CREATIVE DRAMA ACTIVITIES AS AN APPROACH TO
DEVELOPING FLUENCY IN SPOKEN ENGLISH IN THE
PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SINGAPORE

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Theatre
by
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ABSTRACT

CREATIVE DRAMA ACTIVITIES AS AN APPROACH TO DEVELOPING FLUENCY IN SPOKEN ENGLISH IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SINGAPORE

by

Roland Clive Scharenguivel

Master of Arts in Theatre

Although English is the medium of instruction in most schools in Singapore, it is not the language of the home for the majority of the pupils. The present level of attainment in spoken English is not satisfactory. In an examination-oriented education system, written language is over-emphasized at the expense of oral expression, which is believed by teachers and principals to be unnecessarily time consuming. The practical application of language and oral communication is sadly neglected. As a result, pupils often have great difficulty in expressing themselves orally in English and are generally very self-conscious and inhibited.
In this study, the writer emphasizes the importance and use of creative drama as a vital strategy and an indispensable tool for the teacher to help pupils develop language skills and cultivate the ability to think and speak extemporaneously. Through creative drama activities, pupils are given the opportunity to express ideas, emotions and feelings in a wide variety of real and imagined situations, thus emphasizing the affective-social process of speech as well as the cognitive domain of language learning.

The goal of this thesis is to delineate aims, principles and methods of using drama as a pragmatic approach to developing fluency in spoken English and to offer teachers suggestions and guidelines for creative drama activities.

Chapters in the thesis include the importance and use of drama for the language teacher, the rationale for creative drama as an integral part in the primary school curriculum, and ways of beginning creative drama in Primary One. A major part of the paper is devoted to specific examples of rhymes and songs, pantomime and movement activities, activities using music as a stimulus to create or enhance the dramatic situation, dramatic dialogues, and various improvisation activities to elicit
autonomous interaction and to provide pupils with opportunities to use conversational English in life-like situations.
I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand.

Chinese proverb

The playing out of situations challenges the child's social attitude, his verbal control and language ability, his unselfishness, his physical energies and his imagination as he 'lives through' the situations of interest to him.

Dorothy Heathcote

"Drama as Challenge"
The Uses of Drama (1972)
Chapter 1

RATIONALE AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This fundamental change in our policy of industrialization geared to a world export market...also meant more widespread use of English, for this is the language of the investing industrialists...More and more parents have registered their children for the English-stream schools...and despite successive campaigns, parents have continued to place the future careers of their children first, before any cultural or linguistic patriotism.1

Lee Kuan Yew
Prime Minister, Singapore

Linguistically, Singapore is unique in that it has four official languages--Chinese (Mandarin), Malay, Tamil and English. All four are available as media of instruction and as second languages at both primary and secondary level, and although parents can choose to have their children educated in schools using any of the four official languages as the medium of instruction, the majority--eighty-six per cent² have opted for an English medium education.

Three reasons for this demand are, first: the English-educated have better job opportunities than the Chinese-educated; second, in 1966 the Government introduced a bilingual policy requiring all students to study English either as a first or as a second language; and, third,
English has status and prestige in Singapore. Kwan Sai Kheong, the former Director of Education, stressed the importance of English and pointed out that, "We have come to realize that English is essential to our economic well-being and that it can enrich, rather than dissipate, the diverse cultural heritage of our multiracial and multilingual Republic."\(^3\) Thus English, which is not an ethnic mother tongue, is promoted in Singapore as the 'lingua franca' of inter-ethnic communication. It is the language of government bureaucracy, and a medium for Singapore's principal function, namely international trade and commerce.

Although English is widely used as the official language of communication in all government offices, the type of English which is heard in Singapore differs widely from British or American models. Instead, in Singapore one generally hears a variety of local forms of English, ranging from a simplified and almost pidginized dialect of English, to a rather formal variety of English which is probably the result of the strong emphasis on the written word in the schools.

Failure to achieve an acceptable standard of English is causing the government some concern.\(^4\) Several factors and prevailing problems have contributed to this failure:

1. There are only about five per cent native speakers of
the language and about thirty-five percent non-native speakers. The majority of the population are thus non-
English speaking.

2. English is not associated with any of the three major ethnic groups in terms of ethnic-linguistic identity.

3. The majority of pupils attending the primary and secondary schools in Singapore do not speak English at home. Their first language, or mother tongue, is either some dialect of Chinese, the Malay language or Tamil. Thus, although they attend English-medium schools, they are not necessarily proficient in the language. In primary schools, the English spoken will be found to contain many structures distinctly showing interferences from the first language of the pupils.

4. There is a shortage of qualified English-medium teachers, particularly for teaching English in the upper grades, to cope with the increased demand for English education.

5. There is also a shortage of well-developed English-language textbooks and material, particularly in the primary school.

6. Classes are excessively large—about 40 to 50 in a class.

7. There is over-emphasis on the written word and drills rather than upon the practical application of the language in lifelike situations.

In a written examination oriented education system, teachers feel that oral expression and communication take up an unnecessarily great deal of time, and thus the practical application of the language is sadly neglected. Even if there is oral activity in the curriculum, it often takes the form of repetition or drilling of the language structures. In fact, it is quite usual to find teachers doing most or all of the talking in the classroom. Pupils are often blamed for making little progress in English when,
in fact, they have not been given many opportunities to use the language, either in the classroom or outside. Thus, when faced with a real-life situation, they have great difficulty in expressing themselves orally and are often very self-conscious and inhibited. The fact of the matter is that the language taught in the classroom has little relevance to their communication needs.

Difficulties with spoken English will persist unless teachers shift the emphasis from written language and meaningless drills to oral expression, and give pupils abundant opportunity to use English in a natural, practical and useful way in a significant social setting.

Creative drama, which, by definition, is a "doing of life" involving informal creative expression and improvisation, is an excellent way of dealing with this problem, since it presents pupils with situations in which they are called upon to communicate a wide selection of thoughts and ideas. The activities of creative drama will help to develop language skills and a fluency in oral expression. Drama is a particularly useful and effective tool for teaching English as a second language because it motivates a much-needed interest in learning and breaks down inhibitions which block the use and fluency of the language.

This study was undertaken in an effort to help teachers realize the importance of creative drama as an
indispensable tool in assisting pupils to develop a fluency in spoken English. The purpose of this study may be stated as follows:

1. to delineate principles and methods of using creative drama as a pragmatic approach to developing fluency in spoken English among pupils in the Primary schools in Singapore; and

2. to offer some guidelines and suggestions for teachers in the classroom.

Since speech is an affective-social process as well as a cognitive one, the creative drama activities in this study will include the affective domain of language learning.
Chapter 2

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE AS A LIVING LANGUAGE

A widespread interest in language learning has brought about many changes in methods of techniques of teaching English as a second language. Since the nature of language and its complex operations is still a matter of controversy, language teachers and linguists may never see eye to eye on the best method or methods of teaching English as a second language. Nevertheless, they all agree that one of the main purposes of language is communication, and that the objective of language teaching is communicative competence.

Otto Jespersen has pointed out that "language is primarily speech, that is, chiefly conversation (dialogue) while the written (and printed) word is only a kind of substitute."\(^5\) According to Leonard Bloomfield, another linguist, oral language is primary and should be given primary stress in the classroom,\(^6\) and Eric H. Kadler has emphasized that speech is often "the most effective and the most important mode of communication."\(^7\)

All these statements affirm the true purpose of studying a language today. We no longer study a foreign or second language merely to read its literature and
recognize its code or signs. We need to acquire a practical skill which will enable us to use the language as an instrument for communication.

Since the ultimate goal of language learning in Singapore is communication, the primary objective of teaching a language should be to train the learners to use the language to express themselves and to satisfy their own needs. Communicative competence cannot be achieved merely through drills and exercises practiced in the classroom. The audio-lingual methods advocated by modern linguists, which involve careful drill and practice in sentence patterns, have not helped pupils make significant progress in expressing themselves competently and fluently in English.

Teachers in Singapore often find that even though pupils may have performed sentence patterns and drills quite fluently and may give every indication of having mastered the patterns, they usually have problems in transferring their classroom abilities to real-life communication situations. This is because the conditions under which they achieve this mastery and exercise this fluency are highly artificial and quite unlike the conditions of normal conversation. In class, pupils can probably understand more than they can speak, but outside the classroom they usually find the reverse is true -- they may be able to say many things, but can understand very little. Very often pupils may not even understand what they are drilling
or repeating, so that drills and pattern practice become a meaningless routine and bear no relationship to the use of English as a means of communication. The drills and sentence patterns have only resulted in pupils speaking in a stilted and artificial manner which is divorced from English spoken by native speakers. In fact, the learners generally find it very difficult to understand and communicate with native speakers because they have not been taught the colloquialisms, the contractions, and other kinds of elision that take place in natural spoken language. This results in a disappointing, discouraging and frustrating experience for both teacher and pupil. Thus many teachers have begun to question the efficacy of methods like pattern practice and drills.

Another important factor that is omitted by language teachers in the pattern practice method is that pupils are not saying what they might want to say, but often what the teachers require them to say -- and this may be remote from their own personal experiences and interests. Pupils must have something to talk about and must be interested in communicating their ideas to someone else. In fact, it has been observed that pupils persist and persevere when they are communicating with their peers in a real situation. In planning a language programme, this should be taken into consideration. Interest must be given high priority, and the programme should provide a means by which the pupils
can do more than learn the semantic union between word and object, or word and experience. The real test of success in language teaching should be whether or not the pupils in our schools are able to use the language in various situations in which they have a real need, a deep desire to say something and to someone to whom they genuinely want to say something. In other words, "steady improvement will come only from individual motivation and purpose: that personal desire to perfect one's communicative effectiveness which is stimulated by genuine interest in what one is doing." 9

As noted earlier, speech is an affective-social process as well as a cognitive one. Some psychologists maintain that the influence of attitudes and feelings in language learning is a greater contributing factor in determining pupil achievement and success than the cognitive. 10 The essential ingredient which injects life into sentence patterns learned in the classroom is being able to express ideas, emotions and feelings in the language. However, these ingredients are generally missing in the language classes. While learning grammar, which is primarily cognitive, is generally given emphasis, the affective domain is sadly neglected by language teachers who then wonder why pupils are unable to communicate with native speakers or appear tongue-tied when faced with a real-life situation. As Wilga Rivers and Mary Temperley
stress, "knowledge and intensive practice (skill-getting) are not enough to ensure confident interaction. The latter requires practice in actual, purposeful conversational exchange with others."\textsuperscript{11}

The goal of the teacher, then, must be to bridge the gap and link the language taught in the classroom with the 'real' English spoken by native speakers. The pupils must be made to see that the way they have learned to talk about tables and books and about themselves in the classroom is extendable and can be applied in real-life situations. Classroom experiences requiring authentic communication in real-life situations which demand the use of informal conversational English will give pupils close contact with the language used by native speakers. To achieve this end, the teacher's task is to devise a wide range of real and imagined situations in which pupils can use and practice the language naturally and appropriately.
Chapter 3

THE IMPORTANCE OF DRAMA FOR THE LANGUAGE TEACHER

The importance of drama in teaching English in our schools cannot be over emphasized. John Stewig states that "probably one of the strongest contributions drama makes is to oral language proficiency."\(^{12}\) According to P. Lindsay, "the use of drama, in the widest sense, reminds teachers and learners that speaking another language involves acting in that language," since speaking a language involves paralinguistic vocal cues and features like gestures, facial expression, and non-verbal sounds.\(^{13}\)

Drama has three important values for the language teacher. First, as Rivers and Temperly point out, drama is "an excellent technique for eliciting autonomous interaction in speech;" second, it kindles and arouses in the pupils a sense of awareness and interest, and provides the most effective incentive and motivation to learn; and third, drama by its very nature is not a matter of knowing about, but of doing, and can help pupils to learn to use language in situations where they have to communicate using the whole self and not just the voice.

Psychologists and educators have shown that children learn best through the play-way method. As Nancy E.
Curry writes, "Play is a multi-purpose tool which assists the child in realizing his effectiveness as the initiator in the learning process." The child brings a strong desire to explore the environment and "symbolize thought and fantasies in dramatic play." All children love to dress up and make-believe that they are mothers, fathers, doctors, cowboys, Red Indians, and even con-men and gangsters. It is play-living, in which as Winifred Ward says, "a child 'tries on life' by putting himself in the place of grownups," or, as Dorothy Heathcote writes, an "attempt to pre-live these experiences in imagination." The little girl who wheels her doll in her pram in the garden is merely enacting a part which she knows she will play in earnest when she is an adult and leaves the make-believe world of childhood fancies far behind her.

Small children in particular work hardest when they are playing under the guise of make-believe. Peter Slade points out that learning via drama is valuable because it uses the child's natural instinct for play and make-believe. The child's creative potential (i.e., his capacity for learning) is highest when he is happy and playing a make-believe situation. In fact, it has been observed that children of every age, whether advanced, normal or retarded, derive great enjoyment from participating in dramatic activities. Teachers who have used dramatic activities in the classroom know that the class comes to life at once
at the mention of a game, a play or a dramatization of any form. Even the uninterested or bored pupils will brighten up and apply themselves with immense enthusiasm to language practice when the teacher takes the dull language items or sentence patterns and transfers them into interesting dramatic situations.

