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EFL learners developing  
critical intercultural awareness  
through process drama:  
Dialogue and discovery

by Irene Wen-ling CHEN

A thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

School of Education

Durham University

2013



## Abstract

The overall aim of this research study is to look for a paradigm shift in foreign language (English) education in Taiwan. By challenging the role of foreign languages teaching and learning in the reproductive purpose of education systems, this study addresses the significance and urgency of developing *critical intercultural awareness* (CIA) in Taiwan students' language learning experience. This study is a reflective account of an action research project that explores the how and why CIA can be developed in process drama praxis in the context of the Advanced English Learners' Programmes for 27 junior high school students in Taiwan.

Drawing on the theoretical framework of socio-cultural and educational drama theories for foreign language learning, this study follows the line of *performative inquiry* (Fels, 1999; 2000; 2008). As such, the drama site is regarded as a space for reflective action to take place, the drama workshop is seen as a collective experience of reflection, in which the participants are made able to problematise the current situation, to see things from different and distanced perspectives, and develop understanding in every moment of encountering with others, while co-constructing meanings together through dialogue and critical reflections. The narrative accounts of this inquiry serve to answer the major research question: **How would a process drama syllabus help EFL learners develop critical intercultural awareness?**

The qualitative data demonstrated how such the multilayered mental space in drama allowed the language learners to develop flexibility and mobility through a freedom in the choice of action endowed upon them by the drama syllabus. The analysis revealed how drama created a milieu for the participants to engage, to negotiate, and co-construct meanings with SELF and Others from critical perspectives. The foreign language learning experience serves as a contact zone in which the SELF is deconstructed and reconstructed through a constant interplay and negotiation of meaning with the OTHER. The drama syllabus and approaches furthered this inter-space experience, deepened the impact of encountering the OTHER, and thus enabled the process of recognizing and re-strengthening of one's own cultural identity.

The evidence in the research demonstrated that, when given appropriate opportunities, the EFL learners are able to develop critical intercultural awareness through the language learning experiences. A model for the development of such intercultural education is then constructed through this study. The research thus argues for a need of a critical pedagogy approach in the foreign language classroom.

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# Declaration

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No material contained in the thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

## Statement of Copyright

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The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without her prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

# Acknowledgement

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Thank you all.

*i.w.chen*



## Prologue

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### 1. Sammie's story

#### **Part 1: the morning class.**

*Setting:* an English-only<sup>1</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> grade Literature class in a junior high school in Taichung city, Taiwan.

Sammie entered the classroom anxiously as she knew that this class would be focused on the reading of Harry Potter. She was holding in her hands a thick volume of "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," which she and all class students were required to purchase beforehand. Sammie and all other classmates sat quietly in the classroom as the teacher asked them to turn to the first chapter.

The teacher passed around the room a thick pile of handouts to all students. "These will be the lists of all the new vocabulary and phrases you need to learn from this literature class," the teacher proudly announced, "all five hundred of them!" The teacher was a Taiwanese who spoke to the class with a distinct and pleasant American accent; she had just been chosen out of a pool of a dozen candidates to teach this English class. She briefed the Harry Potter story for ten minutes, read aloud with the class the new words and phrases in

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<sup>1</sup> "English-only" means that English is the only medium of instruction in the class.

the first 15 pages of the book, and asked the students to memorize them after class as homework. "Next week we will have a quiz on these words," she reminded. After the teacher explained the meanings of the first thirty new words in the book, the class was dismissed.

It needs no imagination to envision how the next literature class on Harry Potter would be run. A quiz would be taken, and more vocabulary and phrases would be highlighted. When Sammie finished this course, her parents received a grade report from the school informing them that Sammie now had a vocabulary base of 500 words from this well-known novel.

**Part 2: the after-school class.**

*Setting:* a cram-school in Sammie's neighborhood.

Sammie signed up in the entrance and lined up to enter a small, crowded classroom in this facility. She brought with her another voluminous book in language arts published in the United States for American 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Her tutor in this cram school was a blonde native English speaker from Canada, and the topic for today was to introduce the history of America.

Sammie had never been to the States. All these stories about a far away land seemed interesting yet remote to her. She was taking these extra-hours English lessons after school because most students in her class did so and her parents would not miss any opportunity for her to study more about English. Spending almost 6 extra hours per week in a cram school had already become a routine of life since Sammie was an eight-year-old.

Sammie wrote in her journal that she separated her life into two categories: the English arena and the Chinese arena. In school she also needed to learn other subjects in Chinese, but when she studied English, her "Chinese" side

ceased to exist, because it seemed that her “Chinese” culture was obscure and lost its visibility in her English arena.

Sammie’s English learning experience tells us a good deal about the paradox of the foreign (English) language education and its practice in Taiwan. When the reading of a novel of adventure like Harry Potter serves only to be the backdrop for memorization of words, all other elements of the reading experience, such as stimulation of the imagination and critical inquiry skills, are consequently ignored. Together the school and the parents advocate only the surface value of learning the language and fail to recognize other education objectives behind foreign language education. In such a system, there is offered only technical training in language which reduces the communication process that is crucial to any language learning experience. The individual learning progress tends to be ignored for the sake of group achievement, and naturally the specific social identities with which the learners learn to respect “the others”, which is considered a significant part of learning a foreign language, can not be developed.

Moreover, when the learners have to depend on the cram school system for the major learning experience in English, the objective in learning language and culture will not be complete as the cram school system endows a great dependence on the use of teaching materials from the U.S. Here the content of foreign language education seems to embrace mostly the cultural elements of the target language and leave out the discussion of the local culture.

Outside the classroom – whether in the school or in the cram school - the pressure for opening up to meet the challenge of internationalisation and globalisation is the undertone of every political, economical, and educational statement in Taiwan. When meeting the challenge of the world and modernization becomes the central claim and focus of education in Taiwan, foreign language (English) education in particular seems to help to

advocate the policy of educating the future citizens to cope with the demand of the global competition. Thus when English learning is glorified as the only possible solution to the economical problems in the developing countries, demand for the mastery of English language seems to take the role of being the savior to those social classes who might not have the opportunity to acquire the prestige of learning the language in their educational path.

### **Elitism and educational reform: Is English a better choice?**

One significant factor in language education will need to be brought to attention of the reader. This factor is related to the situation in which English becomes, with its implicit ideological implication, a social symbol for a better future. Trueba and Zou in their study indicate that the basic hypothesis that “education, the acquisition of knowledge, status and academic skills is the main door to the empowerment of nationalities” (Trueba & Zou, 1994, p. 83). Belief in the magic power of English as a global language for the global citizens contributes to the nation’s striving to enter the international stage for economical profits as well as political positioning. Fishman believes that the language problems of the “old developing nations” differed from those of new nations, principally because old nations had literate traditions, and so the task for language planners in new nations was “to cope with Western technology and procedure” (Fishman, 1968, p.494), and “if the citizens could speak the same modernized language, both unity and economical development, key to Western technology, financing, and expertise, were more likely” (Ricento, 2000b, p. 12). The choice of English as the dominant global language over other ones epitomizes such belief in Taiwan society.

Ricento observes that, from the mid-1980s to the present day, “operating along with geographical and political changes are forces associated with the globalization of capitalism, such as the domination of the media by a handful of multinationals” (Ricento, 2000b, p. 17). He indicates that the development

of “penetration of Western culture and technology... in the developing world... has had consequences for the status... of languages, large and small” (Ricento, 2000b, p. 17). From Ricento’s point of view, language becomes “a vector and means by which an unequal division of power and resources between groups is propagated” (Ricento, 2000b, p.18). In the same vein, Phillipson examines the linguistic situation in the developing world and invokes the term “linguistic imperialism” as a ‘shorthand for a multitude of activities, ideologies and structural relationship” (1997, p. 239). Foreign language education in this light becomes the tool to reproduce ‘sociocultural and econo-technical inequalities, and the language planning is often connected to the processes of Westernization and modernization” (Ricento, 2000b, p. 20). English has been marketed as the dominant form of world language, with the creation of a global consumerist culture, a single market (Anderson, 1983) of Coca Cola, McDonald, and Microsoft, for which the key language is English, and as the solution to the problems of the economy. This echoes Bernstein’s view that “a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control” (Bernstein, 1971, p. 47).

What would be the social identities of the learners who would be better equipped with English language, the key element to the future achievement? If the dominant conception in the society regards the language as the world language, how would the learners develop what Kramersch (1999) defines as *symbolic communicative competence*, which is developed with “the recognition and understanding of social differences in the use of language, an understanding of a social group’s history, its form of symbolic capital, its social structure, and of the distribution of power as reflected in its use of language” (Kramersch, 1999, p.42). What would be the opportunity to improve intercultural competence, which emphasizes “the need to pay attention to the Self in a dialectic moment of self-and-other discovery?” (Kramersch,1999, p.43).

The foreign EFL teachers working in public schools and cram schools alike, who are supposed to be responsible for equipping “the learners with the abilities of accessing and analyzing any cultural practice and meaning they encounter” (Byram, 1997, p.19), seem to face the problem of social identities themselves. Although these teachers might have been exposed to academic training in teaching methodology, one way or another, in their home countries, they are far from being qualified with special training in child and adolescent development, guidance and project methods of teaching elements which are crucial to implementation of curriculum objectives (Taba, 1971, p. 138). The scope, levels, sequences and integration that Taba and many other educationists prescribe for curriculum organization are beyond their focus. Like Sammie, foreign language (English) students accept only the ‘surface’ impression of the target language and culture, the one that celebrates Halloween and Christmas with talent shows.

## **2. Purpose and significance of the study**

“If some of the goals of education in modern times are to open up possibilities for discovery and expand learning and the chance for mutual acceptance and recognition in a wider world, it may be important to offer students a perspective on their own immediate center of the world by enabling them to participate sensitively as cross-cultural sojourners to the center of someone else’s world” (Bachelder, 1993, p. xiv), Bachelder argues. As a researcher, I share Bachelder’s perspective and yet it is precisely this perspective which is at risk when the focus is on English as a world language taught and learnt so that Taiwanese people can become effective in the globalised market. Thus in conducting this research journey, I aim to look for a paradigm shift in foreign language (English) education in Taiwan away from the exclusive focus on instrumentalism and towards a combination of instrumentalism with the kind

of educational values Bachelder formulates.

### **3. Research questions and how they were raised**

My interest in the topic arises from my work as an English and drama teacher in universities, and as a bilingual program developer/consultant for several high schools in Taiwan. From such experience I noted that the education policy prescribes only the micro-linguistic approaches for English language teaching/learning experience, and fails to acknowledge the significance of intercultural understanding for the education of world citizens, as described above. This became the starting point for my engagement with this research and with the need to offer a new approach – perhaps a paradigm shift, for the English classroom. I am interested in finding out further: if learning English becomes a significant part of schooling, how would this language learning experience enhance the learner's perception of the world? What would we as educators bring to their learning experience then? In particular, what would be the effect of the focus on EFL and learning through EFL on their understanding of their own society and its relations with others?

In my years of teaching at universities, I had become aware of how at times the classroom environment sustains a "charged" atmosphere and students appear to embody a dynamic "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) of energy and concentration with the curriculum. During these sustained moments, the class demonstrated an engaged participation with the situations *as insiders* to the phenomenon under study (Edmiston, Enciso, & King, 1987; Wolf, 1994). By so doing, they were able to transform their textbook on English language learning study into living inquiries. An identical line of inquiry has thus started to formulate itself at every moment of my teaching path: why exactly do we learn English? If the status of English language is unquestionably dominant in this global world, would we, the non-native users of the language,

be able to sustain our cultural and individual identities in the learning process? If cross-and intercultural communication is acknowledged as the main objective for English education, how, then, do we see ourselves and people from other cultures when we use this non-native language to communicate with them? How can we, as both educators and foreign language teachers, encourage the kind of dynamic and energy flow to emerge in the learning process that is genetic to active learners and yet mostly suppressed in the English language classroom? And last but not the least, if properly facilitated, how would this kind of dynamic and energy flow generated in the language classroom enrich the language learners' educational experience? Can we develop a model with drama pedagogy that could encourage this educational inspiration?

These questions drove me to search for alternative possibilities in educational approaches for the English curriculum. In fall, 2002, I attended an educational drama workshop and was introduced to the concepts and practiced of educational drama which was originated in UK in the 1960s. Amazed by the infinite educational possibilities of the approaches, I started to look for theoretical links between drama pedagogy and intercultural education. I was curious to search into the terrain for educational possibilities that would not only address the significance of learning a foreign language with global status but also enhance the learners' development of self-identity. New questions were added to my earlier ones: Can drama pedagogy provide the learning experiences I was seeking for foreign language learners? How would the drama praxis facilitate such process?

In conducting this research journey, I aim to look for a paradigm shift in foreign language (English) education in Taiwan. Taking the Bilingual English Program (BEP) in junior high school in particular as the object of discussion, this study challenges the fallacy of learning foreign languages as a means for social reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). In presenting both a



conservative and a progressive interpretation, this thesis argues further the significance and urgency of developing intercultural competence in Taiwan students' language learning experience. The research then seeks to show how this is possible through the pedagogy of process drama which put learners in situational contexts of encountering "the others" to look at how language learning experience can become part of a process of cumulative development through which the learners achieve motivational and social preparedness and capacity to use their intercultural competence in many ways. In order to demonstrate this effect of intercultural competence in language learning experiences, a discussion and analysis of the impact of educational drama activities on advanced language learners is presented, through which the development of critical (inter-)cultural awareness is studied. In such instance, the practice of process drama was adopted as an opportunity for learners to develop intercultural consciousness, which will enable learners to go beyond boundaries and limitation of language classroom experience.

The main research question this study addresses is:

**How would a process drama syllabus help EFL learners develop critical intercultural awareness?**

Under this umbrella, three sub-questions are then explored:

- 1. What does it mean to develop critical intercultural awareness in the EFL classroom?**
- 2. How does the process drama approach facilitate a reflective space for EFL learners?**
- 3. How is the critical intercultural awareness generated in the drama process?**

The first sub-research question is addressed with a review of major trends in language, culture and intercultural education in the first part of **Chapter 2**. In the second part of **Chapter 2**, a development of a conceptual framework of

drama praxis is presented. The drama framework and praxis is explored from the perspective of seeing drama as a cultural practice which is parallel to the concept of situating language also as a cultural practice.

To address the second research question, in **Chapter 4** this study describes and examines the co-constructed process of the curriculum drama. An analysis of the drama process to identify and interpret the major patterns of interactions of the EFL learners & teachers is presented and explores the following agenda: how do students and their teacher develop an environment that values dialogic experience? What processes help to transform the classroom environment to a drama? How do classroom relationships transform when drama is enacted as a process between students and between students and their teacher?

To answer the third research question, an examination of the effects of the drama approaches in relation to the development of critical intercultural stance is presented. I then examine how this drama curriculum can be the basis for the change in approach – the paradigm change – to the teaching of English so that learners acquire the intercultural critical awareness which I use a short-hand formulation of the educational values I want English teaching to embody. The third research question is addressed in **Chapter 5**.

The research thus proposes to provide a broader perspective on the foreign language education policy of Taiwan, and on the BEP program in particular. Following a description of the background to this topic, the research project plans to investigate the significance of prescribing intercultural competence as a purpose for successful foreign language education. As drama education has been facilitated in the official curriculum, an integral approach for L2 experience using the medium of process drama provides an opportunity for learners to develop such competence and enhance the richness of learning experience.

#### 4. Outline of the chapters and structure of the thesis

In order to address the issues I have raised, **Chapter One** provides a historical background for foreign language (English) education in Taiwan to discern the subtle and complicated ideology commonly shared by the Taiwan society.

In order to address the research question and to refine them, the first step is to analyse critically the existing research and to ask how it can help with the particular questions in the particular context. **Chapter Two** thus presents a review of the relevant literature. It begins with literature that examines the major trends in the relationship between culture, language and intercultural education. In this way this chapter locates the research in existing research – both empirical and conceptual/theoretical and in particular the areas of language, culture and intercultural education. In the second part of this chapter, seeing drama as a cultural practice and a collective learning experience, a line of inquiry is developed in order to locate the research in the context of social learning theories, cultural studies, performance and performativity theories, and educational drama tenants.

In order to discover if and how the paradigm shift I want to introduce can be realised in practice, my approach was to carry out a project in the classroom and my opportunity to do this was offered by my work as consultant to schools in Taiwan. **Chapter Three** presents the research design of this study, describes the instructional setting for the study, and reports the methods of data collection and analysis, together with a discussion of the validity/trustworthiness reliability/ credibility of the study – which is a case study in one school – and the degree it might be possible to generalize or make general recommendations from it by the end of the thesis. There is also a discussion of educational and psychological perspectives on simulation games and educational drama. It also includes a discussion of the ethical issues in doing educational research and

how these have to be addressed through the concept of “informed consent”.

**Chapter Four** presents a narrative describing the co-construction of this classroom drama. On the basis of the data collected from the research design and data collection techniques presented in the previous chapter.

**Chapter Five** presents an interpretative analysis of the themes emerging from the narrative and how the data collected answer the research questions introduced above.

**Chapter Six** discusses the findings, critiques the study, - including a further discussion of how far this case study can be generalised to other educational situations in Taiwan and beyond - and offers implications for practice and suggestions for further research

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

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### **1.0 Overview of the chapter**

This chapter presents and investigates the general background of the research project, i.e., English education in China and Taiwan in the past 100 years. Examining foreign language education in Taiwan from a political perspective, this analysis of the research context aims to establish a critical account of how foreign (English) language learning experience has been endowed with an ambivalent and paradoxical tone in the Taiwan society, for all policy makers, educators and language learners at all levels.

### **1.1 Introduction to the research context**

The call to meet the challenge of internationalisation and globalisation has become the undertone of almost every political, economical, and educational statement of the Taiwan government, and proficiency in English in particular seems to be the passport that connects the islanders to the outside world.

English has gained a prestigious status in every aspect of Taiwanese society as the “linguistic software” (Tonkin, 2001, p. 6, cited in Crawford, 2001, p.1) for economic growth and competitiveness. Interestingly, though, as Taiwan is a

multicultural society<sup>1</sup>, when there has developed a contested battleground for different ethnic groups who strive for recognition of their identities through national language planning and policy, it is English, a language from foreign cultures, that has won its overwhelming popularity over all other languages (Tsao, 2001). Price (2005) observes that Taiwan seems to be tolerating tremendously the dominance of a foreign language in the society, while advocating a ‘supra-ethnic Taiwanese identity’ (p.1) within the country and to the outside world. This paradoxical attitude toward language spread and language policy, Price argues further, leads to tensions between the global influences and the local approaches for educational policies and practices. Recognizing the opposing perspectives of indigenisation and internationalisation, Taiwanese society finds herself obsessed with the English language while striving for a balance between national identity and competitiveness.

## 1.2 When East meets West: the Chinese context

It is interesting to examine the status of English in the Chinese context from the perspective of the rise and fall of political power. The relationship between English language and Chinese politics has been an “ambiguous” and interesting issue from historical perspective (Adamson, 2002, p. 231). For a culture that has itself embraced political and economical prestige for thousands of years, in the nineteenth century the Chinese people regarded the penetration of foreign power with English language as invasion of their pride and territories. The language of English, however, though it inevitably became the major medium of communication between the “developed” Chinese elite and the foreigners, was categorized as a “barbarian language”,

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<sup>1</sup> The main ethnic groups include *Ben-sheng-jen* (refers to people who have immigrated to Taiwan before 1949), *mainlanders* (refers to people who came to Taiwan with the KMT retreat to the island in 1949), *Hakka*, and *Aboriginals*.

paradoxically “the tongue of military aggressors, barbarians, imperialists ..., as well as of trade partners, academics, technical experts, advisers, tourists and popular culture” (Adamson, 2002, p.231).

Drawing evidence from policy documents, Adamson observes that, in China, the status ascribed to English has undergone drastic revolution during the past two hundred years. Particularly in the Chinese education system, this was due to the traditional biased view of the Chinese government that regarded English as “the desirable evil” - an ambiguous and paradoxical attitude that was resulted from the political and economical tension between China and foreign power. However, interestingly, when the tension between China and the West was more balanced, a higher status would then be attributable to English. Ironically, while English was ascribed such economically positive views, the Chinese nobility still showed hostility toward the language. Adamson posits that this kind of “anti-foreigner sentiments” (p.234) formed a strong counterpoint to the trend towards strengthening China through westernized education.

Yet English language somehow was a “barometer” of modernization in Chinese education system (Ross, 1992). In Ross’s words, the English language registered “high when open participation in the global community is perceived to be commensurate with political and economical interests, low when foreign influence is viewed as threatening to political stability and cultural integrity” (p.240). It was thus a threat as well as a benefit to the Chinese people, providing technological, social and financial opportunities for a better life. As English was used to embody “values that are perceived as undesirable to Chinese culture” (Adamson, 2002, p. 241), the Chinese people’s willing acceptance of the language nowadays is an indication of their reaction to the calls for Westernization as the ladder to success. Foreign language expertise is viewed by the state as essential to economic and scientific

development and the maintenance of productive diplomatic and cultural relations (Ross, 1992).

With such challenges from the Western world and the pressure for opening-up to accept more advanced knowledge - the key to success in modern sense - since the 1990s, the Chinese view of English language has been changed from the perception of a "barbarian tongue with low official status" to a language with "high status" which is desirable for "national modernization" (Adamson, 2002, p. 240). Nowadays in the Chinese context, in China and Taiwan as well, English has acquired a dominant importance as a subject in the examination for entrance to higher levels of schooling. Not only has it become a key determinant for university entrance, it also plays a decisive role in procuring well-paid jobs in the commercial sector (Adamson, 2002).

### **1.3 Historical development of the Chinese ELT practice**

The true story in the Chinese English learning experience was loaded with a complex of sentiments and bitterness. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Chinese people - the imperial circle to be specific - started to face its first challenge from globalisation. Over the last three thousand years before then, the Chinese people had been the centre of its own universe, enjoying victories in wars and eventual dominating power over neighboring minority groups. As the western countries started to reach out for the first genuine globalising attempt in human history, thanks to technological advancement from the Industrial Revolution, in the second half of the nineteenth century China began its official encounters with people and political entities which it had very scarce experience with. The Chinese people's preliminary experiences with these foreign powers were, sadly, traumatic: their overwhelmingly



reluctant and arrogant mentality inevitably caused offensive reaction from the anxious foreigners - the British and the French to begin with - and led to inevitable military confrontations. After the defeats in the two Opium Wars, one in 1842 and another in 1860, the Qing China was forced to open up for interactions with foreign power through economic and political concessions.

As a consequence, the Qing imperial government began a process of reformation that lasted for fifty years before the new Republic came into power in 1911. China started a series of reforms in the wake of westernisation. Along with several adaptations to western technology, the reform movement was marked by a significant establishment in 1862: the foundation of "*Tung-Wen Kuan*" (Common Language Learning School), the first English learning institution in China (Hsu, 2000). Ten students were selected from aristocratic families to learn English. The repertoire of foreign languages was then expanded to include Russian, French, and German. Before the Sino-Japanese war in 1895, there were reported to be five language schools nationwide. The initiation of such language learning institutions in the official landscape marked not just the first self-willing attempt of the Chinese people to learn western languages, but also the beginning of the modernisation of the Chinese education system, and the systematic spread of western civilization into the Chinese domain.

It should be noted that students of the *Tung-Wen Kwan* were required to learn not only western languages but also Chinese academic teachings, taught by senior scholars from the imperial court (Hsu, 2000). This was very much due to the fact that foreign language learning was just a very minor part of the academic world; the whole ladder for the rich and famous in the society at that time was still defined by the result of the existing examination system.

In 1872, the imperial court made another significant move: thirty young students were selected to study in the United States on financial support from

the government. In the subsequent four years, thirty students were dispatched to the same program each year, and the graduates from the program all became significant social elites when they returned to the country (Lin, 1994).

It is thus evident from this brief overview that from the very beginning of the Chinese history of English education, or foreign languages learning, the complex relationship of power and social reproduction in foreign language learning with the purpose of providing access to an international and eventually global economy had been deep-rooted.

On the one hand, foreign language learning was a necessity for the nation's survival. The admitted defeats in the two opium wars and the subsequent many others were mostly caused by ignorance of the foreign power beyond the Chinese borders. Learning the languages of the enemies was then the threshold to the understanding of the opposite side with the sole intention of defeating the enemies in the future. The well known expression posed by that advocated strategy of "controlling the barbarians with people and skills from the barbarians" (*yǐ yí zhì yí*, in Chinese) clearly demonstrated the Chinese mentality in learning foreign languages during this stage. It started with the pressure for modernization and an unwillingly anxiety to fight for national glory, aiming for well-defined political missions and national interests (Sung, 2003).

On the other hand, in order to fully explore the secrets behind the western 'strong ships and powerful canons' (*chuán jiān pào lì*, in Chinese) which had defeated the Chinese army in many wars, only people with the most approved social backgrounds were selected to be exposed to foreign language learning. Upon graduation, as a consequence, these selected people became part of the social elite system and, eventually, policy makers or influence on the policy making process. The 1901 Jen Yen Curriculum and the 1902 Kuei

Mao Curriculum for secondary schools all prescribed heavy load of foreign language learning hours per week (Tseng, 2007, p. 220).

Foreign language learning remained the right of the few select people till the end of the Imperial Qing. And these select people were usually the key force in bringing back western influence that resulted in social reform. The May Fourth Movement in 1919 was a clear manifestation of the magnitude of such influence from the west. Probably one of the most significant reform efforts in Chinese history toward democratisation and modernization (Hsu, 2000), the movement was initiated by elites and scholars who had studied abroad, in U.S.A. mostly. It called for a fighting back against foreign invasion, from the Japanese in particular, for national pride and identity, and a demand for more open policy to knowledge from the west, democracy and science in particular, and resulted in a gradual revolution of the knowledge system, culture, and education of the society ever since. It should be noted that it was indeed through efforts of such movements that the sociological and political concepts of the Marxists became well known to the Chinese people, and consequently changed the social and political landscape of the country in a couple of decades.

In short, the instrumentalist thinking about the learning of English which I outlined in the prologue as dominant in Taiwan today has a long history. It was sometimes linked with democratic processes as well as the notion that English (and other foreign languages) were necessary as a basis for learning more of western technology and becoming more involved with western trade. Yet it remained throughout a prestige for the elite and the powerful. In the following section, a discussion of the historical development of English language education in Taiwan is presented to provide an in-depth examination of the links between elitism and the instrumentalist view of language policy and education.

## 1.4 EFL in Taiwan – a historical overview

### 1.4.1 Practices before the 1950s

In the late nineteenth century, before Taiwan officially became a part of China, George Leslie Mackay, a missionary and a dentist from British Columbia, set up a modern school in Tamsui, the largest harbor city in Taiwan at that time, with a donation from his own town folks in Canada. The school was called *Niou-Jin Xue-Tang* (牛津學堂, the Oxford College) which was dedicated to the teaching of theology, geography, physics, medicine, etc. - knowledge that belonged to the western culture - to the Taiwanese people (Aletheia University, 2005). With an effort to modernize Taiwanese education, Dr. Mackay approached the local society from a unique perspective in that, rather than transforming the local culture to meet his own call, he became extremely fluent in the local language and was devoted mostly to the preservation of indigenous culture. Although the teaching and learning of English was not the main purpose of the institution, a few subjects might still be taught in English (Sung, 2003). It is almost certain that English language education was not too attractive to the society, since an overall antagonistic attitude toward foreigners and their cultures was still the pervading mindset of the time. Yet Dr. Mackay and his institution successfully helped to modernize the local educational landscapes through the introduction of western knowledge in many ways, particularly in the fields of women's education and medical practice (Aletheia University, 2005).

In 1887, in the wake of other cities in China that underwent increasing exposure to foreign interactions, Taiwan witnessed the establishment of the first official foreign (English) language teaching and learning institution in Taipei (*Four Hundred Years of Education in Taiwan*, 2006). The institution was set up by Liu Ming-chuan, the first Chinese viceroy to Taiwan, under the name *Xi Xue-tang* (西學堂), which literally means "Western Educational Institution". Unlike its counterpart in the capital city in mainland China, this

western-style educational institution opened its doors to local commoners – albeit commoners with outstanding intellectual abilities. This marked a promising start for the local commoners to learn the foreign language which used to be regarded as the privilege of the elites.

However, when Taiwan became a colony of the Japanese after China's defeat in the first Sino-Japan War in 1895, all English teaching and learning practices were eventually suspended by the new government. As learning Japanese, the colonist language, became the major task of all levels of schooling, English was only taught in teachers' schools, either as a compulsory course or an elective one (Tseng, 2007, p. 223). During this stage of development, the English curriculum in Taiwan, if any, followed the prescription of the Japanese Ministry of Education for ELT models developed by Harold Palmer, a British scholar who was commissioned by the Japanese government to renovate teaching pedagogy and revise textbooks and dictionaries for English teachers and learners (Howatt, 1984; cited in Tseng, 2007, p.223). The focus of English language education, nevertheless, was mostly on grammatical acquisitions (Tseng, 2007, p. 231).

#### **1.4.2 The post-war period: EFL education and American aid**

In 1949 when the Republic government retreated to Taiwan and started to solidify its dominance over the island, the second Chinese social reform under the influence of western culture<sup>2</sup> began - only this time self-willingly adopting the whole scheme of western ideology from many perspectives.

The overall tone of English learning and teaching in Taiwan after World War Two was particularly shaded with significant influence from the Americans

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<sup>2</sup> The first social reform in China with western influence refers to the reformation that was initiated with the May Fourth Movement in 1919 which was a clear manifestation of the magnitude of influence from the west.

(Hsu, 1981; cited in Tseng, 2007, p. 233). Having been defeated in the civil war and given up the continent to the Communists, the KMT government in Taiwan adopted the position of a member of the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty, and became a significant ally of the United States. The spread of English education at this stage thus won tremendous popularity under the deliberate influence of the American government (Chao, 2001). In 1951, the first US assignment of a Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) was stationed in Taiwan. During the Vietnam War, Taiwan was the retreat and supply centre for American troops. When the Americans sent armed forces to defend Taiwan against China according to the above-mentioned treaty in 1954, the influence of American culture flourished on the island, ranging from songs, to movies and magazines, which became the main source of language learning ever since (Chao, 2001).

Moreover, from 1951 to 1965, during and after the Korean War, the Taiwan Strait Crisis, and the Vietnamese War, Taiwan accepted significant US aid that helped in the country's major economic development (Chao, 1985; Wen, 1989). Wang Chao-ming, the former minister of economics and one of the key persons in Taiwan's economic development in the post-war period, remarked that American aid played a significant role in setting up the bedrock for the modernization of Taiwanese society; without American aid, Taiwan could never have achieved the economic miracle (Chao, 1985).

Actually the aid from the US did more than just provide financial stimulus to the island country. Taiwan has subsequently opened its door to English - American English, to be exact – both in terms of the culture and ideological impact of the language, and the overwhelming popularity of a foreign language in Taiwan certainly grew out of a mixture of ambivalent sentiments. Chen (2005) indicates that the key to the success of “American neo-colonialism” (p. 9) in Taiwan was due to the approach of the US

government to cultural penetration into Taiwanese society, which, as Chao observes, aimed to achieve “deliberate cultivation of a pro-American, anti-communist, conservative elite class” (Chao, 2001, p. 93), which then played a significant role in the reform of the social system. These approaches included support from various institutions and project funding bodies, and other endeavours for students to study abroad, governmental exchange programmes, and various research projects with American universities and institutions (Chao, 2001). Like their predecessors at the beginning of the twentieth century, students and scholars supported by such projects have in turn brought back tremendous American influences into the Taiwanese society in the last few decades. The fast-track development of Taiwan in the last half a century is often seen as the result of the effort of these socioeconomic and political elites who were educated in the United States. It is estimated that, in the last two decades or so, more than 60% of the cabinet members have been educated in the US (Chao, 2001.), including the former president Li Teng-hui, the former vice presidents Lien Chen and Lu Hsiou-lien, and the current president Ma Ying-jeou. Once again we see the relationship between language learning and elitism and the reproduction of an elite in the Taiwan society.

Aid from the US also played a significant role in the development of an English education system and language training centre in Taiwan. In 1951, the English Language Center (ELC) funded by American aid was established, which offered English language training courses to people preparing to go to the States under government funding. Courses in other foreign languages, such as French and Spanish, were also offered by the centre. Aid from the US was minimized after 1954, and the management of the ELC was then shifted to the National Taiwan University, providing services mostly to government-sponsored personnel (LTTC, 2008). After 1963, due to the significant boom in the popularity of English language courses, the centre

became financially independent of American funding, changing its name in 1979 to the Language Training and Testing Center (LTTC), and was then commissioned by the Taiwanese government to develop language teaching and learning guidelines and assessment projects for the national curriculum. The development of the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT), which has been the dominant nationwide language testing system of the country since 2001, is one of the projects of this centre. TOEFL, the linguistic competence threshold of American universities and graduate schools, is also represented by the LTTC in Taiwan. The set-up of the institution helped in making English learning available to all levels of people beyond the elite, whilst nonetheless promoted the thinking of seeing English as a key for the global market.

#### 1.4.3 EFL and educational reform in the post-martial-law era

Educational policy, particularly that of English language education, moved into a new phase of development when forty years of political restraint from martial law was officially abolished in 1987. Economic prosperity and internationalisation stood firm as the urgent calls of the nation, and have been evident in educational policy statements since 1995, as shown in **Table 1-1**.

**Table 1-1: Government policy statements and major claims relating to English education since 1995**

	Government policy statements	Major claims for English education
1.	The Republic of China Educational Report, Ministry of Education. (1995)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multicultural education</li> <li>• Freedom in education</li> <li>• Internationalization</li> <li>• Diversification of foreign languages education</li> <li>• International exchange educational</li> </ul>



		programmes
2.	Advisory Proposal for Educational Reform (Education Reform Advisory Committee, 1996a); The Consultants' Concluding Report on Education Reform (Education Reform Advisory Committee, 1996b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratization, , modernization and internationalization of education</li> <li>• De-regulation of elementary and junior high schools, curriculum reform , introduction of English to primary school students</li> </ul>
3.	Master Plan for Educational Reform, Ministry of Education (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationalization</li> <li>• Diversification of foreign languages education</li> <li>• International exchange educational programmes</li> </ul>
4.	Educational Reform Action Plan, Ministry of Education (1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationalization</li> <li>• Diversification of foreign languages education</li> </ul>
5.	Challenge 2008: the Six-year National Development Plan, Executive Yuan (2002a).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For universities and graduate schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Professional English education courses, enrolling international students and sending students abroad</li> <li>➤ Increase of overseas travel and information exchange</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The ultimate goal: to shape Taiwan into a suitable centre for cultural exchange of resources of all kinds with foreign countries.</li> </ul>
6.	Action Project for Building an	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforcement and integration of a</li> </ul>

	English Living Environment, Executive Yuan, Republic of China (2002b)	bilingual environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training in English talents to relevant competency levels</li> <li>• Reinforcement of the publicity campaigns, advertisements, and websites in English and Chinese..</li> </ul>
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In almost every major policy statement since 1995, English language education has been prescribed to be a key element of economic growth and globalisation. As a consequence of such an educational perspective, English language courses, among all other subjects in schooling, are regarded as the primary means to economic prosperity and the acquisition of linguistic competence in English is believed to facilitate exposure for the constrained islanders to the outside world, which leads to business opportunities in the global village (Executive Yuan, 2002a; 2002b; MOE, 1997; 1998).

The Educational Reform Procession, which echoed this urge for internationalisation at all levels of education, was called into action on 10, April, 1994 by over fifty thousand teachers and educators in the country for modernisation of educational policy and practices. Issues such as policy, curricula, teachers' education, teaching pedagogy, and teaching materials were raised and scrutinized in numerous research studies, forums, hearings, and discussions in all sectors of the society. In response, between 1996 and 1998, the Ministry of Education (MOE) reformed directives and guidelines for all levels of education (MOE, 1998). In 1998, the MOE finalized the action plan for the implementation of a crucial educational change (MOE, 1998), and the new Grade 1-9 Curriculum, which revolutionized the existing nine-year national compulsory educational system, was put into practice in 2001 (MOE, 2000). The call for and efforts towards reform encompass many aspects of

education, among which several changes in the process of facilitation of English courses in the curriculum are pertinent to this discussion.

English had been a subject taught in secondary schools prior to the 1990s, as discussed in the previous section. Due to the educational reform, the Taiwan government proposed to extend the provision of English language teaching to primary schools. In 1993, the Taiwan government began to allow primary schools to provide English teaching during the extra-curricular activity hours (Shih, 1998). In the years that followed, in attempting to follow the advice of the Educational Reform Committee, the MOE conducted feasibility studies, proposed training programmes, and formulated guidelines for the reform plan. English language education was thus envisaged not only as a subject taught at all levels of schooling but also as a movement of change in all sectors of the society. **Table 1-2** gives a chronological account of this development.

**Table 1-2: Development of the EFL policy in the 1990's & the 2000's**

	Year	Programmes/Proposals	Significant details	Initiation
1	1993	Educational Policy(MOE, 1993)	Primary schools are allowed to facilitate English classes in extra-curricular activity hours.	MOE
	1996	Advisory Proposal for Educational Reform(Education Reform Advisory Committee, 1996)	Proposition of 1. the inclusion of the reading and writing knowledge of the 26 letters of the English alphabets as official	Educational Reform Committee, Executive Yuan

			<p>requirement for K12 students;</p> <p>2. the extension of English language education to primary schools.</p>	
	1998	Training for Primary School English Teachers	Proposing training of English teachers for primary schools.	MOE
	1998	Feasibility Study and Proposal for English Curricula for Primary School Students (Shih, 1998)	Report of the feasibility study team on the facilitation of English courses in primary schools which proposed the objectives, the implementation process, the resources, the teacher training necessary to administer the curriculum.	MOE-commissioned project
	1998	Education Reform Action Plan(MOE, 1998)	“Every citizen to learn English” becomes one of the main goals of 1999-2003 educational policy	MOE
	1998	General Guidelines for English Language Arts of Grade 1-9	Specified that, from 2001, English will be taught to the fifth &	MOE

		Curriculum(MOE, 1998)	sixth graders in primary schools.	
	2001	General Guidelines for English/Language Arts of Grade 1-9 Curriculum(MOE, 2000)	English begins to be taught to the fifth & sixth graders in primary school.	MOE
	2003	The Grade 1-9 Curriculum: Phase 3 for English language education(MOE, 2003)	English education planned to be extended to grade three pupils in 2005.	MOE

The notion of “Every citizen to learn English” highlighted the determination of the government to promote ELT in every corner of the nation as an effort to democratise the learning of English, while the move to extend English provision to fifth and sixth graders in primary school in 2001 aimed clearly to initiate a significant change in ELT educational practice. However, the final guidelines of the Grade 1-9 Curriculum for English/ Language Arts provided only a short, brief structure for the implementation of the curriculum and left out far too many details regarding actual practice (Tsao, 2008); little planning or renovation was forthcoming from policy makers in terms of objectives, pedagogy, teacher training, or assessment. Even though the Taipei city government had progressed through five stages of development of the implementation of English teaching in the primary schools from 1984 to 1999, which demonstrated the city government’s deliberate cautions in finalizing the details of what would be a historical jump in education, this policy leap to extend ELT to primary school level was still strongly criticized by many scholars and teachers as blunt and abrupt, especially regarding the development of teaching materials and the training of qualified teachers (Chern, 2002). The problems arising from the implementation of English

programmes in the primary schools will be taken up again in more details in the next section.

Furthermore, according to a survey conducted in 2000 (C. Chang, H.C. Chang & Lin., 2002), as many as a 97.2% of private kindergartens and one third of public kindergartens were already teaching English to children; nearly 63% of the parents surveyed sent their children to kindergartens that offered English programmes, and 77% of parents would want the government to enforce the inclusion of English learning in the kindergarten curriculum. Moreover, for most parents, two hours every week in official schooling is not sufficient in terms of language exposure. Pupils are also sent to attend after-school supplementary classes, or “cram schools” (bu-xi-ban) for intensive learning in English. In a MOE survey of 28,804 pupils in 2002, 53.87% of primary school children attended after-school classes, and more than a third of these cram schools were dedicated to English teaching (MOE, 2002b).

