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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH DRAMA
A Teaching Experiment

A Pro Gradu Thesis in English

by

Heini Salopelto

Department of Languages

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Heini Salopelto

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH DRAMA: A Teaching Experiment

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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää, soveltuuko draama kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän kompetenssin opettamisen välineeksi peruskoulussa. Tutkielma tarkastelee kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän opettamisen ja draaman yhteensopivuutta teoriatasolla sekä käytännön tasolla tutkielmaa varten tehdystä opetuskokeilusta kerätyn aineiston perusteella. Toimintatutkimukselle tyypillisesti tutkielma on luonteeltaan pääosin kuvaileva.

Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan kielen ja kulttuurin välistä suhdetta, kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän taitoja osana laajempaa vieraan kielten osaamista, kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän kompetenssin opettamista, sekä draamassa tapahtuvaa oppimista teorioiden valossa. Tarkastelun pohjalta luotiin suunnitelma opetuskokeilulle, joka toteutettiin yhden peruskoulun kahdeksannen vuosiluokan oppilasryhmän kanssa. Opetuskokeilun tavoitteena on draamaprosessin avulla kehittää oppilaiden kykyä suhtautua toisiin empaattisesti ja samalla lisätä oppilaiden tietoutta suomalaisesta kulttuurista. Opetuskokeilusta saatuja kokemuksia kuvaillaan opettajan muistiinpanojen, oppilaspalautteen ja oppituntien videotallenteiden analyysin avulla. Opettajan muistiinpanojen perusteella arvioidaan draamaprosessin toimivuutta sekä yksittäisten harjoitusten osalta että kokonaisuutena. Kyselylomakkeilla kerätty oppilaspalaute kertoo oppilaiden suhtautumisesta draamaan työskentelymuotona ja heidän kokemuksistaan draamassa oppimisesta. Oppilaiden vastausten perusteella arvioidaan myös heidän kykyään suhtautua toisiin empaattisesti. Videotallenteiden analyysin kautta arvioidaan opetusmateriaalin sopivuutta tarkoitukseensa.

Kirjallisuuden tarkastelun ja opetuskokeilusta saatujen kokemusten nojalla todetaan, että draama soveltuu menetelmäksi kulttuurienvälisen viestinnän kompetenssin oppimisessa. Samoin draamanprosessiin osallistujat oppivat draamatyöskentelytaitojen lisäksi työskentelyn teemana olevasta aiheesta. Lisäksi draamassa oppilaat saavat mahdollisuuden harjoitella empaattista toisen ihmisen asemaan samastumista tavalla, joka on emotionaalisesti koskettava ja siten oppimisen kannalta merkittävää. Kokemusten perusteella todetaan myös, että draamatyöskentelyssä merkittävää ei ole ainoastaan roolissa oleminen, vaan kaikki harjoitteet yhdessä tukevat toisen ihmisen tilanteen ymmärtämistä ja lisäävät mahdollisuutta empaattiseen samastumiseen. Kerätyn aineiston nojalla todetaan myös, että osallistujat ovat heikosti tietoisia omasta oppimisestaan. Lisäksi todetaan, että draamatyöskentely vaatii draamataitojen opetteluun lisäksi melko paljon aikaa, mikä ei nykyisen opetussuunnitelman puitteissa ole välttämättä helposti järjestettävissä.

Asiasanat: language education, intercultural communication, intercultural competence, drama education, experiential learning, learning potential in drama

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1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades understanding of language, of what it means to know a language, has undergone dramatic changes. The idea of language not just consisting of a set of grammatical rules and a lexicon has received wide acceptance. It is not enough to possess knowledge about language, to know the vocabulary and the grammar. One must also be able to implement that knowledge, to use language, appropriately. Communicative competence is a term used to refer to the skills and knowledge that are collectively needed for effective communicative use of language. Groundwork on identifying those component parts was done by Canale and Swain (1980) and others have since drawn on their ideas (see Bachman 1990, Legutke and Thomas 1991). Noteworthy in these ideas is the inclusion of intercultural competence as part of communicative competence by Legutke and Thomas (1991). The impacts of the notion of communicative competence on language acquisition theory have been welcome and appreciated. Yet its various models remain inexplicit about the relationship between language and culture. This does not mean, however, that the principle idea of communicative competence is flawed.

1.1 Toward intercultural communicative competence

Increasingly people (Buttjes 1991:7) have been taking the view that language cannot be regarded just in a narrow linguistic sense with no regard to its social and cultural contexts and that problems in cross-cultural communication are cultural rather than linguistic in origin. Also, lately, the practice of teaching foreign languages appears to have been shifting to gearing its aims towards attainment of cross-cultural communicative competence (Ronowicz 1999:1). Indeed, intercultural competence is recognised as an objective of English language teaching in primary education in Finland. This is evident in articles that deal with

foreign language teaching in Finnish schools (Savela 1994, Yli-Renko 1994), but most importantly the objectives for comprehensive education stated in the recently renewed *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet* (National Core Curriculum or NCC, 2004) clearly posit that cross-cultural communicative competence is the aim of foreign language teaching. Objectives for foreign language teaching include specific aims for cultural skills as well as language and learning skills (NCC 2004:90-93). Students should both learn to communicate in foreign language use situations and to understand and respect other cultures as well as learn skills specific to the target language culture. Foreign language teaching is supposed to give the student a new perspective on their own language and culture.

In addition to having significant attention to culture skills in the objectives of foreign language teaching, the NCC outlines overriding themes for education that are to be integrated into subject matter teaching. These include having students learn to understand their cultural background and to build their own cultural identity as well as to gain facility for intercultural communication (NCC 2004:13-14).

It is, however, my experience as English as a foreign language teacher in comprehensive school that the above mentioned goals are not met with the current teaching practices. A quick flip through the current and commonly used teaching materials from major Finnish publishers shows a serious lack of support for the attainment of intercultural competence. The teaching materials give attention to developing communicative language skills but the cross-cultural aspect of communication is neglected. Cultural matters are limited to factual information about target language cultures. Clearly, then, there is a need to resolve the question of how to meet with the target of attainment of intercultural communicative competence in language teaching and this study attempts to find one possible answer.

1.2 About the present study

I am interested in exploring the possibility of deploying drama in order to develop ability of English language learners to function appropriately in cross-cultural communication situations. I undertake to develop appropriate drama materials and to run an experiment using the materials to give some insight into the matter. Previous MA theses (e.g. Pyörälä 2000 and Huohvanainen 2001) have also looked at deploying drama in English as a foreign language classroom. There are also some larger scale studies (e.g. Wagner 1998, O'Neill 1995) that have used drama for language teaching. All of these studies, however, focus on developing learners' linguistic skills and bear no attention to the development of intercultural competence. This study aims to 1) find out whether there is sufficient theoretical evidence to support the use of drama for the attainment of intercultural communicative competence, 2) to create such a teaching material package, deploying drama, as will help to develop intercultural communicative competence and 3) to evaluate the experience of implementing the package.

This study is structured in the following manner: Chapter 2 explores the relationship between culture and language with the aim of identifying the characteristics of intercultural communicative competence that a competent foreign language user should possess and Chapter 3 looks at the attainment of such skills. The theoretical principles of educational drama are reviewed in Chapter 4 followed by a framework for the teaching experiment in Chapter 5. The proceedings of the teaching experiment and data collected for its evaluation are presented in Chapter 6 including results from the student feedback questionnaires and analyses of the teacher's reflections and the recorded drama sessions. Chapter 7 offers a summary and analysis of the whole project. The lesson plans and student questionnaires are to be found in the appendixes.

2 LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

One must, as Seelye (1994:1) argues, understand the context where an utterance is said in order to understand the intended meaning, and the context is “to a large extent culturally determined”. This implies, a view point also adopted by this study, that language is considered to be more than just a system of syntactic, semantic and phonological features. Apart from being a *system*, as outlined by Kumaravadivelu (2005:3-16), language can also be regarded as *discourse* with an emphasis on its communicative functions and rules that govern situationally appropriate language use, or it can be seen as *ideology*, which takes the concept of language “way beyond the confines of systemic and discursal features of language, and locates it as a site for power and domination by treating it both as a transporter and a translator of vested interests.” Kumaravadivelu calls attention to the relationship between language and ideology and the sociocultural as well as political aspects of language. In reference to Foucault and the extended notion of text, Kumaravadivelu (2005:13) states that:

A *text* means what it means not because of any inherent objective linguistic features but because it is generated by discursive formations, each with its particular ideologies and particular ways of controlling power. No text is innocent and every text reflects a fragment of the world we live in. In other words, texts are political because all discursive formations are political. Analyzing text or discourse therefore is means analyzing discursive formations, which are essentially political in character and ideological in content.

The complexity of the concept of language makes it not very easy to identify constitutes language competence, i.e. what it means to know a language and be able to use it. Just two years after Chomsky introduced his notion of competence, Hymes, as Brown (1994:226-250) points out, challenged the view for being too limited and not taking sufficient account of social and functional rules of language. Hymes was the first to distinguish between *linguistic* and *communicative competence* of language. Since then, several theorists have attempted

to define communicative competence (see e.g. Canale and Swain 1980, Bachman 1990). Like other theorists, Bachman (1990:81) recognizes that “the ability to use language communicatively involves both knowledge of or competence in the language, and the capacity for implementing, or using this competence”.

However, the term competence can be seen as problematic (Kumaravadivelu 2005:19-20), not only because of not taking adequately into account multi- and bilingual language abilities, but also because it attempts to explain “an internal psychological mechanism to which we do not have direct access, and to analyze it only through its external manifestation in terms of language behaviour.” Nevertheless, the difficulty of the task does not render it unnecessary. As a response to its limitations, Kumaravadivelu (2005:23-24) replaces competence with the combined term *language knowledge/ability* to refer to the “overall language know-how that a competent language user has, or a language learner seeks to have”. Kumaravadivelu’s outline of this knowledge/ability attempts to be all-inclusive and consists of elements that take into account the three aspects of language: system, discourse and ideology. Notably, the pragmatic dimension of the knowledge/ability is seen to include “the knowledge/ability of language use in a textually coherent and contextually appropriate manner” as well as “the knowledge/ability to [...] be critically conscious of the way language is manipulated by the forces of power and domination.”

The broad notion of language and language ability outlined above will be held as precepts for any pedagogic choice in this study. Given this, we now need to determine how to understand culture. It can be said that children become culturally and linguistically competent in their native culture and language as a result of primary socialization (Buttjes 1991). First language acquisition is deeply embedded in the socialization process and at the same time, language is the main means of acquiring and transmitting socio-cultural knowledge. Caregivers are not concerned with grammatical accuracy but with the appropriate linguistic and other behaviour in a given social situation.

What is deemed appropriate is specific to culture and different cultures promote different types of linguistic behaviour.

Brown has said that culture is “the context within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others” (1994:163). This idea that culture is a collective phenomenon that defines and is shared by the members of a particular social group is not uncommon (see Brown 1994:164, Hofstede 1991:5). Defining culture however is tricky business. There are as many definitions as there are theories concerning culture. Seelye (1994:15) reports on Kroeber and Kluckhohn’s study from 1954 in which they failed to find a common denominator among about 300 definitions of culture. Nevertheless it is possible to identify certain trends among the definitions.

There are three basic notions that are commonly explored in cultural theories (Fornäs 1998:167-169). One notion identifies culture in what can be termed a narrow sense as the fine arts. This meaning is common in mass media. A second notion views culture broadly and includes all aspects of life in a society or the way of living for a particular group of people. This can be called an anthropological notion. Yet another notion sees culture primarily as communication. This idea holds that culture is more than just the institutional high arts but excludes the idea of culture being the same as society. This hermeneutic-semiotic notion views culture as interaction in organized symbolic forms through which people express and communicate social aspects of their society.

It is well to remember that cultural theories are attempts of drawing a picture of and naming existing phenomena. Regardless of how their aspects are termed in each theory, the underlying real-world processes are the same. Leaving aside the narrowest interpretation of culture, the differences between cultural theories lie not so much on how they see the world, society and culture, but on the emphasis given to different features of it. Therefore it suffices to for the purposes of this study to say that culture is viewed in the broader sense.

2.1 Culture and communication

It was expressed in the previous section that language and culture are viewed in this study in their broader senses. In this section I review some cultural theories in order to further explore the relationships between language, culture, communication and intercultural communication. The first to be reviewed subscribes to an anthropological notion of culture. The second can be seen as hermeneutic-semiotic.

The anthropological notion of culture holds that every aspect of life of a particular group of people is culturally determined. This also influences linguistic behaviour and the way representatives of that culture communicate. Hofstede (1991) proposes that culture can be seen as mental programming, a kind of software for the patterns of feeling, thinking and acting. These patterns are acquired within one's social environment over a lifetime of experience in the process of acculturation. Culture offers the framework for a person's cognitive and affective behaviour and influences the way people express their feelings and thoughts.

Hofstede (1991:10) also reasons that culture is layered. A single person is a member of several different groups on different levels of the society simultaneously. There are groups and subgroups that include people of for example the same nation, region, gender or social class. Each of these groups has its own set of patterns which may also be conflicting. This means that people behave differently in different situations. For example, a person is likely to speak differently depending on whether he is telling a joke to his friends on an evening out in a pub, or giving a presentation of a project in a business meeting. Conflicting cultural patterns means that put in a new situation it is difficult to anticipate how the person might behave.

The diversity that is characteristic of culture also applies to linguistic behaviour. No language community is completely uniform no matter how finely it is defined (Wardhaugh 1992). There is variation between dialects, different speakers and variation of style in the same

speaker in different situations. The current view in the field of linguistics favours the idea that to be able to use a language effectively one must possess not only linguistic skills but also the ability to use language appropriately within the given socio-cultural context. As Ronowicz (1999:5) puts it, language is always tied to the cultural framework of the social group that is using it and:

Successful communication depends to large extent on such things as what the content of the utterance actually refers to, which of the grammatically correct words, phrases or sentence patterns suit a given situation, and which do not, when to say things and how or, for that matter, whether to say anything at all.

Knowledge of “accepted set of cultural rules” is to be combined with linguistic knowledge in order to achieve effective communication (Ronowicz 1999:5).

Language, however, is not just the vessel for, the means of expressing, culture. Language is also used to give form to the society, in shaping the culture. Fornäs (1998) is one to equal culture with communication. Individuals communicate using symbols, such as language, to express themselves and their expressions outline and represent their surrounding reality and society. But what is communicated does not merely reflect it, it also shapes the society. Similarly, communication as symbolic interaction has two features: On the one hand it is about transmitting a meaning from one person to another. On the other hand it is about creating meanings between communicators.

Fornäs (1998:45-47) argues that although globalisation has spread certain features of the modern culture and society all over the world thus making different parts and societies more similar than before at the same time there is marked differentiation within societies between its different aspects, such things as art, science, religion and politics, individual and society, or work and free-time.

