# The Taming of Drama Education

Drama education in elementary school English as a foreign language classroom - material package

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Draamakasvatus tarjoaa mahdollisuudet motivoivaan ja monipuoliseen oppimiseen. Sen avulla voi luoda moninaisia oppimisympäristöjä yhden luokkahuoneen sisälle. Draaman avulla oppilaiden on mahdollista päästä kokemaan toden tuntuisia vuorovaikutustilanteita ja kokemusten kautta voi syntyä pysyviä muistijälkiä. Draamakasvatuksen mahdollisuuksista huolimatta opettajat voivat kokea sen pelottavana. Tähän on usein syynä se, että opettaja eivät koe olevansa tarpeeksi kokeneita esiintymään.

Draamakasvatuksen tavoitteena ei kuitenkaan ole esiintyminen. Näyttelemisessä ei tarvitse olla hyvä, että draamakasvatus toimii. Kyse on keinosta tutkia asioita eri näkökulmista. Tässä tutkielmassa oli tarkoituksena kehittää draamakasvatusmateriaalia englannin opettajille, joilla ei ole paljoa kokemusta draamasta. Tehtävät on suunniteltu niin, että ne ovat helposti lähestyttäviä. Tehtävät auttavat ymmärtämään kuinka luontaisesti draamakasvatus sopii kielten opetukseen.

Materiaalipaketti koostuu 21 tehtävästä, joita opettaja voi yhdistellä haluamallaan tavalla. Lisäksi materiaalipaketissa on listaus yleisesti draamakasvatuksen lämmittely- ja lopetustehtävistä, joita voi hyödyntää varsinaisia draamatehtäviä ennen tai niiden jälkeen. Tehtävät on jaoteltu erilaisiin tehtävätyyppeihin, jotka kukin harjoittavat jotakin kielen oppimisen osa-aluetta. Tehtävät on suunniteltu alakoulun neljättä luokkaa ajatellen, mutta jokainen tehtävä sisältää myös ehdotuksia siitä, kuinka materiaalia voisi soveltaa nuoremmille ja vanhemmille oppilaille.

Avainsanat – Keywords

EFL, drama education, material package, foreign language learning, English language

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#### 1. Introduction

The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (Finnish National Agency for Education [EDUFI], 2016, 218) states that joy, playfulness, and creativity have a place in language teaching. Heikkinen (2005, 33) supports learning through playing by explaining that playfulness is what directs the will and energy to study things and create something new. The idea of drama education is based on this idea of playfulness. In it, the learning is mainly done through playful exercises. Working with drama in classrooms revolves around working in groups, and usually, it happens without an audience (Draaman Opettamisesta | Opetushallitus, n.d.). According to Draaman Opettamisesta | Opetushallitus (n.d.), drama education is especially part of teaching Finnish as a first language in schools. This thesis aims to offer the possibility of applying drama education methods to English as a foreign language teaching by developing a material package.

With drama, we can explore subjects that would otherwise be very hard or even impossible to talk about (Heikkinen, 2005, 35). This is based on the idea that drama mimics real-life situations, but it is still not real. The situations in dramas are often made up, or if they are based on real events, they are usually not the direct experiences of any of the participants. Some of these serious topics can include, for example, racism or love. When students make choices in the drama, the things related to the topic become more concrete (Heikkinen, 2004, 80).

Many teachers feel they need to be experts or trained actors to even try including drama education in their teaching (Royka, 2002). The teacher may be afraid of looking silly in front of the class. Water, McAvoy, and Hunt (Water et al., 2015, 3) remind us that drama is truly for everyone, as it relies on universal human skills that are used every day. Such skills include, for example, observation, empathy, communication, and improvisation. "Talent" is not necessary when participating in or creating drama. Humanity is what makes us prepared for it (Water et al., 2015, 3).

This thesis revolves around drama education in English as a foreign language teaching and creating a material package around it. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on discussing the theoretical background research of this thesis. The purpose of the

theoretical background is to show that drama is one way for a teacher to carry out playing and creativity in the classroom and to go through how English is being taught. Chapter 4 introduces the framework for the material package by discussing the target group, the types of exercises included in the material, and the ethics behind creating the material package. Chapter 5 is dedicated to reflection and discussion about the process of creating the material package and evaluation of the product.

#### 2. Drama education

This chapter discusses important concepts that should be taken into consideration when considering using drama education. In chapters 2.1. and 2.2 three terms, serious playfulness, aesthetic doubling and the aesthetic of incompleteness, are introduced. Chapter 2.3. discusses what the teacher should consider before implementing drama education into their lesson. Hannu Heikkinen has written several works about drama education in the Finnish context, and these works have included all the concepts talked about in this chapter. This is why the theory is based largely on his work. Other sources have been used to support ideas for individual concepts.

## 2.1 Serious playfulness

Drama education is, by nature, playful. It is good to note, however, that it is not playful just for the sake of being fun, but that the playfulness needs to have a reason. The term 'serious playfulness' emphasizes that playing has a purpose in drama education. Drama differs from pretend play by being structured and having a purpose (Water et al., 2015, 31). The exercises and methods can seem fun and meaningless to people looking at them from the outside, however, in reality, there is a meaning and aim that have been agreed on by the teacher and the group (Heikkinen, 2004, 74). The reasons for exercises vary, from warming up to the topic, exploring the topic, practicing working together, etc.

Serious playfulness is a chance to explore and study things, and yet it is also a chance to connect theory to practice and still unknown areas in a zone that is free from influence (Heikkinen, 2004, 74). While doing drama, an individual balances between actions that mimic real life and actions that mold real life (Heikkinen, 2004, 48). Imagination plays a big part in this balancing act, as it helps us visualize different situations. Children naturally use their imagination when they create games and play with each other. Children's games include situations that resemble real life, for example, when they play house. While playing, participants create the foundation for their whole lives (Plato, cited in Heikkinen, 2004, 49). In reality, children are not able to do the same things as adults, so they solve problems, ask questions, and have disagreements between their hopes and reality (Heikkinen,

2004, 51). When we are children, we do not automatically know how we are supposed to act in such situations. Baldwin (2008, 2) notes that children all over the world pretend and that children's brains even need to pretend. These imaginary situations have an educational side as they guide children's behavior, and the situation starts to lead them (Heikkinen, 2004, 51). This educational side of imagination is what is at the core of serious playfulness.

Playfulness is not given to every single individual. According to Huizinga (cited in Heikkinen, 2004, 65), playfulness is not necessary for survival, but it brings sensibleness to life. In other words, we can live without it, but it can make life more interesting and meaningful. Heikkinen (2004, 65) brings out an interesting example of this phenomenon in real life. He says that when we arrive at the theater, we agree to play along during the play and to believe what is happening on the stage, if we don't, the play is ruined. If the audience decides as a collective to ignore the play and focus on not believing what is happening on the stage, the play can turn out to be a rather boring and unpleasant experience. Bolton (1992, 4) supports this idea by saying that if participants do not submit themselves to the social event, it will not be believable. Drama education is similar to this. Participants are supposed to play along with the exercises so that they can obtain as much as they can from them. Playing along unlocks the possibility of experiencing and learning something new in drama education.

Heikkinen (2004, 56) divides all playing into two different types, white and black. Black games are characteristic of children's games, they are born spontaneously. White games, on the other hand, are organized games that are usually guided by adults. The difference between these two types can be seen in the result. White games lead children to work according to the rules of the world, and black games develop children's creativity (Heikkinen, 2004, 56). White games are typical in a school environment. Especially younger children are most likely familiar with different kinds of classroom games designed to help them practice vocabulary or some grammar aspects. When using methods of drama education, one needs to acknowledge both types of play (Heikkinen, 2004, 57). In drama, participants should not cling only to the rules of the exercise or group. For drama to remain a chance to change and develop and for playfulness to remain energetic, we cannot abandon the improvisation and spontaneity of the situations (Heikkinen, 2004, 71). The reactions

and actions at the moment are the factors that present us with new insights and ideas. Playing is often seen as a fun activity, however, it does provide a chance to go through even very serious issues. Heikkinen (2004, 72) mentions that playing, and thus also drama, offers a way to explore truly serious topics that can feel very hard or even impossible to talk about. This is because drama allows us to distance ourselves from the concept, thus making it less threatening (Erikkson, 2011, 65–66). Adding to this idea, Heikkinen (2004, 55) explains that feelings affect a lot of how the playing progresses. It is possible that through their emotions, participants can process something they have not been able to do before.

Heikkinen (2004, 67) argues that there might not be situations that are completely free from influence. He adds that perhaps it is more about temporarily giving the power to someone else. In the case of drama, this would mean that the group experiencing the drama has ownership of their project. The teacher guides exercises and offers methods to work on the problem, but in the end, the participants are the ones who decide where to take the thought process. The participants might end up taking the process in some other direction than the teacher originally intended, but this can convey an aspect related to the topic that the participants are curious about. Considering all of this, one should not see drama as the opposite of reality (Heikkinen, 2004, 67). Drama mirrors reality.

