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"Songs My Mother Taught Me"
    A Psychodynamic Approach to Language Developement
    through Music and Drama in the Multi-Ethnic Classroom.

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This paper presents anˇargument that a psychodynamic approach to language development through drama enactments can enhance the learning of language of students in a multi-ethnic classroom.

Evidence will be cited of current thinking about the signifance of drama as a learning medium and its role in developing intercultural understanding. It will also be argued that a psychodynamic approach to language development, "recognising the underpinnings of intercultural understanding, enhances both it and language competence. Drama enactments using music as a stimulus are particularly relevant to a psychodynamic approach as they encourage the expression of affects and their realisation through language. Examples will be given below of a variety of educational settings in which the principles underlying this argument were explored and reflected upon in writing by participants. The integration of these elements point the way to a new theoretical basis for language development.
Enactment as a Psychodynamic Process

Enactment is a psychodynamic process which refines and elaborates the early terms such as: roleplay, simulation, curriculum drama or creative dramatics, which as esslin (1987) and other have acknowledge to be difficult to define.

In our argument, psychodynamic enactment is an physicalisation and expression of an intrasubjective monologue which becomes externalised in intersubjective dialogue. In that process the monologue and dialogue are energised by affects, but my be realised and expressed through thought, language and action. Further, in the process of physicalisation and expression, there is the potential for enactment to energise and re-shape both the intersubjective dialogue and the underlying intrasubjective monologue with conscious components and unconscious underpinnings.
Vygotsky (1988) Lacan (1977), Kohut (1985), and Bruner (1986), together with reflections on our own teaching practice.

A Psychodynamic Approach to Language Learning

Langauge development is also psychodynamic involving: psychological processes, cognition and the differentiation of affectivity in social contexts. This approach to age learning which underpins a psychodynamic theory is active, expressive, student centred, creative and imaginative, and may involve othe symbolic activities like drawing, movement, model-making and play activities, along and with others. Ideally, such an approach will not necessarily become less creative and more formal as students move through formal education but will continue to encourage the development of both creative and analytic abilities. In a dynamic and interactive learning classroom the teacher will encourage exploration and self-expression through reading, writing, speaking and listening in the belief that students have the ability and the need to make sense of their world through experiences in a range of discourses. At the same time the teacher will have a well-developed working model of what constitutes development in literacy and will be able to structure language tasks in ways which promote that development. The teacher will also be a model of a well-integrated, creative anad analytic mind.

It is generally not acknowledged that the interactive classroom can provide the teacher, as well as the students, with opportunities for imaginative explorations of texts and human interactions, together with opportunities for self-reflection and cognitive development. The teacher's responsibility is to structure developmental language activities which increase the students' language awareness and language use, to provide an adult, responsive, constructive audience for their language work, along with the audiences provided by their peers, and to clarify with them the kinds of thinking, language and creative abilities they may have demonstrated in their work. The teacher needs to be engaged with students some times and appropriately disengaged other times in order to analyse sensitively what is happening in the classroom and what need restructuring. Such a balanced, demanding role for the teacher requires, at the very least: insight, well-developed personal language skills, empathy, flexibility and a capacity to engage students in analysing classroom interactions. One of the many advantages of an interactive classroom,

however, is that the teacher can involve students in perceiving, analysing, reflecting and commenting upon that they hear, see, feel and think as they engage in classroom activities. The classroom can become a workshop for real life and a safe environment for experimentation and risk-taking. This suggests, of course, that the classroom relationships are healthy, positive and self-affirming. If they are not, then the teacher will need to work on understanding the dynamics of that class and try to establish a good working environment of trust and self-respect.

For all the overwhelming demands placed on teachers, especially teachers involved in language development there is one distinct advantage enjoyed by these teachers: the content of lessons can be the thoughts, feelings, ambivalences, fears, hopes and even regressions of the students themselves. It goes almost without saying that teachers who do not

thoroughly enjoy intense relationshuips with others - that is, relationships which involve a degree of appropriate self-disclosure, a large measure of trust and a certain amount of risk-taking, as in an interactive language classroom, and teachers who do not enjoy working out how the world, themselves and other people act and interact are probably not going to be very effective language teachers. A large measure of insatiable curiosity, good humour and self-reflection, and the ability to endure delayaed gratification (language development is a very slow process) are important qualities for interactive language teachers - qualities similar to those needed for good parenting which is so important in early language development. The comparison is important because yet another quality teachers and parents need in order to be effective is the capacity for authentic relationships; relationships in which individuals can be appropriately expressive and exploratory. Drama enactments can be an especially effective way to encourage the realisation of these qualities.