Among the major reasons in sending children to cram schools, the top two are: 1) fear of lagging behind other children (73%); and 2) belief that English language skills are better acquired at an early age (60%) (Child Welfare League Foundation, 2002). This has created a situation where some pupils may have acquired English as the first or second language before they enter the junior high schools, as compared with the two-hours-per-week language experience of those students who have never had cram school experience.

The result of the survey also showed that 60% of pupils in the metropolitan Taipei city area had already started to learn English before entering primary schools (Child Welfare League Foundation, 2002). In 2005, there were significant increases in the numbers of fifth and sixth graders attending after-school English classes, up to 84% (Cheng, 2005), or to 72% with all graders counted (104 Tutor’s Net, 2005). In actual practice, children from socially and economically privileged families do not only start early, generally

at the age of four, which is eight years earlier than was the norm fifteen years ago, but the time they spend on English is also longer. Around one-tenth of pupils has attended immersion programmes in English since kindergartens, and continues to study English in cram schools for over eight hours a week in addition to the normal school hours.

In sum, the description above provides a picture of the status of English language education in Taiwan now. On the one hand, the government makes efforts to democratize the English learning that was once confined to the elite circle; on the other hand, with the recognition of the economic value attributed to the language, the language learners in this context, regardless of their social status, inherit the elitist approach for foreign language learning and fail to see and enjoy the educational/communicative functions of language learning. In the following section, a discussion of Taiwanese people's general attitude toward English is examined with an endeavour to explore further the status of English in the Taiwan society now.

#### **1.4.4 English proficiency = competitiveness? EFL: a national obsession**

This nationwide indulgence in the learning of English has been appropriately described as an "English fever" (Krashen, 2003) and a "national obsession" (Liu, 2002). It originated from an urge to speed up westernisation before the 1950s, and to connect with the "American dream" after the 1950s, and is now even more widely advocated owing to the perception of globalisation and internationalisation commonly held at the turn of the century. In 2002, the Taiwan Government initiated a six-year plan: *Challenge 2008: National Development Plan* (Executive Yuan, 2002a) which aimed specifically to strengthen the nation's competitiveness in the global village through grand-scale projects and programmes - among them the focus on English education and the construction of an English-friendly living environment are the two of the most outstanding strategies.

In recognizing that “(t)he first step to facing future challenges requires a high adaptability to globalization, as well as an environment for fostering such abilities” (Executive Yuan, 2002a), the government states in the six-year plan that, “English in particular has become essential to global connection, and accordingly the government made English a quasi-official language to boost the range of English application in everyday life.” Moreover, to improve the English proficiency level of the people, and thus to attract more attention from the outside world, the government proposes to “cultivate an English-friendly living environment” which will “...efficiently bilingualise public signs, modernize regional service facilities and remedy the general lack of English information.”

The status of English in Taiwan has thus been formally verbalized by the government as the “passport to the world” (Hsieh, 2009, p. 3). Hsieh (2009) indicates that English is not only viewed by the Taiwanese people as a language to be used for promoting economic growth and a subject to be taught in schools, but also as a global *lingua franca*, the ultimate foreign language, and in particular a trendy language for the social elites. As such, one could argue that Taiwanese society confers upon this language a prestigious status and pays disproportionate attention to proficiency in English, as demonstrated in the dominant interests in using GEPT (General English Proficiency Test) scores as markers in many facets of the society, including college graduation threshold, job application, and recruitment for public service officers.

In other words, the instrumentalism of the past is repeated in the present, and over 50% of the current job listings required a certain level of English proficiency, which is mostly defined by GEPT assessment scores (104 Job Bank, 2004). In its policy statement in 2002, the Executive Yuan of Taiwan asserted that 50% of government employees, 50% of university students, and



100% of future primary and secondary school teachers should be able to pass intermediate level of the GEPT by 2007 (Executive Yuan, 2002a). The GEPT office estimated a total of nearly 4,700,000 test participants since the launch of the system in 2000 (LTTC, 2012). Be it in the public or private sectors, from 2000 onward, GEPT score has become an indicator of competence in English for people of all ages and social groups, ranging from 5-year-olds to 70-year-olds. Proficiency in English has become not just one of the determinants of academic achievement, but also a threshold for higher education and social attainment (Liu, 2002). It was not surprising when former president Chen Shui-bien announced his wish to make English the *lingua franca* by 2008 (Taipei Times, 2002). Counter-voiced and eventually vetoed by the opposition party leaders as well as cabinet members as not applicable to the current situation, Chen's intention was still echoed in the 2008 Reform Paper prescribed by the Executive Yuan in that year (Executive Yuan, 2002a).

In her discussion of the spread and status of English in Taiwan, Chen (1996) observes that this language has been attributed values that transcend the pragmatic role of the language. As a symbol of social status, the acquisition of English proficiency secures job opportunities and thus economic competitiveness; as a symbol of intellectual sophistication, the language guarantees its users a window to knowledge and information in the outside world, and thus is equivalent to academic achievement; and finally, as a symbol of professionalism, it signifies a high educational level and thus demonstrates a working competence in the job market (Chen, 1996, p. 328). To highlight the significance of this situation in Taiwanese society, a discussion of a newly-emerging ELT practice is provided in the following section.

### 1.4.5 Bilingual English Programme (BEP): a new trend in ELT

It is not surprising when the Bilingual English Programme (BEP), a variation of ELT programmes that was developed on the basis of the principles of ESL and immersion education, became popular in the education landscape at the turn of the century. BEP is a form of intensive ELT programme which aims to serve the need of parents and students who, under the pressure of competitive college admission and the job market, prefer an alternative that can guarantee a well-developed English learning experience conducted in an “official”<sup>3</sup> bilingual environment. It won its popularity in the last decade especially when the Taiwan government started to loosen its restrictions on the curriculum of the secondary and primary schools (Educational Reform Advisory Committee, 1996)(see footnote 3). Up to March 2009, in Taipei city alone, over 10 well-known secondary schools have offered such programmes under the MOE classification of “programmes for the gifted and talented students”, and more nationally-founded schools that are considered highly competitive for college entrance admission are joining the market (Taipei Resource Centre for the Gifted and Talented, 2009).

As the Taiwan government allowed all-English curricula in the kindergartens but would tolerate the teaching of only a maximum of 35% of courses in

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<sup>3</sup> Before the emergence of BEP, all public and private schools had few options in curriculum designs but to follow the national curriculum, in which the hours for teaching English are stratified. That means that if students aspired for more English teaching hours and exposure, they had to go for private after-school institutions. The idea of BEP helped the schools to find a way out of restrictions. Since 1996, schools have been allowed to try out programmes like BEP under two kinds of categorisation, the experimental programme, and the gifted students programme. Originally these two categories were not designed to suit the purpose of intensive language programmes, but were later adopted by interested schools to suit the regulation, which suggests that the BEP does not totally follow the “official” prescription but rather flourish as a “tolerated” compromise between policy and practice. Note also that, up to March 2009, legally the “all-English” programmes in primary and secondary schools can only be set up for students holding non-Taiwanese passports (MOE, 2009).

Alternative titles for BEP include: “intensive English programmes”, “experimental bilingual programmes”, and “programmes for the gifted and talented students.” See more detailed discussion of the programme on following pages.

English in primary and high schools, be it private or public (MOE, 2004), BEP is a marketing solution that breaks through the government restrictions, in addition to the legally permitted number of English teaching hours, hours of the ‘secondary courses’ (subjects that are not included in the high school or college entrance examinations, such as arts, music, and PE) may also be conducted in English and taught by foreign teachers. In this way the school can claim that 50% to 60% of courses in the curricula are “all English” –i.e. taught through the medium of English.

BEPs are usually taught by certified foreign EFL teachers (native English speakers), yet these teachers might not also be qualified to teach all subjects in the schools. Courses such as social studies, math, science, history, geography, arts, when taught by foreign teachers, focus mostly on the teaching of language skills rather than the content. Most foreign teachers responsible for teaching of these “non-linguistic” subjects, though certified to teach English, might not have a background in general education (i.e., in child psychology, educational philosophy, curriculum design, moral education, etc.) or even other subject-specific knowledge. Thus, although students claim to enjoy an immersion language education conducted in English for an average of almost 16 hours a week, as compared with 4-5 hours in a regular programme (see **Table 1-3** for a comparison of class hours between BEPs and regular programmes), they receive little “content-based” education in these “extra” language classes. This kind of arrangement also implies that the amount of time spent on subjects taught in Chinese the mother tongue is drastically reduced.

**Table 1-3: A comparison of the number of hours of classes taught in English on BEPs vs. regular programmes.**

	Ages/	hrs/wk	hrs/wk
		<u>Regular schools</u>	<u>(Bilingual/Intensive English Programmes )</u>
Kindergartens	4-6	0	20
Primary schools	7-12	2	4-10 (after school)
Junior High school	13-15	4-5	14-16
Senior High School	16-18	4-5	14-16
College/University (non-English majors)	18-22	4-5	x

Although the Taiwan government enforced a regulation prohibiting the employment of foreign teachers in all kindergartens in 2004 and immersion-style English curricula were thus disallowed in the kindergarten level island wide (MOE, 2004), all primary schools are still required to provide a two-hour English class each week, for all levels starting from grade three. It is noteworthy that parents and kindergartens still find their ways of coping with the situation, pushing kids to learn English as early as possible.

#### 1.4.6 The elitism of English teaching and learning continues

As mentioned, BEP is designed especially for pupils who expect exposure to immersion education in English and foreign teachers from kindergarten level onwards. However, it is only the social elites with financial prestige and social influence who can afford the high tuition fees and accompanying expenses that are incurred owing to extra payment required for the foreign teachers, imported books, library fees, uniforms, transportation expense (as these schools are usually located out of the students' neighborhoods), costumes for parties and talent

shows, luxurious field trips to places offering American flamboyance, etc. As parents, rather than students themselves, make the final decision over the selection of school programmes, most schools open their doors for the parents to be involved to some degree in the design and implementation of the programmes. This strategy is especially effective when there is strong competition in the market of such bilingual programmes. Potential students with influential parents would attract students from similar social backgrounds and also those students with parents who wish to advance their social status by entering such bilingual programmes.

It is not surprising to find that ELT in this sense is taken as one form of cultural capital in the society, as it was treated in the past as described in **1.4.1 and 1.4.2**. Throughout human history, education has long been the means for social reproduction, creating possibilities as well as inequalities for different social groups in the society. Borman, Fox and Levinson (2000) have indicated that, in the process, persistent inequality is created which result in “gaps in academic achievement between groups of students” (p. 239). When educational policy, in terms of foreign language learning to be specific, prescribes a clear system that, in every aspect of its practice and reception, actively surrenders to the power of socio-economic class, such inequality is too obvious when classes with fewer social and economical advantages don't have access to that kind of education. In the long run, the education system that, as specifying the acquisition of “educational qualification and appropriate attitudes and values” (Demaine, 2003, p. 126), inevitably becomes a process for remaking and reproducing the coercive relationship of power.

Research into the sociology of education has been particularly concerned with the process of socialisation involved in such a reproduction system. Bourdieu (1986) argues that when language, or the language of an elite class, is taken as a form of cultural capital, the ‘symbolic efficacy of such cultural capital... lies in the logic of its transmission’ (p. 246). Connell, Dowsett, Kessler and Ashenden

(2000) note further that it is the schooling process, as the major actor in executing the transmission, that “generates practices by which the class is renewed, integrated, and reconstituted in the face of changes, in its own composition and in the general social circumstances in which it tries to survive and prosper” (p. 310).

Several studies of ELT in Taiwan justify this sociological concern about the popularity of EFL by indicating a close relationship between family backgrounds and foreign/English language learning. Su (2002) observes that attainment through education is a significant factor of occupational success in his study of social mobility in Taiwan. Su also finds that the more advantaged social group use the privilege to obtain even better educational opportunities. Using several scales to measure the socio-economical status of over 3,000 primary school pupils, Nieh (2004) concludes that there is a high correlation between educational attainment and family incomes in Taiwanese society, and that parents with more financial privileges would be able to send children to private institutions to learn English long before the government made the move.

Chen and Cheng (2000) support this observation in their nationwide survey of junior high school students in Taiwan. They also find that after-school education, especially in English learning, plays an important role in terms of students continuing on in education and choosing further study after completing their compulsory education at the age of 15. Yang (2004) indicates further that multiple factors of personal background, social, cultural and financial capitals determine educational attainments, especially with regards to the provision of English language education of Taiwan.

Discussions like these also reveal a positive correlation between early start in EFL and the support received through having a more advantaged family background in Taiwan. Resourceful parents are thus more capable of finding

support for their children, and thus pushing for an early start in English language education. Although early initiation of English learning is found to be a positive factor contributing to the acquisition of English language skills in Taiwan (Huang 1989; Li, 1988; Shih, 1998; Tsao & Luo, 1994; Tsao & Wu, 1992), the presence of other educational values of such an early start, particularly regarding the impact of early teaching of foreign culture on the learner's own culture and identity, remains an issue for debate (Nieh, 2004; Tsao, 2001; 2008).

### **1.5 Summary of the current ELT situation in Taiwan**

Although there have been many academic discussions around the pedagogy of EFL education in recent studies, they reveal however some of the ambivalence between the urge to achieve the objectives of ELT as a part of the process of internationalisation, and the struggle to decide the best ways in which to implement the programme to achieve such goal. In one way, the mission statement of the new education policy proposes to nurture future world citizens, and the foreign (English) language policy thus formulated claims to provide a global dimension to the education; in other ways, ELT practices suffer owing to the ignorance in the gaps between policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. In many instances, it is the hidden agenda of marketisation that provides guidelines for the planning and implementation of ELT, as in the cases of the early starts of English learning and the BEPs. While it is important to bring to light how the market forces in education sacrifice the benefit of the majority of pupils for that of a limited social group, it is just as vital to find a way in which the nation is able to strengthen its identity in every step of internationalisation.

Furthermore, it is crucial to find ways in which instrumentalism is balanced

with educationism, with the promoting of educational values of a general, perhaps universal, kind pursued through an intercultural approach to language teaching, as will become clear in the next chapter. For now, as the allocation of resources in the education sector favours ELT over local languages (Tsao, 2001; 2008), the question of how to implement ELT practices while advocating cultural strengths of the nation remains a challenge to the policy makers and the educators alike in Taiwan. On the other hand the policy makers need to be made aware of the importance of balancing instrumentalist goals with educational objectives. How do we, as educators and language teachers, meet the challenges outlined above? It is thus crucial that a re-search and re-definition of a paradigm that embraces this concept is necessary in the context of Taiwan.

To explore the possibility and direction of a paradigm shift for foreign language education in Taiwan, this study will present in the first part of the next chapter a review of the relevant literature to examine the status of English as a global language and the essence of language in relation to culture. The second part of the next chapter will be devoted to a development of a conceptual framework of drama praxis. The drama framework and praxis is explored from the perspective of seeing drama as a cultural practice which is parallel to the concept of situating language also as a cultural practice.



## Chapter 2

### Developing a conceptual framework: Review and analysis of literature

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#### 2.0 Overview

After an examination of the research context in Chapter 1, it is necessary to turn to a broader understanding of the theoretical background and research pertaining to the situation under study in this research. The status of English as a global language will first be discussed, followed by an analysis of the interrelationship between language and culture. This chapter will further provide an overview of the theoretical and empirical development in the following two areas: A) Culture and intercultural learning in ELT (in sub-section 2.1), which addresses the socio-cultural perspectives of foreign language learning, and B) Theorizing drama pedagogy for intercultural education in ELT (in sub-section 2.2), which comprises of a discussion of a conceptual framework of drama praxis in the foreign language classroom. Together these two sections provide a framework from which the first sub-research question is addressed: *What does it mean to develop critical intercultural awareness in the EFL classroom?*

2.1) Culture and intercultural learning in ELT is further divided to five sections:

- 2.1.1 the status of English as a global language;
- 2.1.2 language learning as a cultural practice
- 2.1.3 language and identity in ELT
- 2.1.4 ELT as intercultural education
- 2.1.5 Developing critical intercultural awareness in ELT

2.2 ) Theorizing drama pedagogy for intercultural education in ELT will explore the socio-cultural theories for the drama praxis, including the two sub-areas:

- 2.2.1 The essence of drama and theatre, and
- 2.2.2 Drama/theatre as an educational space.

## **2.1. Culture and Intercultural learning in ELT**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the history of learning of English in China and Taiwan as has always been endowed with paradoxical views. From a socio-cultural perspective, learning another language, whether as an additional language, a foreign language, or a second language, is never only about learning the linguistic system of the target language. It is in essence a social practice, in which the learner encounters and interact with the values embedded in the target language, and also a “site of struggle” (Norton, 2000, p. 127), in which the learner’s own culture confronts the target culture and results in conflict, resistance, and mediation.

Language learning is no doubt a cultural practice, and needs to be examined in the context of diversified socio-cultural factors. Before we explore the relationship between culture and language, an examination of the status of English in modern times is crucial here for our understanding of the power and controversy that this particular language carries in the spread of its global influence.

## 2.1.1 The status of English as a global language

### 2.1.1.1. Globalisation and Internationalisation: the magic words

As examined in the previous chapter, the obsession of the Taiwanese people with English language learning in recent years started with the magic words: globalisation and internationalisation - the need to make contacts with the outside world, which posited a pressure that challenged the traditional exclusive nature of the Chinese mentality, and a need that no single person in the global village can be said to prosper without. Jones (1998) suggests a distinction between the natures of these two terms which could be used here as a general reference to the concept:

In essence, globalisation is seen as economic integration, achieved in particular through the establishment of a global marketplace marked by free trade and a minimum of regulation. In contrast, internationalism refers to the promotion of global peace and well-being through the development and application of international structures, primarily but not solely of an intergovernmental kind. (p. 143).

Jones here, however, raises not just the question about how these two concepts could be clearly separated, but he is also, like many predecessors, regarding the relationship of the two issues. In the numerous attempts to clarify the essence of the terms (e.g., Albrow, 1990; Brown & Lauder, 1996; Dicken, 2003; Jones, 1998; Kress, 1996), there emerges a serious concern over the binary significance of the mutual dependency of the two concepts. While globalisation puts the main focus on integration of economical activities, it is through the impact of internationalisation that all integration makes sense to the development of a global culture.

From this perspective, the impact of globalisation will not be limited to the encouragement of global economy. On the contrary, a broader concern for the tolerance of cultural "differences and diversity" (Jones, 1998, p.149) could be

stimulated through such a process. With an application of this perspective in education, Kress (1996) encourages, in his urge for a “rethinking of curriculum” for education policy and system, an innovative view of the mission of education which should “reflect, encode, and enact the social structures and values” (p. 195) of the global requirements. Kress argues further that, in such pursuit the education and curriculum *per se* should allow “harmonious, productive engagement with different cultures” which makes a demand for new channels and methods of communication its ultimate mission.

### Global education for globalization and the myth of English

As the emphasis on the English language learning has become a crucial part of education, and this view of the mission of education moves far beyond the mere teaching of the knowledge of the target language in a narrow sense. Foreign language teaching and learning in general in the last two decades has seen a shift of focus from linguistic acquisition to cultural understanding through the target language. Before we move to the discussion of ways foreign language learning can contribute to the acquisition of tolerance and reduction of cultural differences, an examination of the development of English as a global language is necessary in the following section.

#### **2.1.1.2. *English in a Global Context: the status now***

With the endowment of its popularity worldwide, English has become a lingua franca for social, economic, cultural, academic and business exchange (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Crystal, 1997; Gnutzmann, 2000; Jenkins, 2003; Kachru, 1982; 1990; Pennycook, 1998; Platt, Weber & Ho, 1984). In his celebrated account of the history and development of the English as a global language, Crystal (1997) indicates as much as 85% of international organisations in the world make official use of English, and 90% of published academic articles in numerous academic fields are presented to the public in English. In his

estimate in 1997, English was the most widely-taught language in over 100 countries (Crystal, 1997, p. 3).

English has developed into a world language used by native(NS) and non-native speakers(NNS) in different countries for a diversity of communication. Ronowicz (1999) projects that, among the estimated 2 billion of all English speakers, be it native or non-native, native speakers “make up only a fifth to a quarter of the total number of speaker”(p.15). In his observation of the situation earlier, Crystal (1997) estimates a 3.7 million population of native English speakers, while Strevens (1992) assigns a number of 700 to 750 million to non-native speakers. Moreover, of the 1.2 to 1.5 billion people estimated in 1997 to have near-native command of the English language, less than half live in countries where English was the first language (L1) or official second language (L2) (Crystal, 1997). As a consequence, as the majority of its speakers are NNSs, one needs to consider the place English holds *vis-à-vis* the other languages that are used alongside it. Gnutzmann (2000) indicates that nearly 80% of the verbal communication conducted in English involves no L1 speakers of English. NNS are now many times more than NSs. Kachru observes that the language is now being “considered a symbol of modernisation, a key to expanded functional roles and extra arms for success and mobility in culturally and linguistically complex and pluralistic societies”(Kachru, 1986, p.1). Not just a medium for communication among NSs or NNSs who do not share other common language, Kachru further emphasis, “knowing English is like possessing the fabled Aladdin’s lamp, which permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates in international business, technology, science, and travel” (Kachru, 1986, p.1).

Thus no one would challenge the fact that English has gained itself the status of a world language, an international language, or a lingua franca in almost all settings, as described in many renown scholars in the field (Brutt-Griffler,

2002; Crystal, 1997; Llurda, 2004; McKay, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2001, 2004). Crystal defines global language as one that “develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (Crystal, 1997, p.2). This would not just mean an existing recognition in countries where English is established as a mother tongue, such as United Kingdom and USA, but also in other countries where it is used as an official language, “as a medium of communication in such domains as government, the law court, the media, and the educational system” (Crystal, 1997, p.3), or as the primary foreign language when it has no official status. Crystal indicates that, in formal practice, the language can be made official “as the only official language of a country, or it may share this status with other languages” (p. 4) - and in some cases it may have been used as an official language only in certain “domains.” The process of choosing an official language, Crystal warns, may become a battlefield, or “a site for struggle” in Pennycook’s words, for historical, political, cultural, economical, or technological confrontations. Furthermore, the popularity of English is not just limited to the political and academic circles. Crystal notices that a significant percentage of written and vocal works are produced in English in the domains of popular arts and culture (Crystal, 1997).

But why English, we might ask. Answers to the question indicate a clear departure from seeing the linguistic richness of the language itself: scholars in the past twenty years or so have been engaging in fervent discussion on the spread of the English from sociological perspectives. In Crystal’s words, English is the language “in the right place at the right time” (Crystal, 1997, p. 110). Crystal asserts that “it is much more to do with who these speakers are” (p. 5). Links between language dominance and cultural power is a commonly recognized contested battleground in language learning. “Without a strong power base, whether political, military or economical, no language can make progress as an international medium of communication” (Crystal, 1997, p. 5). It is the military power that establishes a language, but it takes an economically strong power to maintain and expand it (Crystal, 1997, pp.7-8).

### 2.1.1.3. *Who speaks English? NS vs NNS*

To represent the “types of spread, the patterns of acquisition, and the functional allocation of English in diverse cultural contexts” (Kachru, 1992, p.356), Kachru traces the development of English spread and delineates a model of three concentric circles for the users of English. The countries in the *Inner Circle* (Kachru, 1992), which is the centre of his diagram, are the traditional, or the original, users of English such as United Kingdom and US. The second circle, the *Outer Circle*, includes the English users from around 75 countries. In these countries, such as India and Malaysia, English is used primarily in conducting public affairs, while native languages (the L1 languages) are used in most daily communication. Much of the spread of English in such cases is a colonial legacy, immediate or remote. Together the population in these two circles amount to 570 million (Crystal, 1997).

Throughout the rest of the world, however, in countries where there is no colonial or historic connection with English, English dominates the foreign language learning scene, with some estimates suggesting a range of anywhere from 100 million to one billion people who have learned/ are learning English to a reasonable level as a foreign language (Crystal, 1997). These are what Kachru (1992) calls *Expanding Circle* countries (where English is spoken as a foreign language rather than first or second language).

While this model has been acknowledged as the most well-cited framework in the last two decades, it is based mostly on “geographic and genetic” (Jenkins, 2003, p.17) distinction of the use of the language rather than on the perspectives of the users, and therefore fails to recognize the multifaceted relationship of language users with the language. Jenkins (2003) indicates a diversity of attitudes and levels of mastery for English language in the inner and outer circles that simply cannot be attributed to a clear-cut categorisation of native and non-native speaker.

Likewise, Burt (2005) observes a discrepancy between Kachru's positive recognition of the growth and spread of the language and his inadvertent "marginalisation" (p.2) of the *Expanding Circle* countries from the *Inner Circle*. While Kachru attributes an interdependent relationship among the circles, with the Inner Circle being norm-producing, the Outer Circle being norm-developing and the Expanding Circle being norm-dependent, Crystal(1995) argues that any distinction between the L1 & L2 users of English is impractical. "There are several countries where population movement, language loss, divergent language attitudes, and massive shifts in language use have made it difficult to answer the question 'What is your first language?'" (Crystal, 1995, p. 363).

It is exactly this line of observation that challenges the traditional role of English in the world stage that leads to the second phase of development for English. Researches in the development of the English language concur that it is not feasible for a common, standard world variety of English - the expectation of English as a global language or an international language. Furthermore, as the language spread, in order to suit specific contexts or needs, new varieties of L1 English have been established, as in the cases of Singapore and Nigeria. In such kind of model, "international varieties thus express national identities, and are a way of reducing the conflict between intelligibility and identity"(Crystal, 1997, p.134). In another approach to the development, the different Englishes are categorized in two groups, "the centre" and "the periphery." The centre refers to native varieties of English, such as what Holliday (1994) calls BANA (Britain, Australia and North America).

#### 2.1.1.4. *Why?*

Yet the emergence of an international language is due more to the political factors more than others. In history we witnessed the dominance of Greek,



Latin and Arabic by way of the military power of their people. English is no exception to such a phenomenon. Van Essen (2004) argues that the status of English as a world language was not a result of its linguistic richness.

Nevertheless, although it might take political power to establish its status initially, “it takes economic power to expand it and to keep it up” (van Essen, 2004, p. 12). This is especially true when the Americans dominate the world stage and are capable of speeding the spread of the language, as in the case for Taiwan.

The need for a lingua franca has been a common practice in society where several languages are used and a common language is necessary to ensure communication between groups. In most cases a language is accepted from outside the community because of the influence of a foreign power, be it religious, political, or economical (Crystal, 1997, p. 9). Since the 1950s, especially when UN became the chief international forum, due to the need to build up political communication, the pressure to adopt a single lingua franca became strong, particularly in the academic and business communities. And English, with the dominance of American economy, becomes that language for international communication.

Crystal (1997) estimates that one-third of the world’s population has the knowledge of the English language. Ironically, to the remaining two-thirds of the world population, without the competence of knowledge, what would become their links to the rest of the world? Or, more paradoxically, the concept of a global village that requires a common medium of communication remains a dream of the dominant power of the community? As Crystal indicates, however, the use of a common, single language does not guarantee ‘social harmony or mutual understanding’ (Crystal, 1997, p. 13). There are certainly dangers in having one single international language. Those who ‘speak the global language as a mother tongue would automatically be in a position of power’ (Crystal, 1997, p.14) compared to those who have learn it

as an official or foreign language. Linguistic power, or to use the term more precisely, language as power, constitutes the myth and base for ideology in modernization process.

From the sociolinguistic perspective, Cheshire observes that there exists a concept of 'speech community...where all socioeconomic classes followed the usage of the higher socioeconomic classes in their more careful speech style" (1991, p. 2). This means that variations of the language itself lead to the blurring of the difference between native and non-native speakers as the language is used in informal domains as well as formal domains. Cheshire further indicates a challenge posed to the methodology of research in analyzing English as a global language. She argues that existing research based the theoretical framework on models developed in Western industrial societies and resulted from a neutral, objective analysis ignored the socioeconomic factors for which the language functions. "A sociolinguistic perspective is important in identifying social attitudes both to the use of English relative to other languages in the community's verbal repertoire and to the use of different varieties of English within that community" (Cheshire, 1991, p. 8).

From this sociolinguistic perspective, the spread of English found its strongest criticism in Phillipson's works (1992; 1997; 2000), in which global English is viewed as a medium of *linguistic imperialism*. Tracing the conceptual framework of language as dominant power in social reproduction from the theories of Bourdieu and Saussure, Phillipson (2000) warns that "references to English as a universal *lingua franca* conceal the fact that the use of English serves the interests of some much better than others" (p. 89). As a development of globalization dominance of the language is attributed to the success of British colonization in the previous centuries and the growth of American economy and influence in this century, Phillipson observes a link in

the original intention to spread the language with the process of exploitation, control, dominance, and commodification.

Accordingly, the spread of English thus privileges only certain groups of people--the native speakers of colonies became the preferred class of the society, together with the non-native elites who were endowed with the opportunity to master it well. Consequently, others who have less opportunity to learn it may be deprived of the privileges. In this circumstance, the spread of English can also be a one of many factors contributing to the tragic loss of indigenous languages around the world if the acquisition of English continues to symbolize a better opportunity for social reproduction (Phillipson, 1992). In many colonies in the post-colonial generation, such as Singapore and Hong Kong, the continued use and spread of English, and whom it benefits and whom it harms, will be a site of ongoing struggle.

In summary we can surmise that English in the modern world will be viewed by its learners around the world as their own language of additional communication, rather than as a foreign language controlled by the "Other". Teachers and policy makers will be challenged to exploit this situation by creating opportunities for communication based on the values, cultural norms, and needs of learners, rather than on the syllabi and texts developed in the native-speakers communities.

#### ***2.1.1.5. Neutral, natural, or beneficial--The politics of English***

However, it would also be naïve to think that English is a completely neutral tool without weight of its own. Rather, as Pennycook (1994) points out, English carries a set of ideologies, values, and norms based on the history of its development and use. Crystal (1999) takes a more balanced view, pointing out the advantages of a lingua franca while also expressing concern about linguistic diversity. In criticizing Fishman's view (1977) of English as an

“ideologically encumbered” lingua franca, Flaitz (1988) takes the stance that language and culture are not separable and there is no such thing as a culturally neutral language. However, in agreement with Fishman, Flaitz discerns two significant developments for English to emerge as the global language: “its unprecedented spread over the globe, and the promotion of the status by non-native communities” (Flaitz 1988, p. 6).

With China’s entry to WTO, the Beijing people are even more open to external influence. Demands from parents for more English teaching and teachers in the schooling echoed the government’s eagerness for promoting the language as a medium for modernization (Lam, 2002, p.255). Paradoxically yet not surprisingly, in Taiwan where political differences with China are devastating, people share the Chinese ideology in that a conflicting but emerging view of the importance of English is becoming clear. When describing the popularity of the language, Kachru (1986) uses the term “alchemy” to represent the mystic and transmuting impact people endow to English as a step stone to wealth and power, as “gates that control vital knowledge about the miracles of science and technology” (Kachru, 1986, p. 1).

The situation of the English language in Taiwan supports such recognition with no less scale. As Kachru indicates, with the analogy of alchemy, English language provides a medium for the modern science and technology, and people who acquire the competence thus enjoy prestige of advanced knowledge. S. B. Chen, the formal president of Taiwan, was once attacked as “unqualified” for the position by the leader of the opposition party, who holds a Ph.D degree from George Town University, and that “he is not at all competent in English and should step down because of his ignorance in world affairs” (Li, 2004). Such instances exemplify the belief of the non-native communities that the English language holds a symbolic power of transforming as well as transmuting the social status of a nation and of people. Moreover, as English dominates the vocabulary of the elites, and with the fact

that most elites take education in English abroad, a new social caste is emerging. Such social caste, in Kachru's view, could become the force that brings forward possible social change (Kachru, 1986). In the situation of Taiwan, that new caste has already taking over the spotlight of the stage, which phenomenon leads inevitably the dependence on English education.

#### **2.1.1.6. Summary**

Foreign language learning is inseparably connected with the socio-cultural background that the learners bring to the classroom. While language classrooms are often seen as neutral, "insulated from external political concerns" (Auerbach, 1995, p. 9), a dynamics of power and domination is there. When the classroom becomes "the site of struggle" (Norton, 2000, p. 127) about whose knowledge is worth teaching to our children, the issue emerges as a matter of the ideological power and the possible social consequences that lie beyond the texts and pages. All educational practice implies ideological stance, posits Freire (1985), and that leads to a rethinking of the goal of our foreign language curriculum, and most importantly, to all the limitation as well as possibilities in the facilitation of such curriculum. What, then, are the factors the ELT curriculum needs to address in order to resolve the hidden tension and struggle in the language learning classroom? In the next section, an examination of the relationship between language and culture will be provided to enlighten the significance of interplay between these two concepts in the language learning classroom.

### 2.1.2 Language learning as a cultural practice

Language teaching and learning involves the encountering of two languages: the target language and the language of the learners. In essence, language is more than a linguistic system of codes. As the major means for understanding a culture, language functions as more than just words and sounds. Keesing (1974) defines language as a 'subsystem of culture' (p. 77). Spradley (1979) affirms that a language of a culture serves as "the primary symbol system that encodes cultural meaning in every society" (p.99). Damen (1987) adopts this view and extends it to the teaching of culture in foreign language classroom. He stresses that "a language reflects and reinforces the value and belief systems that form such a large part of the subjective reality shared by members of the same culture" (p.120). In defining language, Damen asserts that

...human language may be viewed as a system, as a vehicle for cultural transmission, as a formative force whose structures place their stamp upon the minds and actions of its speakers, or as only one of many modes of communication, albeit a crucial one. (p. 119).

With this definition, language is seen as cultural code, and human beings as cultural bearers. This means that, in the process of communication between people from two cultures, it is actually a battle ground of beliefs, views of value and ideology between cultures. When the FL/EFL learning is placed in the context of cross-cultural education and understanding, how, then, would a learner confront, respond, reflect, and interpret his relationship with subjects from another culture? In the following section, the question will be addressed with a discussion of the process of FL/EFL cross-cultural learning experience.

### *The meaning of culture*

#### **Culture as a shared system**

The definition of culture varies with different perspectives on interpreting human behaviours. In 1952 Kroeber and Kluckhohn alone came up with a list of more than 200 definitions of "culture" (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952).

Adaskou, Britten & Fahsi (1990) define culture on a more specific level by outlining four dimensions of meaning (senses) of culture: the aesthetic, sociological, semantic and the pragmatic. The first dimension refers to cinema, literature, music and media, which they address as the aesthetic level of culture; the second dimension, the sociological one, designates the organization and nature of family, interpersonal relations, customs, material conditions, and so on. The third and the fourth dimensions include:

...the whole conceptualization system which conditions perceptions and thought processes, and their pragmatic or sociolinguistic sense refers to the background knowledge, social and paralinguistic skills, and language code which are necessary for successful communication. (Adaskou, Britten & Fahsi, 1990, pp.3-4).

These four dimensions interweave one another and constitute the complexity of the meaning of culture.

Goodenough (1963) sees culture as an "organization" in which all people behave or believe in ways that all other members of that culture accept or believe. He rightly notes that "(c)ulture...consists of standards for deciding what is,...for deciding what can be,...for deciding what one feels about it,...for deciding what to do about it, and...for deciding how to go about it"(p.259).

Geertz (1973) elaborates this view by arguing that culture is a "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited concepts expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate,

perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (p. 89). When consolidated and externalized as a whole, this multi-leveled, multi-dimensional web of meaning in culture affects the behaviours, beliefs, and values of its individual member in various ways.

In Keesing’s view, this form of co-constructed knowledge, however, comes through a process of cognitive learning (Keesing, 1974), in which members of the culture learn through a recognition and interpretation of the “shared information or knowledge encoded in system of symbols” (Lafayette, 2003, p. 59). Robinson(1988) also indicates that "past experience influences meaning, which in turn affects future experience, which in turn affects subsequent meaning, and so on" (p. 11), and thus suggests that culture should be viewed as a dynamic system.

In his analysis of the interactive relationship between culture and its members, Brooks (1968) asserts that the individual is primarily moulded and constrained by the conceptualising system of culture. Culture as a system provides numerous models and rules for its members to observe and follow, and these prescriptions for behaviours cannot be ignored without penalty. In his emphasis, “the totality of the culture is the pervading medium that gives meaning to each individual’s acts, yet his capacity for innovation, choice and rejection is never forgotten” (Brooks, 1968, pp. 21-22).

### **Language as representation of culture**

As people mould and conceptualise the culture they mutually share, language becomes the representation for this particular cultural mode. Hall (1997) defined such representation as “using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people” (p. 15).

According to Hall, it is through semiotics and discourse that this form of representation connects meaning and language to culture. This view echoes Halliday’s (1978) notion of language as “social semiotic,” an approach to



language that hypothesizes that identity and culture are reflected in linguistic structure.

Semiotics is the primary means through which culture manifests itself. Peirce asserts this view and stresses on the interpretation of signs. Meaning and understanding, according to Peirce, are guided and limited by a triadic mode of signs: the symbolic, the iconic and the indexical, each denotes a level of perception and together they construct the complexity in signs. Peirce theorizes that these signs are interpreted according to a habitual connection, a rule with which people in that culture share and follow. "The symbol is connected with its object by virtue of the idea of the symbol-using mind, without which no such connection would exist" (Peirce, 1998, p. 9), Peirce explains, and a sign exist mainly due to the fact that it is used and understood.

The system of signs and the signified in a culture denotes an on-going and dynamic meaning-making process. Barthes (1972) furthers this claim by arguing that the tension between signs and the signified would be stabilized when people in culture work together with these signs and the signified to create a "myth", which is an iconic representation of a culture phenomenon. Language as sign, in this sense, denotes two layers of perspectives:

- 1) the sharedness nature:  
language represents the collective meaning-making practice of the culture.
- 2) the dynamic nature:  
the negotiating process between signs and signified is a constant mediation among the language users which in turn creates the common beliefs in that culture.

### **Views of culture in foreign language learning**

In the context of this research study in ELT, views of culture can be further explored from two perspectives: the learner's culture, and the target culture. Atkinson (1999) indicated there are two contrasting views of culture in this

situation. The first view is a “received view,” referring to the way one culture is seen from the perspective of another culture, which is “a notion of culture(s) that sees them in their most typical form as geographically (and quite often nationally) distinct entities, as relatively unchanging and homogeneous, and as all-encompassing systems of rules or norms that substantially determine personal behaviour” (p. 626). For instance, a “received view” on Chinese culture might see all Chinese people as an entity and behaving in similar ways. Appadurai elaborates on this view by calling our attention to fact that, even in one given culture, despite shared values and norm, there might be conflicts in power relations: people could be “marginalized or dominated” (1996, p. 12, cited in Atkinson, 1999, p. 626). Appadurai (1996) reminds that this “received view” of culture fails to address the unequal distribution of power and resources in culture.

Atkinson thus argues for an “alternative, nonstandard view of culture,” which calls into consideration “terms such as identity, hybridity, essentialism, power, difference, agency, resistance and contestation” (Atkinson, 1999, p. 627). This post-colonial view of culture addresses the contesting and fluctuating nature of culture. Levy (2007) elaborates on this view with five dimensions of culture:

*1) Culture as elemental*

- We are deeply embedded in our own culture.
- We have to learn about our own culture first to better understand our frame of reference.
- Aim at "practical objectivity" and reflection, with the learner as researcher.

*2) Culture as relative*

- A contrastive approach is unavoidable, but problematic.
- Generalisations have some value, as long as they are not considered absolute.

- Small scale interactive models/methods are helpful.
- Aim at direct engagement to develop a more nuanced perspective.

### 3) *Culture as group membership*

- Membership of groups is layered and multiple.
- Membership is regulated formally and informally.
- Aim at raising awareness of the cultural groups we belong to and how language is used to negotiate and sustain membership.