# 2.2 Aesthetic doubling and the aesthetic of incompleteness

As mentioned before, drama gives us a chance to distance ourselves from the topic that is being explored. This can happen, for example, through aesthetic doubling. In aesthetic doubling, while doing drama, one's self can be forgotten for a moment, but it does not fully disappear as one reacts to different things in the exercises. Aesthetic doubling is about the relationship between reality and fiction, and it is related to not only planning fiction but also working in fiction and watching it (Heikkinen, 2004, 102). Simply put, Heikkinen (2004, 103) describes it as a phenomenon when reality and fiction exist at the same time. Aesthetic doubling happens in three different ways: doubling in a role, doubling in time and doubling in the environment (Tuomola, 2016, 7). Doubling in a role is about the difference between the participant's self and the role character (Tuomola, 2016, 7). Tuomola (2016, 7)

explains that the difference can be made clear with a role name or even with some costume changes, but it is not always necessarily clear if the participants are working in a role or not. Doubling in time is the difference between the real amount of time used to explore the drama and the time in the fictional frame (Tuomola, 2016, 7). For example, the drama can be set in the past or future, and the day in the drama can be 20 minutes in real-time. Doubling in the environment means that there is a fictional setting where the drama takes place (Tuomola, 2016, 7). For example, a classroom can be a castle or a pirate ship, and tables can work as caves or animals. The person behind the character can be reacting based on their previous knowledge of how people tend to react in such situations. Taking advantage of these aesthetic doubling phenomena can help make the situation less threatening as the situation is removed in one or more ways from reality (Erikkson, 2011, 66).

Anything related to drama is incomplete, meaning that there is always a possibility to practice and polish the situation or performance more. It will never, however, be complete. The worlds we explore with drama are not closed, but rather open and available to be changed in any way desired (Ikonen, 2013, 12). This is what the aesthetic of incompleteness means. When working with drama, the teacher and the participants must accept this aspect of incompleteness (Ikonen, 2013, 12). The people participating in drama need to be able to work in situations that are uncertain and not predetermined (Heikkinen, 2005, 175). When the teacher accepts uncertainties, a lack of faith does not spread among the students (Ikonen, 2013, 12). The incompleteness also works as a possibility, as there is a chance to fill any holes noticed (Heikkinen, 2004, 122).

# 2.3 To consider when implementing drama lesson

This chapter is dedicated to concepts that teachers would benefit from considering when planning a lesson that employs drama education. Chapter 2.3.1 discusses about the drama contract that helps set rules for the drama session. Chapter 2.3.2 introduces the concept of safety in a role. Chapter 2.3.3 focuses on the different roles a teacher can have in a lesson that includes drama in it. Chapter 2.3.4 touches upon what should be taken into consideration when evaluating the student's work when it comes to drama exercises. And lastly, chapter 3.5 is dedicated to the ethical matters related to working in drama.

#### 2.3.1 Drama contract

A teacher needs to consider whether their classroom's atmosphere is safe enough for drama. If the atmosphere is not good among the students, this can completely prevent drama from happening (Välimaa, 2022, 14). In these kinds of situations, the students do not feel safe taking part because, for example, they can feel shame or fear that someone will ridicule them. It is best to start with smaller exercises to test the water in the classroom. If the class is suitable for a longer drama process, it is important to form a drama contract at the beginning of it. A drama contract is an agreement between the participants that can include general rules of how everyone should act in the group, the theme of the project, and methods that can be used (Heikkinen, 2004, 93).

The drama contract can be written down, or it can be verbal. For example, within the drama contract, the classroom can change to a different time and a completely different location (Heikkinen, 2004, 59). Especially short-term contracts for one meeting are often verbal. In this case, the purpose of the contract is to give the participants ownership of the project (Heikkinen, 2004, 92). Long-term contracts can be made for an individual course or the whole year (Heikkinen, 2004, 92). Bolton (1992, 2) explains that mutual rules give meaning to what is being done. How the drama manifests itself in the end is dependent on the rules and working methods as well as the genre and aims that have been chosen (Heikkinen, 2004, 59). The point is to make a contract with every new group and every new project. Baldwin (2008, 19) highlights that a well-managed drama session is safe for the participants. This happens when the participants are protected and supported by the group and the teacher.

# 2.3.2 Safety in a role

The concept of safety in a role is tightly connected with the aesthetic doubling that was talked about in Chapter 2.2. It is based on the idea that the participants are aware that they are not themselves in the scenes or exercises, even if they are there bodily (Heikkinen, 2004, 104). The role is supposed to create distance between the participant and the subject. This can offer some participants safety and the freedom to work. Savela (2012, 68) agrees with this by explaining that the role can take away

anxiety from the situation. This gives the student a chance to focus on the moment and the experience. This also means that participants should not blame or be mad at other participants based on what their character does. For example, if the character is the villain of the story, this does not mean that the person playing the character is evil. It is important to separate the character from the actor. Of course, every group works out their own rules with the teacher and determines what their limits are. These limits should be respected regardless of the role's safety.

Drama exercises are usually social, and they require recognition and synchronization with other people; thus, they are intrinsically ethical (Ferrari, 2011, 74). When choosing the topic for drama, the teacher should be aware of their group and what kind of topics the group is ready to deal with. The safety of the role might not be enough to distance the students from all topics. It is impossible to foretell what topics and issues the student might be going through. Arts easily offer therapeutic links, however, these should not be searched intentionally by the teachers (Baldwin, 2008, 19). If students show clear discomfort when working with a certain theme, the teacher should consider whether the process is necessary. The learning experiences are for the students, and if the lessons do not fit the group, they should be interrupted.

#### 2.3.3 Teacher's role

While planning a lesson, teachers can start to wonder what their role is in the project. The teacher's role can be guiding, participating, or both in drama. The pre-play teacher offers support, for example, by introducing the students to materials that can stimulate the play (Dunn, 2011, 31). They might want to introduce the roles and tasks that are relevant to the students (Dunn, 2011, 31). It is possible that the play can continue mainly without the teacher's involvement (Dunn, 2011, 31). In this case, the teacher needs to take care of the schedule and steer students to move forward with the tasks.

Teacher-in Role is a technique that refers to a teacher assuming a role in the class drama (Baldwin, 2019). This technique is simply based on the adult playing alongside the children in imagined worlds (Baldwin, 2019). There are several different reasons to use the teacher's role technique within a drama-based lesson.

Within the role, teachers can gain and maintain attention from students, stimulate cognitive responses, impart information, introduce problems to solve, and safely shift the common teacher-student relationship (Baldwin, 2019). The concrete role of the teacher can be, for example, someone who needs help, possesses a threat, brings information that the students need, or is facing the same problems as the students. For example, in Välimaa's study (2021), Välimaa assumed the role of a person working at Shakespeare Globe, asking the students to help the theater solve problems that are preventing them from finishing their next play. The teacher needs to remember to somehow indicate to the students that they are now assuming a role instead of unexpectedly going into one and leaving students to figure out what is happening (Baldwin, 2019).

## 2.3.4 Feedback

Angelianawati (2019, 129) brings out that giving feedback while doing drama can be challenging for language teachers, as correcting mistakes students make during drama interrupts the session. Mistakes are a very natural part of any learning process, and noticing and fixing these mistakes is also an important part of the learning process. Angelianawati (2019, 129) notes that for drama-based lessons, it would be beneficial for teachers to adopt a feedback method that does not interrupt the drama. The interruption can discourage the students and break the illusion of the play.

Teachers planning for a drama-based lesson should remember that drama contrasts with theater in the sense that the product is not the main outcome. (Water et al., 2015, 8). In theater, something is prepared to be shown to the audience. In drama, participants can share the outcome with co-participants or sometimes with an audience outside the group, but that is not necessarily the goal. The real goal of drama is to deepen one's understanding of oneself, others, or the subject of the drama (Water et al., 2015, 8). Thus the learning in drama exercises can best be seen in how the students act in the situations and how they reflect upon what happened.

#### 2.3.5 Ethics in the classroom

Besides these previously mentioned aspects, teachers should note that it is important to always take time for discussion after using drama, especially if it has been used to explore serious themes. Students should be allowed to discuss what they have experienced. This is where ethics comes into play in drama education. It is possible to make choices in the drama that we would not normally make, but afterward, the action should be reflected upon (Heikkinen, 2004, 80). The discussions give students tools to work through what they have experienced during the drama. The discussion can also help the participants unpack the feelings they might have experienced in their character and sort of shake the character off and return to real life. Drama gives the opportunity to not only observe feelings but also to study and recognize new emotions (Heikkinen, 2004, 80).

Purjo (2014, 81) highlights that to make the situations in the classroom ethical, teachers need to treat the students as equal encounter partners. This means that when students come up with statements and questions, they should be taken seriously. Taking students seriously does not mean teachers should forget the characteristics of certain age groups (Purjo, 2014, 83). Teachers need to take into consideration their students' age groups and think about how they can make the topic something the students can process

#### 3. English as a foreign language learning

This chapter discusses English as a foreign language learning (EFL) and drama education in EFL. Chapter 4.1 introduces the guidelines for teaching EFL in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (NCCBE) (EDUFI, 2016). Chapter 4.2 focuses on presenting some traditional methods for teaching a language. Chapter 4.3 discusses previous studies of drama education in EFL.

## 3.1 English in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education

This chapter focuses on contemplating what the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education says about English language learning. NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016) is what navigates how different subjects are taught in Finland. NCCBE states the objectives of the instructions, key content areas that relate to the objectives of the instructions, and assessment instructions to guide the teaching. In this thesis, the focus will be on the instructions given in NCCBE for 3-6 grades as that is the main target group of the material package (EDUFI, 2016, 369–376).

NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 371) mentions 11 objectives of instructions for teaching EFL. Four of these objectives are under the category of growing into cultural diversity and language awareness. These objectives involve guiding students to notice the linguistic and cultural richness around them, motivating them to value their linguistic background, helping them notice differences and similarities between different languages, and leading them to understand how much material in English there is available (EDUFI, 2016, 371). NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 371) also clarifies that the students should be led to see multiculturalism around the world and appreciate their own culture. Language-learning skills category introduces two objectives for instructions. These objectives focus on the students learning to take responsibility for their learning and being part of creating a good learning environment in the classroom (EDUFI, 2016, 371). The third category for the objectives of instruction is evolving language proficiency and interaction skills and it includes three objectives. These objectives center around students interacting within many types of situation themes and practicing diverse social situations, students being encouraged to continue communicating despite mistakes and guiding them to use different means to continue to communicate (EDUFI, 2016, 371). The last two objectives both have

their categories. These categories are called evolving language proficiency, text interpretation skills, and involving language proficiency, text production skills. As the categories suggest the objects in these categories revolve around students-related skills (EDUFI, 2016, 371). According to these objects of instruction, students should be guided to work with spoken and written texts with many various levels and they should be offered opportunities to produce speech and writing from a wide range of topics (EDUFI, 2016, 372).

Key content areas in NCCBE are closely related to the objectives of instruction, objectives of instruction are connected to one key content area. There are three key content areas introduced in NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 372). C1 is "Growing into cultural diversity and language awareness". This means that the students should be familiarized with linguistic and cultural diversity, they should be able to reflect on their backgrounds and receive information about the significance that language and culture have not only for individuals but also for the community (EDUFI, 2016, 372). C2 is "Language-learning skills" and it focuses on students gaining language-learning skills that they can use to improve their other language skills and find learning techniques that work for them (EDUFI, 2016, 372). C3 is "Envolving language proficiency, interaction skills, text interpretation skills, text production skills". This content area is about how students should be able to practice their different language skills with different varying topics that are somehow related to the student's lives and with many text genres.

Regarding assessment the NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 374) states that it should be encouraging and provide students with opportunities to be aware of their skills. Besides this, the assessments should be versatile for students with learning difficulties to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills (EDUFI, 2016, 374). Overall the student assessments should take into account different ways of assessment including self and peer feedback (EDUFI, 2016, 374).

In addition to the objectives of the instructions, key content areas that relate to the objectives of the instructions and assessment criteria NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016) include objectives that are related to the learning environment and working methods. According to the NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 372), learning should emphasize learning in pairs and small groups in versatile environments. Additionally, drama is mentioned

in this part of NCCB, as the teachers are encouraged to include play, songs, gamification, and drama in teaching to allow the students to experiment with their language proficiency (EDUFI, 2016, 372).

## 3.2 Traditional language teaching methods

Broughton et al. (2002, 46) claim that in the classroom teacher is only part of three processes which are presenting new material, practicing familiar material, and testing it. This can be achieved with varying methods. Traditional methodology in teaching features usually teacher-centered interaction (Boumová, 2008, 11). Järvinen (2014, 72) describes this interaction by saying that the teacher teaches and the student learns. Teacher-centered interaction is based on the idea that the teacher is the source of the knowledge who gives this knowledge to the students (Kuzu, 2008, 36). The traditional methodology lays the responsibility of the students learning mainly on the teacher and it is believed that the students learn simply by being present and listening to the teacher (Boumová, 2008, 11).

One of the often-used traditional methods of teaching English is the direct method (Oprean, 2023). The direct method is based on the idea that the teaching is done entirely in the target language (Renau, 2016, 83). New words were not translated to the student first language (Järvinen, 2014, 78) It was created to resemble the way first language acquisition (Renau, 2016, 83). The teacher had to be creative with their teaching methods as first language was not used at all. This method takes advantage of drama, pantomime, pictures, drawings and hand puppets (Järvinen, 2014, 78). Oprean (2023) clarifies that the purpose of the direct method is to improve students oral communication and it involves repetitive drilling exercises. For students, this means they have to learn mainly by memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary lists and by mimicking what the teachers do (Renau, 2016, 83). As the language was focused on oral communication it brought up colloquial language next to teaching writing skills (Järvinen, 2014, 78).

A very traditional method of teaching is the grammar-translation method (Oprean, 2023). Grammar-translation focuses only on studying grammatical rules and it was based on how classical languages such as Latin and Greek were learned (Nassaji &

Fotos, 2010, 2). Latin and Greek grammar were divided into different categories and these categories were used as base to segment the target language into different speech parts (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010, 2). When using this method the students are required to spend long periods reading texts and translating them (Oprean, 2023). Järvinen clarifies that the students were required to learn wordlists by heart besides translating grammatical rules (2014, 72). Grammar-translation method alone is a bit limited as it focuses on the language system and the portion of speaking and listening to real life situations is left little (Oprean, 2023). The reason for this is that Latin and Greek were taught as academic subjects rather than being taught for communication reasons (Renau, 2016, 83). The teaching was very teacher-orientated, students did not make initiatives and the teaching was done through the students first language (Järvinen, 2014, 72). When texts were worked on the focus was only on the grammatical form and the content of the text were not talked about (Järvinen, 2014, 72).

Last traditional teaching method to be mentioned in this thesis is the audio-lingual method. In audio-lingual method grammar was studied through parts of speech (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010, 3). Oprean (2023) notes that grammar was the most important part of the learning in audio-lingual method, as teacher would drill the grammar to the students who had to repeat the grammar patterns. The teaching was based on stimulus-reaction-chain, which was repeated and through this the students were conditioned (Järvinen, 2014, 74). The students would listen to model dialogues and repeat these dialogues (Järvinen, 2014, 74). The purpose of this practice was to acquire habits for different dialogue situations (Renau, 2016, 83). In audio-lingual method the purpose was to focus mainly on oral language skills instead of written skills (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010, 3). This means the parts of language were first learner orally and then in writing (Järvinen, 2014, 74). Even thought the focus was on oral skills there was no focus given to context or real-world usage of language (Oprean, 2023). The real goal of the language use was to have fast responses (Järvinen, 2014, 74). The audio-lingual method has been criticized for not developing the language analyzing skills, the learned usually staying on mechanical level and the learning being superficial (Järvinen, 2014, 77).

## 3.3 Concerns English language teachers have of drama education

Royka (2002) discusses different aspects of drama education that can cause stress in English teachers. These aspects include the feeling that one needs to be a professional actor to use drama and a fear of looking silly. Royka (2002) suggests that teachers should not see themselves as performing for the class but instead focus on creating the learning experience together with the students. One way to overcome the fear of looking silly is to start slowly with some warm-up games. This way the teacher can make sure the students accept the exercises and feel more comfortable in the classroom (Royka, 2002). In addition to this material package, there are drama activity books that the teacher can use to find different exercises to use. Royka (2002) reminds us that many drama activity books are user-friendly and explain the activities understandably. That is the purpose of this material package, as well as the fact that it is aimed at language teachers who do not necessarily have a lot of experience with drama education.

In addition to concerns language teachers can have regarding their skills in drama and how they present themselves in the classroom there are also practical reasons they might not enjoy using drama education. Duong (2014) conducted a survey for English teachers considering using drama education and especially role-play in the classroom and asked them to explain as well why they dislike using role-play as a teaching method. The most common reason among the English teachers taking part in this study to not use role-play in their classroom was noise (Duong, 2014, 86). A lot of different types of activities that are action-based can cause noise as students get excited. In addition, situations where we use language are not typically completely silent. Another con the English teachers saw with roleplay was that it is time-consuming (Duong, 2014, 86). It could be argued that using the lesson time for activities that are done in groups is a good way to spend the lesson time. Students do not necessarily have someone at home that they can practice the language with. Thus, it would be important to offer students as many opportunities as possible to practice using the language with other people in class. Half of the participants felt like they had difficulty making the role-play exercises interesting because textbooks did not include ready-made material for role-play purposes (2014, 86). As creating material was mentioned as being very time-consuming for teachers, this study is intended to offer some help for teachers in a similar situation by providing some ready-made material.

#### 3.4 Drama education in EFL

Duong (2014, 86) brings out in her study that the language teachers who took part in the study identified shyness and anxiety as one of the things that affected students' capability to speak English. Anxiety has a huge effect on language learning (Duong, 2014, 84). Duong (2014, 84) divides language learning anxiety into two types: the helpful type and the harmful type. Too much of this harmful type of anxiety can hinder the learning process. Jarmo Savela (2012, 68) believes that drama provides students with a safe environment to practice using a language. When a student is in a role, they do not need to be anxious about how they are presenting themselves; rather, they can focus on the language (Savela, 2012, 68). Duong's (2014, 87) study supports the idea of students being able to focus on using the language better during role-play. Almost all the participating students felt like their speaking skills improved thanks to the role-play aspect. In addition to the safety of the role, students can also benefit from the safety of the situation. Students can explore themselves in real-life situations in drama (Savela, 2012, 27). Thus, students can practice the ways they interact in different situations through drama. Savela (2012, 25) explains that what people experience in real life follows them to the drama. This idea is tightly connected to the serious playfulness that was discussed earlier in Chapter 2. The dramatic situations are not disconnected from reality; rather, they mirror reality. This offers teachers a great chance to create near-authentic situations for students to practice in.