Drama as a Learning Medium

Drama has at its core and enactment of events which may have happened, or may be imagined to have happened (esslin, 1987) and the use of drama in education has received much attention in the literature (Wagner, B.J. 1976, Bolton, G. 1979, 1984, 1991; Johnson, L & O'Neill, C. 1984; Morgan, J & Saxton, J. 1987). The literature fails, however, to sufficiently acknowledge the power of the psychological processes underpinning enactment.

We wish to explore the power of this process for language development and intercultural understanding and to show how certain reflective drama enactments stimulated by music can be employed.

The context for this approach, in Australia in our multi-ethnic school society and hence the need for intercultural education.

The Nature of the Multi-Ethnic Clasroom

While aboriginal people have lived in Australia since before recorded time the rest of us are new arrivals. Nearly 40% of our population are refugees, migrants or children of these parents. 25% of our population are of non Anglo or Celtic background (Jupp, J. 1988:124). In New South Wales schools, 18.3% of students were of non-English speaking background in 1990. Insome metropolitan schools, 90% of the school populations are from background other than English speaking. (Immigration: ANSW Perspective, January, 1992). Drama enables teachers to promote the concepts of ethnic plurality and intercultural understanding through child-centred enactments. Participants in such activities are encouraged to reflect on their own ethnic identity and how this relates to the broader community. The processes described below look at enactment, stimulated by music to enhance intercultural understanding, self-curioness, and language development with special reference to writing.

It must be understood that students from differing cultural backgrounds share a universal feeling state generally expressed as cultural shock. (Oberg, K, 1960). Importantly the ease of settlement depends on support available and the prevailing attitudes towards new arrivals. While cultural shock can occur in English speaking arrivals, non-English speaking students have their nightmare compounded by lack of adequate language facility.

Drama is already acknowledged as an effective teaching strategy for helping develop second language competency. (Maley, A & Duff, A. 1982). We know from language acquisition research (Ellis, R. 1985; Dulay, H., Burt,

M. and Krashen, S. 1982) and from research into communicative language teaching tha tthe most effective language learning occurs when teaching approaches and strategies mirror real-life communication; when task rather than grammatical form dominates the language exchange, and when fluency precedes accuracy. The students must be encouraged to take risks, to gain confidence in order to hypothesise the language structures. Enactment promotes these learning.

In Sydney, such drama classes are currently being implemented at an inner city intensive language centre, where newly arrived adolescents are coming to terms with English for the first time. These new students are suffering both cultural shock and linguistic despair and they are undertaking a drama course as part of their school program. These students keep diaries of the drama activities and typical of the journal entries is the following:

The first time I just laugh when I saw you did something and my friends too. Because I never did that before.

However when I see you do something for drama now I really admire who like actress.

I hope I will able which like you that might I don't afraid when I have meet strange men and standing and talking in front of a crowd.
Truc, A 14 year old Vietnamese student writing to her teacher.
Another student, a 15 year-old boy, wrote:

I will never forget my Drama lessons in this school. I really enjoyed all Drama lessons. Drama is good fun and very good for English. Aspecially for lesting when we are in relax time. Every lesson we done somethings different and some are same. But all of them was good non of them was boring or something bad. I lerned many thing from Drama lessons. If I do Drama in tyhe future, I all ready know some thing about drama. Drama lessons made all students much friendly. Because some students are not talking. Maybe they are shying or maybe afried of English but they are never talking. But Drama lessons give them dare to talk.

But Drama give the "dare to talk". These comments highlight the importance of feeling during language learning.