'Peter Slade recognized that learning is a two-way process and that creative play is a valuable asset in teaching, since it provides a more lasting impression on the child than mere memorization of facts and figures. He also points out that child drama is "most essential because it is the chief medium for outflow and it provides the actual proof trials of experience. What is learnt is tried out. It is not far from the truth to say that without frequent opportunities for Creative Play, what is learnt is never proved, since it is never physically and emotionally experienced."'18

The joy of discovery in a small child often becomes linked with dramatic play, because play is a means of exploration and development, as well as being a creation of the moment. Drama is a 'child-centered' activity, and only through active participation will the child be encouraged to discover on his or her own. This is, after all, one of the principal reasons for involving the child in creative drama, since "he becomes the centre of the action, drawing upon and using his accumulated experiences while
exploring primarily for himself and according to his own standards."¹⁹

Teachers should take this into account and make maximum use of the child's natural interest and love for dramatic activity and make believe, and 'the language teacher, in particular, should use drama whenever possible to provide much needed motivation for learning. The language teacher should thus plan and present varied specific, creative drama activities that would provide enjoyment and at the same time reinforce the learning of the language. By creating interesting situations, and by encouraging pupils to use the language in dramatized situations, the teacher will bring language to life, making lessons more meaningful and purposeful to the pupils'.

Empirical research demonstrates that teachers who use creative drama activities have found that children are more articulate and express themselves more fluently than those who have been deprived of this programme. Charlotte Ludwig showed that a group of kindergarten pupils who were involved in creative drama for a period of three months made significantly greater improvements in articulation than did the group who were given the usual classroom teaching programme.²⁰

'In another study Earl Blank found that creative drama contributes to the positive development of personality and was effective in developing voice and vocabulary.'²¹
In 1971 Richard Knudson included several language variables as part of a study which tested his "Specialized Language Program" with below average ability rural ninth-grade students. His results showed that students participating in the experimental program for a year demonstrated significantly greater improvement than a comparison group in a variety of language dimensions including reading comprehension, use of Standard English, writing complexity, as well as oral fluency. Although these studies were carried out with native speakers, this is equally effective in a second language situation, as has been borne out in the research by Richard Via, an English teacher at the East-West Culture Learning Institute, Honolulu, Hawaii. Via used improvisations and theatre games to help Japanese university students improve their comprehension and speaking skills in English conversation, and found that drama is an "extremely useful tool" in teaching spoken English, and in helping to make the language lessons become "a living experience of communication rather than another tedious class hour." If it has proved effective for Japanese students whose language is also very 'foreign' to English, we can safely assume that the use of drama is equally effective for all students learning English as a second language.
Chapter 4

CREATIVE DRAMA AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Although educational drama, as creative drama is known in Singapore, was introduced and recommended by the Ministry of Education in its primary schools pilot programme as early as 1971, it has not been readily accepted in the school curriculum by many teachers and principals who still regard it as a frivolous subject, or, at best, an out-of-school activity to be enjoyed by a few talented pupils. Even in the United States of America, this sad state of affairs persists. Although the value of creative drama in education is widely recognized, "it has only rarely been included in the elementary curriculum."²⁴

In the opinion of this author, the failure to trust or accept drama in education may be attributed to the following:

1. There is much confusion and uncertainty over its concepts and practices;

2. The educational objectives, the principles which distinguish creative drama from other subjects, have not been clearly and specifically defined and delineated;

3. There is little research evidence to support the expectation of the benefits often claimed to be the results of creative drama experiences; and
4. the evaluation of progress and achievement in creative drama remains elusive and difficult to define.

Even eminent teachers of creative drama have used global, panacean terms when describing the educational objectives of creative drama. For example, Geraldine B. Siks states that, "Through the art of creative dramatics, children and youth can be guided into developing a strength of spirit such as the world has never known." 25

Ann M. Shaw, in her survey of the behavioural objectives of creative drama covered by representative writings in the field, developed a taxonomy of cognitive and affective behaviours in creative drama. In her research she observed that the affective objective stress:

commitment to the belief in the ability, right, and responsibility of the individual to discover and express his own unique ideas and feelings; to pursuit of a clearer and more complete understanding of one's self and others through the process of consciously and purposefully imagining one's self in the place of another; and to the willingness to assume responsibility for and to value group effort in exploring and expressing ideas related to the human condition. 26

However, she says that although cognitive goals have been quite clearly delineated, the affective domain in creative drama remains very difficult to define and state in conclusive terms. She emphasizes that all the categories of the affective domain are difficult to test because
process of growth cannot be determined by usual testing procedures. Yet these objectives are directly linked to the objectives which movement and drama hold in common: the use of the senses and body awareness.²⁷ Perhaps because the emotional needs of a child are not so easily identified, parents and educators have paid less attention to their development; yet, as Charles Duke points out, to ignore such development is to "invite a kind of far-reaching paralysis which may well cripple the individual in his attempts to find a meaningful existence."²⁸

To achieve an adequately balanced, diversified programme in education, which is designed to meet the needs of all children, more emphasis will have to be placed on the aesthetic and creative aspects of learning. Although there is some confusion in creative drama about the term 'creativity,' research recognizes some general attributes of creativity that help distinguish the degree of creativeness within an individual. At one extreme the creative process may be nothing more than engaging in an elementary problem-solving activity; at the other extreme it may invite a high degree of originality. The school system in Singapore which is examination-oriented and too exclusively verbal and cognitive, has emphasized the need to learn factual information and has tended to overlook the creative process and the affective domain in language learning. The result is a programme of instruction heavily weighted in
favour of the mastery of easily-measured cognitive tasks. In fact, much of the misuse and distrust of drama in schools is the result of a superficial level of involvement where the emotions are not taken into account and activity is overly structured, or there is perhaps too much emotional involvement. The best method, as Jerneral Cranston states, is to achieve a balance between emotional motivation and its release. She emphasizes that "Such a relationship of the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains requires participation in activities which allow the mind-body processes to function." \(^{29}\)

Brian Way also underlines this importance of involving and developing the whole person, "living with the whole of oneself." He writes that "if education is concerned with preparing young people for living rather than for a job in life, then it must concern itself with the whole person." \(^{30}\) Way inscribes the individual as a circle which, in the psychology of Jung, is representative of the fully realized person. He divides this circle into seven wedges which indicate important facets of personality: 1. Concentration, 2. Senses, 3. Imagination, 4. Body, 5. Speech, 6. Emotion, 7. Intellect.

As the child progresses around the circle of experiences, each new focus always is in combination with what has preceded it. Senses are explored together with concentration, imagination with concentration and the senses
body with concentration, senses and imagination, etc., so that one experience naturally follows another and falls into the other, thereby enlarging itself. Through this progression, the child begins experiencing more harmony among the various aspects of his personality and greater consciousness of self and others.\textsuperscript{31}

This imaginative experience, which enlarges the child's understanding of himself or herself and of other human beings, is a vital aspect of creative drama and of education in general. The focus is on the child, who is valued for himself, for his total experience and for what he may become. The emphasis is on enabling the child to grow and mature, to be emotionally articulate, physically active and mentally adventurous. The psychomotor, cognitive and affective domains of learning are thus integrated in the development of the whole person.

Assuming the validity of these arguments, creative drama should be an integral part of the curriculum at all levels of education. In giving creative drama its rightful place in the school curriculum, we are bringing an important element of life into the classroom. We are catering to the dramatic need of our pupils as well as helping them to be self-reliant and better adjusted to society. As Philip Coggin emphasizes, creative drama is "the doing of life."

It helps the personality to self-realization.
by educating the emotions, stimulating the intellect, and co-ordinating movement and gesture to the wishes of the mind and spirit. A fully developed human being is, by definition, a full member of society, and the communal character of drama encourages the full development of the social group.\textsuperscript{32}

Creative drama activities make it possible for pupils to express strong feelings in an acceptable manner, to develop basic language skills and to develop a sense of sociability. They are also effective in helping to promote healthy mental and emotional growth. In sum, creative drama can contribute to the development of the child as a total being.
Chapter 5

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF CREATIVE DRAMA AS THEY RELATE TO EDUCATION IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SINGAPORE

Winifred Ward has defined creative drama as "a general term meaning the activity in which informal drama is created by the players...its dialogue and action are extemporized rather than written and memorized." Peter Slade also sees informal child drama as an educational medium which allows the child freedom within a controlled situation to explore and experiment, and, "through searching and coming to terms with his experiences makes decisions and moral choices in the framework of play of a dramatic kind."

A basic aim of education is the maximum growth of the child as an individual and as a member of society, and experiences in creative drama activities help to develop the child as a 'whole' person. Another contribution creative drama can make to education lies in the area of creativity and spontaneity. Creative drama encourages self-expression, stimulates both imaginative and original thinking and provides a wholesome outlet for emotions. Since drama has to do with people, their actions and their feelings, it can also help pupils understand and express
their feelings and emotions. In terms of educational psychology, this may help pupils in their own social relationships; and, in terms of linguistics and language learning, understanding and expressing their emotions is an indispensable part of language learning, since it involves the affective-social process of speech.

One of the major reasons why creative drama is generally still not taken seriously and accepted by both parents and educators in Singapore, is that the term 'drama' is generally associated with theatre training and acting on the stage. This misconception has caused parents and teachers who are ignorant of the values and objectives of creative drama to frown upon the activity as a waste of time. This prejudice will persist until teachers are made to realize that the main purpose of creative drama is to produce a well-balanced personality, not an actor, and that:

1. the pupils personal experience of "doing" is the main value of creative drama;

2. the pupils personal development rather than the satisfaction of an audience is the goal;

3. it is the act or process of creating rather than the end product that is important;

4. creative drama is a viable and extremely useful tool for teaching English as a second language, since it provides abundant opportunities for pupils to express themselves in imagined and real-life situations..
The main objective, as related to this study, is to help pupils to develop the ability to think and speak extemporaneously and to achieve a proficiency in spoken English. Ward showed that dramatic activities make an indirect contribution to good voice and diction, and provide an incentive for pupils to make themselves understood. She noted that perhaps the greatest contribution made by creative drama in the field of speech is the development of the pupils' ability to think on their feet and express their ideas readily.\textsuperscript{35} Isabel Burger also emphasizes that flexibility and fluency in oral communication of ideas are worthwhile goals of creative drama.\textsuperscript{36} Creative drama, then, is considered a helpful and useful means of developing language skills and attitudes in the closely related fields of language arts.
Chapter 6

RHYMES AND ACTION SONGS

Rhymes and songs are a very useful means to motivate interest and pleasure in the learning process. Attention is naturally and spontaneously drawn to the rhythm and repetition of the words in songs, and pupils will enjoy reciting and singing them, both in and outside the classroom. A most important advantage of using rhymes and songs in teaching English as a second language is that the rhythm of the verse and the lilt of the song 'force' pupils to give correct stress, rhythm and intonation to the language.

The rhymes and songs in the following pages have been devised by the author as suitable material for pupils in the primary school. They will enjoy the repetition, rhythm, action and movement suggested in the songs, and they will have no difficulty in learning them. However, they should not be restricted to these verses, but be encouraged to make up their own rhymes.

Suitable rhymes and songs for lower primary classes using action words, movement and simple dialogues.

When I was a soldier
1 When I was a soldier,
   A soldier, a soldier;
When I was a soldier,
   This was what I did.

2 When I was a postman,
   A postman, a postman;
When I was a postman,
   This was what I did.

3 When I was an air pilot,
   I pilot, a pilot;
When I was a pilot,
   This was what I did.

4 When I was a doctor,
   A doctor, a doctor;
When I was a doctor,
   This was what I did.

Pupils should be encouraged to substitute other occupations or work such as sailor, fireman, teacher, etc. After the line, "This was what I did," they will be free to use pantomime and movement to illustrate the activities of the different occupations.

Can You Tell Me?

1st group asks
the question:

1. Can you tell me,
   Can you tell me
   What some boys do?

2. Can you tell me,
   Can you tell me
   What some girls do?

2nd group answers
and does the action:

They run and jump,
   They run and jump;
So we will jump too.

They dance and skip,
   They dance and skip;
So we will skip too.

3. Can you tell me,
   Can you tell me
   What soldiers do?

4. Can you tell me,
   Can you tell me
   What some babies do?

They fight and march,
   They fight and march;
So we will march too.

They eat and sleep,
   They eat and sleep;
So we will sleep too.
Mary Sim

A group of children, to Mary Sim's mother:
We've come for Mary Sim,
For Mary Sim, for Mary Sim;
We've come for Mary Sim.
Can she come out to play?

Mother:
Mary Sim is sweeping,
Sweeping, sweeping.
Mary Sim is sweeping,
She can't go out to play.

Mary Sim is then substituted with other names, preferably the names of the pupils in the class, and 'sweeping' is substituted with other activities, such as cooking, reading, practicing, painting, etc., and the song continues. In acting out the situation, pupils will be free to improvise and decide on their own outcome. For example, the mother could be rather cross with the children and tell them to go away; the children could try to argue, and while they are talking, one of them could help Mary, who is sweeping, to sneak away. This rhyme has another advantage in that it gives pupils opportunities to use the present continuous tense--the progressive tense--in a meaningful and purposeful manner.

Traffic

I'm a careful motorist. I'm a careful cyclist.
I obey the traffic light. I cycle to my school.
Every time I drive to school, I always keep a sharp
I look both left and right. lookout,
And obey the traffic rule.
I'm a careful pedestrian.  
I obey the traffic code.  
I always see that it is clear  
When I cross a busy road.

I'm a careful taxi driver.  
I always drive with care.  
I never meet with accidents,  
Neither this place nor there.

Pupils should be encouraged to take on the roles  
of the motorist, cyclist, pedestrian, taxi driver, tri-  
shaw rider, motor-cyclist, etc., and improvise and mime  
situations in which they have to observe traffic rules and  
regulations. Besides helping pupils to be safety con-  
scious, the simple poem gives them a chance to use the  
present tense; for example, I obey, drive, look, keep,  
cycle, see, cross, etc.

