German department chairs in the US and Canada regarding the use of theater as a teaching approach in their classes. The results of this survey were published in Ronke (1993).

To support my dissertation topic with information on the activities of other institutions, the questionnaire was modified and sent out again in 2001.
The main objective was to research whether, how, and to what extent other German programs in the US and Canada had produced theater projects in their university and college classes between 1996 and 2001. Furthermore, I wanted to find out whether those who had undertaken such projects were satisfied with the results with regard to language learning and learning in general. I hoped to receive valuable information from other professors about the preparation, execution, and evaluation of theater projects in their German classes. The projected results of this questionnaire were as follows:

- Relative to the number of German departments at American and Canadian universities and colleges, a minority of programs implemented large-scale theater projects in their classes between 1996 and 2001.
- Most of the German instructors that used the theater method consider such projects to be a valuable learning experience with a number of important educational benefits for the students.
- Those teachers who used theater projects in their German classes can offer valuable information on how best to implement this method, which can serve as a resource for teachers with no previous experience.

It was my goal to examine and possibly modify these hypotheses on the basis of the findings of this survey.

### 2.2 Data Collection Procedures

#### 2.2.1 Technique

The questionnaire contained two types of questions: (a) yes/no questions and (b) open-ended questions.

Examples:

(a) #15: "Did you use costumes in your production?"
(b) # 27 "What were the main objectives for this theatrical event?"

The open-ended questions were included to give respondents a chance to elaborate and provide as much information as desired. This type of question was also used to provide a sense of the range and frequency of likely responses and to possibly identify common patterns. Some of the questions are a combination of both types.

Example:

# 30: "Would you rate a theatrical event/drama exercise in a foreign language class available learning experience for the students? Please explain why (not) and list some of the educational rewards for the students."

The purpose of these questions was to achieve a more in-depth or accurate response. In my analysis, I separated the two types of answers and calculated the yes/no questions quantitatively and interpreted the open questions qualitatively.

The arrangement of the questionnaire was non-linear, i.e., filter questions were used, since not all questions applied to all respondents.

Example:

# 2 c.: "If you answered "yes" to question # 2c, but have not produced a full-length theatrical event, please proceed to question # 24."

In February 2001, this questionnaire was sent out as a hard copy and through the web page to German Department Chairs of 500 four-year colleges and universities in the US and Canada. The mailing list (Fall 2000) was acquired through the Modern Language Association (MLA) in the US. It originally consisted of 1,047 addresses, but was shortened to a list of 500 by deleting every second address in the list (which was arranged by state and country), and than randomly rounded down to 500. Seven letters were returned by the postmaster; therefore, the sample consisted of 493 participants.
2.2.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods

In designing the questionnaire, I used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative approaches include multiple choice questions, yes/no questions, or rating scales. They are designed to generate data that constitute the basis for a large-scale comparative analysis. By contrast, qualitative research focuses on verbal description and observation of certain phenomena rather than on fixed numerical data. It is a much more personal and subjective style of research than a quantitative approach. Qualitative research is used to investigate participants' perspectives, experiences, and practices in order to develop an understanding of the subject matter. It always takes into consideration that human behavior is shaped by the context in which it occurs, and that its meaning is therefore negotiable and variable.

Qualitative research is based on the premise that reality is not objective and given. Rather it is socially constructed either by the participants' accounts of their experiences or through social interaction (Lyons 2000, 271). The goal of qualitative research is to develop new or more specific theories or justified hypotheses on the basis of the analyzed data. The questions are open-ended and elicit descriptive, nonobjective responses.

In my questionnaire, the data for the yes/no questions were tabulated by the computer; the open-ended answers were first coded or categorized and then counted manually. Due to the differences in wording as well as repetitions by the respondents, the analysis of those questions could not be done without some of my own interpretation.

2.3 Survey Results and Discussion

Overview

Of the 493 recipients, 67 returned the questionnaire. One can assume that among the non-respondents, the theater approach did not play a significant role in their teaching
at that point of time. Alternative explanations include a lack of time or interest in answering the questionnaire on the part of the faculty, or the possibility that a number of questionnaires did not reach the intended recipient.

Since the return rate is 14%, the collected data cannot necessarily be seen as a representative sample. However, it illustrates trends, which can serve as valuable information on drama and theater as a method in German instruction. Since there were only very few responses from Canada, no trend can be determined between Canada and the United States. Therefore, I have combined the data of both countries in the analysis.

In the following, I will present a synthesis of the most significant results of the national survey. The analysis will focus primarily on the data obtained from the 67 respondents. In some cases, I have organized the results according to general topics. Each section will be followed by a short discussion of the data and the pedagogical implications derived from my own experiences and the available literature. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

No information can be given about the number of German programs that have used 'drama exercises' in their classes (question # 2c). Since I had not provided a definition of the term 'drama exercises', several respondents did not comment on the exercises, but rather mentioned the name of their theatrical production. Therefore, the data cannot show a trend for the use of drama exercises in German language classes.

2.3.1 Number of Respondents with Theater Project Experience

Questions # 1, 2a, and 2b asked the respondents if they had produced a theatrical event in German (a) between 1996 and 2001, (b) before that date, or (c) if they were planning to do so in the future.
The answers show that 27 (40%) of the 67 respondents had produced a theatrical event in German in their classes or as an extracurricular activity. This represents an upper-end estimate of the population, given the number of non-responses. From the 40 German departments that had not undertaken a production between 1996–2001, 10 departments had produced a play before that period. Therefore, one can conclude that 37 departments had had experience with theater projects at some point in the past. The main reasons given for discontinuing theatrical activities in German were mainly a) the interference with personal research and a high work load, b) the lack of time or financial support, and c) job changes or the discontinuation of the German program.

At the time of the questionnaire, 19 departments (29% of all respondents) were in the process of organizing a theatrical event or planning one in the future; two indicated that such a project was a possibility. The majority of those departments had already undertaken a theatrical event between 1996 and 2001.

Discussion

The results show that slightly less than half of the respondents had incorporated larger theater projects into their teaching between 1996 and 2001. Reasons why the other half of the teachers had not used theater projects in their classes may lie in the fact that many of them had never been acquainted with this approach or with project work in general. They may not have been able to recognize the value of this approach, as they may have lacked the experience or the willingness to diverge from traditional teaching methods or they may have felt reluctant to engage in projects that involve additional work and time, or uncertain about handling such innovative approaches. In addition, there were not enough prepared materials specifically for German teachers or teacher training workshops in this field at that time. However, based on the responses of the teachers whose programs included theater projects, it seems that the majority considered it valuable for their students and the department.
2.3.2 Integration of Theater Projects into the German Language Curriculum

Question # 3 asked those respondents who had done theater projects with their students if and how the theater project was integrated into the German curriculum. Of the 18 German professors who chose to answer this question, all but one had integrated the theater project into the German curriculum at their university or college (as a course for credit) and did not offer it merely as an extracurricular activity. Half of the respondents offered the production as part of German courses geared specially to drama, with titles such as "German Drama Workshop," "Performing German," "German Drama Production," "or "Theater Workshop." The other half of the German programs reported to have integrated their theater projects into regular courses, entitled, e.g., "German Drama," "German Theater," or "German Literature." Most theater projects were part of a 3rd and 4th year undergraduate German course, or in some cases a graduate course, with most students having to meet a two-year language prerequisite.

Discussion

Most of the German programs that had produced theatrical events recognized the importance of including such activities as a regular part of the curriculum. The reasons seem to be, as many respondents indicated, that they fulfill the objectives of many traditional language, literature, or culture classes. Perhaps more importantly, they seem to meet the demand for a more interdisciplinary, multidimensional, student-centered approach to language teaching. I recommend planning a theater project in a class created specifically for that purpose, e.g., "Performing German Theater." If this is not possible, the project can be an integral part of a language, literature, or culture course. In my experience, the only disadvantage of undertaking such a project as part of a more general course is that prospective participants must be made well aware ahead of time that part of the class will involve rehearsing and performing of a play. Once this has been made known, the class becomes a perfect means of advertising the
German program and recruiting students from different levels and departments (my course had the highest enrollment ever in the German program). As a part of the German curriculum, such a course is also attractive for high school students who are accumulating pre-college credit. Being able to include those students may increase the enrollment number for this course. Finally, I believe, students should receive credit just as they would for any other university or college class. After all, they work hard in a course like this and are very much involved with the language.

2.3.3 Preparation of a Theater Project

Good preparation starts well before the actual project begins, and is essential to its success. Preparatory steps include finding the script, securing financial support and the cooperation of other university departments or the community, choosing a location, advertising for the course, and finding staff support.

In the following, I will briefly discuss the most important parts of such preliminary planning for the teacher or the teaching team.

2.3.3.1 Type of Production and Text Material

Type of Production and Genre

In question #1, the teachers were asked to describe the type of theatrical events that they worked with in their classes.