With more advanced language learners Drama activities are equally important. Many of these students have well developed general communicative skills; playground interactions will cause no major problems. But they may lack the ability to use abstract language and this is needed for academic development. Research into drama and language (Parsons, Schaffner, Little and Felton, 1984) has pointed to the importance of drmam in such development: "the cognitive processes of hypothesising and questioning a viewpoint are being carried out at the same time as the social implications of feeling are being expressed". (Carrol, J. 1988:20). We want to argue that the expression of affectivity is a precursor to cognitive processes.

Role-plays and simulations have been used for many years in child and

adult education to allow participants to view the world from a different cultural perspective. (Brislin, R. et al 1986. Casse, P. 1980).

There is a danger, however, that the drama process itself may reinforce the assimilationist model. An unspoken assumption that openness contributes to understanding and has positive social value, that hiding your feelings and thoughts, that being indirect is failing to commit oneself to the drama, violates a host of assumptions and values in many cultures (Weeks, H. et al n.d.). Theatre in education piece Kin by Sidetrack theatre well demonstrates the harm that well meaning 'liberal' teachers can do in this regard. It is for this reason that many teachers in Australia, implementing drama for intercultural understanding have been paving particular attention to the concept of protecting-into-role. (Simons, J. 1991). Protection-into-role via enactments in the classroom must be founded on principles which acknowledge the feeling state of participants.

Principles of Educaiton for Cross-Cultural Understanding

We wish to postulate five principles of intercultural education. These will facilitate insights into cultural values, recognitise of the value fo diversity, and enhance individual psychodynamic integration which leads to cohesion.

Ethnic diversity should be recognized and respected at individual, group

and societal levels. Teachers as well as students need experiences of the breath of Australian society: they need to overcome their own fears of difference (Gollnick, D M & Chinn P C. 1986:270).

Culture must be seen as a dynamic. Our culture and our sub-culture are learnt and provide a blue print for the way an individual thinks, feels and behaves. Hoever, "schools should avoid defining these cultures solely in terms of patterns of life and experience in countries and continents of origin. It may be far more meaningful for children to look at cultures as they are evolving and taking shape..." (Cohen, L & Manion, L. 1983: 183).

Ethnic identification should be optional for individuals (Banks, J A, 1981) No matter how well intentioned teachers must articulate aims, objectives and classroom approaches which allow the individual the right to identify and disclose ethnic association when he or she so chooses. Adolescents, especially, seek peer acceptance (Foot, H. C. Chapman, A J & Smith J R. 1980) and well meaning teachers may be reinforcing ethnic sub-culture association at the expense of cross-cultureal understanding. "Waht is called for therefore, is an exploration of strategies for restructuring group relations in ways which make the differences among individuals less invidious and less likely to be a source of conflict, tension and frustration". (Cohen, L & Manion, L 1983:100). Ethnic sub-cultural identification with possible negative effects is well exposed in Kin.

The approach outlined below is predicated on the individuals' right to choose. A positive self concept is also associated with peer acceptance both in the sub-cultural and the broader culture (Carter, D E. Define-Carter, L & Benson, F W. 1980). This leads to our fifth principle.

Education for cross-cultural understanding must be affective as well as cognitive. Consistent with psychodynamic principles classroom activities

must be personally relevant to students. Studies in cultural pluralism have shown the need for the affect to be acknowledged in developing cross-cultural understanding. (Appleton, N. 1983). Too often educationalist are concerned with what Rodgers calls "education from the neck up". (Rodgers, C. 1975).

Enactment and Language development: The Psychodynamic Approach.

Our approach to language development and cross-cultural understanding integrates the individual's affect driven concerns. Such concerns can be realised and expressed through the kinds of structures describedˇbelow. These structures are consistent with the five pirnciples outlined above.

Case studies

The case studies used music, namely songs of childhood as the stimulous for enactments which led to reflection in writing. To date this approach has been trialed with secondaryy school students in Sydney comprehensive schools, tertiary English/Drama studetns at the University of Sydney and the University of Melbourne and with participants at an International Drama in Education conference in Europe. A description of the process and structure follwos with written reflections from particpants at the international conference and from tertiary students at Sydney University. Video excerps from the latter groups will be shown here and discussed.

The process consists of eight (8) phrases which develop a symphonic-like structure the method integrates with the musical content of the session. The structure mirrors the phrase in music.