### 4) *Culture as contested*

- Culture is contested at many levels.
- Culture is contested through multiple language interactions.
- Aim at raising awareness, identifying points of contestation and managing differences.

### 5) *Culture as individual (variable and multiple)*

- Cultural knowledge varies from person to person and operates at many levels.
- Students and teachers are selective in how they represent their culture.
- Aim at sharing individual experiences and building upon them.

(p. 112)

These five dimensions help to broaden our understanding about the complexity of the relationship between language and culture in ELT. The question is, then, how do we teach culture learning in ELT practice?

### *Culture learning in ELT*

Language is thus more than a part of a culture: language *reflects* culture.

ELT researchers have recognized this dialectical connection between language and culture since mid-1980s (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999; Damen, 1987; Hinkel, 2005; Lessard-Clouston, 1997; Nieto, 2002; Peterson & Coltrane, 2003; Stern, 1992).

Early approaches to include cultural features in the language classroom, Krasner (1999) for instance, recognized the necessity for language learners to

develop not only linguistic competence but also an awareness of the culturally-appropriate features of the target language. Peterson and Coltrane (2003) specified the learning objectives of culture learning as follows:

Language learners need to be aware, for example, of the culturally appropriate ways to address people, express gratitude, make requests, and agree or disagree with someone. They should know that behaviours and intonation patterns that are appropriate in their own speech community may be perceived differently by members of the target language speech community. They have to understand that, in order for communication to be successful, language use must be associated with other culturally appropriate behaviour. (p. 1).

In approaching the cultural knowledge of the target culture, language learners in this context need to appreciate and adopt the socially appropriate behavioural patterns of the culture. In this early approach, competence in a target language encompassed such form of cultural knowledge, and focused on cultural facts, such as geography, foods, festival celebrations and life styles, in other words, information about cultures. However, Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) indicate that such cultural knowledge given in the form of fact, statistics and generalisations are external, static, articulated, stereotypical, and reduced. The information thus given about the targeted culture can be misleading as it is not only dependant on other people's (i.e., the teachers') expertise, but also simplified, prejudiced, and fixed in time

Otherwise feasible in certain contexts, there might be two fallacies in this approach for language teaching. Firstly, teaching "external" forms of cultural knowledge fails to recognize the dynamic, fluid nature of any culture, therefore the cultural knowledge so transmitted could be misleading for the language learners. Secondly, these objectives see language learners as *neutral* cultural beings in approaching another culture. As explored in 2.1.2.1, language learners bring to the classroom cultural heritage of their own, and

cultural confrontation inevitably arouses contestation of the different values and ideology embedded in all forms of culture. Teaching of these cultural facts addresses only the social behaviours without examining the underlying cultural values, nor does it support students' reflection on their own culture.

Recent studies in ELT (e.g., Duff, 2012; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000), however, shift the focus to the process and effect in learning about another culture through learning its language. These approaches see cultural learning as a context for understanding the target language. Such views assert a cultural context that goes beyond language itself. Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) argue that it is

...about second language learning not as the acquisition of a new set of grammatical lexical and phonological forms but as a struggle of concrete socially constituted and always situated beings to participate in the symbolically mediated lifeworld of another culture. (p.155).

The cultural context "defines the language patterns being used when particular persons come together under certain circumstances at a particular time and place" (Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2000, p. 9). Gudykunst and Kim (1992, cited in Paige et al., 2000) elaborate on this view of cultural context with the concept of external and internal contexts in cross-cultural encounter. External context refers to "the social meaning attached to the situation of interaction on the grand scale, i.e., the ways in which a particular culture group constructs the various settings for human interaction and communication" (Paige et al., 2000, p. 10). Internal context refers to the cultural meaning each learner/interlocutor brings to the encounter. This internal context might result in understanding or misunderstanding among people from different cultures. The significance in this cross-cultural encounter, Paige et al. stress, lies in the development of a third context: a context that is created by the interaction among people from and out of the target culture. "The two interactants will continuously be scanning each

other's verbal and nonverbal communication (contextualization cues) for insights into the meaning of their encounter; communication is altered as meaning is constructed and reconstructed" (Paige et al., 2000, p. 11).

Paige et al. (2000) define culture learning as

...the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviourally, and affectively. (p. 4).

With this definition of cultural learning in mind, Paige et al. propose a model of culture learning goals and outcomes as follows:

- 1) learning about the self as a cultural being,
- 2) learning about culture and its impact on human communication, behaviour, and identity,
- 3) culture-general learning, i.e., learning about universal, cross-cultural phenomena such as cultural adjustment,
- 4) culture-specific learning, i.e., learning about a particular culture, including its language, and,
- 5) learning how to learn, i.e., becoming an effective language and culture learner.

(Paige & Stringer, 1997, cited in Paige et al., 2000, p. 5).

With items 1 & 2, this model suggests a re-examination of the self-other relationship in the process of cultural encounters. For items 3 and 4, the model further provides three sub-categories of learning: *knowledge*, *attitude*, and *behaviour*, which indicate that the affective, the behavioural, and the cognitive domains of learning are called into operation in the culture learning process.

The model thus suggests three significant dimensions for cultural learning: first, it denotes an involvement of internal changes in terms of attitudes and values of the learners. Secondly, effective culture learners must develop “a variety of learning strategies ranging from reflective observation to active experimentation” (Paige et al., 2000, p. 5). To this aim, Paige et al. emphasize the importance of adopting an “experiential learning” style, and “learning how to learn.” The third significance refers to the sensitivity, awareness, openness, and flexibility people develop in relation to others. This final factor is indicative of an intentional and cognitive learning process through which an outsider of the target culture becomes appreciative of the values of that culture.

The shift in understanding language and culture as discussed above lays the cornerstone for the development of intercultural language education. Defining all language as a cultural act (Kramsch, 1993), intercultural language learning theory presupposes a fundamental interconnection between language, culture and learning. In language learning, the learner is actually engaging in a process of developing a reflective and critical understanding through their use of languages and cultures, comparing, inferring and negotiating both the languages and their own intercultural identity (Corbett, 2003; Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler, 2003). Before we turn to a detailed discussion of the conceptual framework and practice of intercultural language education, we will explore some key factors at work in the process of intercultural communication: namely the self-other relationship and the identity formation in ELT.

### *Dialogicality and cultural awareness*

In the previous section, I have explored the nature of language and cultural learning from socio-cultural perspectives. In this section, I will discuss the philosophical stance of the interconnectedness between language and culture.

I will examine this relationship with Bakhtin's dialogic theory of language.

When a foreign language learner interacts with people from the target culture, he engages the communicative act on two levels. First he will be asking how to be understood by the people from the target community. With this purpose he will take on the linguistic codes and socially appropriate manners of the target language, in this way the language learner can be said to be suspending his cultural self in order to adopt and assimilate into the target culture.

However, in the effort of making himself understood, this language learner is also calling into action his "historical understandings, contemporary realities, and future desires" (Norton & Toohey, 2002, p. 115), that is, the past, the present and the future positioning of both cultures.

In Bakhtin's dialogic theory language is thus situated as social interaction in human consciousness. Seeing all social acts as political, following a Marxist view, Bakhtin asserts that there is a complex working in the process of a speech act. To Bakhtin, "a speech genre is not a form of language but a typical form of utterance; as such the genre also includes a certain typical kind of expression that inheres in it" (Bakhtin, 1986, p.87). Hall, Vitanova and Marchenkova (2005) explain that there is "certain typical kind of expression" because "(a)t the moment of their use, we infuse them with our own voices" (p. 3). Bakhtin (1981) argues that the utterance is the key conceptual tool for analysis of human activity. His view of language as utterance is tied to the meaning constructed through the use of language, which in turn sees the use of language as a social process rather than production of linguistic codes. It is also a complex and conflicting process because speakers in an interaction need to struggle to "appropriate" their words in order to "appropriate" the voice of others. Iddings (2005) asserts that, in this social process, "individuals internalize language into inner speech and that, because thought is carried out by inner speech, *consciousness* arises from this ongoing process of social communication" (p. 39).



I will then examine three key concepts in Bakhtin's theory of language: namely *heteroglossia*, *polyphony*, and *dialogicality*, and discuss how these concepts relate to our research context of foreign language learning.

### **Heteroglossia**

*Heteroglossia* refers to the coexistence of voices that an individual brings to a dialogue. It does not address the linguistic diversity or the multiplicity of linguistic genres in one particular language; what it explores is the social nature and tensions between the varieties of these voices, i.e., social background, identities, values, etc. from different cultures. Originally referring to the "voices" in novels, the term indicates the complexity of language with qualities of a language such as perspective, values, and ideological positioning. Bakhtin interprets the nature of such confrontation as the tension between two forces: the centripetal (the centralizing) and the centrifugal (the decentralizing) forces of language. "Utterance" in this sense is subject to the heteroglot tensions of the centrifugal forces of the language. In other words, in a speech act, the form of expression from each interactant is the manifestation of the fluctuating conflicts between these two forces (i.e., the centralizing and the decentralizing forces).

### **Polyphony**

*Heteroglossia* refers not to the merging of any one voice into another, but a co-existing status of a variety of speaking voices that "sing" simultaneously together. Bakhtin uses *polyphony* to describe the co-existing nature of speaking voices in an utterance. In music polyphony refers to the combination of simultaneous melodies in one composition. Bakhtin borrowed this concept to elaborate on the idea of *heteroglossia*: first, each voice in the interaction is equal and valued; second, with the working of the two heteroglot tensions each voice will strive to maintain a harmonic balance with each other. Bakhtin indicates that this striving effort is inherent in a speech act and is achieved

through two actions: *understanding* and *response*, which are realized through *dialogic interactions*, as discussed in the following section.

### **Dialogicality**

Dialogic defines the nature of interactions in Bakhtinian speech act. To Bakhtin, all language is dialogic. In a speech act, the individual *responds* to a thing said by the other interactant with an anticipation for a further *response*. The first *response* from the individual, moreover, is an outcome of an *understanding* of the thing said by the other interactant in the speech act. Bakhtin sees this dialogic chain of *understanding-response-understanding* as the fundamental of human communication. In Bakhtin's words,

(t)o be means to communicate dialogically. When the dialogue is finished, all is finished. ... One voice alone concludes nothing and decides nothing; two voices is the minimum for life, the minimum for existence (1984, p. 213).

Furthermore, in dialogic relationships, this encounter generates transforming effects. In Platt's words, "(i)deas become renewed only insofar as they encounter other, *foreign*, ideas" (Platt, 2005, p. 121). This transforming effect is the result of the functioning of the other two concepts: *heteroglossia* and *polyphony*. In dialogic discourse, the understanding-response-understanding chain of action will stabilize conflicting forces and maintain a harmonious balance between the two centrifugal forces.

Marchenkova (2005) terms this understanding as "creative understanding" and values this "understanding" mechanism in such dialogic communication. In the act of understanding, "a struggle occurs that results in mutual change and enrichment" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 142).

The Bakhtinian *heteroglossia* is mostly situated in the context in which there coexists a dominant language and a peripheral language. When each

interlocutor participates in a speech act, there are three stages of development. First of all, when the individuals engage in a speech act, they carry with them from their own cultural ways of viewing the world, their belief systems, positionings and values, and interacting and aligning with others. The interactants in the speech act then understand “learning other languages is about seeking out different experiences for the purposes of developing new ways of understanding ourselves and others and becoming involved in our worlds” (Hall et al., 2005, p. 4).

The analysis of Bakhtin’s concepts performed above leads up to a theoretical framework of second language learning that takes into account the dialogic nature of consciousness, cultural interactions, and identity formation. The following main considerations stimulate my interest in exploring this issue. Bakhtin’s theories enlighten us on the dialogic relationship between language, culture, and self. Hall (1995) argues that, from a socio-historical perspective, “our language and our uses of language (re)create our social worlds, our relationships with others and our ideologies” (p. 207). Norton and Toohey indicate that the journey of finding and responding to words of others in a speech communication is “as much a social as a linguistic struggle” (2002, p. 117). Bourdieu (1986; 1991) argues that it is a struggling process as there is always an unequal relationship between speakers from two cultures. In a speech act, Bourdieu asserts, there is always a conflict between speakers who not only wish to be understood but also to be respected and followed. In this way the inequalities create tension and power struggle in a speech act.

Bakhtin and Bourdieu’s views of the role of language lead up to a view of language as a social practice and a site of struggle. As both a social practice and a site of struggle, the language learner’s *self* is at the frontline of challenge in every moment of the cross-cultural communication. We will turn therefore now to an examination of how identity is formulated and challenged in ELT.

### 2.1.3 Language and identity in ELT

As contemporary theories address language learners from the socio-cultural perspectives, the process of language learning is seen as an exploration and understanding of the relationship of the language learners to the social world. Kramsch maintains that “in summary, culture can be defined as membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaging” (1998, p 10). Culture is about the individual’s relationship with the group he belongs to, and in the context of learning another language, it’s about how the individual’s relationship with his own culture confronts the individual-group relationship in another culture.

As in the case of learning English as a global *lingua franca* which is said to enjoy a dominant status in cross-cultural confrontation, the interaction through the target language is inevitably influenced by relations of power. In such a case, in the process of learning another language, learners are not just conducting a practice of linguistic codes – they are actually engaging a cultural experience that could “be affected by the multiple aspects of their identity – race, gender, sex, age, sexuality, class, caste position, geography, and so forth – and it is likely to alter in any circumstances” (Skeleton & Allen, 1999, p. 4). Taking on the complexity of interactions in this language learning process, the learners are actually engaging in a struggle of identity construction and reconstruction through constant negotiation and mediation with another culture.

The interconnectedness of language and identity has long been explored in applied linguistics and second-language research. Gardner and Lambert (1972) stress the significance of motivation with regard to learners’ goal in second

language acquisition. One of the foremost driving forces they discern in L2 learning is the integrative-oriented type of motivation. Gardner and Lambert indicate that the need for social and ethnolinguistic identification explains the motivation behind effective second language acquisition. Ushioda and Dörnyei, however, question this integrative concept in the context of ELT by arguing the non-existence of an “external referencing group” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009, p. 3) that the language learners seek to identify with. Instead, they support Dörnyei and Csizér’s findings (2002) that the development of identities in EFL learners might be “an internal process of identification within the person’s self concept” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). Ushioda and Dörnyei theorize this “person’s self” as the *ideal self* or the *ought-to self*, and this view of *the self* might serve as the “powerful motivation to learn the language” (2009, p. 4).

Another perspective on the motivation and identification process in SLA and ELT practices is found in the sociological factors in learning a foreign language. Elaborating on Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of cultural capital, Norton Peirce (1995) asserts that L2 learners make an “investment” in the target language to gain linguistic capital. In this view, inherent in the ELT practice there is a deep-rooted societal power relationship between language learners and the target culture. This instrumental perspective of motivation leads to a further distinction of motivation: the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is the motivation from inside the learners. The learners learn simply because learning gives them a sense of satisfaction and self-concept. In other words, intrinsic motivation is “what people will do without external inducement” (Malone & Lepper, 1987). Factors usually listed as promoters of intrinsic motivation include challenge, curiosity, control, fantasy, competition, cooperation, and recognition.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is the motivation to engage in an

activity as a means to an end. Individuals who are extrinsically motivated work on tasks because they believe that participation will result in desirable outcomes such as a reward, teacher praise, or avoidance of punishment. This kind of motivation is especially emphasized by behavioural psychologists (e.g., Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999) who seek to explain motivation as reinforcement theory.

The four dimensions here - namely *the integrative, the instrumental, the intrinsic, and the extrinsic* - help to deepen our understanding of the role of motivation in foreign language learning. They also inform another two perspectives of L2 learning. Firstly, these four dimensions influence one another dialectically and therefore cannot be discussed in separation. Second, in the operation of these four motivating forces, there appear some continuous, on-going pulling-pushing forces among all four motivating forces. For instance, in order to gain returns from “investment” (the instrumental motivation) in language, the language learner might try hard to assimilate into the target culture, and believe in the result (reward) of this assimilation, which will in turn help to win recognition (intrinsic) from the target community. Such pulling and pushing forces in turn generate momentum and dynamics to motivate the language learners to achieve high levels of L2 proficiency.

The concepts of identity and culture are thus in a constant state of flux. The dynamic nature comes not only from the individual’s own internal process, but also from the individual’s responses to broader socio-cultural factors. Hinkel (2005) describes the interrelationship of identity and culture as “...complex, perpetual evolving, and sensitive to such diverse social constructs as social status, education, language contact, current and shifting ideologies, and historical and political legacies” (p. 891). Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory (1978) supports this view of a dynamic operation between language, culture, and identity by arguing that a learner’s developing L2 proficiency can be taken as a transforming process. The

learner's development of high L2 proficiency is thus viewed not just about a simple switch of speech medium to the target language, but a gradual transformation from L1 self to the L2 self (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000).

The paradox is: how is this new L2 self defined? Or, to be more specific, from which perspective of the two cultures does this new L2 self emerge? Some contemporary SLA and ELT theories (Duff, 2012; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000) argue that this new L2 self come into being through struggle and negotiation. The objectives in L2 learning call for acquisition of not only language proficiency but also cultural and intercultural competence<sup>1</sup>. In the context of this research study, cultural and intercultural competence will be examined not as an "outcome" of L2 learning but rather as a transforming "process" of language learning in its own right. In the following section, I will explore such process from the perspectives of Byram's model for intercultural competence.

#### **2.1.4 ELT as intercultural education**

Learning another language inevitably involves confrontation and negotiation between two cultures, i.e., the learner's own culture and that of the target language. Sercu (2000) sees this process as "maintenance of integrity of identity, and as a constant process of negotiation between what is own and what is foreign, what is part of one's identity and what is new and challenging" (p.74). Scarino (2008), however, affirms positive values in such process. In Scarino's view, "the meaning making of people in interaction (as a process in which they necessarily draw upon their whole linguistic and cultural

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<sup>1</sup> For the discussion in this study, the ideas of *cultural competence* and *intercultural competence* are used interchangeably to refer to the ability to communicate successfully and effectively with people from different cultures.

make-up) is the very focus of language learning” (2008, p. 7). Scarino indicates that this process is communicative and educational as it not only necessitates exchange of meaning but also inspires reflective interpretations.

Scholars in the past two decades have proposed an “intercultural” shift of focus in language learning (Byram, 1997; Corbett, 2003; Liddicoat et al., 2003; Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet, 1999). Overall, there are two main propositions for intercultural language learning: firstly, an intercultural language learning programme should provide the space to “develop students’ abilities to think, act, discriminate and experience cultural differences in appropriate ways” and asks learners to “pause, reflect, question, move back and forth between understandings they have in, and of, their various languages” (Moloney & Harbon, 2010, p. 177). This aspect refers to what Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) believe to be the raising of “cultural awareness” (p.6). Most importantly, an intercultural language learning programme should help the learners to develop an “intercultural awareness” in order to “translate” culture in their own context (Guilherme, 2002). In Guilherme’s words, intercultural education focuses on:

...how the participants perceive the linguistic manifestations of others, how they create new meanings, adapted for the particular situation they are constituting. This means that person do not rely entirely on their cultural norms but take into account other values and adapt eventually to what they assume to be the foreign cultural norms and actions that other orient them to talk to. (Guilherme , 2004, p. 297).

In other words, the language learners should be provided with opportunities to gain insights into the relationship to their own culture by critically engaging in a dialogue between their own culture and the target culture. In doing so, language learners take a reflective stance in the language learning process and become the agent for changes to both their individual lives and to their own community. In this perspective the language learner becomes what



Byram defines as an “intercultural speaker” (1997, p. 91). An intercultural speaker is defined in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* as having the ability to:

...negotiate between their own cultural, social and political identifications and representations and those of the other, that is, they must be critical. The critical ‘intercultural speaker’ takes critical advantage of the world opened wide to them by appreciating different narratives available, by reflecting upon host they articulate, how they are positioned and how their positions affect their perspectives. (Guilherme, 2004, p. 298).

In elaborating the competence for this intercultural speaker, Byram (1997) proposes a framework of five *savoirs*, as follows:

1. *Savoir être* (attitudes);
2. *Savoirs* (knowledge);
3. *Savoir comprendre* (skills of interpreting and relating);
4. *Savoir apprendre/faire* (skills of discovery and interaction);
5. *Savoir s’engager* (critical cultural awareness).

The five *savoirs* are interrelated to one another. The first *savoir*, *savoir être*, refers to attitude, i.e., the willingness to suspend one’s own preconception about the target culture as well as the belief in one’s own culture. In doing so, the intercultural language learner can be open to new ideas perceived in the intercultural encounter. *Savoir être* is regarded as the first step in the development of intercultural speaker. The learning objectives in *savoir être* further include:

- A) a willingness to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality, distinct from seeking out the exotic or profitable;
- B) an interest in discovering other perspectives on interpretation of familiar and unfamiliar phenomena in both cultures;
- C) a willingness to question the value system behind one’s own cultural practices;
- D) the readiness to experience the different stages of adaptation to an interaction with another culture during a period of residence;

- E) the readiness to engage with culturally appropriate verbal communication.

Byram indicates that *savoir être* also implies developing an interest in the other's experience "represented in the dominant culture" (1997, p. 91).

The second component refers to knowledge about one's own culture and the target culture. Byram asserts that an intercultural speaker would not just learn about facts of the target culture, but he will relate these facts to his own culture, which assertion leads to the third *savoir*: *savoir comprendre*. *Savoir comprendre* refers to ability to critically read and interpret cultural experiences and relate them to one's own. The objectives include:

- (A) the ability to identify ethnocentric perspectives in a document or event and explain their origins;
- (B) the ability to identify and explain causes of misunderstanding and dysfunction in an interaction; and
- (C) the ability to mediate between conflicting interpretations of phenomena.

The fourth *savoir*, *savoir apprendre/faire*, refers to "the skills of discovery and interaction, ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction" (Byram, 1997, p. 98).

The fifth dimension for an intercultural speaker, *savoir s'engager*, refers to critical cultural awareness, the individual's ability to critically reflect and comment on the practices and products of one's own and another culture (Byram, 1997, p. 53). Byram lists the learning objectives for this skill as:

- (A) the ability to identify and interpret explicit or implicit values in documents and events in one's own and other cultures,
- (B) the ability to make an evaluative analysis of the documents and events which refers to an explicit perspective and criteria;

- (C) the ability to interact and mediate in intercultural exchanges in accordance with explicit criteria, and negotiation a degree of acceptance by drawing upon one's knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

According to Byram, critical cultural awareness involves “both view points, making learners both ethnographer and informant, allowing them to gain a perspective through comparison which is neither entirely one nor the other” (Byram, 1991, p. 25). This dimension, i.e., critical cultural awareness, is the core to Byram's proposition (Byram, 2012, p. 7). It can be argued that the five *savoirs* that Byram proposes call for a critical engagement with the world, and the process of language learning is thus taken as a transforming journey.

Byram's model of an intercultural speaker described above is perhaps the most widely used framework for the development of intercultural communicative competence. It operationalises the concepts of intercultural communicative competence by providing a descriptive model as well as prescriptive outcome. However, in the context of this study, it needs to be cautioned that this model is adopted as a point of departure rather than guidelines for the research, with the following reasons.

Byram's model is mostly applied to European context, concerning interactions of L2 learners approaching target language. However, in the encounter of two cultures, there are actually four dimensions to be taken into account, i.e., the views of the L2 speaker for his own culture and for the target culture, and the views of the L1 speaker for his own culture, and his views for the L2 culture. Therefore, it would be a quite complicated issue when a language learner tries to conduct a dialogue or mediation between two cultures if there are ambivalence among these four perspectives.

Complication is even more furthered when one of the cultures has a more

dominant status and there is power struggle between L1 and L2 cultures, as in the situation of ELT in Taiwan that I have discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. As there are unavoidable conflicts, resistance and ideological issues involved in such intercultural dialogue, an English language learner might **well be** confronted with contestation with his own cultural values and ideology. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, I propose a competence (in Byram's sense) in *critical intercultural awareness*, a concept that I argue will better serve the context of EFL learners in Taiwan.

### 2.1.5 Developing critical intercultural awareness in ELT

This research study will be based on Byram's model for the intercultural speaker and argue for an elaborated framework for foreign language learners. Such a framework will call for three perspectives developed on Byram's model of an intercultural speaker, as follows:

Firstly, intercultural language learning should acknowledge the encounter of the "Otherness" as a positive and necessary stimulus for intercultural understanding. The comprehension of the sameness, differences, diversity and contestation between myness and otherness constitutes the core of intercultural understanding. "Otherness" in this context is viewed as a device through which the individual, either approaching or residing in the target community, is able to distance himself and sees his own culture from a different perspective. This echoes Bakhtin's argument that, "[i]n the realm of culture, outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding. . . A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning" (1986, p. 7).

Secondly, in the process of encounter, there is a dialogic mechanism between

the myness and the otherness; i.e., a learner' perception and development of intercultural competence comes from a constant examination and re-examination of the interconnectedness between culture, language and identity. This is parallel to Bakhtin's theory of utterance as a dialogic chain of *understanding-response-understanding* (see discussion in 2.1.2.3).

Thirdly, the process of intercultural encounter necessitates a generation of new meaning through interactions. Such interactions involve a cyclical process of problematising, reflection and action. Furthermore, the newly generated meaning injects dynamics into the cultural encounter and deepens the meaning of the next interaction in this language learning process. This dynamics, however, can be both generative and problematic. Hathaway (2007) maintains that this "refraction of cultural images, one's own and that of 'others', can be unsettling" as it "implies a new relationship with one's own culture, sometimes giving rise to a tension between 'criticizing' and 'critiquing' one's own culture" (p. 232).

Drawing on these three perspectives, I argue that an intercultural speaker *per se* needs to develop a more critical lens for this language learning journey.

**Critical cultural awareness**, the core to intercultural competence, needs to be re-defined as *critical intercultural awareness*, which will address the more dialogic nature of intercultural encounters in foreign languages learning.

In **Part 2** of this chapter, an exploration of drama and theatre both as a cultural practice and a learning medium will be presented in order to construct a conceptual framework for the study.

## 2.2. Theorizing a drama pedagogy for intercultural education in

### ELT

There has been a long tradition of using theatre both as a metaphor for human interactions and an art form for cultural representation. In the second part of this review of literature, I will first explore the ways theatre and drama help to construct and represent meanings from two major perspectives: *life as theatre*, and *theatre as life*. The *life as theatre* approach addresses the sociological views of human interactions as dramaturgical, while discussion of the *theatre as life* approach establishes the complexity in the contextuality of performances. These two perspectives of the theatre will then lead to the third dimension of my discussion on the essence of theatre and drama: the educational potential of theatre and drama. I will then argue that the performative perspectives thus explored are necessary in constructing a framework for the drama praxis for developing critical intercultural awareness for the foreign language learners.

### 2.2.1 Exploring the essence of drama & theatre

#### 2.2.1.1. *Performing culture*

##### **Performativity of human interaction**

“I have considered our whole life is like a play: wherein every man forgetful of himself is in travail with expressions of another...though the most be players, some must be spectators,” posits Ben Jonson (1838, p. 750). Theatre and its performative nature have long contributed to the understanding of how people interact. The vein in the studies of sociology and sociolinguistics has paid attention to the ways people employ elements beyond and beneath verbal language in social interaction. For instance, Hymes (1974) and Gumperz (1982) have indicated that people use language not only to construct meanings but also to contextualize social interactions. Ochs (1988) elaborated

on this view and asserts that people apply a variety of socio-cultural features and strategies beyond language to present and represent themselves in speech acts. Such strategies, Ochs added, include “social status, roles, relationships, settings, actions, activities, genres, topics, affective and epistemological stances among participants” (p. 213). In Alexander’s words, from this perspective, human behaviour is thus seen “as performative – as socially constructed, enacted, emergent, repeatable, and subversive” (Alexander, 2005, p. 415). Alexander concludes that human interaction is regarded as “an interpretative event of cultural practice.”

In a broader sense, all human activities are manifestation of culture and cultural norms. Alexander (2005) defines performance as the expression of the “enacted nature of human activity, the socialized and shifting norms of human sociality, and the active processes of human sense-making” (p. 414). From this perspective, “people in society are their own cultural agents, transforming those situations by acting on and acting in them, in short, by performing them” (Kruger, 1993, cited in Tulloch, 1999).

The performativity in human interactions can be considered from several dimensions. Firstly, human expressions employ verbal (language) as well as non-verbal (bodily movement, facial expression, etc.) means, which are culturally/socially situated. Secondly, in every interaction, it implies the existence of an audience, to which and with which the individual carries out his performance, and for which a performative act constructs meaning. Thirdly, a performative act is a collective expression of all agents involved in the interaction. Through this collective process of expression, each individual will confront critical moments of conflict, mediation and negotiation with one another, and each action resulted in the mediation process will then be responded to by another consequent action. This is to say, social action is mutually constituted in which “power relation...can be illuminated, interrogated, and intervened, if not transformed” (Alexander, 2005, p. 414).

### **Language as performance**

The use of language has always been seen as a performative act. There are two perspectives in the use of language that are performative. The first one refers to the structural employment of grammar and syntax, and the other perspective refers to the ways people use language to express, interact, and construct meanings. From these two perspectives, the act of using language is performative in that it employs culturally and socially acceptable rules, and in this way is expressive of the user's identity/identities.

Taking this view, the use of language as a performative act means more than just to interact or to perform. In the process of interaction, we also interpret and reflect on the performative acts of others. In other words, we are audience to others' performance and thus provide response to their performance. Yet seeing human interaction as performative also means that others are audience to our performance as well – we are mutually providing response and reflection in the process of interaction. The chain of perception, interpreting, responding, and interplay of interactions in a performative act is socially situated and also forms a dynamic and fluid chain of communication. From this perspective, language as performative implies a process “by which language and identity are constantly remade” (Harissi, Otsuji & Pennycook, 2012, p. 524).

I will then explore the performativity in speech acts and in human behaviour from the perspectives of Searle, Austin, Burke and Goffman.

#### ***2.2.1.2. Life as theatre: the sociological perspectives***

##### **Austin and Searle**

A performative turn in the study of human behaviour concerns with the ways human practices relate to their contexts. The speech act theories of Austin



(1962) and Searle (1969) contributed further to our understanding of the performativity of speech acts. Austin (1962) posits that a speech act is actually an action performed by the speaker with words, and thus “*all* speech acts have a dimension of meaning...*and* a particular force” (Holtgraves, 2002, p. 11). Holtgraves (2002) observes further that, “in Austin’s speech act theory, any utterance involves the simultaneous performance of a number of different acts” (p. 11). Adding support to this view, Austin has identified three kinds of acts as classifications for the performatives of utterance: the *locutionary*, the *illocutionary*, and the *perlocutionary* acts (Levinson, 1983). In each category, certain kinds/levels of sounds, grammar, references, forces (i.e., act in saying), and effects on the hearer are summoned into use in order produce meanings beyond language. In certain circumstances, the effects produced through performative use of language might even “extend well beyond anything intended by the speaker” (Holtgraves, 2002, p. 11). Austin states that whether the speech act is *felicitous* or *infelicitous* depends on a set of conditions whose interpretation differs.

Elaborating on Austin’s theory, Searle (1969) indicates that there are four felicity conditions in speech acts, namely *propositional content*, *preparatory condition*, *sincerity condition*, and *essential condition*. In Searle’s observation, the working and interconnectedness of these four conditions deepen our understanding of a speech act.

### **Burke’s dramatic pentad**

Together Austin and Searle’s theories add dimensionality and contextuality to the speech acts as an intentional act and a mediated process, and echo Bakhtin’s view of language discussed in section 2.1.2.3. As these theories explain the contextual and intentional dimensions of speech acts, it is Kenneth Burke (1969) who provides a holistic perspective for human interaction as drama. Burke maintains that *language is action*, and it is “more than simply

instrumental: It legitimates, and performs social meaning" (Bell, 2008, p. 95). Burke asserts further that, in using language to perform social meaning, *life is drama*, and the foundation to this dramatism is Burke's concepts of *motives*, i.e., the reasons why people do the things they do. Burke takes language from theatre and provides a dramatisitic "pentad" (Burke, 1969, p. xv) to interpret motives in human interaction as *act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose*. Burke relates these five elements of the pentad as "what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he (or she) did it (agency), and why (purpose)."

Burke's dramatisitic pentad helps to understand how people interact with each other to create meanings in symbolic dramatic situations. Bell (2008) alerts us to the first level of significance of Burke's model that, in seeing human interactions from this perspective, "it mandates *an awareness of our selves as actors speaking in specific situations with specific purpose*" (author's italics. p. 95). The second level of significance in Burke's dramatism lies in the observation that, when life is seen as drama, action is driven and compelled by confrontations and conflicts which are inherent in every human interaction. As in drama, these conflicts might well be interpersonal and intrapersonal, and thus action "implies choice, conflict and cooperation" (Combs & Mansfield, 1976, p. xviii, cited in Bell, 2008, p. 95) between different goals of the agents. This further implies that each individual actively engages in a collective creative meaning making process through participation and on-going mediation and negotiation.

### **Goffman and the presentation of self in relation to others**

Expanding on Burke's concept of dramatism, Goffman (1959) has developed a dramaturgical approach to interpret the process of human interaction.

Goffman's central concern is about the ways an individual presents the "self" to others, and he asserts that this "presentation of self" would take on "roles" recognizable to both individual and the society. The process of taking on roles

is similar to the ways an actor projecting images of role in a theatrical performance: the actor presents the role through his personal experience as well as from a socially granted framework. Similarly, in everyday life, a person asserts his identity (his ideal self) to others by presenting a certain image of his through an understanding of the socially constructed/acceptable self (the social/cultural self). In other words, we enact our social roles “both directly and indirectly to create impressions for ourselves and for others that we are who we claim to be” (Bell, 2008, p. 151).

Bell (2008) posits that, in taking Goffman’s perspective, the question so arises is about “*how we present, maintain, and repair our social selves in interactions with others*” (author’s italics, p. 148). Goffman (1959) adopts the language of “frontstage” and “backstage” from theatre and argues for a delimiting barrier between “front region” and “back region.” He uses the swinging door in a restaurant that separates kitchen and the dining room as his example of this delimiting barrier. A server might be arguing out-loudly with the kitchen staff behind the swinging door, yet as he passes the door into the dining area, he puts on poise and manners appropriate to the performance of the service. Elliot (2007) indicates that this front/back metaphor not only implies the putting on and taking off a certain character but also involves “the bracketing-out or screening-off of aspects of identity which are felt inappropriate to the social setting or encounter that is staged” (p. 40) – in other words, the front/back region metaphor constructs a space of power struggle.

From this perspective, “roles” are not just a set of different “faces” that one chooses to present his own image – roles are “*a set of norms or social expectations felt by self and perceived by others*” (author’s italics, Bell, 2008, p. 149). Such set of norms acts like “frame” (Goffman, 1974) which also delimits a boundary between our ideal self and the perceived self. Furthermore, as these expectation and conception might be interpreted differently by the people engaging in the interaction, in presenting the individual’s “self” there also

develops conflicts, tensions, expectations, and resistance in one's relationship with others (i.e., the differences in views of roles adopted by other people, and also of how one's roles are perceived by other people).

The metaphors of role, front/back stage, and frame serve to explain the hidden layers of complexity in human interaction. Elliot (2007) calls to our attention of the significance so raised in this dramaturgical perspective: that in performing roles and interacting with other roles, an individual becomes conscious of the multiplicity of these roles. This consciousness might well be brought about through "role distance," another dramaturgical concept Goffman employs to explain the degree of identification and resistance an individual develops between his social and self-identified roles. Bell refers to this awareness as "performance consciousness" (2008, p.43) – which, in her words, is the "*reflexive awareness of oneself as performing*" (author's italics, Bell, 2008, p. 43).

In this sense, performative consciousness also helps to generate reflective action. Elliot (2007) furthers his observation of Goffman's approach by arguing that in such process of interaction, the individual has the agency in his action; that is, "the individual is the creative and reflective agent who decides – and in doing so constitutes self-identity – on how to carry out such roles as well as the staging of role performances" (p. 38). Again this might well be triggered by the functioning of "role distance" as a performative effect: a constant meta-cognitive process within the individual as a performer, a co-existent, dialectic condition of "me" (the ordinary self) and "not me" (the performed self) (Elliot, 2007).

In conclusion, a performative view of human interactions contributes to our understanding of human behaviour. The concepts of role, mind and body, audience, and the reciprocal interrelationship involved in a performative situation are the crucial in developing a critical "performative consciousness"

for all people involved in a performative act. In the next section, I will explore the essence of theatre from the perspective of theatre itself.

### *2.1.2.1. Theatre as life: theatricality and web of relationship in theatre*

#### **The essence of theatre**

Theatre provides entertainment, but it does not stop right there. In providing entertainment, it is also an art form, in the ways various artistic elements (music, acting, dancing, singing, etc.) are integrated to present its totality. It is also a cultural practice, in that it provides a rich space for dialogue, reflection and representation of/for the society. As a cultural practice, the participants in a theatrical event share, respond, and in doing so inject new meanings to the collective experience. In Barba's (2002) words,

Theatre is intolerable if it limits itself to spectacle alone. The rigor of the craft or the elation of invention is not enough, any more than the awareness of the pleasure or knowledge that we can induce in the spectator. Our work should be nourished by subversion that projects us beyond our professional identity, which acts as a wall, both protecting and at the same time imprisoning us. The performance sows a seed that grows in the memory of every spectator, and every spectator grows with this seed. (Baba, 2002, p. 17).

#### **Theatricality: experiencing theatre**

What informs a theatrical experience, then? A theatrical experience is a holistic experience, created through a physical, aesthetic, psychological, and eventually emancipatory and thus transformative journey, brought about through multiple devices and elements. In the context of this study, I will focus on the following three elements pertaining to the discussion of the second metaphor on theatre, that is, *theatre as life: space/ time, actor/role, and audience/spectator*.

### *Space and time.*

The first two elements that define theatricality are time and space, which are connected to the physical presence of participants<sup>2</sup>. In theatre space and time are multi-dimensional concepts. Space in theatre usually comprises of a) a stage space, referring to the physical construction of a theatre, and dramatic space, referring to the space described and symbolized in the script. Yet a spatial experience in theatre involves more than these two perceptions of space. Pavis (2006) posits that there should be multiple dimensions to understand a spatial experience. He categories these dimensions as follows:

1. Regarding the objective, external space: the multiplicity of a theatrical site (i.e., the building/architecture of the theatre), the stage space (the performing area), and a liminal space (a marker that separates the stage and auditorium).
2. Regarding the subjective, internal space: the multiple perception of a gestural space (space created and projected by actor's presence and movement, evolving and could be reduced or expanded), textual space (created by the enunciation of text in space-time), and internal space (created through *mise-en-scene* and projected internally by the spectator).

As with space, a temporal experience in theatre can be understood through both concepts of stage time (the time of the performance) and dramatic time (time reported in the text), and also through an "objective/external" and "subjective/internal" perception of the temporal experience. Pavis (2006) indicates further that in a theatre experience, "there quickly comes a point

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<sup>2</sup> For the discussion in this study, the term "participants" of a dramatic praxis or theatrical event refers to both "actor" and "audience/spectator".

where dramatic temporality and stage temporality...starts to interpenetrate and mutually reinforce each other's credibility" (p. 157).

From this perspective Pavis maintains that the liminal theatre experience (Turner, 1967) described above converges objectivity and subjectivity in the spectators, and lead to an effect of "chronotope" in Bakhtinian sense, a "spatiotemporal conjunction" (Pavis, 2006, p. 159) of the multiplicity of appreciation and perception in a theatrical experience.

### *Actor and role.*

In theatre, a role refers to the image of a character projected and constructed by the actor (Pavis, 1998). In presenting a role, the actor needs to project, imitate, and identify with the role to various extent so that "the spectator receives the whole of the event with the forces of the enunciation" (Pavis, 1998, p. 7). However, unlike the views of acting in classical theatres, modern approaches for acting allow actor to consciously manipulate the distance between the role, the actor, and the spectator to suit the purpose of the text or production. Brecht (1964), for instance, demands that all device in a theatrical production needs to help to produce an alienation effect (i.e., *Verfremdungseffekt*). Be it classical or modern approaches to acting, in creating and presenting a role, an actor unconsciously or consciously generates a certain degree of detachment to his role. In previous section, this consciousness is termed as "performative awareness" (Bell, 2008).