Variation aside it is nevertheless possible to find similarities within a social group. Indeed, it is necessary to find such

generalizations in order to be able to differentiate between cultures (Bennett 1998:5-8). It is also important not to let these cultural generalizations become stereotypes i.e. to assume that every person in a group has the same characteristics or beliefs. Bennett (1998:6) points to this by saying that “Nearly all possible beliefs are represented in all cultures at all times, but each different culture has a preference for some beliefs over others”. So there are individuals within every culture who are closer to the majority of another culture than to the majority of the people of the native culture in what beliefs they hold. This is illustrated in Figure 1 below. What values are preferred by each culture may be deduced from research with large groups of informants (Bennett 1998:6). For example, Hofstede (1991) reports on his own extensive study among workers of a particular large company that operates internationally. Although Hofstede’s informants do not represent a good cross section of each national society, some implications can be drawn from his study as the informants do represent different national societies. Based on his research findings Hofstede attempts to identify the differences between national cultures. He suggests that there are five dimensions that define the value system underlying each culture: 1) how people relate to authority, 2) the relationship between the individual and the group, 3) expected gender roles, 4) ways of confronting uncertainty, and 5) people’s orientation of time.

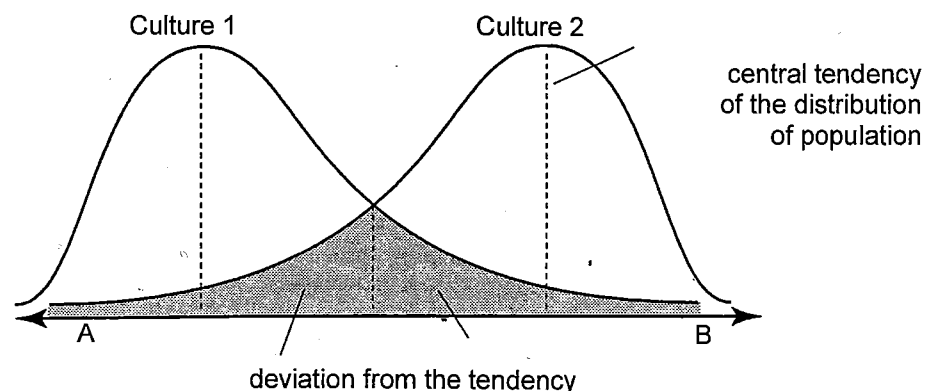


Figure 1. Distribution of cultural generalizations. Here A and B are the polar opposites of a value (adapted from Bennett 1998:7).

Hofstede (1991:7-10) suggests that the values that are upheld or, as he puts it, people's "tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others" influence practices within a culture. The manifestations of differences in cultures are e.g. language, dress and hairstyles, status symbols on the most superficial level, and choice of heroes i.e. people possessing characteristics that are esteemed, and rituals or codes of conduct in social activities on a deeper level. According to Hofstede's theory then people can relate to others and communicate on the basis of their shared understanding of how things are. This is a too simplified picture of communication for Fornäs (1998:169-170) who, although he agrees that for the communication process, taking place between two people in social interaction, to be effective the meanings of symbols need to be shared, maintains that to think that communication rests on shared knowledge alone does not give a full picture of the processes involved. Fornäs posits that the meanings of symbols used in communication are not fixed. They are constantly negotiated and created in communication as messages are interpreted by communicators. Fornäs believes that it is not the thoughts or mental representations that are shared between the communicators but rather "the general forms of language used to express them" (p.169), especially so in the modern age of differentiated norms.

Although we commonly feel that the world is made smaller by globalization, making things and ideas accessible to anyone anywhere in the world, it is also made wider in that individuals now face choices and influences on a scale unprecedented in any previous era. Fornäs (1998:31-62) claims that both the norms and social rules governing interpersonal communication and the forms of communication themselves are currently undergoing changes. Modernisation has resulted in the crumbling of traditional norms and ways of living and the individual is presented with freedom of choice socially, culturally and psychologically. People are free to choose but at the same time are bombarded with conflicting messages resulting in an increased feeling of insecurity. As all traditional customs are no longer self-evident, new traditions are invented to create control over life, but there is also

newfound interest in old rituals. Individuals cope in the new situation in varying ways and may either present different behaviour following a similar situation or arrive at particular behaviour due to vary different cultural or social patterns:

Uudelleen virinnyt kiinnostus vanhoihin rituaaleihin voi ilmentää joko kiinteiden arvojen etsimistä joksivaan tilaan joutuneessa maailmassa tai sille miltei vastakkaista vaatimusta intensiivisestä esteettisestä nautinnosta arkisen harmaan, askeettisen ja päämäärille alistetun tehokkuuden sijaan. Osittainen vapautuminen traditioista saattaa sekoittaa tällaisiin pyrkimyksiin arjen ritualisoimiseksi, mutta silloinkin kun ihmiset toimivat (sosiaalisesti) perinteisillä tavoilla, he saattavat ajatella (kulttuurisesti) uudella tavalla. Kulttuurisesti modernisoitu minäkuva saattaa kätkeä taakseen konventionaalisia sosiaalisia tekoja tai päinvastoin. (Fornäs 1998:65)

In viewing the cultural theories reviewed in this section some conclusion can be drawn from the discussion. Whether one chooses to call communication culture or just representation of culture is not important in light of the current study. What is relevant in the theories outlined above is that they all imply first, that the linguistic behaviour of an individual is influenced by rules of the social group that the individual is involved with. Mutual language alone is not sufficient enough to ensure successful communication. When two native speakers of the same language from the same social group communicate, their understanding of each other is made possible by a shared knowledge of the rules of the language and its use as well as knowledge of the world. Secondly, what also is apparent is that no group is made of clones. There is variation between individuals and also in the individuals' behaviour in different situations. These points have some strong implications on communication in a foreign language and between cultures. These aspects are explored further in the next section.

2.2 Intercultural competence

As was discussed in the previous section, different cultures produce different types of behaviour. Cultural differences are manifested in

people's behaviour and communication patterns vary between cultures as well as within cultures. Intercultural communication takes place when people from different cultural backgrounds engage in communication. Commonly the language used is at least for one of the speakers not a native language. In this section the nature of intercultural communication is explored in order to outline the constituents of the ability.

As was suggested in section 2.1, a common language is not alone sufficient to sustain mutual understanding and accurate decoding of intended messages. In intercultural communication where the context of communication is not the speakers' native culture, this must be taken into consideration. Meyer (1991:137) notes accurately that intercultural competence is "part of a broader foreign speaker competence [that] identifies the ability of a person to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures".

Yet, there is a tendency for people to interpret phenomena they encounter from the point of view of their own cultural context and to hold their own perception as correct (Brown 1994:164). As information is thus filtered, a perception is a selected one. Therefore a given phenomenon is easily perceived differently by members of different cultures. This also means that "Misunderstandings are . . . likely to occur between members of different cultures" (Brown 1994:164). Ronowicz (1999:8) writes that:

People do not usually realize how much their daily life is influenced by unwritten rules automatically accepted and applied within their social class, their neighbourhood, their country. They not only tend to take them for granted, but also frequently make the wrong assumption that everyone operates within the same system of cultural rules.

Often people only realize they cannot adequately interpret other people when they are removed from their own society and come into contact with a different culture (Ronowicz 1999:8). Descriptions of such situations of misunderstandings can readily be found in both academic

and non-academic literature and also in film. For example, the film *Stupeur et tremblements (Amélie)*, based on the autobiography of Amélie Nothomb, pictures how Amélie, having been born and spent her childhood in Japan but grown into adulthood in France and in a French family, now as a young adult returns there to work as an interpreter. Despite being fluent in Japanese Amélie runs into conflict with the attitudes and codes of conduct at the workplace. What she has learned about manners at home no longer applies. She is demoted consecutively and ends up cleaning toilets.

The lack of understanding of the foreign environment is likely to lead a person to experience something that is often called a *culture shock* or culture stress. Hofstede (1991:209) explains that even if the person knows about the more obvious manifestations, such as language and customs, of the surrounding culture the individual is not likely to understand the values underlying that social behaviour. The visitor will have to learn how the minutest little things are done all over again. The resulting feelings are distress, helplessness and hostility towards the new environment.

The tendency to view and interpret all cultural phenomena from within one's native culture viewpoint is termed *ethnocentrism*, or monocultural awareness (Byram 1991:19, Bennett 1998). *Ethnorelativism* is the opposite, meaning that cultural phenomena are viewed using a different cultural frame of reference appropriate to and depending on the cultural context.

Ethnocentrism can be deeply rooted in the codes of conduct that are upheld in the society. For example, as Bennett points out (1998:191-214), in the western Christian society the accepted norm for treating other people is the biblical Golden Rule: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them... -- Mathew 7:12". Commonly, Bennett explains, this principle translates to behaviour so that when people are unsure of how to treat another person, they think of how they themselves would like to be treated and then act accordingly. The flaw in that is the assumption of similarity: people are different and may not want to be treated the same

way as you do. Bennett (1998:213) proposes a new code of conduct that recognises that people are different: the Platinum Rule of "Do unto others as they themselves would have done unto them".

The ability to adapt to other cultures, Bennett (1998:24-25) argues, is most important in intercultural communication. People must become sensitive to cultural differences. They must expand their worldview so that it includes behaviour and values that are appropriate to other cultures in addition to behaviour and values of their native culture. Intercultural sensitivity develops gradually from an ethnocentric stage of denial to an ethnorelative position of integration (see Figure 2 below).

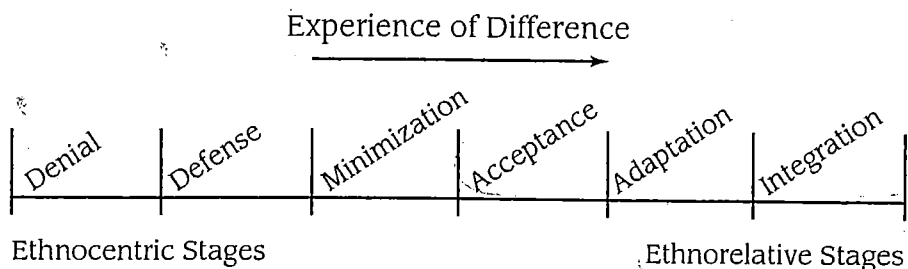


Figure 2. Development of intercultural sensitivity (adapted from Bennett 1998:26).

The assumption of similarity is an important factor in intercultural misunderstanding, but perhaps not the only one. Barna (1998) identifies five other points as stumbling blocks in intercultural communication in addition to the assumption of similarity. The other points are: language differences, nonverbal misinterpretations, preconceptions and stereotypes, tendency to evaluate, and high anxiety. Of these, nonverbal misinterpretations and tendency to evaluate can be seen to be linked with the assumption of similarity as they are a result of using one's existing native culture as a base for interpretation.

The purpose of this section has been to outline the components that form the basis for intercultural communicative competence. We started with the premise that culture influences communication and thus

intercultural communicative competence should be seen as part of an over-all foreign speaker competence. I discussed intercultural communication in terms of *culture shock*, referring to the anxiety resulting from misunderstanding of another culture. I also explored the concepts of *ethnorelativism* and *ethnocentrism* relating to the ability to evaluate cultural phenomena with a suitable frame of reference. It was also noted that intercultural communication presents a speaker with multiple obstacles, some of which are linguistic, others non-linguistic in nature. Drawing from the theories of Meyer (1991), Hofstede(1991) and Bennett (1998) discussed above it is possible identify that the basic components of intercultural communicative components are: 1) the awareness of ones own cultural conditioning, 2) awareness of differences between cultures, and 3) skills that enable the speaker to overcome the problems that may be caused by the differences. In the next chapter I look at how a foreign language learner might attain these.

3 INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

In the previous chapter I came to the conclusion that intercultural competence should be seen as part of a broader notion of language ability or a foreign language speaker competence and that intercultural competence can be seen to consist of awareness both of ones own cultural conditioning and of differences between cultures as well as skills to overcome any communicational misunderstandings. Understanding that the term competence is problematic, I nevertheless continue to use the term intercultural competence to refer to this component of that more general ability. As foreign language teaching aims at student attainment of such skills/abilities that are adequate for functional communication the above mentioned premise should be considered when foreign language teaching is conducted or constructed. In this chapter I will first look at the national and local curricula to see how the goals for foreign language teaching are termed,

how intercultural competence is featured in the goals and what the suggested methods for the attainment of the goals are. I will then discuss the appropriateness of communicative language teaching method for the attainment of intercultural competence and also explore some models of teaching that have a focus on intercultural communication in order to see how well they address the attainment of the desired traits of intercultural competence.

3.1 Intercultural competence in Finnish basic education

Any education given in a Finnish school must be based on the NCC (2004). The recently renewed NCC can be seen as having a strong emphasis on culture. Cross-cultural understanding is mentioned as one of the values that are at the base of all basic education (NCC 2004:5). The new national curriculum requires schools not only to teach different subjects to the standard described in the curriculum, but also to educate students on a number of other aspects. These overall cross-curricular themes are to be incorporated in the teaching of compulsory and optional subjects and into other school functions (NCC 2004:16-21). One of the seven themes is termed *kulttuuri-identiteetti ja kansainvälisyys* which aims to make students learn to understand their own culture, its roots and its diversity as well as to function in a multicultural society and in an international community (NCC 2004:17-18). Students are to develop their own cultural identity and ability for intercultural communication. The core content of the study of this theme should include students' own culture at different levels (local, national etc.), other cultures and skills of intercultural communication.

Culture also features in the foreign language teaching requirements. The NCC (2004:92) states that with the study of language starting in grades 1-6 of basic education the students begin to develop the ability to function in cross-cultural situations. However, as can be seen from the subject specific objectives (NCC 2004:92-96) the aims of teaching foreign language include acquainting the students with

the target language culture(s) and to learn target language culture specific customs rather than general cross-cultural communication skills.

If it is intended that students learn more widely applicable cross-cultural communicative skills, it appears that this objective is only covered in the cross-curricular themes and is left to the individual municipalities or schools to deal with it as best they know how in integrating it into their own municipality-specific curricula. The foreign language teaching as required by the NCC does not cover this aspect. The situation does not necessarily improve in the local curriculum. In Hamina municipality-specific curriculum (2004), for instance, where the language starting in grades 1-6 of basic education is English the core content outlined in the NCC has been further defined and aspects of the cross-curricular themes have been included in the content of each subject. For English teaching there is again a general claim that students should learn to understand foreign cultures as well as their own culture (p.38). Yet there is very little in the actual objectives or course contents that relate to other than British or other English speaking cultures and what is outlined, states that it is through contrastive analysis of target language culture and Finnish culture that the desired cultural skills are to be obtained.

It is highly questionable whether teaching based on the local curriculum actually can develop students' ability for intercultural communication as foreign cultures are reduced to English speaking ones and the method of study is contrastive analyses. In the following sections I will discuss culture specific materials and communicative language teaching, which I believe is widely used by Finnish foreign language teachers, in light of their appropriateness for the attainment of intercultural competence. I will also outline some other options for the attainment of intercultural competence.

3.2 Communicative language teaching and culture

As theorists drew attention to the difference between “knowledge ‘about’ language forms and knowledge that enables a person to communicate functionally and interactively” (Brown 1994:227), teaching foreign languages was geared toward communicative language teaching. Many practitioners have found communicative language teaching appealing and it has received wide acceptance, so much so that it can be seen as characteristic of language teaching today (Brown 1994:245). But at the same time it is impossible to draw a single definition of the theoretical position behind communicative language teaching. Richards and Rodgers (1986:66) acknowledge the lack of an authoritative model or definition. However, they maintain that the common ground for all communicative language teaching lies in viewing language as communication and also in the aim of achieving communicative competence as a result of language teaching and developing teaching practices that take into account the communicative nature of language.