According to the survey, the majority of professors chose literary plays (dramas and comedies, partly shortened or adapted), followed by cabarets/variety shows, selected scenes from literary plays, skits, poems, and occasionally a puppet show or Reader’s Theater (see Appendix C. 1.1). The most popular author was Bertold Brecht.
When asked for suggestions (question # 32), most respondents again recommended dramas and light dramas (see Appendix C, 1.2). Brecht was the the most popular author; in particular his *Three Penny Opera* (*Die Dreigroschenoper*) was mentioned, which, however, was not performed during the time period in question for reasons not stated. Several respondents also pointed out that they had been successful with comedies or comical skits.

**Discussion**

There are various types of theatrical performances that can be appropriate for a foreign language course, ranging from full-length literary plays, cabarets, or musicals, to individual scenes from plays or selected skits performed at a theater evening on campus. The teacher’s choice of what type of theater project and what genre to produce most likely depends on the focus and objectives of the class, the time available for the production, the foreign language proficiency and projected interest of the students, and the make-up of the audience. The respondents may have chosen mostly literary plays because they were on the reading list for a particular class or because there was a greater number of complete scripts or supplementary material available for literary plays than, e.g., for cabarets, which in most cases have to be assembled from individual acts.

Having had experience with producing both plays and cabarets, I favor the cabaret or dramatic revue for the following main reasons:

- The scenes/skits in a cabaret can be easily adapted to the students’ individual language levels and talents; there are no main characters around which the whole production revolves;
- It can comprise a variety of genres as well as many different styles of text, ranging from literary texts and prose, to magazine/newspaper articles or ads to skits or songs written by the students. Students can benefit from getting to know a number
of different authors or dramatists and having the opportunity to act out more than one character;

- Since the number and level of the participating students are often unknown during the planning, it is much easier to add or take out scenes at the time of casting than when working with a fixed script.

The choice of Brecht as the most often-staged playwright can most likely be attributed to the fact that he is known throughout the world for his thought-provoking themes, his unique style, and the historically and culturally significant settings of his works.

Comedies were most likely recommended because they are enjoyable, motivating, and assumed to be easier to perform for students with little acting experience. In my own experience, plays that combine interesting, thought-provoking themes with humor or some entertainment value work best with FL students.

After deciding on the type and genre of the production, the text material can then be chosen accordingly.

Text Material
Question # 5 inquired about the reasons for choosing a particular text for the production. The criteria for the text choice, as mentioned by the participants of the survey, can be summarized in the following categories:

1. potential for language learning
2. historical era and type of language
3. practicality and suitability
4. motivational aspects

Results and Discussion
(1) Potential for language learning
Several teachers pointed out that the language must be accessible to the students, i.e., it should be in keeping with the linguistic and intellectual ability level of the participants. As some teachers mentioned (question #5 and #32), it should not be too formal, "stilted or artificial in expression" (Prof. from Illinois), but contain "numerous basic expressions" (Prof. from Kansas). Excessive dialect should be avoided (Prof. from Virginia). The respondents point out that the level and style of language is important for successful language learning and find that a more contemporary language style is the most beneficial. In the research literature, some educators are divided. Smith (1984) and Wessels (1987), e.g., advise FL teachers to stay away from noncontemporary plays (generally before the 1950s), plays that contain "highly stylized language," inappropriate dialects which are seldom heard, and/or contain "too much non-standard grammar... or inappropriate subject matter" (Smith, 131). For (Bourke 1993, 232) on the other hand, these guidelines are far too restrictive and categorical. He gives several examples of successful productions of famous old plays, and/or plays written in dialect (e.g., Andreas Gryphius' *Herr Peter Squentz* and Carl Orff's *Astutuli*).

It is my belief that the language of the chosen plays should be challenging but not beyond the students' reach. If the language level of the text is too high, students will feel frustrated by their lack of linguistic proficiency. As a consequence, language learning will most likely not happen. I believe it is quite permissible to make small changes to the text (although not to the content) in order to adjust it to the language proficiency of the students. The length and difficulty of the text can also be reduced by performing only one act of a play or an individual scene. This too will yield the desired language learning effect. One must always remember that for most theater projects, the main objective is to speak and act in natural German and to be understood by the audience. Surely, it can be quite fun to do a scene or two in ‘old German’ or Bavarian dialect, but I generally agree with Wessels and Smith in their preference for
contemporary plays, which offer a good deal of conversational interaction. The plays do not even have to be well-known in order to fulfill these language goals.

Another question is whether there is greater benefit in selecting a student’s own text or an existing literary work when it comes to achieving the desired language objectives. Respondents of the survey were not specifically asked about this topic. Therefore, I will only briefly touch on some of the arguments.

Meyer-Dinkgräfe (1988, 5) believes that the language of most literary dramas is grammatically correct, and the language level is more complex and idiomatic than a text written by students could ever be. By modeling the complex language structure of most literary pieces, students learn more than by writing and speaking their own text. Bulmer (1982, 147) even goes so far as to suggest that students might be overtaxed in having to write their own text while studying and concentrating on movement and body language at the same time. On the other hand, writing their own script can give students a chance to apply their knowledge of the foreign language in written and spoken form. It encourages them to be creative and take risks. Using the language becomes more meaningful because students work towards performing their own piece, which may be more motivating and provides a greater sense of pride and involvement.

I believe both approaches have great educational value. A cabaret-project, in my opinion, can offer a platform for combining short dramatizations of works by various authors as well as students’ own skits, poems, or songs. In the cabaret “So ist das Leben!” that I directed in the 1992, students wrote and performed a skit about the different characters in a typical German class (their idea). They also helped to create a number called "Musikalische Reise durch Deutschland." The students got to choose some famous German folk songs and write the dialogues in between the songs. For another act, the students came up with a different version of the classic skit by Loriot (1983), called "Das Ei", and got to present both. The rest of the cabaret presented
pieces from existing literature. This mixture provided students with the linguistic (and cultural) benefits of both approaches.

(2) *Historical Era and Type of Language*

As seen from the list of plays and authors (appendix #?) which has been compiled from answers to questions # 1 and # 32, most teachers prefer plays written in the 20th century; however, classic plays, e.g., by Goethe, Sachs, and Gryphius, or modernized versions of classic plays, are also occasionally performed in order to portray a broader range of German literature.

The aforementioned compilation of theater plays (see Appendix C), which identifies the ones that can be successfully adapted to the classroom, can be useful for educators who plan to incorporate plays in their teaching. Older lists were published by Ronke (1993) and Schlunk (1990). A discussion of selected German plays for the FL classroom can be found, e.g., in Bourke (1993, 227-249), Bourke et al. (DAAD publication, no year provided) and others.

(3) *Practicality and Suitability*

It is very important to consider the following questions on the practical aspects of selecting a play:

- Can the play be easily adapted for FL students and to the locality available (a stage or open area; size, acoustics, etc.)?
- Is the number of speaking parts, the mixture of male and female parts, the variety of roles, and the length of the text and individual roles suitable for the performance and the composition of students? Too many 'star roles' destroy the group effort. Several small plays or skits offer more main character roles.
- Can the play be produced within the available budget?
- Is the necessary technical equipment manageable for you and your students, or do you have the money to hire technicians?
(4) Motivational Aspects

The more motivating the content of the text, the more effective learning will be. Taking into consideration the interests and talents of the participating students (beforehand, if possible) will help the teacher to choose an appropriate text. Some of the respondents also considered motivational aspects of the prospective audience. They mentioned that German authors who are more familiar to people in the US and Canada (e.g., Brecht) would be more attractive and draw a bigger audience.

2.3.3.2 Collaboration with Other University Departments and Local Theaters

Question #5 inquired if the theatrical event was implemented in collaboration with other college or university departments. In the survey, 41% of the respondents collaborated with another departments. The majority of these collaborations involved the theater department while a few respondents worked with the music, history, or English departments. In some cases, they shared responsibilities, such as directing the play, hiring trained student help, or staging bilingual productions; in other instances, they offered assistance, e.g., with costumes, props, or performance space.

Discussion

Not quite half of the respondents reported collaborating with other departments on campus. Reasons for this could be the increased work and effort on the part of the teachers to arrange such interdisciplinary cooperation, or the lack of interest on the part of other departments. In my experience, an interdepartmental collaboration is highly beneficial for projects of this nature. On the one hand, the theater department or a local theater constitutes an immeasurable resource for costumes, props, and technical equipment, and can save much time and money. Moreover, the cooperative relationship with knowledgeable faculty and staff can be highly valuable. On the other hand, cooperation with different departments fosters interdisciplinary students learning, and can lead to joint projects between departments. It brings faculty and
students from different fields together, and encourages reciprocal learning. For a cabaret, for example, students and faculty from the music department, who usually have some training in German (mandatory for their major), can give German students musical training. In return, music students have the opportunity to perform in German, which they need for their degree. It is hoped that more German programs will recognize the importance of interdisciplinary learning, especially for such projects, since they are immensely valuable and can help avoid many problems and headaches during the rehearsal and performance stage.

2.3.3.3 Budget and Financial Support

Question # 21 pertained to the size of budget that was used for the event as well as the source and adequacy of the money. As the calculated results show, the average total cost for a theater production was $1194.00. The cost for the individual components cannot be computed, as too few people provided information in the questionnaire.