In one aspect, in performing a role, an actor is simultaneously aware of himself and the role his presenting. The actor is also aware of the fact that his acting is being watched by an audience. The consciousness develops in every single moment of a performance. In yet another aspect, in presenting a role, an actor is actually conducting a cultural practice, in which he is reconstructing experiences from a collective memories of his culture.

Schechner (2002) defines the process as *restoration of behaviour* and sees it as

“the key process of every kind of performance, in everyday life, in ritual, in play, and in the arts” (p. 28). In Schechner’s view, this process of *restoration* can be conducted consciously or unconsciously, and also might be modified, changed, re-arranged, transformed, or even re-created. In theatre practice, Schechner points out further, the process of restoration of behaviour is mostly discernible in the rehearsals of the performance, through which the participants deconstruct, reflect and reconstruct cultural practices.

### *Audience/spectator.*

Audience is the third key element in a theatre experience. When Peter Brook defines a simplest form of performance, he describes it as “a man who walks across an empty space whilst someone else is watching him” (Brook, 1968, p. 9). In modern theories of theatre, an audience is more than just “watching” a theatre event - an audience *participates* in the theatrical event. In Hare and Blumberg’s words, an audience actively “collaborates in the unreality on stage by sympathetically and vicariously participate in the unreal world generated by the dramatic interplay of the scripted characters” (Hare and Blumberg, 1988, p. 47). In her analogy of drama for social life, Burns (1972) reminds us about the significance of the presence of an audience as both the spectator and the participant of the performance. Earlier, Mead (1934) has asserted that, inside of the self, there dwells another type of “audience” – an inner audience that is “observing, encouraging, or restraining the actions of the I” (Hare & Blumberg, 1988, p. 48).

In the vein of sociological and performance studies, the inquiry into the meta-cognitive dimension of the role of audience has become dominant in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., Burns, 1972; Carlson, 2004; Goffman, 1959; Schechner, 1988). Carlson even argues that “all theorists of performance recognize... the essential quality of performance, that is based upon a relationship between the performer and the audience” (2004, p. 35). Both Burke and Goffman stress that the sociological behaviour presupposes the existence of an audience for



whom the performer acts and reacts. It also needs to be emphasized that, in certain social behaviours, an audience might just be implicit or symbolic, and can be either present or absent (Hare & Blumberg, 1988). In other words, the existence of an audience might just be an assumption of the performer.

All together, these multiple perspectives in a theatrical experience provide a rationale for constructing a drama framework in the language classroom. The dimensionality, contextuality, and theatricality in this experience construct a web of interrelationship for all participants involved. Such web of interrelationship is not only dialogic and reciprocal, but also creating dynamics in each participants' development of identity, made possible through the meta-cognitive effect of performance awareness.

In the next section, I will then turn to explore the ways theatre and drama educate and in so doing present a process drama praxis that helps to construct a reflective space for language learners.

## **2.2.2 Drama/theatre as an educational space**

The overall argument in this section is to situate and explore educational drama in EFL classroom as a learning medium. In the following sections, drama as a learning process will be examined from three perspectives; namely, as a reflective and interactive process for each individual to explore his relationship with oneself, and with other people in the same context.

### ***2.2.2.1 Early development***

The third dimension of theatre and drama sets its stage in the educational arena. Drama as a medium and aim for education combines the vocabulary,

tools, concepts in theatre and focuses on the learning potential of the art form. In UK where the concept of drama in education acquires its most prominent attention and status, the development of such movement only began in the turn of last century. From its initial stage, the innovative learning medium has put its emphasis on “child-centredness” and encouraged a “learning by doing” pedagogy. As a consequence, there resulted in a shift of positions and relationship between teachers and students (Lewicki, 1996). According to Bolton (1984), it was John Dewey’s idea of education that put an unprecedented priority on child’s “instincts and activities” for education that became the bedrock of this new pedagogy:

The old education may be summed up by stating that the centre of gravity is outside the child. It is in the teacher, the textbook, anywhere and everywhere you please except in the immediate instincts and activities of the child himself... Now the change which is coming into our education is shifting the centre of gravity... The child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve; he is the centre about which they are organised. (Dewey, 1921, p. 35, cited in Bolton, 1984 , p. 4).

Pioneers of educational drama in this climate were blessed with the opportunity to try out elements borrowed from the theatre as well as child play that would encourage children’s creativity and spontaneity through a “progressive” (Lewicki,1996, p.14) learning process.

In its early development, it was Harriet Finlay-Johnson, Henry Caldwell Cook and later Peter Slade who contributed to bring this form into education reform as a medium for knowledge and won recognition from the government (Bolton, 1979, 1984; Lewicki, 1996). Together these practitioners enabled drama to be “treated as a possible font of knowledge and drama used as a vehicle for knowledge”(Lewicki, 1996, p. 24). However, although these drama practitioners had been identifying themselves with the “child-centredness” and “self-expression” (Bolton, 1984, p. 20) objectives of

educational drama, the approaches they employed in the classroom were diversified. Lewicki observes that Finley-Johnson emphasized a cross-disciplinary approach for learning all school subjects through drama, while Cook urged an “exploration of the artistic values which the artist...included in the work” (Lewicki, 1996, p. 23). Later it was Peter Slade who integrated all elements from drama, theatre, and education into a whole and brought into educational drama conceptual framework as well as practical examples. Some of the major claims in the early development of educational drama are explored as follows:

### ***Drama as a means of expression***

Slade revolutionised several concepts for drama in educational setting. He urged that a dramatic experience to be treated as a learning process for pupils/participants. At the centre of Slade’s approach is the observation that “...every child has within himself/herself his/her own natural drama, the expression of which promotes healthy growth” (Bolton, 1993, p. 29). Slade thus identifies drama/play as “a form of self-presentation, expression, communication” (Lewicki, 1996, p. 43). This kind of exploration from within takes imagination which is generic in child’s play and in drama, while helps the child to develop and experience an emotional catharsis in the process (Lewicki, 1996, p. 45).

### ***A mirror to look inward***

Any moment and process in the dramatic experience is thus reflecting the growth and learning of the children. In *Child Drama*, Slade (1954) clearly relates different stages of development - psychological, emotional, social - of a child from birth to adulthood to dramatic experiences. Drama thus becomes life, as Neelands (1984) stresses many years later; more importantly, an experience of drama becomes a mirror through which the participant conduct dialogue with himself and other participants, and is thus given the opportunity to look inward of himself, of “finding personal rhythm”

(Slade,1954, p. 31).

### *Group dynamics: new relationship with others*

This dialogue with oneself brings forth a necessity to develop socialisation with others, just as what happens in the real life experience. The “in-flow” in this learning process triggers the urge for “out-flow,” which leads to what Slade sees as “the development of the Self outwards, toward a consideration of others” (1954, p.51). In drama, interactions with other team members stimulate “a form of group dynamics....group sensitivity, group creation, and new feelings for the place of others” (Slade, 1954, p. 52).

### *Sociality of the classroom*

Here a classroom becomes, as it always has been in schooling, a microcosm of the outside world. For the learners, drama provides a framework for sociality (Moffet, 1968), through which a learner acquires the chance to engage in a dialogue with himself, interact with other fellow participants, and initiate changes through that interaction with oneself and with others. This interactive process is able to proceed only within a fictional world constructed through imagination and symbols which work on projected levels of the subconscious.

### *Teacher/student relationship re-defined*

Drama that aims to encourage children’s growth inevitably changes the conventional teacher-pupils relationship in the classroom (Bolton, 1993; Lewicki, 1996; Slade, 1954). The child develops individualized learning path in this learning mode, and the teacher eventually would need to step aside, and let go of his pre-conception of what ought to happen in the learning process, and becomes more of a “facilitator”, a “counsellor”, and a “manager” (Schewe,1993, p. 293) in assisting the child to go through the journey of discovery. The change in this relationship demands from the teacher tremendous degree of patience and development of advanced teaching

methodology.

### **Learners taking responsibilities**

What implies through this new teacher-student relationship in the classroom, for the young learners, is a re-definition of learning style and learning behaviours. As the learner is handed over with the ownership of his learning, he is also engaging in this learning process with other students who are also developing agency for their own learning, there develops a form of collective learning process, which Verriour terms as a “mode of collective creation of meaning” (1994, p. 44).

### **Spontaneity: centre to the dramatic experience**

For these learning effects mentioned above to emerge, there is a crucial element in educational drama: the injection of spontaneity as a goal as well as a means. Pioneers such as Winifred Ward (1930) posits that classroom drama provided much for spontaneity than rehearsed/staged drama, while Moreno (1946) linked spontaneity with the effect of *Psychodrama*, in which a participant releases emotions through spontaneous account of his personal past (Bolton, 1993, p. 31). In Slade’s approach, spontaneity is achieved as an existential quality when the participants ‘submit to the...experience in order to make it happen’ (Bolton, 1993, p. 33).

#### ***2.2.2.2 Later development: Dorothy Heathcote***

Dorothy Heathcote was perhaps the most influential figure in the arena of educational drama. She clearly puts educational drama as a participant-centred learning medium. She defines educational drama as “being anything which involves people in an active role-taking situation in which attitudes, not characters, are the chief concern...” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 61). To her the sole purpose of doing drama in the classroom is in its meaning and meaningfulness for the participants, and she emphasizes that

“all drama is about man” (Heathcote, cited in Bolton, 1993, p. 36).

For Heathcote, the drama is neither the examination nor execution of a predetermined script passed down by the teacher, but an organically derived dramatic experience explored by both the student and facilitator. ‘student ownership and growth are the goals’ (Weltsek III, 2003, p. 12). Heathcote further stresses that “problem-solving is the basis of learning and maturation” (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 62). In practice, Heathcote would introduce a problem, and ask the participants to explore possible solutions. In this process of exploration, participants assume the role of a “mantle of the expert” (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995), making decisions from the perspectives of authority and power, and become “active learners, engaging in choosing what knowledge is needed in order to solve a particular problem” (Weltsek III, 2003, p. 17), while teacher acts as facilitator and gives no re-defined answer for the discussion. In creating freedom of discovering solutions through imagination, the participants “live through” the fictional world.

From this perspective, the impact of this learning process is a holistic one on the learner. As Heathcote emphasizes,

...this playing out of situations challenges the child’s social attitude, his verbal control and language ability, his un-selfishness, his physical energies and his imagination as he “lives through” the situations of interest to him. He learns to understand them in his own way. He relates them to his experiences and makes them comprehensible in the light of his experience. (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 83).

### ***2.2.2.3 The use of drama in EFL classroom***

In its application, educational drama has been widely used in foreign language learning mainly as means to encourage the development of

language skills. Various activities that employ the basic dramatic skills such as role-play are also popular in EFL classrooms. The popularity in using drama activities to enhance language development lies in several factors. First of all, these activities provide ample varieties for classroom teaching pedagogies and thus contribute to motivating students to learn. Secondly, drama activities create situational contexts in which the foreign language learners practice on the use of the target language. Most importantly, drama performance using the target language is always considered an opportunity for the teachers to demonstrate the learner's learning outcome.

While drama activities have been justly apprehended as means of improving and demonstrating linguistic proficiency, the language learning classrooms use only a thin slice of what drama is and miss its real gist. Drama activities could be adding fun to learning, yet the fun of learning could be generated more intuitively if the content and process of learning also stimulates interests and motivation in the learners. Hawkins (1993) analyzes what drama can do for language learning as follows:

1. create an experiential context for a foreign language;
2. inject motivation to grasp and produce language in that context; and
3. make possible the "sparks" of tension and physical encounter of social interplay.

Learning with drama is thus a humanistic experience, which Bolton describes as "the very clay of the dramatic medium – to do with focus, symbolism, tension, resonance, ambiguity, contradiction, ritual, simplicity, contrast, anticipation, resolution, completeness and incompleteness, humour, magic, ambiguity and metaxis" (Bolton, 1986, p. 370).

Drama does provide situational context for the practice and display of the target language, however getting in contact with the target culture implies far

more than learning how native speakers “order food at McDonalds” or “dress and play in Halloween.” As FitzGibbon (1993) indicates, in educational drama “the constructs they use are more complex and their wide range of semiotics potential can effectively convey elements of culture, civilization and simple human living as well as linguistic practice” (p. 270).

Although it is evident that dramatic performance does give EFL learners ample opportunity to practice oral skills in target language, drama could provide a far more enriching experience to the participants. In Schewe’s word, drama puts emphasis

...on situations experienced by people, or interactions arising between different people, of a sort that display features characteristic of the dramatic genre: tension, resolution, intensification, relief, anticipation, recollection, similarity and contrast, exposition, expostulation, retort, dispute, altercation and interplay, etc.” (Schewe, 1993, p. 11).

### *Exploration with oneself*

Drama provides an opportunity for the participant to find out about himself in any context (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 160). Dramatic experience, when taken as a learning process, enables its participants to start a journey of discovery with his/her own self. “And because drama is, in itself, all-embracing, it is a more effective medium for procuring the transfer of the aesthetic outlook into all that it touches, not only the other arts and intellectual subjects, but life itself” (Coggin, 1956, p. 242).

### *Discovery of relationship with others*

By nature, educational drama is a socializing activity in which interaction among participants takes place as part of a learning process. It is a process in which “...shared and cooperative learning, where sense and meaning are constantly negotiated, e.g., between individual learners in a small group;



between individual learners and the teacher; between different groups” (Schewe, 1993, p. 293). This mode of learning echoes what Bruner (1990) describes learning as a communal activity and a sharing of a culture.

In his wide spread discussion of the language education, Moffet (1968) emphasizes the “sociality” of the language learning classroom in which the learners are given the chance to develop the language in relation to their life experience. He urges the use of “improvised dialogue” in classroom drama as the major means of developing thought and language (Moffett, 1968, p. 90). As he terms this “improvised dialogue” as “verbal cooperation” (Moffett, 1968, p. 90), the learning process is elevated to the perspective of an interactive one. In drama classroom, this cooperation takes place in a variety of forms, ranging from non-verbal to verbal, controlled to open, as mentioned earlier. A collaborative learning style is thus established in the classroom, in which constant negotiation with the aims of enforcing mutual understanding is the major mode of communication.

Here the participant is viewed as “a social being,” one who plays and talks with others, learns through interaction with parents and teachers rather than “an isolated being” constructing meaning for himself alone in his interactions with the physical environment (Verriour, 1994). This social being thus forms a partnership with his teacher and other participants in establishing a common learning goal. In a drama classroom, this pattern of negotiation is realized through constant, fast-paced activities taken place in the safety zone of a fictional world where resistance for such negotiation find little chance to emerge. More importantly, each participant receives feedback and also get supports from fellow participants. As Baur (1990) indicates,

Learners all immediately establish personl contact with other people in the group, and the sense of being supported by the group replaces the feeling of being observed and of having to assert oneself in front of or over the

rest of the group... (p. 30, cited in Schewe, 1993, p. 302).

### *Students: active participants in the language learning process*

Glock (1993) asserts that the participants of this learning process would assume an active role whose tasks include:

- 1) discovery of the self through constant reflection and challenges from peers
- 2) taking responsibility for their own learning
- 3) increase self-esteem and confidence
- 4) taking failures as a fundamental part of their learning process

### *Open challenge*

Heathcote proposes that, in the drama classroom, no set of correct answers would be provided to solve posed problems (Wagner, 1999), therefore students could “respond in a variety of ways, to make choices and to recognize that there are alternatives” (Glock, 1993, p. 132). It is through challenges that learners develop a heightened sense of satisfaction from the process of problem solving and group interaction. The difference between real life situation and a drama situation is that drama provides a ‘safety zone’, or a “no penalty zone” (Heathcote, in Johnson & O’Neill, 1984, p. 130) in which risk-taking is encouraged.

### *A de-centring and de-familiarizing process*

A primary approach in educational drama, however, is to enable its participant to step away from ethnocentric stand. In drama, all experience occurs in a fictional world. As the participant steps into this world, in Heathcote’s view, we can look at ourselves and our world from a fresh perspective (Heathcote & Bolton, 1998) - and it is at this point a discovery and re-discovery of the self/others relationship begins. In practicing a foreign language, a learner could be very much aware of the fact that *he is putting on*

*an act of using another language*. He needs to be conscious at all times about what to say and how to say it: tenses, sentence structure, word choice, parts of speech, syntax, etc., are all constructs that a language learner needs to be very careful with in using the target language. He even needs to be very alert of the use of manners and rhetoric appropriate in the target culture. In other words, a learner needs to be “looking” at himself applying all these linguistic rules. This echoes what I have explored in the previous sections (i.e., 2.2.1.2 & 2.2.1.3) the idea of *performativity* and *performative consciousness*. The foreign language learner is thus endowed with a “distanced” perspective at the very moment he uses the target language to express himself and communicate with others, while the sense of detachment is even more enhanced as he the fictional world of drama, in which a deepened sense of detachment is made possible.

In Heathcote’s approach, devices such as aliens visiting the earth and asking questions could also help to trigger a decentring process. In this way the participants of a drama are given the opportunity to look at familiar situations and behaviours from a complete stranger’s view, and a process of de-familiarization begins and so does a higher cultural awareness (Fleming, 1998). This approach echoes what Bruner (1986) observes about the purpose of language education:

Much of the process of education consists of being able to distance oneself in some way from what one knows by being able to reflect on one’s own knowledge. (p. 127).

### *Working with individual differences*

Within this drama world, the participant is required to work with other participants. As an ethnocentric stand is removed through the decentring process described above, a true group dynamics begins. Each individual as a member of a group is able to start to listen, accept, and support each other in the process and accommodate differences with others (Kase-Polisini, 1989). A

significant outcome from of this process is that, eventually, it is in this struggle to work and negotiate with others that one finds himself. As Breen and Caldlin (1980) indicate:

Such a context would be typified by the acceptance of ongoing success and failure as necessary prerequisites towards some ultimate achievement, where it is assumed that learners inevitably bring with them “mixed abilities” and that such “mixture” is, in fact, positively useful to the group as a whole. Commitment to communication on the learner’s part need not be regarded as something unattainable or threatening - even for the “beginning learner” – because he is expected to rely on and develop that which is familiar: his own process competence and experience of communication. (p. 101, cited in Glock, 1993, p. 111).

### 2.2.3 Constructing a drama praxis: Drama as a process

To put it in a simple way, process drama is a form of educational drama in which the structure is developed and co-constructed by participants. As it is a co-constructed structure, its process necessarily demands negotiation and conflict resolution. I will then adopt Kao and O’Neill’s model (1998) for the process drama to develop a framework for the study.

Kao and O’Neill (1998) propose a developmental model for process drama as follows:

1. A starting point (*pre-text*), e.g., picture, image, situation, myth, dilemma, etc., that intrigues and involves participants;
2. A *context* that includes serious and realistic situations;
3. *Roles* (created for individual and for the group) that bring students further into the drama;
4. *Dramatic devices* are to be employed to develop the structure and to engage the participants;
5. A *drama* developed through process of questioning, negotiating, and reflection.

In order to engage the participants, Kao and O'Neill also propose various activities in drama classroom, ranging from non-verbal to verbal, from closed-form (controlled) to open communication (Kao & O'Neill, 1998).

When the *non-verbal drama activities* are used as the initial steps, the objective goes far beyond mere entertainment. Quoting Lewicki (1996),

(T)hese activities are used as the very first joy of physical movement, of the first communication voluntarily sent by the child in order to signify his/her presence or to enter in the relationship with somebody else or something outside... (and) the spontaneous speech sound (language flow)—stimulated by various external and internal factors—develops toward improvisation into communicative speech skills. (p. 44).

Furthermore, when *role-play* is used, a more advanced dramatic element is added, and an in-depth dialogue provoked. Bolton observes that role-play “stimulates a high degree of focused attention at the imaginative and intellectual level necessary for most good subject-learning” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 156). In Bolton’s view, this role-playing is the skill basic to acting, which requires “an ability to engage with something outside oneself, using an ‘as if’ mental set to activate, sustain or intensify that engagement” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 156).

The act of *engagement* is perhaps the most significant mental state that a participant is required to equip with when immerse in such process of enquiry. Bolton stresses that “the dramatic ‘as if’ mode implies a release from contingencies of the present into the logical rules of a hypothetical present. These two characteristics combined suggest a mental activity that is both “dynamic and rational” (Davis & Lawrence, 1986, p. 156).

### 2.3. Chapter summary

This chapter has explored the two major dimensions of the proposed study: firstly, about culture theories and cultural learning in ELT (2.1), and secondly, the sociological, theatrical and educational perspectives of drama (2.2). In the discussion on culture and cultural learning, I mapped out the global status of English, and discussed the relationship between language and culture. In this respect, language, culture, and identity are interconnected concepts. In arguing foreign language learning as an intercultural education, I proposed *critical intercultural awareness* is crucial in helping learners develop the competence of an *intercultural speaker*. Based on Byram's model (1997) of an intercultural speaker, I argued further that *critical intercultural awareness* needs to be developed with the following three dimensions:

Firstly, intercultural language learning should acknowledge the encounter of "Otherness" as a positive and necessary stimulus for intercultural understanding.

Secondly, in the process of encounter, there needs to develop a dialogic mechanism between the *myself* and the *otherness*; i.e., a learner's perception and development of intercultural competence comes from a constant examination and re-examination of the interconnectedness between culture, language and identity.

Thirdly, the process of intercultural encounter necessitates a generation of new meaning through interactions. Such interactions involve a cyclical process of *problematizing*, reflection and action. Furthermore, the newly generated meaning injects dynamics into the cultural encounter and deepens the meaning of the next interaction in this language learning process.

I then explored the concepts of drama and theatre from the sociological, the theatrical, and the educational perspectives, in an endeavour to construct a conceptual framework for the proposed fieldwork. The exploration in this chapter served to answer my first sub-question for the research: **What does it mean to develop critical intercultural awareness in the EFL classroom?**

In conclusion, the discussion above on the major theories of educational drama provides a conceptual framework for the fieldwork. The design of the research with this framework will be explored in more details through discussion in **Chapter 3**.

## Chapter 3

# Research Design and Methodology

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### 3.0 Overview

In order to see the potential effect of intercultural competence in language learning experiences, a discussion and analysis of the theory of the impact of educational drama activities on the advanced language learners has been presented in the previous chapter, through which the differences in cultural and social awareness, language attitudes and identities of the researched subjects were studied. Given this theoretical position, the practice of process drama was implemented as pedagogy for learners to develop critical intercultural awareness, which enables learners to go beyond boundaries and limitation of language classroom experience, which focuses only on the learning of linguistic system of the foreign language and fails to address the socio-cultural factors in ELT practice.

In order to discover whether this theoretical position could be implemented in practice, an action research project in a bilingual programme was planned. The research design was directed by the main research question:

**How would a process drama syllabus help EFL learners develop critical intercultural awareness?**

Under this umbrella, three sub-questions are then explored:

- 1. What does it mean to develop critical intercultural awareness in the EFL classroom?**
- 2. How does the process drama approach facilitate a reflective space for EFL learners?**
- 3. How is the critical intercultural awareness generated in the drama process?**



The first sub-research question has been explored through an examination of the major tenets in sociolinguistics. A conceptual framework that builds on theories of drama and theatre has also been constructed in the second part of **Chapter 2**. This chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings of my research design followed by a detailed description of research procedures.

### **3.1 Rationale for using interpretative research**

The research adopted an interpretative approach “to discover patterns which emerge after close observation, careful documentation, and thoughtful analysis of the research topic” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p. 21). Maykut and Morehouse (1994) argue further that it is through a process of discovery that we explore “contextual findings” (p. 21)—findings that are, in Holliday’s words, “construction of reality of the researched culture”(Holliday, 2002, p. 16).

Interpretative research involves a complex, interconnected theories, concepts, and assumptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.21). Interpretative research can be defined generically as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p. 3). As opposed to objectivist, explanatory research, which stresses the description and presentation of causal relationships between variables, interpretative research recognizes that research inquiry will truthfully reflect the socially constructed nature of the world and the relations between the researcher and the researched. Instead of explaining or predicting human behavior, the purpose of interpretative research aims to “to raise awareness, guide perception, and generate theory that will drive further research and provide a lens with which to study other, similar situations “ (Lazaroff, 1998, p. viii).

As such, in interpretative research, the tensions between the researcher and subject are thus lifted. The subject acts as a research participant, develops a partnership with the researcher, and even interacts intensively with the other research partners. Through such partnership with the subject, as described by Guba and Lincoln, interpretative researchers “anticipate the emergence,

unfolding, or adaptation of the research design as the inquiry proceeds, with each step dependent on all proceeding steps” (Guba & Lincoln, 1988, p. 83).

In conducting an interpretative research, I also come to recognize that the writing up of the analysis is also “a method of knowing” (Richardson, 2000). As I went through piles of transcribed data, student’s writings and images in the video recordings, as I re-arranged pieces of information and probe under the themes, I came to understand that the pieces of data were forms of representations – they carried meanings in themselves and generated insights and new meanings when explored.

The following sections describe my action research procedure and approaches in this journey.

## **3.2 Situating the research: site and target group**

### **3.2.1 Beginning the research journey**

In one sense, my inquiry into the objectives and pedagogy for the advanced EFL learners began years ago. As a teacher myself, a teacher-trainer, and a consultant for the curricula development of a wide range of education institutions from kindergarten to adult courses in the field of EFL, I had explored different approaches for language teaching and learning in relation to the needs of various age and level of learners. My first hand experiences as a consultant in the EFL education market further granted me opportunities to investigate beyond the pedagogy into the broader social context in which the language teaching and learning curricula operates as a market driven product. Consequently I started to raise questions for myself about the objectives of EFL as a discipline of education rather than a simple language learning experience, as has become evident in earlier chapters. This effort to ‘look beyond’ current EFL pedagogy pressed me to search for opportunity and space for new paradigms for EFL and develop pilot projects for experiments in my university freshman English classes in which I am granted total flexibility of syllabus design and implementation.

My educational objectives thus aimed beyond the facilitation of linguistic components of the foreign language in the classroom *per se*. In these experimental projects I hoped to explore for a commonly-shared 'language', if we return to the original concept of the term as a speech act, that could serve the purpose for genuine interpersonal communication in the global arena, one which I would define as an 'intercultural language for intercultural dialogue' (**Chapter 2**). To this aim, in my freshman English mixed-ability classes, students were coached to go through a series of activities in exploration of the self-others relationship using English as means of explorations and reflections. To an extent these students learned to internalize linguistic patterns from textbooks and produce more genuine human concerns. I therefore began to search for the possibility to develop projects that would use an open-ended method for language learning purposes (see discussion in **Chapter 2**).

The permission, or to be specific, the opportunity to implement an experiment in the EFL classroom was not easy to obtain. My position as an EFL consultant was mostly regarded as a convincing endorsement for the existing practices rather than a resource for innovation. In 2004, Principal Tang, the principal of Ming-Day High School (referred hereafter as MEHS) approached me for advice for the initiation and curriculum development of a BEP programme in his school. Principal Tang explained to me how he observed the dramatic change of English proficiency levels in some of his students at the entry level to the seventh grade and why he thought it was difficult to keep these students in the same English class with other regular students. He was searching for innovations in conceptual framework and curriculum development to accommodate his potential applicants to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade programmes.

### 3.2.2 The research site

The MEHS is a comprehensive high school in Taichung City of central Taiwan. The school is a celebrated private educational institution which comprises of a junior high school division, a senior high school division, a vocational school division, with a total of nearly 10,000 students. A school with strong leadership and a well-articulated mission, the thirty-year-old MEHS is also part of a

continuous educational system, which include a newly-founded bilingual elementary school, and a four-year-old college. In recent years, driven by an awareness of the market and global trends, the MEHS has begun a search for redefining its objectives in search of a platform for intercultural education as part of its global citizen education project. Various attempts and innovations have been brought into curriculum reform and even received recognition through governmental awards.

In 2005, the MEHS started an experimental intensive language program that has taken the spirit from its market competitors but with a very different approach. Named as BEP, the intensive English program was developed for students entering junior high school with higher English competence. As compared to those from the regular program with government-prescribed exposure to English learning of two-hour per week, these were students who had attended extra or supplementary English language courses either in after-school institutions, or in bilingual primary schools, which was a very common practice among students in metropolitan areas of the island, as explained in **Section 1.4.4**. The average total English learning hours for these target students, prior to this stage, was estimated to be five times of that of the regular programs, as discussed in my **Introduction** section on EFL education in Taiwan.

### 3.2.3 The existing practice

Before the initiative of the BEP programme, the school had implemented an experimental approach in which these A-level<sup>1</sup> students stayed in 'regular' classes for every subject except English, but were 'pulled out' from their classes to learn English with other A-level students. In other words, they learned most of the disciplines in Chinese with the regular students, and studied English with other 'A-levels' drawn from other 'regular' classes for six more hours per week. There were 120 7<sup>th</sup> grade A-level students; however, as compared to the other 760 'regular' ones, their language learning experiences in EFL were quite different (see **Table 3-1**).

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<sup>1</sup> Upon entering MEHS, all students would need to take a English proficiency test. A-level students refer to the highest scorers from this proficiency test and usually comprise of the top 15-20% of the whole grade.

**Table 3-1:**

A comparison of the structure of weekly EFL classes between A-level students and students in regular classes in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade of MEHS.

A-levels students (in the pulled-out Advanced EFL classes)		Students in regular classes	
MOE EFL curriculum	2 hours	MOE EFL curriculum	4 hours
Advanced Conversation classes	2 hours	Beginning level Conversation classes	2 hours
Advanced EFL classes	2 hours	X	X
Saturday supplementary classes	3 hours	X	X
Total hours/week	9 hours	X	6 hours

On top of the prescribed hours per week for students, the MOE of Taiwan also prescribed a set of national guidelines for all students in the same grade to follow, an objectives for entrance examinations to the senior high schools, and as a policy to keep school curricula under control. The students with lower English proficiency level stayed in the regular classes, and followed such MOE prescribed curriculum all the way. The A-level students who had been exposed to more English learning experience spent 50% less of time in going through the prescribed materials, as the levels of these materials were much lower than their current situation, and accepted more advanced training in English in the remaining English hours. Under this circumstance, the Chinese teachers (CTs) responsible for the teaching of these classes were required to be more fluent in the four skills than other CTs – the ability to talk all the time in English was essential, and a MA degree from an English-speaking country was almost a pre-requisite. The materials used in the Advanced English classes ranged from Harry Potter to English poetry, usually through a mixed pedagogy of sentence drills and comprehensive discussion of the information in the texts. The Saturday supplementary classes were taught by foreign teachers (FTs) only (native English speakers); materials and pedagogy vary with different FTs, ranging from reading, writing, to arts and sport activities – all, without exception, were conducted in an

'English-only' environment.

### 3.2.4 Part 1: My journey as an ethnographer

The project took shape as I became very much tempted to pursue the curricula and pedagogical innovations that Principal Tang approached me for in the beginning. As I discussed in previous chapters, the education for these young advanced English learners (referred to hereafter as AEL) in Taiwan was still undergoing an experimental stage and had been mostly either pursuing the path of the Canadian immersion programmes or dangling between the MOE prescription and imported texts books. Most researchers and practitioners in this field approached the situation from the teacher's perspectives, rather than from the needs of these target students. I therefore decided to begin my search with an observation of the AEL as a particular cultural group with their particular ways of life –in other words, I approached these students as an outsider who intended to ask “ethnographic questions” (Holliday, 2002, p. 37) to address the “taken-for-grantedness” (Wallace, 1992, p.71, cited in Holliday, 2002, p. 94).

From September to November of 2004, I “entered the field” as a “curious, rather ignorant but very non-threatening person, who wished to witness their going on” (Dyson, 1997, p. 25), to fit into the daily class schedule of these students, to look into their assignment works and tests reports, and to sit in the English classes with them to observe their learning styles and interaction with classmates and with the teachers. I further conducted other in-depth classroom observations of BEP programmes and practices in other educational institutions, and informal interviews/discussions with AEL and regular students in the program, parents, CTs, FTs, Chinese head teachers, foreign head teachers, the administrators, and even English textbook suppliers. Throughout this journey, I kept observation journals and reports, in which the AEL as a community unfolded their stories to me, including their learning history, learning patterns, aspirations and anxiety in learning the foreign language.

The adoption of an ethnographer's position in the inquiry into the target culture at this stage enabled me to let go of what I had been taking for granted for years as

an English curriculum planner and consultant. When I witnessed AEL children being deprived of educational rights in learning their own culture and forced to immerse in the teaching and learning of a foreign one in the name of globalisation and internationalisation, I was also made aware of a calling in these children for answers to their curiosity for the world out there. Park (2001) describes this journey of ethnography as a process in which

...the knower inevitably comes to the task as a whole, living person with a past and a future, personal likes and dislikes, and enters into the phenomenon to know it on its own terms, This requires an attitude of openness and willingness to listen to the message emanating from the object of interpretation. The knower and the known thus participate in the process of knowing, in which what they bring to the encounter merge together. This process assembles disparate pieces of information into a meaningful whole of pattern, rather than dividing it into analytical components as variable in a functional question. (p. 83).

My role as a researcher began with approaching these children as an outsider, taking that position of a "stranger" (Schuetz, 1944; Simmel, 1971) who learned about the approached culture with a fresh view, through a journey of what what Holliday described as "seeing the familiar as strange" and thus a "critical awareness"(Holliday, 2002, p. 93) was made possible for the researcher. Holliday (2002) further urges that, in conducting fieldwork, the researcher renounce pre-set conceptions about the researched and therefore could approach and "listen to discourse coming from diverse intellectual origins of conceived with a different cultural syntax"(Borda, 2001, cited in Holliday, 2002, p. 93) with a modest attitude. The "different cultural syntax" of the researched in this sense implies "a dynamic, ongoing group process which operates in changing circumstances to enable group members to make sense of and operate meaningfully within those circumstances" (Holliday 2002, p. 13). In this process, moreover, Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) keep reminding us that "...participants in social settings are not 'cultural dopes' - they can give cogent reasons for their intentions and actions, and generally demonstrate a sophisticated (although not necessarily social scientific) understanding of the situations they inhabit" (p. 346).

Ethnography in this sense is most radical and empirically productive in specifying

the actual procedures through which social order is accomplished (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p. 215). As I reflected through the process of my previous practices in curriculum planning, the question that eventually overarched my research began to materialize; that is, *if learning English becomes a significant part of schooling, how would this language learning experience enhance the learner's construction of the world? What would we as educators bring to their learning experience then? In particular, what would be the effect of EFL on their understanding of their own society and their relations with people from other cultures?*

### 3.2.5 Part 2: Research strategy for the fieldwork

#### 3.2.5.1. Action research and participatory action research

My reflection from the above ethnographical journey guided me through the process of formulating a research strategy. The reflection from this new perspective was then injecting energy into the second phase of research - the implementation of a project in which the AEL could have the opportunity to develop their construction of the world through the learning experience of a foreign language. As the objective of this inquiry is aiming at finding a new paradigm for the AEL students, then came to decide to adopt a double-looped learning model (Argyris, 1976). As in essence this journey of inquiry takes the researcher and the researched as both agents and actors, *the researcher's* quest became the first loop of action research, while *the researched* taking a modified participatory action research as the second loop. As such, both parties conducted a research process that accomplished the cycle of action, reflection, raising of questions, planning of field work to review current (past) actions – in which “its conduct, analysis of experiences encountered, the drawing of conclusions, and the planning of new and transformed actions” (Wadsworth, 1998, p. 2).

As I shares Noffke's belief that “research by teachers is unlikely to become a significant element in their lives unless they see it as improving their own school-centred circumstances in ways they identify as salient” (1995, p.131), this study was not conducted with the researcher as an academic outsider, although



the ethnographical outsider approach was the initial stage. Instead, the action researcher played a significant role in the study, as a collaborator of the target drama workshop, and a teacher/ developer/observer of the teaching-learning process. Such approach echoes Whitehead's prescription for the educational change, "to keep the teacher-practitioner at the centre of the enquiry" (McNiff, 1988, p.37). Moreover, through this process of communication with the researched, a transformative change on the part of the researcher and the researched would be possible. Rorty argues that "in coming to an understanding, the interaction between the knower and the known produces changes in both. In interpreting, we always encounter something new and unexpected, and we gain a new experience, by virtue of which we become altered" (1979, cited in Park, 2001, p. 83). Most importantly, the action research hopes to generate knowledge that will lead to improvement with a focus on problem-solving (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001).

Seen from a broader social perspective, an action research approach for the purpose of this study would contribute to the exploration of a possible change particularly on the part of the participants. It is an approach that Gaventa and Cornwall indicated as a process in which "participation in knowledge production becomes a method for building greater awareness and more authentic self-consciousness of one's issues and capacities for action" (Gaventa & Cornwall 2001, p. 75). This concern for the social purpose of research justifies the design of the second loop of action research in which the participants of the project become the joint researchers (Choi, 2003). Voices of those affected by the research process are allowed to enter the game, participate in the knowledge production process and contribute to the improvement of the situation and in this sense define an empowering effort through the process.

In the context of this research, the participatory action research (PAR) was taken as an initiative for the participation in the power and knowledge distribution arena. PAR is a branch of action research, and the paradigm calls for a collective inquiry and experimentation of the participants in the research journey. Different from the conventional approach in which the participants are regarded as the subject of inquiry, in PAR the participants and the researcher alike conduct a search for understanding of the world. Kemmis & McTaggart (2005) indicates that

PAR is itself “a social - and educational - process” (p. 563). In this sense both the ‘subject’ and ‘object’ of participatory action research undertake their research as a social practice: while the ‘subject’ conducts a social practice, the ‘object’ of PAR is also social. Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) affirm that “participatory action research is directed toward studying, reframing, and reconstructing social practices. *If practices are constituted in social interaction between people, changing practices is a social process*” (authors’ italics, p. 277),

Schwandt (2007) asserts that the participatory action research (PAR) is characterised by three basic elements: its participatory nature, its democratic impulse and its objective of producing both useful knowledge and action, and consciousness-raising. Kemmis and McTaggart elaborate on this view by indicating that, by focusing on the “context of possibility, the stakeholders involved in this particular type of research study should regard this practice as a matter of borrowing, constructing, and reconstructing research methods and techniques to throw light on the nature processes, and consequences of the particular object they are studying” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005, p. 575). The process of PAR is cyclical and allows the researcher to reflect on material covered in the past and present.

In order to raise the awareness and consciousness of the issues that affect their lives, the participants in PAR get involved in the development of the strategies of awareness building. In Kemmis and McTaggart’s words, “(p)articipatory action research offers an opportunity to create a forum in which people can join one another as co-participants in the struggle to make the practices in which they interact—forums in which rationality and democracy can be pursued together, without an artificial separation ultimately hostile to both” (2003 , p. 382).

In essence, PAR is therefore a “people’s research”(Park, 2001, p. 81) in which the people who share the problem come to decide the focus of the problem and solution for that problem. In other words, the participants in PAR are directly involved in the social change process that affect their lives. It is different with AR in that it is played by “non-experts” who engage in three kinds of activity: “inquiring into the nature of the problem to solve by understanding its causes and

meanings; getting together by organizing themselves as community units; and mobilizing themselves for action by raising their awareness of what should be done on moral and political grounds" (Park, 2001, p. 81).

In practice, this reflection of situation and the subsequent implementation of change come through a constant dialogue in a group processes. Dialogue in Freire's term is a dynamic tool through which people are impelled to express their thinking and feeling and form a common entity that is larger than its constituent parts (Freire, 1970). This dialogue, when taking place in a group process, begins with the participants' knowledge of one another as members of a community, which enables them to form a shared 'social space' (Park, 2001, p. 81) in which common meanings can be created, and concerted action further forged. As such, the participants of PAR gain what Miles (1959) describes as "the sociological imagination" (p. 5) by situating themselves in the wider contexts of the community. Miles argues that "(i)n a word, by their reflection and by their sensibility, they realize the cultural meaning of the social sciences and their place within this meaning" (1959, p. 14). In Kemmis and McTaggart's words, it is "a social process of collaborative learning realized by people who join together in changing the practices through which they interact in a shared social world in which, for better or for worse, we live with consequences of one another's actions"(Kemmis and McTaggart ,2005, p. 563).