The various models of communicative language teaching can be seen lacking in the attention given to the role of culture in language competence. Some attempts have been made to modify the communicative language teaching method by bringing culture into the model and making intercultural communicative competence the goal of foreign language teaching. For example Buttjes (1991:9) has called for “a new intercultural rationale for language teaching” that would combine the communicative and educational origins of involving culture in teaching language. In Finland for instance Kaikkonen (1994) has expressed a desire to see foreign language teaching developed to better account for the need to develop foreign language learners’ intercultural competence. It can be said that teaching foreign languages as a practice has lately been shifting towards attainment of cross-cultural communicative competence (Ronowicz and Yallop 1999), but it is also apparent from what was outlined in section 3.1 above, that on

procedural level the ideals may very likely not be met with current practices.

Kumaravadivelu (2005) challenges the whole concept of method claiming that classroom procedures seldom conform to the procedures suggested by the principles of the method that the teaching supposedly subscribes to. Abandoning the concept of method as invalid and impractical, Kumaravadivelu makes a case for what she calls a *postmethod pedagogy* which emphasizes the need to take into account the parameters of the particular teacher, students, context and sociocultural situation involved. The general principles behind Kumaravadivelu's (2006:170-176) postmethod pedagogy are particularity, practicality and possibility. These mean that in teaching the learners, teacher, goals of teaching and context of teaching are always "embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:171); that teachers must use their intuition and prior experience in determining what is practical and leads to learning; and that sociocultural influences on such things as learner identity and the learners' linguistic needs must be acknowledged. Drawing from not just a single theory of language or a single method, but from all "currently available theoretical, empirical, and pedagogical knowledge related to L2 learning and teaching, Kumaravadivelu proposes a framework of ten *macrostrategies* to operate as general guidelines for classroom operations. The locally determined needs determine the *microstrategies* that translate the operational principles into classroom procedures. The macrostrategies as listed by Kumaravadivelu (2005:201) are:

1. maximize learning opportunities;
2. facilitate negotiated interaction;
3. minimize conceptual mismatches;
4. activate intuitive heuristics;
5. foster language awareness;
6. contextualize linguistic input;
7. integrate language skills;
8. promote learner autonomy;
9. ensure social relevance; and
10. raise cultural awareness.

The last point being most relevant in terms of the current study, I like to note that Kumaravadivelu (2005:208) considers it important that cultural diversity is explained and explored and that learners need to gain a “global cultural consciousness” to meet the demands of present day cultural globalization. This notion is dealt with more elaborately in the next section of this chapter. Operating on the principle of the general framework by Kumaravadivelu (2005:208-209) that situational particularities are taken into account, the macrostrategies may be realised in many forms. “Each macrostrategy can have any number of, and any type of, microstrategies, depending on the local learning and teaching situation” (p. 208-209). Constraints come from such things as “the national, regional, or local language policy and planning, curricular objectives, institutional resources” of each teaching context. The need to consider learner needs is also stressed (p. 209).

In finding the concept of method problematic and the particular method of communicative language teaching lacking in the attention given to the attainment of intercultural competence I opt to follow the framework proposed by Kumaravadivelu in construction of the teaching project for this study. Following the principle of Kumaravadivelu’s framework of taking into account situational particularities I will next outline the constraints and demands put on by the Finnish national core curriculum.

3.3 Culture-specific vs. culture-general approach

This section discusses the concept of cultural specificity. Traditionally intercultural communication has had its focus on knowledge about the target culture, offering information on the history, geography and customs of the other culture (Hofstede 1991:231-232). In the light of what has been outlined above that cannot be seen as adequate for the attainment of intercultural competence.

The new notion of cross-cultural or intercultural communicative competence is in strict contrast with the earlier tradition of teaching

foreign language students history and geography of the country of the target language, often referred to in literature by the term 'Landeskunde' after the earlier German teaching tradition (Meyer 1991). As is pointed out by Seelye (1994:22) learning trivial facts about the customs or any other aspect of a culture does not promote understanding of or respect toward that culture. Also, as noted by Meyer (1991:137), concentrating in teaching on cultural differences between one's own country and the country of the target language "fosters the students' awareness of cultural differences, but it does not systematically allow the students to learn to *act* in cross-cultural situations" (emphasis original).

Modern approaches in intercultural communication generally fall into two categories: culture-specific and culture-general (Bennett 1998:9). Culture-specific approaches concentrate on mediating between specific two cultures, usually the native and one other culture. In foreign language teaching a culture-specific approach means that the aim is to mediate between the native and the target language culture. Culture-general approaches aim at communication skills that are applicable in any cross-cultural situation regardless of the interlocutors' native languages or cultures.

It is commonly accepted, that technology provides people today with easy means for commuting and communicating across the world and intercultural encounters are common occurrences. People travel for holidays, take on job assignments and study abroad. In this age of globalization English is fast becoming a Lingua Franca; it is the language of business, technology, science and travel. The situations where English is used are varied and can involve people from several cultural backgrounds. It is estimated that there are about 1.5 billion non-native English speakers in the world whereas there are only about 350 million native speakers (Strevens, as quoted by Ronowicz 1999:14-15). Given all this it is clear that people who are learning English as a foreign language are likely to use the language in communicating with people from various cultural backgrounds, who may or may not be native speakers of English.

For the reasons mentioned above it is not feasible to limit to teaching students of English how to conduct communication with the English, or even all the English speaking nations. A culture-general approach must be adopted as a guideline when teaching intercultural competence to students of English. Students must be taught how to interact with people from any given cultural group other than their own.

3.4 Teaching intercultural competence

It has already been stated that cultural awareness is a key component of intercultural competence in over-all foreign language speaker ability. This section looks at some specific models that propose to achieve attainment of intercultural competence, in order to identify the more immediate aims for the current teaching project. For reasons stated in the previous section, only models that can be considered culture general are included. Hofstede's (1991) model appears initially to be culture-specific but the way the model is structured implies that the first stage that aims at creating cultural awareness is in fact the same regardless of the target language or target culture and his model can in fact at that stage be regarded as culture-general and is therefore included in this discussion.

There is variation in the focus of different models of teaching intercultural competence. Byram (1991) and Seelye (1993) look at the teaching of intercultural communication in the context of foreign language teaching. Others, such as Hoffstede (1991) and Bennett (1998) concentrate specifically on intercultural communication. In what follows I outline the models proposed by Hoffstede, Byram and Bennett.

3.4.1 Hofstede's model

Hofstede (1991) suggests that intercultural competence is built in three stages: awareness, knowledge and skills. First learners must recognize that their own behaviour is conditioned by the culture that they have

become a part of when growing up in a particular society, and that others are in just the same way differently conditioned by the different cultures that they grew up in. Second, they must learn about the particular culture they are going to interact with. They need to learn the language and they should acquire knowledge of the overt cultural manifestations and basic differences in underlying values of the target culture and of their own culture. With cultural manifestations Hofstede means the customs and also heroes, such characters, real or fictional, that are perceived as possessing characteristics that are esteemed. Third, the learners must apply the knowledge of the target culture and put it to practice in the target culture environment.

Hofstede (1991) makes a clear separation between cultural awareness and language teaching and he proposes that cultural awareness is to be learned independently. Only as a result of cultural awareness is a student capable of utilizing culture specific knowledge in a constructive way and through the experience within another culture the student can reach intercultural competence. Hofstede's (1991) model focuses on intercultural competence. Hofstede sees that a course of intercultural communication must focus on awareness training, the first stage of developing intercultural competence, and that learners can be left to acquire knowledge about the particular target culture on their own as there are plenty of materials readily available for that purpose. The course that Hofstede (1991:232) himself has been involved in developing is designed to last three days and deploys game, exercise and case studies along with lectures and group discussions as means of instruction.

For Hofstede the target group or learners are adults who are about to take a job assignment in a foreign culture, who may already have foreign language skills. In his case training for linguistic competence and intercultural competence together from the beginning is not possible. In a comprehensive school environment, however, it is possible to address the issue of intercultural communication alongside foreign language teaching. Furthermore, it is questionable whether a three day course, such as proposed by Hofstede, is enough to

adequately foster the process of cognitive development of intercultural sensitivity and it is probable that learners would benefit from a more thorough look into the matter. It is also questionable whether the methods proposed by Hofstede are suitable for promoting such learning as is required in order to inflict desired changes in students.

3.4.2 Byram's model

Byram (1991:19), in contrast with Hofstede, wishes to combine language and culture teaching to achieve a change in learners so that they move away from monocultural awareness and gain intercultural competence. According to Byram, foreign language teaching should consist of four elements as depicted in Figure 3 below. In this approach language learning is combined with the building of students' linguistic and cultural awareness and foreign culture experiences. In the learning process each segment is supported by the two that are adjoined to it.

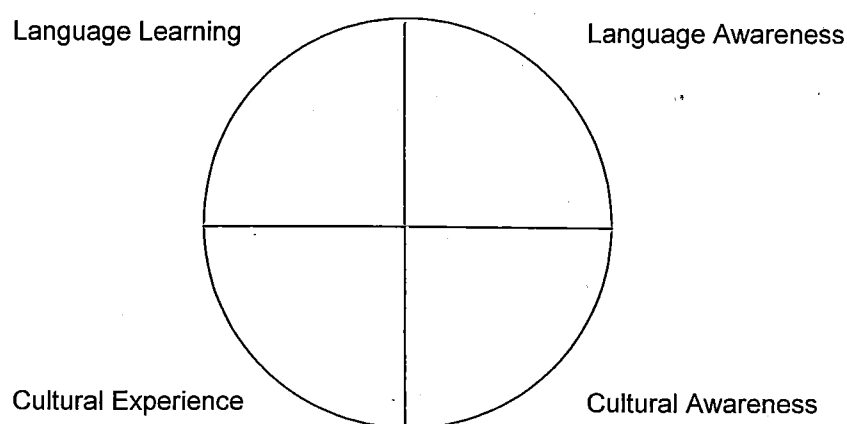


Figure 3. The language and culture teaching process (Byram 1991:20).

The language awareness element in Byram's model aims to make students perceive their unconscious cultural knowledge of their native language and the connection between underlying cultural knowledge and linguistic forms in both native and target languages. Byram believes that this will help students to learn appropriate linguistic behaviour in the target culture and to broaden their understanding of

culture in general. Cultural awareness teaching concentrates on transforming monocultural awareness into intercultural awareness i.e. making the students interculturally competent. The result should be a change in students' "attitudes and concepts" and a "modification of culture specific schemata" (Byram 1991:24).

In Byram's model language learning and cultural awareness are brought together in direct *cultural experience* that is available to students on their trips abroad. The experience offers students a chance to try out for real the language and cultural knowledge they have learned. This does not mean, however, that the learning must happen in a foreign culture environment. Byram believes that the same process of modifying schemata that occurs when students use the foreign language in coping with new experiences can be achieved in the classroom if aspects of the foreign culture were to be taught in that foreign language rather like in an immersion process. Byram emphasizes the importance of involving students in a structured learning process that is prepared for in advance and later analysed in cultural awareness teaching.

Byram (1991) takes a constructivist view of learning: Just as in primary socialisation where the individual modifies the existing schemata when it is found to be inadequate the schemata are to be modified to accommodate for the phenomena in a foreign culture. Byram maintains that in order for this secondary socialisation to happen learning should be experiential; learners "must understand and experience the culture from within, by acquiring new values and behaviours in a non-mediated form through direct experience" (1991:19).

Byram (1991:23-26) proposes that cultural awareness teaching should involve students in taking the role of an ethnographer by observing and learning about the target culture, and also that of an informant by explaining aspects of his own culture, and thus allowing the students to make comparisons between the two. Byram (1991) suggests that to get the students to reflect on how culture affects linguistic behaviour, any ethnographic material that illustrates this can

be used regardless of the language of the material. Byram points to the advantage of having a clear contrast achieved when choosing materials from cultures that are markedly different from one another. Byram also suggests that the students' first language can be used as a means of instruction in helping the students understand a foreign culture.

Several aspects of Byram's approach are agreeable. The fact that intercultural competence teaching is seen as an integral part of language teaching is applaudable and the goals outlined for language and culture awareness must be seen as key elements in gaining intercultural competence because, as was pointed out before (see section 2.2), people are seldom aware of the extent to which their own behaviour and their habit of interpreting other peoples' actions and reactions are influenced by their own culture. Byram also hits the nail in demanding that in order for learning to take place the students must be able to gain a personal, meaningful experience. This experience is crucial for changing people's attitudes and value systems.

The problem with Byram's approach is the choice of teaching methods. While Byram's model is not culture-specific, the suggested method of cultural comparisons is a problem. Learning in Byram's model is largely based on contrastive analyses of cultures which may produce awareness of differences between cultures, but as was stated earlier in reference to Meyer (see section 3.2 of this study) this is unlikely to teach the students how to act when communicating with people from different cultures. Also, Byram borders on a culture specific approach as he requires that students are acculturated in the target culture. As was stated earlier cultural competence in the target language culture alone is not a feasible goal for foreign language teaching. Also, when intercultural competence teaching is tied closely with foreign language teaching, as in Byram's model, the issue of intercultural competence can be blurred with the issue of the influence of culture on language forms and vocabulary i.e. how various things are expressed in the given language.

3.4.3 Bennett's model

Bennett's (1999) approach to intercultural communication training concentrates on the development of *ethnorelativism*. Bennett (1999:197-207) associates *ethnocentric* perception with the feeling of sympathy. He maintains that in sympathy people try to imagine how they themselves would feel if faced with the same situation as the other person. In contrast with this is empathy where one tries to understand how other people feel in the situation they are in. Bennett (p.208) suggests that empathy could solve such problems in cross-cultural communication that are the result of unwarranted assumption of similarity.

Bennett (1999) presents a learning process that involves the learner in a constructive experience. Bennett (1999:209-212) proposes a six step model for the development of empathy skills. The steps to be taken are: 1) Assuming Difference, 2) Knowing self, 3) Suspending self, 4) Allowing Guided Imagination, 5) Allowing Emphatic experience, and 6) Re-establishing Self. First, learners must accept the existence of multiple different realities and come to terms with the fact that given different circumstances they might possess a different perspective of the world. Second, they must clearly establish their own identity by becoming aware of the values, assumptions and beliefs within their own culture. Third, students expand patterns of thinking outside the self identity, to explore other points of view. Fourth, students are to use their extended awareness to imagine situations that they would not normally have. They are to imaginatively participate in the experience of a specific other person, like one would experience a situation as acting a character in a play. Fifth, students must allow themselves to emphatically experience that other person as if they were that person, to live for a moment as that other and experience that person's feelings in whatever situation they are in. Finally, students must re-create their sense of being separate from the explored other person. The self identities are resumed.

Bennett successfully identifies a skill that can be helpful in intercultural communication. He also proposes in practical terms what type of activity may help the attainment of that skill. Notably, Bennett's model is culture general and does not tie the attainment of intercultural competence together with language learning. The importance of awareness of native culture conditioning is again seen as the base for understanding other cultures. In contrast with Byram's model where acculturation in the target culture can be seen as the goal, Bennett's model aims for an ethnorelative worldview which allows functioning with representatives of other cultures but with the students retaining their self identities. To approach the attainment of intercultural competence with this premise seems justified in light of what was said about the need to extend the skills to encounters with all foreign cultures.

