

**The Possibilities of Creating and Interpreting Texts in Language  
Teaching  
From the Heterogeneity and Diversity of Pupils' Plans to Better  
Understanding of I, You, Mutuality and World**

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In this paper, using the example of teaching German as a foreign language, components of two language or foreign language teaching concepts are presented, the objective of which is to open a space for each and every pupil, free in the choice of subject, to give aesthetic expression to their experience of I, you and the world and for them to exchange views with each other.

In the framework of the first concept, the reasons for and a description of elementary steps are given that may represent the productive starting point of each subjective, play-based, experimental and also language-system-relevant production of text. This first concept is thus to be seen as a contribution to a didactic conceptualization of creative writing. The second concept is oriented towards reception and interpretations of text and offers during lessons the option of simple dramatization of texts based on drama and theatre-pedagogical access to texts.

Both concepts are intended to take into account recent findings in the psychology of learning according to which ideally language learning should be presented in a varied and diverse way and should integrate all potential modes of learning – among others authentic language activity, experience, the largest possible subjective and intersubjective context, discovery, imagination, decision-making based on aesthetics, sensory perception, the non-verbal level of language communication and non-verbal communication codes, physicality, connection to space, reflection.<sup>1</sup>

The conceptual components described here are of a general nature. A more concrete description is only possible depending on the age of the pupils and their progress in the language: in the expectations of text making and in the selection of the texts for the planned dramatization.

In the spectrum of procedures and range from guided through semi-guided to free language expression the position of both concepts may be characterized as follows: the object is that the pupils are each able to express and realize their own ideas in respect of content and interpretation, on the formal side they are supported – for creative writing by narrow requirements of grammar and text structure, for text dramatization the text that is to be dramatized and the facilities for staging provide the framework.

The attempts at creative writing and the theatre-specific text dramatizations are subject to the same regulations concerning structure of lessons and of the learning process as the components oriented to acquisition of knowledge, acquisition and consolidation of language instruments or as the components oriented towards extending skills – in respect of distribution, dosage, proportions, progress and of the requisite material, media, aids.

This paper consists of three parts. In the first part the theoretical starting points of the two concepts is discussed briefly.

In the second and third parts the theoretical reasons for the concepts are specified and the concepts described and accompanied by examples.

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<sup>1</sup> cf. for example Vester 1992 (1978), Gardner 1993, Spitzer 2009.

## 1. Theoretical Starting Point

In a philosophical-educational context, *understanding* is analysed as one of the basic modalities of human existence, as an expression of the individual's relationship with himself, with others and with the world, as the fundamental phenomenon of social life.<sup>2</sup> The question of how I and You understand themselves and each other, how they understand the world is one that human beings are confronted with every day in all their spheres of life – from intimate relationships with family and friends, to paths of learning, career structures, life cultures, paradigms of knowledge, world politics and finally to the search for meaning. The modern European school is therefore certainly right to undertake the highest function in the hierarchy, that of perceiving the heterogeneity and diversity of the pupils' worlds and of building on that and creating learning options by which pupils are sensitized for the experience of reciprocity, tolerance and solidarity, of democratic patterns of behaviour, of openness and empathy towards otherness - and for awareness of the relevance of this experience in view of the possibilities of understanding each other better.<sup>3</sup>

Among the numerous systems of signs or indeed communication, language is considered the most complex system. Through language and text, I and You express how they understand the world, through language and text, they learn how another person understands the world. Through language and text, I and You discover the worlds that exist and that could exist. Thus this question is all the more obvious: How can language teaching with its inherent possibilities of language and text work contribute to pupils' daily encounters at school allowing for questions of heterogeneity, diversity and a formation of identity<sup>4</sup> that should develop in dialogue and open ways to better understanding of each other?

The most important theoretical inspirations for approaching the question of heterogeneity in all its dimension of understanding<sup>5</sup> arrived late in the thousands of years old history of foreign language teaching<sup>6</sup>. Feuerbach is described as the first thinker that pointed out that the category "I" is not tenable without the category "You" (Laing et al. 1971:13). His analysis of the relevance of You as at the same time a boundary and a possibility for growth for I are followed by later analyses of language as an area of encounter and togetherness: language as "*house of being*" (Heidegger 1991: 24), as a thinking agency in the dialogue of I and THOU (Buber 1994), as an "involvement" in common stories (Schapp 1985), as the formation, occurring in narration, of individual, social and historical coherence (Carr 1986), as permanent "*communication in interlocution*", shifting and fusion of horizons, that result in "*a metamorphosis into jointness in which one does not remain what one was*" (Gadamer 1990:

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<sup>2</sup> Zur multidisziplinären Breite der Problematik des *Verstehens* cf. Zajícová 2008:241.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. die vier Säulen der Bildung für das 21. Jh. (Delors et al. 1996).