Karhunen (2020, 55–56) highlights the importance of multicultural competence in learning a language, and she thinks that one way to teach multicultural competence is drama. One of the drama's benefits is that it is student-led (Karhunen, 2020, 57). Students have the chance to affect what is learned and how. There is a possibility that this can make the learning more motivating and meaningful for the students. Karhunen (2020, 57) states that using drama in language teaching can make students more familiar with different complex situations in a multicultural and multilingual world. Arguably, practicing these skills is beneficial for the students, as how could

they know how to act without discussing and practicing the situations? Duong (2014, 87) found out in her study that the participating students were able to, in addition to using the English language, also practice non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication adds a lot to the communication situations. In cases where someone says something that is not understood, body language, eye contact, and gestures can help to understand what the utterance means (Duong, 2014, 87).

Ryynänen (2013, 24) argues that using drama in English foreign language teaching can give context to the language. This could help the students understand the meaning of language use better. According to Duong's (2014, 87) study, most of the student participants agreed that role-play provided them with realistic real-life situations. Several participants in the study also mentioned that role-playing helped them use English more naturally. Ryynänen (2013, 24) says that drama as a teaching method fits many different types of learners. With this, she refers to the idea that with drama, one can utilize all senses and thus offer a way for all kinds of learners to get familiar with the topic. The field of drama is in constant change, and because of this, it is open for experimentation (Ryynänen, 2013, 44). This means teachers can mold the drama practices to fit their personalities and teaching styles. Ryynänen (2013, 45) brings out an interesting point about how drama as a learning medium evokes emotional responses. Exploring emotions and how to act within those emotions is an important part of life. Through drama, students can do this in a safe environment.

Drama offers teachers a way to implement communicative language learning in the classroom (Ropponen, 2006, 31). The students interact with each other during the drama; thus, they practice working and communicating together. Ropponen (2006, 65–66) explains that in his study of language use situations, he focused on pre-designed strategies. With these strategies, students were able to solve problems while using English as their communication language. Ropponen, however, criticizes the usage of drama in teaching grammar by saying that its effect is questionable. Ropponen (2006, 81) describes that the exercise did not focus only on grammar, he tried to connect it with other communicative competencies. In the exercises, the students were introduced to new vocabulary and needed to use it in sentences, thus also practicing grammar with sentence structures. The students enjoyed the grammar exercises. Ropponen and the class teacher, however, were not completely

sure if there were any language-learning benefits to these exercises (2008, 86). For example, one of the teachers was unsure about the usage of time in the classroom, as teaching the words and structures takes time. Ropponen (2008, 83) explained that the gifted learners benefited from the grammar drama exercises, but he felt like the gifted students' activation happened at the other student's expense. Ropponen (2008, 86) does admit that there is a chance that the students were able to improve their grammar skills without noticing it.

Ntelioglou (2011, 185–186) experimented with including drama in the writing process in a language learning course. Before writing, the participants worked in groups in roles, learning about different rights and presenting as experts to the other students. After this, the students wrote a letter, in the role, to be submitted to a hypothetical government committee (Ntelioglou, 2011, 185). Another writing task is included in this writing-in-role journal entry. Students reported that they felt their learning through drama exercises was deeper as they were able to communicate with each other about the vocabulary and their ideas (Ntelioglou, 2011, 185). One of the students in Ntelioglou's study (2011, 185) explained they feared writing beforehand, but they had enjoyed the individual and group writing assignments that included drama. In the course where the study was implemented, the instructor stated that they felt like writing in the role was more motivating to the students than the regular writing tasks (Nteliglou, 2011, 185). Even though the tasks resembled many of the regular writing tasks included in the course, the addition of the role made the writing process easier for the students.

Age does not limit the use of drama education in English language learning. In preschool, the meaning of playing is highlighted (Välimaa, 2022, 19). Young children take part in playing naturally and can learn simultaneously. This is highlighted in the Finnish NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016) by encouraging teachers to use different games and songs in their teaching. In upper secondary school, drama offers a nice variation to the classroom and allows the students to use English in varying ways (Välimaa, 2022, 16). This variation can, for example, help them focus better. As mentioned already in this chapter, this variation can come as a method of learning, different learning environments, or even different roles the students can take in the classroom. Besides children, adults can also benefit a lot from drama education (Välimaa, 2022, 20). It can offer something fun for the lessons that are otherwise focused on more

traditional teaching methods (Välimaa, 2022, 21). Lähdesmäki (2016) agrees with this by explaining that drama education can broaden the adult students self-understanding. In Välimaa's study, some of the adult students found drama a relaxing aspect, going so far as to mention that they were less afraid to use English. In Lähdesmäki's (2016) study the students also mentioned that with the grouping process, they gained the comfortability to throw themselves into the drama. The students were able to experience communication on multiple levels, they were not afraid to be themselves and were able to work in roles without feeling embarrassed (Lähdesmäki, 2016).

Lastly, some benefits apply to EFL, but also to other subjects and are worth mentioning. Some students might not be served by traditional ways of teaching and learning. In some of these cases, drama can be a method to reach these students (Water et al., 2015, 8). Drama is a social event. Because of this, it can connect participants to work with each other, but it can also connect participants to themselves (Water et al., 2015, 8). Learning environments should be as varied as the methods themselves. Drama can transform the learning environment with the help of collaboration and exploration (Water et al., 2015, 8). This is especially important in schools where there might not be many different environments available besides the regular classroom. Creativity and critical inquiry are things that should be included in the teaching to make sure the students can apply what they learn to their lives. Drama creates new modes to practice this creativity and critical thinking very naturally (Water et al., 2015, 8). Anttila (2017, chapter 8.3) for example, says that with the help of art education, we can shake the modern ways of thinking, values and structures that are somehow creating damaging social and economic issues. There might be ideas an individual does not even think to question before they get to experience them themselves. With drama, teachers have a chance to introduce those situations to students safely.

#### 4. Framework of the material package

This chapter is dedicated to introducing the framework of the material package. Chapter 5.1 is about where the material package started, chapter 5.2 clarifies who it is aimed at, and 5.3 explains the different task types included in the package.

## 4.1 Starting points of the material package

As NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 372) expresses, through playing, singing, different games, and drama, the students can experiment with their language knowledge and learn about different attitudes towards different themes. NCCBE offers guidelines, which, for example, aim to be followed but leave room for teachers to interpret them. Even if NCCBE encourages teachers to use different and varying methods to teach, it does not include guides or directions on how to do it. In conversations with my fellow student teachers, I have found out that many teachers and teacher trainees who do not have experience with drama find it complicated and frightening to implement it. Drama education easily brings to mind theater and, thus, performing, which can be scary for someone who has no experience with it.

As with any technique, teachers have the opportunity to improve and redo lessons (Gallagher, 2000, 116). Teachers allow students to rehearse, change their minds, etc., and teachers should be as flexible with themselves. This is a way for the teacher to show that they are not perfect and do not always make the best choices the first time (Gallagher, 2000, 116). Even though everyone has what they need to take part in drama, not everyone enjoys doing it. This is an important point to consider, and Water et al. (2015, 3) bring it out as well. This applies to teachers as well as students.

# 4.2 The goals and the target group of the material package

Angelianawati (2019, 127) explains that with drama the students are actively learning, as they take part in conversations and exercises that require them to use their imagination. Instead of listening and repeating the students have a chance to learn by experiencing (Angelianawati, 2019, 127). Drama education promotes student-centered learning and offers variation to more traditional teaching methods (Angelianawati, 2019, 132). The goal of this material is to offer language teachers,

who wish to add active participation to their lessons, a chance to dip their toes in the water of drama education. The material is supposed to show English teachers how they can include drama in their teaching in a simple way and thus make their lessons more varied. If this material happens to pique anyone's further interest in drama education, they are encouraged to read more about the topic. As explained earlier in this text (chapter 3.4), drama education has several different positive effects on language learning. This material package aims to improve student participation in the learning process. The exercises are planned to include different areas of language and to build the student's confidence in using English. The learning process with this material happens through different drama exercises and games, whose purpose is to improve students' reaction process. The exercises offer safety from worrying too much about using the language and give the students a chance to react instinctively.

The target group of this material package is English teachers who want to try including drama education in their EFL teaching. The material package is built with teachers in mind, especially 4th grade teachers. This is because the exercises have been designed based on the objectives of the instructions, key content areas that relate to the objectives of the instructions, and assessment instructions to guide the teaching that are included in the NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016) for 3-6 grades. 4th-grade students have already some experience in learning the language and have some basic knowledge of English. This offers a good base to design exercises that include practicing more specific language skills rather than just focusing on basic vocabulary. The materials do, however, have some ideas for how the exercises could be altered for different age groups and/or made easier or more challenging. The idea is to introduce exercise types that can be easily varied with, for example, different vocabulary or themes in mind.

Mandarini and Munir (2021, 2) point out that English language has worked as means of intercultural communication because of its status as lingua franca. English is used to share different ideas and different experience and in this way share cultural phenomena (Madarini & Munir, 2021, 2). The Finnish NCCBE (EDUFI, 2016, 371) highlights, as previously mentioned (chapter 3.2), the importance for the students to be made aware of different cultures and to appreciate their own cultures as well. Part of this is to be able to see your culture represented. The material used in the

classroom should represent the different cultures that are present in the classroom through the students (Mandarini & Munir 2021: 2). Because of this the secondary goal I had for this material was to include people from different cultural backgrounds in the illustrations. It is mostly part of the visual representation in the material package, as this thesis does not focus on this theme. I still wanted to mention this aspect shortly to explain that the representation was done very purposefully and thought carefully trough when creating the material.