The Seaside

1st pupil performing the actions and speaking:
I'm at the beautiful seaside.  
I'm having a lot of fun.  
I'm gathering shells and enjoying myself.  
Join me, everyone.

A group of pupils joining him:
We're at the beautiful seaside.  
We're having a lot of fun.  
We're gathering shells and enjoying ourselves.  
Hurray! We're glad we've come.

2nd pupil, performing
I'm at the sunny seaside.  
I'm having a lot of fun.  
I'm building castles on the beach.  
Join me, everyone.

Another group of pupils:
We're at the sunny seaside.  
We're having a lot of fun.  
We're building castles on the beach.  
Hurray! We're glad we've come.
3rd pupil: I'm also at the seaside
And having a lot of fun.
I'm catching fish with my new rod.
Join me, everyone.

Another group: We're also at the seaside
And having a lot of fun.
We're catching fish with our new rods.
Hurray! We're glad that we've come.

4th pupil: I'm at the sunny seaside.
I'm having a lot of fun.
I'm rowing my boat out to sea.
Join me, everyone.

The last group, shouting to the fourth pupil:
We're at the sunny seaside.
We're having a lot of fun.
But we can't row your boat,
'cause we can't swim.
It's easier said than done.

Pupils are encouraged to improvise a situation at the seaside and perform the various actions while saying the poem. The repetition and action in the poem provide opportunities for pupils to use the progressive tense, in both the singular and plural forms.

I'll pay another day

The following poem is based on the well known nursery rhyme, "Simple Simon," but adapted in the Singapore context to suit the interest of the pupils. It is suitable for Primary 4 or 5.

1 Muthusamy met a butcher
   Walking down the street.
   Said Muthusamy to the butcher,
   May I taste your meat?
   The butcher said to Muthusamy,
   "Do you mean to pay?"
   Said Muthu as he ran away,
   "I'll pay another day."
2. Mohammed Ali met a hawker,  
   Walking near the sea.  
   Said Mohammed Ali to the hawker,  
   "May I taste your mee?"
   The hawker said to Mohammed Ali,  
   "Do you mean to pay?"
   Said Mohammed as he ran away,  
   "I'll pay another day."

3. Johnny Soh met a baker  
   Strolling near the lake.  
   Said Johnny Soh to the baker,  
   "May I taste your cake?"
   The baker said to Johnny Soh,  
   "Do you mean to pay?"
   Said Johnny as he ran away,  
   "I'll pay another day."

4. Bobby Bennet met a grocer  
   Walking on the lawn.  
   Said cunning Bobby to the grocer,  
   "May I taste your com?"
   The grocer said to Bobby,  
   "Do you mean to pay?"
   Said Bobby as he ran away,  
   "I'll pay another day"

   Before introducing the variant verses, the teacher  
or a pupil recites "Simple Simon" to the class; then  
pupils form pairs to pantomime the actions suggested in  
the poem, one pupil taking the role of the pieman, and the  
other, Simple Simon. The pantomime may also be done with  
puppets or as shadow-play on a screen.  

   Before pupils use the words of the poem or their  
own words in dramatizing the poem, the teacher may find it  
necessary to explain some of the vocabulary and structures  
in the rhyme.  

   Finally, the pupils improvise the situation and  
develop their own outcome or conclusions and solve the
problem in any way they wish. To motivate further interest, and to help pupils develop fuller characterization and achieve more creative and imaginative improvisation, the teacher discusses the poem with the pupils. The following questions would help to stimulate an interesting and lively discussion:

- What kind of pies do you think the pieman was selling?
- Where did he meet Simple Simon? Was he hawking his ware?
- What 'calls' or 'cries' did he use? How did he carry his pies?
- Did Simple Simon plan to cheat the pieman? How did he plan this? What would you do if you were Simple Simon?

The teacher may work out a similar strategy for the other verses, or he or she may, through discussion, develop a market scene or fair where the butcher, baker, grocer, etc., sell their wares. Muthusamy, Johnny Soh, Mohammed Ali and Bobby Bennet, may be portrayed as urchins or rascals who have planned as a group to cheat the various stall holders or sellers.
Chapter 7

EXPRESSION THROUGH PANTOMIME AND MOVEMENT

Pantomime is the communication and expression of ideas and feelings by the use of facial expression, gesture and movement without the use of words. It is not copying things, nor does it aim at substituting language with gesture and mimicry, but rather it is the attempt to reveal things, situations and conditions and to portray their content. It does not substitute for language, but as James Moffett says, "embodies it."\textsuperscript{37}

The objectives of mime and movement may be summarized as follows:

1. to develop the pupils' imagination;
2. to stimulate their awareness of sensory and emotional stimuli;
3. to inspire and develop their powers of observation, self-expression and appreciation in a whole range of media.

In a second language learning situation, pantomime and movement are particularly useful, as they help pupils to relax. They also encourage non-verbal communication, which, in turn, reinforces oral communication. As James Moffett emphasizes, "non-verbal expression can provide the best pathway to speech development."\textsuperscript{38} Through mime and
movement experiences, pupils' senses are stimulated and their emotions are brought into play, thus emphasizing the affective as well as the motor and cognitive domains of language learning.

Experiences in mime and movement have sound educational and psychological values for all children, because through mimetic activities, the child develops his imaginative powers, and his eyes are opened to the significance of the movement that goes on all around him in life at school, in the bus, on the train, in the street, in his neighborhood, and in his own home. The child begins really to see how people walk, how they sit down, how they use their hands and bodies. He also begins to realize how posture and mannerism is related to age, health, sex, occupation and so on. The child observes, and, later, in the course of a creative drama lesson, he is given the opportunity to recall what he has seen, and to use what has been observed in his mime, movement and improvisation activities. If the teacher stimulates the pupils' imaginations, creates the right atmosphere, and exposes them to a multitude of exciting, colourful, animated experiences, they will not produce a series of worthless cliche gestures, but rather felt emotions stemming from a true understanding of what has been observed in real-life situations.

In the lower primary classes, action mime and movement provide an excellent opportunity for pupils to develop
flexible, spontaneous, expressive body movement and to learn new vocabulary as they name parts of the body and use action words to describe what they do. Through commands like roll your head, wave your hands, open and close your fingers, raise your right hand, touch your toes, etc., pupils learn to respond to directions and to associate words and physical actions in a meaningful and purposeful manner.

**Action games and songs**

For reinforcement of action words and for further enjoyment of the activity, the teacher could introduce the following games and action songs:

Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes, knees and toes, Head, shoulders, knees and toes, Eyes, ears, mouth and nose.

(sung with actions to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down").

**Hokey, Pokey**

Put your right leg in, Put your right leg out. Then put your right leg in, and shake it all about. Do the hokey, pokey and turn around. That's what it's all about.

**Chorus** Oh! hokey, pokey, hokey (three times) That's what it's all about.

The words 'right leg' are then substituted with left leg, right arm, etc., until the 'whole self' is involved.

**Pull your nose**
Teacher or pupil:

Touch your head.  Pupils: I'm touching my head.

(or)  We're touching our heads.

Bend your knees.  I'm bending my knees.

Touch your toes.  I'm touching my toes.

Pull your nose.  Oo...ouch! it hurts.

The activity is repeated with different commands and actions given by the teacher or one of the pupils. When the command to pull your nose is given, the pupils will feel their noses and scream out, "Oo...ouch! it hurts."

Simon says

This is a similar activity where the teacher or pupil gives the command to move a part of the body; e.g., stand on one foot. The pupils will obey only if the teacher uses the words, 'Simon says.'

All these are whole-group activities. The purpose is to encourage the overt expression of subjective responses. Through the actions, the repetition of the words, and the singing of the songs, pupils will have no difficulty in picking up and using vocabulary and language items.

Charades, or What's my Line?

The teacher invites individual pupils to mime an occupation, such as a postman, builder, hawker, policeman, beggar, etc., and the rest of the class will have to guess the type of work or occupation. The pupil who is miming
the occupation will ask questions, like "What am I doing?" "What am I carrying?"

**Six Questions**

This simplified version of Twenty Questions, or Animal, Vegetable & Mineral is similar to the above. An occupation is mimed by a group of pupils. The teacher will encourage the group to mime different activities involved in the occupation; for example, the different jobs of the policemen. The rest of the class will be given six questions to try and guess the occupation. Questions should only require a yes or no answer; for example, "Are you hawkers putting up your stalls?" The pupils miming the activity would have to give the appropriate reply: "Yes, we are," or "No, we aren't." Pupils are thus given the opportunity to express themselves in mime and movement, and at the same time to use the present continuous tense in a meaningful and interesting situation.

Besides songs and games, pupils in all grades should be exposed to a wide range of mimetic activities to help develop their imagination, stimulate their senses, and encourage expression of feelings and emotions. Pupils in Primary One and Two, for instance, should be given opportunities to explore different ways of walking and moving. These should include walking on the sand, walking barefoot on the pavement on a hot day, walking on wet grass,
walking on a wet and slippery road, walking on a narrow jungle path, wading in the jungle stream, crossing the stream by stepping-stones, walking along a narrow ledge, groping through a dark tunnel or cave, etc. To stimulate further emotional awareness, the teacher can add a 'character' to the mime. For example, pupils will enjoy walking like a soldier, a queen, a giant, a wicked witch, etc. From these 'general' characters, the teacher will then encourage pupils to explore the movements and mannerisms of the heroes, heroines and villains of famous Chinese, Malay or Tamil legends with which they are acquainted. In Primary One and Two the mimetic activities should be clear-cut and sharply drawn; for example, "show me how the 'bad' man walks," or "how the monkey god moves in the story." In the upper grades, more demanding and challenging mime and movement activities would motivate the pupils and provide a basis for improvisation. These could include developing the ability to pantomine characters from literature and history; for example, the Malaysian legendary hero Hang Tua; Rama, the hero from the Ramayana legend; or the cruel Emperor Wu from Chinese literature. As in the previous activities, individuals or small groups pantomime the characters, and the rest of the class have to guess the character and the action. Thus, besides encouraging imaginative bodily expression, these activities provide opportunity for pupils to use the
present and the continuous tense.

In the upper primary classes, challenging solo mimetic activities could include lifting a pile of books from the floor to a high shelf, bending to pick up objects of various shapes, sizes and weights, and working in pairs and groups. Mirror work in which one pupil faces a partner and mirrors or mimics his actions is excellent for stimulating the imagination and developing concentration. Besides 'performing' ordinary routine actions, like combing the hair or dressing in front of the mirror, pupils should also be encouraged to 'make up' and 'dress' as well known characters from literature or history.

Sensory stimuli, such as those listed below, stimulate pantomimic activity and also encourage non-verbal expression of emotions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensory Stimuli</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing</td>
<td>brightly lit fountain at night outside the National Theatre in Singapore, puppies or kittens playing together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(unpleasant) an approaching storm, a street accident, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>a favourite piece of music on the radio, the sound of raindrops after a long dry spell, a bird singing, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(unpleasant) a road drill, piling at a building construction site, the noise of heavy traffic, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling</td>
<td>something soft, such as velvet, feather, fur of a kitten or puppy, soft clay, a smooth surface, marble, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(unpleasant) broken glass, a rash or itch on the skin, sandpaper, the outer surface of a durian, etc.

Smelling (pleasant) a favourite cake baking in the oven, sweet smelling flowers, perfume or soap, etc.

(unpleasant) something burning, bales of rubber sheets, stagnant ponds or drains, burnt toast, spoilt or rotten food, etc.

Tasting (pleasant) a cool drink on a very hot day, a favourite dish, ice cream, sweets or candy, etc.

(unpleasant) very sour or bitter fruit, medicine, soda water, sour or rancid butter, etc.

The teacher should try to elicit many examples of the above from the pupils themselves, thus encouraging verbal as well as non-verbal expression. To help pupils express their feelings and emotions, the teacher could encourage pupils to talk about pleasant or unpleasant things that they have seen. To sharpen their hearing discrimination, and also to extend their vocabulary, the teacher drops various objects one at a time onto a tray, and the pupils try to identify each one by the sound it made when it hit the tray. For feeling, tasting and smelling discrimination, the teacher could invite pupils who will be blindfolded, to feel, taste or smell various things and identify them. In the upper grades, pupils could express their emotions and feelings by handing an imaginary wounded bird or puppy from one pupil to another.
This experience may even encourage them to develop a
dramatic situation which could lead to an interesting
improvisation.

The teacher must bear in mind that success in
dramatic activities at all educational levels depends upon
his or her establishing a classroom environment that allows
pupils to take on roles without fear of embarrassment.
Each pupil must feel that he or she is valued as a person
who has a valid contribution to make; and he or she must
not be expected to fit individual feelings, perceptions
and needs to a pattern imposed by the teacher. Discipline
and control should come from the need and collaboration of
the other pupils in the class. Activities must involve
situations within the pupils' imaginative range so that
they can be absorbed in the activities, gain confidence
and be more spontaneous and creative in movement which will
lead naturally to the introduction of language.