<sup>4</sup> Based on Duden (2007) the terms "heterogeneity" and "diversity" are here understood as difference, strangeness, inequality, unevenness, dissimilarity, manifoldness, the term "identity" considered in the meaning of being as a "certainty, individualness, unmistakability" or also "the inner unity of the person experienced as 'self'". Whereas heterogeneity ensues from the past, identity is perceived as an endeavour by the "I" towards achieving its coherence in the present. We relate the term "diversity" to the present and the future.

Where heterogeneity, identity und diversity are involved, forms of dialogic encounter are to be sought that aim for and hold out the prospect of "participation in the common consciousness" (Gadamer 1990: 297).

<sup>5</sup> We see approaches in which the question of heterogeneity is equated with optimization of results, with conditions of team work regarding economic success or also with conflict management and violence prevention as unjustifiably reductionist. Our question is rather: How can attractive teaching and language teaching be so planned that it enables the following:

- Development of the I, you and world reflexive abilities and skills of each and every pupil as a personality and member of the group.
- Guidance to dialogic, democratic, co-operative style of communication and interaction as the norm to be aimed for.
- Conscious development of individual and social coherence.

<sup>6</sup> cf. for example Kelly 1976.

384). Only in interlocution can constructions of I and of You be compared, tensions between intentions and communicative effects be bridged, discontinuities be explained, voids be filled, non-verbal messages be interpreted, narrations exchanged, attitudes communicated, relationships built, experiences of the world and visions be recounted.

In the context of education the history of heterogeneity as a topic can be pursued in two questions that have been being asked for thousands of years: on the one hand in the search for the complete human being from the idea of *kalokagathia* to various constellations of *being, knowledge, action, belief, language, experience, physicality, love, play, autonomy, sexuality, economic relativity, intentionality, creativity* and finally to thematizations of the alternatives, on the other hand in ideas of equality, of self-determination or co-determination, of equal opportunities<sup>7</sup>.

Despite the importance of the numerous theoretical suggestions, their implementation in everyday teaching seems to be hardly the general rule. We see this difficulty in the existing tension between the cognitive acquisition of the concepts as systems of knowledge and the as yet unsatisfactory character of the macro- and micro-didactical framework, in which teaching takes place. A dual approach may be observed. On the one hand, future teachers acquire valuable knowledge during their university studies, on the other hand, they have few possibilities to interiorize this knowledge effectively. They start out from their own history of learning, which is usually not characterized by encountering alternatives to the mere acquisition of knowledge. The schools at which the students practise, where they carry out their first attempts at teaching and where they are then given a post as beginner teachers often display rigid structures that are hard to influence – sometimes it is even almost impossible to modify the teacher-oriented class seating plan. The beginner teachers are confronted with normative expectations of pupil results and at the same time they are only just beginning to establish their own style of teaching together with time management competence. And, last but not least, they rely on the existing textbooks in which there are no pre-structures for a satisfactory approach to varied, multi-modal learning based on a diversity of ways of access.

Proceeding from the above-discussed theoretical inspirations, from the present state of research into learning and from the relevance of the topic of heterogeneity, we consider it to be necessary to conceptualize productive ways of learning, with the assistance of which:

- pupils' creative achievements are given their space in the learning process as equal players in the paradigmatic worlds of knowledge;
- autonomous experience, pupils' own associations, memories, questions, arguments, imagination and designs for the future become the starting point for narrative decisions that they are involved in about the relevance of paradigmatic worlds originating outside;
- opening up of syllabuses and forms of learning for pupils' autonomous constructions stimulates exchange of views and reciprocity.

## 2. Creative writing in language and foreign language teaching<sup>8</sup>

Selected components of the concept were presented by staff member, Milan Pišl, of the Germanist Institute of the University of Ostrava during the International TIPP Conference in Bielefeld on 4.6.2009 in the workshop "Elementary Procedures to Initiate Creative Writing in the teaching of German as a Foreign Language".

The basis of Creative Writing in language or foreign language teaching is understood by us as working in two directions. We are concerned both with slow and intensive perception and use of language and text structures and with written expression of one's own experience of the world and of independent content and of exchange of views with one another.

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<sup>7</sup> cf. Zajícová 2008: 72.

<sup>8</sup> For this part of the paper an extract from Zajícová 2009a was taken and expanded.

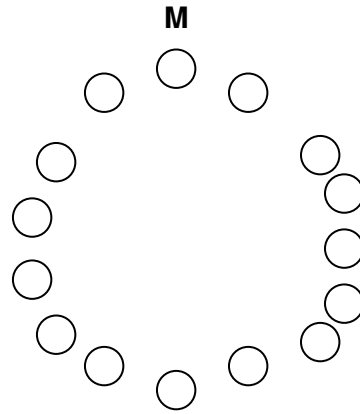
At first sight, the impression could be gained that there are already more than enough suggestions as stimuli for creative writing. Indeed – existing works provide an almost confusing picture. The large number of suggestions, however, makes it difficult to see what is important. In the context of language teaching, not only freedom of content and originality can count, but also the slow acquisition of formal resources and competence in their flexible use. After the real beginning of creative writing, which is definitely based on experiencing, observing, listening, assessing, and putting into relation, we want to emphasize certain directions of language activity that, in our opinion, form the axis of learning creative writing. These are 1) generation of motifs and ideas, 2) sorting and selecting these, forming initial structures, categories and order, 3) conscious perception and considered use of language structures, 4) conscious structuring of the text. All these directions should be developed as skills – they are based on longer-term, relaxed and experimental work in small doses, which uses a circle of steps in which language models, one's own productions, reflections, revisions and presentations alternate and are constantly repeated. In our opinion, learning creative writing in language lessons with the production of a free text about a complex stimulus (e.g. philosophical quotation, music) should not and cannot begin only at university or secondary school but rather should be a natural and permanent antipole to guided writing – from the very first beginnings of writing.