## 4.3 Exercises types

The exercises do not require great knowledge about drama education or a lot of experience in acting from the teacher or the students. The instructions included in the material package are designed to work without prior knowledge about drama education. The exercises in the material package are divided into four main types. These four types are: Warm up, Discuss, Play a game, and Express. Some of the exercises fit more than one type. Warm-up exercises are simple tasks that teachers can use to help the students warm up for other drama activities. Besides the warm-up exercises that are introduced as their exercises, there are some warm-up and end-discussion activities introduced in the "Glossary of Basic Drama Tasks.". Discuss exercises focus on interaction and are especially good for practicing spoken language. The exercises vary from simpler association tasks to having conversations with other students. What makes these discussion exercises part of drama education is that they usually involve students taking some sort of role. Play game exercises include different games that are often used in drama education. In this material package, they are, however, adjusted to include language learning in them in one way or another. This can mean practicing vocabulary, listening, reacting, and even thinking about how questions are formed. Express exercises include expressing oneself via some means. This can mean acting through their body language but also by, for example, writing.

When using the material, the teacher can decide to use individual exercises on their own or to connect a couple of exercises with a small task from the "Glossary of Basic Drama Tasks" to create a lesson of their liking. All the activities are adjustable for the different topics and themes that are being worked on in the class currently. If you

feel stuck on how to adjust the exercises for their lesson, the material includes suggestions on how the exercises can be adapted.

## 4.4 Ethics of the material package

Regarding the ethics of this material package, it is important to mention a few things. First, the exercises included in the material package were not invented by me. Viola Spolin is considered by many to be the one who innovated American improvisational theater by teaching young actors improvisational techniques (Chamberlain, 2021, 6). Spolin has written "Theater Games for The Classroom ", a book that adapts her exercises and games to the educational setting as she realized her techniques could work for all kinds of students (Chamberlain, 2021, 7). The different drama exercises have been modified and developed based on what Spolin and other people like her in theater have created. Many drama exercises started as exercises meant for the actors. For this material package, the writer adjusted the exercises to fit language learning. The exercises were chosen while keeping in mind that they needed to help practice some aspect of language learning. The purpose of each task has been carefully considered, and the purposes have been included in the material package to give a clearer picture of the exercises.

Secondly, it is worthwhile to note that the material package was planned with multiculturalism in mind. The writer has done "Teacher Education for Language Awareness and Multilingualism Studies" as part of her degree. It felt significant to include that in the planning of the material. Schools have students from several different cultural backgrounds, and the students must be represented in the material used. This is why a lot of focus is put into including different-looking characters and making sure that, for example, certain genders do not appear only in certain stereotypical situations.

The third thing that is important to mention regarding ethics is that every teacher knows their class. One should not grab the most challenging exercise from this material package and use it with a group that is not used to drama education. Some of the exercises include ideas of how one can adjust the exercises so they require less being in front of the rest of the class, thus making the exercise feel safer for students

who do not feel comfortable being in front of the class. The exercises are not about performing or putting on a show. This is also why the material package does not talk about performing but rather about games and exercises.

Lastly, the material package has been created in a program called Canva. Canva allows its users to edit and adjust the icons and pictures, and they have been edited, for example, regarding the color theme. The material package includes a references part where the source of every icon and picture in the material package is included.

#### 5. Discussion and reflection

This thesis aimed to develop drama education material that fits language learning and is easy enough for drama beginners to use. This section is a reflection on the process of making the material package. In chapter 6.1 the overall process of creating the material will be discussed. In chapter 6.2 there will be a reflection on the difficulties and the successes of the process. Chapter 6.3 is the conclusion of this thesis.

## 5.1 The process of planning and designing material

It was very clear from the start, that I wanted to create a material package. I wanted to create something that connected the different studies I had been learning in university. These studies are English subject teacher studies, class teacher studies, and drama education. Drama education was something that had greatly affected my teaching philosophy so it was important to include it in the thesis. In my drama education studies, I completed a study on how process drama worked in an English classroom. As this was a more exploratory study, in my thesis I wanted to take the chance to create something. The worries my student colleagues had about using drama education in the classroom further fueled my inspiration to create this material. I enjoyed drama education myself so much, that I wanted to give my colleagues a chance to try it and make it as comfortable for them as possible.

My process started with exploring the drama education framework. For clarity, I found it important to only introduce the aspects that were truly necessary for understanding and using the material created. I used the first half of my process solely on working the theory background before diving into the material creation process. A lot of the theory was something we had discussed during the drama lectures. During this process, I needed to find sources that supported the ideas and theories I had learned earlier in use. I had ideas and theories in my head that I knew were related to drama education, but it was important to support them with sources well. I managed to do this and while writing about the theories they became even more clear for me as well. The feedback I received during the process of writing this

thesis helped me notice which theory parts required more explaining so that anyone could understand them. I feel like the theory background helped me feel more confident of the importance of the material I was going to create.

When I started working on the material, I had somewhat clear ideas of the first exercises I wanted to include. The exercise variations were something I had been considering during my drama education studies. After being able to get those ideas down, I needed to start considering what different types of material I wanted to include. The main goal was that the exercises would practice some language aspects but also be interesting and motivating enough to offer some variation to the lessons. In the end, I decided to go with an approach of individual exercises, so teachers could combine their combinations of them. Rather than creating whole lessons, I wanted to give the teachers the freedom to start with smaller portions. I think this is an advantage of this material package. It is easy to choose and pick different exercises without the need to worry if they will work on their own.

## 5.2 Challenges and successes in designing material

One of the main challenges of creating material for this thesis was evaluating the usability of the exercises. Many interesting and fun drama exercises would have been nice to include in the material. It was, however, important for this specific thesis to leave out exercises that did not offer functions for language learning. Drama education can be exciting and fun, but the teacher needs to carefully consider what function the exercises have. To make the process of using the exercises as easy as possible, the language aspects needed to be considered carefully while creating the material. Sometimes whole exercises were planned before realizing they did not serve the function set out for this material. This happened because often the starting point of planning the exercises was to think what drama exercises there were and then modify those for language learning. It would be interesting to try the opposite approach in the future and start with a language aspect and design a drama exercise around it. Even if it was challenging to consider which language aspect could be practiced with each exercise I am happy with the result. In the end, I feel the language aspects practiced with each exercise fit well into it. I was able to create

exercises for many different purposes and this gives a good idea of how drama can be implemented into use in multiple purposes.

Another challenge was to make the exercises clear enough. Drama exercises are easiest to learn when one can try them themselves. In some cases, directions for drama exercises can be a bit abstract or hard to understand without physically trying them. With experience in drama education, the instructions might become easier to understand. Here, the instructions needed to be understandable for other people besides the writer. I asked for feedback from my student colleagues, both ones who had experience with drama education and ones who did not if they found the instructions in the material package understandable. One thing that seemed to help the understandability of the instructions was creating specific demonstrations with text and pictures.

One of the important goals of this material package was to create material for English teachers who do not have experience with drama education. This is why it was important to create and modify material that was approachable and did not require too much prior drama knowledge. I think I was able to achieve this goal. The English teachers who decide to read and use this material are not required to have prior experience in theater or acting. The material includes a lot of modifying ideas and suggestions to make the material easy to adjust for different lessons and student groups. I received positive feedback from my student colleagues from the presentation and the variety of the exercises. I hope that in the future they will feel less intimidated by drama education and give it a try to see if it would work for them.

I am very satisfied with the appearance of the material package. I wanted to make it approachable and fun-looking. The material looks like something I would want to and like to read. In addition, creating the material with multiculturalism in mind was very important to me and I mentioned this as a secondary goal I had in mind for the material. I wanted to showcase different-looking people in the illustrations. I considered it carefully to make sure to avoid stereotypical situations, for example, for specific genders. In case the teacher shows the instructions of the exercise to the

students, I wanted to make sure more students could feel themselves as seen than only one specific type of student. I regret that I had limitations in showcasing people with different disabilities. This was partly due to the illustrations I was using in Canva as I wanted to keep the illustrations coherent. In the future, when creating material, I would like to take into account disabilities as well.

#### 5.3 Conclusion

This thesis aims to provide English language teachers with a resource to try drama education in their teaching. Drama education creates new learning opportunities and environments with its playful nature. Playing is very natural for children, and they explore the world with it already on their own. Applying this to the classroom creates an opportunity to let the students experience different language usage situations. Drama education might not be specifically included in the NCCBE, but learning through games and playing is. Drama education answers this need for play in learning. It creates these situations that students do not necessarily recognize as learning at first. The teacher must introduce the goals of the exercise to make sure they are not only games for the sake of games. The material was created to be approachable so that teachers could easily see if it fit their lessons. Longer and more complicated drama lessons ask for deeper understanding and more experience in drama education, but this material should be a good base for teachers to dip their toes in the water of drama education. As this material was planned as a help for teachers who see drama education as a bit ominous, I hope this material will help someone in the future. It was planned with practical function in mind.

In the future, it would be interesting to explore and study how drama education affects learning, especially in the English classroom. For example, reusing these materials and then collecting feedback from students and teachers to see how they found the exercises. It would also be interesting to focus on creating several exercises for some specific language aspect rather than tackling multiple aspects. Especially, creating drama exercises to help practice grammar aspects would be very intriguing. Social and discussion language aspects are easier to tackle with drama education, so exploring the possibilities and limitations would be interesting.