3.4.4 Summary

I have in this chapter described three models for teaching intercultural communication. They all aim at the attainment of cultural awareness and intercultural competence through different practices. It was stated before that for intercultural communicative competence a student must become aware of one's own cultural conditioning and of differences between cultures as well as skills that enable the speaker to overcome the problems that may be caused by the differences. All of the three models address the issue of awareness, but only Bennett's model with the proposed procedure for the attainment of ethnocentric frame of mind offers a concrete and feasible explanation on how the student may overcome any difficulties of intercultural communication. Intercultural competence calls for the modification of learners existing schemata. The process expands the learners' understanding of the world and their ability to deal with phenomena in foreign cultures. Clearly it is important to know and understand culture specific customs in order to be able to function well in a foreign culture. But what emerges from the models outlined above as more important than culture specific knowledge is the initial understanding that culture does

influence our way of thinking and behaving and that different cultures produce different kinds of behaviour. And yet the most important skill is the ability to evaluate other peoples' actions in reference to their relative situations instead of ones own. Hence developing students' ability to emphatically review other people's situations must be at the foreground of teaching intercultural communication. The process of exploring other points of view described in Bennett's model resembles the process of an actor on stage assuming a role in a play. This suggests that role-taking or perhaps other drama activities could be used successfully in creating these steps that lead to empathic skills. The next chapter explores drama and the learning potential offered in drama education to determine if indeed this is the case.

4 EDUCATIONAL DRAMA

Drama is a general term that is used to refer to a multitude of things. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines *drama* as "a play for the theatre, radio or TV", "the art of writing and presenting plays", "a series of exiting events", or just "excitement". In the field of education the word *drama* can refer to a form of literature, a school subject, a teaching method or a series of events (Laakso 1994:122). The term *drama* is sometimes used by writers to denote the particular form of drama that is being promoted by them but is in fact most often used when referring to something in the field of drama in general. The term *theatre* is by some writers used synonymously with drama, but drama is seldom viewed as theatre in the sense of staging a play to be presented for an audience. However, all types of drama deploy conventions used in the theatre. The difference between theatre and drama lies in their focus (Way 1967:14). In theatre the focus is on interaction between the actor(s) and the audience, and in drama the focus is on the experience of those taking part in the drama. However, the use of terminology in the field is

far from fixed, perhaps due to the relative novelty of drama education as a field of study.

Drama education in Finland is firmly rooted in an Anglo-Saxon frame. In this chapter, in section 4.1 I attempt to give an overview of the field, noting the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian elements in focusing on what relates to Drama education practice in Finland. I also attempt to outline in section 4.2 the theoretical principles behind Drama education and the learning potential that drama is understood to hold.

4.1 Drama in education

Educational Drama, Drama in Education, Creative Drama, Improvised Drama and Process Drama, are just some of the terms used to denote various forms of drama activity where, usually outside the scope of a specific school subject, drama is deployed in order to reach educational or instructional goals (Laakso 1992:123). There are two to some extent overlapping branches of educational drama that differ in their aims. The practice which aims at fostering the development of the person as a whole, often dealing with students' values and attitudes, can be said to have educational goals and the practice which aims at teaching the person a particular skill or subject can be said to have instructional goals. However, this division is by no means clear-cut as any teacher is likely to give some consideration to the education of a child as a whole and not just focus on teaching a given subject matter.

Nevertheless, there is considerable disagreement among writers and practitioners under which category drama in the school should be placed in. Some see drama as a subject to be studied for its own merits, while others see it as a method for teaching something else or as a pedagogical tool. For example, Østern (1994) maintains that drama is an art subject the core of which is in dramatic art, although she does acknowledge that drama can also be used as a teaching method. For Østern drama is pedagogic use of theatre conventions, but she places the focus of learning on aesthetics, working on themes and

interaction. Others, like Bolton (1981), see drama in an educational context. According to this view educational drama has to do with the changing of values and the affective and cognitive development of the participants. Bolton also goes on to suggest that learning of knowledge that is not related to value judgements may be better taught through a method other than drama.

It follows then that drama as a school subject can mean one of three things: the first type of drama subject is concerned with the art of self expression and is often termed as *ilmaisutaito* in Finnish. This type of drama is commonly offered as an optional subject in upper secondary school in Finland (Laakso 1994:122). The second type, again optional if at all available to students in Finland, is dramatic art or *näyttämötaide* which aims at teaching students about theatre and acting. A third type of drama subject is artistic in nature and is defined as something that ranges from children's structured play through classroom improvisations to performances of Shakespeare (HMI document *Drama 5-16* as quoted by Neelands 1992). The objectives of learning lie in the dramatic situations where students by taking on fictitious roles are enabled to examine their own and other people's behaviour from new perspectives (Neelands 1992:4-5). This type of drama is a particular school subject within the British National Curriculum and has a long tradition there.

The dichotomy between subject and method is not significant if one concurs with Heikkinen (2002:80-81) who suggests that Drama Education could be viewed as a part of general education and consisting of different genres. Heikkinen (2002) attempts to clarify the confusion in terminology and suggests that Drama Education (*draamakasvatus*) should be used as the name for a discipline and a university subject. Drama Education should be used as an umbrella term to cover all "sectors of drama activity that occur in educational settings" (Heikkinen 2002:147) thus including theatre done in school or to be viewed at school, but excluding professional or institutionalised theatre or any type of drama therapy. Drama in Education

(*draamapedagogiikka*) should be used to denote the “more focused activity, the teaching of drama” (Heikkinen 2002:147).

It is not the aim of this study to create or even suggest policy for the use of terminology or the role of drama within the Finnish education system. The discussion above merely shows how undefined the field is at the moment. Recognizing the problems outlined above I will nevertheless for the purposes of this study continue to use the term drama to refer to the activity of activity of using drama conventions in the educational setting. I hereby also recognize that there are several genres within the field of drama, as is suggested by Heikkinen (2002), all of which can be deployed in drama. Drama conventions are the individual dramatic activities, techniques or exercises that are used in creating the dramatic situation in the classroom and they can vary from reading or writing texts to improvisation or even rehearsed acting out of scenes from a play. Exercises have been named, described and listed in various publications (see e.g. Owens and Berber 1997), but it is not possible to credit any single person for one particular activity as practitioners constantly come up with new ones and vary the old.

As I understand it, and I here concur with Heikkinen (2002:116), one does not have to choose between the different genres. Rather they can all be used as is deemed appropriate for the particular circumstances or can all be included in the curriculum of drama if it is taught as a school subject. Experiential drama can take the form of e.g. Forum-theatre, improvisation or Process Drama. Process Drama, created by Heathcote and Bolton, has been used in previous theses studies that deploy drama in a foreign language classroom (see e.g. Pyörälä 2000 and Huohvanainen 2001). In Process Drama the story is created in the moment without a pre-existing script in a manner which is not dissimilar to improvisation. The teacher listens to students' suggestions and leads them to explore aspects of the story or the topic as it interests them, using drama conventions. The whole emerges from episodes of connected activities rather than from a linear story line.

The form of working in Process Drama requires great teacher proficiency – a solid command of the various drama

conventions – for to be able to respond to the situations and questions arising in the moment with appropriate activities. It is nevertheless possible to design a drama process that is similar to Process Drama in that the whole of the experience is created by episodes built with drama conventions but so that the form of the drama process is designed in advance and controlled by the teacher. In fact, Owens and Barber (1998:19-26) identify four ways of approaching the planning of a drama process depending on the desired amount of control over the process and content pointing out the benefits and drawbacks in each of them. In one approach the choice of content of the drama process is left to the group. In this way students are likely to feel motivated and the content has a meaning to them. The teacher is responsible for the form that is given to the drama but the teacher can involve students in the decision making. A possible problem in this approach is that not all members of the group may agree with the choices made. Also, the demands of the curriculum may not be met. Another approach reverses the roles of the first: the teacher proposes the topic and students choose the conventions. This has the advantage of the teacher being able to prepare and study the topic in advance which makes it easier to guide the process and suggest suitable conventions that will take the process in a direction that will make it meaningful. The danger is that students are given too much autonomy for the sake of ownership and the work may become meaningless. In the third approach both form and content are negotiated between the group and the teacher. The group is motivated because they are made part of the decision making process but the teacher can guide them and make meaningful suggestions. This requires enough experience from the teacher and students to know which conventions are available and suitable for the particular situation. A fourth approach posits the choice of both content and form on the teacher. The advantage is that the teacher can plan the structure of the process in advance as well as gather background information to familiarize with the topic of the content and prepare possible materials in advance. The pretext or topic is designed to catch the students'

imagination and to engage them with the work. The danger is that the process is too controlled by the teacher.

The term pretext refers to the story or text used as the starting point of the drama process or, in case of more controlled drama process, text used as the basic storyline that gives the drama its form. The pretext can be an existing piece of writing, a book, a play, an article or even a film, or it can be created for the purposes of the drama process.

This section has looked at drama in an educational context without yet explaining its learning potential. It was shown that drama does not at present hold a clearly defined role in the Finnish education system. Terminology was also discussed and clarified for the purposes of this text. How drama may in fact educate i.e. what may be learned in drama is discussed in the next section.

4.2 Learning in drama

Research into the effectiveness of drama as a teaching method is not extensive. Hard evidence of its impacts on learners is hard to find, to say the least. Scarcity of scientifically valid studies in this area is notable. In the following sections I first offer in section 4.2.1, drawing on the findings of Wagner (1998), an overview of the research that looks at drama and language learning, in order to show what empirical evidence there is about the impacts of drama on language learning. Wagner reviews several studies showing that drama does indeed contribute to language development. She presents various studies that show drama to have a significantly positive effect in increasing verbal fluency, and syntactic and semantic complexity of speech (1998:51). However, as the present study is primarily interested in the development of the specific ability of intercultural competence rather than language skills in general the learning potential of drama is explored further in section 4.2.2 by looking into the theoretical foundations of learning in drama

and describing in more detail the nature of the learning process unique to drama.

4.2.1 Language learning and drama

An extensive overview of research in the field of Educational Drama in the 90's is provided by Wagner (1998). In her own study Wagner used a statistical meta-analysis method to analyze the findings of twenty different studies of the effectiveness of creative drama. In all these studies classroom drama had been used as an instructional strategy. Wagner found that "the performance of students who participated in creative drama was increased by almost one-half a standard deviation above those not participating" (Wagner 1998:206). A similar analysis was conducted by Kardash and Wright (as quoted by Wagner 1998:209), who came to the conclusion that drama enhances students' achievement in reading, oral and written language, person perception, and drama skills.

Wagner also reviews five studies that show that drama has an impact of improving second language competence. A study by Kao (as quoted by Wagner 1998:54) showed that students "made notable progress in speaking English" after engagement in drama. Maranon (as quoted by Wagner 1998:55) showed improvement in "English oral expression through drama". Wagner (1998:42) also reports on a study by Similansky conducted on children aged 3-6 which showed that "sociodramatic play develops skills necessary for creativity, intellectual growth, and social interaction". This study found that children of extremely low socioeconomic level can benefit significantly from sociodramatic play in developing oral language skills. Similansky's findings on oral language development were later seconded by Lovinger (as quoted by Wagner 1998:42).

These findings give support to the theory that drama is effective. Drama appears to have a positive impact not only on first language oral skills but also on second language competence. The use of drama has a positive effect on students' first language skills in the

three key areas of reading, writing and oral skills. Also, in second language acquisition, students' oral language skills benefit from engagement in drama. Yet, as Wagner states, "Because of the wide variety of activities that come under the broad terms *informal classroom drama* or *educational drama*, it is often difficult to discern just what treatment led to the results that are reported" (1998:3, emphasis original). More research is needed to validate all the claims that have been put forward concerning the benefits of drama. However, the findings cited above are encouraging and enough to support the use of drama as an instructional strategy in a foreign language classroom.

The use of drama in the foreign language classroom usually aims to engage participants in the fictional events deeply enough to create spontaneous and authentic language use (Wagner 1998:8) thus fostering language learning. The focus there is largely on increasing the learners' linguistic ability. However, the attainment of intercultural competence, as outlined earlier in chapter 2, calls for the acquisition of skills that are non-linguistic in nature. In what follows we will take a closer look at the learning potential held in drama to evaluate whether drama could be seen as a facilitator for such aspects of language ability that relate to intercultural communication.

4.2.2 Experiential learning in drama

Since the late 1950's our understanding of learning has undergone a dramatic change as the ideas of behaviourism have been replaced with constructivism. We no longer believe that students are empty vessels which can be filled with information and knowledge. It is generally accepted by theorists (Wagner 1998, Rauste-von Wright and von Wright 1994, Harjanne 1994) today that learners are actively using their prior knowledge and their subjective experience of the learning situation together with the new information at hand to reconstruct their understanding of life.

The current trend views the learner as active and goal oriented (Rauste-von Wright and von Wright 1994, Harjanne 1994). The

learner's actions are guided by intentions, expectations and received feedback. The learner's existing schemata, which also consist of both conscious and subconscious emotions, direct the choice of focus when observing a situation. The inner schemata are reshaped as a result of the experience created in observing the surrounding situations. The learner receives feedback of the real world and what is observed is given a meaning as it is interpreted by the learner by using previously gained knowledge, either by assimilating the new information into the existing schema or by changing or reconstructing it (accommodation). As a result of the learner's experience he constructs a conception of the world, arrangements of representations for events, ideas and information in the mind, in an evolving process.

Although drama is most often viewed in terms of experiential learning, what has been said here about constructivist learning theory is in no major aspect in contrast with the idea of learning that takes place in drama, except that experiential learning theory emphasizes the importance of the initiating experience and the internal learning processes. Kolb (1984) has drawn together the earlier works of Lewin, Dewey and Piaget in a model of experiential learning. According to Kolb (1984:6) the learning process is a cycle with four phases: 1) action creates an experience, 2) through reflection the experience is brought into awareness, 3) conceptualizing the personal experience and 4) learning translates into new action. The reflection and conceptualizing (of phases 2 and 3 above) can take place in a verbal or artistic form (Sava 1997:267). Integral to experiential learning is that learning is viewed as a process, not a product and that learning takes place continuously and is the result of experiences.

The affective-cognitive learning in drama can be seen to take place as students experience the situation created in the drama. It happens to them and they live through the emotions that it creates in them. Heikkinen (2002) offers a comprehensive description of learning in drama and I will here outline the key points of his analyses. In drama space and time are manipulated to create a fictional reality that is educationally meaningful. Learning in drama takes place through

participation in that fictional situation. The world created in drama offers participants a chance to explore other people's lives in a fictitious context. In the world of drama students may explore other realities, other situations and other people. Participation in drama creates a possibility for a new understanding of the students' own as well as other people's lives. A drama world is created of four elements: 1) context, 2) transformation of self, time and space, 3) rules and 4) actor-viewer-relationship. Dramatic activities i.e. drama conventions are used in conjunction with the other activities, such as discussion or drawing, to create the drama world to be experienced by the participants. The manipulation of time and space and the taking on of a role is also known as aesthetic doubling. Participants are aware of the duality of the situation. The fact that drama work is rule governed and not free play is what makes it a focused activity:

The task for the drama teacher is to help students create such drama worlds in which they can with their current knowledge and abilities act as freely and naturally as possible. Yet action is not free as in free role play, but action is guided by the chosen genre and the boundaries of the drama world. (Heikkinen 2002:88)

There are four possible areas of learning in drama, as outlined by Heikkinen (2002): 1) the content i.e. the subject or topic of the drama, 2) oneself, 3) social skills, and 4) the form of drama. Heikkinen emphasizes the need for reflective processing of the experience in drama in order for learning potential to be realized. However, he also notes that "Learning takes place when some moment is meaningful and it touches, and therefore is remembered." (2002:93) and that "Influential are usually things that make one think and even annoy" (2002:119).