Varied, non-language stimuli, guidelines for acquiring writing techniques and dealing with writer's block, further instructions and writing experiments with reference to those addressed and the media, in functional style, in change of perspective, in working with stylistic devices and, last but not least, text presentation skills can and should – depending on intention, wishes and time requirements – be integrated into the learning process. For our long-term work we are, however, looking at four components, which we see as especially significant because they are anyway necessary for writing (associating) and because they represent a long-term basis for all language writing and its development. This is work with associations, with language equivalences, with small formats and with text structures. We will give short explanations of the reasons for these four components one after the other.

- Association. From Aristotle to Vygotski to the most recent findings of neurodidactics: they all teach us that every piece of independent or creative writing begins with associations, with inner discourse and its development. An experienced writer may manage without explicit association. Nonetheless we believe it is an unavoidable duty of language teaching to offer the pupil this step explicitly, to make it transparent and to integrate those kinds of processes into language learning in which one's own associations are generated, sorted, ordered and placed in a hierarchy, developed and structured according to the text – until the habit of association takes shape, is consolidated and becomes automatic. Verbal list games, competitions with associations, development and structuring of associogrammes – first in groups or partner work and later individually – clustering, mind-mapping, brainstorming, perspectivisation should be presented and reflected on again and again.

#### Example 1

I am the moon (play-based association of words with movement). All those taking part (T) sit in a circle. The T that starts has a vacant seat on his left and right side. He says: "I am the moon (M). Who goes with me?" The two T that say their association first ("I am the night, I am the sun, I am Neil Armstrong ...") take the vacant seats beside the moon. "The moon" puts his arm on the shoulder of one of his two new neighbours and says, for example, "I take the night." Those two go back into the circle. "The sun" takes the centre seat and continues: "I am the sun. Who goes with me?"



### Example 2

Écriture automatique (Exercise to break down writer's block). For about five to ten minutes all those present write down everything that they think of in connection with a presented stimulus. All other rules do not apply. They can make mistakes, They can switch into their first language or a third language. What is important is that they do not stop writing. Their pens should always be touching the paper and moving. If their thoughts come to a halt, they keep going through the motions of writing until a new thought comes (according to Hornung 1996: 228). Short selected passages – slightly edited - can be read aloud later in the group session

- Equivalences. Language expression is normally based on grammatical structures. In language lessons learners are made aware of grammatical structures – in first language teaching on the level of the meta language, in foreign language teaching mainly on the level of understanding, learning, using automatically. At the same time, becoming aware of grammatical structures takes place in constant interaction between reception and production. In this interaction, the didactic utilization of Jakobson's poetical equivalence principle<sup>9</sup> is an obvious choice as a basis for long-term language learning as the use of poetic-grammatical equivalences in one's own poetic parallel texts. A poetic text is worked on receptively and then its structure becomes a model for one's own attempt at a text with self-determined content. This model can be modified not only in the sphere of creative content but also in form and grammar. It becomes evident that with the aid of selected examples of literature a didactic progression can be developed – from the graphic-metrical to the phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactical and finally to the text structural level (Zajícová 2008: 187-215).

### Example

As a poetic-grammatical model the Tucholsky poem is read all together, the equivalences of the verbal accusative government are understood, more simple verbs with the accusative or dative government are suggested.

Kurt Tucholsky ... (Gesammelte Werke in 10 Bänden, Band 6, 1928. Rowohlt 1985)

KURT TUCHOLSKY

Peter Panter . Theobald Tiger . Ignaz Wrobel

Kaspar Hauser

*haßt:*  
das Militär

*liebt:*  
Knut Hamsun

<sup>9</sup> „Die poetische Funktion projiziert Äquivalenzen von der Achse der Selektion auf die Achse der Kombination.“  
Here adapted from Jakobson 1995.

die Vereinsmeierei  
Rosenkohl  
den Mann, der immer in der Bahn die  
Zeitung mitliest  
Lärm und Geräusch  
'Deutschland'

jeden tapfern Friedenssoldaten  
schön gespitzte Bleistifte  
Kampf  
die Haarfarbe der Frau, die  
er gerade liebt  
Deutschland

KURT TUCHOLSKY

Peter Panter . Theobald Tiger . Ignaz Wrobel  
Kaspar Hauser

*hates:*

the military  
people who love joining clubs  
brussels sprouts  
the man that always reads  
another person's paper in  
the train  
noise and din  
'Germany'

*loves:*

Knut Hamsun  
every brave soldier of peace  
nicely sharpened pencils  
struggles  
the colour of the hair  
of the woman he loves  
at the moment  
Germany

Primary equivalence: verbal government, accusative object.  
(Secondary equivalence: relative clause, attributive adjective)

Modification: be happy about / look forward to, be afraid of, be for /against, say thank you to – for, admire, enjoy talking to – about, yearn for, wish s.o. something, wait for, be interested / uninterested in ...