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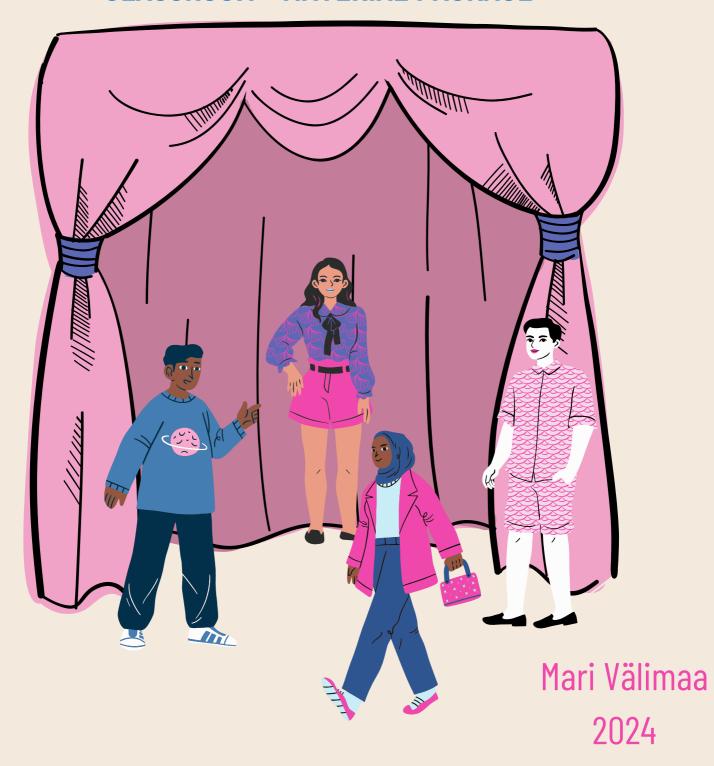
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### APPENDIX 1

# THE TAMING OF DRAMA EDUCATION

DRAMA EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
CLASSROOM - MATERIAL PACKAGE



# Dear reader,

Welcome to a material package on drama education in English teaching.

This material package, Taming Drama Education, is intended for teachers who want to try drama education in their classroom but do not know where to start. The material has been planned to be easily approachable, and time has been devoted to making the exercises understandable to people who do not have prior experience in drama education or theater.

Before you read forward, I wanted to say that you are capable of doing drama. Drama education does not require performance or acting skills. It is a method that can bring variability into your classroom. Playing is very natural for children and language classrooms. For example, role-playing is counted as drama education, and that is often used in language learning.

With drama education, students have a chance to subconsciously process the world around them. It is also a good way to develop students' social and emotional skills while also boosting their creativity. This material package focuses on using drama education exercises as a method to practice language skills. The purposes of each task range from focusing to practicing story structure.

The exercises do not form a single lesson; rather, they are separate exercises that you can combine however you want to. The exercises are organized so that the first exercises are easiest to take part in and the last exercises are more challenging. If you are looking for a specific type of exercise, please take advantage of the themed table of contents.

Each exercise includes the estimated time it takes, the materials you will need, the purpose of the exercise, and some suggestions on how you can make the exercise easier or harder. The illustrations in the material package were chosen to represent all kinds of different students. The sources of each image are included in the sources of this material package.

I hope you will find this material package helpful and meaningful! Sincerely,

Mari Välimaa



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Dear reader ... 0

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# Symbols and exercise types used in this material package

The following symbols are used to describe the content of the exercises.



### Take a seat

These activities can be done sitting at the desk or on the floor. These tasks don't necessarily demand a lot of empty space.



### Stand up

These exercises need a bit more space in the classroom to move around.



### Independent work

Exercise is meant to be done alone.



**Pair work** 

**Exercise** is

meant to be

done in pairs.

### **Group work**

Exercise is meant to be done in groups. Recommended group sizes are included in the instructions.



### Warm-up

Warm-up exercises include simple tasks to help warm-up the students for drama activities.



### **Discuss**

Discuss exercises focus on discussion.
They are used to planning characters or scenes and taking part via spoken language.



### Play a game

Play game exercises are different games usually used in drama.



### **Express**

Express exercises are about expressing with the body and by acting, but also, for example, by writing.



### **Time**

All the exercises include an estimate of the time it will take to do them.



### **Materials**

This symbol indicates a list of materials that are needed for the exercise.



### **Adapting**

This symbol can be found at the bottom of the page. Next to it are suggestions on how to adapt the exercise for different topics or for different age groups and experience levels.







# One, Two, and Three



### 5-10 min



- 1. Divide the students into pairs.
- 2. Students stand in pairs, facing each other. Each pair engages in eye contact.
- 3. Students start to count one, two, and three in pairs. They take turns saying the numbers, and when they get to three, they start from one again.
- 4. After doing this for a moment, one of the numbers is replaced by a clap.
  - a.One
  - b.\*clap\*
  - a. Three
  - b. One
- 5. When the students can keep up with this, the teacher can make variations of the "counting".

### For example:

- a. \*jumps\*
- b. Two
- a. \*stomp\*





- For variation in One, Two, and Three, use three words that have something to do with each other, for example, fork, spoon, and knife.
- The purpose of this task is to get the students to focus. It is, however, also about accepting
  mistakes. Mistakes are part of learning, and it is important that the students learn to accept
  mistakes as part of the process.







### **Word association**





- 1. Divide students into groups of 4 or 5.
- 2. The teacher can say the first word for the whole class.
- 3. The next student in each group has to say the word that comes to mind.
- 4. The second student in the group will think of a word based on what the first student said, and so on.
- 5. Let the students go through several rounds in their groups.
- 6. You can ask each group what word they ended up with.

Teacher: Flower Student 1: Bee Student 2: Sting Student 3: Needle Student 4: Sewing Student 1: Clothes

And so on.





The purpose of this exercise is to allow students to practice their word association. It is
important that the students say the first thing that comes to their mind instead of taking time to
think what they should say.







# What are you doing?





- 1. Form a circle (or two smaller circles) with the students.
- 2. One person goes to the middle of the circle. They mimic an action.
- 3. One person from the circle asks "What are you doing?"
- 4. The person in the middle answers with a completely unrelated action. For example "I am driving a car".
- 5. The person who asked goes to the middle and now mimes driving a car.
- 6. Repeat until everyone has had a chance to mime and ask.



- For groups where the students get nervous when being alone in the middle, instead of forming a
  circle, the students can form two queues. One mimes, one asks, gets the answer and then mimes
  that answer. The one who mimed first goes to the end of their queue.
- The purpose of this task is to get students to use the present tense and progressive aspect.





# One word at a time story





Paper, pens

Warm-up suggestion: "Yes and" Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"

- 1. Divide the students into small groups or pairs.
- 2. Participants take turns saying one word.
- 3. Ideally, the word is something that is somehow based on what has been said previously. It is important to listen during this exercise.
- 4. Example
  - a. Once
- e. Was
- i. Music

- b. Upon
- f. A cat
- j. etc...

- c. A time
- g. The cat
- d. There
- h. Liked







- 1. Divide students into small groups or pairs.
- 2. Each participant adds one sentence to the story on their turn. Ask the students to write the story down.
- 3. The story is built by template, meaning each sentence has a start that the participants need to use.
  - Once upon a time...
  - Everyday...
  - Until one day...
  - Because of this...
  - o At last...
  - After that day...
- 4. The purpose is to practice how stories are structured.
- Once upon a time there was a small bunny.





- Include articles in the one-word limit, so everyone takes part in making decisions for the story.
- To make it easier, ask the students to form sentences like a puzzle out of words on pieces of paper.
- To focus on speaking, leave out the story-writing part.
- To make it more challenging, ask the students to mainly use words that are included in the word list of the book chapter you are currently working on.
- The purpose of this task is to get students to practice the structure of a story in text form.







### Tale from a word

Warm-up suggestion:
"Walk around the room"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks".





Word list, different items that related to the theme/ chapter

- 1. Divide students into pairs.
- 2. One student says a word from the word list that is related to the theme and/or the chapter you are working on.
- 3. The other student tells a story that is 3 to 5 sentences long about their own life or anything that comes to mind from that word in English.
- 4. The students take turns. Each student should tell at least 3 stories.

# Shared feature

- 1. Students start this exercise alone. Students take a moment to walk around and observe what they see in the classroom.
- 2. They choose 3 different objects from the room and connect one word from the list to each object. Each student should think of a reason why they chose that word. For example, pencil can remind someone of the word list's word "drawing".
- 3. Students return to their pairs from the previous exercise. They take turns showing the selected objects to each other and explaining what word they chose and why they chose it for those objects.





- You can combine pairs into groups and ask them to create statues of the start, middle and end parts of their stories.
- The purpose of this task is to get students to talk and to add new words to their vocabulary.









# **Elephant - Gorilla - Palm tree**





Warm-up suggestion:
"Gaze moves" & "Stop, go,
jump, clap!"
Check page 18 "Glossary of
basic drama tasks"

- 1. Students stand in a circle, and one of them is in the middle of the circle.
- 2. The person in the middle points to someone on the circle and says either elephant, gorilla or palm tree.
- 3. Elephant: The person who is pointed forms a trunk with their hand, the person on the left and the person on the right side of that person form the ears of the elephant.
- 4. Gorilla: The person who is pointed bangs their chest like a gorilla. The person on the left and the person on the right side of that person pretend to look for fleas on the gorilla.
- 5. Palm tree: The person pointed lifts their arms up. The person on the left and the person on the right side of that person lift their arms half up as leafs of the palm tree.
- 6. The person who hesitates or makes a mistake goes to the middle next.