Speech should emerge naturally out of movement and
mime. Therefore the teacher should not discourage or stop
any pupil who wants to use language as well as gesture in
mime and movement activity. The teacher should always
encourage pupils to use speech. Mime and movement
activities offer the opportunity to experience new and
varied modes of communication at a non-verbal level, which
is particularly valuable to the pupils whose verbal
endowment is limited. Through interaction with their peers
in absorbing and involving activities, pupils will gain confidence and come to express themselves naturally, both nonverbally and in verbal terms. In other words, through experiments with pantomimed responses to varied stimuli, pupils may come to conceptualisations which can lead to further exploration in verbal terms.
Chapter 8

THE VALUE AND THE USE OF MUSIC AS A STIMULUS TO
EVOKE IMAGINATION AND CREATIVE ROLE-PLAYING

In Development through Drama, Brian Way refers to the development of "intuition," or harmonic interplay of mind, body, heart and spirit and relies on music to call forth this interplay. "Music," says Way, is "one of the finest expressions of this coordination... the essence of music is rhythm; the essence of all aspects of the earth, including human life, is rhythm."\(^3^9\) Music also may lead to many varied emotional and aesthetic discoveries. An intense interplay of emotions may find expression through movement while reacting to music. Brian Way further points out that music provides opportunity for releasing "blockage" to mental, physical and emotional growth, "allowing full use of all oneself."\(^4^0\) Music can be used to suggest ideas. Appropriate background music in creative drama activities helps to stimulate imaginative and creative movement and is effective as a focal point for improvisation activities.

Examples of Activities with background music to stimulate expressive spontaneous and creative movement.

1. Fighting a fire with people trying to put out the fire,
people rescuing belongings from the fire leading up to the climax either of the fire being extinguished or of the building collapsing.

Music: "Sacrifice" from Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*

2. Chasing and eventually catching a mouse that has escaped into a room that is full of junk, or dusting objects in a wax museum with a feather duster.

Music: "Pizzicati" from Delibes' *Sylvia*

3. Feeling one's way carefully across a minefield... suddenly there is an explosion, someone is injured. Rescuing the person and carrying the injured person back to safety.

Music: "Mars" from G. Holst's *The Planets*

4. The Circus comes to town. Developing a situation around this scene, with jugglers, clowns, animal trainers, strong men, tight rope walkers, etc.

Music: Saint-Saens' *Carnival of Animals*  
Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*

5. Burglars creeping through a house in the dark and being surprised by occasional noises, or exploring a cave, getting lost in it and being rescued or finding a way out.

Music: "Mars" from G. Holst's *The Planets*  
and using sound effects for noises.

6. Rescuing a fellow explorer from a dangerous tropical swamp in Perak, Malaysia.

Music: "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle" from Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*

7. Exploring a planet where there is very little gravity.

Music: "Aquarium" from Saint Saens' *The Carnival of Animals*
8. Ghosts and spirits come out of their graves at midnight and dance to the music of the violin played by an old tramp, or another ghost.

Music: Saint Saens' Dance Macabre

9. Rescuing an injured friend from a smoke-filled room, with people frantically trying to save a bedridden old person and an animal trapped in the upstairs bedroom.

Music: "Baba Yaga" from Moussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition
"The Dance of King Kastchei" from Stravinsky's The Firebird


The teacher tells the story, but before inviting the pupils to pantomime the story, he would first encourage all the pupils to take the role of Perseus armed with the magic shield, winged sandals and sword flying through the air looking for the fearful Medusa; then the whole class will play the role of the monster, Medusa. Pupils will be free to work in a group and present Medusa as a three headed monster or individually.

Music: "Sacrifice" from Stravinsky's The Rite of Spring
Chapter 9

DRAMATIC DIALOGUES IN LEARNING ENGLISH

Dramatic dialogues are an effective tool for language acquisition and for transmission of cultural material. They are not an end in themselves but should show pupils that what they are learning in the classroom is going to be useful outside the classroom as well, both as a source of expression and as an indication of what the other culture is like.

The aims of dramatic dialogues in learning English are threefold: first, they help to motivate and stimulate a much-needed interest in language learning; second, they give pupils opportunities to practice language in simulated out-of-school situations (whether real or imagined); and, finally, and most important of all, dramatic dialogues help pupils to absorb structures and idioms as they are used in real conversations.

Dialogues can be introduced from as early a stage as Primary One. They should be based on pupils' experience, interests and imagination. They should include scenes of everyday life; for example, expressions of courtesy, greetings, seeking and giving directions, simple telephone conversations, etc. In the upper primary classes,
situations may focus on the customs of different cultural and ethnic groups in Singapore, such as the various festivals celebrated in Singapore--Chinese New Year, Thaipusam, Hari Raya Puasa, and Christmas. Pupils should also be introduced to typically American or British ways of interacting and reacting. Through dialogues and conversations, they learn to understand and be tolerant of the customs and behaviour of other races, as well as to use English in life-like contexts. Dramatic dialogues thus provide pupils with a fund of very authentic expressions for use at a stage when their overall knowledge of the language is still quite minimal, and this ability to put together something meaningful encourages them with a sense of progress and achievement. Most important of all, dialogues are stepping stones to role-playing and improvisation--the technique which will eventually put the pupils on the right path to success in learning English by making the language a living experience of communication. Appropriate gestures, facial expressions, emotions and feelings will enhance the dialogues and enhance the affective-social process of speech. The dramatic dialogues on the following pages have been devised by the author to emphasize this affective-social process of speech.

Sample Dramatic Dialogues Suitable for Pupils in the Lower
Primary Classes--Primary One through Three

The Untidy Room

Characters: Mother and her three children--Ah Cheng, Ah Kim and Lucy.

Props: Various objects such as toys, books, shoes, etc.

The children have left their things lying around the room and are watching television. Their mother enters, sees the room so untidy, first expresses surprise and then anger. (These expressions could be both non-verbal and verbal.)

Mother: Oh, no! Just look at the mess. Ah Cheng, come here at once.

Ah Cheng: Who, me?

Mother: Yes, you. Come and clean up this mess.

Ah Cheng: It wasn't me. It was Kim.

Ah Kim: (blaming Lucy) No, it wasn't. It was Lucy.

Lucy: No, no, no, it wasn't me. It wasn't me. (Having no one to blame, she starts to cry.)

Mother: I don't care who made the mess. Just clean it up, all of you.

Variations of this activity could take the form of mother or father tidying the cupboard, sweeping the garden, cleaning the toolshed, arranging the books in the bookshelf, etc.
Mother: (sweeping the floor) Whose pencil box is this?
Ah Moi: It's Kim's.
Mother: Well, put it away. Put it in his bag.
(Ah Moi picks up the pencil box and puts it in Kim's bag.)
Mother: (picking up another object) Now, whose shoe is this?
Wong: Let me see. (She comes to have a look.) Oh, it's mine.
Mother: (angrily) Put it in its proper place. (or, Put it in the shoe rack.)

etc., etc.

This activity could also take the form of a blind person walking along the road with two children, perhaps Scouts or Girl Guides, to help him identify objects, positions, and places.

Blind person: (feeling his way) What's this?
First Scout: It's a post box. (or, That's a post box.)
Blind person: What's this?
Second Scout: It's a large stone, etc.
(or the blind person could ask questions like "Where am I now?")

All these activities give the pupils opportunity to increase their vocabulary and learn sentence structures.

Watching Television
Jumat is watching television. Ahmad, her elder brother, enters.

Ahmad: What are you watching?


Ahmad: I want to watch sports (or a soccer match) on Channel Two.

Jumat: Well, you'll just have to wait till this is over.

Ahmad: No, I won't. I'm older than you.

(He turns the channel. Jumat tries to stop him.)

Jumat: (calling out) Ma! Ma! Jumat won't let me watch 'Hang Tua.'

Mother: (entering) Now then, stop it both of you. It's time for bed. So march straight up to bed.

The activity gives pupils opportunity to use gestures, facial expressions, emotions as well as to widen their vocabulary and learn sentence structure in a real life situation.

The Birthday Party

This activity could be done in several stages involving separate dramatic dialogues: (1) The Invitation, (2) At the Party, (3) After the Party. The situation involves the pupils in many different creative dramatic activities; for example, preparing for the party, singing, playing games, etc. It could be a very enjoyable and useful
activity for children in the lower primary classes, the
dialogue having been planned to make it easy for children
to use simple language structures.

(1) The Invitation

It's Susan's birthday. She calls many friends on
the telephone and invites them to her party. The invita-
tion could be as follows:

Susan:         Hello, may I speak to Pit Kuan, please?
Pit Kuan:      Hello. Yes, this is Pit Kuan. Is that
                you, Susan?
Susan:         Yes. Pit Kuan, today's my birthday.
                I'm seven years old today.
Pit Kuan:      Happy Birthday, Susan.
Susan:         Thank you. I'm having a party at half-
past four next Saturday and I would
                like you and your sister to come.
Pit Kuan:      Oh wonderful. Thank you.

Susan invites her other friends and a similar
dialogue takes place.

(2) At the Party

Susan          (welcoming several friends) Hi,
               Johnny!; Hello, Pit Kuan, etc.

(Pit Kuan, Siti, Johnny and the others give her their
presents, and greet her.)

All:           Happy Birthday.

Susan:         (excitedly) Ooo, thank you, thank you.
               I wonder what's in it?
Kathi: (laughing) You must guess. You must guess. I shall give you three guesses.

Susan: (feeling the parcel) I know. It's a storybook, a doll, etc., etc.

The cake is then cut, Susan makes a wish, and the children join in the singing of the birthday song, after which they could then decide whether to sing other songs such as "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," "Here We Go Round the Mulbery Bush" (which could be substituted by a familiar tree in Singapore...Here we go round the durian tree), or to play games. The games chosen could be interesting language games. These could include Charades, Twenty Questions or unscramble the hidden words, or others of similar nature.

(3) Cleaning up after the party

After the party is over, the children volunteer to clean up the mess.

Siti: We'll all help. I'll wash the dishes.

Maria: Yes, that's a good idea. Come on, let's go.

Johnny: Who'll help me to put back the chairs?

Muthu: I'm strong. Watch me carry two chairs.

(He drops them and they all laugh.)

Lost and Found

The following activity is very useful for helping pupils to use prepositions, and prepositional phrases.
Teacher: (entering the classroom, looking very worried)
I've lost my umbrella. I've lost my umbrella.
(to a pupil)
Have you seen it?

First pupil: Yes, I have. (or No, I haven't.)
Second pupil: Have you looked under the table?
behind the cupboard?
on top of the chalkboard?

Teacher: I will look.

(he looks)
It's not there. (or Oh yes, it's here.)

Another object is hidden and the search continues.

The above activity was tried out with a Primary Two class.

A description of the try-out is given below.

Theme of Activity: Lost and Found
School: Delta East Primary School
Class: Primary Two
No. in class: 43
Age Group: 7 to 8 years old.

Description
To give the pupils confidence and encouragement at the
beginning, the teacher found it necessary to take part in
the activity himself. Pupils were allowed freedom of move-
ment throughout the activity. Before answering the
questions, "Have you looked in the cupboard?" or "Have you
looked under the table?" with "Yes, I have," or "No, it
isn't there," the pupils playing the role of the teacher
had to carry out the action of looking for the 'lost'
object in the cupboard or under the table. The pupils had
to close their eyes while the teacher hid the various objects.

Observations
The pupils were enthusiastic and lively and looked upon the activity as a game. Even the shy pupils readily participated in the activity by asking the questions and feeling the thrill of guessing the place where the objects were "hidden." Pupils learnt the use of the phrases...it is, it isn't, I have, I haven't...very quickly, and they also had the opportunity of using many prepositions and prepositional phrases. When the pupils were familiar with the structure and procedure, the teacher took them outside the classroom, and they enjoyed the 'game' even more. As they gained more confidence, they asked questions like..."Have you looked in Mr. Chee's car?" "Have you looked behind that big bush?" or "Have you looked in 'sir's' pocket?"

Dialogues to Encourage and Stimulate Individual and Group Expressions of Feelings and Emotions

These dialogues are useful since they involve the whole class, break down inhibitions and also prepare the pupil for dramatic improvisation later on. Like all activities, they should range from simple individual and group expressions of feelings to more complex and more demanding activities.

A good way of encouraging group expressions of
feelings is by telling the class to imagine that they are at the annual school sports, swimming carnival, or at a soccer match. They will then be asked to cheer, boo, shout their disapproval, etc. To help pupils express their feelings, the teacher tells the class that they are now listening to the events on the radio. He will then give an exciting running commentary on the various events, using the names of the pupils in the class. This group activity, which allows the more inhibited to join in without embarrassment, may be noisy, but it is very enjoyable and meaningful for the pupils.

If the teacher prepares very exciting running commentaries on tape with some pauses, he or she can encourage and even join in with appropriate gestures, such as clapping, and with appropriate verbal exclamations to go with the facial expressions; for example, "Oh no! Ah! Come on, come on! Hurry up, the Green team is just behind you."

For upper primary classes, the following situation with a four-line dialogue in which the 'punch' line is a verbal expression of feeling, may be introduced:

First pupil: (bursting into the room) Have you heard the news?
(Rudy is playing Chinese checkers with his friend and does not even look up.)
Rudy: No, what's happened?
Ah Lim: You've won a hundred dollars in the Straits Times painting competition.

Rudy: (gesticulating widely) Really! (or Hurray!) (or I don't believe you.)

The news may be sad or disappointing to the listener, in which case the dialogue could take this form.

Lucy: Ah Moi, Ah Moi. Have you heard what's happened?

Ah Moi: (without looking up from whatever she is doing) No, what?

Lucy: I've just hear that your dog has been run over by a car.

Ah Moi: It can't be. It can't be. (or Oh no! What! Don't tell me...Browny can't be ...dea...d, etc.)

The above situations involve the pupils emotionally and give them the words to express feelings, not merely facts, and the element of drama in the dialogue transforms a routine 'exercise' into a pleasurable and emotional experience. With advanced pupils the above dialogues may be expanded, and this will lead smoothly into improvisation. For instance, the receiver of the news could ask such questions as When did it happen? Where did it happen? (using the present perfect with the past simple) and, in an appropriate situation, Why did it happen? (past perfect or past continuous). The dialogue can lead into a dramatic description of a real or an imaginary incident, if the pupils are up to it.
An exciting imaginary incident which the pupils in Primary Five and Six will love to explore could take this form.