Bolton (1979) argues that for learning to take place the participant must have an affective experience in relation to the action. It is not enough for the learner to just do the action required in the drama. The participant must at the same time feel what the situation or action feels like or might feel like to the character he is playing and also to himself. Through this affective experience the individual develops a

deeper understanding of the subject that is under consideration in the drama and through this understanding there may happen a change in the individual's attitudes towards the subject or towards a related and broader set of concepts.

Bolton (1979) talks about drama for understanding. He believes that through drama it is possible for the student to experience something that enforces a change in the student's attitude towards something, the value given to a particular thing. However, in order for the drama to have this effect it must reach a certain level or form. Any given imaginative play does not facilitate the change. If the students merely repeat things that are already known to them and nothing new is brought into the situation, no learning can take place. For the drama to be effective the students' attitude towards the created situation must enable them to experience it and have such feelings in it that is convergent to the topic of the drama.

Bolton (1979) believes that children should be allowed to choose the topics. From the educators point of view this is problematic: the teacher must work towards various goals set in the curriculum. It may not be feasible to be left to the mercies of the children's choices and merely hope that all the goals will be met with. Bolton uses the term Process Drama to describe the form of drama he uses which advances on the children's terms. The form requires a lot from the teacher as one must be able to pick out of the emerging themes and points those which are meaningful and lead the children into working on those.

The type of drama used by Bolton (1979) is not designed to teach children any new knowledge or facts about anything – it develops their personalities. The children may come out of the drama experience (as in one example described by Bolton) no longer believing that all Africans are stupid. But even the original perception of the stupidity of the Africans was not based on factual information but on a mental image. In fact it was a value judgement and the drama process brought on a change in that value judgement. The learning influences the students' values and mental images.

The problem here is – if indeed this kind of learning is believed to be taking place – that making the change visible is difficult. Bolton recognises this problem and goes on to say that the change does not necessarily take place during the actual drama process. The drama may provide an initial nudge for the change that then develops with time. What, if anything, is learned is often not clear to the participants either, especially right after the drama work. Heikkinen (2002:149) notes this by saying that participants:

may come out of the drama process not knowing what they have learned – perhaps, at the most, they can talk about the experience and how they felt. Afterwards they may recall moments of the work or they may find analogies to their life world, of other arts.

This presents a problem for anyone wishing to empirically test the effectiveness of drama on such aspects as world view or values or the ability to relate to others emotionally and emphatically, which in fact are at the heart of the inquiry of the present study.

To sum up what has been said about learning and drama: The evidence of scientific studies confirms that drama can be beneficial for both first and second language learning. Experiential learning in drama is rooted in Dewey's and Piaget's learning theories and is also firmly supported by the current theory of learning. The participation in a drama and experiencing the world of drama created in the moment in a meaningful way holds a real potential for learning, although evidence of that learning is seldom overtly realised and therefore difficult to observe. However, the above mentioned theoretical and practical considerations and the view of skills required for intercultural competence discussed earlier in this study support the use of drama for the attainment of intercultural competence. With this evidence I next set out to consider the practical issues of the task of teaching intercultural competence with drama.

5 RATIONALE FOR THE TEACHING EXPERIMENT

This chapter outlines the rationale behind the teaching materials prepared for this study and the method used for evaluation of the experiment. In current literature teacher is often seen as someone who reflects on and researches his own work. For instance Kaikkonen (1994:131-136) recognizes this and encourages practicing teachers to do small scale research to develop their practices. For Kumaravadivelu (2006:181) the goal of teacher research is to allow teachers to explore and expand their pedagogic beliefs. But Kumaravadivelu (2006:172-173) also suggests that teachers should not be restricted to testing existing theories through action research: they should study their practices to make new theory. Kumaravadivelu (2006:181) suggests that methodology from exploratory research, teacher research cycle and critical classroom discourse analysis could be used for the purposes of teacher research.

Considering the teaching experiment at hand the method of action research can be seen as suitable as the study involves testing out a teaching method and it also attempts to modify the pupils' attitudes and values with regard to a specific aspect of life. (Cohen 2000:226) However, the study is not truly experimental in design as there is no pre-test and post-test observation to be compared and no control group. The omission of testing is due to lack of suitable methods for testing students' cultural sensitivity and ability to feel empathy. To evaluate the teaching experiment alternative methods have to be used rendering the study an interpretive paradigm. For all other purposes the study follows the form of action research proposed by Cohen, Mannion and Morris (2000:234). In what follows I will identify the parameters for the teaching experiment that are based on the discussions in chapters 2-4 of this study. I will also state the objectives of the teaching experiment and explain the evaluation procedures used. Chapter 6 outlines the implementation of the experiment and the evaluative materials of the experiment together with interpretations of the collected data.

Parameters for the teaching experiment

The starting point for planning the experiment is Kumaravadivelu's postmethod framework outlined in section 3.1 and the more detailed constituents of intercultural competence identified in section 3.2. The underlying conception of learning for the national core curriculum (National Board of Education 2004) is a constructivist one (section 3.1), but the choice of teaching methods is left to the individual teacher (section 3.4) although some guidelines are given. All of those guidelines can be seen as supporting the choice of drama as a teaching method. The rationale for using drama for the particular goal of the attainment of intercultural competence was given in chapter 4. In what follows I outline the contextual and situational constraints for teaching intercultural communication through drama and for the teaching experiment and then give the rationale for the choices in the drama process materials. I start by stating the objectives of the teaching project that were drawn from the discussions in chapters 2 and 3.

Objectives of the teaching experiment

Discussing the relationship between culture and language and the nature of intercultural communication in chapter 2 and exploring culture teaching in chapter 3 has led me to believe that in order to achieve such foreign language speaker competence which enables the speaker to communicate functionally and appropriately in cross-cultural situations foreign language teaching must aim at raising cultural awareness in terms of cultural diversity. In exploring the models for teaching cultural competence in Chapter 3 I found that the modification of learners' schemata through an emotionally engaging learning experience in order to develop the ability to feel empathy and thus relate to other peoples' situations is what should be aimed for in teaching intercultural communication. As this objective, in the light of what was said in section 4.2 about learning in drama, can be seen as attainable through drama, it was chosen as the main objective for the teaching experiment. The primary aim of the teaching materials prepared for this experiment is

therefore to develop the students' ability of feeling empathy. Secondly, the materials aim to foster awareness of the students' own cultural conditioning by offering information on the recent past of their own culture and society, thus taking into account the aspect of cultural awareness training that is also seen as important to intercultural competence and also adhering to the aims of the national curriculum.

Target group and situational considerations

The target group for the experiment was chosen from the body of student groups already under my tuition in Pappilansalmen koulu, in Hamina, a Finnish comprehensive school for grades 7-9. The target group was a class of 19 students on the eighth grade and they were chosen because they were available and agreed to participate in the experiment. I had been teaching them since the previous year and it was possible for me as a teacher-researcher to take the opportunity to further my understanding by carrying out this experiment with them. I was allowed by the school to arrange the teaching of altogether ten 45 minute lessons into two full days of five lessons each. The days were five days apart with the weekend in between. There were two or three lessons each morning before a lunch break and another two or three in the afternoon, depending on which shift the students were assigned to eat in. The group had no prior experience of drama in a school environment.

Considering the abilities of both the group and the teacher in drama, it was decided that the drama process should be fairly controlled. The choice of content and form should rest with the teacher and the structure designed so that the students' choices only have an effect on individual activities and not the structure of the entire drama process. A further consideration affecting the planning of the teaching project was the students' language ability. As was stated earlier (section 3.4.2) Byram suggests that students' native language can be used in the foreign language classroom in explaining the students about other cultures. The general trend in the foreign language classroom I believe has increasingly been to use the target language as

the medium for content, especially so with the upper grades of 7-9. I have myself as an English teacher felt guilty of using too much Finnish during lessons. To openly suggest using Finnish for instruction may be frowned upon by many current teaching practitioners. However, it is my personal experience that at even the upper grades of 8 or 9 the foreign language skills of Finnish students are not high enough to enable very profound discussions. Yet the process of forming the students' ideas and thoughts involves discussing such topics and concepts which may at first be beyond them even if they were discussed in their native language. Therefore the choice of language for the teaching package had to be Finnish. The lessons prepared for the experiment are described in the next chapter together with reports and analyses of the data collected from the experiment.

Content of lessons

As it was decided that a culture general approach is wanted and that culture specific knowledge of customs is only secondary for the general ability to relate to others appropriately, I concluded that in order to achieve the desired goal the teaching materials need not involve target language materials or target culture information. Rather, as awareness of one's own cultural conditioning is also important – it was considered proper to choose the content of the teaching material so that it would introduce knowledge about the students own cultural background. Also the context and characters of the drama should be such that make it possible for the students to relate to them. With these considerations in mind, the play *Anna Liisa* by Minna Canth (1985) was chosen as the pretext for the drama process. The play is set in a rural farming community in the relatively recent past, depicting a society typical to Finland of that era – a society that subsequent ones have built on. The main characters are young and the tensions between boyfriends and girlfriends seemed relevant enough to offer present day youth something to relate to. The events and conflicts of the play were considered intriguing enough to capture students' interests. Also, the

play *Anna Liisa* and its writer Minna Canth are part of Finnish literary history and therefore knowledge about them can be said to increase cultural awareness of any Finnish person.

As the group involved had little or no experience in drama it was decided that activities should be simple and if possible the form should be introduced before content was added. This was quite difficult as there was also a limit on how many lessons were available for the experiment. The time constraint also limited the number of introductory games that could be used. Therefore attempts were made to incorporate as much thematic elements into the introductory activities as possible. The lesson plans are to be found in Appendix 1.

Method of evaluation

As no suitable method for testing students' cultural sensitivity and ability to feel empathy was readily available for the purposes of this study it was decided that the suitability of the materials for the purposes proposed should be evaluated based on interpretations of participant observation. I, as the teacher, reflected on and wrote down comments of the proceedings after each day. To enhance the validity of the findings from the experiment I chose to use triangulation in its evaluation and included a further two methods of gathering information: Firstly, the students were asked to fill out questionnaires (appendixes 3 and 4) at the end of each day; and secondly, all the lessons were videotaped and later reviewed by myself. In the next chapter the teaching project is outlined in terms of presenting the form of the drama process which is the result of the considerations presented in this chapter together with reports of and analyses of all the evaluative materials gathered from the experiment.

6 TEACHING EXPERIMENT

The objective of the drama process created for the teaching experiment was to develop the students' ability of feeling empathy and to foster awareness of the students' own cultural conditioning. It was concluded that the teaching materials should introduce knowledge about the students own cultural background and that the context and characters of the drama should be such that make it possible for the students to relate to them. In the next section the proceedings of the lessons of the experiment are described. Then the three ways of evaluating the experiment are explored. First, the teacher's reflections of the lessons are reviewed with any conclusions that may be drawn from them. This is followed by student feedback drawn from the questionnaires and finally, the lessons are reviewed from video recordings.

6.1 Description of the experiment

The teaching experiment was carried out at in Pappilansalmen koulu, in Hamina, which is a Finnish comprehensive school for grades 7-9. The group of students taking part in the experiment were a class of 19 on the 8th grade. The experiment consisted of ten 45 minute lessons that were arranged into two full days of five lessons each with a lunch break in between. The days were five days apart with the weekend in between. The students were given a questionnaire at the end of each day. After the lessons each day the teacher reflected on the lessons and wrote down the reflections. The lessons were also recorded on video.

The first day of the experiment was designed to introduce some drama conventions, such as miming and improvisations, to offer students some practice in involvement in drama, and to introduce the main conflict of the pretext so that there would be enough of a hook for them to be interested in continuing the work after the pause of several days. Games (see Appendix 1 for details) were used in the beginning to

focus the students' attention. Simple activities of miming and improvisation conducted during the first morning introduced elements of drama form in advancing stages, providing the students with skills that they could later use in the more complex activities. The students began with giving form to an imaginary object, and moved on to miming by denoting objects with gestures. Using sound on stage was also introduced, as I find that if you make all the students do something quite silly with their voices together, they will not be afraid of speaking out in role later on. Then acting in front of others was practised together with denoting some activity in mime. To practise doing scenes and to include feelings and emotions I used mini productions. At first the students could use their own experiences and act as themselves. Then they were given a situation and they would have to imagine the feelings of the persons in that situation. The work with the pretext, the play *Anna Liisa*, started with the opening scene of the play and the introduction of the main conflict. Reading and discussion were used for this purpose. The work relating to the pretext would loosely follow the storyline of the original play.

The second day of the experiment would need to again start with some warm-ups and activities to recall the pretext and the work from the previous session but would then move on to the development of the drama world and exploration of the various aspects involved in the conflict with the work culminating in the students deciding on how the main character should resolve the situation. Before the storyline was taken forward an exercise was used to familiarize the students with the idea of the characters having different social statuses. The conflict situation was explored through activities that depicted events in the past that later led to the conflict. Improvisation and the teacher's simultaneous directions were used together with narration that would ensure the storyline moving in the desired direction. It was decided that volunteers should act the scenes with others watching as this way we could all focus on the same scene and discuss it if necessary. Writing diary entries gave every student a chance to take on the role of the main character. A scene at the church was included to remind the

students of the influence the church as an institution held in the society at the depicted time. Narration again brought the story back to the conflict situation. The parents' anguish was explored to give yet another point of reference. Then Anna Liisa's dilemma was reflected on in discussion to prepare the students for the finale of a tunnel of decision, which brought the story to a climax. The detailed lesson plans with texts used during the lessons can be found in the appendixes.

6.2 Teacher reflection

After each day of the drama process the teacher reflected on the proceedings of the drama sessions of that day. The writings were later studied for elements that would reveal useful information about the lessons. I will here give an overview of the entries and their implications. All quotations are from the teacher's reflections.

The commentary of the teacher's reflections was mostly concerned with how the exercises had worked with that particular group in carrying out the planned drama forward. It appears that the activities chosen for the process were mostly successful in that the students were able to perform them even with their limited drama abilities. This is evident from the comments at the end of each day:

On the whole I feel the students worked well and the exercises with the exception of the one with short dialogue functioned as intended.

Also, most of the exercises worked as planned and as well as they could, considering the lack of prior experience on the students' part.

The exception referred to in the first instance was the Mini productions where the students were required to act out a short dialogue according to a given situation. It was included as the logical next step from the previous exercise where they were able to depict emotions in situations that were relevant for them. This next exercise required the students to imagine how someone else would feel in the situation that was described briefly on a piece of paper.

Perhaps the situations were still a little far from the students' own world of experience in order for them to relate to them or perhaps their skills in depicting a role and its emotions were not good enough. In retrospect, I would leave this out.

As can be seen from the comment above, even when one is present in the situation, it is sometimes difficult to say why some activities work for some groups and some others are less successful. Although the exercise appears simple on the surface level it does in fact require the participants to create and assume a character and present that character in a complex situation with emotions that are related to facts that are not present in the depicted scene. Put in these terms it is obvious that the exercise was far too complex in terms of required drama skills to attempt at this stage. The students' failure to excel in this exercise also implies to me that they were not ready to emotionally engage in another person's situation.