Fifty-six percent of the respondents reported that they received funds for the theater project. More than half were supported by their German or foreign languages department. Other money sources included the College of Arts and Sciences, the theater department, or occasional funds from the community. All but one professor found the financial support sufficient.

Discussion

It is hard to speculate as to why the budget needed for such projects was relatively high, because the amount depends very much on the size and style of the project, the frequency of the performances, as well as the teacher's expectations for the production. The teachers, however, did not consider this to be a major problem. Thus, one can conclude that sufficient financial support was provided. It was also obvious from the teachers’ remarks that the German departments were taking an interest in sponsoring a
Chapter IV: Practical Application of Drama and Theater as a Method for Teaching FL

2.3.4 Execution of a Theater Project within a German Language University Course

2.3.4.1 Course Objectives

Question # 27 asked respondents to state the main objectives for a theatrical event as part of a university of college German course. The following presents the answers of the 32 respondents, categorized and ranked. The number in brackets refers to the number of respondents for each objective. The main objectives are:

1. to provide students with conversational/communicative practice and exposure to the language and to improve their oral skills (14)
2. to give students a deeper appreciation and understanding of German literature by making it come alive through performance (13)
3. to provide an opportunity for social and psychological growth for students (to successfully work in teams; to accept responsibility; to raise self-confidence; to overcome fear of speaking in front of people; etc.) (9)
4. to improve students’ overall German skills (language proficiency) (7)
5. to stimulate interest in the German language and culture; to increase visibility of German on and off campus (7)
6. to make learning German more enjoyable (6)
7. to offer students hands-on learning (6)
8. to practice and improve German pronunciation and intonation (5)
(9) to bring the German community together (3)

Discussion

Because the theater projects are done as part of a German language or literature course, the main goals should relate to using the language and improving language skills or understanding and appreciating German literature. As can be seen from the above list, the top two objectives listed by the respondents do correspond to the general goals of traditional language and literature classes.

The third most frequently stated objective, ‘social and psychological growth’ (the affective aspect), is not usually mentioned on traditional language syllabi as one of the main goals (e.g., see Course Master Plan from California State University San Marcos, Dep. of World Languages), although psychological studies and brain research clearly show its importance for language learning. This aspect is what makes the involvement of theater and drama so valuable, as is shown throughout this dissertation.

All objectives listed above coincide with the ones I had set for my own theater projects. In addition, one of my main goals was to offer project-oriented and interdisciplinary learning, since I have experienced the benefits of learning through such a method.

2.3.4.2 Course Structure

A course that involves a theatrical project must be structured differently than traditional language or literature courses at the university or college. Although questions in the survey pertained to aspects of how the course was organized (role casting, rehearsal and group work), none of the questions inquired directly as to the overall course outline. However, several teachers sent a copy of their own course description or outline as well as a good deal of additional material from their theater projects, which contains valuable information about structuring such a course.
The following suggestions summarize the responses to the survey questions, ideas from the extra materials provided, as well as my own and other educators' experiences.

A course that involves a theater production should last for at least one semester or two quarters. For a one-semester course (12-18 weeks), the following schedule is suggested:

Phase I: 4-6 weeks  Reading and in-depth discussion of the literature (or writing own text); language and acting exercises
Phase II: 1 or 2 days  Role casting
Phase III: 6-8 weeks  Rehearsals and backstage group work on the part of students (costume/make-up, scenery, and advertising group)
Phase IV: 1-2 weeks  Performance(s) and reflection

**Phase I: Reading and in-depth discussion of the literature (or writing own text); language and acting exercises**

All in-class exercises and discussions should be conducted in the German language. Students read the text material at home and aloud in class. Reading out loud in class is important for practicing pronunciation, intonation, and characterization, while developing self-confidence. Also, the teacher will get a feel for the language proficiency of his/her students. Students should be asked to mark word and sentence stress in their scripts, since intonation and stress tend to be difficult for foreign language students (see Chapter III, 6.1.2.). Individual pronunciation, intonation, and voice exercises should be done regularly.

An in-depth discussion of the main characters and an analysis of vocabulary problems should follow the reading. This phase should also familiarize students with the author(s) and the background of the play(s) as well as aspects of the time period the play is set in. Students are asked to create role biographies (see Chapter IV, 1) which
Chapter IV: Practical Application of Drama and Theater as a Method for Teaching FL

depict character traits, age, clothes, behavior, manners, feelings, etc. "They become more deeply involved in cultural considerations as they work with the language in a concrete manner" (Faulhaber 1973, 39). Visualization of the characters or individual scenes maybe enhanced by drawing the location of the scene or having the scene set up in the classroom.

After a couple of weeks, students read short excerpts from the text in groups outside of class, and possibly record their reading. In class, they are then asked to perform their part. This can be done in 'dramatic readings' (like Readers Theater) followed by 'staged readings' In a 'dramatic reading', students read the text with all necessary inflection, vocal, and facial expressions, and gestures, although they are not required to memorize it. There is no movement other than entering and exiting at the beginning and end of their scenes. The next step, a 'staged reading,' adds a simple set to the reading, which characters move about and generally act out their roles, also without having to memorize them. It is important to have each student experience both reading techniques at least once.

In this and all subsequent phases, it is important to create good group dynamics and a low affective filter among the students. A comfortable atmosphere in class and in group-work is vital to the success of the whole theater project. It is the teacher's task to mold the students into an ensemble. Therefore each class period should include various drama-oriented exercises and interactive activities, as described in Chapter IV, 1 of this dissertation. “From the very beginning of the project, every single game that is played, every physical exercise or vocal warm-up, should be geared towards generating good group dynamics” (Wessels 1987, 118). However, the teacher needs to make very clear to the students that the main goal of the class is to learn the language and that they are not expected to become great actors! Students also need to understand that learning is a process, and that they will acquire some skills during the class that will help them to act to the best of their ability.
**Phase II: Casting**

Question # 12 asked how students were selected for certain roles in the play. Of the 20 teachers who responded to question # 12, eight stated that auditions are their main choice for casting. Five teachers chose a combination of auditions and student/professor recommendation, and four let the students make the decision (mutual agreement).

**Discussion**

The numbers show that more than half of the respondents wanted the students to have some say in the casting the roles; however, auditions were the single most preferred choice. Auditions were chosen most likely because they are more fair than other means of selection and allow the teacher/director and assistants to get a better impression of the individual students (stage presence, voice, etc.) than they would by observing them in class.

In my experience, a combination of auditions and student choice work the best. It will help the casting process to have the students hand in a wish list of roles they want to audition for, as well as fill out a questionnaire about their theatrical interest, previous experience, and other talents. Factors such as knowledge of German, physical and vocal characteristics, sense of responsibility, discipline, social behavior, as well as acting talent and experience play a role in casting considerations (Hall and Lederer 1997, ii).

**Phase III: Rehearsals and Backstage Group Work**

(1) **Rehearsals**

In question # 13, teachers were asked about the nature of their rehearsals. It is impossible to give an exact average of the length and frequency of rehearsals based on the responses, since information about conditions at the individual
institutions (length of semester or weeks of rehearsals) was often not provided in
detail. Eight respondents stated a rehearsal time of three hours per week, which in
most cases corresponds with the number of course credit hours. Several respondents
pointed out that rehearsal time increased as the performances approached and more
group rehearsals took place in the evening and on weekends.

Individual coaching sessions with the main professor were often included as part of the
preparation. 82% of the respondents also utilized language coaches who assisted the
students (question # 14). They were, for the most part, German teaching assistants in
the department, fellow faculty, or native speakers from the community.

Discussion
The last 6-8 weeks are usually used for rehearsing individual scenes and the play in its
entirety. This phase concentrates on stage work. Students rehearse their lines, practice
stage movement, learn how to prepare for a theatrical performance, and work together
on scenery, costumes/make-up, advertisement, etc. The length and frequency of
rehearsals is dependent on the length, type, and difficulty of the production and
available rehearsal space. For much of the course, rehearsals do not (should not!)
exceed regular class time. A rehearsal plan with dates, times, and rehearsed scenes
should be available for all participants at the beginning of the semester so that they can
plan accordingly.

Rehearsal is a phase with intense work on language. Students learn to coordinate
speaking (pronunciation/intonation, volume, etc.) with gestures and body movement in
order to look and act natural and authentic—perhaps the biggest challenge for FL
learners. Each rehearsal should begin with a vocal and physical warm-up (see Chapter
IV, 1). The rehearsal phase can be divided into three parts.
In the “sit-down reading” (term adopted from Spolin 1986, 129) during the first weeks, the play is read through aloud with each student speaking his/her own role. The main focus is on the language (pronunciation, intonation, and voice); no acting is required. After these initial one or two readings, rehearsals of individual scenes are scheduled before taking on the play in its entirety. Students meet with their partners in the scenes to read the lines. From the second or third week on, it is the students' responsibility to start memorizing their parts. Memorization happens through repetition. Also, the better the student understands the text and emotionally connects the character, the faster he/she will memorize it. Eckert and Klemm (1998, 128) provide a list of valuable tips that can help students to learn the lines in an enjoyable way.