Lim: (bursting into the room) Have you all heard the news?

Ahmad: No, what's happened?

Lim: I've just heard on the radio. A spaceship has just been sighted over Singapore, etc.

By answering the questions when, where, why and how, pupils can develop an exciting improvisation.

More Suggested Dialogues to Involve Pupils Emotionally

Mother: (knocking at the door and calling out) Aruko, Aruko, get up!

Aruko: (yawning) ah...! Yes, ah...I'm awake.

Mother: Hurry, you'll be late for school.

Aruko: I'm out of bed, already.

Mother: Someone's at the door for you.

Aruko: That's Chin. Tell him to wait.

Mother: It's a quarter past eight.

Aruko: I'm coming. I'm coming.

Mother: Your friend has a snake.

Aruko: A snake! Wow! I'm coming.

Mother: It's too late. He couldn't wait.

Aruko: (appearing) Oh.

Scenes of real dramatic tension may be created from the
following dialogue.
The young soldiers have escaped from enemy prison and are hiding in an old barn or in the jungle.
Peter: Sh! Someone's coming!
Cheng: I can't see anyone.
Peter: Sh! Be quiet! I hear a noise.
Cheng: I can't hear anything.
Peter: Let's hide!
Cheng: Who goes there?

Besides the structures and idioms which the pupils will pick up in no time, there are many dramatic possibilities in such a situation. The end is deliberately left open for the pupils to develop and improvise.

Sample Dialogues for Pupils in Upper Primary Classes

At the Doctor's

Characters: Johnny, Mrs. Tan (Johnny's mother), the doctor and the nurse.

Props: Toy stethoscope, bottles of medicine.

Scene: The doctor's clinic.

Nurse: Please come in Mrs. Tan.

Mrs. Tan: Good morning, Doctor.

Doctor: Good morning. Please sit down. What is the matter with Johnny?

Mrs. Tan: I don't know. He was ___________ outside with the other children, when he came in crying.
Doctor: (to Johnny) Where is the pain?
Johnny: It's in my arm, leg, elbow, knee, etc.

Doctor: When did it happen?
Johnny: This morning, afternoon.

Doctor: How did it happen?
Johnny tells the doctor how it happened.

Doctor: Does it still hurt?
Johnny: No, it doesn't. Yes, it does.

Doctor: Let's take a look at your arm, leg, elbow, etc.
I think we'd better take some pictures of it.

Nurse: Come with me, Johnny. I will take you to the X-ray department.
(They go out.)

The above activity is suitable for Primary Three or Four. The whole class can perform the simple dialogue in pairs, one playing the doctor and the other the patient. At the initial stage, explaining how the accident happened may be omitted, as this is the most difficult part of the dialogue. The pupils then reverse roles and get further practice in asking and answering the questions: What is the matter? Where is the pain? When did it happen? How did it happen? The classroom can then be
easily converted into two or three clinics with many 'patients' waiting their turn to see the doctor. The teacher could first create this atmosphere by encouraging the pupils to mime their ailment and even groan and moan, if they are in pain.

The nurse greets each patient as he or she enters and then proceeds to fill in the patient's information card. The dialogue thus gives the pupils opportunities in the use of a number of variant answers with reference to name, address, age, occupation, etc.

The patient is then led into the doctor's room. The doctor examines the patient and prescribes a remedy.

When the pupils are familiar with the dialogue they will be encouraged to improvise and to develop the situation. For example, they may want to develop the situation where the patient is sent to the hospital and further examination is given and perhaps surgery is performed. The outcome is left entirely to the pupils.

The Magic Bottle

Characters: Hassan, Beng Lee, Peter, Daud, Sally and Ali.

The Genie from the bottle.

Props: The 'magic' bottle.

Scene: The children are camping near the beach. In the evening, they are picking shells, and playing by the receding tide when Hassan finds a strange bottle.
Hassan: Hey, look what I've found.

Peter: What a strange-looking bottle.

Daud: Yes, what's inside?

Sally: Give it to me. Let me clean it first.

(She cleans the bottle.)

Beng Lee: Hey, look, there's something strange and funny inside.

Hassan: (taking the bottle from him) I'm going to try and open it.

(He opens the bottle and the genie appears. The children start to run, but the genie stops them.)

Genie: Stop, don't go away. I'm the bottle genie. I've been trapped in the bottle by a wicked witch. Since you have set me free, I shall grant each of you a wish. What is your wish Hassan?

Hassan: I wish, I wish I were a great emperor or king.

Genie: If you were a great king, what would you do?

Hassan: I would build a huge palace by the sea.

Genie: It shall be done. Now, Beng Lee, what is your wish?

Beng Lee: (not believing in genies) I wish I could fly.

Genie: Well, if you could fly, what would you do?

Beng Lee: I would fly high up into the sky until I reached the moon.

Genie: It shall be done. Now, Peter what is your wish?

Peter: I wish, I wish I had a million dollars.
Genie: If you had a million dollars, what would you do?
Peter: I would build my own spaceship and travel to
Galactica as in Star Wars.
Etc., etc.
The genie asks each child in turn his or her wish, and
also what he or she would do if the wish were granted.
As the genie grants each child's wish, he warns him or
her that the wish only lasts for one day.

The pupils are free to develop and improvise the
outcome as they wish. This dialogue gives them the
opportunity of using the conditional clause and in the
use of modals.

Old Grandpa

Type of activity: Telephone conversation using reported
speech.

Characters: Grandpa, who is deaf. Mary and Tom, his two
grandchildren.

Props: Two telephones.

Scene: Grandpa is reading the newspaper. Mary is playing
outside. Tom is staying at his uncle's large farm in the
country, about two hundred miles away. The telephone
rings. It is Tom ringing to find out how they are getting
on. The phone rings several times, but grandpa does not
hear it.

Mary: (calling from outside) Grandpa! Grandpa, please
Grandpa: (finally hears her shouting) Eh? What's that?...Oh, the phone... (He gets up and picks up the receiver.) Hello, hello (As he is rather deaf, he cannot hear Tom at the other end, so he keeps on repeating)...Hello, who is speaking? Speak up, I can't hear you, etc.

Mary: (coming in) Who is it, Grandpa?

Grandpa: I don't know. I can hear someone mumbling at the other end.

Mary: I'll speak to him. (Taking the phone from him) Hello! Hello!

Tom: Hello, Mary.

Mary: (excitedly) Tom! (to Grandfather) It's Tom. Tom, how are you?

Tom: I'm fine. How is Grandpa?

Grandpa: (interrupting) What did he say? What did he say?

Mary: He said that he is fine. He wants to know how you are.

Tom and Mary are now free to carry on their own conversation. Grandpa will interrupt every now and again to find out what Tom is saying, and Mary will have to use the reported or indirect speech to tell him what Tom is saying. The teacher may find it necessary to play the role of Mary at the beginning, to give the pupils the idea and to motivate and stimulate interest. Once the pupils gain confidence, they will be able to participate freely and
improvise the situation. As in the other creative drama activities, the teacher will encourage the pupils to improvise and develop and create their own outcome. For example, the pupils may decide to increase the number of people in the family, or create a situation where Tom is studying at a school in Malaysia, or in America, or that he has been injured in a soccer match and is ringing from a hospital.

The role of Grandpa can be quite comic as he keeps interrupting Mary during the conversation and anxiously wants to know what Tom is saying. He may even snatch the phone from Mary and try to listen to what Tom is saying.

**Dialogues Over the Telephone**

Telephone conversations are another very useful activity to give pupils the opportunity to use natural, conversational English in an enjoyable and meaningful manner. To build their confidence, the teacher may have to make the initial phone call. It is important that the teacher keep the conversation going. If the pupil is inaudible, the teacher can complain that there is a bad connection and ask the pupil to speak louder. To give the situation a sense of reality, actual telephones borrowed from the telephone company may be used. Pupils in the upper primary classes would also enjoy giving directions, conveying messages, and giving instructions
using toy walky talkies. This could be very exciting for the pupils, if the activity takes place in an open area and the pupils use walky talkies to contact each other; for example, the situation could be Martians trying to convey a message or give instructions to the people on this planet.

The following activities are suitable for pupils in the lower primaries, that is Primary One, Two and Three

1. Ring to invite a friend to a party.
2. Ring to inform your teacher that you are ill.
3. Phone a friend in school and ask him whether you can borrow his bicycle, ball and bat or story book.
4. A stranger rings and asks you to take a message.
5. Ring the office at Sentosa, and find out the time schedule for the cable car or ferry service to Sentosa. Inform them the time and day you intend to travel to Sentosa.

The following telephone conversations are suitable for pupils in the upper primaries, that is Primary Four, Five and Six.

1. Ring a friend to make up after a fight.
2. Ring your grocer to complain that the eggs your mother bought are bad.
3. You are constantly being disturbed by someone who keeps getting the wrong number.
4. Ring the fire station and inform them of a fire near your house. Give them clear instructions and the exact directions to the place.
5. Ring your dentist and make an appointment either for yourself or for someone in the family.
Chapter 10

ROLE-PLAYING AND DRAMATIC IMPROVISATION

As noted earlier, speech is an affective-social process as well as a cognitive one. In fact, some psychologists maintain that the influence of attitudes and feelings in language learning is a greater contributing factor in determining pupil achievement and success than the cognitive factors. Through improvisation, pupils are motivated to communicate their thoughts to their peers. By taking into account pupils' interests and by giving them the opportunity to talk about their own concerns and feelings, the affective-social process is emphasized. For example, in the improvisation on the traffic accident (see page 78), the pompous policeman, the timid cyclist, various motorists and other eye witnesses express different emotions in their views of the accident, and, in this way, incorporate and register mood variation in language.

The Drama Theatre Framework for California Public Schools has defined improvisation as the "creative, cooperative, and spontaneous dramatic response to rapidly changing and unanticipated dramatic stimuli." It is thus an excellent technique for eliciting autonomous interaction, and provides opportunities for pupils to use
English in life-like situations involving relations with others, and to immerse pupils in real communication situations. Secondly, role-playing and improvisation stimulate and motivate pupils to acquire greater language skills so that they are better able to communicate with their peers; and, third, improvisation activities link listening and speaking, since, without the ability to comprehend the speech of others, "communication becomes an uninteresting and frustrating one-way street."  

Role-playing in improvised situations allows pupils to experiment with the roles they play in their own personal lives. It also gives them a chance to try on new identifies and to test out different personalities. Improvisation thus generates spontaneity and creativity and acts as a catalyst for a flow of natural conversational English in meaningful contexts.

In the early stages of role-playing and improvisation, the teacher should involve pupils in expressing their feelings concerning everyday situations and in using faculties which reinforce those basic experiences. However, as the pupils are exposed to more creative drama activities and gain more confidence, the teacher should deepen their internal responses and enlarge their emotional experiences by probing constantly with increased intensity, and encouraging exploration into literature and non-realistic situations.
To unleash the pupils' impulses and imagination and to generate spontaneity and creativity, the teacher could motivate improvisation by using various stimuli. These may be in the form of pictures, stories, poems, music, discussions, or, in the upper grades, interesting and exciting articles from the local newspapers or the beginning and ending of a story which the pupils must develop spontaneously.

Locations around which a story may be built also provide useful stimuli for pupils in all grades to improvise situations according to their imagination or in terms of their own experiences. These could range from places like the market, a restaurant, the jungle, the seaside, to locations involving more complex and intense emotional experiences, like an old disused tin mine, the inside of a space ship, the dentist's waiting room, etc. Choices will depend upon the age and experience of the group.

In role-playing, it is a good idea for pupils to take on different characters with fictitious names to aid in the willing suspension of disbelief. Role-playing and improvisation also emphasize the need for pupils to use language for the normal purposes of language, that is, for establishing social relations, seeking and giving information, and for using different registers in different contexts--from formal to very colloquial and conversational English.
Improvisation activities should be attempted as early as Primary One. The teacher should, of course, bear in mind the pupils' centres of interest and limited vocabulary. At the beginning, the teacher should focus on these centres of interest—the home, the school, friends, society, familiar places, etc.

One way of beginning, and to encourage everyone in the class to talk, is through some general group activity such as a dramatization of a market-place, the bazaar at Change Alley, the Marine Parade seaside, the Great World amusement park, Sentosa, the circus, 'pasar malam,' etc. These group activities are useful because they provide abundant opportunities for the pupils to be involved in the action, to overcome self-consciousness and to encourage and motivate many pupils to talk. The activities also do not require, at least at the early stage, long and difficult conversations.

In the market-place, for instance, stall holders could call out their wares, and simple bargaining situations could take place between customers and stall holders or sellers. When the pupils gain confidence, they will be naturally motivated to express themselves more fluently.

As a development of the market scene, the teacher could add other situations: for instance, a customer steals some fruit, and the market superintendent is called to deal with the culprit; or a pickpocket is caught 'red-
handed' stealing from a lady's handbag; a seller complains that the money he has received is counterfeit; some customers complain that the meat, fish or eggs are not fresh or that they are too expensive, and a quarrel or even a fight breaks out; or a dog or a cyclist causes a fruit stall to be knocked over. The teacher should try and elicit these developments from the pupils themselves. These developments—the complaints, arguments, quarrels—will provide further opportunities for the pupils to express their feelings and emotions in non-verbal and verbal communication.

Developing improvisations around problems which pupils have to solve are very useful activities for pupils in the upper grades, since through participating in them, pupils become aware of the consequences of their actions, they begin to see another person's point of view, and further opportunities for role-playing and language development are provided. Thus, through providing abundant opportunities to practice speaking within an uncritical framework, and through patient guidance, the teacher will assist pupils in gaining confidence and ability to express themselves fluently in speech.