Another exercise commented as not working was the Interview of characters of the pretext from Day Two, which required four or five students to speak in one voice when answering questions. Simultaneous talk was technically too demanding for the students. With inexperienced participants talking as one person is easier to manage if conducted in the form of one word per person. This slight change in the activity meant that the students were able to perform it and the exercise worked as it was intended in getting them to work together. But this exercise had another function, too. The students were to develop a broader picture of the characters in answering the questions. As can be seen from the teacher's comment the exercise did not fulfil this function:

Interviewing the characters, however, almost took the storyline off the intended course as the students did not have enough information about the characters and started to make it up themselves. This type of exercise would work better at a later stage in the process when students have enough knowledge about the characters and their motives.

Nevertheless, while the two exercises commented above can be seen as too complex and therefore not appropriate for the purposes used, as was stated before, most activities chosen for the process functioned

well. Simplicity and the step-by-step approach adopted for the drama process had been a good choice. Also, the pretext proved to be appropriate and engaging:

I had anticipated that the students could not fully relate to Anna Liisa's situation as they did not have enough information on the Finnish village society of the late 1800s, but the students' response after reading the extract was not wildly off the point.

Interestingly the students wanted to know how the play ends and although I had intended to leave it open I decided to oblige them and read out some passages from the end of the play to a captive audience.

Two aspects arise from the teacher's commentary quite strongly: the students were inexperienced in drama and there was not enough time. The limited time meant that there was not enough room for introductory activities that would have built the students' confidence in the drama form which would have enabled them to concentrate on the content of the exercises rather than their form. Also:

Perhaps the student's did not feel secure enough to expose themselves even though the group has been together since the seventh grade i.e. for the past school year and the first half of the current term. The mode of working was new to the students in the school environment which probably contributed to the feeling of insecurity. I had not anticipated this level of uneasiness and had not catered for it in the plan. I do normally tend to go for more introductory games and group building exercises with any given new group that I start to work with using drama and have not experienced this problem with other groups before. But again I was held back with the limited amount of time available for the whole process. This demonstrated to me the importance of those introductory games.

With the tunnel of decision again explaining the form took some attention away from the content and it required a lot of prepping from me as a teacher to get everyone to do their part, but we did end up with everyone being able to give some reasons for the choice they were suggesting in their role as well as some discussion of what they themselves thought Anna Liisa should do.

The students' inexperience in drama can be very limiting. If any inference can be drawn from this it is that perhaps attempting to achieve any goals other than drama skills is futile if time is limited and the participants are only just beginning to learn about the drama form. In order to benefit from working in the drama form the participants need to know what they are doing.

An issue relating to this mentioned in the teacher's comments is learning about drama form during the process. It was felt that the students were not in general able to pick up skills from one exercise and carry them over to utilize in the next, although the process was planned so that each exercise paved the way for the next one.

Passing on an imaginary object established the convention of using pantomime and gesture in showing objects. Perhaps the point could have been made clearer by verbalization of the fact. This is something that arose from other exercises (and indeed the whole process) as well: the students are not aware of what they have learned from an exercise and cannot transfer the skills to further exercises. This might be improved by verbalizing what has been learned after the fact.

The need for more discussion after each exercise was mentioned also elsewhere in the teacher's comments. Definitely this demonstrated the need for reflection that was described as part of the learning process in section 4.2 of this study. Again, the limited amount of time available for the completion of the process was one reason for not allocating enough time for discussion in the process.

Although I have here highlighted some aspects of the drama process that show there is room for improvement, the overall message to be drawn from the teacher's comments is that it is possible to create a drama process that works for the intended group if the groups' needs and abilities are carefully taken into consideration. An issue to be considered is the possibility of attainment of goals other than learning about the drama form when the students are new to this form of work. Also, it emerges from this material that working drama work requires time. Especially, there needs to be enough time for reflection and discussion during the process.

6.3 Student feedback

Questionnaire design

I decided to have two questionnaires, one at the end of each day, rather than one at the end of the whole process. The two sessions were five

days apart and I feared the students might not recall everything from the first session at the end of the second day. Also, dividing the questions into two sets meant that the students had less to fill in one go. I hoped that this would lessen the risk of them being overwhelmed with the task. Attention was paid in drawing up the questionnaires to making them accessible to the target group who were teenagers and likely to be unfamiliar with questionnaire forms.

The first questionnaire (see Appendix 2) focused on finding out how much experience in educational drama the students had before the experiment. Consciously, the questions were asked after the first drama session, rather than before, as I suspected that the students might not know what educational drama is and therefore would find it difficult to say if they had participated in it or not. After the session they would have an idea of what educational drama is and could better evaluate this question. The first three questions were designed to give information about the students' prior experience with educational drama and familiarity with the exercises of the day. Questions 1 and 2 were multiple-choice questions, but the open ended questions 3a and 3b made it possible for the students to identify those activities that they already knew and those that were new to them, respectively. To find out the students' opinion about the activities of the first day they were asked in question 4 to rate the activities done that day on a scale from one to seven.

I also wished to find out what would be at the top most on the students' minds after the first day as this might indicate what if anything had been meaningful to them. As was suggested by Heikkinen (see section 4.2.2) something that stirs or sticks to mind may be meaningful and hold the potential for learning. An open ended question was chosen in order not to direct the students' answers in any way.

The second questionnaire (see Appendix 3) at the end of day two asked the students evaluate the whole drama process. I wanted to know if they saw a connection between this drama process and any of the subjects they studied as part of their normal curriculum at school. Question 1 catered for that need. Notably, I never mention to them what

the underlying objectives of attainment of intercultural competence were as I wished not to influence their judgement on the matter. I did not want to tell them what I thought they might learn from the process, because I wanted to learn from them, what they thought they might have learned. Questions 2 and 3 explore the aspect in terms of knowledge and skills learned within the process. Again, as I did not wish to direct their thought open ended questions were used for this. Questions 4 and 5 were included to gain information about the students' feelings toward the whole project with a scaled multiple choice question to force an opinion and an open ended one for personal comments.

The second questionnaire also included four questions that were designed to indicate if the drama process functioned in the desired way by making the students emotionally engage with the characters and if they could show empathy toward them. In question 6 the students were asked to imagine what a particular character would have thought in a particular situation that had been explored during the drama. The idea was that the answers would show if the students could relate empathically to the character's situation and imagine how he would behave in that situation, instead of asking them how they themselves would act in a similar situation. Questions 7 and 8 asked the students to evaluate themselves how well they had been able step into the various characters shoes and if the activities had helped them to do so. The final question was also there to be evaluated by myself and designed to show if the students could indeed relate to the situation of the main characters. All of these four questions were given as open ended ones in order to gain honest and personal answers from the students.

Responses to the questionnaires offered both qualitative and quantitative information and were analysed accordingly. Below, the findings from the analyses are outlined.

Students' prior experience of Educational Drama

Ten of the nineteen participants had not before the experiment participated in a situation where drama activities had been conducted. Five said they had and four were unable to say. Familiarity with the

activities done during the first day varied with almost equal numbers of students choosing each of the possible answers to the question. All but three were familiar with at least one or two of the activities and four claimed to be familiar with most of them. The open ended questions 3a and 3b rendered few responses, but indicated that some of the warm up games were familiar to some students.

Learning in the drama process

Responses to question 5 “Mitä sinulle jäi mieleen tämän päivän harjoituksista?” were varied. Nine of the answers indicated a particular activity from the day: two different warm up games were mentioned in three answers, one mention was made of an improvisation exercise, and five remembered the mini productions. Two of the informants claimed that everything was in their mind. Five indicated that they did not have anything about the day on their mind. The answers show that the students were primarily thinking about individual activities in their answers. It is possible that the form of the questionnaire directed their thinking, but it is also possible that nothing they did during the first day was thought provoking enough to steal the attention away from the fact that they were engaging in activities which in themselves were interesting to them.

The students’ evaluation of the whole drama process at the end of the second day indicates that they were not aware of their own learning. In response to question 2 of the second questionnaire “Opitko draamajaksojen aikana jotakin uutta tietoa?” twelve out of the nineteen participants chose “En osaa sanoa”. Two answered no to the same question and only five answered yes. As a response to the request in the case of an affirmative answer to identify what knowledge had been gained by the student, the following entries were given by the five informants:

- (1) *Vähän näyttelemistä ja jotain*
- (2) *kaikenlaista*
- (3) *Aviorikoksen tehneet naiset mestattiin.*

(4) *Lapsen murhasta mestattiin*

(5) *Että 1800-luvulla nainen olisi tuomittu aviottomasta lapsesta vaikka kuolemaan. Minna Canth on kirjoittanut Anna-Liisa-näytelmän.*

In considering whether they had learned any new skills during the drama process more of the students felt that they were able to say they had not learned any. Only three students claimed having learned some new skills which were identified as:

(1) *Vähän näyttelemään ja eläytymään siihen.*

(2) *Osaan nyt enemmän bantomiinia*

(3) *Seinävoltin luokan seinällä*

As the affirmative answers to these two questions came largely from the same informants, the total number of students that were able to identify that they had learned something during the drama process is six out of nineteen. The results of these questions clearly indicate that the students were not aware of the possible learning processes within themselves. As was noted by Heikkinen (see section 4.2.3 of this study) students are rarely able to identify what, if anything, they have learned during a drama process. This result in the questionnaire does not therefore have to mean that the student's learned nothing. Rather the result reinforces the claim made by Heikkinen.

School subjects that the activities of the drama process were seen to relate to are listed in Table 1 below. The drama process was most strongly seen to relate to Finnish and History. Quite a few also thought it had something to do with Religion or Ethics. Two respondents appeared unsure and indicated one or more subjects as well as saying "En osaa sanoa". Their choices are included in the total number of students who indicated each subject. No one thought the drama process did not relate to any subject. Notable perhaps is the fact that the students did not see a relation between the drama project and foreign language studies.

Table 1. Distribution of answers to question 1 of questionnaire 2.

Question	1. Draamajaksojen aika tehdyissä harjoituksissa tehtiin ja käsiteltiin erilaisia asioita. Mihän eri kouluaineisiin asiat mielestäsi liittyvät?			
School subject followed by number of informants indicating relevance of the drama process to that particular subject.				
Finnish	16	Music	1	
History	14	Geography	1	
Religion	8	English	0	
Ethics	6	Swedish	0	
Health Education	5	Mathematics	0	
Physical Education	3	Physics	0	
Biology	3	Chemistry	0	
Art	2			

Students' response to the drama process

As can be seen from the number of positive responses in Table 2 below the majority of the students thought positively of the exercises of the first day.

Table 2. Distribution of answers to question 4 of questionnaire 1.

Question	4. Tänään tehdyt harjoitukset olivat mielestäni								
Scale of choices	mukavia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ikäviä
Number of informants indicating each choice		3	9	3*	0	2	2	0	
*One informant responded indicating both 2 and 3 on the scale. The response has been included in the results and in this table as 3.									

In evaluating the whole drama project the students first chose from a list of adjectives to describe the drama sessions. The distribution of student responses can be found in Table 3 below. The data reveal that an overall response was a positive one. Most students (16) thought that the process had been fun and a significant number also thought it educational (9) and thought provoking (12). Some also considered it useful (5). Only three students responded with what may be seen as a negative evaluation by choosing one or both of uninspiring and useless. However, the feedback from these individuals contained mixed signals. For one student the process had been fun and thought provoking but also useless. Another thought it fun, thought provoking and teaching, but still uninspiring. Yet another saw that it was fun and uninspiring as well as useless. I cannot help concluding that if three out of nineteen students i.e. 16 % have mixed feelings about or are uncomfortable with doing drama this should be taken into consideration when making decisions about the use of and in planning drama processes.

Table 3. Adjectives chosen by the participants to describe the drama sessions.

Adjectives presented in the questionnaire	Number of informants indicating each adjective
hauska	16
ajatuksia herättävä	12
opettavainen	9
hyödyllinen	5
mitäänsanomaton	2
turha	2
tylsä	0

The personal comments of the students to the open ended question asking them to describe the drama sessions showed an almost

unanimously positive response with comments ranging from “*ihan Jees*” to “*Viihdyttäviä*” and “*Mielenkiintoinen, Ajatuksen lentoa*”. None of the comments can be seen as negative. Based on these results and even with the mixed results of the previous question I would be encouraged to use drama again with this particular group and also to try it with other groups.

Students' ability to relate to the characters of the drama

The students were asked in questions 7 and 8 specifically about their ability to relate to the characters and about the effects the drama activities had on that ability. Fourteen out of the nineteen respondents felt that they were able to look at the situations from the characters point of view. Two were unsure and three felt they were unable to do so. In reference to being able to understand the main character, seven of the nineteen respondents claimed not having gained any help from the exercises, three were unable to say one way or the other, and attributed benefit to the activities. Comments in the last group included for example the following:

(1) *Ihan hyvin*

(2) *Osittain en ajatellut että tilanne olisi niin vakava*

(3) *Kyllä, kun pohti sen tekovaihtoehtoja.*

The fact that nearly half the informants felt that the activities had helped them understand the situation of the main character better are encouraging and indicate that drama can be a useful tool in exploring other people's situations. On the other hand, the high number of those that did not feel any benefit from the activities in this respect can not be ignored either. However, there is no information on which to draw any conclusions on why the activities failed to have the desired effect on these students. I can only conclude the drama process holds the potential to deepen the participants understanding of the characters' situation.

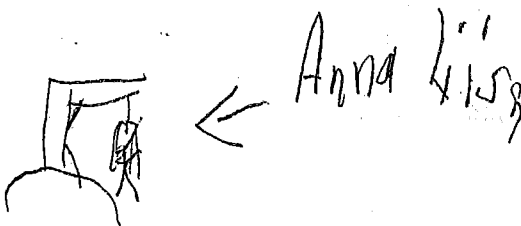
It was hoped that question 6 in the second questionnaire would offer an indication on how well the students in fact were able to empathize with another person's situation as they were asked to place them selves in the shoes of one of the characters and express his thoughts in a situation that was possible in the world of the created drama. The students had to imagine what Anna Liisa's father would have thought if he had found out at the time that Anna Liisa at the age of 15 had dated the farm hand Mikko. Consider the following examples of students' answers:

(1) *Herran jestas! se ei ole suotavaa! Mikon täytyy lähteä! en sentään tappaa aijo! en sellaisen puoskarin takia vankilaan mene!*

(2) *Ahaa, minä arvasin tämän taidampas tappaa hänet. Hän ei pitkälle pötki, haen haulikon*

(3) *Se nyt ei varmaan olisi hirveästi innostunut asiasta, mutta ehkä olisi hyväksynyt sen joskus.*

(4)



The contents of all of the responses to this question were more or less appropriate in the context of the drama process, with example (1) above illustrating the style and content of the majority of the answers. Yet there were some responses that were quite strong, bordering on an over statement that indicated that Anna Liisa's father might want to kill Mikko or even Anna Liisa. But in the light of the materials used this can be seen as reasonable. However, some responses, like example (2) above, I felt were not believable. There seemed to be a joking element in them which to me indicates that the respondents were not at this point engaged in the drama process. Four of the nineteen respondents, as example (3) indicates, did not express the thoughts of Anna Liisa's father in the first person narrative that was intended. Perhaps it is possible to draw from this that they were unable to view the situation from the father's point of view. They were, however, able to imagine

what the father might do and expressed this from an outsider's point of view. Also, some of the respondents chose to render their input to this question partially or wholly in a pictorial form, as in example (4). I have already questioned the target group's ability of expression and although this fact emphasises the point the illustrations can also be seen as a creative of expression that was informative and to the point.