The Structure of Enactment

Phrase one

The group activity begins in a circle with the leader and the participants involved. Relaxation and trust-developing exercises are undertaken. This is crucial for effective enactment to proceed. The strength of the circle has long been known in drama work. (Lee, J. 1915). This phrase is designed to develop attunement in the group. This phrase is essential.

Phrase two - Chamber music

Participants in the circle hum, lying with their heads together. One participant begins to hum: this hum is passed aroung the circle. When the whole group is humming, the sound rises and falls: crescendo - diminuendo - crescendo, without signal from the teacher. This is a cooperative, spontaneous process. The hum of the individual joins with the group and returns to the individual. As string quartets work without a conductor, so

does the group make music.

Phrase 3 - The conductor and soloist

This involves guided listening to evoke memories of childhood songs. In this phrase the psychodynamic power of music/song is employed to establish the intrasubjective monologue: an underpinning of our psychodynamic theory. Music, which creates meanings with out signifiers can reach to the centre of our unconsicous selves. (Barthes, R. 1985, Clement, 1989).

The participants take themselves imaginatively to a place where they

feel completely comfortable, at peack and safe. The leader/conductor says: Feel yourself in that place. Smell the smells of that place, feel the texture of that place, hear the sounds of that place, see the signs of that place. Know that you are there, completely comfortable and completely at peace. You are a childin this place: contented, happy. As you rest in that place, a song comes into your mind. It is a song from somewhere in your past - a song comes into your mind. It is a song from somewhere in your past - a song that echoes in your memory. Hum the song gently to yourself. As the song echoes in your mind, allow any associations connected with the song to come into your consciousness.

It is important that the 'conductor' deliver this guided listening largo and pianissimo in order to evoke the appropriate introspection and affective recall.

Phrase four - The conductor and the ensemble

This phrase is drawn from the language teaching work of Gertrude Moskowitz (1978) The participants form small groups (5 or 6 in a group). They share their songs and associations with each other.

Phrase Five - Enactment of the Song

Each group decides on one song and depicts it in 'still picture' (Neelands, J 1990). Still pictures are presented and cued by the conductor. It is important that these be conducted legato. slow motion, so that they move in a musical arc with groups viewing other groups from their own depiction space.

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Phrase Six - The Song and the Association

Groups depict the song and then depict the asociation in still picture and fade from song to association. This is conducted legato in order to effect smooth transformation as in a cinematic fade.

Phrase Seven - Narrative and Enactment

The members of each group present their song/association pictures. The participants, whose song is being enacted narrate the song and the association. The groups thenrepeat the picture/fade/picture sequence.

Phase Eight - Debriefing and Reflection

Debriefing and reflection are essential parts of the psychodynamic approach because they allow for the articlation and affirmation of feeling aroused in the porcesses of tntrospection and enactment.

The songs of early childhood, songs my mother taught me, may or may not be exposed through this process. The song may or may not belong to a culture which is not English speaking - whatever is recalled however, will be significant to the individual. In a multi-ethnic classroom the principle of the right to chose the time of ethnic identification is thus validated. It has been our experience that such sond do, however, occur. In the workshop at the international drama conference, for example, the following was recalled:

M from England rememberd 'Speed Bonny Boat', the lines that
    stayed in her memory were 'Thunder claps rend the air' and the
visual image that the song evoked for here was:
    She associated this with love of family and her grandmother's
voice. It surprised her that the violence of the words were
outweighed, by the affective quality of the melody which   evoked security
and love.