It should be pointed out that the action research approach, as it enjoys the advantage of getting teachers involved in every step of the procedure, also suffers some degree of weakness. First of all, since the experience is limited to a particular group and classroom situation, the learning outcome as in all case study research cannot result in generalizations. As action research is highly context specific, it is unlikely that learning from such a study could be widely applied to other situations - nor is it likely to count as 'hard evidence' of the effectiveness of any given intervention (McNiff, 1988). However, where the aim is to bring about change - or to learn about the process of bringing about change - it may have advantages over other methods and will provide an effective bridge between research and practice.

### 3.2.5.2. *Process drama practice as pedagogy*

My second approach for the research was to plan a process drama journey for the AEL with an endeavor to establish evidence of how the pedagogy of this process drama put learners in situational contexts of encountering 'the others', and to look at how language learning experience becomes part of a process of cumulative development through which the learners develop *critical intercultural awareness* as a preparedness and capacity to use the intercultural competence in many ways. In order to demonstrate the expected effect of critical intercultural awareness in language learning experiences, a discussion and analysis of the theories of drama and theatre was presented in my **Chapter 2**. The practice of process drama was adopted as an opportunity for learners to develop *critical intercultural awareness*, which would allow the language learners to go beyond boundaries and limitation of language classroom experience.

In short, the purpose of the empirical part of the study is to present a description and analysis of an exemplary approach that uses process drama as a supplementary course in an intensive English learning program of a junior high school. By focusing on and analyzing the actions, motives, models, changes and values in teacher-student interactions in the classroom practice, I collected data (see 3.3 in the following section) that will help me to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach and to answer my own research questions (for details of this proposal, see discussion in **Chapter 1: Introduction**.)

### 3.2.5.3. *The role of the researcher*

My role with the workshop was an action researcher-facilitator-observer. Although I had some experiences in educational drama activities prior to the workshop, my experience as a drama teacher had always been more in the field of dramatic literature and theatrical performance. Within the context of this study, I chose to work with two drama specialties in the belief that: a) the workshop could be conducted in a more sophisticated way, b) I could engage in the observation of the drama praxis from a more objective view, and c) the action research reflexive

cycle could be more effectively conducted with the two drama teachers (referred as DTs hereafter) as insiders and me as the observer.

In a sense, I also worked as an insider as I actively involved in every step of the design and facilitation of the syllabus. Moreover, I also worked closely with the two DTs on revising the lesson plans on a daily basis. In other words, the goal of the researcher and the teachers were closely aligned. I was part of the PAR research and learning in this drama praxis. It also needs to mention that during the course of the drama sessions, my role as researcher did not intervene in the development of flow. Revision based on discussion with DTs and Chinese English teachers (referred as CTs hereafter) came only after the drama sessions each day.

My role as the facilitator and observer of the drama praxis also enabled me to become an insider while maintaining the perspective of an outsider. As one of the facilitators, I designed and helped to generate ideas pertaining to hypothesis in the process. As an observer, I collected and interpreted data and search continuously for a deeper understanding of the meaning making process. As a researcher, I myself was engaging in the PAR inquiry in which I collaborated with the participants to construct meaning through shared “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5) that developed in the course of the drama.

This dual research perspective further allowed me to engage in a reflective practice of my research. As one of the facilitators of the programme, I was literally a part of community of the learners and the teachers. Observing the praxis while reflecting on what happened in the process, I was able to take a distanced view of my own approaches. In Neelands’ (2006) words, “in order to be effective the reflective practitioner strives to be self-knowing as well as other-knowing”(p. 17). This reflective stance for me was an on-going practice during the programme: I reflected and consequently modified approaches in the course of the implementation of the programme.

In conceptualizing teachers as reflective practitioners, Schön (1987) distinguishes between three levels in a reflective practice: *knowing-in-action*, *reflection-on-action*, and *reflective-in-action*. *Knowing-in-action* refers to know-how or the

practical, theoretical or professional knowledge that teacher brings to her teaching practice. *Reflection-on-action* happens when the teacher stops and evaluates the effect of her *knowing-in-action*. *Reflective-in-action*, however, takes place during (rather than after) the teaching practice, and this reflection in turn generates change in action. *Reflective-in-action* thus implies that: a) all teaching practice is an action-centred process (Taylor, 2000), and b) learners as well as teachers are directly or indirectly effected by this on-going dialectic between practices and interpretations of teaching (Freire, 1998; Neelands, 2006).

Neelands (2006) indicates that, in this way, the dialogic relationship between teacher and learners formalizes a partnership-based reflection through which knowledge becomes co-constructed and mediated in every classroom. Furthermore, Neelands posits, knowledge as co-constructed informs that the learners' voices would be encouraged to the extent that their voices "disrupt" the flow of teaching, and thus "provoke a critical consciousness" (2006, p. 21) in the learners.

My role as a reflective practitioner of this action research will be explored in more details through the description of the project in the following sections.

#### ***3.2.5.4. The project outline***

##### **The English Drama Workshop**

The project, entitled **English Drama Workshop**, was planned and proposed to the MEHS in November 2004. The project proposed a three-day drama workshop in January 20-22 of 2005 for the Advanced English Learners (AEL) group from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade of the school. Included in the proposal were: conceptual framework, objectives for linguistic and intercultural competences, syllabus and lesson plan for the workshop, description of procedure and target participants, budgeting and plan for technical supports and human resources (see **Appendices i & ii**). The school accepted the proposal and supported the research with full funding, on the grounds that a complete documentation would be carried out, and the copyright would go to the school.

### **The coaching team**

My role with the workshop was an action researcher-facilitator-observer. I invited two specialized educational drama teachers, Mei and Yen (pseudonyms) from two junior high schools in Taipei city (two hour drive from Taichung), to join the team as the main facilitators for the drama workshop. Mei received her MA in Drama-in-Education from a UK university, and had been actively engaging herself in promoting and teaching of educational drama nationwide. Yen was also a graduate from the same university, with a major in applied drama and training in acting. Together we had conducting several workshops with similar approaches before this project, with me presenting the theoretical background and application of drama for English learning, and Mei and Yen on the drama practices. However, this workshop would be the first time we committed ourselves to the development of a complete process drama situation.

Andy, a native English teacher who had been a teacher of English conversation classes for MEHS, was invited to host the forum in the morning of the second day of the workshop, and the two CTs joined the workshop as assistants.

#### ***3.2.5.5. The participants***

The workshop was announced to all AEL students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades of MEHS and their parents, and participants would be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. A total of 27 students from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades were accepted, among them were 16 females and 11 males. This number for participating students was decided according to the collaborating teachers' level of energy to work with the class.

Students from the regular English programmes were also taken into consideration in acceptance for the workshop. Students' language proficiency level was taken into account but was not the definite deciding factors for final decision. All participants signed up for the project on a voluntary basis. From the questionnaires they completed, the reasons they chose to attend this workshop included: a) motivation to improve English proficiency level; b) encouragement from the homeroom teachers; c) urge of the parents to take any opportunity to

learn more about English; and d) to fill up free time in the winter vacation; and e) drama is challenging to English learners and only the top students can handle the challenge. The last reason also implied that the student needed to be good enough to be accepted to the programme, which was not at all the researcher's intention –the homeroom teachers as well as the school administration inadvertently enforced this message through their announcement and application procedure. This reason accounted for almost two-thirds of the applicants' motivation in participating in the programme.

The workshop invited only the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> graders, as the 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the school were intensively preparing for BCT tests (the Basic Competence Test for Junior High School Students)<sup>2</sup> at the moment of the workshop.

Other than the grade specification and English proficiency levels, no other purposive sample criteria were conducted. The prior drama experience was also not required. My intent was to have a range of students' engagement in the drama that would generate a rich source of descriptive data that would in turn inform the questions raised within this research study.

#### ***3.2.5.6. Ethical issues in data collection***

As I aimed to carry out a research inquiry through this project, I was extremely **cautious** in every step of my approaches, for two particular reasons. The primary reason was that I would be conducting a kind of project that had never be done before in the target school, therefore the school administration and the whole related teaching staff needed to be informed at all stages of the implementation. My second concern was about the participating students. As these participants were minors, they and their parents were needed to be made aware of the methods of data collection, and the nature and effects of such drama workshop.

To address the concerns of the school administration, I discussed my objectives,

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<sup>2</sup> BCT ((the Basic Competence Test for Junior High School Students) is a national and unified examination procedure for all junior high school students. The test focus on achievement attained in core subjects and the score would be used as the major criteria in the admission to senior high schools. BCT was developed by MOE and is conducted in June each year.



project, and every single step of my approaches in details with the Principal, the head of the junior high division, and the all teachers involved in the project. As the project was planned to be recorded, I also explained in details to the school administration about the method of data collection and the ethical issues so involved in meetings prior to the workshop.

I also realized that the drama approaches for language learning was to be implemented in a different way than what parents and students would have expected from an English drama performance. Therefore I put down in a letter to the parents about the goals, approaches, and possible effects of educational drama for language learning. In this letter, I also explained about the issues of confidentiality and protection of anonymity of participating students. This letter was sent to the parents of all participating students by the school administration. At the beginning of the workshop, I reminded the participants again about the objectives and approaches of the workshop, and that all sessions were to be recorded.

A consent form signed by all parents and students of this workshop was obtained prior to the workshop. To protect the identity of the participants within this study, in this research report actual names of the teachers and the participating students have been changed to pseudonyms.

### 3.2.5.7. *Starting the action research: The procedure*

Lewin (1946) defines a three-step spiral model for action research: *unfreezing*, *changing*, and *re-freezing*, which refer to stages of planning, action, and evaluation (reflection) of action, respectively. For the context of this study, I will use the model developed by Elliot (1991) in which the action research cycle consists of four major phrases, as follows:

<i>The Reconnaissance &amp; General Plan</i>	.Initially an exploratory stance is adopted, where an understanding of a problem is developed and plans are made for some form of interventionary strategy.
<i>Action</i>	.Then the intervention is carried out .

<i>Observation</i>	During and around the time of the intervention, pertinent observations are collected in various forms.
<i>Reflection and Revision</i>	The new interventional strategies are carried out, and the cyclic process repeats, continuing until a sufficient understanding of (or implement able solution for) the problem is achieved.

The cyclical process of action research works as a loop: the first cycle through these four stages generate reflection that informs the modification of the next cycle, and so forth. In this way, the research process is cyclical and alternates between action and critical reflection. In doing so the cyclical process generates understanding that in turn helps a continuous refining of methodology and interpretations of data. The procedure is explained as follows.

**Stage 1: The Reconnaissance & General Plan:**

**Understanding the problems and defining the tasks**

One week before the workshop, the collaborative team began to work more intensively on the project. I planned and collaborated with the two selected CTs. A deliberate check on the AEL students' English proficiency levels was conducted with the grade reports and test papers provided by the school. The purpose of this task was to decide on the level of language proficiency necessary for develop a referencing framework for the two DTs.

The team further conducted the following tasks:

1. The team defined the language as well as communicative tasks for developing intercultural communicative competence based on the guidelines provided in *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR)(Council of Europe, 2001) for the workshop, as in the following list. The objectives in implementing these guidelines were to build a backbone on the development of syllabus for the workshop. In this way the researcher and coach team constructed a common understanding of the targets.

2. The team then identified necessary teaching methodology for the drama praxis.

The language tasks included:

- Asking questions
- Listening to information
- Identifying
- Sharing information
- Interaction
- Instructing
- Describing
- Expressing
- Sequencing
- Summarizing
- Persuading.
- Speculating—Inferring

The communicative tasks included:

- Cultural understanding.
- Conflict recognition.
- Persuading.
- Conflict resolution –

The intercultural communicative tasks included:

- self-awareness
- accepting/bridging the differences between cultural groups
- Identities and cultural/social/national/world citizen

Once the tasks were defined, the team facilitated one training session for the two CTs on the practice of educational drama in ELT. After the training session, the team worked on the procedure, syllabus, and lesson plans using the methodology of process drama. The teaching materials for the workshop were selected and evaluated with the following criteria:

- Cognitive appropriateness;
- Focus on cross-cultural differences and diversity;
- Potential for further development in the EFL classroom;

- Quality & quantity of the practice in the target language.

The team sent the guidelines and materials to the DTs, Mei and Yen, and discussed with the two teachers. With feedback from Mei and Yen, the team then developed a detailed syllabus. Again this syllabus was sent to the DTs for their final approval. Steps and procedure were then explained to the supporting team members and tasks for each team member in the workshop were allocated. The syllabus and task allocation were then sent to the MEHS administration for final approval.

### **Preliminaries for the workshop**

General meetings were held with the school administration committee to explain and discuss the research aim and procedure. There were also individual meetings with all English teachers for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in MEHS to acquire a common understanding of the philosophy and methodology of the study.

The supervisor of the MEHS junior high division then reviewed and finalized the applications for the workshop. Once the list of participants was announced, a letter to the participants' parents was then prepared to explain the research, outline the details for the workshop, to acquire consent of the parents for their children's involvement in the study. As video recordings were to be used during the workshop, the participants and their parents agreed to the procedure. A sample of the consent form and the explanation of the intended research goals is presented in Appendix iv. .

Two English Chinese teachers (CTs) were appointed by MEHS to be the assistants for the project. Two intern assistants were appointed by the school to help in the video-taping work.

### **Stage 2: Action: Facilitating the workshop**

At this stage, the drama workshop took place: a three days drama workshop (4 sessions/day, 90 minutes each session) for a class of 27 students. All participants and the two CTS stayed in the school dormitory for days 1 and 2 of the workshop, so there were also activities in the two evenings of the programme.

The two DTs, the two CTs and the researcher met at the completion of the sessions each day. The procedure and participants' responses were carefully examined and discussed, and the approaches for the sessions next day were modified and revised accordingly.

To address the research goal of raising critical intercultural awareness (CIA), the drama praxis entails five dimensions for the development of CIA as constructed in Part 2 of Chapter 2: *probelmatizing, distancing/deconstructing, dialogue, reflection, and reconstruction of action*. In terms of syllabus design, these five dimensions were not explored as a sequence; instead, they worked in a reciprocal and cyclical way. That is to say, one dimension might be triggered by another and lead to the development of others. For instance, "*probelmatizing*" might come from a "*distanced*" perspective, and thus lead to a "*reflection*" of one's own status, and again trigger the act of 'dialogue' between self and others. The drama praxis is presented in more details in Appendix iii.

### **Stage 3: Observing, action, reflective action and revision**

When the drama praxis was in action, the researcher and the two CTs remained seated at the far end of the room, and observed the execution of the workshop. During and after the each session, all members of the coaching team, which included the two DTs, the two CTs and the researcher took notes and kept journals. The team met during almost each break, compared notes and share observations and responses. The discussion and sharing among members were then noted down in journals. If the coaching team agreed on the minor revision of the approach, the DTs responsible for facilitating the related session would modify her approach accordingly. In certain moments, reflection came in form of "observation" and this might serve as reminders for approaches rather than request for changes. For instance, the DT would briefly mentioned that she observed a reluctance in participants to follow a certain activity. The team agreed, and offered some relevant observation for such resistance. This did not lead to a noticeable change of approaches, but the DT might modify her approach in the following section based on this observation.

Some other reflections, however, might lead to a major change of approach. Especially during the daily meeting in the evening, a more structured review of the process were held, and major changes would be considered for the sessions next day.

One week after the workshop, I presented a discussion of the approaches and documentation of the drama workshop to all English teachers in MEHS in a seminar.

### **The learners in participatory action research**

In the meanwhile, for the participants, the drama praxis also acted like a participatory action research. Here the model proposed by Habermas explained the praxis more appropriately as:

1. Description and interpretation of an existing situation;
2. Interrogation or 'penetration' of the reasons that brought the existing situation into being;
3. Proposing an action-oriented agenda for altering or democratizing the existing agenda (praxis);
4. Evaluation of the transformative and emancipatory effectiveness of the actions taken to alter the existing situation.

(Habermas, cited in Neelands, 2006, pp. 28-29).

## **3.3 Data collection**

Data collected for this study focus on both process and reflection from the workshop. They included pre-workshop observation and interviews, questionnaires, video recordings, teachers' journals, and students' writing assignments.

### **3.3.1. Pre-workshop classroom observation and interviews:**

Two months before the workshop, I observed several AEL English classes taught by three different Chinese English teachers. The purpose of the observation was

three-fold: a) to understand the language proficiency levels of the AEL learners; b) to understand the contents of cultural learning and awareness in the classroom; c) to understand the approaches of current teaching methodology and identify learning outcomes of the pedagogy. I then interviewed these three CTs after the classes to understand in details about the current direction of EFL pedagogy.

### **3.3.2. Questionnaires:**

On the first day of the workshop, before the workshop started, the participants took 30 minutes to complete a questionnaire in which two categories of questions were listed, a) background regarding their demographical data and English learning experiences before the 7<sup>th</sup> grade; b) their reflection on their English learning experience (see Appendix iv). All participants completed the questionnaires.

### **3.3.3. Video recordings:**

During the three-day workshop, the two assistant CTs helped to document the whole process, excluding the first session on the second day in which the foreign teacher (FT) conducted the three-hour forum in the auditorium for a viewing and discussion of a movie. Given the spirit of participatory action research which seeks to explore the meaning making process rather than the outcome of the study, video recording provided detailed documentation of the participants' development of attitude and behavior, and how they changed during the process. This helped me to recall details of the workshop afterwards, and in doing to discern overall patterns and meaning of actions of the participants. It was also crucial in helping me to explain what lead to an action and what a resulted action would develop into.

In total, 12 DVDs were produced for this 3-day workshop, and the visual and audio quality was quite good except for the first DVD when the two interns were trying to familiarize with the operating of the camera. All documented materials were then produced by the Media Centre of MEHS. As previously agreed, MEHS owned the copyrights of these DVDs, and the researcher would be allowed to use the DVDs and all materials related to this workshop in the context of her thesis.

### 3.3.4. Workshop journals

Both the researcher and the two DTs kept journals during and after the workshop. These journals are used in the team meetings every day. These notes of the workshop documented and tracked the on-going reflections of the teachers and the researcher, and helped to synthesize and summarize observation and reflections generated in the process. They also recorded the participants' interactions with one another and with the DTs. Possible interpretations of the causes and patterns of interactions were also recorded in the journals. In this way the journals did not simply document what was viewed and valued by the teachers, they were providing also means through which teachers and the researcher were able to reflect on their approaches and perspectives, and deepen the level of reflectivity in data analysis.

The further reflections and discussion in each after-session discussion among teachers were also recorded. These written records became the researcher's clues to make sense of the data.

### 3.3.5. Students' writing assignments

The participants' work sheets and two assignment tasks were collected and analyzed. These included a) *a letter to Jennifer*, which was done in the first evening of the workshop, and 2) *a reflection on the workshop*, which was done one month after the workshop in the form of a winter break assignment. The first assignment, *a letter to Jennifer*, revealed the degree of the participants' projection and identification through the protagonist's story, i.e. evidence that show the degree of understanding and perception of the world. To a certain extent, writing these assignments enabled a deeper understanding and reflection of the participants of the world and thus encouraged a more critical view. The second writing practice, *a reflection on the workshop*, helped the participants to reflect on their learning in this process.



### 3.3.6. Interviews with Chinese drama teachers

Two weeks after the workshop, an interview with the two drama teachers were conducted. With an aim to explore the effects of the project, this interview asked the teachers to evaluate their approaches with regard to the objectives they set before the workshop. During the interview, the focus was intended to be a comparison of educational impact on the participants (see **Appendix viii**).

However, in the interview, it happened that the two teachers primarily referred to the reflections of the pedagogical approaches from the teachers' perspectives. Out of concern that a discussion of the pedagogical aspects of the data would lead to another research focus, i.e., a focus on the teachers' perspectives and how they responded to the innovations, this set of data was not the main focus of the data analysis in this study.

## 3.4 Data analysis

### 3.4.1. Treatment of data

This research study approached data analysis in terms of creating "thick description" (Geertz, 1973), generation of categories based on emerging patterns and refinement of these categories, and generating hypotheses.

To begin the process of my research inquiry, I reviewed the 12 DVD documentation of the workshop several times, and cross-referenced with other types of data collected: journals, field notes, students' writing assignment, and reflections from students. I wrote down notes outlined possible patterns of interactions among participants. To organize the data, in about three months I began to produce hundreds of pages of transcription out of the 12 DVDs. The transcription was not only about the verbal dialogue from and between teachers and participants, it also included a detailed, descriptive and narrative account of all non-verbal action in the process. In other words, the transcription became a holistic contextualization of the drama praxis.

Through the process of transcribing, I began to notice patterns of significance. Right after the second page of my transcription, I encountered a very strange and mystic experience. It felt very much like the data itself was passing on a voice to

me by asking me these two questions: *What is happening here? What does it mean to the participants?* I read about this mystic power before but I always thought that just some sentimental reflections of the researcher. But as it was happening to me, I had to admit that my understanding of the meaning of the data was very much compelled by the data itself - and it sounds like the data had a life of its own.

Indeed any data, as it is produced by humans through human interactions, has a life of its own. Coming back to the rational aspect of data analysis, I could only say that it was only when a researcher really 'listens' to the data can the researcher discern the value in human experiences. This was exactly what I was experiencing in transcribing my data. In describing and narrating what happened in the process, I was reminded all the way by the two questions mentioned above, and I wrote down my answers/responses to those two questions on the margins of related transcription. These margin notes were usually guided by these words: *Why? How? Meaning?*

The transcription I produced thus consisted of: verbal transcription, narrative description of actions, and possible explanation of the action. I then reviewed the transcription page by page, and generated further themes that could explain the patterns of interactions. During my next stage of data analysis, I tried to use the NVivo software to develop coding systems for my data. I spend almost two months on organizing the codes, and learning to use the software. I also generated hundreds of pages of coded data with NVivo. As I finished this coding task, I went back to read my original transcription, and my data reminded me again right there: if this study is about human beings, why did I use a computerized approach to analyze my data? What was my data trying to inform me of their meaning making process?

I then decided to put aside my coded files, and engaged in the second layer of data analysis. I constructed another descriptive narrative of the lived experiences of the participants, and all the 'moments' of happening in this narrative became the representation of the significance that emerged through the interactions. At this stage, although the NVivo themes were not used or cited in my final analysis,

they still served as the bedrocks that helped me to explore under the surface of the happenings. In other words, through layers and layers of exploration into the data, I was able to see the meanings co-constructed by all participants in the project. I began to understand what Richardson (2000) asserts as the process of crystallisation in research.

Upon completion of this descriptive narrative, I identified themes and develop a list of descriptors for each theme. Under each theme I then identified interrelated characteristics among each theme, as well as evidence from the data that exemplified the characteristics. In this stage of analysis I identified four emerging themes, namely, building a space for embodied learning experience, developing multilayered interactions, boundary-crossing through metaxical engagement, and collaborative meaning making in reflective action. These four themes were then analyzed in terms of my research questions to see how these themes address my research questions.

In doing so, I moved into the fourth stage of my data analysis. In cross-examining the themes, the evidence, and my research questions, I realized that these themes did not stand independent of one another; instead, they emerged from one another and construct a web of significance. Reflecting on this, I realized that if I just explored each theme separately, the significance of the experience cannot be truthfully presented. Therefore, to present my discussion of data, I decided to construct a narrative which serves as a 'thick description' of the drama praxis with the four themes that I had identified. The form of narrative addresses the nature of a drama and would serve as a performative inquiry through my research. I will discuss the nature and application of this narrative of performative inquiry in the next session.

#### **3.4.2. Analysis and interpretation: a performative inquiry**

In essence, a theatre event as a social practice is a performance of culture and is multilayered in its presence. It calls for a web of relationship in its service, as discussed in **Chapter 2**. In accordance with the nature of a drama praxis, this study will apply the methodology of a performative inquiry to interpret the

meaning which emerged from the data.

Performative inquiry follows the calls of many theatre practitioners and theorists who see theatre as a space for understanding, critique and social action. In Chapter 2 of this study, I have discussed approaches of Austin, Searle, Burke, Goffman, and Schechner who share this line of inquiry in which human behavior is interpreted as a performance. Here in analyzing data, I will use L. Fels' (1999; 2009; 2012) theory of **performative inquiry** as the framework to present my data.

In Belliveau's words, performative inquiry is

...a research methodology that uses the medium and processes of drama as a way of knowing (Fels, 1998). This qualitative approach investigates how performance (improvisation, tableaux, role drama, playbuilding) creates a co-evolving interaction between participants, their environment and the subject/theme within which moments of learning emerge (Fels, 2004).  
(Belliveau, 2006, p. 7)

Fels (2012) asserts that performative inquiry "offers practitioners and researchers a way of engaging in research that attends to critical moments that emerge through creative action" (p.50). Fels proposes that, in the spirit of performative inquiry, an educational drama provides the following opportunities for researchers:

1. a performative (third) space for action to take place;
2. a collective experience of reflection;
3. learning through performance;
4. knowledge developed through action and interaction;
5. investigation from a new perspective;
6. moments of questioning, uncertainty, dislocation, and risks.

In my analysis of the data in the following chapters, the drama workshop will be seen exactly as "a collective experience of reflection," in which the participants were made able to problematise the current situation, to see things from different and distanced perspectives, and develop understanding in every moment of

encountering with others, while co-constructing meanings together through dialogue and critical reflections. To truthfully present this collective experience in action and reflection, and “because of the complexity of the interactions, the whole creative sequence needs to be studied” (O’Toole, 2006, p. 46). Therefore, a descriptive narrative of drama praxis in the spirit of “thick description” is used to explore the meaning making process in the first part of the analysis, i.e., **Chapter 4**. The exploration of the deeper meanings co-constructed in this experience will be presented in **Chapter 5**.

### **3.5 Accountability and limitation of the research methodology**

#### **3.5.1. Credibility**

Three of the major factors that Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicate that determine the reliability of an interpretative/qualitative research include: prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, and triangulation of data. Prolonged engagement in the field reflects the researcher’s familiarity with both the subjects and the phenomenon under study. On the two subjects explored in this study, i.e. EFL and drama, both me and the two drama teachers have been working for the field for a substantial amount of time. Therefore, a familiarity with both the philosophy and approaches of the fields were well established. In terms of persistent observation, I also have conducted pre-workshop classroom and in-workshop observations.

In terms of triangulation, Golafshani (2003) argues that triangulation as a way to establish the trustworthiness of the results of a study has replaced the ideas of reliability and validity in qualitative research. Theories in triangulation for research remind that the researcher should use multiple sources of data to interpret phenomenon emerging in data. Mills asserts that “researchers should not rely on any single source of data, interview, observation, or instrument” (2003, p. 52). Triangulation implies, however, more than comparison of different sources of data; it implies a cross-examination of various types of research methodology in interpreting the same study (Denzin, 1970). Elliot (1978) elaborates on this view by asserting that triangulation also ensures that the

researcher present and interpret various perspectives and voices of actors within the same research setting.

In the context of this study, triangulation is ensured through a cross-examination among various types of data collected during the research. The types of data included: questionnaires, interviews, video recording, students' writing assignments, and journals.

### 3.5.2. Limitations of study

The limitations of this study lied in the fact that the setting of the study was a particular workshop, within a limited time-frame, in a particular geographical area. Many theorists criticise the credibility and limitations in a single case as in ours, however "the very limitation that you cannot generalize from a case study is actually a value asset in the study of drama itself" (O'Toole, 2006, p. 46). O'Tool further enlightens that "drama is by its very nature a negotiated group art form and is therefore a non-reproducible experience" (2006, p. 46). Therefore, , this study approaches the performative experience in the spirit of a case study research exactly because of the uniqueness of each experience that cannot, and should not, be reproduced in another setting. In so doing, this research also prioritizes human agency in every intercultural encounter, as the interactants involved in such experience co-construct a dialogue that is unique to the situation. Last but not least, in treating the participants as human subjects with "unique" voices, a researcher is able to reflect truthfully a human experience. In O'Tool's words, in this way the researcher "honours the agency of the participants and positions them as experts rather than a source of data for analysis"(O'Toole, 2006, p. 46).

## 3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has described the research methodology and rationale used in the proposed study. Data collected will be discussed in the next two chapters (**Chapter 4 and Chapter 5**). **Chapter 4** presents a descriptive narrative of the meaning-making process of the participants, and **Chapter 5** provides an

interpretative analysis of the significance of this drama praxis.

## Chapter 4

# Analysis of Data

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### 4.0 Overview of the chapter

This chapter takes a journey through the drama-building process of the research subjects to trace the development and patterns of learning experience in the drama workshop. This learning experience that derives from the creative and collaborative nature of the drama process is analysed from the perspectives of the following two research questions:

- **How does the process drama approach facilitate a reflective space for EFL learners?**
- **How is the critical intercultural awareness generated in the drama process?**

The examination of what happens in the drama praxis is divided into two sections, each one corresponding to a stage of development of the experience.

The first section, *Setting the stage*, denotes the process of engagement in the drama praxis, and explores the phenomenological patterns of interactions in this process. The analysis in this section addresses three dimensions in the praxis:



- 1) building a space for embodied learning experience,
- 2) developing multilayered interactions, and
- 3) crossing boundaries through metaxical engagement.

The second section, *Deepening the meaning*, investigates the fourth dimension of the praxis: collaborative construction of reflective action, in which the critical and reflective meaning-making significance of the drama praxis emerges.

These four dimensions are interrelated and intertwined to one another as they are developed progressively and simultaneously in the drama process. The complexity of the drama experience in this case is thus to be examined and discussed in the light of the parallel development of these four perspectives, in order to find evidence of how a reflective space is constructed, how critical intercultural awareness is enhanced and how the first is related to the second i.e. whether it “provides the space” as a precondition for the enhancement of the critical intercultural awareness.

In this chapter, the key factors from the nature of drama that facilitate this transforming process will also be identified and discussed. Thereafter, through the identification of the determining factors in the process, the significance and themes which emerge in connection with the enhancement of critical cultural awareness will be addressed in **Chapter 5**.

## 4.1 Part 1: *Setting the stage*

### **Building a space for embodied learning experience**

The process of language learning, to take Bakhtin's notion of language as utterance, involves an on-going interaction and with other people, and in this way, is dependent on a dialogic reflection of the interdependence between self and others. "I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another," states Bakhtin (1984, p. 287). Merleau-Ponty provides a philosophical stance for the meaning of this self-other interaction: "When I speak or understand, I experience that presence of others in myself or of myself in others..." (1973, pp. 141-142). The basic premise of this philosophy is that the world and its people exist for us only in and through our experiences. In such dual perspective of "others to me and me to others" proposed by Merleau-Ponty, people are and can be aware of themselves through others. To engage in a dialogue with others in the same utterance, is to engage in communication by which "the *self* enters into a dialectic with the contents of the knowledge of the *other*" (Manjali, 1999, in Platt, 2005, p.122).

#### **4.1.1.1. *The preparatory stage:***

##### **Subjective experience through body movements in the drama process**

To engage in such process toward accomplishment of an utterance, Bakhtin stresses the use of semiotic tools (non-verbal signs) in the meaning making process. In the first part of the discussion, I focus on the functioning of a subjective experience which throws light on the awareness and reflection on the self-other relationship through bodily movements.

**Frame 1**

Before the drama process began, Teacher Mei, the first drama teacher, introduced to the participants a series of “warm-ups” and group building exercises. The students were asked to roam around the floor area without any audible musical accompaniment. To allow more freedom in the first try-out of body movements, Mei did not restrain the students with specification or limitations in styles of body movements, positions, routes, or directions for the free-walking.

Initially, these participants, unfamiliar to physical movements and interactions with one another in the classroom, accepted the instruction yet did not know what to do. The manner in which they conducted first and second run of the practice adopted the pattern of band-marching –normally the in-school walking as a group they normally experienced required strict conformity rather than individuality: one directional, rigid posture and equal spacing among one another. Most students, mainly girls, started to move in a very slow and hesitant way along with other participants, seemingly slow to grasp the intended momentum of the activity. Some other girls stayed in pairs at the very edge of the space even as others formed a circle for the movement when the activity began.

Noticing this, in order to help the participants pick up the rhythm of the group movement, Mei stopped the activity as she sensed the hesitation, and provided more instruction: she further specified signals to enhance the fluidity of the activity: hand-claps were to be used as cues for beginning and freezing of the movements. These signals seemed to work in encouraging the participants to pick up the momentum of the activity and there developed a further reaction to the action: as the group continued to “flow” around the floor, several attempts to break the previous pattern of moving became more observable. One boy found his way to interpret the activity very quickly, and

started to express himself through exaggerated physical movements that contradicted the direction and pattern of others. Two girls started to form as a team and interact with each other, while constantly changing their direction of the walking. These attempts to break off from the rigidity of the previous pattern encouraged the other participants to try out their experiments with diversified postures. As teacher Mei used claps to intersperse different paces, rhythms and poses to freeze the motion, soon all the participants began to daringly engage in the action with different directions, pacing and movements.

*Flow-walk* is an activity in which an inner momentum is triggered. To engage in a flow activity, the participants follow this momentum without conscious intervention of either of one's own self or with others' selves. Linds (2005) indicates that, in *flowing* around the space, "there is little distinction between self and others, between stimulus and response, or between past, present and future" (p. 112). He describes it as an action in which "(w)e are everywhere and anywhere in/on the strip so that embodied understanding is simultaneously generated all-at-once, and, at the same time, bends back upon our perception" (Linds, 2005, p. 112). Boal (1992) uses this kind of free-walking activity as the beginning to bring forth a releasing energy to the participants body movement.

There also emerged a noticeable counter-directional attempt from some participants in the *flow* activity, and as this action took place, it produced more tensions in others' movements. As a spontaneous reaction to change in group momentum, such confrontation with conflicting movements led to follow-up adjustments: when the students moved on with individualized rhythm and action, they had to attend to their spacing and movements so that they would not bump into one another. In this process the participants demonstrated a developing awareness in their spatial relationship with one another in their deliberate adjustments in spatial contacts, in more obvious

eye-contacts with the others to attend to the movements of co-participants in the group, and in attuning their pacing and rhythms of movements to cope with others at all times.

The students demonstrated more diversified reactions as the teacher helped the group to accelerate the action with more frequent move-stop-move commands. At some *freeze* moment, Mei asked the participants to stand on one leg. Sometimes on the next *freeze*, the prescription was asked to stand still on one leg and touch another person nearby. More complexity of movements was developed when Mei asked the students to freeze as groups of two and then three members.

This extended activity was formulated expressively to build up self-other relationship and cooperation. At the *freeze* moments, the fluidity of movement was interrupted, and group momentum was stopped; as such when one student was told to stand on one leg, he/she needed to make an effort to maintain balance with one leg, and was thus able to withdraw from the previous group action and returned the focus to a more subjective experience with his/her own body movement. It is noteworthy that this “returning attention” to one’s own body was made possible through ongoing interactions with others. The following *freeze* activities in groups of two and then three people extended this awareness of “attention-returning” to a more advanced level: an awareness of one’s own body through supports/interconnection with others.

On the second run of this *flow-walk* practice on the third day of the workshop, Yen, another drama teacher, asked the participants to approach this activity with a different focus. She gave specific instruction for the participants to *walk* freely with no expression of emotions and attend exclusively to their own body movements. Silence was demanded; loosened arm positions, relaxed body posture and a focus on the spine-line was specified. The participants

were thus asked to move around the space with a focus on their own body movements and not to follow others. Yen then prescribed further that, in walking on one's own, the participants should define their own walking and space from a keen attention to their individual spacing with others. She also instructed them to turn right or left to adjust their spacing relationship with others. In the flow of the action, each participant was asked to keep this attention to the varying distance between each participant and others.

Unlike the previous practice of *flow-walk* activities, this activity asked the participants to return to a sole concentration to their own individual existence - as such this concentration was also an outcome of the constant attention to their ever-changing relationship to others. As the participants moved along with this focus, they also needed to look around with an effort to find defining space for their own bodies through on-going adjustments to others' spacing. With teacher Yen's constant reminder to see their positions in relation to the whole group, each participant gradually picked up the group rhythm and was able to maintain a balancing and yet self-defining spatial relationship with each other in *walking*. Moreover, as this spatial relationship was constantly shaped and reshaped in the process of free walking action, it is also interesting to find that the each participant developed an awareness of the fluidity of relative interrelationship through the group dynamics.

### *Dialogic movements in space*

As Yen further specified that each participant should see himself as a single person and also as one element of the group picture, this walk-flow activity provided an opportunity for each member to come to the awareness of self-other relationship through different lenses. The significance of such discovery, it should be emphasized, was realized through a constant switching of perspectives that took place from moment to moment in the process of this activity. When Yen speeded up the tempo of their movements with a series of walk-freeze-run-freeze-run faster-freeze-walk-freeze-slow

walking-freeze action, we find this awareness developed to an elaborated extent.

Another activity during the 1E session of the first day provided the participants with an opportunity to advance this awareness. Teacher Mei asked the participants to form a circle with joined hands and maintain an equal distance between each other. To engage in a “passing electricity” game, the first person in the group initiated a squeeze of hands to both sides and the persons receiving the squeezes passed on the “electricity” to the next person on the other side. All were required to close their eyes and concentrate on the movement from either side the joined hands.

During the first three try-outs of the game, the participants demonstrated a developing sensitivity in receiving signals from peers. They watched attentively as the first ‘squeeze’ signal passing through the group members, giggled as the signal arrived and energized as they passed on the squeeze to the next person, keeping very much alert as the signal was going through the group in a very subtle way. We noticed a sustained tension in the air; however this kind of tension seemed also to contribute to the enhancement of a great sense of the group dynamic. With an objective to open up the non-verbal transmission channel between players, this game activated a direct and spontaneous responsive momentum among the group members through direct kinaesthetic contacts with each other.

Such momentum was accelerated to a higher level as the participants were then divided into two groups for the next run of the game. Each team was lined up and asked to face the other team. They then sat down with joined hands, yet not looking at each other but concentrating on the movement of the squeeze passing through the team. As soon as the last person felt the power, he/she would then run to the platform and claim victory over the other team. As the competitive spirit was in the air, attention to the group movements

was elevated even more as the speed of passing the squeeze was accelerated with an endeavour to claim the floor. Unlike the *flow* activities in which more laughter and agitation was noticed, in this run each member showed a greater silence and focus in the process. Each of these activities ran for about ten to twenty minutes as warm-ups for the longer drama sessions that followed.

To Boal (1992), the purpose in doing spatial movements is to invoke an awareness of our relationship with that space in which we move and interact by trying to fill out this space in the ongoing process. This spatial relationship is dialogic and encompasses both physical space and the mental space in the sense that both levels of space provide an opportunity for the participants to reflect the co-dependency of self and other, as the space is constantly shaped and re-shaped in the process. Linds (2006) indicates that “(u)nderstanding oneself in this way is to sense the space of possibility as being constantly co-enacted and re-enacted in our encounters” (p. 117). He posits that “the space of metaxis is thus a moving in-between to which we belong, of which we are a part, and in which we participate” (Linds, 2006, p.117).

### **Frame 2**

During Frame 2, teacher Mei introduced three sequential activities that aimed to encourage the participants to physicalise mental images into visible forms. The students were divided into four teams to enact a still image of a TV in the timeframe of ten seconds. At first only the physical aspects of a TV were required in the presentation. Very little time for discussion among team members was allowed; they had to approach one another and construct a TV image in a single snap. This was not easy for the groups. As one group presented the TV image, the other groups watched and adopted and imitated the pattern in their presentations. Evidence from the video shows that each team enacted the still images in a very similar way: one person crouched in



the centre as the TV screen, with two other members on both sides, arms stretched and joined over the head of the first one to form the frame of the TV.