As the respondents indicated, individual coaching sessions with the teacher (or the language coaches) are highly recommended so that individual linguistic issues can be dealt with early on. As one of my students in the cabaret remarked: "The individual sessions were great for learning how to intonate and pronounce correctly. They felt like a private lesson!" In the time remaining until the performance, it is rather helpful for the individual student to be assisted by volunteer language coaches. This facilitates the work of the director, and also offers students intensive language learning and interaction with native speakers.

The second part of this rehearsal phase involves the ‘scene rehearsal with movement.’ Now the text is lifted off the page and brought into action! The classroom is transformed into a stage with a basic set. Doors and stairs are marked and simple props (table and chairs, personal items, etc.) are added. I find it important to use props, simple costumes, sound effects, and lighting as early as possible as this creates a realistic atmosphere. Director and students in individual scenes meet and begin to go through their lines, deciding where to stand and when and how to move (blocking). Gestures, exits, and entrances are set according to the text and in keeping with the interpretation of the director and students. At the beginning, the text is still read from
the script, but students are transitioning over to reciting it by heart. Once the movements are clear, students practice their role in so-called 'stop and go' or 'work rehearsals' (Smith 1984, 148). I have found that these scene rehearsals offer very intense language practice, as students had the chance to work closely with the instructor in a small group environment.

Video recordings or photos of students in action are an excellent source of feedback for students with regard to their performance and help them to modify certain gestures or movements (van Handle 1988, 197). A vocabulary list with German theater terms, such as "scenery", "props", "lighting", "director", etc., facilitates communication in German during rehearsals.

The last part of the rehearsal phase is the ‘on-stage rehearsal.’ This is when students really feel that it is their responsibility to make it happen! "From now on the spirit of the play should take over!" (Geppert 1975, 133).

During the last two weeks, scenes are put together and the play is rehearsed in its entirety on stage. All students are present. Lines have to be memorized completely. Students get a feel for the sequence of the entire play. Run-throughs without stopping become more frequent. The teacher/director should take notes during the run-through and discuss them with the students at the end. During this period, the set, costumes, and lighting are also added. During the last week there should be a technical rehearsal, a costume rehearsal and—one or two days before the premiere—a dress rehearsal with a small audience.

(2) Backstage Group Work: Costumes/Make-Up, Scenery, and Advertisement
Several more questions (# 15, 16, 17) pertained to backstage work, in particular the use of costumes/make-up, scenery, and advertisement. The responses will not be discussed at this point.
In addition to rehearsing their parts in the play, students are often responsible for backstage work and other aspects of the production. For example, each student might participate in one production group (costumes/make-up, scenery or advertisement). The groups decide what items are needed (e.g., to research and organize costumes for a certain historical time period), and where and at what cost they could be found. Together with the teacher, they are also responsible for obtaining and returning them in good condition. The advertisement group comes up with ways to publicize the play in order to attract a good-size audience (question #18 and 19). The teacher needs to be present in the initial group meetings to give direction, motivation, and budget considerations.

As many respondents pointed out in the survey, it is very important that group work be done primarily in German. Students learn or refresh a lot of vocabulary (e.g., building phrases, body parts, clothes, etc.) while working in teams. They are very motivated to communicate because they have a purpose and a context. Phrases such as: “Hast du morgen Zeit, das Holz für die Wände zu holen?” or “Was für ein Kostüm brauchen wir für Krankenschwester Irene?” must be improvised frequently during group work. Communicative competence develops rapidly during this phase, and the teacher will often be amazed at the level of proficiency the students have achieved.

In addition to giving students a context for learning and applying the language, group work fosters personal growth and social learning and gives each student a sense of responsibility for the production.

Phase IV: Performance and Reflection

The actual performance is the time when all preparations and efforts come together. In the survey, question # 9 pertained to the size and composition of the audience at a German theater production on campus.
Most German programs performed their play three times. On the average, 110-120 people watched each performance. The majority of spectators were German students from different classes (72%), followed by faculty of different disciplines and members from the community (48% each), high school students (38%), family and friends (19%) and German students from other college German classes (14%).

Discussion
The premiere takes place at the end of the semester, one or two weeks before other class final exams. The students are looking forward to finally showing (or showing off to!) their parents, friends, teachers, etc., what they can do in the foreign language.

The average size and composition of the audience indicate that both the campus and the off-campus communities at these universities and colleges take an interest in such foreign language events and that these productions serve as an attractive and valuable advertising method. They bring German students and native speakers from the community together, make German culture more accessible to the general public and, most of all, they offer valuable language exposure for university and high school students. In my experience, this is one of the most effective ways to do outreach work (a task of many German instructors at all levels), especially at the high schools (see questions # 18 and 19 in the questionnaire, Appendix B). For the “Theaterfest” at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts or at the University of Connecticut, for example, high school German students or whole classes from different schools in the area are invited to attend and perform.

Because language advertisement and language exposure are some of the objectives of such projects, the audience—many of whom speak little or no German—must receive some support in understanding the play. Lys et al (2002, 221) suggest preparing a German-English script, a bilingual program (with a detailed summary, background of the author and play), visual graphics or video footage to go along with the script, or a
question and answer period on stage between the audience and all the participants after the play. All these techniques further an understanding of the language and the literature, and attract a bigger and broader audience.

The success of the performance also relies on people, such as stage managers, prompters, and light and sound technicians, some of who are students as well. As mentioned in the questionnaire (see question # 22), most German performances were videotaped by amateurs (students, friends, etc.) If finances allow, I would highly recommend hiring a professional for such recordings. The video can later be used as a teaching and learning aid in literature and language classes; thus, good quality is important.

The performance(s) are followed by a reception or cast-party—an absolute must! If possible, radio and TV appearances of the cast can be arranged before or after the performances, which give an extra boost of confidence and pride to the participants while serving to advertise the project in the community.

The class concludes with a final meeting of all participants for the purpose of feedback, reflection, and ideas for future projects.

2.3.4.3 Grading

Because theater projects are an integral part of the German curriculum at most institutions, students are assigned a grade. Although none of the questions in the survey pertained to student evaluation, I was able to glean some information about grading objectives from the attached material (brochures, syllabi, flyers, personal letters, etc.). The following shows examples of grading criteria as provided:
Example 1:
Grading criteria
- assessment of performance
- knowledge of text
- rendition of role in the play
- credibility of expression, accent, auditory and authenticity
  (Prof. from Alaska)

Example 2:
"I evaluated students' performance in the drama—that included all preparation" (Prof. from Louisiana).

Example 3:
Grading criteria
40% class participation (discussions, overall contributions)
20% essays
40% performance (oral performance, memorization, etc.)
- or -
40% for work on playbill, intertexts, costumes, set, etc.
(Prof. from Texas)

Discussion
Because there are no fixed evaluation criteria for university courses in the US, it is up to the professor to select his or her own. Consequently, the criteria for a German theater course vary from one institution to another. For most of the professors cited above, the performance counted as the final exam of the course.

The grade depends very much on the objectives each instructor has for the class. In my opinion, the grade for a 3rd or 4th year German language class should reflect oral proficiency as well as participation in class work, rehearsals, group work, and in the
final performance(s). Above all, it should take into consideration students' progress in regards to fluency, intonation, pronunciation, and communicative competence throughout the entire class. Video or audio recordings of rehearsal sessions and the performance can also be used to evaluate students' progress. In addition, effort, overall contributions and short written tests (e.g., vocabulary quizzes) should be factored into the grade. Acting skills should not be graded.

If the theater project is part of a literature course, students’ understanding and critical interpretation of the text has to be evaluated as well. Besides having to demonstrate their understanding through a credible performance, students can be graded on their participation in literary discussions or on written essays.

2.3.5 Student Evaluations of Theater Projects

Question # 26 in the survey asked how theatrical productions were evaluated by the students following completion. The majority of the respondents (81%) reported having students complete some type of project evaluation: Almost half of the respondents stated that students filled out regular course evaluations; some used oral impressions as their feedback; occasionally, e-mail comments, word of mouth, or an audience questionnaire were mentioned. Eight respondents stated that the event was not evaluated.

Discussion

In order to improve and further develop such theater projects within the framework of the German language and literature curriculum, it is highly advisable to request feedback from all participants (and possibly from the audience). The numbers from the survey sample show that most teachers did not create a special evaluation form, but were satisfied with the usual course or teaching evaluation. In my opinion, teachers should come up with a separate means of evaluation for a class or project of this type
as the feedback it contains can contribute to the future success of such projects. One form of effective evaluation is a questionnaire, administered to the students either in written form or as a personal interview.