    For L, the song remembered was 'I gave my love a cherry',   and she
wrote: "I am a giving person and feel most alive   when I am able to
give...I had a great gift of love as a child   from my family and it is
essential to my being to give back.   But when I give a joyful mystery,
or a gentle joke, with sexual overtones, that is my best gift in the world
    Maybe my most tranquil and happy memories are those as a   mother to
small children."
    For B from Holland, the song remembers was "Row row row   your
boat". She wrote, "I was astonished myself that it was   an English song
that came. Later on I realised that it wasn't   so strange. It deeply
expressed at this moment the pleasant   feeling to be with other people,
but still on an airbed gently   moving me in a tent. I did that just
before coming to this   Congress.
    Late on with writing exercises it was only the Dutch language   that
came back. I felt the same embarrassment sometimes as   people who are
in my groups - ethnically very different. Still I felt safe by the way of
working. It is important to have   such an atmosphere in the kind of
groups when people may   quickly have misconceptions not knowing each
other's   feelings. I know I felt that before, but it is reinforced
again."
    X from Germany recalled 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' which   he
first hear in English recently when in a tender moment   with his young
family. The group depiction of the song and   his association was
particularly moving. He had them translate the song into his own German.
He sang this to the   whole group while his 'still picture' group moved
from song to   association.
    Y from France recalled a song from childhood which she   narrated
in French. The group depicted this song and her   wartime association of
comfort and support from a farmer   and his wife.
We argue that these kinds of experiences engage participants in potentially
evocative and powerful reminiscences which are precursors to expressive
language. Evocative experiences and their concomitant affective responses
can stimulate expression in language which can be self-revealing, self-
affirming and self-smoothing. Hence the need for trust and effective de-
briefing in these enactments (Arnold, 1991). As the comments abouve show,
participants can experience a delight in their own expressiveness. We
argue thatt this is a primary universal human need found on affectivity
which drama and music can stimulate and language can express. With
responses from studetns which are centred on self and charged with feeling,
teachers have quality material to work with further. Psychodynamic
processes integrate selves across time and space.

In the seminars with postgraduate students at the University of Sydney, debriefing involved both discussion and reflective writing. Again students were asked to write freely about their experiences. without exception, the students wrote about their feelings as they reflected on their childhood and as they worked in their groups on their enactment. The predominate feelings expressed were joy and contentment - and what might be interpreted as a feeling or quality of integration, as memories of childhood were recalled and expressed in currently adult learning contexts. As one student wrote:

"Although these last few months seem to have been doom and gloom, today I had hope... Here comes the sun, and it has come back, my life has come back, I'm no longer an   automoted being, I'm an image of the sun, bright, always new,   fully of life and love. I have been so alone, not physically, but   psychologically, because I have lost my sun, my focus, my   reason for living. Why was I so taken up with the money   hungry world?"

Another student expressed it.

"The activity was freeing in a way. I felt good and happy with my life and peaceful within myself. The group seemed to have the same response [positive, happy feelings] and so   sharing it with the larger groups was simple to do, in fact,   gladly done."

These comments are also characterised by highly affective and self-disclosing content. This is consistent with the expectations arising from our argument about the nature of psychodynamic enactments and literacy development. In the initial stages of implementing such wrok, this kind of

fairly spontaneous reflective writing needs to be regarded as a valuable starting poiint for teachers concerned with promoting long term writing development. As has been argued elsewhere (Arnold, 1991) language teachers working in a psychodynamic model need "a comprehensive theory of writing development and sensitive, responsive monitoring of students' writing (and reading and related discourse experiences) over a long period of time (Arnold, 1991:1/2).

In due course we will elaborate further on the relationships between music, enactment, language development and learning. So far the enthusiasm with which participants at various educational levels undertake reflective writing as part of their post-enactment de-briefing suggests that affect arousing pedagogical experiences are suitable starting points for reflection, and with skilful scaffolding by teachers can lead to higher cognitive processes like speculation and theorising. We would argue from our observations of the experiences outlined in this paper and our analyses of participants' written reflections, that aimed at developing higher levels of thinking and language should be stimulated at appropriate times by experiences which are as potentially evocative as those outlined here. This does mean that teachers implementing a psychodynamic model of teaching must be confident that they can handle the feelings such a methodology might arouse in their students and in themselves. provided teachers are habitually reflective and self-attuned thes issues are manageable.

It is also important to note that the individual's song becomes the

group's song, the individual's associations become the group's embodied association. The diversity of the cultural background explored by the individual through intrasubjective monologue become through intersubjective dialogue an enactment owned by the group will illuminates, reinforces and integrates the paradox: cohesion through diversity. The chord may be complex and consist of many notes but its result is harmony.

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Songs My Mother Taught Me

This paper presents learning es andFurthermore dapproach process influencesIt is.The theory has its genesis in the work of Vygotsky (1988), Lacan (1977), Kohut (1985), and Bruner (1986) and is gien a pedagogical structure in Arnold (1991).