As this was done, the teacher asked the students to “upgrade the TV” with an added function that could turn the TV on and off with a certain innovative device. Each group needed to come up with ideas for: the kind of function the TV needs to have, and the kind of device that would activate the function. The purpose here was to project human emotions (i.e. what and how would you want the TV to be like?) into the context. Each member of the team needed to face two levels of challenge: to reach a group consensus about what kind of function the TV should have and then present the way the TV work with this added function and device with *still images*. Still only seconds of time were allowed to rehearse for the presentation, yet this time teacher Mei assisted in the moulding process of the movements. As the complexity of interacting with one another enhanced in this activity, this time we found students varying patterns of presentation as the added function of the TV was defined differently among groups: in positions and spacing among members, postures and movements, etc., there was shown greater development in flexibility and creativity. The students demonstrated a release from the previous stage of following other group’s *still images*, and moved into a more daring tryout of enactment.

In the next activity, students were asked to present a sequence of *freeze-frames* that express: firstly, a *still image* of any type of machine; secondly, another *still image* that shows an ideal machine that could fly to “heaven”.<sup>1</sup> When the first group presented their *still image* of a rocket, the teacher asked for the name of the machine, and a student from another group suggested “happy explosive”.

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<sup>1</sup> The teacher mistakenly used “heaven” for ‘sky’, which accidentally might have provoked a different connotation in the following process, as “heaven” carries a more emotional twist.

The teacher immediately took the opportunity and asked the students to link the feeling of happiness with the machine and present a “happy machine”.

At these moments the participants moved from the previous stage of warm-up, in which awareness of the self-other relationship was developed, into a bridging phase in which bodily interconnection with one another was made possible through sensory perception and response to other team members. Enactment, in Mills words, is not simply presenting the physical delineation of objects:

To act, whether in this sense, on stage, or in life, is an act of reconstruction of meaning. (...) It is not to represent the world but to create a new world that we may inhabit for a time. It is to “take on” dimensions of meaning within which we go beyond attempting to reproduce what we know toward the creation of new experience that is similar to what we know in certain ways. (Mills, 2005, p. 4).

Gurevitch indicates that this reconstruction of meaning emerges through metaphorically looking through mirrors and reflecting on the taken-for-grantedness (Gurevitch, 1988).

During these activities, the students were also challenged to build up interpersonal relationships from a different angle: they crossed over boundaries, approached one another’s realm of imagination, and tried to construct meanings within that new, imagined territory - and all these moves took place in a moment of time. The students exhibited more diversified patterns of posture, movements, sequence of action, and spacing. With the teacher’s instruction to start and end the presentation with a pose, each group also demonstrate a greater group consensus and control over the rhythm and focus of the enactment.

### **Frame 3**

### *Linking non-verbal and verbal expressions*

Each group was asked to imagine a gift-giving situation and present it as a freeze-frame as the Chinese New Year was approaching. The what, when, for whom, why, and how of the situation and the gift were asked to be both built into enactment and explained afterwards. The size of a group was doubled from the previous activity (i.e., the television game); there were now 6 to 7 members in each group. Each group was assigned a new task which involved three levels of group action: choosing a new-year gift (with details about the who, whom, what, why and how), coming to a group consensus, and designing a tableau (still image) that could visualize their ideal gifts. Time limit for the completion of the activity was set to be two minutes. The participants were dispersed into four groups. Two of the groups, groups A & B, in which a leader came to the fore and agreed on the selection of the gift without much discussion and went straight on to the design of the still image. The other two groups showed they were less accustomed to making group decision: group C, all boys, leaned against the edge of the stage, observing attentively the other groups' actions; while group D spread into several subgroups, chatting to each other or playing purposelessly. As group C & D demonstrated a lower degree of experiences with group discussion and decision making process, the teacher joined each group and gave more specific advice on the steps they should be approaching. Having picked up the cues for such activity, groups C & D soon decided on the choice of gifts and went on to practice the group images. The purpose of this activity was to encourage creativity, reflection and group discussion needed for the presentation.

When each group presented their ideal gifts with *still images*, the teacher asked for volunteers to verbally explain about his ideal gift, the person who was receiving the gift and the reasons in choosing the gift. One student, Joe, volunteered to stand up in front of the stage. Coyly but passionately, he invited the principal of the school, who had been observing silently at the

back of the auditorium, to the front and asked him if he could send a clock as a new year gift to him. Although the principal had not been participating in any activity so far, he picked up the cue for the activity right away, and responded energetically to Joe's request.

This is perhaps Joe's very first attempt to reach out of the principal whom they had been seeing around the campus everyday yet scarcely had the chance to talk to. In receiving a friendly and encouraging signal from the person, Joe described his ideal gift to Mr. Big and justified his choice of the gift based with personal observation of the principal's daily needs.

Teacher Mei then asked another volunteer, Robert, to present the image of his gift to his father with mimed actions rather than with words. Poorly-trained in using non-verbal expression, Robert shyly and awkwardly swung his right arm around and drew a horizontal circle with his right hand, grabbed an object from the air and suggestively put it in the centre of the circle. The observing participants showed their confusion with noise, and Robert repeated his gesture for a couple of times. The teacher initiated some leading questions for the observing participants, and the crowd tried to provide several guesses of what the object might be, all being rejected. Robert then searched nervously in his pockets and took out a black pouch, and opened up the pouch for the group. Finally a girl shouted her guess: "a wallet!" and Robert walked back to join the rest of his group.

The answer to the puzzle of the latter case was by no means brought out from any substantial clues that the presenters had tried to delineate. During the process of a seemingly commonplace game of charade, the presenter and the other participants were brought into a process in which personal life experiences were called to service to develop connections between abstract constructs and verbal articulation in a foreign language. More importantly, that in so doing they were also actually making efforts to find commonality in

other participants" lived experiences and to build up connection. It's also noteworthy that both verbal and nonverbal were employed in developing such connections.

So the participants took part in the activity with enthusiasm. Their curiosity and communal feelings were provoked, and high degrees of expectations aroused as they identified with the two volunteers" narratives. They travelled into other participants as the "invisible" domains<sup>2</sup> (Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998) conducted dialogues with them, and made hard efforts to make sense of the interactions. To the observing participants in particular, a transforming process took place as they participated in that shared experience: they were pushed into the imaginary world of the presenters, wondering along a space constructed by the other human beings who in turn struggle to reach out for communication. In a way, both parties strive for a negotiation very much like the one between E.T. and the little boy in the Spielberg film in the 1980s: they were seeking a common language which was eventually formalized through their very willingness to listen and understand. Unlike the presentations of the previous tasks, in this process greater varieties in the design of physical movements were obvious, which indicated a deeper degree of involvement of all participants.

This activity actually took more than ten minutes for all the discussions to come to completion. Seeing this, the teacher gave "the signal" and asked all participants to sit down on the floor in front of the stage. She then explained how the participants should behave in watching and giving the presentation, in this way making "contracts" of inter-group rules with them. The contracts

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<sup>2</sup> The invisible domains of the classroom interactions refer to various forms of group dynamics taking place in the sub-consciousness and unconsciousness levels of the individuals. Ehrman and Dörnyei (1998) observe that, for interactions in the classroom context, the invisible classroom interaction is as significant as the visible ones for second language learners.

were not made arbitrarily; the teacher skilfully threw questions like “what should you do when others are performing?” and even challenged the students to give negative responses - the consequences of these were then mildly described. Several contracts were thus established: for the audience, they would refrain from talking and keep quite; for the performers, to open up gestures and movements so that actions would be more visible to the audience, to speak as loudly as possible so that the audience could understand clearly. The teacher then asked for volunteers and arranged the order of appearance for each group.

Each group was also asked to start and end the presentation with a pose: the group members would make a circle with joined hands, as a ritual to enter and leave the imaginary world.

#### *4.1.1.2. Themes emerging from analysis of subjective experience*

Drama activities provided opportunity for the participants to engage in an on-going dialogue and reflection with others in the same context and space, as shown in the discussion above. But what kind of learning would this process of dialogic reflection generate in relation to the perspective of language learning as an intercultural education? We have observed the functioning of bodily movements and other semiotic tools in fulfilling an utterance in Bakhtinian sense that involves a discourse between self and others, yet how would such practice leads to the learners further understanding and critical intercultural awareness?

Several themes emerged from the observation of the data that might indicate factors that determine the levels of learning in such process. Firstly, we found that in the on-going redefining process of the self-other experience, the

participants were able to take a different view of themselves and others. As one boy in the forum session of 1C<sup>3</sup> reflected the subjective experience, "I felt like a fish out of water:" the opportunity to see 'self' and "other" from a different relational term implied a **de-familiarization process** in which "the other person emerges, at a distance, as a separate self" (Gurevitch, 1988, p. 1179). Secondly, this de-familiarization process triggers a switching of perspectives from subjective to **inter-subjective perception** of interpersonal relationship. Thirdly, **group dynamic** was generated in the dialogic use of these semiotic tools. These three themes will be discussed in the next chapter and link to the theory of critical intercultural awareness. Here in the following section, I will turn to an examination of the second level of the drama learning experience in which different perspectives of the participants are encouraged to emerge and develop.

### **Developing multilayered interactions**

One of the prominent characteristics of process drama relates to the multi-layered functions of varying types of roles assigned to all subjects involved - for teacher and participants alike. While in theatre, roles, such as director, playwright, actor and audience, are normally assigned to different people in relation to their functions in the production and stay as such in the production, in process drama these roles merge, split, overlap, multiply, and sometimes even conflict with one another, in so much the manner of August Strindberg's plays. A process approach to the drama as a learning medium prescribes that it is the participants who make the drama possible, the director role at one moment could be taken over by another participant at next moment, and that director might assume the responsibility of an actor at

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<sup>3</sup> This session (session 1C) and all sessions hereafter refer to sessions in the drama workshop (See Appendix iii).

another moment. The inter-changeability of roles is not strange to theatre world; Pirandello gave his remarkable illustration of such interplay in 'six Characters in search of an Author' 80 years ago and demonstrated recognition of the multilayered reality of human existence.

What is brought to the researcher's attention in a process drama situation lies in the fact that the participants here are engaging in an educational experience: they are the persons who are going through this particular journey themselves, and the experience in taking on different roles themselves could take on more personal meaning than watching it happening to other people on stage. Bowell & Heap describe the multiplicity in the working of different roles in process drama as "quadripartite thinking" and "quadripartite response" (2005, pp. 64 -66), in which the teacher, as well as the participants, assume roles of a director, a playwright, an actor, an audience, a teacher/ participants, and/or a self-spectator as context and situation changes and demands.

In our drama process, these types of multi-layered interactions among teacher and the participants in relation to different type of roles are inherent in each frame of the workshop. When the task demanded that a certain freeze-frame was to be enacted, the teacher assumed the role of a playwright who provided the road map for the performance, of a director who showed the participants ways to present the images, as audience who observed the working of the process, sometimes even as actor who participated in the process and influenced the direction of the performance. Each time he/she switched roles, it meant that a relative role that addressed the function of the previous role he/she left behind was to be taken over by the participants. The same shifting process occurred for all other participants: as one group was presenting, other groups stayed as audience, and when the presenting group got to observe other groups, it not only turned into audience but engaged in the working of



self-spectatorship as it could see itself mirrored in some way in the presentation of other groups.

In **Frames 2 and 3** of the workshop session **1B (see appendix iii)**, when groups were given the task of enacting images of a TV set and of a new year's gift, these two levels of "quadripartite thinking" and "quadripartite response" developed simultaneously. As director the teacher described the tasks to the participants, letting the participants draw maps about what to present. In this way the participants took over the role of playwright, and then of actors to do the presentation, while the teacher stepped aside and observed as a spectator. Yet even when the teacher switched her role to that of a spectator, there were two other roles that she simultaneously remained involved with: her role as a teacher who supervised over the working of the process as an educational medium, and as a self-spectator who reflected about the effectiveness of her facilitation and her relationship with these participants as learners. To the same extent, one group that presented then gave floor to the other group and switched to the role of audience watching how the floor-taking group carried out the same task. And it was exactly because the same task was demanded for every group, that each group easily lapsed into the self-reflection mode in observing the mirroring of a similar experience from other groups.

In workshop session **1E (see appendix iii)**, when a more complex task was given, teacher Mei stepped into the action to demonstrate the acting techniques necessary for the completion of the task. The students called numbers one through four, and were divided into four groups accordingly, with each group named as spring, summer, autumn and winter. Each student was given a piece of scratch paper to write one sentence without any prescribed context. Mei then collected the pieces of paper from the students and re-distributed them randomly to each one. She asked the students to make a script out of the six or seven sentences at hand, to give meanings to the parts with added tone and physical movements. The students watched

and listened to the teacher demonstrating possible ways of presenting the task, yet still showed hesitation in enacting this completely unfamiliar method of meaning making. Motivated and encouraged to probe the activity, the students started to throw questions at the teacher with an endeavour to get engaged in the game. She gave a demonstration based on two simple expressions: “good morning” and “that chair is empty”. She imitated the action of a jogger, waving and saying “good morning” to the passing-by, then sitting down on a bench in the park. She then pointed to the neighbouring chair, showing with body gesture to the passing-by that “the other chair is empty.” She went on to present a more easy practice, expressing “good morning” in three kinds of intonations to illustrate completely different emotions. The underlying emotions behind each tone were drastically different so the expressions were carrying different degrees of implications. When the teacher completed the demonstration, she guided the students to explore beneath the surface implication of each tone through verbal discussion.

Here the teacher assumed multiple roles at one single moment. She was the director giving instruction for the style of performance, she was also the actress participating in the process of the drama, and she was the teacher who made sure that the participants as learners acquire the keys to language learning and also the ability to see beyond surface meaning in verbal communication.

The participants were receiving the messages from this director-actor-teacher-playwright all-in-one as audience, and in the next moment, they themselves picked up the roles. They continued to complete the task by trying to develop a progressive narrative through the sentences on hand with dialogue (as playwright), to envisage how a story out of those sentences could be envisaged in the presentation (as director), and to assign characters to each member and rehearse with the lines (as actor). When a group presented, other

groups watched (as audience) and observed how the same task could be interpreted differently by others (as spectator).

In workshop session **1F**, the multilayered representation of roles was able to take place in a more simultaneous manner. After a memory recall of the key moments from the film *The Day after Tomorrow*<sup>4</sup>, Mei asked the students to do a whole group image: each person was to go on stage, and create a gesture or movement out of any key scene from the film discussed, within ten second of time. She provided a demonstration of how such an image could be created. She enacted the moment from the film when a character fell down in the snow and went through a hole of a building to a mall which was sunken below the ground level because of the tsunami. She stretched her arms, with her head looking upward and mouth open. With this demonstration, Mei asked the participants to engage in a series of activities that served to deepen their responses to the catastrophic event depicted in the film. I will then explore the significance of this session with a discussion of the process of f these sessions (categorized as “patterns” in the following discussion).

#### *4.1.2.1. Patterns of multilayered interactions*

##### **Pattern 1**

Mei first asked the students to spread into groups with any number of members in it, discuss among one another about their most impressive moment or scene from the film, and create *freeze* image on stage. The number of members in each group was not specified; students got to select their own

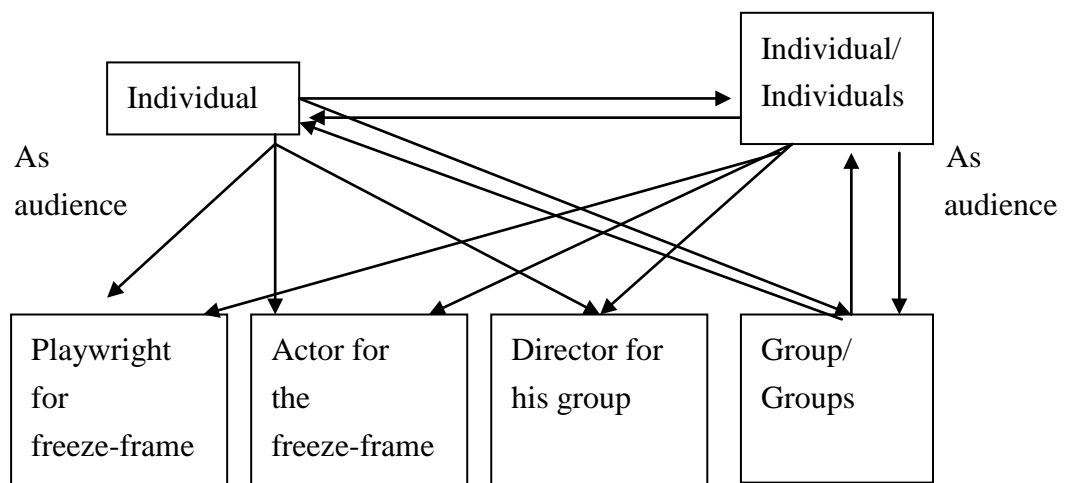
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<sup>4</sup> *The Day after Tomorrow* is a science disaster fiction movie which was released in 2004. It depicts a devastation effects of a fictional tsunami which turned most part of America into an ice-age state. The film was purposely chosen by the facilitators for the workshop participants to demonstrate the scale of a possible disaster and also to build up links with the impact of the Indonesian tsunami event took place roughly two months before the workshop. All participants were asked to view the film before the workshop. The discussion and narratives developed in the workshop developed around this film and the 2005 Indonesian tsunami.

team or to stay as solo. Mei reminded the students that any scene, image, moment, or character from the film could be used as their material.

The following series of activities was enacted in a quite compressed timeframe. After a short discussion, the students were all asked to go on the stage and enact the freeze-frame all at once. The first presentation was enacted on a count of ten seconds, after that Mei asked the students to observe their own physical relationship with one another and adjust or fill in the space among each person/group and present the freeze-frame again in 5 seconds. The following diagram shows the multilayered progression in this activity:

The interaction pattern is shown as follows:



**Diagram 4-1:**

Multilayered interactions in **Pattern 1**.

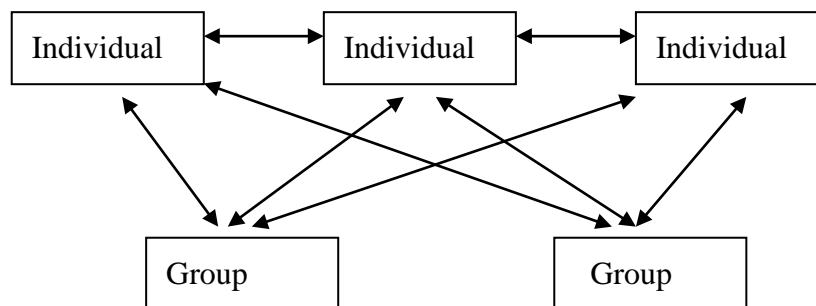
### **Pattern 2**

Upon completion of the previous freeze-frame, Mei immediately gave cue for all groups to present their images and speak a sentence all together that described the presented image all together. After this action, the participants

stepped down from the stage to the floor, there they did another run of the same *freeze-frame* enacted onstage. With a tap on a member of each group Mei gave cues for them to speak one group after another while they stay in the freeze frame.

- 1) *Girl 1*: (as Statue of Liberty): It is amazing that the statue is covered by snow.
- 2) *Girl 2*: (as a girl looking upward to the Statue): I saw the statue in New York City.
- 3) *Girl 3*: I am going to burn this book to keep warm.
- 4) *Girl 4*: (next to Girl 3) It's good to burn it!
- 5) *Boy 1*: There is a big storm in North America.
- 6) *Girl 5*: I will burn more books....

The interaction pattern is shown as follows:



**Diagram 4-2:**

Multilayered interactions in **Pattern 2**.

### **Pattern 3**

The 27 students were then divided into two large groups. Each group took turns to go on stage again to repeat the same freeze-frame, while the other group stayed down stage and watched. The freeze-frame of each subgroup

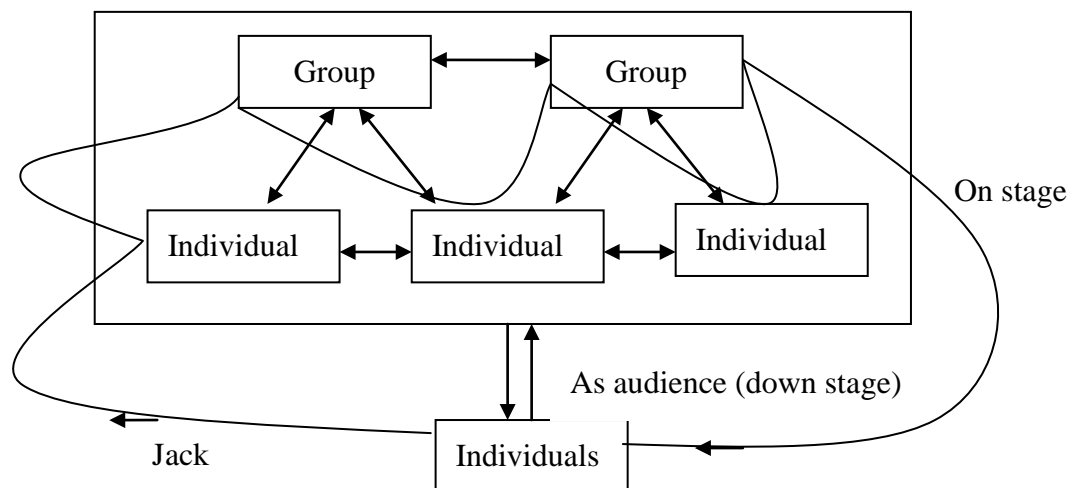
was still cued on Mei's tap on a member's shoulder. For the enactment from the second group, Mei asked a boy from the first group, Jack, to do the cueing for her.

On Mei's cues, each student in the first run of this activity gave the sentence that articulated the freeze-frame image one after another almost consecutively without any pause between each one, either as individual or group. The consecutive manner of turn-taking demanded a fast-tracked switching over of the roles under discussion here; when one individual/group completed the action, the next one picked up the acting role immediately, and upon completion, the other one came to fill in. This turn-taking run seemed also to perform the function of the interfacing "walking" activity in the first part of the workshop: each one filling in the space of the others" as the others moved away and back.

What is crucial to our discussion here is the revelation of another possibility of multilayered interaction: in the speeded-up, compressed time-frame, we saw the exchange and interchange of roles taking place, one that gave no pausing in between each switching-over, one that blurred the distinction between each role and enabled the crossing of boundaries feasible without hesitation.

In a very compressed time-frame, all individuals/groups onstage acted as they posed, defined the pose in verbal form as they spoke, positioned themselves in the group picture as each individual enactment clearly related to one another in a large picture of the film. The opportunity of seeing oneself as a part of the whole, connecting one's view with that of others as each was giving one segment of the whole story from the film, enabled each one to perceive the interconnectedness between individual and others" perspectives, and this was made possible mainly from picking up the rhythmic dynamics of the activity.

Jack's taking on the cueing enhanced this possibility as he was from one of the watching group who, in this run, were sitting down stage - not quite so simply as audience as each one of them knew it was their turn to perform after. Each one down stage was watching one representative of the group entering into the space of the first group to assume the director's role. The following diagram illustrates the interaction pattern in this activity. Note that the arrows that show the directions of interactions become bilateral here as the interactions between subjects took place more simultaneously.



**Diagram 4-3:**

Multilayered interactions in **Pattern 3**.

### 3. *Reciprocal interactions*

The complexity in the layers of interaction triggered a profound processing of thinking and response among participants. Bowell & Heap (2005) uses the analogy of a many-headed version of a TV legend Wurzel Gummidge to express the spontaneity of the occurrence of varying functions of roles in the drama process. They indicate that there emerges a "spiral of creative

exchange" (2005, p. 66) between teacher and participants due to this complexity in the multiplicity of these roles. A well-planned development of such "quadripartite thinking" and "quadripartite response," Bowell & Heap maintain, provides endorsement for a successful facilitation of a drama process.

The previous activities might have been examined on the physical level as well as the semiotic one, and could be regarded as an invisible approach behind the imaginative realization of a subjective experience. For the second part of session 1F, there emerged a couple of instances that demonstrate the working of this interplay and 'spiral of creative exchange" (Bowell & Heap, 2005) on a more concrete level. To lead the students further into the target context, Mei adopted a widely-used Drama in Education device of "teacher-in-role" and worked on the development of the story with the participants. The enactment of teacher-in-role functions as a driving force to move the story forward by working out further details of the drama with a joint effort from both the facilitator and the participants.

To initiate this further development, the teacher/facilitator in process drama assumes the role of a character, either previously existent in the story or newly arrived, yet in any way relevant to the "context" and "frame" (Bowell & Heap, 2002) of the drama, as someone credible to the participants involved. The in-role teacher then takes the opportunity to supply more information, and at the same time evokes drives for the further development. This device is often combined with the method of "hot-seating", a drama-forum style of inquiry into the in-role character, and invites progressive identification with the character on the part of the participants.

For the participants involved in this context, the entrance into the new character's world was made possible through a skilful manipulation of introduction. Unlike the previous interactions, in which the switching of roles



among participants took place in a subtle and un-noticeable manner, Mei made it possible through verbal instruction. Upon completion of the previous task, she summoned all participants to sit with her on the floor, and gave compliments for their contribution and sharing, and concluded that she realized that to many participants the burning of library books seemed to be most impressive moment in the film. She then said that it was time to introduce to them “another story”. She announced that she would become another character when she put on a scarf, and went back to her role as teacher again when she removed the scarf. The participants were moved into this imagined realm smoothly:

*Mei:*

Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Nancy. Nancy Wu. Tomorrow my sister’s daughter is going to the school. And, mn, she is coming to your class tomorrow. And, I think I need to come to you because she has some problems, and I need your help, to help her. Is this alright with you? But, do you have any questions? Maybe you want to know about my sister’s daughter.

Mei provided her legitimacy in the context, and briefly but effectively brought up another character who would be coming into the story soon. By saying the last sentence, the in-role teacher stimulated the participants’ curiosity to probe further about the new character from her simple opening line. The hot-seating process was triggered simultaneously with the enacting of the new situation:

*Student 1:* How old is she?

*Mei:* She is 14, just like you.

*Student 2:* Why did she come here?

*Mei:* Because she lost her house.

*Student 3:* What problems does she have?

*Mei:* She is--she was studying in Thailand. Due to the Tsunami, she lost everything except her parents. My sister and her husband think--thought that it would be a good idea for her to come back

to Taiwan. And I am worried about her.

*Student 4:* Why?

*Mei:* She cannot speak Chinese. She can only speak English.

The students gave their response in a spontaneous manner and prompted one after another without any hesitation in between. The teacher's leading into the imagined world found no resistance from the participants in this instance, and activated the subsequent layered interactions: teacher enacting from the imagined world having dialogue with the students in the real world. The interactions that followed demonstrate an intensive curiosity about the story this role provided:

*Student 5:* Why don't you send her to America?

*Mei:* Because we don't have any friends or relatives in America

*Student 5:* You can send her to American school like Morrison.

*Mei:* She is not an American. In fact she is a Taiwanese. She owns a passport of the Republic of China Taiwan so she can't go to an international school. She has to come here.

*Student 6:* What is her name?

*Mei:* Her name is Jennifer, she's lovely.

.....

*Student 5:* Can she speak Chinese?

*Mei:* Not really. She left Taiwan when she was five.

*Student 7:* Why can't her parents come back with her?

*Mei:* No, she couldn't, they couldn't because they have to manage the things after the tsunami.

*Student 8:* What are the things they are managing?

*Mei:* Well, it's about their jobs, it's about their jobs.

*Student 6:* Did they lose their job?

*Mei:* Well, sort of. They owned a Chinese restaurant in the island of Phuket. And because of tsunami, they lost everything.

*Student 5:* How did that happen?

*Mei:* The restaurant was up on the hill. So, when, well, because many people went to their restaurant, to ask for support, and my sister and her husband took care of the people. The restaurant is still

there, but we don't think they can open the restaurant in a few months.

*Student 8:* What are they going to do when they come back to Taiwan?

*Mei:* I am not sure when they are coming back to Taiwan and I am not sure they can come back to Taiwan because the situation in Phuket is really terrible.

*Student 6:* Why can't they come back?

*Mei:* They were asked, asked to help people don't know why. In fact Jennifer was really sad because she would like to come back with her parents. And your suggestion is very good-if her parents could come back with her, it would be very good. But they just have to stay there and help people. And, mn, they are Christians, they believe they have to take care of other people.

*Student 7:* You said they lost everything, why did they still have the restaurant?

The dialogue above shows a pattern of interactions that was prompted through a series of inquiries into the credibility and legitimacy of the new character and her situation. In a spontaneous style of interrogation, the background and the details that related to the character's reason for coming back to the country were raised one after another. The engagement into the context of the new character triggered a pattern of interactions on a different level: unlike the previous ones, in which silent perception of the dynamics of the switching of roles was the dominant tone, here the students initiated every move and the interactions took place on three levels: among students when they verbally articulated their concerns, between the students and Jennifer the imagined and invisible character, and finally between the students and the in-role teacher. In other words, it seems that here the students were taking control of the inquiry process under the spell of visible and invisible characters. It might also be noteworthy that this strong urge into the character's world could be something related to fact that it was constructed in an imagined domain.

This journey started with slower pace when the workshop began, and increased in intensity and in the frequency of the interplay as it proceeded. As the demands for entering and going out of various level of reality increased by the given tasks, the participants' adaptability to cope with different situations was also elevated. In the next section, an analysis of the drama experience that is brought to the fruition in the dual/dialectical nature of theatrical world is presented.

### **Boundary-crossing through metaxical engagement**

Drama presupposes a state of co-existence of two different perspectives: the fictional world, and the real world in which the spectator presides (Boal, 1995; O'Toole, 1992; Somers, 2003). For drama to release its power on the spectators/participants involved, all dramatic action emerges through an interplay betwixt and between the two realities. Boal defines this state of co-existence as "metaxis" and describes it as "the state of belonging completely and simultaneously to two different autonomous worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image" (Boal, 1995, p. 43). O'Toole (1992) explains this metaxical process within drama education as follows:

... what we know to be real, and what we bring to the drama in terms of our cultural background, experience, and attitudes - is termed the real context, while the make-believe world of the drama which we have agreed to believe in together is termed the fictional context. While the drama is happening, we are operating in both of these contexts, and it will be shown that they are operating on each other. That is part of what is romantically called the "magic" of theatre; however, I shall unromantically term it "metaxis", because it is a very substantial and definable component of the experience itself, which needs to be understood

if we are to comprehend the dramatic aesthetic and the dramatic meaning (p. 13).

The world of the imagined is developed alongside the real world, and this fact is clearly recognized by all participants taking part in the dramatic action. The dual perception of these two worlds thus brings forth a spectrum of effects on the characters, the action, and the spectators in the theatre. When the imagined referents are different from those from the real world, these two worlds compete, collide, contrast and/or conflict with each other and tensions thus created (Bundy, 2003; O'Connor, 2003). In many instances, these two worlds assume a dialogic relationship in which participants are able to move, either freely or with some constraints, from one to the other. This dialogic relationship might also be taking place in the space between the two worlds; in such case the tension is expanded to a multilayered and reciprocal one among the real one, the imagined one, and the in-between space, for this in-between-ness could result in a further struggle or harmonious relationship on the part of the participants with both realities (Somers, 2003).

In drama the participants take a journey through these three levels of reality in either conscious or unconscious manner. In either case, our concern here is not quite about why drama triggered such engagement but about what and how this journey unfolds to the participants. The co-existence of the three levels of reality could position the participants in three concurrent perspectives: seeing the imagined and the in-between from the real world, seeing the real and the in-between from the imagined world, and/or seeing the real and the imagined ones from the in-between space. By putting the participants in different positions in terms of their relationship with varying realities, such engagement in metaxis could be viewed as "a state where one can be both oneself and someone other than oneself" (Simpson & McDonald, 2000, p. 2): a 'someone other than oneself' as a projected representation.

The interplay among these three perspectives might take place one after another or simultaneously. Through our workshop process several modes of engagement in the metaxis emerged and will be examined in progressive order as the order of occurrence of these modes might also enhance our understanding of their significance.

***Mode 1: group to group perception***

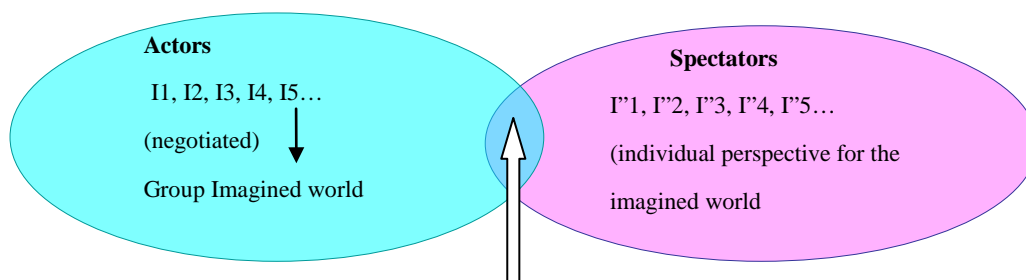
In **Frame 2** of workshop session **1B**, the participants were asked to enact a series of freeze-frame images of objects in daily life: a TV and then a TV with a special on-off device, a machine and a machine with special functions, and a new year's gift for someone special. For part one of the first task: a group image of a TV, only the physical aspects of the TV were required. Yet the first try-out of physical representation seemed not to be a daring attempt. As TV is such a familiar household object, all the six groups came up with easily comprehended and almost identical patterns of enactment: roughly we see two persons bridging arms across the head of a third person in the middle, with slightly varied posture in different groups. For the beginning of this workshop, this move to present an object can be regarded as the participants' first attempt in the journey to link the real and the imagined world: by delineating the physical aspects of an object from common memory of all members, this move engaged every participant in a shared experience that was activated by abstract projection out of a common background to the present. The imagined was credible, which made the shared reality more viable.

When a particular function of the TV was to be added to performance, it seemed to give a sense of urgency to their performance. The participants seemed to enjoy the very idea of having a device that could allow them free will over the control of the TV, as it might well be a liberating function to all children alike. We noticed a more diversified enactment of the idea: the members who enacted the functioning of this special device triggered the

movement of the members who enacted the TV and there was a more dynamic interplay of movement between each individual in the performing group. In a sense, the imagined world provided dynamics (injected through the expansion of power of humans over the machine) for the real world where all members were developing bonds through an emotional engagement and a shared vocabulary constructed through the bodily presentation.

This shared vocabulary was able to develop largely because the two activities above took place on the group level. Either as direct transference of experience from the imagined to the real, as in the case of the first enactment, or as a translated emotional projection that usually emerged in the space in-between the two, the shared vocabulary became the outcome of group movement and consensus exactly because it carried elements that were commonly recognizable by people sharing the experience.

In the latter case, where emotional projection of recognizable elements built up the interconnectedness between the two worlds, we see the possibility of a dialogic relationship in the duality of drama that might be contributing to the effectiveness of communication. When such dialogic relationship developed, the dynamic energised an engagement in a negotiating process in which the varied perspectives about the imagined and the real of both parties reached a consensus. That is to say, as there were always diversified personal interpretations of the imagined and the reality, the spectators made an effort to perceive the message the actors tried to pass on with their own interpretation of an imagined reality, as the actors' group interpretation of an imagined reality was also a result of a similar negotiation process within the group.



Perspective of the real world as result of negotiation between the group imagined world & individual spectators' imagined worlds (shared vocabulary emerges)

**Diagram 4-4:**

Emergence of a shared vocabulary

**Mode 2: individual to individual meaning making**

However, if the metaxis takes place at an individual level, or at an individual to individual level, to be precise, would there be a different mode of interaction? When Mei asked a volunteer, Robert, to enact in the form of charade his very personal ideal of a new year's gift to his father, the mode of dialogic interplay was able to be elevated to a more complex level. To give a bodily representation of his ideal gift, Robert shyly and awkwardly swung his right arm around and drew a horizontal circle with his right hand, grabbed an object from the air and suggestively put it in the centre of the circle.

For both parties engaging in the charade, meaning-making presupposed a challenge to cross personal boundaries in order to complete the task. To the presenter, he had to try every way he could to bring the spectators to an understanding of his imagination, and this was difficult for him because drama was not a familiar medium of expression to him. To the spectators, each one of them might be carrying a different way of conceptualizing the



semiotic signs thus presented. These signs, to un-trained participants in the charade, were not yet developed well enough to create a sophisticated shared vocabulary for both parties, and thus might be bringing more barriers to the understanding of meaning than communication.

What was generated here, however, was something attributable not so much to the skills of bodily enactment but to the enthusiasm of both parties: we found that, with Robert's hard effort to bring out his idea to the spectators, the spectators were also eagerly taking part in the action by patiently making sense of the action along with Robert. It seemed that in this case, a reciprocal channel of communication was able to develop because both parties were willing to participate in each other's world. Robert was not just enacting any object; he was trying to present something special for someone meaningful to him. What's more important in this case, the assigned occasion for the presentation of this gift was the New Year, a time regarded as the most important opportunity for giving a serious gift in the whole year. The urgency of the gift-giving thus brought out that both the actor and the spectators came to share this particular emotional value behind the physical aspects of an object. In other words, the imagined and the real worlds here were correlated with an emotional bond that connected both parties involved.

Yet this willingness to participate might also due to the nature of the game. When a fun mood was created in group activity, the crossing of individual boundaries could take place with fewer difficulties, and communication was thus made possible.

### *Mode 3: making sense of fragments*

What might happen in the process of meaning making if the messages from the real world were fragmented? In an exercise for story-telling techniques in session 1E, the four groups wrote down sentences on different pieces of paper, and shuffled and redistributed them among groups. Each group was then

given the task of re-arranging the re-distributed and fragmented sentences and restructured them into a meaningful group scene. Some extracts from the final presentation as follows:

(Group 1)

*(Girl 1 & 2 walking across the stage)*

*Girl 1:* She is taking a shower during such a winter day. Can you believe it?

*Girl 2:* On such?

*Girl 1:* True.

*(Girls 1 & 2 walk to the other end of the stage)*

*Girl 3 & Girl 4, Boy 1:* It's a beautiful day.

*Boy 2:* They are drinking coffee at the bottom of the ocean.

*(Boy 2 goes to everyone in the group and repeats this sentence as he approaches).*

(Group 2)

*(Girl 1 pairs up with Girl 2)*

*Girl 1:* I like swimming.

*Girl 2:* I like...

*Boy 1: (In the gesture of holding a telescope looking at the girls):*  
I enjoyed the view.

*Boy 2:* Nice meeting you. *(Kicks Boy 3 off the stage)*

*Boy 3:* What!

*Girl 3: (Joining the pair):* Please understand that

*Girl 4:* This is a beautiful park...

*Boy 4: (Walking behind the girls as he speaks.)* This is my favourite season.

The first group attempted to simply enact strings of fragmented sentences with a very thin line of rationale. The act of "taking shower in a winter day" can be comfortably juxtaposed with the ideas expressed by sentences such as: "it's a beautiful day" and "drinking coffee at the bottom of the sea". It might not be too uncommon to see how the younger students in this generation understand reality from a perspective which is very similar to the montage effect in films: a reality that is re-constructed as a series of individual episodes

and that juxtaposition of fragments in totality which expresses the ludicrous essence of that very reality. Here both the spectators and the enactors stay with that co-existence of two contradictory realities without much difficulty.

Children's view of the diversity and the contradictions in the real world can be much more tolerant than adults' perception. Here what happened during the enactment might give us a further understanding of the metaxis. In the world of imagination, reference to time and space do not follow the rules of the real world: time might be compressed, prolonged, delayed, and space displaced or extended, as in the sub-consciousness of a dreamer: any referent to the logic of the real world hence does not apply. For people engaging in the imaginary world of drama, the present could be realized through a collage, a juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated phenomena that evoked various meanings to different spectators in each other's imaginary domain.

Children need no further assistance to explain to them that in playing roles they are given this luxury to engage in such a liberated domain- the ability to play across set boundaries is a prerequisite to engagement in imaginary activities. When this liberty to cross boundaries was endorsed in a meaning making activity, there emerged another kind of shared vocabulary co-constructed by the enactors, the facilitator, and the spectators. At the end of the first presentation, the teacher stepped in to play as a mediator for the story:

*Mei:* So, where were they?

*Student 1:* In the ocean.

*Mei:* In the ocean? (*Laughter*). You think so? (*referring to the presenting group*) Would you please sit down by the stage. Yea. (*To the class*) And do you have idea what they were doing?