Developing Improvised Situations from Dialogues
Sample Improvisation Activities
The Restaurant

Type of Activity: From a dramatic dialogue to improvisation.

Characters: The classroom can be converted into a make-believe restaurant, and the whole class can be involved in the situation and can play the various roles: waiters, customers, chefs, kitchen helpers, captain, musicians, etc.

Props: All props can be mimed. However, pupils could prepare menu cards, and have chopsticks or a few basic props to help them in the mime.

Scene: A large restaurant in Orchard Road. Some customers are seen entering the restaurant, others are already seated, and the whole atmosphere in the restaurant is a busy hive of activity.

Head waiter: Good afternoon madam/sir. A table for...

two. Over here please. (directs customers to their seats.)

Lady and gentleman: Thank you.

Another waiter: (handing them a menu) What would you like?

Lady: Now let me see...it's so difficult...

(to the waiter) could you come back later, please?

Waitress: (to another couple) What can I get you?

Mr. Chin: I would like some satay chicken rice fried mee etc.
Mrs. Chin: You shouldn't eat a heavy meal if you're going to play golf this evening, my dear.

Mr. Chin: That's true...perhaps I had better just order the satay.

The restaurant gradually gets quite crowded. Some waiters and waitresses are busy rushing around taking orders, ordering food from the kitchen, or serving the food, etc. The kitchen staff is also very busy preparing the different kinds of food.

To vary the questions, the waiters/waitresses could ask:

What would you like for [breakfast? lunch? dinner?]

Would you like anything else? or What would you like to drink?

For the upper primary classes, this situation could be developed to include a complaint about the condition of the food; a quarrel about the price of the food; a beggar walks into the restaurant and is chased out by the head waiter; a woman insists on bringing her pet poodle into the restaurant; a new waiter/waitress spills soup or ice cream soda on a customer's head or lap; manager is called to settle a quarrel between two waiters--each claiming the tip; a fat man who has had too much to drink causes a disturbance in the restaurant; a customer is in an embarrassing situation when he/she does not have the money to pay for the food; a lady finds her purse missing and insists on calling the police, etc.

This activity is very useful as it provides a means for children to observe good table manners,
politeness and courtesy, and to learn names of the
different kinds of food, and it will also provide further
opportunities for pupils to express their feelings and
emotions in non-verbal and verbal communication.

Mrs. Beaton and her wheelbarrow or cart.

Type of activity: Mime and dramatization.

Number in group: Mrs. Beaton and as many pupils as
possible.

Props: A wheelbarrow (an overturned chair may
serve for this purpose.)

Scene: Mrs. Beaton is returning home from
market with her wheelbarrow laden with
groceries. As she is pushing the barrow
along a muddy path, the wheel gets stuck
in the mud and she is unable to push it.

She calls on several people to help her.

Mrs. Beaton: (to a passerby) Oh dear! Oh dear! I
can't push this wheelbarrow. Please
help me, Mrs. Lee. My wheelbarrow is
stuck in the mud and I can't push it.

Mrs. Lee: I'm sorry, Mrs. Beaton. I can't. I'm
too weak. Ask someone stronger.

Mrs. Beaton: (to another person) My wheelbarrow is
stuck in the mud. Please help me to
move it.

Farmer: Oh, I'm too old. Find someone younger
than me. (He goes off.)

Mrs. Beaton: (to young Jim) My wheelbarrow is stuck
in the mud. Please help me to move it.

Young Jim: Oh, I'm too busy. Ask someone who is
less busy.

Mrs. Beaton then appeals to several other people
to help her, but they all give excuses.
The dialogue is simple, but it can be expanded as soon as the pupils get the idea and are able to participate spontaneously. To introduce the situation, the teacher could discuss an old market scene in the country, and pupils could enjoy singing the nursery rhyme "To Market, to Market, to Buy a Fat Pig." The teacher could encourage the children to take on the roles of the various people taking their wares to market or buying or trading things at the market, and the pupils could improvise the situation of Mrs. Beaton. They are free to pursue the unfolding of the plot or solve the problem however they wish.

In the Jungle.

Class level: Lower primary classes--Primary One to Three
Type of activity: Mime, dramatic dialogue and improvisation.
Number in group: The whole class.
Props: Pictures of various wild animals in the jungle.
Scene: To motivate an interest, the teacher discusses the different wild animals found in the jungle--their movements, the sounds they make, the food they eat, etc.

1. The teacher converts the room into a 'jungle' and invites the pupils to be various animals. "How will you move if you are a small animal, and where will you look for food?" "How will you move through the jungle if you are a monkey? a snake? an elephant? a tiger?" etc. What
sounds will you make?
2. "Now let's all be hunters going through the jungle. How will we go through the thick undergrowth? What animal or animals are we going to catch or kill? How are we going to do this?"
3. Pupils are encouraged to improvise the situation working as a group of hunters or individually. Some pupils will be the animals stalking or hiding in the jungle. The pupils will be free to develop the situation as they wish.
4. The first hunter enters the jungle, and as he passes the animal, it startles and frightens him by making the appropriate sound or noise. When the hunter comes out of the jungle, a group of villagers or reporters ask him:

   "Hunting in the jungle, what did you see?"

The hunter will reply:

   "I saw a --------- (name of an animal)
   --------- (appropriate movement) at me."

The next hunter enters the jungle, and an animal springs or leaps out and startles him. He is also asked by the group of reporters the same question, and he gives the appropriate reply.

The dialogue comes naturally from the pupils themselves, and from the creative drama activity they will have no difficulty in creating the following very simple verses:
In the Jungle.

Walking through the jungle,        Hunting in the jungle,
What did you see?                   What did you see?
I saw a fierce tiger               I saw a creepy snake
Crouching near me.                  Crawling up a tree.

Tracking in the jungle,
What did you see?
I saw a hungry crocodile
Gaping at me.

Walking through the jungle
What did you see?
I saw a baby monkey
Laughing at me.

Hunting in the jungle,
What did you see?
I saw a huge elephant
Trumpeting at me.

Hunting in the jungle,
What did you see?
I saw a cunning fox
Running past me.

etc.

It will be more exciting if the hunters do not know where the animals are hiding. If this activity is done in the classroom, the animals could hide behind the tables, and 'trees' mimed by some pupils. It is not advisable to allow all the hunters to enter the jungle at the same time, as this may create pandemonium.

The Funfair

Class level: Primary Three or Four

Type of Activity: Giving directions, dramatic dialogue and improvisation.

Characters: Seven strangers, a policeman, a shopman, passerby, a road mender and a worker; the manager, attendants and workers at the Funfair.

Props: nil

Scene: The activity could begin with a group of pupils miming and improvising a situation at the Funfair which could include the merry-go-round, the big dipper, the shooting galleries, the ghost train, the
big wheel, the side shows, etc. The strangers arrive and ask various people on the road the directions to the fair.

First stranger to policeman:
I want to go to the Funfair.
I want to see the display.
I want to ride on the merry-go-round.
Will you show me the way.

Policeman:
Take bus number 17, and get down at the junction of Neil Road and Owen Road. Walk along Owen Road till you get to the second traffic light, then turn left and you will see the Funfair ahead.

(The stranger thanks him and proceeds on his way.)

Second stranger to shopkeeper:
I want to go to the Funfair.
I love to sing and play.
I want to ride on the Big Dipper.
Please show me the way.

(The shopkeeper directs the second stranger giving him the appropriate directions. The second stranger thanks him and proceeds on his way.)

Third stranger to passerby:
I want to go to the Funfair.
I love to laugh all the day.
I want to go in the ghost train.
Please, will you show me the way?

(The passerby directs the third stranger.)

Fourth and fifth strangers to the road mender:
We want to go to the Funfair.
We must be there. Don't delay.
We want to shoot the toy ducks.
Hurry and show us the way.

The road mender:
Well, if you are going to be so rude, I shan't show you the way.

(The fourth and fifth strangers realize that they would not be able to get to the Funfair, so they ask the road mender more politely.)
Fourth and fifth strangers: Please, please show us the way.

(The road mender finally relents and directs them to the Funfair.)

Sixth stranger to a hawker: I want to go to the Funfair. I love to go in the sleigh. I also love the Dodgem car. Please, will you show me the way?

Hawker to sixth stranger: Ah, well...buy some cakes from me and I'll tell you the way.

Sixth stranger: Tell me first, and then I'll buy the cakes.

(The hawker believes him and directs him to the fair. The sixth stranger runs off without buying any of the cakes. The hawker shakes his fist at him.)

Hawker: So, he thought he could cheat me. Ha, ha! I gave him the wrong directions. Ha! Ha!

Seventh stranger to a little girl: I want to go to the Funfair. I want to see the cabaret. I love to listen to the band. Will you show me the way?

Little girl: My mummy told me not to talk to strangers.

(She runs off.)

Seventh stranger to a group of boys playing marbles: I want to go to the Funfair. I want to see the cabaret. I love to listen to the band. Will you show me the way?

Group of boys: We also want to go to the Funfair. We also want to see the cabaret. We also love to listen to the band. Take us, and we'll show you the way.

Seventh stranger: (Laughing) Okay, okay, but you are too young to go to the cabaret.
Group of boys, individually: I'm thirteen; I'm sixteen; I'm twenty, etc.

(The seventh stranger decides to pay for them and they all go to the fair singing the song, "We love to go to the Funfair.")

The Accident

Class level: Primary Five or Six

Type of activity: Mime, dramatic dialogue and improvisation.

Number in group: The whole class.

Characters: Police inspector, policemen, ambulance driver and attendants, lorry driver, taxi driver, cyclist, several other motorists, pedestrians and other eye witnesses including an old lady, shopkeepers, school children, passengers and commuters in taxis and buses, etc.

Suggested scene of accident: The accident occurs in the busy junction (intersection) between Orchard Road and Paterson Road. A lorry laden with timber is travelling along Paterson road at about 40 m.p.h. To avoid a collision with a taxi, the lorry suddenly swerves and knocks down a cyclist. The cyclist is badly injured and after the ambulance has carried the cyclist to the hospital, the police question the lorry driver, taxi driver and witnesses.

Procedure: The pupils mime the scene of the accident, and improvise the situation immediately after the accident--the commotion, traffic almost coming to a stand still, tempers rising, people rushing to help or merely to see, police taking measurements and drawing the outline of the 'body,' the ambulance attendants and perhaps a doctor rendering first aid and carefully carrying the injured cyclist into the
To make the activity more interesting, and to involve the pupils in the affective domain of language learning, the teacher could suggest that some of the eye witnesses could be reluctant to give evidence while others like the old lady would come forward to give their account even though they may not have seen the accident.

Police inspector: Now then, who saw the accident?

Pedestrian: I did. I was crossing the...

Inspector (interrupting): Wait a minute. Before you proceed, will you give me your name and address.

Pedestrian: Do I have to...I mean...I don't want to get involved.

Inspector: If I'm going to take your word for it, I want to know who you are, and you must be prepared to repeat the account of the accident in court.

Pedestrian (shocked): What? In court! I couldn't...I...

Inspector: Yes, in court. Now, please don't waste time. I have to question all these people.

Old lady (coming forward): Look inspector, I will tell you what happened, and I just love to appear in court.

Inspector: Well, tell me your name and address.

The old lady gives her name and address and then with many gesticulations and exclamations like, "Oh dear! terrible, terrible, it's not safe on the road anymore...oh dear the blood...the blood was everywhere...terrible," she relates rather discursively what she thinks has happened.

The inspector proceeds to question the lorry driver and all the witnesses. They get emotionally
involved and take sides, resulting in a stimulating
discussion or heated argument. The police inspector could
march them all off to the nearby police station and a more
orderly and formal investigation could take place, or the
whole case could be tried in court. This would involve
additional roles like the judge, the prosecutor and the
defense counsel, and would give pupils the chance to learn
about simple traffic court procedure. The activity is also
very useful as it provides opportunity for the pupils to
use the past tense and past continuous tense; for example,
"I was crossing the road," "the car was travelling,"
"while I was waiting for the bus," "we were just coming out
of the shipping centre," "they were rushing," "we were
walking," etc., in an interesting and purposeful manner.
The whole dialogue could be expanded, depending upon the
resourcefulness and vocabulary of the pupils. In the
improvisation, pupils are free to pursue the resolution
of the conflict and solve the problem in any way they wish.

Dick's New Shoes
a sketch

Characters: Dick, Mrs. Tan (Dick's mother)
Props: A pair of shoes or a hat or tie.
Scene: Dick has returned home very late from
school. He has been shopping with his
friend Ah Cheng and has bought a pair
of leather shoes with very high heels.
He tries to sneak into his room but his
mother sees him.
Mrs. Tan: Where did you go all afternoon? Why are you so late?

Dick: I went shopping with Ah Cheng.

Mrs. Tan (surprised) Shopping! You never like shopping. Did you buy anything?

Dick: Yes, I bought a...well, a pair of shoes.

Mrs. Tan: (more surprised) A pair of shoes! Let me see them.

(Dick reluctantly shows her the shoes)

Mrs. Tan: You didn't need new...(she sees the high heels) You can't wear these... just look at the heels. Why did you buy them?

Dick: I bought them...well...because I liked them, and most of the boys in the class wear them.

Mrs. Tan: Well, I don't like them. These heels are too high.

Dick: Please, mother, Jim has shoes like these, and so does Ah Cheng.

Mrs. Tan: How much did you pay for them?

Dick: Ten dollars and fifty cents.

Mrs. Tan: You paid too much for them. Where did you get the money?

Dick: I borrowed eight dollars from Ah Cheng, and I made up the balance.

Mrs. Tan: Dick, you shouldn't borrow money. How are you going to pay Ah Cheng the money?