2.3.6 Fulfillment of Course Objectives and Educational Benefits for the Students.

In question # 28, the teachers were asked if their objectives for the theater project(s) were achieved. All 29 respondents answered this question positively. 25 respondents reported that the goals were fully met, adding comments such as: “Proficiency had improved tremendously by the end of the semester,” “The course has been a mainstay of our spring curriculum offering for a quarter of a century!” and "Most undergrad students' oral proficiency was markedly better after the play/course than before it." Four respondents evaluated the outcome positively but had reservations, such as: "unprepared readings [by the students]," "Many times it proved to be difficult to keep practicing German while we were running out of time," "Some student performances did not achieve the level of excellence to which we had committed ourselves (I'm too picky)." 14 professors specifically mentioned the improvement of communication skills or oral proficiency and stated that this was accomplished primarily through the following:

- an all-German language environment throughout the whole course (total immersion);
- students' identification with their role;
- increased motivation and less inhibition towards speaking as a result of enjoyable and goal-oriented tasks and a supportive group atmosphere;
- action-oriented learning;
- intense pronunciation and intonation practice;
- memorization of lines which taught them ways to communicate effectively;
- improved their vocabulary;
- greater interest on the part of students when reading dramatic texts;
• the process of coaching and continuous correction during rehearsals.
The first part of question #30 asked the respondents if they rated a theatrical event or
drama exercises in a FL class to be a valuable learning experience for the students.
The second part inquired about the main benefits or educational rewards for the
students.

Of the 39 respondents who replied to the first part of the question, 33 considered a
theatrical event or drama exercise a valuable learning experience. Many underscored
their opinion by saying: “Very much so,” “Absolutely!” “Very rewarding, personally
as well as pedagogically,” or “Definitely—very valuable.” One person considered it
not feasible (on a commuter campus). Five respondents chose the rating “somewhat
valuable” and made remarks such as “Could well be… The problem is finding the
time…” “Potentially valuable if we could integrate it effectively into our language
curriculum,” To some extent through the tedious process of coaching and requiring the
students to memorize the parts.”

The educational rewards, as mentioned by the participants of the survey, were
summarized and ranked in the following categories:

1. Improvement of language proficiency
• become more at ease with speaking the language; master colloquial German;
• speak more fluently; speak with more poise and better diction; take more
communication risks;
• learn language in context and connect speaking with doing;
• improve pronunciation, intonation and projection;
• improve reading and comprehension skills;
• learn grammar with action and emotion; think on their feet.
2. Individual psychological benefits
   • gain self-confidence, courage, and pride in using the language
   • overcome fear and inhibition with regard to speaking
   • become motivated and committed and have fun learning the language
   • gain deeper understanding of themselves
   • get more in touch with their own bodies

3. Social and organizational benefits
   • work together to achieve a goal (also applies to team projects after college);
   • develop an esprit de corps among students;
   • create a unique bond among students and students and department/faculty (esprit de corps);
   • establish friendships and relationships;
   • learn how to share, help, and support each other
   • learn to manage time.

4. Gaining a deeper understanding of German literature
   • explore literature ‘live;’
   • empathize with characters, thereby learning the intentions of the author;
   • apply their knowledge of playwright and drama theory.

5. Cultural insights
   • achieve a better understanding of cultural and historical issues
   • learn culture in context

Discussion
The teacher's responses show that theater projects as a part of language or literature courses have high learning potential. This also confirms the second hypothesis that I had formulated for this survey. Many of the objectives that teachers had set for their
class theater project were geared towards improving language and communication skills while heightening students’ understanding of German literature and culture. Teachers also found these to be the most important benefits when evaluating the outcome of the class. Interestingly, they rated psychological and socio-psychological benefits second and third (even before understanding of literature), most likely because they had experienced the impact of these benefits on their students’ language learning progress.

The educational benefits described by the teachers correspond with the aspects of foreign language learning that I consider being important and have chosen to discuss in this dissertation (see Chapter III, 6). The benefits of physical actions for FL learning, e.g., "thinking on your feet, "connect speaking with doing,", "grammar with action and emotion," "put the words into action and the action into words"(quotes by different professors in the survey) were summarized in the above list in category (1). In Chapter III, 6.3 of this dissertation, however, I have elected to discuss this aspect in detail owing to its significance for language learning.

2.3.7 Potential Problems in Theater Projects

In question # 29, respondents were asked to list problems they encountered during the preparation and production of the theatrical event and how these problems were resolved. The problem most often mentioned was the lack of time (5 of the 27 respondents). This was attributed to students' busy time schedule, the greater time commitment on the part of the instructor, and to general time constraints towards the end of the rehearsals ("It always takes more time than one imagines."). Four respondents experienced logistic problems (scheduling theater space; lack of technicians; hard to find props, etc.). One or two mentioned problems with group dynamics, students' lack of experience or reluctance in play-acting, a lack of discipline
and commitment, too few German speakers, or audiences that were too small. Seven teachers (26%) reported not having had any problems worth mentioning.

Only a few respondents gave suggestions as to how these problems could be resolved. Time problems could be solved by simply learning "to live with them!" or "finding time!" or giving more credit hours for the course; group dynamics problems by “voicing the concerns and discussing them.” One professor pointed out that such problems are an integral part of the project and have to accepted as such.

Discussion
I also believe that any comprehensive project, in which people of different ages and personalities work together, will generate a certain number of problems that have to be expected and dealt with. The problems will vary with each production, and there is no set formula for resolving them.

Although more than half of the respondents mentioned the lack of time as their problem, none of them mentioned that it made a theatrical project within the FL class impossible. Most of them seemed to have worked around the problem (partly with humor) and felt that the many educational benefits of such an undertaking were more important. The time needed for the preparation of the project depends on the length and difficulty of the play, as well as on the organizational skills and experience of the instructor.

Problems with group dynamics vary from one group to another, depending on the type of participants (diversity of ages, cultures, language background and skills, expectations, etc.). Some groups are more cohesive than others. Problems within the group can be created, e.g., through unreliable students or late drop-outs; different language levels; unfulfilled expectations, personal problems, and intolerance; contradictory directives on the part of the instructor, discipline problems, etc. If these
problems are disturbing for the group or the instructor, they should be discussed openly. Since all students strive towards a common goal, they will usually have the motivation to quickly resolve or avoid these problems. In the cabaret that I produced with German students some participants had the idea of exchanging the traditional couple (husband and wife) in a famous German skit with two men. Since this instigated resentment on the part of some students, the entire class was called upon to discuss the portrayal of homosexuals in the arts, and students had to decide together if this skit could be included in the cabaret. The discussion took place in German (!!!) and communication could not have been more 'real'!

Many group problems can be avoided by getting to know the students well, setting up a clear class schedule, giving the students exact expectations about the level of commitment that is required of them (Wessels 1987, 119) and creating a positive group atmosphere from the beginning.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have examined theater as a tool to be used in German classes within the foreign language curriculum. To support hypotheses formulated through my own experience with theater projects and reviewed literature, I analyzed the results of a questionnaire, which was distributed to a list of German departments in the US and Canada.

Since the return rate partly results from unknown factors that are involved with sending out questionnaires, the data cannot necessarily be considered a representative sample. On the other hand, many national surveys and polls rely on a much smaller sample size (<1%) and have been proven to be accurate representations. The value of this data lies in the tendencies it provided for the use of theater in German instruction.
With respect to my hypotheses for this survey, it can be said that the first one has been confirmed. The low number of returned questionnaires could be seen as an indication that the theater method has not yet been used in many German programs around the United States and Canada. Reasons for that might include: (a) the faculty’s lack of familiarity with the method, with its benefits and the field of theater pedagogy, (b) their reluctance towards alternative ways of teaching, (c) time constraints due to research and publication pressures, or (d) fluctuating enrollment and reduction of German program budgets.

Of the 67 departments that did fill out the questionnaire, however, two-fifth reported to have used theater projects in their German classes. Moreover, 85 % of those departments rated theater projects to be a worthwhile and highly educational experience for language learners and named many benefits for language learning as well as personal learning. This confirms the second hypothesis for this research, i.e., the positive evaluation of the theater approach. As seen from the data, teachers value theater as creative and meaningful project work, which invites their students to be cognitively, affectively, and physically involved in the language learning process. They have experienced it to provide the context for intense language practice and to bridge the gap between language, culture, and literature learning. Most importantly, they have witnessed that it creates an atmosphere of learning that increases students' self-confidence and motivates students to take pride in and responsibility for their own learning process. These benefits also coincide with my own experiences from producing two large and several smaller theater productions with German students.

The third hypothesis that I had formulated for the returned sample was also confirmed. The 27 teachers that used theater in their classes gave very elaborate and detailed responses. Many teachers enclosed materials, such as syllabi, playbills, photos, as well as enthusiastic letters and remarks, e.g., “Thank you for conducting the survey. It [The survey] could be very useful for many of us,” or “Please keep me informed of the results of your data.” The written information and the added materials show teachers’
interest and passion for this teaching method. All of this provides valuable information for teachers about the preparation, execution and evaluation of theater projects in German classes. It must be critically noted, however, that only those instructors who regarded theater projects favorably, have provided detailed information about their productions.

Given the results of this survey, as well as my own experience and literature about the subject, it is reasonable to conclude that theater projects in German language instruction can be valued as another effective way of integrating the theater arts into foreign language instruction.