(*Students chatting*)

*Mei:* And what is the season of the story?

*Students:* Winter.

- Mei:* And how do you know it's winter?  
*Girl 1:* Because someone said it is very cold.  
*Mei:* Yes very cold, and she didn't want to what?  
*Girl 2:* Go to school.  
*Mei:* Yes very good. So, there are two people on the stage chatting, and it was very good and they did not want to go to school. And there were two people talking to someone else about Annie, chat for a while and put more words into the sentences, for example, that is interesting. That is very good. And someone was waiting on the other side of the stage, and said they are drinking coffee in the ocean? What's happening to the boy? He talked to everyone with that sentence. OK. So, mn, thank you very much.

On the part of the students, being "in the ocean" in "cold" "winter" explained the two students' unwillingness to "go to the school", and the fact that "someone drinking coffee" in the same ocean at the same time did not contradict the first situation. They expressed an understanding of the story and, with the teacher's stepping-in, the un-relatedness between episodes was recaptured in verbal form. When the non-verbal and yet visible signs might not be filling up the space of understanding in this case, a verbal approach supplemented as a bridge. In a conventional language learning situation, this might be happening the other way around: non-verbal signs normally fill in to supplement what's been left by verbal utterance.

The second group developed a more discernible structure through the fragmented sentences. The story they tried to enact might be interpreted from varied perspectives, but as the teacher recouped the story with the spectators, the understanding skewed to one very common:

- Mei:* So what was the story? Where are they?  
*Girl 2:* ME High School.  
*Mei:* And which area of the school? Or what did you see? Someone who was?  
*Girl 3:* Swimming.

*Mei:* And someone was?

*Boy 3:* Talking...

*Mei:* Good. (*pointing to Boy 1 on the stage*) And someone was?

*Boy 4:* Looking?

*Mei:* Looking for what?

*Boy 4:* Yellow thing. (*Laughter from the crowd.*)

*Mei:* What is the yellow thing? (*Laughter from the crowd.*) Why? He was looking girls, right?

*Spectators:* Yes.

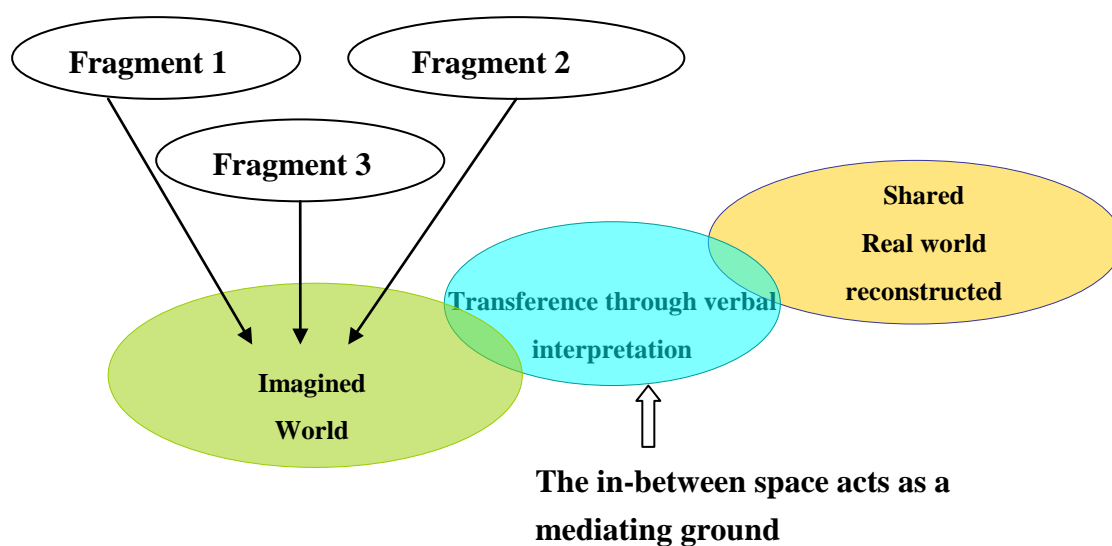
*Mei:* And what about the other girls? They were...talking, right? What about the boys? What did he say? Autumn is my favourite season. He said it in a very interesting way, right? Autumn is my favourite season. Yes interesting. But I would like to mention the interaction between him and other people. The relationship among them. When you speak a sentence, or someone says something to you, what is your reaction? You have to think about this (...).

In this verbal discussion that followed between the teacher and spectators, the location of the event was agreed upon to be the school, girls were swimming, and people were “looking” at the scene. Boy 4 quickly gave an interpretation to the above situation: a “yellow thing”, which in Chinese referred to anything obscene or dirty in sexual sense. Obviously a reference to sexuality evoked laughter from the spectators, and the memory in the way the boy on stage said the sentence “and autumn is my favourite season” added more interesting flavour to the reference as he was linking the watching of girls swimming with the season.

What was not explicitly delineated here, in a rational sense, however, was the reasoning between “girls swimming”, “in a beautiful park”, “in autumn”, and the greeting between friends. That is to say, although there was some sense making explanation offered for a part of the action in the discourse above, making sense of the enactment still relied largely upon the same kind of understanding as for the first group’s enactment. A comfortable state of mind

in the juxtaposition of fragments proved that the simultaneous existence of the imagined and the real worlds provide more excitement than uneasiness. The state of living in metaxis, in other words, seemed to be happening naturally to the young learners.

The following diagram illustrates the working of the metaxis state:



**Diagram 4-5:**

Reality reconstructed from the fragmented imagined through the in-between

**Mode 4: simultaneous presentation of multi-layered perspectives**

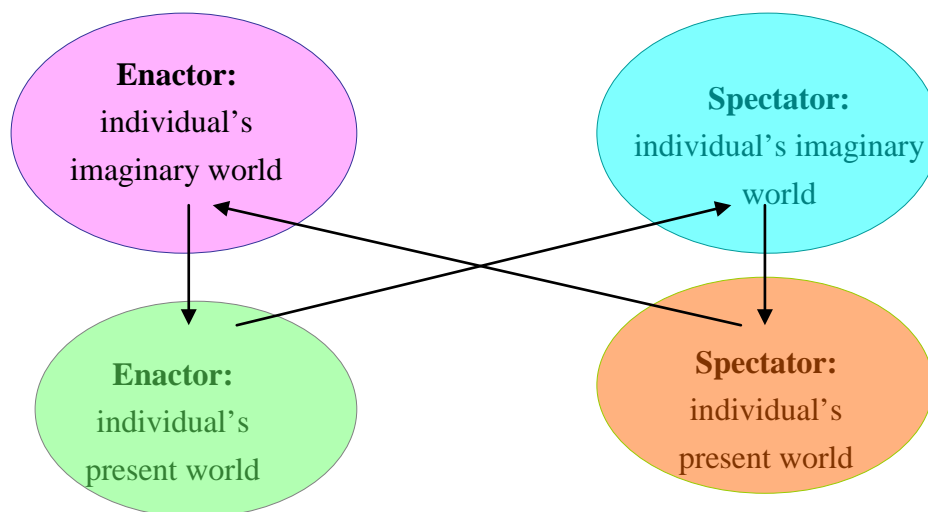
For session 1E, we have discussed how multilayered interactions were created through different approaches for freeze-frames and group images (see discussion of **Patterns 1-3** in this chapter). These activities also unfold to us another level of significance: the extent to which metaxical engagement helped the participants to understand the self-other relationship.

Throughout **Patterns 1-3**, for each individual and group tasks, presentations

were required to take place either one right after another or simultaneously. For instance, to enact the most impressive moment from the film, all participants did his/her own image simultaneously and then for the second time of enactment, within a large group of 14 participants, each took turns to perform, with other 13 students sitting down stage as spectators. After the still image, each individual then gave sentence that expressed the still image with the teacher's tapping on the shoulder one after another.

Each enactor was thus giving his/her very own interpretation of a link to an emotional moment in the film that might reflect a deeper identification with the characters or event, through his/her **imaginary world to the present**, while other people were watching and linking it to a similar reflection of the moment in **their imaginary world**, either as co-enactors in the same group, or as audience down stage (in their own **present**).

As these tasks in this session almost took place in a simultaneous manner, a parallel emergence between the four perspectives (i.e., the enactor's imaginary world and the present world, and the spectator's imaginary world and the present world) is discernible. The following diagram illustrates this mode of engagement:



**Diagram 4-6:**

Simultaneous presentation of multi-layered perspectives

#### *4. Dialogic interplay between co-existing worlds*

In the discussion of the previous four modes of metaxical engagement, we explored how participants in the drama process moved between different perspectives and traced how each perspective connected with one another. In the following sections, sections **1F** through **3F**, as the participants were brought into a deeper enquiry about the fictional character *per se*, the pattern of engagement in metaxis was elevated to a higher level of complexity. This complexity was demonstrated in three domains of the activities: first, in the dialogue between the in-role teacher and the students; second, between the fictional character and the students; and thirdly, among students themselves. All three perspectives emerged concurrently, as discussed in the following section.



**Mode 1:****Interplay of perspectives between the in-role teacher and the students**

In the discussion of the multilayered interactions of session 1F, we have indicated that the complexity of interactions took place on three levels: among students when they verbally articulated their concerns, between the students and Jennifer the imagined, invisible character, and finally between the students and the in-role teacher. We also found that the above three levels of interaction were mainly initiated on the students' part. The students were taking control of the inquiry process under the spell of visible and invisible characters. For this part of the discussion, we add that the complexity of interactions was further enhanced by students' perception and reciprocal discursive journey in different realms of metaxis.

When Mei performed the first teacher-in-role, in session 1F, the students probed into all sorts of information about Jennifer the fictional character through questions. They asked about Jennifer's name, education, family background, reasons for her going to Thailand and coming back to Taiwan. This information about Jennifer's biological and social background constructed a "reality" about the fictional Jennifer. But the students need to know more; a series of questions that looked into the reasons behind her move was prompted:

*Student 2:* **Why** did she come here?

*Mei:* Because she lost her house.

*Student 3:* What problems does she have?

*Mei:* She is-she was studying in Thailand. Due to the Tsunami, she lost everything except her parents. My sister and her husband think- thought that it would be a good idea for her to come back to Taiwan. And I am worried about her.

*Student 4:* **Why?**

*Mei:* She cannot speak Chinese. She can only speak English.

*Student 4:* **Why** don't you send her to America?

*Mei:* Because we don't have any friends or relatives in America

*Student 3:* You can send her to American school like Morrison?

*Mei:* She is not an American. In fact she is a Taiwanese. She owns a passport of the Republic of China Taiwan so she can't go to an international school. She has to come here.

...

*Student 5:* What are they going to do when they come back to Taiwan?

*Mei:* I am not sure when they are coming back to Taiwan and I am not sure they can come back to Taiwan because the situation in Phuket is really terrible.

*Student 4:* **Why** can't they come back?

*Mei:* They were asked, asked to help people don't know why. In fact Jennifer was really sad because she would like to come back with her parents. And your suggestion is very good-if her parents could come back with her, it would be very good. But they just have to stay there and help people. And, mn, they are Christians. They believe they have to take care of other people.

*Student 5:* You said they've lost everything, **why** did they still have the restaurant?

*Mei:* I meant the place-the location-is still there, but they lost, for example, their money in the bank, was not there; and even if they have the money, they can not buy anything. There was no food, you know, there was no business in Phuket.

*Student 4:* Then **how can they** help people if they don't have anything?

*Mei:* They have some foods in their storage. But that's it. And you know, there are many people doing donations from different countries. So we are glad that they get a mission about giving (*emphasizes with hand gesture*) the food to people in Thailand. That's why they are not coming.

The students asked a lot of "why" questions to probe into Jennifer's story in the manner of detective conducting an interrogation, and there was a subtle consensus among the students which prompted the action one after another and soon everyone picked up the momentum and became more engaged.

They wanted to know not just about Jennifer's personal details, as in a normal social interaction, but also about the legitimacy of her story. And it seems that the very picture of Jennifer which had been constructed through her personal details evoked the students' curiosity. The question is: what were they actually questioning about through these "why" questions--the authenticity of Jennifer's "life" story, of Jennifer the character, or the whole imaginary world represented by Jennifer and the in-role teacher? Or it might be just the opposite: by exploring Jennifer's story, they were making efforts to construct a reality of Jennifer to make meaning for themselves.

As the teacher already deliberately informed them at the beginning of this session that she was going to be someone else by putting on a shawl, the students should have been very much aware of the fictional nature of this interaction. It seems that, it is exactly this awareness, the students' curiosity about how "real" the story was pushed them further to ask for more details. In other words, the probing demonstrated a metaxical interplay between the spectators' imagination of the fictional aspect of an imagined character who seemed to exist "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1967) two perspectives. The issue that is of concern here is again not about why this was happening: we'd like to see beyond the experience to evaluate how flexibly the spectators were able to move in the "betwixt and between":

*Student:* Why does she come to ME?

*Mei:* Pardon?

*Student:* **Why does she need to come to ME?** She goes to a bilingual school if she can really speak English there.

*Mei:* Well, because **I just live near here.** And ...I asked for **your head teacher's** help, and he is really nice to help us to deal with the problem. He is really a good guy.

To connect with Jennifer through the "fact" that she was said to be coming into the participants' life established a link here. The student raised the

urgency in asking “why” she’s coming, and the in-role teacher, in turn, pushed that linking further with more details: she actually “lives near here”. And it was “the head teacher”, a real character in the participants’ school, who offered to help Jennifer to continue schooling. This head teacher from the same context as the participants provided a link between the imagined and the real.

*Mei:* I am going to pick her up at (reading her watch) **7 o’clock** this evening.

....

*Mei:* So, **it is 3:40**, and I need to go back and manage her things.

By indicating that “I” was going to pick “her” up from the airport, and “it is 3:40”, the in-role teacher linked the fictional with the real: time, location, and characters merged. The questioning process of “hot seating” thus conducted not only functioned through multilayered interactions, as discussed in the previous section, but also indicated a simultaneous engagement in different realms of perspectives on the part of both in-role teacher and the students. The in-role teacher gave life to a fictional character, which is taking place in the common “real” world for both teacher and students, while she herself was also a real actor from a fictional world.

However, the students seemed to keep their head above the water as all these make-believe acts were taking place. In the midst of the in-role process, a student remarked after the teacher encouraged the students to become friends with Jennifer:

*Mei:* I trust you, I trust you, you are going to be her classmates and you look friendly. You are so keen to ask questions about Jennifer.

*Boy 1:* **Sometimes that’s not real.** (*Laughter*)

*Mei:* Of course it is real.

*Girl 2:* **Does she have friends?**

*Mei:* She has friends in Thailand but not here.

“...*That’s not real,*” a boy said aloud, other students laughed and agreed, but still continued to engage in the story: the next question “*does she have friends?*” was back on to the previous context. Even at the end of this section, when Mei turned around toward the stage and slowly took off the shawl to indicate an ending to her in-role performance, students applauded her for her enactment, it shows that they were aware of the make-believe situation at all times. It might not be the context which shifted, to be precise; the students’ view of the boundaries between the imagined and the real could be a very blurred one.

### **Mode 2:**

#### **Interplay of perspectives between the students and the fictional character**

The students entered the fictional world as soon as the teacher put on the shawl, conducting two kinds of dialogue at the same time: a verbal one with the in-role teacher, and a hidden one with fictional character—the hidden one being explored through the verbal one. The teacher constantly made reference to the students’ real world, as in the dialogue above, bridging over the students’ perspectives to an extent where the students developed links with the fictional character’s identity and prompted to help:

*Student 1:* What did she say to you?

*Mei:* Woh, I don’t know that I know was: she went to Thailand when she was five, she studied in Bangkok, and **she has nightmares.**

*Student 2:* Why did they go to Thailand?

*Mei:* Well, mn, there were something happened to the family, and it is a little bit embarrassing to tell you teenagers. But they did a good job there. But unfortunately the tsunami happened and she has to come back. And, mn, **she has nightmares every night.**

*Student 2:* For what? (*Students:* Yeh for what? )

*Mei:* I don’t know don’t know? My sister told me that **she’s**

**screaming all the night**, and she said it would be a good idea that she comes back and stay with us.

*Student 4:* **She can go ‘shou-jing<sup>5</sup>’.**

*Mei:* Do the Chinese traditional shou-jing? **I think it’s a good suggestion**, I will bring her to that kind of place, **do you have suggestions about here should I go? Where she can go?**

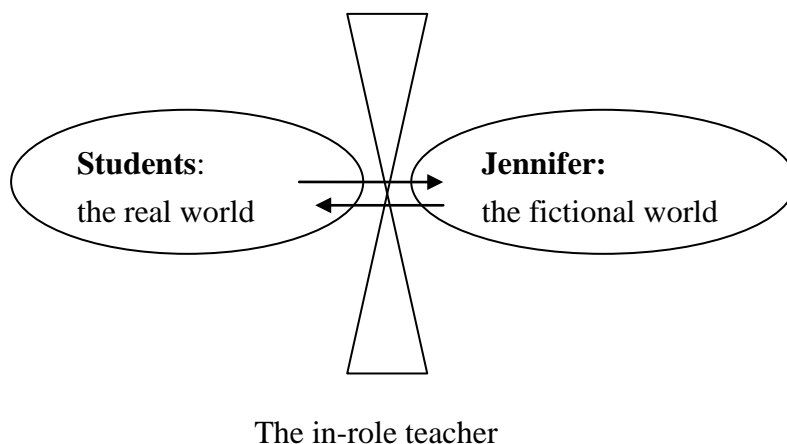
*Student 4:* **My grandpa** knows how to do that.

*Mei:* Really? Will you please give me your phone number so I can bring her to your grandpa?

By giving an account of Jennifer’s educational background in the previous section, the teacher had hinted about a possibility of Jennifer not being able to speak the same kind of language with people in Taiwan, and thus cast a shadow on what might happen when she started to fit in. Here by indicating that Jennifer was having nightmares and screaming at nights, the in-role teacher pushed further the spectators to see beyond the character’s background: something related to a psychological condition which could be an aftermath of something traumatic. In other words, the in-role teacher provided a lens through which the students involved could have a first encounter with the fictional world of the character. Her remarks about asking for phone number of the student’s grandpa (who resides in the real world of Student 4 but might still remain intriguingly fictional to other students who did not know about him) to help Jennifer (the fictional character) provides illustration for such attempts:

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<sup>5</sup> In Chinese the term simple means “taking away aftershocks,” referring to a semi-religious practice of a purification process to heal traumatic aftershock with the help of deities.

**Diagram 4-7:**

Interplay of perspectives between the students and the fictional character.

In workshop session 2E, teacher Yen evoked a second level of exploration into Jennifer's world by stepping in-role as the homeroom teacher and informing the students of Jennifer's missing. She described how Jennifer's aunt found out about her being missing when she sent her the school bag she forgot to bring alone. That very school bag that Jennifer forgot to take along was then used as a "compound stimulus" for participants to conduct a dialogue with Jennifer. Yen laid down the schoolbag on a piece of yellow cloth on the floor, and invited a couple of students to look through things in the bag:

*Yen:* (*Seeing one volunteer*) What's your name? OK, Sammie. Sammie is going to help us find out what is in her school bag. Please open it. You can take out one thing and help us to see.

*Sammie:* A lot of **letters**.

*Others:* Love letters! (*Laughter.*)

*Yen:* A lot of letters. OK. Let's take a look at these letters. Can you take one and read it for us? OK. Who wrote this?

*Sammie:* **Joe.**

*Yen:* OK Joe wrote this. Joe is a very nice friend. He wrote a letter to Jennifer. (*Joe screamed, "ah, ah, ah nothing, don't read it!"*) No, we are not going to read this, don't worry. What is it about?

*Sammie:* Joe welcomes her to Taiwan.

*Yen:* So it is a **welcome letter**. Oh very good. Is it only one letter or a lot of letters?

*Sammie:* A lot of letters.

*Yen:* What's all about?

*Sammie:* I think it's all, about the same.

*Yen:* OK, thank you very much. (*Applauses. Sammie went back to seat.*) So it's some letters here. I think you are very good friends. You wrote a lot of letters to her, and she's like hav(ing) all these letters here in her bag with her. **Why (did) she do that?** Think about that. Any one? Joe, do you want to do it, in the bag?

(*Joe came to the front and took a piece of paper form the bag*)

*Joe:* **Garbage.**

*Yen:* Garbage? it's a test paper. (*Students in Chinese: " Our test paper!"*) It's from (*reading from the paper*) ME High School grade 2 English listening comprehension final exam part A? Can you figure out something from this test paper? Is there any difference from yours?

*Joe:* Yes.

*Yen:* What did she do to this?

*Joe:* **She made it into a paper ball, like garbage.**

*Yen:* Oh, **like she was going to throw it away?** (*Showing the paper ball to the students*) so it's like this, right? Like she does want to throw it away and does not want to see this. ..

The letters the students found in the bag were actually written by the participants on the first evening of the workshop to welcome Jennifer to their class, and Joe's letter was one of them. These letters, especially Joe's which was then read by one of the participants, Sammie, acted as immediate links between the participants' and Jennifer's worlds: letters that were recognizable and kept in the character's bag at all time. The message from the second link--the test papers from the final exam that the participants actually took



part in before the workshop - carried a further hint into Jennifer's world. 'she made it into a paper ball, like garbage,' Joe observed, and Yen added: "Like she wants to throw it away and does not want to see this..."

Exploration into a situation was triggered by visible objects acted as windows from the imagined world yet were realized in concrete forms through the participants' real life experiences. Letters were written by the participants themselves, and the test papers were exactly those they had taken a couple of day ago. Unlike the dialogue in the previous section, here the participants were able to engage in direct communication with Jennifer's internal world, via glimpses of objects from her possession. In engaging in an invisible dialogue with Jennifer's internal world, the participants also were aware of the imaginary nature of her existence, as we found in such expression in the process of exploration when they found Jennifer's personal journal and tried to complete the puzzle about her through clues discovered in the journal:

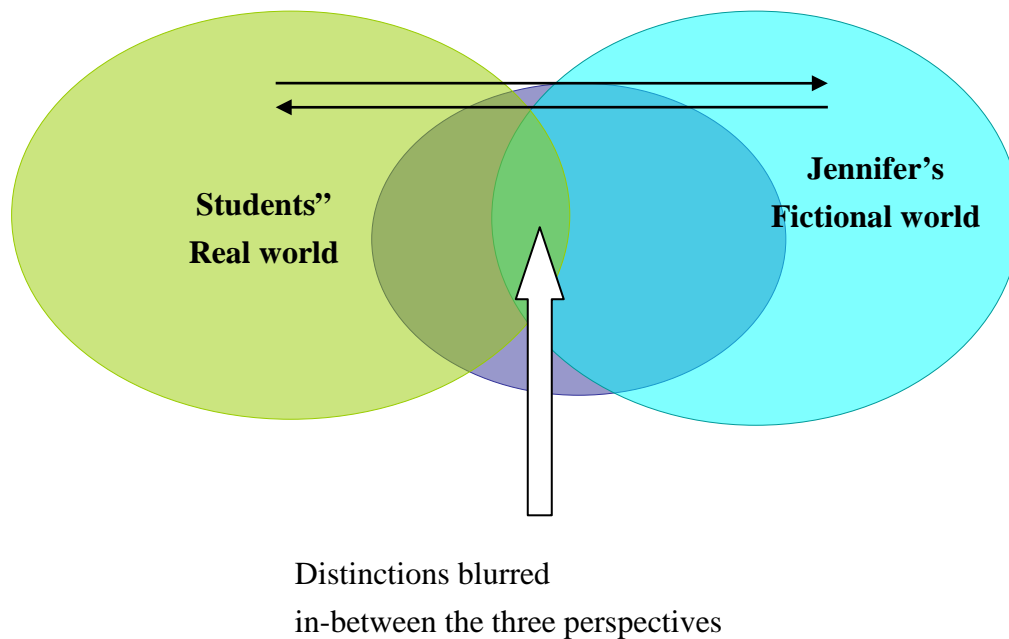
*Student 3: (Reading from Jennifer's journal) "First day to school.  
Nervous. Too many strangers. Ugly formula."*

*Yen: What's that?*

*Student 3: (Continues reading) "Good classmates." **But she didn't come to the classroom!***

*Yen: She didn't come? But maybe she came in the first day, right? So she liked her classmates but she did not come to the classroom?*

*"But she didn't come to the classroom!"* exclaimed Student 3; from her real life experience Student 3 knew that this character was fictional. Yet the exploration continued. Here the mode of metaxical engagement can be represented as follows:

**Diagram 4-8:**

Mode of dialogic interplay

between students and the fictional characters

The students continued their exploration through two other objects they found from the schoolbag: Jennifer's textbooks and pencil case. More clues into her being missing from the school kept on emerging through scattered remarks, notes and drawing in and on these objects. During the group discussion that followed, one student even tried to call the mobile number written at the back of the journal, which showed a direct cut-through the boundaries among all three perspectives in metaxis.

**Mode 3:****Merging of perspectives among students**

The above discussion on the interplay of perspectives in metaxis reveals patterns of interactions that take place between participants, teachers, and the fictional character. These patterns illustrate an ongoing and reciprocal process of dialogic interplay, both verbally and non-verbally, which goes back and forth between realities. As illustrated in previous sections, in many instances such metaxical realities in the drama process also emerge simultaneously. It seems that it is through this simultaneous occurrence of different realities that the participants' interest in the journey is sustained, as it allows the playing of imagination while providing ample opportunities for the participants to interact with one another. In the discussion that follows, we observe that, as a consequence of this engagement and immersion in the metaxical journey, the participants seem to come to accept all realities of the fictional world and the three realities become one (see **Diagrams 4-8, 4-9, 4-10**).

For instance, in workshop sessions **2E** and **3A**, students were re-assigned into four groups. Each one received a different object from Jennifer's schoolbag, i.e. textbook, exam papers, journal, and students' letters to her, respectively, to find out more details about Jennifer and also possible clues for her missing from the school. Each team was then asked to give presentations on their observations, and to suggest solutions to help Jennifer with her problems. Two of the groups summarized Jennifer's problems as follows:

***Student1 from group 1:***

We found some drawings in her books. Like this one (*showing drawing enlarged from Jennifer's textbook.*) This is the teacher, and the classmates. And she thinks her teacher came from Mars. She cannot understand what the teacher was saying. And she has a special feeling for Peter (*turning the paper to the other side to show a list of 8 findings.*)

1. She does not like to go to school
2. She cannot understand what the teacher was saying

3. She is violent
4. She takes drugs<sup>6</sup>
5. She doesn't like math
6. She was born on November 16, 1990
7. Her phone number is 04-2320-0648, but no one (was) at home.
8. She likes Peter.

***Student 2 from group 2:***

1. She doesn't like Ming-Day because of the language.
2. She likes animals.

*(Teacher Mei: Why did you think she likes animals?)*

In her books there're a lot of animals...

3. She likes her classmates, she likes Susan. She thinks she is very helpful. She likes Bob. She also thinks Peter is good.
4. She wasn't happy on Christmas Day. *(Teacher Yen: why?)* Because she tears her book (*showing the diary to the audience*) from Christmas to January third.
5. She missed her parents very much. She got a phone call to her mother.
6. And she likes Chinese listening test, but not good at writing and saying.

Through observations on the objects that belong to the fictional character, the participants delineated a more "realistic" picture about Jennifer. They know something about her background (*"She was born on November 16, 1990"; "Her phone number is 04-2320-0648*), her personality (*"She likes animals"; "She dose not like math"*), her feelings of new friends (*"She likes her classmates; she likes Susan. She thinks she is very helpful. She likes Bob. She also thinks Peter is good"*), her attitudes toward school subjects (*"She doesn't like math"; "And she likes Chinese listening test, but not writing and speaking"*) and especially about her anguish (*"She does not like to go to school"; "She cannot understand what the teacher was saying"; "She missed her parents very much. She got a phone call from her mother"*) and a possible clue to the cause of the anguish (*"She wasn't happy on Christmas*

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<sup>6</sup> This is a misuse of the word "drug" which implies an addiction to narcotics. The presenter was actually referring to "medication" in this case.

*Day...because she tears her book... from Christmas to January third").* Piece by piece, the four groups together presented a more complete picture to the puzzle of Jennifer's world and her behavior. In this way, these participants were not just "imagining" the fictional world; they were actually constructing a vivid, solid "reality" for the fictional character and this very "reality" coincides with their own - to be more precise, they themselves reside in this very "reality" with the fictional character.

This might also serve as an indicator of the degree of projection and identification of the participants with the fictional character. Interestingly enough, as we have noticed, these participants were also very much aware of the fictional nature of the happening, it seems that at this stage of the journey, yet allowing the fictional reality to integrate into their own reality. The boundaries between the three "realities", in this sense, were not only blurred, as discussed in the previous section, but also diminished: the fictional reality and the students' reality became one.

In the process of completing the following task, the students demonstrated a more clear understanding of the nature of this situation. Each team was asked to present a storyline that would focus on one of Jennifer's problems. Each team took effort to link bits of details from the findings and come up with a full scene that served to visualize a piece of Jennifer's world. For instance, group 3 described a scene they created that might have taken place in the school in which:

...Jennifer was in Chinese class, and she could not understand it, and she felt very boring and fell asleep, And the teacher got English because teacher thinks she might understand that. And we'll use some Chinese in this show. (Group 3, Journal)

When being asked by teacher Mei about how the group would do the described situation, student 2 responded:

*Student 2:* The problem...that some classmates (can speak) good English conversation and the teacher helps her to learn Chinese. **We will help her.**

And in responding to further question from the teacher:

*Teacher Mei:* Why did you choose the solution?

*Student 2:* Because she lived in Thailand that she always speaks English. But when she comes to Taiwan, it's like a foreign country that she could not speak Chinese very well. So she can't make friends or...

*Teacher Mei:* So why did you choose that the students work together to help her?

*Student 2:* Why? Because **friends and classmates need to help each other.**

By stating that “(w)e will help her” “(b)ecause friends and classmates need to help each other”, Student 2 was actually acknowledging the existence of this fictional character in her own community by addressing the character as a human “friend” and offering support to a friend’s problem.

Or in the case of Group 4, a possible situation that Jennifer encountered in the mall:

*(Wrote Group 4)*

Jennifer went the department store with her friends. She got lost and separated from her friends. She asked for help, but no one understands English. She wanted to take out her cell phone and calls her friends but her cell phone was gone. The captain came to help and let her use his cell phone. Finally Jennifer found her friends and went home together.

In the Chinese classroom, everyone was learning a classical Chinese essay yet Jennifer could not understand at all. Teachers did not see her problem and punish her to stand outside the classroom for falling

asleep in the class. The classmates came to help and explain her situation to the teacher. They also decided to help Jennifer learn the Chinese essay by explaining it to her in English and body language.

Twenty years later, Jennifer became a well-known interpreter and was giving a speech at a seminar. As she had studied Chinese very hard, she could talk about her experience in fluent Chinese. Audience asked her about her experience from the tsunami, and her grandmother reflected how she worked hard and changed since the tsunami twenty years ago.

Her friends gave testimony on her change.

Scientists in the tsunami research centre welcome three researchers from India, Malaysia and Thailand. Jennifer became an expert on tsunami and gave prediction on the coming tsunami in Thailand due to worsen greenhouse effect.

When tsunami attacked Thailand again after twenty years, Jennifer was transformed into a goddess who came to rescue people on the beach from the tragedy. (Research added to the performance: how the tidal waves became higher and stronger).

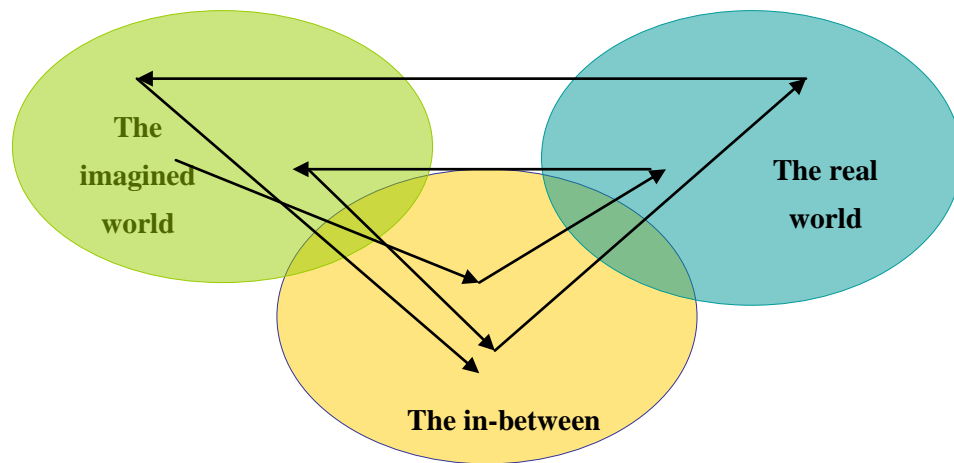
*(Group 4: Journal)*

We see participants receiving and fulfilling the demands for presentation with less and less effort, and, in many moments, even the simultaneous dwellings on all three levels of perspectives seemed natural for the young students. At one time these students were asking questions about the fictional world, as though they assumed the accountability of the story, at others they were obviously drawing themselves back to the real world they were residing. Yet at even more other times they were accommodating themselves comfortably in all three worlds: the real, the imagined, and the in-between. In the section that follows, the fourth level of the drama experience is examined.

## Summary of Part 1

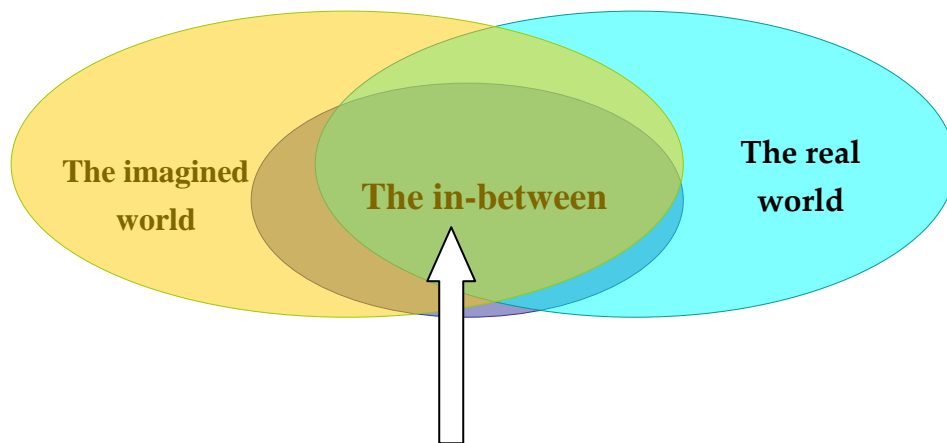
The drama process thus enabled a continuous, ongoing, simultaneous and reciprocal journey betwixt and between the real and the imagined worlds for the participants involved. From the narrative accounts of the process in the above sections, there seemed to emerge a noteworthy effect from such engagement: by going in and out of the three perspectives of reality, the participants developed a heightened degree of flexibility through the on-going, reciprocal switching of standings in the workshop. While drama endorses a relief for its participants from constraints of reality by granting a “no-penalty zone” (Goffman, 1959; Heathcote, 1980), this workshop propelled the participants further to become mobilized between various levels of reality by facilitating a state of co-existence of these realities. This mobility to go back and forth on all levels of reality was enhanced by the practices of multilayered interactions (see discussion of 4.1.2), the complexity and speed of which further the urgency of switching perspectives. Overall, the practice in metaxical engagement and multilayered interactions helped the participants to develop an intensified capability to move, negotiate, switch, and exchange individual perspective with one another. In so doing, the barriers to the boundaries between individual were able to be diminished as the individual went across the constraints with much freedom and flexibility (see **Diagram 4-9**), and as the borderlines of each domain became obscured accordingly (see **Diagram 4-10**).





**Diagram 4-9:**

Effects of metaxical engagement (1)-  
Flexibility and freedom in going between  
zones--Boundaries diminished



**Diagram 4-10:**  
Boundaries obscured.

## 4.2 Part 2: Deepening the meaning

As **Part 1** of this chapter explores the semiotic and phenomenological perspectives of the praxis, **Part 2** investigates the participants' process of taking reflective and critical action. The discussion will demonstrate the interconnectedness between the two parts: the development and engagement examined in the **Part 1** of the drama process serves as the bedrock for the reflective/critical action the participants undertake in **Part 2**. The investigation of **Part 2** thus aims to present a holistic description of how reflective actions are developed, and the significance of these actions in relation to the raising of critical intercultural awareness.

### 4.2.1. Collaborative meaning making in reflective action

The journey of drama unfolds to the participants as a multi-faceted experience which develops through a range of activities, co-constructed by each one involved in the process. In such drama process, a participant engages in the lived experience not only as an individual but, most importantly, as one significant part of a group--to which she contributes as a supporting element for the completion of tasks, and with which she develops reflection through constant interactions. Conversely, the group generates momentum that is received by each individual in a reciprocal way. The drama workshop *per se* thus became a communal space where the non-stop generation and development of such dialogic interactions between each individual and the groups was made possible. It provides a diverse range of experience through which each individual forms a web of relationship with each other. Moreover, through this constant interaction, each individual and the whole group worked closely together to construct meaning for the group action. In the following discussion, the working of this community of practice will be

examined in three categories: namely, engaging in strategic thinking for reflective action, collaborative knowledge building from research activities, and constructing critical action through group narratives.

#### *4.2.1.1. Engaging in strategic thinking for reflection action*

In the previous discussion on workshop session 2E, we explored how teacher Yen used the convention of “compound stimulus” for the participants to conduct an investigation through Jennifer’s school bag in order to identify the problems that she encountered after she came to Taiwan. As all the discoveries in the school bag linked to the participants’ situations, the investigation turned out to be an internal dialogue with the fictional character. This kind of emotional engagement clearly laid a very essential ground for the reflective action that follows: it “prepares” the participants for the target issue under investigation. That is to say, the emotional engagement necessitates critical reflection (Heathcote, 1980).

In 4.1.3, the previous discussion on session 2E, the participants’ summaries of Jennifer’s problems and possible solutions for her situations have been explored from the perspective of metaxical engagement. Here in this section, we will examine the inquiry process that participants undertook in developing the summaries and solution. This inquiry process is mostly conducted as a group dialogue, and shall be examined as a community of practice which is constructed through the interactions among group members.

*(Group 1 examining the test papers found in Jennifer’s school bag)*

*Teacher Yen:* Who was in charge of this? What did you find? Who did this?

*Student 1:* She just guessed the answers.

*Teacher Yen:* So how do you think? Can she understand or not?

*Student 2:* She can’t understand (it).

*Teacher Yen:* Cannot. And it's something about different subjects or she just made a guess about every subject?

*Student 2:* Every subject.

*Teacher Yen:* Even English?

*Student 2:* Yes.

*Teacher Yen:* Is it wrong?

*Student 3:* (*Searching through the test papers*) Maybe not English.

*Student 2:* Has some (information)!

*Teacher Yen:* (*Reading from the group's note*) we guessed that she is not paying attention to class? That's very good.

As discussed in **4.1.2.3 (Mode 2)**, as all the participants just went through the same monthly test a day ago, they stepped into the fictional character's situation immediately when they found the test papers in her school bag. Through this **common link with the character**, the participants searched for clues in the test papers they found, and explored possible problems in the character's situation. "She just guessed the answers," and the further explanation of this "guess" is that "she can't understand it." Note here that the student's explanation of the situation is not about the failure in academic preparation for the subject, but a more personal projection into the fictional character's situation: she might have difficulty "understanding" what was required during the test. This understanding is of course triggered by the previous emotional projection enabled through various drama activities, as explored in **4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3**, and is indeed an intercultural dialogue that leads to a further investigation into the problem Jennifer might have been encountering: "...she is not paying attention to the class..."

The second group then identified another problem through their search of evidence.

(*Group 2 examining journal from Jennifer's school bag*)

*Teacher Yen:* She does not like to go to school? **Why you think that?**

*Student 4:* The drawing (*of the teacher as a Martian*) is all over the book.

*Teacher Yen:* OK, there's a lot of drawing all over the book. So you think she cannot understand what the teacher was saying in the class? OK. And she can't understand what the teacher was saying **because**?