Task: Write a simple coherent text on a selected verb.

- Small formats. A further important step to the development of creative and conscious use of language is represented by experimenting with so-called small formats. The following categories permit numerous thematic modifications:

- Pictogrammes
- Growing poems

Example of a pupil's text

When

When are you coming?

When are you coming? Today?

When are you coming? Today or tomorrow?

When are you coming? Today or tomorrow? I am waiting.

When are you coming? Today or tomorrow? I am waiting and looking forward to you.

- Constellations (varied grouping of few words and ordering them in different images or *constellations*)<sup>10</sup>
- Anagrams (making words by changing the order of the letters in an existing word; e.g. from 'schreiben': 'ei', 'Ei', 'ein', 'eins'...; with the new words a short text is created and then read aloud.

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<sup>10</sup> cf. Bornscheuer 1987.

- Acrostics (the first letters in series of words or series of lines or the first words in series of lines produce a word or a sentence with a meaning)
- Elevenses

Two examples of pupils' texts

Blau  
Dein Hemd  
Du kommst näher  
Jetzt kann ich sagen  
Hallo!

Grün  
Frisches Basilikum  
Der Kuchen – herrlich  
Lass ihn dir schmecken  
Danke

Blue  
Your shirt  
You come nearer  
Now I can say  
Hallo!

Green  
Fresh basil  
The cake – wonderful  
Hope you like it  
Thanks

- Haiku (Japanese poem with three lines and 5-7-5 syllables in the lines; there are other rules about format and content; access to haiku is for example possible through a Sumi-E-Image or through a haibun as a prose text in haiku style)
- Senryu (similar to haiku but choice of theme is free)

Two examples of pupils' texts

Ägyptenreise  
Koffer wieder bei Zbyněk  
Vati bleibt allein

Feuer im Kamin  
Wir sind alle zu Hause  
Und der Kater schnurrt

Egypt holiday  
Suitcase again in Zbyněk  
Daddy stays alone

Fire in the fireplace  
We are all of us at home  
The cat is purring

- Chain poems (each pupil writes a text on the same topic of either two lines with 7 + 7 syllables or of three lines with 5 + 7 + 5 syllables; the topic/title should not appear in the lines – for example in the texts of a chain poem with the title “Ostrava”, neither “Ostrava” nor “the town” should appear)
- One-sentence texts (text consists of one sentence as long or short as desired), three-sentence texts (the sentences begin with “yesterday”, “today”, “tomorrow”), four-sentence texts (1. main clause, 2. main clause and subordinate clause, 3. subordinate clause and main clause, 4. main clause) (adapted from Merkelbach 1995)

Creating these small-format texts does not take much time and can be based on group, partner or individual work. On the one hand it opens productive experiments with graphics, word, length of lines, emphasis, rhythm and text size, on the other hand it signifies an obvious challenge in view of the subjective aim of expressing one's own intended content and to express what is important in only a few words.

- On the way to independent creative writing, we believe it is necessary and advisable to consider the question of the text structure of different types of texts. This seems particularly difficult since there are probably about 4000 different types of texts. And so this paper can only offer examples. Together with questions of normative parts of text structure, experience suggests the advisability of encouraging awareness of appropriate

language activity or of the correct relation between actions and appropriate expression in language.

In our concept of creative writing, practice of form is planned to be long-term and to proceed in small steps. It is accompanied by expression of self-determined content. Finally, the point is that the pupils' creative writing processes help them to increase their awareness of language, to find their own style of writing and to be more conscious of their perception of I, you and the world – in view of respect for I, you and the world, which remain an eternal mystery and which open themselves in encounters in dialogue and become more colourful, more interesting and a constant question and motivation for each other.

### 3. Text dramatization<sup>11</sup>

Within the framework of the TIPP project, the components listed here were recorded with the assistance of students of the University of Ostrava in a sequence of 25 small text work video models for teaching German as a foreign language. On the website of the project [www.teachers-ipp.eu](http://www.teachers-ipp.eu) the recordings and the accompanying texts will be published from October 2009.