Whereas drama-oriented exercises can be employed without much preparation in regular everyday classroom instruction, theater projects—as most projects—need more groundwork, time, and energy on the part of the teacher so that they can bring the anticipated learning results. For this reason, teachers usually cannot offer them to the students every semester. Even when done one every year or every two years, they can constitute a valuable supplement to the German curriculum at US and Canadian institutions in terms of offering students the context for meaningful and genuine language application, as well as generating advertisement and student appeal. The learning that students experience during this project also benefits them in their everyday classroom experience. As teachers reported, students spoke more fluently, spontaneously, and naturally, employ more varied vocabulary and sentence structure, and are less inhibited towards the language.

However, in order to acquaint a larger number of teachers with this teaching tool, more research and case studies, more didactic materials (such as step-by-step instructions, scripted plays, etc.) and teacher workshops are needed. It is hoped that this survey and the information received through it will contribute to more widespread interest in this alternative tool and to the development of more practical teaching material.
Chapter V: Conclusion

*I hear, I forget;
I see, I remember;
I do, I understand*

(Chinese proverb)

Teaching German in the United States can be quite a task. Teachers have to deal with many challenges: language requirements that differ from state to state; a lack of mandatory language standards; competition for enrollment, especially with Spanish-language programs; frequent budget cuts; misconceptions about the German language; and a general disinterest in FL learning. In order to achieve the minimum enrollment numbers and keep the language program alive, the job description of many university and college German teachers has expanded to include “marketing” the language and regular student recruitment at local high schools.

Throughout my years of teaching, I have found that the best means of recruitment is to offer classes that involve creative, (inter-)active, and hands-on activities that provide relevant and rewarding learning experiences in a positive personal environment. Students are much more likely to continue with the language if they are comfortable in class, and if they are satisfied with their progress, especially if they feel that they can actually communicate in German by the end of the class.

In my experience, the drama and theater method advocated in this dissertation represents a highly effective way to teach communication skills or communicative competence (among other skills), and to foster a learning environment with a low affective filter.
Chapter V: Conclusion

The objective of this dissertation was therefore to further explore and provide a theoretical foundation for the impact of this method on FL acquisition, thereby supporting the hypotheses that I had previously formulated.

To this end, I examined research that had been done mainly in the fields of Second Language and FL Acquisition, Theater Pedagogy, Foreign Language Teaching Methodology, Educational Psychology, and Neurology of Language Learning. In addition, I devised a national survey with the intention of gathering additional information on various aspects of theatrical productions offered as part of university-level German curricula. All of the hypotheses set forth in this dissertation have been confirmed by the data gathered from my research in the aforementioned areas and from my own teaching experience.

I began by researching the history of drama and theater in education. I chose to use the developments in Great Britain as the baseline since drama and theater in education has had a longer tradition in this country than in Germany or other countries. My research showed that the use of drama and theater first in general education created the possibility for its application to speech development of the native language, to second language learning, and finally to FL education. The British approach provided both the theoretical foundation and practical application and can therefore be seen as the greatest influence on the development of this method for FL teaching and learning.

Next, I examined major learning theories and teaching methodologies. The analysis showed that they had already incorporated various elements of the drama and theater method, such as authentic language use, contextualization, a low affective filter, ‘active’ language learning, memorization, and repetition, which supports Hypothesis (1) of this dissertation. In particular, alternative methods share several principles with the drama and theater method, the main ones being a holistic view of the foreign language learner and the altered role of the teacher. Most similarities were found with
the communicative method, which is seen here as the foundation of the drama and theater method. The reciprocal effect of these two methods was demonstrated in Chapter III, 6.1.1.

Chapter III, 5 illustrated the many parallels between the fields of theater arts and foreign language teaching and learning and the ways in which they benefit one another. Since both fields teach about language and use "language" (verbal and nonverbal) to communicate and understand culture, the practice of pronunciation, intonation, and pragmatic aspects of the language are of key concern. Other parallels include the importance of fictional situations for practicing communication and the low affective filter. The close relationship between the two provides the rationale for adapting certain theatrical concepts and techniques to the field of FL pedagogy and methodology, and therefore supports Hypothesis (2).

Chapter III, 6 examined various aspects of language learning and explored how they are affected by using the drama and theater method. I chose to examine the aspects that I believed would benefit most from the application of drama and theater. Hypothesis (3) identified these as the following areas of learning:

- communicative competence;
- appreciation and understanding of foreign literature and culture;
- emotional and social growth, and
- motivation and enthusiasm for learning a foreign language.

The analysis and discussion of how the drama and theater method enhances these areas support this hypothesis.

The main language benefit of drama and theater is the development of speaking and communication skills. It allows these skills to be taught in a more complex way, which includes vocal, emotional, corporeal, cultural, and intellectual elements of communicative competence. The exercises are goal-oriented, and put language production in a
meaningful and communicative context; hence, they elicit communication by creating the ‘need’ to speak and communicate on verbal and nonverbal levels. Learners are encouraged to speak spontaneously, express emotions, use body language, and better correlate speech with appropriate actions. Communication therefore looks and sounds more real than the stilted dialogs found in many textbooks. Theatrical techniques encourage students to practice, reinforce, and freely apply grammar, vocabulary, and pragmatic speech functions. They help students to pronounce and intonate clearly and appropriately, which facilitates successful communication in the foreign language.

The method also promotes a deeper understanding and appreciation of German literature and culture, as elaborated on in Chapter III, 6.2. Drama exercises involve the body and emotions as well as the intellect. Therefore, students get the chance not only to imagine, but to act out situations, e.g., in role-plays, improvisations, statues/sculptures. This in turn allows them to experience and understand those socio-cultural contexts within the safety of the fictional situation. A detailed discussion of the social context (the what, where, when, etc.) lets learners examine and experience cultural phenomena from a new perspective. Drama and theater can raise cultural awareness (also through body movements and body language), illustrate cultural differences, or enable students to practice particular behavioral and language patterns in plausible scenarios (e.g., preparing for a trip or study abroad).

Literature—which, after all, is a part of culture—can also be experienced more deeply through the drama and theater method. When text analysis is combined with "expressive doing" (Dodson 2002, 176), students get the chance to examine, e.g., their character's motives, characteristics, body language, dress, and living conditions 'from within', and will therefore empathize with them and their way of life more easily and intensely. Approaching literature through theater (e.g., re-enacting it on stage) is therefore likely to result in a greater appreciation and understanding for the literary
work, its author, and the target culture. In the process, it can work to counteract stereotypes and misconceptions.

I have also proposed that using drama and theater in language teaching would facilitate emotional and social development in individual students, as I had previously experienced in my own classes. An analysis of the personality traits and social factors that influence the FL learning process, which also took into account the many parallels between the fields of theater arts and FL acquisition, confirmed my hypothesis. One reason is that both disciplines have similar goals: They both aim for the learner to interact with people, using their intellect, body, and emotions to express themselves meaningfully, spontaneously, and freely. Both methods thus put equal emphasis on creating a learning atmosphere that is nonthreatening, comfortable, and relaxed, because this is what usually helps the learner to overcome personal obstacles to learning (inhibition, little self-esteem, low motivation, etc.).

In addition, many exercises are done in groups. This allows students to practice social skills, such as cooperating with each other, taking on responsibility, and tolerating different people or opinions. These learning effects are further intensified when students work on a theatrical production, because the intense group work and the motivation to achieve a common goal create a unique bond among the students and faculty. Skills that are learned or practiced during such a project (sharing, supporting one another, cooperating, tolerating differences, etc.) help students to succeed in class as well as in in other areas of life.

Motivation and enthusiasm are perhaps the most important factors for success or failure in FL learning. I have proposed that these factors in themselves are positively influenced by the drama and theater method. Chapter III, 6.3.1 demonstrated that if students actively participate in class – in other words, if they act, feel, and express themselves with a sense of purpose and direction, as drama and theater encourage
them to do – they will be motivated to learn. Activities such as writing a skit to perform in class, rehearsing lines, practicing pronunciation for the final performance, and solving linguistic and social problems that arise in the process, give students –especially adult ones—a sense of purpose. Drama exercises also boost motivation, because they stimulate learners to use their imagination and their intellect to use language in a creative (and often crazy) way. They generate laughter and fun and a more relaxed atmosphere, which in turn fosters language acquisition, as well as the learners’ decision to continue with their German studies. In addition, the motivation exhibited by students in a theater production or during an evening of skits often generates enthusiasm for the German language on campus and in the community, and can favorably influence student enrollment in the language department. This is a phenomenon reported by many educators, and one, which I have experienced in my own teaching.

The educational benefits of drama and theater in FL learning, as predicted by my hypotheses, also correlate with the teachers’ responses in the national survey (Chapter IV, 2.3.6).

Chapter IV discussed the relationship between theoretical concepts and their practical application. It offered ideas as well as didactical and methodological considerations on how, for instance, the commonly used technique of ‘role-play’ can be better structured and made more appealing by applying ’dramatic' principles. The teaching suggestions for FL learning are innovative in that they use both verbal and nonverbal language. In this dissertation, having students practice coordinating body language/movement and speech is seen as an essential part of developing communicative competence. It is argued that both modes of communication complement and support each other in FL learning. Both convey important meaning. Nonverbal language can enhance speech, support cultural understanding and awareness, bridges communication gaps when
speech fails, and underscore the emotional content of words. It also creates fictional situations that learners can fill in with speech.