Dick: I'll save up from my pocket money. (pleading) Please, Mum...

Mrs. Tan: (relenting) Oh, all right. But don't wear them to school.
Dick: Yes, Mum. Thanks! I'll wear them for Muthy's birthday party this Saturday and on National Day.

Suggested Improvisation Activities in Groups--Suitable for Lower Primary Classes (Primary One, Two and Three)

1. Chinese New Year celebrations--the preparation, observing the customs, visiting relatives on the day, receiving 'angpows' sporting on new clothes, the family reunion dinner, etc.

2. Celebrating Hari Raya, Thaipusam, Deepavali, or Christmas.

3. The evening or night market 'pasar malam.'

4. A picnic by the sea.

5. A visit to the zoo.

6. A visit to the Botanic Gardens, Sentosa or Van Kleef Aquarium.

7. Lost in the jungle.

8. A visit to a Malay kampong.


Suggested Improvisation Activities in Groups--Suitable for Upper Primary Classes (Primary Four, Five and Six)

1. A shipwreck.

2. Trapped in a lift, or in a tin mine.

3. Escape from a prisoner-of-war camp.

4. A bank raid or a jewellery shop robbery.

5. A visit to the Jurong shipyard or Van Kleef Aquarium.

6. Producing a T.V. commerical, or directing a part of a film based on a story from literature of history.

7. A fire in a factory, or godown.

8. An adventurous journey...either by sea or by air.
1. **Situation:** Two elderly women in a train compartment returning from a holiday.

   **Development:** A suspicious-looking character enters the compartment with a small suitcase, apparently ticking. The ladies pull the cord, stopping the train. The guard demands an explanation.

2. **Situation**

   You are buying a pair of shoes.

   **Development:** You find your wallet or purse missing. You notice a customer acting suspiciously. You accuse the customer. The manager is called to settle the argument.

3. **Situation:** Workers in a large factory in Jurong.

   **Development:** Somebody gets a hand or hair trapped in a machine.

4. **Situation:** A vacuum-cleaner salesman attempting to sell a cleaner to a housewife on washing day.

   **Development:** Add to this the milkman or grocer wanting his bill paid, an unexpected visitor, and a visit from school children who are selling tickets for the school concert.

5. **Situation:** An old lady loses her spectacles down a drain; a passerby comes to her aid.

   **Development:** Add to this a helpful policeman, a suspicious inspector, a drain cleaner and the appearance of a valuable necklace.

6. **Situation:** An estate agent is showing a prospective purchaser over a large country house.

   **Development:** Add to this an unusual discovery...a skeleton is in the cellar, strange sounds are heard, or a map is found.
Improvisation and Problem-solving Activities, Suitable for Pupils in the Lower Primary Classes.

1. You are rowing your sampan, about a mile off the island of Sentosa. Suddenly you notice that your boat has sprung a leak. You have no life-belt and you cannot swim. What do you do?

2. While walking home from school, you see a kitten struggling in a large monsoon drain which is full of water. What do you do?

3. Your neighbour catches you and your friend in the act of stealing rambutans from a branch of his fruit tree overhanging your garden. You feel entitled to these rambutans...

4. You are returning home from a picnic at Sentosa. In the bus you discover to your horror that you have picked up your friend's bag by mistake, and you find that you have no money for the fare.

5. You are performing in the dragon dance on National Day at the padang. You are responsible for lighting the dragon's 'fiery breath.' As it has been raining earlier that day, all the matches are damp. What do you do?

6. Your classmate is crying. She tells you that she has lost her school fees.

Improvisation and Problem-solving Activities Suitable for Pupils in the Upper Primary Classes.

1. You are in a shop that sells radios and other hi-fi equipment. You notice the salesman trying to sell a tape recorder to a tourist for almost double the price that you paid for the same brand about a month ago. What do you do?

2. You are an astronaut approaching Mars. After landing safely on Mars, you find strange creatures around your rocket who talk and move differently... What do you and the other astronauts do?

3. You were the only pupil who did not go for a P.E. lesson. One of your classmates discovers the loss of his or her new Parker pen and accuses you of having stolen it.
4. You are a taxi-driver and a few tourists have underpaid you. You try to explain, but they don't understand your language.

5. You are among a team of firemen arriving at a shop or factory which is on fire only to find there is no fire hydrant nearby...

After pupils have gained enough experience in problem-solving activities, the teacher should encourage them to think of other problems they have come across. Newspaper articles and headlines provide good stimuli for interesting improvisations.

**Playmaking**

The emphasis so far has been on the use of drama to help pupils to develop ideas and fluency in self expression, and to enable the pupils to grow and mature. It has been pointed out that it is the act or process of creating rather than the end product that is important, and that the teacher should not aim for a performance.

Occasionally, however, after the pupils have gained enough experience in creative drama and are very excited and completely absorbed in the dramatic dialogue or improvisation, their efforts may be scripted and acted by pupils for their fellow students. Winifred Ward recommends that teachers use the improvised situation as a motivation for creative writing, arts, crafts, and playmaking in order to prolong the pupils' enjoyment of the activity and deepen its impression on them.
Although she is referring to pupils whose mother tongue is English, teachers should encourage pupils learning English as a second language to attempt creative writing and play-making so that both oral and written language skills are developed. Kenneth Chastain notes that oral and written presentation can and should complement each other and that teachers should broaden their scope of activities to include all the language skills. However, the writer feels that teachers should not force or rush pupils into this stage, as it may cause pupils to lose interest or look upon improvisation as another 'chore,' or a disguised written exercise.

The following plays have been written by the author to give pupils the enjoyment and satisfaction of taking part in complete plays, and to motivate and encourage pupils to write plays of their own. "Bibi, the Clever Monkey" is suitable for Primary Five or Six, and may be performed as a puppet or shadow play. In acting the play the teacher should also encourage pupils to use their own words or ad lib and subsequently improvise and develop a dramatization of "The Revenge of Mr. Crocodile," as a sequel.

After acting the play, "Things Never Seem What They Are," pupils could improvise and create their own play to the following situation:
The Mirage in the Arabian Desert

A group of travellers and their old Arab guide, after exploring a pyramid in the desert, are camping nearby. In the heat of the desert the travellers think they see various objects in the distance. They argue about them and the old wise Arab only smiles and says little. Finally, he tells them about mirages in the desert.

Bibi, the Clever Monkey

Characters: Narrator, the crocodile, and Bibi, the monkey.

Scene: The river bank. Bibi is sitting on the branch of a tree that is overhanging the river. The crocodile is lying on the river bank.

Narrator: Like all monkeys, Bibi is very mischievous. He loves teasing all the other animals in the jungle, especially the crocodiles. The animals stay away from Bibi because they know he is clever and able to climb trees so quickly that they can never catch him.

One day, Bibi was sitting on a branch of a big tree and looking longingly at the chikues on a tree on the other side of the river. Like all monkeys, Bibi loves chikues.

Bibi: Ooo...just look at those delicious chikues on that tree. How can I get across that river? Let me see...(he sees the crocodile lying on the bank.) Hello crocky. (As there is no answer, he calls out louder.) Hi, there, crocodile. (The crocodile does not answer.) Hello, Mr. Crocodile. (Still no answer, so Bibi shouts out) Hello friend.
Crocodile: What do you want?

Bibi: Today is my birthday, and I've made a reso...a reso...a resolution, that's the word, I will never tease or play any tricks on you again. I want to be your friend.

Crocodile: Mm...if only I can believe you. Well, what do you want?

Bibi: Oh...nothing, nothing at all, friend. I just wanted to know when you are going to visit your uncle on the other side of the river.

Crocodile: Why do you want to know? His jaw is still hurting from biting that rock you threw into his mouth.

Bibi: (stifling a laugh) Oh...that wasn't me...it was my stupid brother. I'm not on speaking terms with him because of that. In fact, if I can hop on your back, I'll go over and apologize for my brother.

Crocodile: Now, that sounds like a good idea. Hop on my back and I'll take you.

Narrator: Bibi climbed down from the tree and sat on the crocodile's back, and the crocodile moved to the other side of the river. When they were half way across...

Crocodile: Now I've caught you. Ha! Ha! You thought I believed that silly story.

Bibi: (very frightened) What are you going to do?

Crocodile: What do you think? I'm going to take you home. My wife is ill, and she asked me to bring her the heart of a monkey to eat. I never knew it would be so easy. Ha! Ha!

Narrator: Rocking with laughter, the crocodile moved towards the bank on the other side. They were approaching the crocodile's home when the monkey thought
of a plan.

Bibi: (as if looking for something) Oh, oh, oh!...

Crocodile: What is it?

Bibi: Your wife will be very sad. I want to help you, my dear friend, but I can't.

Crocodile: Oh, yes you can, you'll make my wife well again.

(singing) You've tricked me in the past,
But I've got you safe at last,
My wife wants your heart,
But I'll eat any part.

Bibi: Oh, but I've forgotten to bring my heart today.

Crocodile: You've tricked me in the... What? What nonsense.

Bibi: Oh, yes, my friend. It's true. I came out today without my heart. You see, today is washing day. Every Wednesday, I wash my heart and put it out in the sun to dry. Never mind... perhaps your wife would like my nose, or my long tail or...

Crocodile (interrupting) No, no, no. She said, "Bring me the heart of a monkey. Remember it must be his heart."

Bibi: Well, I'm sorry. (pretending to look for his heart) I haven't got it.

Crocodile: We must go back at once and get it.

Narrator: So they went back. As soon as they reached the land, Bibi jumped off the crocodile's back and ran up a tree.

Bibi: Ha! Ha! Ha! You got tricked again old crocky!

Crocodile: I'll get you for this.

Bibi: (singing) I've tricked you in the past,
'cause I'm clever and I'm fast,  
Tell your wife of my great art,  
And the story of my heart.

Narrator: The crocodile opened his huge jaws and tried to reach Bibi's tail; but Bibi moved to a higher branch and continued singing and laughing.

**Things Never Seem What They Are**  
or **Grandfather Knows Best**

**Characters:** Four fishermen and grandfather.

**Scene:** The seashore. It is evening, and the four fishermen are occupied in painting the boat, mending their nets, etc. Grandfather is sitting outside the hut smoking his pipe.

**First man:** (to the other men) Look at old grandpa there! He never does anything but smoke his pipe and sleep.

**Second man:** Ya! He's such a lazy fellow.

**Third man:** Leave him alone. He's an old fool.

**Fourth man:** (looking out to sea) What's that?

**First man:** Where?

**Fourth man:** Over there.

**Second man:** Out to sea?

**Fourth man:** (pointing) Yes. Over there.

**Second man:** Yes, I see it.

**Third man:** Yes, I see it too. It's a boat, There's the smoke.

**First man:** No, it's a ship. I can see the funnels.

(The men argue with each other for some time)

**Third man:** Let's tell grandpa.
(They go to the hut and tell grandfather the news. He listens to them quietly, but does not move from his chair.)

First man: Look, Grandpa!
Second man: There's a ship out there.
Fourth man: (pointing) Right out there.
Third man: It's an old steamer. I can see the smoke.
First man: Oh no, it isn't. It's a passenger liner. I can see the funnels.

(They argue again.)

Third man: Don't you see the smoke, Grandpa?
Grandpa: Maybe I do, and maybe I don't.
Second man: (ignoring him) Perhaps it's sailing for India.
Fourth man: No, it's a passenger liner going to Australia.
First man: No, no, no...it's going to Indonesia.
Third man: No, it's a cargo vessel, and it's going to Malaysia.

(Again, they argue about it for some time. Eventually, they approach Grandpa and ask his opinion.)

Second man: What do you think, Grandpa? Isn't it sailing for India?
Grandpa: Maybe it is, and maybe it isn't.
First man: (getting annoyed with him) Oh, he doesn't know anything.
Third man: Let's take a closer look.

(They all go back to the shore to get a closer view.)

Fourth man: Oh! I don't think it's a ship at all.
First man: Yes, you're right. It's a lighter. I can see the cargo of rice.
Third man: No, it's an old Chinese junk. I can see the sails.

Second man: No, no, no it's a sampan. I can see the oars.

(They argue again about it.)

Fourth man: What do you think Grandpa? It's a fisherman bringing in his catch. Isn't it Grandpa?

Grandpa: Maybe he is, and maybe he isn't.

First man: Wait a minute. It's coming closer.

Second man: Yes, I can see it. It isn't a sampan or junk at all.

Fourth man: It looks more like a box.

Second man: Yes, it's a crate of oranges.

Third man: No, I can see the label. It's a crate of apples.

First man: You are all wrong. It's definitely a case of dates.

(Once again they argue for some time, then ask old Grandfather his opinion.)

Fourth man: Well, what do you think Grandpa?

Grandpa: Maybe it is, and maybe it isn't.

First man: I told you he doesn't know anything.

Second man: It's much nearer now. I don't think it's a box after all.

Fourth man: You're right. It's not shaped like a box.

Third man: I wonder what it is.

Second man: Oh, it's gone. I can't see it any longer.

First man: (excitedly) Look there it is. I can see it floating.
Fourth man: (pointing) Yes, there it is. I can see it.
Second man: Let's wade out and get a closer look.
All: Yes, let's go.
Third man: Are you coming Grandpa?
Grandpa: Maybe I will, and maybe I won't.
Third man: Oh, leave him alone. Let's go.
(They wade out.)
First man: Come on! We'll lose it.
Second man: We'll drag it in together.
First man: I'll go first. I'm the tallest.
Third man: I'm going in first, 'cause I'm the eldest.
Fourth man: But I'm the strongest, so I should go first.
Second man: What nonsense! I've got the longest legs, so I should be the one to go first.
(Again they argue about it.)
Fourth man: Let's ask...
Third man: (interrupting) Oh, no, it's a waste of time.
First man: Yes, he doesn't know anything.
Second man: Well, let's all go together.
(They all wade out together...out to sea.)
Fourth man: Here it comes.
First man: I'll get it. I'm the tallest.
(Before they start an argument, he wades out further and picks up the object.)
Second man: (excitedly) Well, what is it?