When asked if they would have conducted themselves differently if placed in the situation of Anna Liisa or Mikko I found it not relevant whether they would or not. What was interesting in the answers was what they revealed about the students ability to understand the full extent of the circumstances. Here again the answers produced were quite limited even to the extent of a few giving a one word answer with no reasoning for their choice. Many of the answers can, however, be seen to show understanding of the characters' situation:

(1) *Anna Liisan asemassa olisin tehnyt tunnustuksen heti.*

(2) *Olisin Valinnut mikon isän mielipiteestä huolimatta*

(3) *Aika samoin en oli suostunut Mikolle virheen tekivät molemmat*

(4) *Anna Liisan asiassa olisin toiminut samalla tavalla, Mikkona en olisi vaatinut Anna Liisaa itselleen.*

The responses to these two last questions indicate that at the end of the drama process at least some of the students were able to reflect on a character's situation and consider how on the one hand the character would behave in that situation and on the other how they themselves would behave in the character's situation. This shows the ability to make a distinction between ones own values and ideas and those of another.

6.4 Analysis of lesson recordings

The lessons of the project were videotaped and later reviewed by myself. The student questionnaires offered quite limited amount of data

concerning how well the drama process managed to reach the goals that were set for it. The teacher's reflections were also more focused on overall functioning of the drama lessons. Therefore I chose in reviewing the recordings to focus on looking at elements that would indicate that the students were able to empathically engage with the characters and their situations. In what follows I will outline these observations. But initially some comments on the lessons in general based on observations from the recordings.

The students' unfamiliarity with the drama form showed throughout the lessons. Not all of them seemed to be able to differentiate between the playful seriousness of drama work and pure play for pleasure. During the first day, for example, in the miming activity which required some student to begin the action by miming it and then some other student to join in the improvised activity spontaneously, some students presented what could be termed as pre-rehearsed mini scenes, obviously reproducing scenes that they act out amongst themselves for fun in their free moments. They were in effect reproducing elements of play. Also, portraying emotions in the mini productions was not always believable or the scenes altogether appropriate. Boys especially resorted to artificial acting and even overacting with inappropriate elements, such as violence, included in the scenes where the assigned storyline was that of one person asking the other to the movies. However, as the activity was taken to the next level and more direction was added the resulting scenes were more appropriate. Assigning an object to the feeling of each character appeared to improve the students' performance. Perhaps portraying feeling without an object was too abstract an exercise for the students.

The drama process was designed so that the activities would help the students build a comprehensive picture of the main character's situation so that they would be able at the end of the process to consider how Anna Liisa might resolve the dilemma she finds herself in. Many of the activities did not, however, involve the students taking on a role where they would have had to think about the situation from that character's point of view. Most of the work requiring such role-taking

involved a few volunteer acting out the roles with the rest of the students as audience. The audience was of course involved in forming the scenes by being able to suggest which direction the scene should be taken in and everyone was also involved in discussion of the scenes. In fact, the only activity during the process where every student could empathically step into the shoes of Anna Liisa was the writing of Anna Liisa's diary entry after a night out with Mikko. Therefore I also decided to look at the diary entries as they were written on paper.

In analyzing the diaries written by the students I had to consider the duality of the writing situation: The writers had taken on the role of Anna Liisa and were writing her thoughts into her diary. But at the same time they were also writing as themselves as students in the classroom performing in a drama process. This latter situation was new to the students and it is reasonable to allow that they did not yet fully understand the discursive conventions and the style of text that was expected of them in that situation. The situation of the drama world expected them to follow the genre of a diary and being a participant in drama process meant that they should submit to the task with a degree of seriousness. Consider examples (1), (2) and (3):

(1)
15.6

Rakas päiväkirja

Kello on nyt 12 ja tulin juuri tanssiaisista markkinoilta. Sanoin isälle, että menen uimaan tyttökavereiden kanssa. Ja Mikko sanoi, että menee naapurin piian kanssa tanssimaan ja isä päästi hänet. Tapasimme Mikon kanssa apteekin edessä ja menimme torille tanssiaisiin. Jotkut katselivat hieman pitkään, mutta toivottavasti he eivät kerro isälle. Mikko on aivan ihana. Olen rakastunut häneen. Kävelimme käsi kädessä kotiin. Toivottavasti voimme mennä joskus uudestaan tanssimaan!

(2)
13.5.1900

Olin tänään tanssiaisissa. Se oli tyhmää, Mikko oli idiootti. Kun tanssimme lavalla kaikki nauroivat meille, koska Mikolla oli niin rumat vaatteet. Mikko oli vielä niin läskikin. Hän lupasi kuitenkin laihduttaa.

The examples shown here as indeed all 9 of the entries do follow the form of a diary. But where (1) can be said to have been written

earnestly, (2) shows joking attitude in the content that indicates the writer did not engage in the task and was not committed to the process. Out of the nine entries two, including example (2) above, are overtly inappropriate in content and a third example is in a lesser degree so. On the other hand the majority, i.e. 6 entries, were conforming to the conventions of both of the socio cultural situations: the imagined drama world and the context of the educational drama. This indicates that the majority of the students were at this stage engaging in the work in a way that made meaningful experiences possible.

It is also possible to assess the produced texts in terms of holding markers that indicate the assuming of the role and the ability to imagine what that character was thinking at that particular point in the drama. This would indicate the ability to empathically relate to the character's situation. At the same time, elements in the writing that indicate the student's own thoughts and points of view and comments from outside the character indicate restricted ability of looking at things from the writer's own personal point of view and lack of ability to relate to the character empathically. Consider example (3):

(3)
1.1. vuonna Elvis

Rakas päiväkirja.

Tänään kävimme tanssiaisissa erään kanssa. Hän oli kerrassaan loistava tanssija. Nautimme vähän juomia, en muista aivan kaikkea. Isä ei saa tietääettä kävin juhlissa, sillä hän luulee, että kävin tyttöjen kanssa uimassa. Ei ole oikein, että olen Mikon kanssa, sillä hän on vain renki. Pidän kyllä myös Johanneksesta, mutta Mikkoa rakastan. Nyt menen nukkumaan. Hyvää yötä, rakas päiväkirja.

Whereas most of the text can be seen as appropriate for Anna Liisa's thoughts, the line *Ei ole oikein, että olen Mikon kanssa, sillä hän on vain renki.* seems more like a comment expressed by the student behind the role rather than Anna Liisa, the character who is in love with Mikko at that time. Leaving out the two entries that were overtly inappropriate in content, all entries but example (3) above were written entirely from the point of view of Anna Liisa. This suggests that in this exercise most of the students could empathically relate to the character in question.

The final scene, which was the culmination of the drama story and also of the play that functioned as the pretext, involved all students, but only one of them was acting in the role of Anna Liisa. This volunteer student was given the power to decide for all how Anna Liisa would resolve the dilemma. In reflective talking with the students in response to the activity everyone was given the opportunity to say how they thought Anna Liisa should act in the situation and also how they themselves would have acted in the same situation. The students were surprisingly able to also give reasons for their choices. However, the process did not allow them personally to make the choice in role as Anna Liisa.

Altogether then, the students' chances of experiencing a character from within a role were quite limited during this particular drama process. Also the limited timeframe and to some extent the choices made in planning the structure of the drama process meant that the building of the characters was quite superficial. For the purpose of more thorough character building the process could have concentrated more on that aspect with more exercises to deepen the understanding of the nature of the characters with perhaps less attention to the actual storyline of the play. The drama story now followed the storyline of the original play which was a conscious choice. This way the students also learned about the play itself as part of their cultural heritage during the process. With only limited time available not everything can be achieved. It is also well to remember that the premise for the experiment maintained that drama work, not just role-taking exercises, can provide the necessary tool for students to explore other peoples' lives in fictitious context so that they can gain insight into other peoples' ways of thinking and acting.

6.5 Summary of the findings

The teacher's reflections revealed that the drama process planned for this experiment was in many respects successful in its form and in its ability to account for the particular needs of the target group. It became

apparent from the recordings that the drama process was limited in offering the students a chance to act in role but other drama conventions were used to develop the students understanding of the main characters situation. The diary entries written in character and the questionnaire answers that required the students to step into character suggested that most of the students were able to empathically relate to the character in question.

The data from the questionnaires confirmed the teacher's previous assumption based on informal discussion with the students that the target group had little prior experience in educational drama. The participants' attitude toward drama after the first day and at the end of the project was predominantly positive. The data showed support to the theory that students are seldom aware of any learning that may take place during participation in drama.

It is not possible to conclusively infer from this type of inquiry that the students' cognitive schemata were changed as a result of having taken part in this particular drama process. To do so would require pre- and post testing. Therefore, I am careful not to draw any conclusions about the effectiveness of the drama process on the matter. Whether the activities helped the students to come to this understanding or not is not evident in the collected data. However, the students' own evaluation gave support to the idea that drama holds the potential for shaping the participants' thinking.

In the free discussion after the students had returned their questionnaires at the end of the second day some things were expressed by the students that I feel need to be given space here. It was desired that the process had included more acting in role and even from a script. In response to my inquiring about the type of play that would interest them for the purposes of such work the students said it should have humour in it. I also took the opportunity there to ask the students if they thought they could have engaged in the type of drama work that was done over the process had it been conducted in English. The unanimous response from the students was a negative one. They

felt that they could not have done the exercises in English because they did not have good enough language skills.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Suitability of drama for the teaching of intercultural competence

I set out to review current theories of language, culture, drama and learning in order to find evidence to support the use of drama for the attainment of intercultural competence. In reviewing the literature I concluded that culture influences communication and thus intercultural communicative competence should be seen as part of an over-all foreign language competence. It was recognised that intercultural competence requires both linguistic and non-linguistic skills. The development of intercultural sensitivity in terms of transforming an individual's frame of reference from an *ethnocentric* to an *ethnorelative* one was considered an important aspect of developing intercultural competence. Drawing from the theories of Meyer (1991), Hofstede (1991) and Bennett (1998) I was able to identify the basic components of intercultural communicative competence as: 1) the awareness of one's own cultural conditioning, 2) awareness of differences between cultures, and 3) skills that enable the speaker to overcome the problems that may be caused by the differences.

Three models of teaching intercultural communication were then reviewed and it was concluded that they all aimed at the attainment of cultural awareness in terms of differences between cultures and also awareness of one's own cultural conditioning. Bennett's model (1998) was found also to propose a procedure for the attainment of ethnocentric frame of reference, offering a concrete and feasible explanation on how the student may overcome any difficulties of intercultural communication. Based on the models it was concluded that the attainment of intercultural competence requires modification of learners' cognitive schemata. It was also concluded that the most

important skill in intercultural competence is the ability to evaluate other peoples' actions in reference to their relative situations instead of one's own and that this may best be achieved by developing students' ability to emphatically review other people's situations.

In exploring the theory of learning potential of educational drama it was determined that drama work appears to provide learners with the opportunity to explore other points of view in a way that can be a very effective personal experience. Current theories of learning were shown to give support to the theory of learning in drama. Also, evidence from studies concerning first and second language learning through drama were shown to suggest that drama as a teaching method can be effective. It was concluded that with current information and the view of intercultural competence that was adopted it was reasonable to suggest that drama could be used for the attainment of intercultural competence.

Findings and implications

I also set out to create a teaching material package that would deploy drama for the attainment of intercultural competence. Importantly, I also wished to evaluate the teaching material and its implementation. The teaching material was planned for a particular group of students and particular situational needs were taken into consideration in planning the lessons. The teaching experiment was conducted as an action research. Qualitative and quantitative information was gathered from the participants with questionnaires, from the teacher by written reflections of the lessons and by videotaping the lessons and later reviewing the recordings.

Based on the evidence of the data it was possible to determine that out of the four possible learning areas listed by Heikkinen (see section 4.2.3 of this study) the students learned about the content and topic of the drama and about drama form. My personal estimation based on my experience as a teacher is that they also learned something about themselves and social skills, although no attempt was made to make such areas of learning visible in the data collected. In

terms of the objectives that were set for the drama process it can be said that although it was not possible to gain evidence of modification of the learners' schemata, the drama process did offer the participants an opportunity to participate in an emotionally engaging learning experience in order to develop the ability to feel empathy and thus relate to other peoples' situations. The process also offered the students information about the conditions of the Finnish society in the recent past as was intended.

The drama process was designed as an attempt to give the students a chance to practice looking at situations from another person's perspective. But it appeared in reviewing them afterwards that the lessons only provided limited possibilities for students to engage in role-taking. Only some of the activities involved all students taking on a role. Quite a few of the activities in the planned sessions had only a small number of students in roles while others remained in the audience. However, it was understood from considering the learning potential of drama that drama work in general – not just practising role-taking – can support the acquisition of empathy which is an integral element of intercultural competence. A drama process with its various activities offers the participants a chance to explore the created situations and characters in many different ways. The analyses of the materials the students produced in role showed that they were able to take on a point of view different from their own during these exercises. Based on the students' own comments in the questionnaires it seems that the exercises that were conducted helped the students to step into role and to understand the characters better. This indicates that the drama process functioned as was desired.

The materials also aimed to enhance the students' understanding of the recent past of their own culture and society, thus fostering awareness of the students' own cultural conditioning. The evidence from the questionnaires shows that at least some students gained new information through the process. The fact that only a few were able to identify aspects of learning themselves cannot be regarded as evidence of only a few having learned anything. Rather it must be

remembered what was said by Heikkinen (see section 4.2.3 of this study) about students being rarely able to recognize what they have learned in drama. With this in mind it must be seen as encouraging that some students were able to do so as a result of this drama process.

The experiment also gave insight into some aspects which although not termed as objectives for the study are worth stating here. The experiment demonstrated the fact that drama requires time. A process that is intended to explore a context thoroughly cannot happen within a single or even a couple of consecutive lessons. Also the drama form requires specific skills and there needs to be time for the acquisition of those skills before context can be explored fully. Yet another element that requires time in drama form is reflection. In order for the learning processes to be complete and to give a chance for the conceptualisation of what has been learned the drama process must have room for reflective discussion or other form of reflective work. These requirements for time pose a problem for the use of drama in the school environment where curricular demands mean that there is no abundance in lesson time. This is a problem that in the present state has to be resolved at the local level as it is found appropriate.

As was discussed in section 4.2 the potential held by drama to affect change in an individual's attitudes or conceptions relies on the participant having a meaningful affective experience in the drama. To achieve this experience and for the participant to be able to perceive what the situation or action feels like to the character he is playing and also to himself requires focus and willingness to engage emotionally with the drama work. This requires from the teenagers especially full use of their mental and emotional capacities. If the drama work is to be conducted in a foreign language in which the participants are not proficient I believe the challenges for appropriate engagement with the activity become too great. This idea is supported by the students' comments at the end of the teaching experiment. This, however, is in conflict with the general idea that the language used in a foreign language classroom should primarily be the target language. Although the method used in this study may not be the only means to the effect

we may have to take a critical review of our teaching practices to determine their suitability for the attainment of the objectives of foreign language teaching. I can see that the time used on teaching intercultural competence lessens the time available for teaching other aspects of language learning and this may result in students attaining a lower level of proficiency in the target language forms. However, we must consider whether we want to teach students to be fluent foreign language speakers with limited or no practical abilities or whether we wish to help them learn how to communicate appropriately in the world of multiple cultures.