# Line-up





- 1. Divide the students into teams of 5 to 7.
- 2. Come up with a list of ways students need to arrange themselves in lines. Some good ones are, for example, birthday months, height, shoe size, who lives closest to school, etc.
- 3. The students now have to line up in the correct order without talking.
- 4. When the students think their line is ready, they need to raise their hands and yell ready.
- 5. Check that they are lined up correctly by asking each student in the line, for example, "How tall are you?".
  - In Elephant gorilla palm tree the words can be any words. The teacher can choose words
    related to the topic the class is going through. The only requirement is that the word needs to be
    able to be formed physically with three people.
  - In Line-up instead of making the game silent, the teacher can also allow the students to speak only in English.
  - To make Line-up easier, instead of only using English when giving directions, the teacher can give certain words to the students in their first language.
  - The purpose of this task is to get students to pay attention to non-verbal communication and to work as a team.











### **Match the emotion**





**Emotion cards** 

- 1. Divide the students into pairs.
- 2. Give each pair a set of emotion cards. Ask the students to spread the cards on their desks so they can see all of them.
- 3. The students will take turns in pairs mimicking an emotion on one of the cards, and their pair will try to guess what emotion they are mimicking.

# Reading with emotion





Emotion cards, text to read

- 1. Divide the students into small groups or pairs.
- 2. Give each student three emotion cards. They should keep their emotion cards a secret from the other students.
- 3. In their groups or pairs, the students will take turns reading. The task is to read out loud with the emotion from one of their emotion cards, and the pair or other students in the group try to guess the emotion they are portraying.
- 4. After every group is done reading out loud, the teacher can ask them if the emotions somehow affected what they heard and understood.











End discussion suggestion:
"I remember"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"



- A set of emotion cards can be found in the attachments (Appendix 4).
- The teacher should go through the emotion cards with their class and make sure the students understand what the emotion words mean.
- The teacher can use any text they want as the text the students are reading, for example, a text from the textbook.
- The purpose of these tasks is to think about how emotions can affect the message that is being communicated. Does it change the meaning of the words or how the student interprets them?







## **Bun person into a character**

Warm-up suggestion:
"I am tree"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"





Bun person print outs, pens

- 1. Give every student a printed copy of the bun person.
- 2. Ask the students to turn the pun person into a character by
  - a. Writing down information about the character around the bun person.
  - b. Drawing features for the bun person.
- 3. Tell the students to give the character a name, interests, dislikes, likes, etc.





5 min



- 1. Divide students into groups of 4.
- 2. Each of the students introduces their character to their group.
- 3. Students need to now come up how their characters know each other. Are they friends, relatives, coworkers, etc.?

End discussion suggestion:
"I remember"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"



- Bun person model can be found in the attachments (Appendix 2)
- The purpose of Bun person into a character is to make students think about adjectives and describing a person.
- To make it more challenging, continue by asking each group of four to write a short script. They should use the characters they have created. Each member of the group can be in charge of writing a different scene in the play. The students should first agree on a plot and agree on what should happen in each scene. This way, students get to experience writing a play.







# Six hot potatoes





Warm-up suggestion:
"Stop, go, jump, clap!"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"

- 1. Form a circle with the students. One person stands in the middle of the circle.
- 2. The person in the middle closes their eyes. They will slowly turn around and count to ten. The students in the circle need to pass the small ball around fast, as if it were a hot potato.
- 3. Once the person has counted to ten, they will point to the person with the small ball in their hands. The person in the middle will also give a category to the student on the ring. The category can be anything, for example, "Name six jobs" or "Say six adjectives".
- 4. The person will try to name six things in the category given before the "hot potato" is passed in the circle from that person back to them.
- 5. If they fail, they will go to the middle. If they succeed, the person in the middle will continue to be there.

### **Bananas**



10 min



- 1. One student sits in front of the class.
- 2. Everyone decides together on a funny word for the person in front of the class, for example, bananas.
- 3. The other students ask questions in English to the person in front of the class, and that person can only answer with the one word they were given.
- 4. The goal is to make the person sitting in front of you laugh. The student who makes the person sitting in front laugh with their question is the next one in front.

End discussion suggestion:
"I remember"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"



- In Six Hot Potatoes, the teacher can also decide the overall category for the game to get the students to practice a specific topic.
- The purpose of this task is to get students to listen and react.
- In Bananas, the teacher can divide the students into groups. This will make the task faster and make sure everyone has a chance to be the one who answers with a silly word.
- The purpose of this task is to practice asking questions and thinking about how questions are formed.







## **Captions and comments**

Warm-up suggestion:
"Postcards"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"

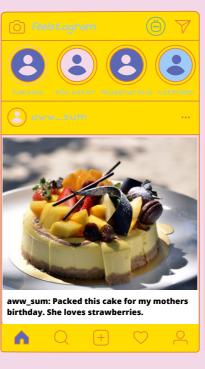




Pictures related to the current theme/chapter, paper, pens and post-it notes

- 1. Divide students into groups of 3 and give each group a different picture.
- 2. Each group looks carefully at their picture and creates a character who has posted the image to social media. The group should at least come up with a name for their character and think why the character took the picture. After this, each group writes a 2 to 4-sentence-long caption in English for their photo.
- 3. The photos are put up on the wall with their captions. The groups take on the role of the character they came up with. Then they walk and take a look at the other group's pictures and leave comments in English on post-it notes next to the pictures.
- 4. Go through with the groups what has been written under every photo.











CLASSMATE: How do you READ SO FAST!? Friend: Were the books good?



- To include students in taking the pictures, ask them to take pictures as homework before the lesson and print them out. Add relationships to the roles to see if it affects the comments. For example, groups' one and two characters are siblings, and groups' three and four characters are school friends.
- The purpose of this task is to practice the students' skills in multiliteracy.









# **That's right Bob!**

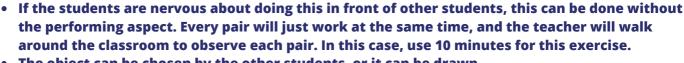




Warm-up suggestion:
"Yes and"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"

- 1. Divide the students into pairs.
- 2. Students come front of the classroom one pair at a time. The pair is TV shopping sellers, and both of their names are Bob.
- 3. The teacher gives an object to sell to the pair. This object/word can be from the word list of the chapter the class is working on currently.
- **4.** The student's task is to introduce the object and come up with crazier and crazier qualities the object has.
- 5. After the first sentence, each reply will start with "That's right, Bob!
- 6. The scene can, for example, go as follows:
  - **Bob 1: This is the new, amazing bicycle.**
  - Bob 2: That is right, Bob! It is amazing because it is faster than any other bike.
  - Bob 1: That is right, Bob! It also has cool lighting details.
  - Bob 2: That is right, Bob! The bike is tougher than any on the market.
  - Bob 1: That is right, Bob! You can throw it down a cliff, and it will still be okay.
- 6. The teacher can end the scene after each student has said a couple of sentences or when it feels like the students cannot come up with anything more to add.





- The object can be chosen by the other students, or it can be drawn.
- To make it easier, ask students to focus on adjectives instead of attachments to the object.
- To make it more challenging, ask the students to explain why the feature is great. For example, "It includes fog lights, so you can go cycling as much as you want in Ireland.
- The purpose of this task is to get the students to describe the qualities of objects and talk in detail about them.









# **Diary**

Warm-up suggestion:
"Opinion lines"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks"





Emotion cards, paper/notebooks, pens

- 1. Give each student an emotion card.
- 2. Each student should write a short diary entry, 5 to 8 sentences, using the emotion they were given.
- 3. Ask students to think about what makes them happy, sad, angry, shocked, etc., and write based on that.



- 1. Give each student a role to write in.
- 2. Give the students help questions and ask them to answer those questions first.
- 3. Each student should write a short diary entry, 5 to 8 sentences, in the role they were given.

### Sample roles

- Bakery owner
- Parent of 4 children
- Guitarist of a band
- Person working in an animal shelter
- Doctor
- Competitive swimmer
- Video game designer
- School book developer

### **Supporting questions**

- What is their name?
- What do they do everyday?
- What do they like?
- What do they dislike?
- How old are they?
- Do they have family or friends?
- What is their dream?









- A set of emotion cards can be found in the attachments (Appendix 4).
- The purpose of the first part of this task is to make the students think about whether an emotion affects the way they express themselves.
- The purpose of the second part of this task is to offer students the opportunity to practice their creative writing in a role.
- To make it easier, the teacher can offer a specific prompt to write about, for example, "Write about what your character did after something great happened to them".





### Two heads one mind





Warm-up suggestion:
"Collective counting" & "Mindreading"
Check page 18 "Glossary of
basic drama tasks".

- 1. Divide students into pairs.
- 2. The pair will work as if they are one person.
- 3. Now make the pairs into groups of four.
- 4. In each group, there are two pairs who each try to work as one person. The students need to try to speak in unison.
- 5. Have the pairs discuss it with each other.

### Sample discussion situations:

One pair is a doctor, and the other is a patient
One pair is a cashier, and the other is a customer
One pair is an interviewer, and the other is an athlete who won a competition
One pair is an employer, the other is applying for a job

### **ABC Conversation**





- 1. Divide the students into pairs or small groups.
- 2. The task is to have a conversation. The twist is that the students need to start their talking according to the order of the alphabets.
- 3. The pair or group should continue the conversation until they can't anymore.
- A: As it is morning, I want to say good morning to you.
- B: But isn't it more like midday already.
- A: Can I say good day then.
- B: Did I not greet you already? Hello!
- A: Excellent greeting. Hello to you, too.
- B: Finally, I get to talk with you.
  - The purpose of both of these tasks is to take the student's mind off whether they are speaking grammatically correctly and get them to just talk.
  - The teacher can make a playful tournament game out of the ABC conversation and see which student lasts longest.
  - You can transform ABC conversation into a whole class exercise by making students stand in two
    lines, with the first of the lines facing each other. When one of the people in front of the line is
    unable to continue the conversation, they will move to the back of the line. The other person will
    stay in front of their line as long as they are unable to continue.