Third man: Yes, what is it? Let me see.

First man: It's only a bunch of... seaweed.

Fourth man: (very disappointed) Oh...

Third man: Let's go back.

(They all wade back to the shore and go to Grandfather.)

Fourth man: Do you know what it was. It was a...

Grandpa: (interrupting) ...a bunch of seaweed. I knew all the time.

First man: How?

Grandpa: Well, there's an old Chinese proverb that says, 'Things are not the same when seen from afar.' or 'Don't jump to conclusions, till you are certain.' Maybe you'll all remember that next time.

All: Maybe we will, and maybe we won't.

(They all laugh.)

Some Suggestions on the Dramatization of the Play.

Through a discussion at the beginning, the teacher could motivate the pupils' interest by talking about the characterization of Grandpa and the four fishermen--(each should have different characteristics)--the type of work they would be doing, etc. He or she could involve the whole class in this activity, by having more fishermen, and getting a group of pupils to play Grandpa, like the Greek Chorus. Some pupils could provide the sound effects of the sea, while others could be onlookers or bystanders who might be drawn into the argument of the fishermen.
Mime work at the beginning would help to create and enhance the atmosphere of the seaside.
Chapter 11

GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTING DRAMATIC
DIALOGUES AND IMPROVISATION ACTIVITIES

1. The teacher should present the dialogue to the pupils as clearly and dramatically as possible.

2. An activity should begin with an example realistically 'played out' by a group of pupils and perhaps the teacher. The teacher may find it necessary to participate in the dialogue--at least at the beginning.

3. The dialogues can be practiced in pairs with pupils changing roles. In this way, even the weakest and most diffident pupils are encouraged to participate in the dialogue. The use of various kinds of puppets and masks is an excellent way of encouraging the timid and diffident pupils to participate.

4. The initial dialogues should be quite short so that the pupils will have no difficulty in remembering at least the gist of them. The teacher should not insist on the dialogues being memorized. If pupils' interest is motivated, the dialogues can be expanded and pupils encouraged to improvise and make appropriate variations.
5. Appropriate facial expressions, gestures, movement and other paralinguistic features and vocal cues should be encouraged in the dialogue as they help to reinforce the learning process and are a necessary element in language learning.

6. The roles in a dialogue or sketch should be clearly contrasted and sharply drawn, particularly at the early stages. For example, a pompous policeman and a timid motorist; a domineering wife and a meek husband, or vice versa.

7. Dialogues should be interesting and meaningful to the pupils and should be related to the needs, interests and environment of the pupils.

8. Generally, no properties are necessary—everything could be mimed. However, simple basic 'props' may be used to help the illusion and set the scene, for example, toy stethoscope, toy telephone, etc.

9. Most activities may be adapted to suit different age or grade levels and interests of the pupils.

10. The activities should range from the simple to more demanding and challenging situations. If the activity is too simple, the pupils may be bored and lose interest, and if the activity is too difficult and demanding, pupils may be discouraged and be reluctant to participate.

11. In improvisation, the teacher should not impose his
or her own ideas on the pupils. He or she should encourage and elicit ideas and suggestions from the pupils themselves, and pupils should be free to pursue the unfolding of the plot, or solve the problem in any way they wish.

12. Follow-up activities can further reinforce the learning process, and also stimulate an interest in playmaking, creative writing, and art projects.

13. The teacher should allow pupils to make mistakes in English and avoid correcting them during the improvisation activities, as this may discourage pupils and inhibit spontaneous speech. The linguistic risks are well worthwhile in relation to the psychological gains, particularly in the initial stages of language learning.
Chapter 12

BEGINNING DRAMA IN PRIMARY ONE--A SAMPLE PROGRAMME

The best way to arouse and sustain interest in drama at this early stage in language learning, is to introduce pupils who speak little or no English to rhythm and movement. Through rhythm and movement, pupils develop an understanding of movement as the external expression of an internal idea, intention or feeling. Rhythm and movement activities also provide excellent ways for starting class sessions with strength and vitality. For the first few lessons, the teacher could focus on developing flexible, diversified and uninhibited physical movement, and with the aid of a tambourine or drum, help pupils to express a visible response to rhythmic patterns and moods in sound and music.

The first lesson could be carried out on the following lines:

Step 1.

The teacher introduces action words like sit, stand, close your eyes, listen, run, jump, skip, pull, push, etc., by tapping or shaking the tambourine. This activity will help pupils to comprehend simple commands and move spontaneously to sounds and rhythm.
Step 2.

The teacher will then give the command followed by signals on the tambourine or drum for different actions, such as continuous shake of the tambourine for pupils to run, regular beats for them to jump, one sudden beat for them to stop, etc. This activity could then take the form of a game where pupils perform the actions from the rhythm or beats on the tambourine, then from the verbal commands of the teacher, or a pupil. Pupils not responding immediately to the sound will be 'out.' Another very useful and enjoyable activity is the game of 'Freeze,' in which pupils respond to various commands, then stop immediately when they hear the word 'freeze,' or when they hear a loud beat on the drum. Those 'caught' moving will be out. The teacher should invite pupils to be the leader and give the commands, so that they have the opportunity of saying the action words themselves. This game is valuable as it involves both listening and psychomotor skills.

Step 3.

Pupils could then be invited to verbalize their actions, the teacher asking the question, "What are you doing?" and the pupils giving the appropriate answer; for example, "We're jumping, We're running, or We're pushing," etc. This activity could also take the form of
a dramatic dialogue in which the teacher or a pupil plays the role of a blind person, or an old 'granny' who is bed-ridden, and asks the question, "What are you doing now?"
The pupils are thus given the opportunity of using the present continuous tense in a purposeful and meaningful manner.

Step 4.

The lesson could end with a simple action song or dialogue, such as the following poem, which is arranged for different voices by the author.

At Play

1st child  I like to skip
2nd child  I like to jump
3rd child  I like to run about
4th child  I like to play
5th child  I like to sing
6th child  I like to laugh and shout
          All
          So we'll all skip, jump, run,
          play and laugh and shout,
          Till Mummy comes out
          And Daddy comes out
          To see--to see
          What it's all about.

The next few lessons could progress in this way, but gradually the teacher increases the vocabulary of different actions in suitable contexts. More games, simple dialogues and action songs could be introduced; for example, "Can you tell me?," "Mary Sim," "Simple Simon," etc. (see Chapter 6 on rhymes and songs.)

Pupils at this level also enjoy imitating movements and sounds of various animals, and the teacher could
utilize this in the creative drama sessions. This activity could also take the form of a game similar to "Charades," in which pupils imitate the sounds and movements of their favourite animals, and other pupils try to guess the animal. Pupils should be given freedom to explore and experiment with the different movements and sounds of wild and tame animals. Asking pupils to mime how an animal moves or to make the sound of animals involves the pupils both psychologically and physically in exploring sounds and meanings and provides an opportunity and need for the pupils to express themselves in both verbal and nonverbal terms.

Other creative drama activities like simple dialogues and improvisation could also be introduced gradually. These should be centered around situations which are interesting, within the pupils' experience, and most important of all, in which pupils have a need to express themselves. In the initial stages, much of the language, such as new words and structures, will have to be provided by the teacher, and much repetition may be necessary. However, if the teacher provides this much-needed motivation and interest, pupils will learn very quickly to use the language.
CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the use of creative drama as a very useful technique in teaching English as a second language in the primary schools in Singapore. Throughout the study the writer emphasizes the importance and use of creative drama as a vital strategy and an indispensable tool for the teacher to help pupils develop language skills and cultivate the ability to think and speak extemporaneously. Various creative drama activities are discussed and suggestions, ideas and guidelines for their use in the classroom are offered.

Rhymes and songs are included to give pupils motivation and pleasure in learning and to help pupils to speak with correct stress and rhythm; pantomime and movement activities are recommended to arouse pupils' awareness of sensory and emotional stimuli and to help pupils express themselves in paralinguistic vocal cues and features; the use of music is suggested to stimulate the pupils' imagination and create and enhance the dramatic situation; dramatic dialogues are included to help pupils absorb structures and idioms; and various activities for improvisation are offered to elicit autonomous interaction and to provide pupils with opportunities to use English in life-like situations. And since speech is an affective-
social process as well as a cognitive one, the affective domain of language learning is emphasized in these activities.

The writer does not claim that the use of drama will be a magic cure or panacea to the problem. It is a means to an end—a very useful tool for teaching and learning English as a second language, since it provides abundant opportunities for the learner to use natural, conversational English in meaningful and purposeful contexts. The ultimate goal is for pupils in our schools to communicate in simple, conversational English with their peers and with native speakers of English outside the classroom. The value of creative drama is primarily to help pupils easily absorb the structures and idioms of the language, as they are used in real communication, without subjecting them to tedious habit-forming drills and pattern practice.

The author believes that if pupils in the schools in Singapore are provided with interesting, stimulating and exciting creative drama activities, they will want to communicate their excitement to their peers and even to their superiors—teachers and parents. This type of motivation will enable them to learn English more quickly, and with enjoyment, desire, and understanding, that drills and other techniques have hitherto not successfully achieved. When the teacher hears the pupils using fluent
colloquial English in their daily interactions, he or she will know that English has become a living language for them.

It must be emphasized that the specific examples of poems, songs, dialogues, mime and movement and improvisation activities have been devised by the author to be suitable material for pupils in the primary school. However, the teacher should adapt these activities to suit the different ages, needs, interests and environment of the pupils. The writer hopes that teachers in the elementary schools in the United States may also be able to adapt and use this material to give pupils the much needed motivation and interest in learning English as a second language.

While it is not absolutely necessary for classroom teachers to have a training in creative drama to try out the material recommended in the study, teachers with a training and experience in creative drama would be able to guide the dramatic efforts of the pupils with greater skill and confidence and achieve more satisfying results. Many teachers who are untrained in creative drama seem to adopt a "laissez-faire" role in teaching. They often set up a dramatic activity, then let the pupils 'get on with it.' Pupils engaged in dramatic activities require some direction and guidance. Without them, the pupils' efforts inevitably lack order and
purpose and pupils may quickly become frustrated or bored with the activity.

Creative drama may be considered an end in itself--as an art expression, or it may become part of the learning process in other curriculum areas, that is, besides serving as a useful means for developing language skills, using all the domains of language learning, creative drama can motivate an interest in creative writing and other forms of creative expression, and it can also be used to link and relate other interdisciplinary subjects on the timetable. This could serve as a subject or topic for another study.
NOTES

1 Lee Kuan Yew, Untitled paper in The Mirror, 8, No. 16 (Singapore: Government Printers, 1972), p. 3.
3 Kwan Sai Kheong, Speech given at the South East Asia Minister of Education Organization, Regional English Language Centre in Singapore, September, 1968.
4 There has been concern by the Ministry of Education and the University of Singapore that the standards of English have fallen. The Institute of Education and the English Language and Literature Department of the University of Singapore have had to institute proficiency tests. The head of the Civil Service has blamed bilingualism for this state of affairs.


Chastain, Developing Second Language Skills, p. 176.

Wilga Rivers and Mary Temperley, p. 5.


18 Peter Slade, *Child Drama*, p. 54.


31 Brian Way, p. 11-12.


34 Peter Slade, *Child Drama*, p. 73.


38 James Moffett, p. 41.
39 Brian Way, Development through Drama, p. 112.
40 Brian Way, p. 115.
41 Kenneth Chastain, Developing Second Language Skills, p. 176.
44 Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children: from Kindergarten through Junior High School, p. 86.
45 Kenneth Chastain, Developing Second Language Skills, p. 279.
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GLOSSARY

1. ang pow money wrapped in a red packet and given by adults to children and unmarried relatives on Chinese New Year—the Chinese Lunar Year, circa February 18.

2. Change Alley popular tourist bargain shopping centre, situated near the harbour.

3. chiku a small, sweet, juicy fruit.

4. durian a favourite fruit, about the size of a watermelon which has a very tough and prickly outer skin.

5. kampong a small village.

6. Jurong an industrialized town located at the extreme south western corner of Singapore.

7. Lion City the meaning of Singapore which is derived from two Sanskrit words, "singa" (lion) and "pura" (city).

8. lorry an open truck.

9. mee Chinese noodles.

10. National Day Singapore became a fully independent and sovereign nation on separation from Malaysia on August 9, 1965.

11. pasar malam night-market, consisting of temporary stalls or stands set up along the road in some areas in Singapore and functioning only one night in the week.

12. rambutan a small fruit the size of a small lime, with a prickly skin.

13. satay small pieces of meat on a stick, cooked on an open fire like a barbeque, and served with a hot sauce.
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<td>14. sampan</td>
<td>small, flat-bottomed boat originally rowed with oars, but now mostly used with outboard motor.</td>
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<td>15. Sentosa</td>
<td>a popular holiday island resort which is accessible by cable car or by ferry.</td>
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<td>16. sir</td>
<td>any male teacher; children in the primary school would refer to a male teacher as 'sir,' for example they would say, &quot;sir's car, or my sir is Mr. Chin.&quot;</td>
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<td>17. trishaw</td>
<td>a three-wheeled vehicle—a bicycle and a carriage used for public transportation.</td>
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<td>18. Van Kleef Aquarium</td>
<td>an aquarium for rare species of marine and fresh water fishes, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates.</td>
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