There may also be room for development in the curriculum not only in how foreign languages are dealt with but on a more general level. School teaching tends to split the world into units that are regarded separately within each subject (Rauste-von Wright and von Wright 1994). This enhances the creation of separate and isolated schemas for different contexts instead of a web of meaningful connections between the schemas. Searching for information in the mind becomes difficult when the schemata in the mind have been organised as separate units with no interconnectedness. Drama work on the other hand often involves using elements from different contexts and schemas in an interconnected way. Drama could be seen as a unifying element in school work if it had a more substantial role in basic education in the form of project or courses in each grade the participation of which was compulsory to all. It should be considered also, that not all students may enjoy drama work. Whether students need to enjoy school work or not is altogether another question. However, it is well to keep the point in mind.

It must be remembered that the development of an individual's ethnorelative world view and the ability to feel empathy is a long process that spans over years. It cannot be expected that any single course could conclusively teaching these aspects to students. The lessons planned for this experiment did not attempt to reach proficient level of intercultural competence. The study only attempted to find out if

drama could be influential in the development of intercultural competence. This, I believe, I managed to do successfully.

Evaluation of the method of study

The group participating in the experiment was like any other average class of students of a Finnish primary school, a group that a practising teacher has to teach when assigned to do so. In that sense the context of the experiment was not unique. No aspect of the group or context was particular in a way that would make it possible to claim relevance to other situations with similar characteristics. Nor can I claim that the information gathered from the experiment is in any way generally representative. This is not due to any fault in the conducted experiment itself but rather an inherent problem of action research as a method. One would be right in asking whether action research is an “optimistic way of ensuring that research impacts on practice for improvement, or [is it] a recessive hybrid” (Cohen et al. 2000:241). Due to the nature of the study I was not able to determine in a scientifically valid way whether the deployed drama process influenced the participants’ ability to empathically review other people’s situations. Nor could I conclusively determine whether the participants’ intercultural competence was improved through the process. All results of this study must be reviewed as suggestive.

One must also consider the relevance and validity of information gathered through the questionnaires. Questions 1 – 4 of the first questionnaire rendered information as was desired. Question 5, however, did not. Although the question was designed not to be directing the students answers, perhaps the fact that the previous questions dealt with activities directed the students to primarily indicate individual activities in their responses. I had hoped for more focused answers. As it was the question did not provide desired information.

The first three questions of the second questionnaire again functioned as planned. In Question 4 the scaled multiple choices we intended to force students to express their opinion but the fact that the informants were allowed more than one choice meant that the opinions

expressed by a single informant were occasionally conflicting. An informant could have chosen options from each end of the scale. This made interpretation of the data a little problematic. However, in viewing all of the answers the numbers made it possible to make inferences about the students' opinions.

The students' input in open ended questions through out the questionnaires can be termed as minimal. The answers rendered often consisted of less than a full sentence. Open ended questions are always problematic for analyses. In any study the respondents may not be equally capable of articulating their thoughts and especially in this case where the respondents were teenagers it may be the case that none of them are so. If the students were in fact incapable of articulating their thoughts the answers do not represent their true thoughts. This raises the question of reliability of the answers and any conclusions made from them. However, the findings concerning this particular group using drama serve as an indication of what may be possible for other groups also. It is possible that other question types could have rendered data that would have formed a sounder base for analyses. However, the type of information desired would not easily be made apparent in multiple choice questions.

As with any case of discourse analyses, in this study also all analyses of texts are the result of my personal and subjective view of the texts being analysed. As can be seen from the excerpts quoted in section 6.2, the teacher's reflections were primarily concerned with the overall running of the activities and the process. This is understandable as such things are often at the topmost on the teacher's mind after a lesson. A teacher is naturally concerned with how well the materials that he or she has chosen worked for that group and in conjunction with each other. Also, as I am a mere novice in drama process planning so I was naturally concerned with the outcome of the lessons and how the activities that I had planned formed in real action the structure of the drama. These are valid concerns when one desires to better oneself in designing drama processes. However, in the case of this study, information about how the work done by the students appeared to affect

their ability to empathically relate to characters would have been useful. The teacher's reflections would have served the purpose of the study better if such aspects had also been considered in the reflections. This could have been achieved by providing questions for the teacher to be used when writing the reflections. On the other hand, the unguided entries do provide an honest and personal account of the proceedings and of the experience of the teacher of the drama sessions. Adopting this method of writing down teacher's comments meant that the thoughts and ideas resulting from the experiment could be more thoroughly analysed and points that might have been otherwise overlooked were detected in the re-readings of the journal entries. The points discussed suggest that action research as method even with its lack of objectivity or findings with general applicability is a valuable tool for practicing teachers attempting to better themselves in their trade.

Suggestions for further study

Regardless of the limitations of the study methods adopted for this study, I see that the results of the teaching experiment and the findings of the review of current theories are encouraging enough to support the use of drama for the attainment of intercultural competence in basic education. Further study is needed to fully validate the claims of the learning potential of drama. As was stated above, this type of research cannot answer the question whether drama can be effective. To claim that an action taken in classroom influences learning would require pre and post tests, control groups and larger samples for validity. The problem with the current issue is the lack of tools for measuring those aspects that are of interest, i.e. ability to feel empathy, or ethnorelativity of world views held by individuals in the target group. Furthermore, the nature of learning which changes the cognitive schemata is such that it may take a long time to come about and even then evidence of the change is not easily detectable. It is possible that to get evidence a larger scale study spanning over a longer period with more appropriate methods of data collecting could better provide answers to the questions about the effects of drama on the development of intercultural

competence. It would be interesting to monitor the development of students' intercultural sensitivity over a period of several years, for example. A journal written by the students could offer insights into the cognitive processes and supply appropriate materials for that type of study.

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Lesson plans for the teaching experiment

Day one

stage	technique / activity	aim
Introduction of the drama project	Whole group discussion.	To offer students some idea of what to expect from the upcoming lessons.
Drama contract	Whole group discussion.	To create commitment for the process.
Warm-up game	Ping-pong. Whole group.	To focus concentration.
Introducing drama conventions	Sculptures: pastoral objects. Two groups	Giving form to the imagined. Introducing the idea of a farming community.
	Mime: passing an imaginary object. Whole group	Learning about miming.
	Moving sculptures. Two groups	Working together. Using sound. Giving form to the imagined.
	Improvisation: one starts an action and another joins in the scene (re-) defining the action. Whole group	To encourage acting and miming. Working together and accepting others' interpretations.
	Mini productions: A asks B to a movie, each has a feeling (happy, sad, angry or in love). Pairs.	To gain experience in acting in front of others. Introducing feelings for the characters. Students use their own experiences as a starting point.
	Development of the previous activity: re-enacting the same scene so that each character has a reason and an object for the feeling.	To deepen the roles and role-taking. To encourage entering into the role.
	Mini productions: acting out a short dialogue according to a given situation.	To practice role-taking. Introduces the imagined situation. Students need to imagine someone else's experience.
Lunch break		
Warm-up game	I love you so much, but I cannot smile to you.	To regain concentration and focus after the lunch break. Keeping in the theme of love.
Beginning the story	Narrative: Teacher narrates the beginning of the play Anna Liisa.	To introduce the pretext. To take the story to the right moment in the play.
Introducing the conflict	Reading a passage of the play with reflection after 1-2 pages. Whole group with volunteers reading aloud.	To introduce the characters and their situation and feelings toward each other at the beginning of the play. Introducing the conflict.

Background information	Reading a description of the period individually and discussion with whole group.	To offer a frame of reference and factual information about the society depicted in the play.
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Day two

stage	technique / activity	aim
Introducing a dramatic aspect	Status game. Whole group.	To draw attention to difference in acting with people of different statuses. The scene of a clothes shop was chosen for familiarity to ease identifying.
Recalling the story and characters.	Typewriters of 4-5 students, each assigned to a section of the alphabet, spelling words related to the play.	To remind of the facts of the process so far. To build concentration, encourage working together and listen to others.
Deepening the characters	Interview: 4-5 students speaking in one voice as one person from the play.	To build up the characters. To build concentration, encourage working together and listen to others.
	Improvisations with elements of Forum theatre. Four scenes depicting Mikko and Annaliisa's secret relationship. Volunteers with rest of the group as audience.	To develop understanding of the characters and their situation. Asking for a permission to go out and hiding a secret were chosen as elements the students could relate to while getting into character.
	Writing: Annaliisa's diary after the night out with Mikko. Pair work.	Getting into role. Working in pairs to encourage dialogue and analysed products.
Introducing church as an element in the conflict	Teacher in role with lines written by the students.	To challenge the students to look at the situation from another point of view.
Lunch break		
Taking the story forward	Narrative. Teacher gives a summary of the events in the play.	To bring the story to the point of the conflict.
Parents' dilemma	Improvised scene with lines from the play. Volunteers in role.	To offer yet another point of view to the conflict.
Reflection	Whole group discussion. Listing Annaliisa's options.	To reflect on and create understanding of the situation of Annaliisa and her motives.
Annaliisa's decision	Tunnel of decision. Whole group with one volunteer as Annaliisa.	Understanding the reasons behind the actions of the character.
End discussion	Reflection on Annaliisa's decision. Whole group.	Removing character(s) and reflection from students' own point of view.

Questionnaire 1

Rengasta vaihtoehto, joka on lähinnä omaa käsitystäsi.

1. Oletko aikaisemmin ollut mukana tilanteessa, jossa tehtiin drama-harjoituksia?

- 1 Kyllä. 2 En. 3 En osaa sanoa.

2. Olivatko tänään tehdyt harjoitukset sinulle ennestään tuttuja?

- 1 Kyllä, suurin osa.
2 Kyllä, moni, mutta eivät kaikki.
3 Vain jotkut olivat tuttuja.
4 Yksi tai kaksi harjoitusta tuntui tutulta.
5 Ei. Harjoitukset olivat minulle uusia.

3a. Jos valitsit kohdassa 2 vaihtoehdon 3 tai 4, kerro tässä mitkä harjoitukset olivat sinulle ennesyään tuttuja.

3b. Jos valitsit kohdassa 2 vaihtoehdon 2, kerro tässä mitkä harjoitukset olivat sinulle uusia.

4. Tänään tehdyt harjoitukset olivat mielestäni

- mukavia 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ikäviä 8 en osaa sanoa

5. Mitä sinulle jäi mieleen tämän päivän aikana tehdyistä harjoituksista?

Questionnaire 2

1. Draamajaksojen aikana tehdyissä harjoituksissa tehtiin ja käsiteltiin erilaisia asioita. Mihin eri kouluaineisiin asiat mielestäsi liittyivät? Ympyröi mielestäsi sopivat vaihtoehdot.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1 äidinkieli | 10 uskonto |
| 2 matematiikka | 11 elämäkatsomustieto |
| 3 historia | 12 liikunta |
| 4 biologia | 13 fysiikka |
| 5 maantiede | 14 kemia |
| 6 englanti | 15 terveystieto |
| 7 ruotsi | 16 ei mielestäni liittynyt mihinkään kouluaineeseen |
| 8 kuvataide | 17 en osaa sanoa |
| 9 musiikki | |

2. Opitko draamajaksojen aikana jotakin uutta tietoa? Rengasta vaihtoehto, joka on lähinnä omaa käsitystäsi.

- 1 Kyllä. 2 En. 3 En osaa sanoa.

Jos vastasit kyllä, mitä?

3. Opitko draamajaksojen aikana joitakin uusia taitoja? Rengasta vaihtoehto, joka on lähinnä omaa käsitystäsi.

- 1 Kyllä. 2 En. 3 En osaa sanoa.

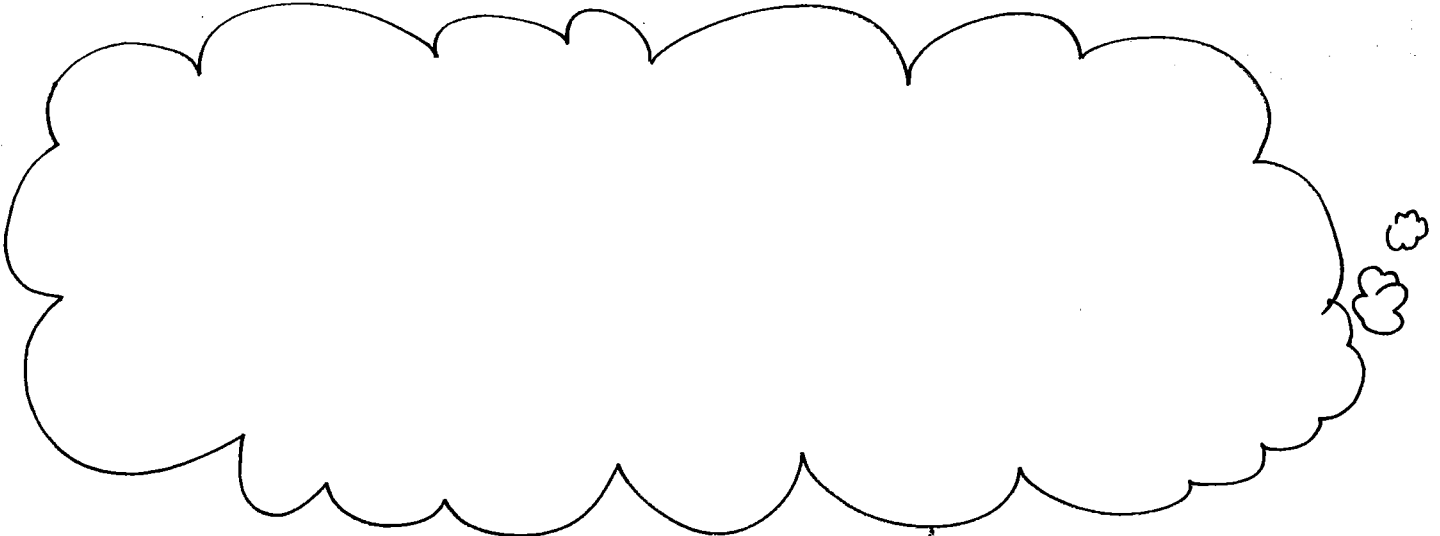
Jos vastasit kyllä, mitä?

4. Mitkä alla olevista sanoista sopivat kuvaamaan nyt läpikäytyjä draamajaksoja? Ympyröi mielestäsi sopivat vaihtoehdot?

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 hauska | 5 mitäänsanomaton |
| 2 hyödyllinen | 6 tylsä |
| 3 opettavainen | 7 turha |
| 4 ajatuksia herättävä | |

5. Miten muuten kuvailisit näitä kahta draamajaksoa?

6. Tänään käsitelimme tilannetta, jossa 15-vuotias Anna Liisa tapasi salaa talon renkiä Mikkoa. Kuvittele, että Anna Liisan isä olisi tuolloin saanut tietää tapahtumasta? Mitä luulet, että hän olisi ajatellut? Kirjoita isän mietteitä alla olevaan ajatuskuplaan. Kirjoita myös, miten hän ajattelee toimia ja mitä sanoa ja kenelle.



7. Draamajaksojen aikana pohdittiin erilaisia tilanteita eri henkilöiden kannalta. Osaitko mielestäsi asettua kunkin eri henkilön asemaan?

8. Auttoivatko tehdyt harjoitukset sinua ymmärtämään Anna Liisaa? Miten?

9. Olisitko itse toiminut toisin Anna Liisan tai Mikon asemassa? Miten?