These recorded video models, as part of the TIPP project, represent the, at present, last results of several years of efforts carried out at the Germanist Institute of the University of Ostrava to integrate drama-specific processes into the teaching of German as a foreign language. Since 1992 lecturers (Detlef Dumon, Silvia Neumayer-EI Bakri, Pavla Zajícová), tutors (Angela Daiss), visiting lecturers (Paul R. Portmann, Elektra Tselikas), PhD students and students (the names of those who prepared the TIPP video models in summer and winter semesters 2008 and summer semester 2009 are given in each recording) have been working together to conduct seminars and workshops in which the idea of "Drama in the Teaching of German as a Foreign Language" was tested and also researched. The following members of staff were especially involved in developing the video models: Silvia Neumayer-EI Bakri und Pavla Zajícová as seminar directors, Eva Polzerová as trainer und specialist advisor, Tomáš Rucki as specialist advisor und technician, Milan Jurček as technician.

The basis of text dramatization is seen by us as a multimodal exchange between the narrations of the original literary text and the texts of the pupils that are involved and take part in the production - as listening attentively together to the voice of the text and to all voices around the text, as focussed consideration of the options for narrative code conversion, as initial drafting, discussing, trying out, selecting, perfecting and finally presenting the text by staging it for an audience. In this we start from two conceptualizations of narration – from the philosophical understanding of narration as a prelingual existential structure of being that is three-dimensional in time (perception and experience of past, present and future) and that, when put into practice in language, becomes the basis of the formation of individual, social and historical coherence (Carr 1986). We also consider the numerous psycholinguistic approaches to the question of the essence of narration, in the framework of which has been discovered that narration is not only expressed by language but is also characterized by a certain permeability for different sign systems (Dijk 1972: 14).

Our teaching models involve, with some small exceptions, very short text sequences. The instruments of dramatization used in each case can of course be employed in longer text treatments and integrated into a longer performance for an external audience, on the other hand we bear in mind the fact of lesson teaching and the possibilities offered by regular short text dramatizations that are prepared in groups and performed for the class. A part of the class is then always the audience.

For drama in foreign language teaching (as product and result) and for the training leading to it (as process), we lay claim to the following principles and features:

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<sup>11</sup> For this part of the paper an extract from Zajícová 2009b was taken and expanded.

- The road to drama is a long-term process. If there are adequate conditions in the fields of teacher training and textbook requirements, drama can, however, be a very effective part of the learning process right from the start of language learning.
- The road to drama includes drama-pedagogical and theatre-pedagogical approaches.
- Drama-specific and theatre-specific work sequences leading to drama are subject to the same rules of lesson structure and learning process as all others, for example the components oriented to acquisition and consolidation of instruments of language and those oriented to extending skills – with regard to their distribution, dosage, progress.
- Teachers and pupils are equal participants in lessons with regard to decisions to be taken.
- The dramatized or to be dramatized text can have a length of only a few lines but the dramatization or performance always has a clear beginning and a clear ending.
- Not only the performers but also the audience have an important function – during the preparation of the dramatization as observers, commentators, advisors, after the performance as a source of feedback.
- In this context partner and group work is of particular relevance.
- The theatre-specific tasks are embedded in a framework of manifold warm-up and awareness exercises, depending on progress, for voice, body, concentration and reference to one's partner and of specific drama-pedagogical exercises.
- All these exercises are presented and carried out in the target language. They are not only intended for the preparatory phases, but their structure can also be included as necessary in the aesthetics of the dramatizations.
- For each step of progress there are several suitable small or larger texts available on the basis of which pupils can themselves choose which texts to dramatize.

Furthermore, we suggest concrete steps or progression of theatre-specific assignments and exercises.

### 3.1 Speech techniques and Voice Leading

Although the voice is on the border between verbal and non-verbal expression and is for that reason at the beginning of our list, the speech and voice exercises, which are in their essence relatively difficult, should only be carried out after a comprehensive range of movement exercises.

Training of speech techniques and of voice leading is based on clear and correct pronunciation and also includes, besides relevant exercises, breathing exercises.

In regular breathing exercises the pupils learn to be aware of their breathing and to use it effectively when speaking. Working consciously with breathing includes physical relaxation and tension, inhalation and exhalation with pauses, chest breathing and abdominal breathing.<sup>12</sup>

In the speech exercises attention is paid to voice placement, voice resonance, speaking into the mask and voice projection, to clear articulation with voluminous vowel formation and consonant contouring, also to emphasis, intonation and use of pauses.

When the pupils are conscious of these aspects and have more or less interiorized them, they are presented with a repertoire of elements that they can select, vary and include in their text presentation, according to their own decisions. These are for example volume, pitch, timbre or emotionality, tempo, number of speakers, speaking like running a relay, cloze speaking and speaking like a musical round, wave, echo, simple sound effects (e.g. clapping, finger snapping, stamping, knocking, whistling, humming, hissing).

### 3.2 Audience-oriented reading aloud

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<sup>12</sup> Exercises e.g. in Zajícová et al. 1998.

We see audience-oriented reading aloud as the basis of drama work. Not every drama text needs to be recited from memory, on the other hand audience-oriented reading aloud is based on familiarity with the text and can be a preliminary to reciting from memory and staging.