The exercises that follow in Chapter IV, 1.2 incorporate the theatrical techniques discussed above, and can be directly applied in daily German instruction. It was my intention to create and compile exercises specifically for the warm-up and language application phase that primarily benefit oral communication skills and the creation of a supportive and relaxed environment. At the same time, however, I would like to point out that these exercises also benefit other areas of language learning. Both parts of this chapter contain supplementary material that will acquaint FL teachers with more holistic exercises. Through my own experience in teaching most of these exercises, and from the feedback I received from foreign language educators attending my workshops, I feel confident that all of them can be employed without special training in the theater arts. This supports Hypothesis (4) of the dissertation.

Theatrical and FL learning can also overlap in a more elaborate way, e.g., in an interdisciplinary project such as a theatrical production (see Chapter IV, 2). I analyzed and discussed the various aspects of such a project on the basis of the national survey, the available literature, and my own experiences. I also examined possible ways of implementing such projects within the German curriculum at American universities and colleges. The survey respondents evaluated these projects very favorably. Benefits included a significant improvement in language learning (especially in oral language skills, such as pronunciation/intonation and fluency), cultural learning, and emotional and social learning. The main problem mentioned by the respondents was their busy schedule, which prevented them from undertaking such projects more often.

It was also pointed out that due to the relatively low response rate, the data cannot be considered a representative sample. Instead, it identifies valuable trends concerning the implementation of theater projects in the instruction of the German language.
Chapter V: Conclusion

The results also seem to show that relatively few German programs in the United States and Canada have used theater projects in their teaching. Reasons could include a lack of information and a reluctance to diverge from traditional teaching approaches. However, it is still reasonable to conclude from the available data that theatrical productions within the German curriculum are feasible, and that they represent an effective means of fostering interdisciplinary, holistic FL learning. This also supports Hypothesis (5) of this dissertation.

Through my research, and after analyzing the results of the national survey, it became apparent that I should expand the set of hypotheses to account for the importance of the various dimensions of learning (cognitive, emotional, and physical) that are stimulated, often simultaneously, by the use of drama and theater in FL learning. This new hypothesis is stated as follows:

"The use of drama and theater elicits multidimensional holistic FL learning, which also corresponds to the way the brain learns (languages) most effectively."

Modern neurological research has shown that not only left-brain, but also right-brain components, such as feelings, images, associations, or emotional circumstances, are very much involved in language learning, and therefore need to be stimulated in a FL class. The drama and theater method is sensitive to the affective components of language learning. Research has also shown that the brain remembers the most and forgets the least when learning is accompanied by body movement or action. The discussed method encourages active and hands-on learning, which also correlates to brain processes, as shown in Chapter III, 4 and Chapter III, 6.3.3.

The ideas introduced in this dissertation represent a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical foundation of this teaching method. It is my intention to acquaint more teachers with the drama and theater method, and to advocate to the FL teaching profession the importance of and need for approaches that are more holistic. As an
extension of this work, more practical and empirical research - possibly in the form of comparative case studies that incorporate various theatrical forms—could be done to provide further support for the assertions made in this dissertation. Other skill areas (e.g., writing, reading, listening) could be examined for possible benefits of that method, as Susanne Evan has demonstrated in her research and in her book "Drama Grammatik" (2003).

Reliable measures for oral performance assessment have to be developed, as this is crucial for the acceptance of any alternative method. Determining the measures for evaluating communicative competence has been a major issue of debate among FL educators for several years.

International collaboration between teachers who use the drama and theater method in FL teaching needs to be established. One valuable contribution is the recently published book by Gerd Bräuer (2002). In the near future, I plan to develop a database and website to promote more efficient networking in this field. Most of all, more teacher training workshops that focus on the drama and theater method and other holistic forms as an alternative to conventional ways of teaching foreign languages should be made available to FL teachers. Currently not many teacher training institutions in the US include such methods in their instructional programs.

German departments and German instructors in the United States should be more open-minded to new methods and circumstances as it is the goal of the teaching profession to stay flexible, incorporate new research findings, and seek innovative ways to teach more effectively. Teachers are encouraged to make room in their schedules to reevaluate their course objectives, methods, and teaching habits, and consider how they can make their teaching more effective, attractive, and rewarding.
Let our students experience the German language and culture as being an exciting and rewarding field of study.

What better way than to show it through......................theater!

_Wozu all das Theater? Deshalb!_
APPENDICES
Appendix A

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Appendix B

1. Letter to the German Program Chairs at American and Canadian universities and colleges.

Astrid Ronke February 12, 2001
German Program Coordinator

California State University San Marcos
College of Arts and Science
Department of World Languages and Hispanic Literatures
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92096-0001
(760) 750-4208
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Dear Colleague:

In my capacity as German Language Coordinator and Instructor, I have produced and directed a German theater play and a German cabaret with language and literature students and I routinely incorporate drama exercises in my language classes. I have found this teaching method to be very effective both as a practical and a motivational tool for foreign language learning.

As part of my research on this teaching method I am conducting a survey to see if other universities and colleges employ this teaching method and how they incorporate it into their German programs.

I realize that the enclosed questionnaire is lengthy and may take considerable time for some respondents to complete (for others it may take only a couple of minutes). I hope, nonetheless, that you will take the time to provide this information, as it is a vital component of research in our field. I am also interested in receiving any supplemental materials you might be willing to provide, such as programs from theater plays, course outlines, etc. Once the project is complete, I will summarize the survey results and make them available on a web site as well as publish them in a professional journal. Please provide an e-mail address or business card in your response if you are interested in being informed of our results in the future. Feel free to use additional sheets if you need more space for any of the answers.

I would appreciate if you would either return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope or fax it to the address given above by March 20, 2001. If you prefer, you can
also fill out the questionnaire on line by going to the following web page:
http://www.csusm.edu/languages/GermPages/SurveyTheater.html

Thank you very much for your help! I look forward to hearing from you.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Astrid Ronke
Cal State San Marcos
German Program Coordinator
2. Questionnaire for the Survey

Web page:
http://www.csusm.edu/languages/GermPages/SurveyTheater.html

Theater as a Tool for Foreign Language Teaching

A National Survey
Conducted by the Department of World Languages
and Hispanic Literatures
at California State University San Marcos

Name: ________________________________
School: ______________________________

1. Have you produced a theater play or smaller theatrical event in German
(or in another foreign language) in your department, in class or as an
extracurricular activity, during the last 5 years?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, please write down the names of the events, their nature and the dates.

2a. If you have not produced a theater play or smaller theatrical event within the
last 5 years (since 1995), but you have before that date, please elaborate on the
reason for discontinuing.

2b. Are you in the process of organizing a theatrical event or are you planning
one in the future?
2c. Have you used **drama exercises** in your German classes, even if you **didn’t** produce a full-length play? Please describe the kind of drama exercises used and possibly name authors/playwrights.

If you answered “**yes**” to question **# 2c.**, **but have not produced a full-length theatrical event**, please proceed to Question **# 24**.

If you have **not** used drama exercises, neither in class nor in a theatrical event (i.e. you answered “**no**” to questions **# 1 and # 2c**), the remainder of the questionnaire need not be completed by you. Please send back the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your cooperation!

If you replied “**yes**” to question **#1**, please answer the following questions about the event.

3. Was the theatrical production an **integral part of your German curriculum**? If “yes”, please state the **title** and **level** of the course (if possible, please attach an outline of the course or a course description).

4. **Who** chose the play(s)/theatrical event for the production (professor, language coordinator, students, etc.)?
5. What were the **reasons** for choosing your particular play/theatrical event?

6. Was the event a **collaboration** of different departments at your school? Which?

7. **Who** participated (acted) in this production (university students, high school students, professors, members of the general public, etc.)? How many people were involved?

8. **How many** people were involved as the **production staff** (non-actors, director, assistants, scenery, lighting and sound crew, language coaches, etc.), and who were they (German faculty, lecturers, teaching assistants, high school teachers, and voluntary people from the public)?

9. **Who** was your audience and approximately **how large** was it?

10. **Where** did the performance take place (university theater, campus center, facility off-campus, etc.)?
11. What was the **language prerequisite** for the participants?

12. How were the participants selected for the individual roles? (Auditions free choice, majority vote, etc.)?

13. Please describe the nature of the **rehearsals** for the production (length, frequency, location, individual rehearsal with the director or group rehearsals, etc.)?

14. Did **language coaches** assist the participants? If “yes”, who were the coaches?

15. Did you have **costumes** in your production? If yes, how were they obtained (costume shop, university theater, home, hand-made, etc.)?

16. Did you use **scenery** in your production? If yes, how were the props obtained (furniture store, university theater, home, hand-made, etc.)?
17. Who was responsible for the selection, pick-up and set-up of the props?

18. How did you advertise for your theatrical event (flyers, posters, TV, radio, newspapers, word of mouth, etc.)?

19. Where did you advertise (on campus, off-campus, at different German institutions or organizations, in Germany etc.)?

20. If possible, could you please state your approximate budget for the production(s).

   Auditorium rental $  
   Audio-visual technicians $  
   Costumes $  
   Scenery (props) $  
   Advertisement $  
   Others $  

   Total costs $  

21. Did you receive financial support for the production? If yes, from whom and
22. Was the event **filmed or videotaped**? If yes, who was responsible (an amateur or a professional media service)?