### Slide show





Warm-up suggestion:
"Statues"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks".

- 1. Divide the students into teams of 6-8. One of the students is a storyteller, and the rest of the group is part of the slideshow.
- 2. The storyteller starts telling a story about something that happened recently—a vacation, an event, or an adventure.
- 3. The rest of the group will form statues according to what the storyteller says.
  - a. "I would like to show you a slideshow of my summer vacation. First, I went to an amusement park with my family. My favorite thing there was the roller coaster CLICK."

b. \*group forms a statue of what the picture taken from the roller coaster ride could look like\*

### Sample titles for stories

- My summer vacation
- Traveling abroad
- Incident at the playground
- My friend's birthday
- Swimming in the sea
- Crazy shopping trip
- When I first learned to ride a horse
- Runaway dog
- Adventure at the zoo

Me and my friends were waiting to get inside the park, CLICK!





End discussion suggestion:
"Marking the moment"
Check page 18 "Glossary of basic drama tasks".



- The teacher can have all the groups working at the same time to make the task faster and to give every student a chance to be a storyteller in the slideshow. Alternatively, teacher can use this task as the start of several lessons, allowing a couple of students each lesson to tell their story.
- The purpose of this task is to practice telling about something that has happened and to listen to what the other person is saying. The task also gives a chance for the student to talk about something in their life.

# Glossary of basic drama tasks

Here you can find explanations of some terms and basic tasks that are often used in drama education. You can mix and match these with the bigger tasks that are introduced in this material package to create longer drama sessions.

### **Statues (Patsaat)**

Students form a still picture together in small groups according to the prompt. For example, form a statue of summer vacation.

### Postcards (Postikortit)

The teachers put postcards on the floor or on a table. Each of the students chooses one card that they want. After this, everyone can tell why they chose the card. Was there something they liked, or was there any other reason?

### Yes and (Kyllä ja)

The students are divided into pairs. One student starts by making a suggestion. The other students will agree and add something to the suggestion. "Let's drink soda" "Yes, and let's also eat pizza" "Yes, and let's also go to movies".

### Mind reading (Ajatusten lukeminen)

Divide students into pairs. The two students need to think of one word to say. Once they have said their words at the same time, they have to think about what the two words remind them of. The end goal is for the students to say the same word.

### **Collective counting (Yhdessä laskeminen)**

The task is to count to 20 with the whole class. This has to happen so that only one student at a time says a number. If two students start speaking at the same time, you have to start from the beginning.

### Walk around the room (Kävele tilassa)

The teacher asks the students to walk around the room and gives them different prompts. For example, walk like you are feeling cold, like you have stones in your shoes, or like you are late from somewhere.

### <u>Stop, go, jump, clap! (Stop, liiku, hyppää, taputa)</u>

The students walk around in the classroom. The teacher gives four different commands: stop, go, jump, and clap. Student's mission is to do these commands as simultaneously as possible.

### **Gaze moves (Katse kiertää)**

Stand in a circle with the students. Everyone will start with the person on their left and then look everyone in the circle one after another. If you look into another person's eyes, you two have to switch places on the circle.

### **Opinion lines (Mielipide jana)**

One side of the room is agreeing, and the other side is disagreeing. The teacher reads a statement, and students decide how they feel about that statement by going to the side of the room that matches.

### I remember (Minä muistan)

Everyone stands in a circle. One by one, each of the students gets to say something they remember from the lesson. It can be something meaningful for them, something funny, or simply something that comes to their head first.

### **Marking the moment (Hetken merkitseminen)**

The students choose a moment from the lesson that was meaningful for them in some way and go stand where that moment happened. The teacher asks students one by one what the moment was.

### <u>I am a tree (Minä olen puu)</u>

Students form one big statue together. Each student will enter the statue one at a time and say who/what they are. "I am a tree" "I am a rock under the tree" I am a bunny" "I am a grass". You can do this with themes as well.

# References

### Layout:

- Canva: Free Desing Tool: Presentations, Social Media + More [online]. (n.d.) https://www.canva.com/ (1 December, 2023)
  - o All fonts, colors, symbols, and the template have been created by Canva or Canva creators.

### Cover:

- Formation: kuningjeruk via canva.com
- Curtains: Sparklestroke via canva.com
- Characters: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com

### **Symbols:**

- Take a seat: Sparklestroke Global via canva.com
- Stand up: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com
- Solo work: Sparklestroke Global via canva.com
- Pair work: Sketchify via canva.com
- Group work: Veii Rehanne Martinez via canva.com
- Warm-up: Veii Rehanne Martinez via canva.com
- Discuss: Edited from Canva Layouts base via canva.com
- Play a game: iconsy via canva.com
- Express: sketchify via canva.com
- Time: Veii Rehanne Martineze via canva.com
- Materials: Sparklestroke Global via canva.com
- Adapting: Veii Rehanne Martinez via canva.com

### **Dear reader**

• Character: Sketchify via canva.com

### Page 4: One - two - three

• Characters: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com

### **Page 5: Word association**

• Characters: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com

### Page 6: What are you doing?

• Characters: Sketchify Indonesia & Veii Rehanne Martinez via canva.com

### Page 7: One word at a time story & Story spine

- Character: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com
- Cat: Unfold via canva.com
- Bunny: littlerainbow via canva.com
- Notes: sketchify via canva.com

### Page 8: Tale from a word & Shared feature

• Characters: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com

### Page 13: Captions and comments

- Post-it note: Wiktoria Grzybowska via canva.com
- Instagram frame: sketchify via canva.com

### Page 14: That's right Bob!

• Characters: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com

### Page 17: Tale from a word & Shared feature

• Characters: Sketchify Indonesia via canva.com

### **Appendix 2 Bun person:**

• Mari Välimaa

### **Appendix 3: Pictures**

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- Hermann / Pixabay. CC0.
- Pexels / Pixabay. CC0.
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- Atlantios / Pixabay. CC0.
- Skitterphoto / Pixabay. CC0.
- Beatriz57 / Pixabay. CC0.
- Fotografierende / Pixabay. CC0.
- Danfador / Pixabay. CC0.

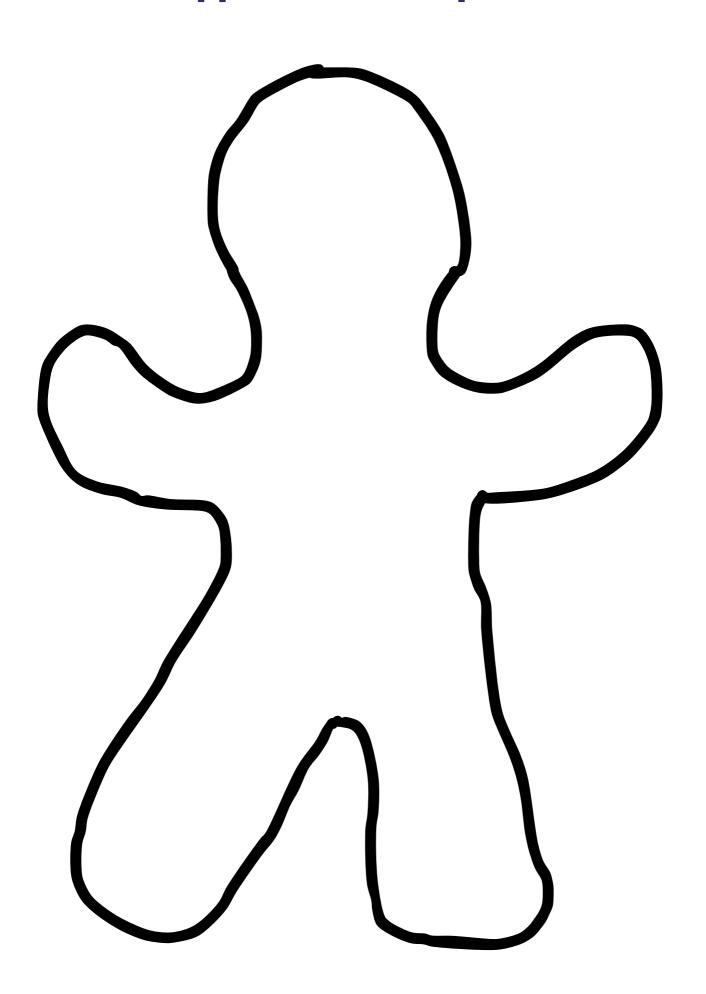
### **Apendix 4: Emotion cards**

- Playful: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Happy: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Joyful: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Shocked: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Surprised: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Thoughtful: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Angry: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Intrigued: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Offended: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Sad: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Hurt: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Anxious: Sketchify: via canva.com
- Background: Canva Creative Studio via canva.com

# **Appendix 1: Sentence starters**

- This reminds me of...
- I used to...
- I've heard that...
- I'm looking forward to...
- I used to...
- I'd like to...
- I play...
- I saw...
- Someone said...

# **Appendix 2: Bun person**



# **Appendix 3: Pictures**

























# **Appendix 4: Emotion cards**