This reading technique, also known as “Read and look up” is characterized as follows:

*“Here the pupil has the text to be learnt in written form and he tries to understand short passages as a whole, while only looking briefly at the text, and then to repeat them ‘by heart’. Frequent repetition of this technique with a text leads to reproduction of what has been learnt.”* (Rampillon 1996: 96)

Whether drama is done in lessons or not, this technique can and should, in our opinion, be practised right from the start of foreign language learning, beginning with very short texts. The audience-oriented, relatively slow style of reading aloud is indeed experienced as very pleasant by audiences. The pauses that the reader is obliged to include contribute to the good impression on the audience.

The preparation phase is very important for the reader. He reads the text several times with a pencil in his hand and divides it into appropriate sections that he can understand by looking at them briefly and can deliver while looking at the audience. These sections can be shorter at first and then longer and by modifying the length of the text to be understood in one go, emphasis and intonation are worked on at the same time. The reader should practise his audience-oriented reading performance several times out loud. While doing this, he imagines his audience and also practises the distribution of eye-contact in such a way that in the course of the spoken segments he reaches all the members of the audience with his eyes.

Finally, it must be mentioned that this exercise is quite difficult, that it should be done at first with a very short text and should be repeated. The teacher should show the pupils before their first attempt how to do it and then praise them for every little success and progress. In our experience, even those pupils that were very sceptical at first will be able to manage this exercise.

### 3.3 Facial expression, gestures, body pose

Work on facial expression and gesture, body awareness and use of the body are practised in specific exercises. The aim is to create awareness of and increase competence in coding and decoding the effect of facial expression, gestures and the body pose. In this case, it is advisable to begin with simple exercises in which not the text but facial expression, gestures, posture and movement are the centre of attention. Exercises of this kind can be part of homework assignments dealing with observation, self-observation and comparisons. How do people walk? How do they enter rooms? How do they sit in the bus? What mood does their facial expression convey? How do they achieve eye-contact? What effect do the observed constellations have on me? What effect do I have on others?

Drama requires distinct and expressive messages through facial expression, gesture and body pose. In appropriate exercises the attempt is made to test one’s potential, to display oneself, to observe others, to reflect together with others what has been tested and observed, to learn from what has been planned.

Differences that appear small are tried out. How does one use one’s eyes when flirting, or when reprimanding someone? How does one move the palms of the hands when giving or begging? How does a man take off a pullover, how does a woman do it? How does a teacher whose wife wants a divorce move or one thinking only about his super class that he wants to motivate to take part in an important sports contest? How does someone write a love letter, a shopping list, a haiku? How can polarities such as “welcome and farewell”, pupil and teacher”, “moment and eternity” be expressed in short group presentations – spontaneous or synchronized – with facial expressions, gestures and body pose.

Experience shows that pupils enjoy perceiving, putting into practice and reflecting exercises with facial expression, gestures and body language that are embedded appropriately in the

entire progression. The attitudes of the participants develop usually from feeling unsure at first to enthusiasm when they see how meaningful facial expression, gestures, posture and movement can actually be.

More complex exercises can be done based either on an existing text or a “text in my head”. In the first case the assignment is to develop facial expressions, gestures and body pose for audience-oriented reading aloud of the text. In the second case, small situations, conflicts or stories are recounted only with the eyes, only with the fingers, only with arms, only by means of posture and movement and then interpreted and explained by the audience or the actors.

### 3.4 Sound

Including sound effects in texts similar to radio plays is a simple variation of audience-oriented reading aloud that offers many options. In group work either an identical text can be prepared as a radio play or the groups are given different texts to work on as radio plays.

The audience listens then with their eyes closed. The actors should speak very slowly and clearly – they must be aware that the audience is usually hearing the text for the first time and only once.

Ideas for sound effects always arise from the concrete text. Steps are taken, doors opened and closed, vegetables cut up. Plates clatter, paper rustles, water flows, a mosquito buzzes. It is also useful to test and modify other ways of handling objects. Eva Engel (1993) recommends the following tricks: for rain, pour rice into a cardboard box; for the wind, use a brush on fabric; for a motor, switch on a hand mixer; for a traffic accident, drop cutlery in a saucepan on the floor; for fire, crumple cellophane ...

Many texts can be adapted as radio plays with simple changes. With regard to the adaptation, the following ideas should be considered:

- Which parts can be omitted? This is especially necessary where direct speech begins (“The pharmacist said: “)
- Which parts can be transferred from descriptive narrative into direct speech?
- Are the proportions of the speakers’ roles ideal? Sometimes small changes can help to equalize the speakers’ shares of the text. This is not only more satisfying for the speakers but also for the audience because then they hear a more balanced change of voices.
- It is important to be sure that the different voices have different character so that the audience can easily distinguish between them.
- In addition to the acting roles, decide who should be the sound technicians responsible for the sound effects.

### 3.5 Narrative Drama

Narrative drama represents an early form of drama. The narrator’s monologue is combined with depiction on stage and the text of the characters. The roles, including the role of narrator, are allotted. The text is read by the narrator and spoken or acted by the actors in a simple stage space.