23. As the professor of the course or the supervisor of the theatrical project, approximately **how much time** did you spend gathering material and preparing for the production **before** the start of the project?

24. Have you ever participated in a **workshop or course** about play productions or about using drama in a foreign language classroom? If yes, when and where?

25. Would you be **interested** in participating in such a **workshop** or receiving informational material about play productions in a foreign language?

26. Was the event/course/drama exercise **evaluated** at the end of the production and if yes, by whom (students, colleagues, friends, organizations etc.). How was this done (evaluation forms, oral impressions etc.)?

27. What were the **main objectives** for this theatrical event/drama exercise?
28. Were the objectives listed above achieved? Please evaluate the outcome of your production/drama exercise. If one of your objectives was increasing communication skills or oral proficiency in German or another foreign language, could you please comment on how this was accomplished.

29. State some of the problems, if any, you encountered during the preparation and production of the event/drama exercise (financial, organizational, or pedagogical problems, problems with costumes, props, advertisement, problems with group-dynamics, or discipline, etc.). How were the problems resolved?

30. Would you rate a theatrical event/drama exercise in a foreign language class a valuable learning experience for the students? Please explain why (not) and list some of the educational rewards for the students.

31. Do you have any suggestions for the preparation and production of a theatrical event/or for incorporating drama exercises into foreign language classes?

32. What German speaking authors and which of their works do you feel are most suitable for theatrical events? If you didn’t produce a play but used drama exercises in your classes, what texts would you recommend?
33. Is it your experience that the increase of technology (e.g. computer exercises) in foreign language teaching has reduced the use of drama exercises or theater productions as a teaching technique in German/foreign language classes?

Thank you very much!

Additional comments (optional):
Appendix C

1. Selected Results from the National Survey:

"Theater as a Tool for Foreign Language Teaching"

1.1 Ranking of Most Frequently Produced German Language Plays and Authors from 1996-2001

(# in parentheses = number of times the play was produced)

Plays
1. Der kaukasische Kreidekreis (Bertold Brecht)... (3)
2. Besuch der alten Dame (Friedrich Dürrenmatt) (2)
3. Biedermann und die Brandstifter (Max Frisch) (2)

The following plays were produced once:

Leben und Tod der Marilyn Monroe (Gerlind Reinhagen)
Moral (Ludwig Thoma)
Scenes from Loriot (Viktor von Bülow)
Der gestiefelte Kater (Ludwig Tieck)
Herr Puntila und sein Knecht (Bertold Brecht)
Der zerbrochene Krug (Heinrich von Kleist)
Die Ermordung (Paul Marat)
Emilia Galotti (Ephraim Lessing)
Mutter Courage (Bertold Brecht)
Ozeanflug (Bertold Brecht)
Der gute Mensch von Sezuan (Bertold Brecht)
Der Meteor (Friedrich Dürrenmatt)
Leonce und Lena (Georg Büchner)
Publikumsbeschimpfung (Peter Handke)
Grimm’s Märchen (Grimm Brothers)
Hin und Her (Ödön von Horvath)
Einen Jux will er sich machen (Johannes Nestroy)
Methamorphosis von Franz Kafka (as a cabaret)
Fastnachtsspiele (Hans Sachs)

Authors
1. Bertolt Brecht (7)
2. Cabaret-style performance, mixed authors (4)
3. Max Frisch (2)
4. Friedrich Dürrenmatt (2)
5. Heinrich von Kleist (2)
6. Puppentheater, mixed authors (2)

The following authors were mentioned once (1x):

Gerlind Reinshagen
Loriot (Viktor von Bülow)
Ödön von Hovath
Hans Carl Artmann
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Peter Handke
Franz Kafka
Grimm’s Fairytales (modernized and written by the students)
Johannes Nestroy
Johann Ludwig Tieck
Paul Marat
Günther Grass
Ephraim Lessing
Ludwig Thoma
Georg Büchner
Hans Sachs
Poetry performance
Reader’s Theater performance
1.2. Ranking of Most Frequently Suggested German Language Plays and Authors from 1996-2001

(# in parenthesis = number of times the play was suggested)

### Plays

1. *Die Dreigroschenoper* (Bertold Brecht) (5)
2. *Die Physiker* (Friedrich Dürrenmatt) (4)
3. *Woyzeck* (Georg Büchner) (3)
4. *Skits* by Loriot (Viktor von Bülow) (3)
5. *Biedermann und die Brandstifter* (Max Frisch) (3)
6. *Wie dem Herrn Mockinpott das Leiden ausgetrieben wurde* (Peter Weiss) (2)
7. *Leonce und Lena* (Georg Büchner) (2)
8. *Der grüne Kakadu* (Arthur Schnitzler) (2)

### Authors

Bertold Brecht 16 counts (author and/or specific play)

- *Die Dreigroschenoper* (5)
- *Galileo Galilei* (1)
- *Mutter Courage* (1)
- *Ja/Neinsager* (1)
- *Lehrstücke* (1)
- *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* (1)
- *Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis* (1)
- *Herr Puntila und sein Knecht* (1)

Friedrich Dürrenmatt 15 counts (author and/or specific play)

- *Die Physiker* (5)
- *Die Wiedertäufer* (1)
- *Der Besuch der alten Dame* (2)
- *Romulus der Grosse* (1)
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 7 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Jahrmarskfest zu Plündersweilern* (1)
*Der Bürgergeneral* (1)
*Die Laune des Verliebten* (1)
*Die Mitschuldigen* (1)
*Faust* (1)

Georg Büchner 6 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Woyzeck* (3)
*Leonce und Lena* (2)

Johannes Nestroy 6 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Freiheit im Krähwinkel* (1)
*Frühe Verhältnisse* (1)
*Häuptling Abendwind* (1)
*Judith und Holofernes* (1)
*Die schlimmen Buben in der Schule* (1)

Hans Sachs 6 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Der fahrende Schüler in dem Paradies* (1)

Arthur Schnitzler 5 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Der grüne Kakadu* (2)
*Liebelei* (1)
*Der Reigen* (1)

Max Frisch 5 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Biedermann und die Brandstifter* (3)
*Andorra* (1)

Loriot (Victor von Bülow) 5 counts (author and/or specific play)

*Skits* (3)

Frank Wedekind 3 counts (author and/or specific play)
Frühlingserwachen (1)

Andreas Gryphius 3 counts (author and/or specific play)

Peter Squentz (1)
Die geliebte Dornrose (1)
Horriblicribifax Teutsch (1)

Ferdinand Raimund 3 counts (author and/or specific play)

Der Alpenkönig (1)
Der Bauer als Millionär (1)
Der Verschwender (1)
Hörspiele (1)

Peter Weiss 3 counts (author and/or specific play)

Wie dem Herrn Mockinpott das Leiden ausgetrieben wurde (2)

Comedies (in general) 3 counts (various authors)

Peter Handke 2 counts (author and/or specific play)

Publikumsbeschimpfung (1)

Hugo von Hofmannsthal 2 counts (author and/or specific play)

Der Schwierige (1)
Marquis v. Keith (1)

Ephraim Lessing 2 counts (author and/or specific play)

Der junge Gelehrte (1)

Poems 2 counts (various authors)

The following authors were mentioned once (1x):

Johann Ludwig Tieck Der gestiefelte Kater
Heiner Müller Hamletmaschine
Ludwig Thoma Die Lokalbahn
August Hinrichs Krach um Jolante
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gerlind Reinshagen</td>
<td>Leben und Tod der Marilyn Monroe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tankred Dorst</td>
<td>Die Kurve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georg Kaiser</td>
<td>Von Morgens bis Mitternachts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Günther Weisenborn</td>
<td>Die Ballade vom Eulenspiegel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruno Frank</td>
<td>Sturm im Wasserglas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August von Kotzebue</td>
<td>Die deutschen Kleinstädter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph von Eichendorff</td>
<td>Die Freier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Bernhard</td>
<td>Heldenplatz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Zuckmayer</td>
<td>Hauptmann von Köpenick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolfgang Deichsel</td>
<td>Frankenstein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerhart Hauptmann</td>
<td>Vor Sonnenuntergang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernst Barlach</td>
<td>Die Sinflut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinhard Goering</td>
<td>Die Seeschlacht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolfgang Borchert</td>
<td>Draußen vor der Tür</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Günther Grass</td>
<td>Nur noch zehn Min. bis Buffalo oder Hochwasser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Marat</td>
<td>Die Ermordung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No titles were mentioned

- Friedrich Schiller
- Heinrich von Kleist
- Hans König
- Heinrich Böll
- Karl Valentin
- Gerhard Polt
- Hans Magnus Enzensberger
- Thomas Bernhard
- Ernst Jandl
- Peter Pabisch

Authors of 50s and 60s.

Not classics

Folk tales
Fables

Concrete Poetry

Plays that incorporate music

Peter Brook

-- use as a template for great ideas

-- on stage settings
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