All those taking part must know the text well. If at all possible, the actors should know their parts off by heart and know exactly at which point in the narrator’s text they enter. The narrator reads the text aloud to the audience and communicates by means of simple gestures and alternating eye-contact between the actors and the audience the connection between, text, plot and audience.

### 3.6 Dance

In our “Drama as Dance” the text is spoken rhythmically by the dancers (e.g. rap) or the roles of speakers and dancers are divided up (e.g. aerobic dance). The dance components can

also be much simpler. We refer here to the tradition of dance drama that has emerged since the second half of the 20th century (cf. Tanztheater 2009) and in this framework to the following theses:

- Dance need not be perfect or beautiful.
- All forms of movement are possible. Within the framework of the choreography involved, rhythm, regularity, change, synchronizing, stabilizing and destabilizing, steps forwards, backwards, sideways, jumping steps, marching steps and other steps, raising and lowering the arms, stretching and contracting the body as well as use of space are taken into consideration.
- The type of dance and the choreography depend on the performers.
- In connection with the text, the dancers express in gestures and movements their impression of the text, their mood, their feelings and also their character, their experience, their preferred modes of physical movement.
- It is primarily a matter of using body language as a free translation of the text into movement – together with song, music, sounds.

In our experience, pupils find, for example, concepts of eurythmy, of aerobic, of rap inspirational.

### 3.7 Mime

Whereas dance is an accompanying component of the text, mime should offer a parallel image and as such replace the text with body language.

In mime the text is first rehearsed in mime and performed during lessons, then interpreted verbally by the audience, later read.

Experience shows that pupils enjoy doing simple miming when for example it is about guessing jobs, performing sports, imitating animals. Miming a whole text, however, appears somewhat more difficult. It is important to remember that a mime performance has a similar syntactical structure to a text. Mime also consists of sentences that have a beginning, an end, punctuation. The syntactical structure is constructed by an alternation of stillness or pause and movement, of neutral position and action, of relaxation and contraction, also by gestures and body movements that show the beginning and the end. Movements express the plot, dialogue, ideas, moods and emotions of the actors.

In warm-up and preparatory exercises in addition to mime games (e.g. charades, washing the elephant) ideas and experiments should be integrated in which some typical mime sequences of movements are tried out – while reducing them to their essence. Furthermore, some good and also trivial examples of mime gestures should be tried out and discussed.

Mime has a reputation as a relatively demanding art form. In foreign language lessons the pupils' performances cannot be expected to meet professional standards. Nonetheless, we see the attempt to translate a text into mime as legitimate. In the context of language didactics it is first and foremost a matter of language activity that consists of discussion about the meaning of the text, about the possibilities for presentation and interpretation and that signifies an extension of work with texts. In addition, pupils can learn a lot through mime, they can learn to work with their body, to be more aware of symbols, imitations, gestures, to think about the specifics of mimed or non-verbal expression.

### 3.8 Puppetry

In puppetry the physical act of acting is transferred to the puppets. Different arrangements of roles are possible. The simplest variant is the constellation of a speaker that reads the text aloud to the audience and puppeteers. Another option is that the roles are spoken by the puppeteers or that actors and puppets are on stage together.

Different types of puppets can be made (for example hand puppets with head, arms and legs in clothing made of fabric, but also really simple cloth puppets, sock puppets, cardboard stick figures) and they can be smaller or larger.

Experience shows that pupils find text dramatizations using puppets very attractive. It is easy and natural for pupils to let the puppets act – laugh and cry, run and jump, dance with one another, float, fly through the air ...

The puppeteers should stand behind the puppets not in the foreground. They should wear clothing that does not attract attention, e.g. black t-shirt and jeans. They should, however, match their movements and facial expression to the puppets.

### 3.9 Picture drama

Picture drama is created with a series of pictures and short texts are spoken to each picture. In the preparation phase decisions about allotting the roles are taken in small groups. In the presentation phase the picture drama is staged. The scenery can either be displayed on the board or on the wall or the format of Japanese paper theatre “Kamishibai” can be used – here the picture panels are placed one after the other in a simple wooden or plywood stage frame.

There are several modifications of content or format:

- Pupils draw pictures or make collages by means of which they want to recount situations from their everyday life, family life or school life.
- Pupils draw pictures or make collages for literary narrative texts, dramas, sagas, myths that they already know and retell the texts. They use the content and the verbal wording of the original texts as required or they try to fill the void in the text with their ideas for extending the text.
- Pupils are given prepared symbols (e.g. circle, triangle, square, rectangle, rhombus, star, heart – as required in different sizes and colours). These symbols represent the characters and objects of a well-known text (e.g. a fairy tale). The pupils position these symbols (for example by sticking them on a piece of A3 paper) as they want in a series of at least three picture panels, representing the selected and agreed scenes of the text. Afterwards the pupils describe their pictures and explain the ideas behind the positions they chose.
- Another option of picture theatre is that a few pictures (4 – 6) are prepared in advance for a text the pupils do not yet know and then shown to the pupils. In group work the pictures are put into order and displayed, and a simple story text is recounted to go with the pictures. Then they read the original text and compare it with the texts they have written and presented. The problem with this last procedure is that, with regard to potential text coherence, the pictures on the one hand should not point too much in one direction so that not all the groups think up an identical text, on the other hand, they have to be such that the creative production of a coherent story is possible.

### 3.10 Music drama

In music drama the selected text is set to music using simple musical instruments and musical activity. During lessons the musical version can then be interpreted and compared with the original text.

We understand the term music drama compared with the artistic perspective in a reduced language didactical perspective as follows:

- A text – so far we have worked exclusively with short texts or poems – is translated into music or a sound picture.

- Musical instruments or sound instruments are used that are possible for the performers in view of their musical training and competence and that can be used without needing to learn a lot.
- Using the Orff rhythmical musical instruments (chime bars, glockenspiels, triangles, tambourines, sistra, timbals, drums, bells, castanets) has proved successful.
- Use of guitar, flute, violin is beneficial.
- The important and central thing is not musical instruction for pupils but their thinking about the text, their pleasure in rhythm and sound, their planning, testing, reflecting and discussing, their enjoyment and their creativity together.

### 3.11 Still image theatre

Image theatre is sometimes called statue theatre, photo exhibition, slide show. The principle of the work is that the participants alone, in twos or small groups form a tableau with their bodies, then freeze and remain motionless for some seconds. The tableau expresses a motif, a topic or a moment of conflict from the text being worked on or from a text in the head and it is created as a result of the physical skills of the participants, their experience of I and world, their attitudes to life and imagination. In addition to posture, there are gestures, facial expression, the line of vision, and in partner and group work also the relationship to one another of those forming the tableau included.

For work with language and text, still image theatre opens up a number of options.

Still images and the situations they are embedded in are interpreted and explained, transferred to the past and the future, they depict selected text passages or illustrate or update a single text motif e.g. justice, misunderstanding, danger in several different ideas.

### 3.12 Staged reading

In a staged reading the words, parts of sentences, lines or paragraphs of the text being read or recited by the speaker/reporter/narrator are accompanied by a series of arrangements and movements and other actions of the actors. A number of elementary questions definitely have to be considered: What should the beginning be like? How do the actors come on stage? Should it appear spontaneous, chaotic, boisterous or orderly and regulated? How are the signals for beginning and transitions given? How do the actors arrange themselves? Do they appear singly or in small groups? Where do the narrator, the musicians, the actors stand? Is the arrangement at the beginning favourable for the changes in the stage constellation that occur later? What should the end be like? How should the applause be received?

We see the range of dramatized-interpretative options in the span between the elementary accompaniment of words, lines, paragraphs, verses by the actors' body language expression, expressed for example by tableaux on the one hand and on the other hand, in the selection and combination of all the modes of dramatization discussed here and many more besides.

For the website of the TIPP project [www.teachers-ipp.eu](http://www.teachers-ipp.eu) the following video models of text work in teaching German as a foreign language were prepared and recorded.

- |                          |                                                          |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Clarity               | Drei Hunde habe ich (nach Wolfgang Menzel)               |
| 2. Voice leading I       | Reklame (Ingeborg Bachmann)                              |
| 3. Voice leading II      | Hilfszeitwörter (Gerhard Rademacher)                     |
| 4. Read and look up      | Zwei Männer, ein Bild, ein Hammer (nach Paul Watzlawick) |
| 5. Partner awareness I   | Zwei Ameisen (Joachim Ringelnatz)                        |
| 6. Partner awareness II  | Sie liebten sich (Hansgeorg Stengel)                     |
| 7. Partner awareness III | Nummern                                                  |
| 8. Voice theatre         | Wegbeschreibung (Son Seongho)                            |

9. Eye theatre	fünfter sein (Ernst Jandl)
10. Finger theatre	Die Aufforderung zum Tanz
11. Gesture theatre	Weißt du, wie spät es ist?
12. Humming theatre	Rufen Sie sofort den Chef!
13. Narrative theatre	Es gibt nur eine Sprache (Peter Bichsel)
14. Freeze frame theatre	Der englische Gentleman
15. Mime theatre	Gib´s auf (Franz Kafka)
16. Dance theatre	aschenbecher (Ernst Jandl)
17. Puppet theatre	Ein Weib (Heinrich Heine)
18. Radio play	Ein Essen für mein Geld
19. Word for Word	Wäschebügeln
20. Rap	Habe nun, ach (J. W. Goethe)
21. Inner monologue	Mottenpulver (Carlo Manzoni)
22. Picture theatre	Im alten China
23. Music theatre	Antipoden (Ernst Jandl)
24. Freeze frame tableau	Oktober (Franz Mon)
25. Staged interpretation	Meeresstille (J. W. Goethe)

## Bibliography