*Student 4:* **Because** of this picture (turning the paper to the other side to show the teacher as a Martian). Mars, the teacher came from Mars. And we think she is violent. She wrote "I beat you!" all over the book.

*Teacher Yen:* And she becomes very violent?

*Student 5:* And **we found** her taking drugs.

*Teacher Yen:* Is it drugs? Or medicines?? I think the correct thing is medicine? (approaching the group for the evidence).

*Student 5:* Hydrochloride?

Here the dialogue between the facilitator and the participants is the one that inspires the initial step of critical thinking in the drama process: questions that probe into the evidence, and answers that lead to more probing under the surface of the problems. Furthermore, this process of inquiry was developed in a dialectic manner between the facilitator and the participants: an observation provided is furthered by an urge for another in-depth observation. As illustrated, the observation that 'she does not like to go to school' would be furthered by "why you think that?" which is in turn answered with another observation: "(t)he drawing (*of the teacher as a Martian*) is all over the book." In this way, a reflexive loop of inquiry is constructed by all members undertaking the dialogue.

The third example illustrates yet another pattern of group interaction. In stead of presenting list of discoveries, the leader from this group summarized their findings with a clear rationale (my boldfaces).

(Group 3)

*Student 6: (Summarizing, not reading from his list)* After we read all the letters we wrote to her, **we found** that everyone welcomes her to come to Taiwan, and, **but she might be confused because**

she doesn't know any one of us **so why are we** writing letters to her?

*Teacher Yen:* Student 6 has said a very important point. All of her classmates have wrote a letter to welcome her, maybe the problem is that **she might not know why**.

*Student 6:* **Also, because** in lots of letters we wrote that we want to be her friends, and these words **might make her remember** the friends she had in Thailand.

*Teacher Yen:* Student 6 said but the friend things like a linking thing, suddenly she remembered her friends in Thailand. You know. It's very important that you have friends in your age.

*Student 6:* **And also** for her Taiwan seems to be a foreign country for her to live in, and **also** she can speak or write, or even read in Chinese. **So this might cause** a lot of problems. **Can you hear her (him)?** She thinks Taiwan is quite strange, it's like a foreign country, **because** she cannot read, cannot write.

Here Student 6 (the leader from group 3) is not merely presenting discoveries, he is also presenting his rationale through observation of Jennifer's situations, by using strong cause-and-effect words such as "because" "so" "also" and "this might cause..." His final urge to the class, "(c)an you hear her?" addresses the problem in an emotional way as he was actually appealing to all participants who have been conducting the same kind of inquiry with him.

Dialogic inquiry of this nature prompts a sequence of reflective action: the participants study the phenomenon, search for clues, identify problems, find explanation for the problems, and suggest solutions. Through this investigation process, each group identified a certain perspective in the situation of the fictional character: respectively, language and communication, interpersonal relationship, academic achievement, and family connection. In the following section, a second level of community practice will be explored.

#### *4.2.1.2. Collaborative knowledge building from research activities*

In workshop session **2C**, each group started to approach Jennifer's situation from a more broad perspective. The participants then viewed *The Day after Tomorrow*, a **film that** depicts a fictional tsunami disaster in a devastating scale. After the viewing session, all participating groups ran internet research on the following arenas: the causes of tsunami, the consequences of the disasters shown with photos from the news, and reports on three real stories from the media. The participants then presented the research findings, followed by a discussion on the pros and cons of human action to the environment.

As the sense of urgency to the fictional character's situation is brought to the attention of the participants, it is through the collaborating process of the knowledge building that we discern a co-constructing of group effort. The research activities serves as a demonstration of how each individual construct meanings in this environment. The research journey helps to set the stage for an understanding of the issues from the global perspectives, prepare and fuel and content base to a further exploration of the Jennifer's problems, built and generated heightened degree of awareness, and further the sense of commitment to the construction of group identity.

All group activities and projects in educational arena would go through a similar kind of collaborating process, in which negotiating and conflict resolution are necessary steps in an endeavour to arrive at a group consensus. Here in a drama praxis, the awareness of the community is developed in a two-folds process: through an emotional engaging journey, as explored in sections **4.1.1~4.1.3** in this chapter, and through the constant mediating effort between all group members. The willingness to mediate within the group is further generated from the identification with the group and a critical reflection of the outcome of the group consensus.



The second factor that is informed by this activity is the active partnership that each individual developed with one another. Through mediation, they identified factors to the problems, and suggested possible solutions. Rather than staying as passive language learners, each participant listened, interacted, discussed, debated, questioned, negotiated, and mediated with one another in the process of discussion. Language, in this sense, helps to situate the learning experience in the real world: it is the medium through which the participants found shared values and re-construct meanings.

#### *4.2.1.3. Constructing critical action through group narratives.*

Through the previous stages of investigating, exploring, researching, and interacting, the participants further deepen the frame of reference by taking an even active position in the meaning making process. After identifying possible factors in Jennifer's story, each group was asked to develop scenes that depict the past, the present and the ten-year-from-now future of the story.

In session 2F, before the enactment of these scenes, each group presented the storyline, and explained their perception of the situation. Each storyline recreate the moments with structure developed by each group. Each presentation was then followed by a forum that discussed the reasons in the choice of moments. Two excerpts are presented in the following:

(Group 1)

*Student 1: (Reading from draft)*

**Storyline:**

Jennifer comes to school and she introduced herself in English to the class, but no one understands that. And nobody understands she is lonely, and she goes to find the teacher and ask for help. Teacher told her that maybe you can teach them English and they can teach you Chinese. And she

becomes better. But the two best students get her into trouble, she fell again. But she stands up on herself this time.

*Teacher Mei:* What kinds of trouble? And everyone stands up? What is the reason you chose this decision?

*Student 1: (Reading from draft)* Why do we choose the relationship? Because relationship is very important on learning. She couldn't (work) well without her good friends. Good relationship can help us solve problems.

(For)the second question: why do we choose this solution? Because of the strange environment, but the second time she can solve the problem by herself. That means it improves a lot.

(Group 2)

*Student 2: (Reading from draft)*

**Storyline:**

Jennifer was in Chinese class, and she could not understand it, and she felt very boring and fell asleep, And the teacher got English because teacher thinks she might understand that. And we'll use some Chinese in this show.

*Teacher Mei:* How did you deal with the problem?

*Student 2:* The problem...that some classmates have good English conversation and the teacher helps her to learn Chinese. We will help her.

*Teacher Mei:* Why did you choose the solution?

*Student 2:* Because she lived in Thailand that she always speaks English. But when she comes to Taiwan, it's like a foreign country that she could not speak Chinese very well. So she can make friends or...(Teacher Mei: her academic learning?)

*Teacher Mei:* So why did you choose that the students work together to help her?

*Student 2:* Why? Because friends and classmates need to help each other.

*Teacher Mei: (Repeating)* "Because friends and classmates need to help each other." Very good.

### 4.2.2. Summary of Part 2

All narratives carry with them an identity constructed or co-constructed by narrators involved. The narratives here are presented with a more intense momentum, in that they are outcome of intensive processes of questioning, discussion, writing, negotiating, mediating, recreating, and representing with all narrators. In other words, unlike storytelling in a general sense, the narratives here are inquiry and outcome of dialectical inquiry process. Students initiated this inquiry by stepping into roles through emotional projection/identification, and building beliefs through embodied learning (4.1.1), multilayered interactions (4.1.2), and metaxical engagement (4.1.3). In this sense narrative becomes a powerful learning experience for all members involved. In the process sense of connection and identity to the characters and to the group is developed and further strengthened reciprocally through every interaction in the narrative. Moreover, as collaborative critical action toward the problems is presented (4.2.1), narrative raises the level of dramatic engagement and excitement. In other words, the participants “live” in and through the narrative. They took interests in the community of practice, and share the felt responsibility that arouses in the process.

### 4.3 Summary of findings in Chapter 4

This chapter examined the development and patterns of learning experience in the drama workshop. This learning experience transformed the language learning setting into a dynamic context in which all participants developed an active partnership with one another and construct critical meaning. Analysis of the four dimensions in the patterns of interaction informs the findings of this study:

1. Theatre praxis creates a milieu for the development of critical action and reflection;
2. Embodied learning experience triggers re-examination of the relationship between self and others;
3. Multilayered interactions prompt a constant dialectical process;
4. Metaxical engagement enables dialogicality, flexibility and mobility in intercultural encounters;
5. Collaborative meaning-making process helps to construct a cultural production in foreign language classroom.

These five perspectives of the drama praxis will be explored in the next chapter.

## Chapter 5

### Further Analysis and Insights into the Drama Experience

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#### 5.0 Overview of the chapter

The discussion in Chapter 4 examined how the 7th- and the 8th- grade English learners develop awareness of self-other relationship in the drama praxis. By emotionally engaging in the drama, participants developed critical understanding and construct reflective action. This chapter discusses the research findings in relation to the research questions of the study, namely:

- **How does the process drama approach facilitate a reflective space for EFL learners?**
- **How is the critical intercultural awareness generated in the drama process?**

The findings of this research suggest the following list of significance:

1. Theatre praxis creates a milieu for the development of critical action and reflection;
2. Embodied learning experience triggers re-examination of the relationship between self and others;
3. Multilayered interactions prompts a constant dialectical process;
4. Metaxical engagement enables dialogicality, flexibility and mobility in intercultural encounters;
5. Collaborative meaning-making process helps to construct a cultural production in foreign language classroom.

The presentation and discussion of these findings in this chapter will be followed with a Critical Intercultural Awareness (CIA ) framework through which it is argued that the critical education emerges.

### **5.1 Theatre praxis creates a milieu for the development of critical action and reflection**

The term “praxis” is used by Freire(1970) to denote a critical cycle of action, reflection, and action. It needs to be mentioned that, although this critical notion of praxis delineates the necessity of action and reflection, it does not necessarily lead to direct social transformation. Wallerstein and Bernstein (1988) indicate that “action” can be understood as critical consciousness against oppression. Following this perspective, a “praxis” is taken here as a process through which critical awareness is enlightened.

On the primary level, the theatre praxis in this workshop enabled the participants to go through a variety of experiences in which action and reflection were constructed in a critical way. These experiences involved kinesthetic expression, individual/group scene construction, freeze-frame, teacher-in-role, hot-seating, research activities, forum theatre, story-telling, and even role-taking activities. These experiences served as the bedrock and points of interest for the participants to conduct a series of inquiry activities, which include: questioning, taking risks, making inquiries, negotiating, mediating, and meaning-making. It can also be interpreted that it was the emotional engagement in drama that provided the drive for the participants to go through the inquiry process. The structure of drama process defined a space in which the thread for the development of critical action emerged and was followed in a natural way.

Furthermore, this praxis developed in a reciprocal way. The reciprocity took place not only between all teachers and participants, but also between different elements inherent in a drama experience. Story built a linear track for

happenings, imagination motivated the participants to project and identify with characters and dramatic situations, tensions created uncertainty and anxiety to intrigue the development of further action, spontaneity in dramatic engagement prompted participants to move between reality and the fictional world at ease, and improvisations helped to break the constraint of cultural boundaries and create flexibility and mobility in interpersonal encountering.

To deepen the understanding of the complexities in this praxis, van Manen (1990) argues that we experience the world through four existentials: lived body (corporeality), lived space (spatiality), lived time (temporality), and lived other (relationality) (van Manen, 1990, p.101). Corporeality suggests that we always experience the world via body, and reveal or conceal something about ourselves through body. Lived space and time, as opposed to objective time and physical space, are felt space and time that change according to our views of the world. Lived other is the lived relation that we remain with others in the shared interpersonal space. In such sense, our theatre experience served as opportunity for us to reflect on the existential concept of the self in encountering others. The reflexivity in the relationship between self and others, to this end, was made possible in this engagement of “invisible” dialogue.

The complexities in theatre praxis have been discussed in the previous chapter through an analysis of the interactions between individuals, and within a variety of situations, activities, and projects (see sections 4.1.2, 4.1.3 and 4.2.1 in Chapter 4). These settings and activities worked together to create a “milieu” where individual constructed meanings.

## **5.2 Embodied learning experience triggers re-examination of the relationship between self and others**

### **Re-examination of the self-other relationship**

In the process of drama, the participants engaged in a variety of drama activities, including walks, flows, freeze-frames, group images, role plays and games such as tag and charade, as analyzed in the first part of Chapter 4. For drama, these

activities worked on the exploration of bodily movements with a purpose of developing kinesthetic awareness through subjective experiences. The elements of game and plays injected a spirit of fun and excitement into these experiences, and as such these activities were often taken as indispensable to the development of education drama.

For our subjects who engaged in the experience as language learners, we observed several dimensions of significance in such experiences. Firstly, drama praxis initiates bodily enactment as one of the major means of expressions. Drama games, tableaux, role-playing, and short drama presentations employ physical movements and kinesthetic representation. The particularity of this new experience thus pushed the participants to develop a new set of non-verbal vocabulary, which would become their major means of expressing ideas in the drama process. This new set of vocabulary was not only manifested through spatial and bodily interactions, but also transmitted through semiotic signs, which then are acts of cultural practice. To meet this demand, a development of another set of vocabulary actually means re-locating common cultural grounds with all co-participants, and a process of reconstructing cultural identity.

In this context, finding a “new” mode of self-expression and communication thus becomes a significant learning moment: in order to step away from the heavy dependence on verbal expression, the participants need to engage in the process of “turning inward”, “listening to own voice”, and “transferring through semiotic signs” - in other words, a process of self-reflection. This process is indeed a process of deconstruction, and the finding of a new set of vocabulary for expression is a re-constructing one. For all participants involved, to generate meanings from subjective experience through such semiotic signs and make them understandable to others might mean a necessity to develop another mode of shared vocabulary to complete the transferring process.

Taking Bakhtin’s view of language as one part of utterance which implies an interplay of perspectives between *self* and *other* (Bakhtin, 1986), as explored in 2.1.2.3, our data shows that, through the effort of developing a new set of vocabulary for the expression and communication, the participants were indeed



engaging in a journey of re-examination, made possible through the interplay of various experiences in the drama process. The journey thus challenged the habitual concept of the self, and necessitates a re-examination of the self-other relationship which used to depend mainly on verbal communication. The process of deconstruction and re-construction thus released the language learners from the indulgence in passive, desk-and-chair, lecture-and-test learning styles in the conventional language classrooms.

### **Self-other relationship defined and redefined: a constant interplay**

The participants walked around the floor, adjusting spacing between each other, searching for a positioning of oneself in regard to constant changing in spatial relationship with others in the process. From time to time they stretched and touched one another, feeling the momentum passing around through physical contacts. They watched, listened to and felt the signals passing to them from others in a variety of ways: through gazes exchanged when they crossed each other during the *flow*, through power of hands from squeezes passed on from one to the other, from stumps others triggered. They moved according to rhythm that others created and responded in a reciprocal way henceforward. At one moment they were probing into the emotional realm of co-participant for transposition of meaning, at another they themselves pressed into an articulation of their own similar emotional experience through semiotic tools.

The participants were thus engaging in a journey of discovery in which a different perception of the relationship between self and others unfolded. As their movements corresponded and were affected by others' movements, or as each one's interpretation of a narrative supported the others during development of group image, they were able to re-situate themselves in relation to others. In the constant shaping and re-shaping of spatial *flow* activities, moreover, in the process of making individual effort to construct group images, they were able to see not only the inter-relationship between each individual but also between each individual as a part of a group and the group as a whole. More importantly, this journey of discovery progressed through an on-going, reciprocal interplay between participants, each one of them conversely affected another; in other

words, even that position/perspective in relation to others was constantly defined, challenged, and thus redefined.

In the process a new possibility of seeing oneself in terms of others emerged, a possibility for recognition of what Merleau-Ponty (1962) terms as the “dimensionality” for the perception of self in regard to others, made possible through bodily experience. In Merleau-Ponty’s view, the essence of perception lies in the awareness that meaning is relational to context and conditions, which in return is dependent on the perspective *I* adopt to approach objects and people other than *I*. The relativity derives from the recognition that a variety of possibility is provided in this perception: as the way *I* move is always in relation to others (objects or people), *I* also am able to shift in between different perspectives. In this sense, “...meaning is not in relation to “what is”, but rather to the ways in which things might have been otherwise” (Mills, 2005, p. 3).

The existence of self would be justified through an awareness of the dimensionality of perception. “All existence is situated existence. I exist as a subject insofar as I maintain myself in distinction from the objects of my world. And there can only be objects in a world at all because I, as the subject, can say, ‘I am here in relation to them’” (Mills, 2005, p. 3). This perception is produced in a process that goes between *I* the subject and *them* the object—or to be precise, between *I*, the seer, taking the subjective stance, and *I* as the objective seen by the subjective *I*. To be able to see the objective *I* as opposed to the view of the subjective *I*, involves a process of seeing oneself both from the inside and the outside, which delineates a dynamic relationship between the subjective *I* and the objective *I*, made possible through a close working with the *others*. Barral (1993) describes the inter-dependency thus resulted as follows:

I must first revert back to myself: who, or what am I? I am a subject, but one who has a nature which is, at once, interior and exterior to me. My exterior is visible to others as theirs is visible to me. My interior is not transcendent or disengaged from my body. (p.156).

Such process incurred an understanding of the world. In Barral’s words, “the body is both the perceiver and the perceived, the unifier and the unified, in the

gradual taking possession of the world, and in the progressive unfolding of meaning, from childhood on" (1993, p. 155).

Merleau-Ponty's concept of self-other relationship endorses a further dimension of this experience: in the on-going, reciprocal process of seeing oneself in relation to others, the self also receives multiple messages from others and construct new meaning in turn. The speaking subject, therefore, through the power of expression, is able to draw from the available meaning and in turn, through them, constitute a new meaning.

### **5.3 Multilayered interactions prompts a constant dialectical process**

The "dimensionality of perception" discussed above is furthered through the patterns of multilayered interactions in the drama praxis. The multilayered interactions denote recognition of a web of relationship in the drama space. Such web of relationship refers more to the implicit/psychological domain in the social role each participant undertakes in such process. Moreno's theory of roles for psychodrama (1953) enlightens us on the interconnectedness in the working of "role-taking" in performative acts. The five categories of roles in a social drama, namely *stage*, *protagonist*, *auxiliaries*, *director*, and *audience*, serves as tools to view the dimensionality in drama. The stage sets a structural framework for the development of drama, and all other roles define the variety of interpersonal relationship. In the situation of a social drama, these roles alternate as the situation demands, wherein there develops a constant tension in the confrontation of different roles.

In a process drama, however, the tension between role functions is generated from a different perspective: the tension is injected through the necessity to switch role function for each participant. As discussed in section 4.1.2, the participants took up and switched roles at every moment of interpersonal confrontation. Moreno (1946/1980) proposes three modes of role-switching, *doubling*, *role reversal*, and *mirroring*, each defines a different degree of projection

and identification with the roles. Through *doubling*, the protagonist puts aside her own perspective and adopts the perspective of another role. Through the *role reversal* process, the protagonist enacts another role and in so doing she becomes emphatic with the role and develops a heightened awareness of the re-created situation. Through the *mirroring* mode, the protagonist reflects on the happening of other roles from a distance and thus develops a meta-cognitive perspective of the situation. All three modes of role-switching serve as different perspective to understand self-other relationship. In our study, these three modes of role-switching were constantly visible in the interplay of various experiences (see discussion in 4.1.2 and 4.1.3). In other words, the experience of understanding the self-other relationship was made possible through an on-going, reciprocal process of stimulation, interaction, and reflection from the nonverbal, sensory elements the drama provided.

In this drama praxis, as the switching of roles functions has become the state of interaction at all times, each participant was able to develop a heightened awareness of the existence of the otherness. It was made possible through an ongoing process of questioning and challenging existed conditions. That is to say, each participant was actually conducting a process of dialectic inquiry in the drama praxis. Heathcote (1980) indicates that the inquiry is possible through “frame distance”, which emerges through tension between role functions. This idea and effect of distancing, especially the kind generated through an aesthetic experience, links to our discussion in the next section.

#### **5.4 Metaxical engagement enables dialogicality, flexibility and mobility in intercultural encounters**

Aesthetic distance between audience and stage is an inherent element and also a key factor in a theatre event. This element enables the audience to believe and not to believe at the same time (Jackson, 2007, p 140). Brecht uses the concept of “distancing” effect (estrangement, or *Verfremdungseffekt*) as a conscious device to raise political awareness (Brooker, 1994). In our study, we approached this concept from Boal’s idea of “metaxis” (Boal, 1995, pp. 42-44), as discussed in

section 4.1.3. Eriksson (2011) summarises two major functions of this “distancing” effect in educational theatre, one is to protect the participants from emotional identification with the fictive role/situation, and the other one is to provide a detached angle for critical reflection. Eriksson further indicates that, in order to create and maintain this “distancing” effect, an emotional engagement has to work in the first place. In Heathcote’s theory (Heathcote, 1980), this emotional engagement coincides and co-exists with critical detachment in an educational praxis. In our discussion, we deciphered complex patterns of interplay between the real world, the fictional world, and the space in-between. This interplay was made possible through the multilayered interactions in the drama praxis, as discussed in section 4.1.2.

#### How does de-familiarization process work in metaxis?

The significance of this effect in our study, nevertheless, lies in the “outcome” of this metaxical engagement. In going through different modes of metaxical engagement, the participant’s subjective and the objective roles shift and change in every moment of interaction. This is also to say the temporal, the spatial, the corporeal and the relational modes of the existential (van Manen, 1990, p.101) among all participants are shifting constantly. The participants in this experience are simultaneously situating the “inside” (as part of “we”) and the “outside” (at a distance from the other) modes (Gurevitch, 1988, p. 1188). Gurevitch explains that this can be seen as a split between two parts of the self: the “observing self,” which is experienced as external to what is going on, and the “participating self,” which is experienced as being in the situation or even being the situation. This metaxical engagement itself is a process of de-familiarization, in which the “observing” self views the “participating” self with objectivity, and while the other becomes distant and strange, it triggers a new inquiry for the “observing” self. In other words, the process of metaxical engagement enables a dialogic inquiry between the two *selves* (i.e., the observing self and the participating self).

To view this metaxical engagement from a another perspective, this de-familiarisation process could also take place in the situation between self and others. As we define the others in terms of “our self”, seeing the other as distant and

strange, “our self” is no longer the person, but “the other”(Bakhtin, 1986, p 137). Bakhtin argues that this dialogic interplay helps to raise our consciousness and awareness, which can take place only through contact with others.

An examination of the happenings in our drama praxis furthered this view on the working of duality of familiarity and strangeness. Considering the tempo, rhythm, frequency, and the scope in the change and shifting of perspectives, to cope with the mode of change, the participants would need to adjust their perspective accordingly. This is to say, each participant will need to let go of her own view points, in order to cope with the change, so as to enter the realm of another role. In this way, the fixed role is questioned and challenged, and a reflection on the fixed conditions is initiated.

## **5.5 Developing a critical intercultural awareness framework**

I have described and conceptualized the four dimensions of the patterns of interaction in the drama praxis. From the analysis and interpretations in Chapter 4 and in this chapter, I tried to present a line of inquiry through the collaborative and dialogic interactions in the drama praxis. In this last part of the discussion of the drama experience, I would like to propose a framework that summarises our discussion in this chapter as follows:

### **The milieu: facilitation of a theatre praxis**

The concept of the drama/theatre praxis entails a range of experiences, including mostly symbolic and imagined activities. However, the significance in facilitating drama praxis in the language classroom lies in the fact that the process provides opportunity for the learners to engage in a journey of selecting, reflecting, meditating, de-constructing, and reconstructing of meanings. To be more specific, drama praxis provides and enforces a reflective process all the way through. This reflective process so affected, in turn, enables all participants to raise awareness firstly through physical and kinesthetic relationship with others, runs from spatial, bodily to psychological understanding of interpersonal/ intrapersonal relationship. In other words, the emotional reflection through this

process triggers the conscious re-constructing learning experience.

### **The filtering lens: a lived experience through drama**

Secondly, the drama/theatre praxis serves as a filtering lens through which the participants engage in a constant re-defining process. In every single moment of the praxis, the shifting and ever-changing interpersonal/intrapersonal relationship is furthered through “dimensionality of perception,” which in turn is made possible through the variety of roles, or role switching, possible only in the imagined domains of drama. The flexibility in role-taking here entails a co-existing condition of *self* and *others*. Furthermore, as the drama praxis also denotes a co-existing condition between the real, the fictional and the in-between, the process triggers a distanced perspective, which is again made possible through the needs for constant de-constructing and re-constructing of meanings. Such experience is filtering in the sense that it necessitates that the participants let go of the self-centeredness in order to be flexible at all times. A de-familiarization process starts to work in the metaxis (the in-between), and thus help the participants construct a critical stance or perspective. The process itself, again, is a cyclical one through questioning, mediating, reflecting, and meaning making. Most importantly, each individual participating in such process is endowed with equal rights for his voice, and is in turn affected by the meaning co-constructed with other participants. In this sense, the drama praxis itself can be said to be a cultural practice.

### **Proposed outcome of theatre praxis : Critical intercultural awareness (CIA)**

The outcome of the theatre praxis can then be summarised as follows:

1. Fixation on knowledge, emotions, relationship, and perspectives are constantly challenged as the participant shifts, renounces, deconstruct, and re-construct;
2. Each individual has agency in affecting the process;
3. Each agency in the process is in turn triggered by others;
4. The space for the development of such dialogue is mediated by all participants involved;
5. New meaning is constructed through this dialogic interaction;
6. Each individual becomes the reshaping agency in the process, re-enforcing

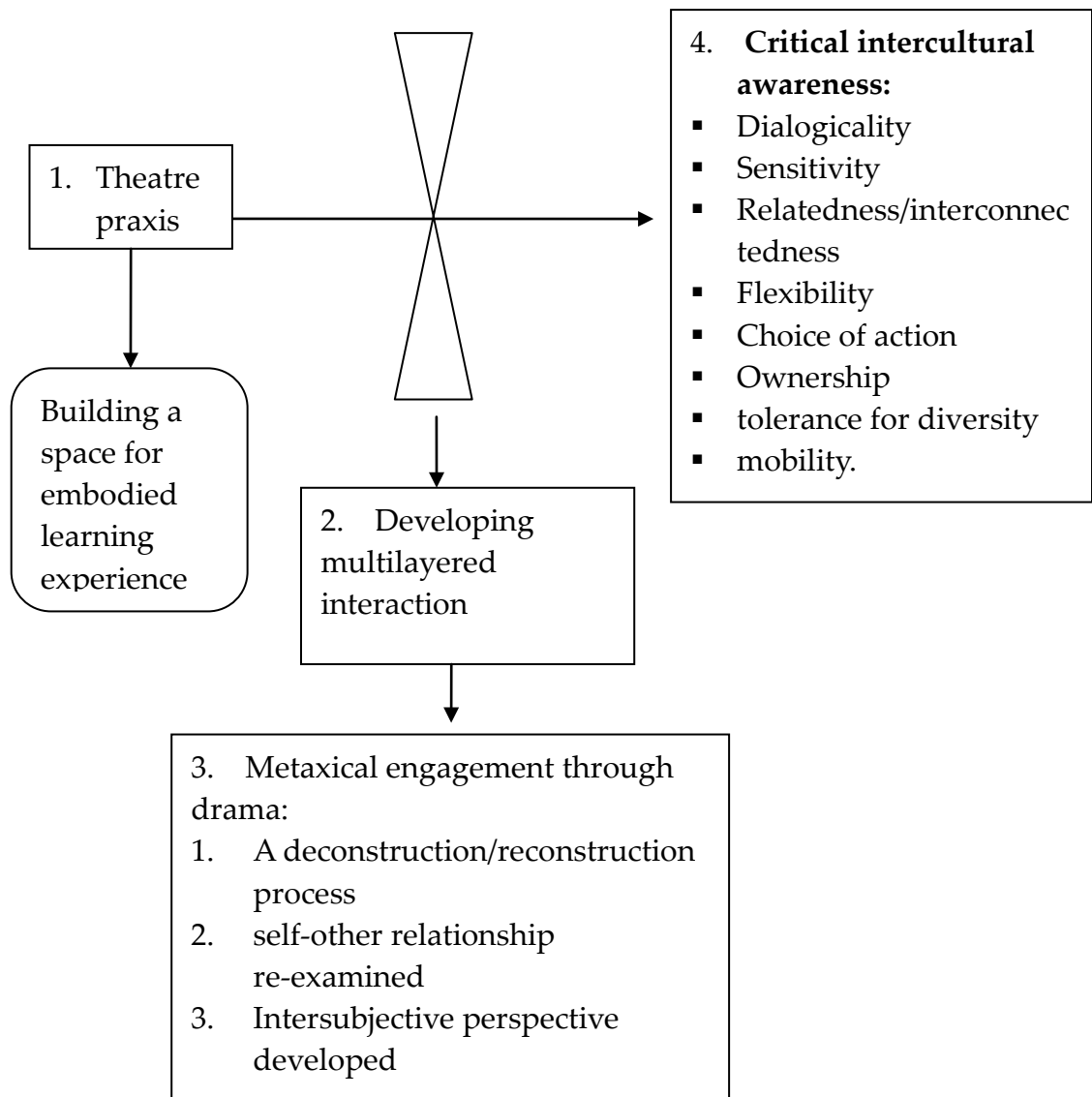
the transformative nature of human activity.

The drama process functions as a process of develop intersubjectivity in an intercultural situation. The intersubjectivity denotes a reciprocal working of mediation through conflicts, tensions, and collision between subjects, yet the working is not only dialogic but also dynamic. Through the ongoing, reciprocal interplay between the reality, the fictional world, and the space in-between, metaxical engagement enables the participants to let go attachment and fixation, and develop the capability to conduct reflective, critical action. A diagram that illustrates the interconnectedness of the elements discussed above is presented on the following page.



**Diagram 5-1:**

A framework/model for developing critical intercultural awareness developed through drama praxis



## 5.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the significance of the drama praxis has been analyzed from five perspectives, i.e.,

1. Theatre praxis creates a milieu for the development of critical action and reflection;
2. Embodied learning experience triggers re-examination of the relationship between self and others;
3. Multilayered interactions prompts a constant dialectical process;
4. Metaxical engagement enables dialogicality, flexibility and mobility in intercultural encounters;
5. Collaborative meaning-making process helps to construct a cultural production in foreign language classroom.

Together these five dimensions comprise a framework for developing *critical intercultural awareness*. In this framework so constructed, the five dimensions worked in a reciprocal way and also as an integrated network. The foreign language learning experience serves as a contact zone in which the SELF is deconstructed and reconstructed through a constant interplay and negotiation of meaning with the OTHER. The analysis revealed how drama created a milieu for the participants to engage, to negotiate, and co-construct meanings with SELF and Others from critical perspectives.

In the next chapter, a discussion of the significance and implication of this research will be addressed.

## Chapter 6

# Conclusion and Implications

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### 6.0 Overview of the chapter

The discussion in the previous two chapters has explored and analyzed the process of developing critical intercultural awareness through a process drama syllabus and the meaning emerged in such journey for EFL learners. This chapter will then present the conclusions of and reflections on this research. I will start with a review of the study, and then give a reflection on the findings and implications. Finally, I will present some suggestions for further research.

### 6.1 Review of the study

In this study I was looking for the reality of using process drama syllabus as pedagogy to help EFL learners develop critical intercultural awareness and the reciprocal impact of the awareness thus developed on their language learning experience. In **Prologue**, I raised questions which focused on three main aspects of the issue:

**How would a process drama syllabus help EFL learners develop critical intercultural awareness?**

Under this umbrella, three sub-questions were then explored:

1. **What does it mean to develop critical intercultural awareness in the EFL classroom?**
2. **How does the process drama approach facilitate a reflective space for EFL learners?**
3. **How is the critical intercultural awareness generated in the drama process?**

Primarily, I was concerned with finding the paths of development in the dialogic space the process drama approach facilitates for EFL learners. I was trying to understand the effect of using different dramatic methods or approaches for the language learning experience and the possible patterns of interaction in such practice.

Secondly, I am interested in the effectiveness of such drama process that helps to generate the critical intercultural awareness which would provide a solid foundation in intercultural encounters in using the target language.

Lastly, I was trying to understand the impact of such critical intercultural awareness on the EFL learners.

To address these questions, I started the study with a presentation of the motivation, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and an overview of the thesis in **Prologue**. I then moved on to an investigation of the historical context of ELT education and identified the political and social factors underlining the ambivalent attitude toward English learning of Taiwanese people (**Chapter 1**). In doing so, I aimed to indicate and distill the misconceptions of current EFL education in Taiwan that addresses predominantly the linguistic components in ELT while neglecting the hidden agenda of cultural-social-political issues in such practice. While providing a

discussion in major cultural, social and educational theories, I formulated a line of inquiry into the tenets of educational drama theories which guided me to a development of a process drama model (**Chapter 2**).

The general dramatic methods/approaches of applying imagined and symbolic materials this drama model proposed enabled me to facilitate a study with 27 junior high school students in central Taiwan. In **Chapter 3**, I discussed the key concepts of the action research, and elaborated the methods to collect, analyze, and interpret the data, which consisted primarily of video documentation of the project and participants' written assignments. Thematic analysis approach was then adopted to interpret the data.

In **Chapter 4**, I examined and interpreted the interactive patterns of engagement through the drama syllabus in the English language classroom. The analysis revealed how drama created a mental space for the participants to engage, to negotiate, and co-construct meanings with SELF and Others from a critical perspective. This transforming process was able to emerge because of what is common in drama approaches: drama allows its members to conduct an "experiential and sensuous processing of experienced, imagined and symbolic material (Guss, 2000; cited in Rasmussen & Wright, 2001), which, according to Rasmussen & Wright, emerges "through a cyclical process of selecting, mediating and expressing the chosen ideas/text in a visible form" (Rasmussen & Wright, 2001, p.9).

Such syllabus moves away from the normative track of foreign language teaching in Taiwan and challenges the pre-set boundaries in cultural encounters. The qualitative data demonstrated how such space for the "crossing-over" of restrictions on learning allows the language learners to develop flexibility and mobility through a freedom in the choice of action endowed upon them by the drama syllabus. In **Chapter 5**, I explored further of the meaning and significance in this process of emancipation and demonstrated the effect of using drama as vehicle to bring forth intercultural

understanding in the language learning experience. Evidence further showed that, when freedom in the choice of action was granted in the drama experience, language learners activated a group momentum that drove them toward a second-level search for cohesiveness within and beyond the groups.

Taken together, the narrative of the drama praxis developed an insight into the ways drama worked as an active tool, as well as a process of inquiry, and a reflective praxis which empowered the language learners to develop a critical intercultural awareness. The foreign language learning experience serves as a contact zone in which the SELF is deconstructed and reconstructed through a constant interplay and negotiation of meaning with the OTHER. The drama syllabus and approaches furthered this inter-space experience, deepened the impact of encountering the OTHER, and thus enabled the process of recognizing and re-strengthening of one's own cultural identity.

In postulating a framework for the development of critical intercultural awareness through process drama syllabus, I seek to contribute to a paradigm shift in EFL education practice and policy that would facilitate learners in a more meaning making context, as follows.

## **6.2 Implications for EFL practice and policy in Taiwan**

Belief in the magic power of English as a global language for the global citizens contributes to the nation's striving to enter the international stage for economical profits as well as political positioning, and vice versa. As reviewed in **Chapter 1**, there is ambivalence between the urge to achieve the objectives of ELT as a part of the process of internationalisation, and the struggle to decide the best ways in which to implement the programme to achieve such goal. While it is important to bring to light how the market forces in education sacrifice the benefit of the majority of pupils for that of a limited social group, it is just as

vital to find a way in which the nation is able to strengthen its identity in every step of internationalization.

Currently, the EFL practice in Taiwan is strongly directed by the policy that emphasizes the GEPT test results as indicators of English language proficiency from junior high school level above. If we come back to genuine spirit of language learning as a medium of human communication, proficiency in English should not be represented by a long list of vocabulary and drills, and the goal of internationalisation in promoting EFL practice on a national level should go far beyond mere acquisition of the four language skills. The paradigm shift in ELT that I thus advocate aims primarily for a holistic, humanistic education experience that will help our students to develop the kind of reflectivity on their interrelationship with the people and environment around them.

Secondly, the research indicates a need for the EFL educators to allow for a critical pedagogy approach in the foreign language classroom. As discussed in **Chapters 1 and 2**, as informed by the line of theories from Bakhtin and Freire, the EFL educators, and policy makers alike, should give rooms for cultivation of more critical minded learners through encountering of difference cultures in the language learning experiences. The learners should be provided with opportunities to recognize, develop, and respond to messages embedded in each cultural contact. In other words, every moment in the language learning process should become space for intercultural education in which competences in cross-cultural/inter-cultural communication can be developed. As Byram argues, it is “only through critical cultural awareness that FLT can claim to contribute to learners’ general education and development” (1997, p.63). The evidence in the research demonstrated that, when given appropriate opportunities, the EFL learners are able to develop critical intercultural awareness which in turn help the learners to generate critical intercultural consciousness.

### 6.3 Recommendations for further research

As Taylor suggests, “reflection happens not only before and after the performed event but informs the event itself” (Taylor, 1996, p.30). While I was observing my research subjects going through a transforming journey, I was also conducting a cyclical process of action-reflection-action, which was enabled by the very same process of deconstructing and reconstructing of meaning the students were going through. While interpreting the evidence emerging from the data, I found myself an identical “metaxical” perspective about my role as a researcher. This critical stance developed through the analytical procedure enabled me to constantly reflect on not just what the participants presented, but also what their experiences informed me of what I am.

I recognize, however, that my research contains both limitations and strengths. There are several issues that should be considered for future research.

The first relates to the continuity of intercultural approaches in EFL curriculum. In order to address the question of “what ought to be done,” evidence will be more effective if we can observe the facilitation of any intercultural syllabus for longer period of time. In this regard, we could involve more subjects in the process of research and hope for a more lasting impact on the participants, teachers and students alike.

Secondly, the interviews with the participants and the teachers can be extended to students from other schools in different areas of Taiwan; the interviews with teachers carried out here would need to be analysed and serve as a basis for further work. Such analysis may provide supports for a further analysis of the pressing issues concerning EFL practices in Taiwan.



Furthermore, a study that addresses the EFL teachers' general beliefs that bring impact on their practice will definitely help to move this quest forward.

This study is only a beginning. It is my hope that it will provide a critical perspective on the possibilities we as educators can bring forth to our students. Intercultural education and critical intercultural awareness, in this regard, will not only further the language learning experience but also help to deepen the impact of such process.

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## Appendix (i): Workshop proposal to MEHS (*in Chinese*)

### MEHS 英語戲劇探索營 計畫 2004/12

#### (一) 計畫目的：

1. 透過“過程戲劇”(Process Drama)的發展及訓練，讓國中英語資優學生透過戲劇活動的角色扮演、模擬、情節推演、情境再塑等步驟，引動及組合課堂英語學習之語言技巧，連結生活經驗，發展邏輯推理及想像創造等深層語言學習經驗。
2. 藉由不同背景、程度之學習夥伴之共同學習經驗，深度探討全球化影響下，國中英語資優學生之跨文化溝通能力(intercultural competence)、跨文化溝通訓練 (intercultural training) 及文化適應 (intercultural adaptation) 等“世界公民”(world citizenship) 之教育成效。

#### (二) 計畫對象：

國中英語資優班學生 20-25 人。

#### (三) 課程設計原理說明：

##### 1. 語言學習的目的

- a. 台灣一般英語學習方式以背單字、句型為主要內容，然而此法並未達到使學習者能與人口語溝通的目的。主要原因是：課堂上課以虛擬之情節、固定之對應關係為主，未能具體模擬現實狀況，引發學生連結生活並內化語言之學習經驗。
- b. 大部份的英語教材設計，較少注意到情感與語言表達的關係。戲劇，尤其是以想像及再創作為目的之教育戲劇及過程戲劇(Educational Drama/Process Drama)應是協助學生發展深層英語學習經驗之助力。

##### 2. 戲劇

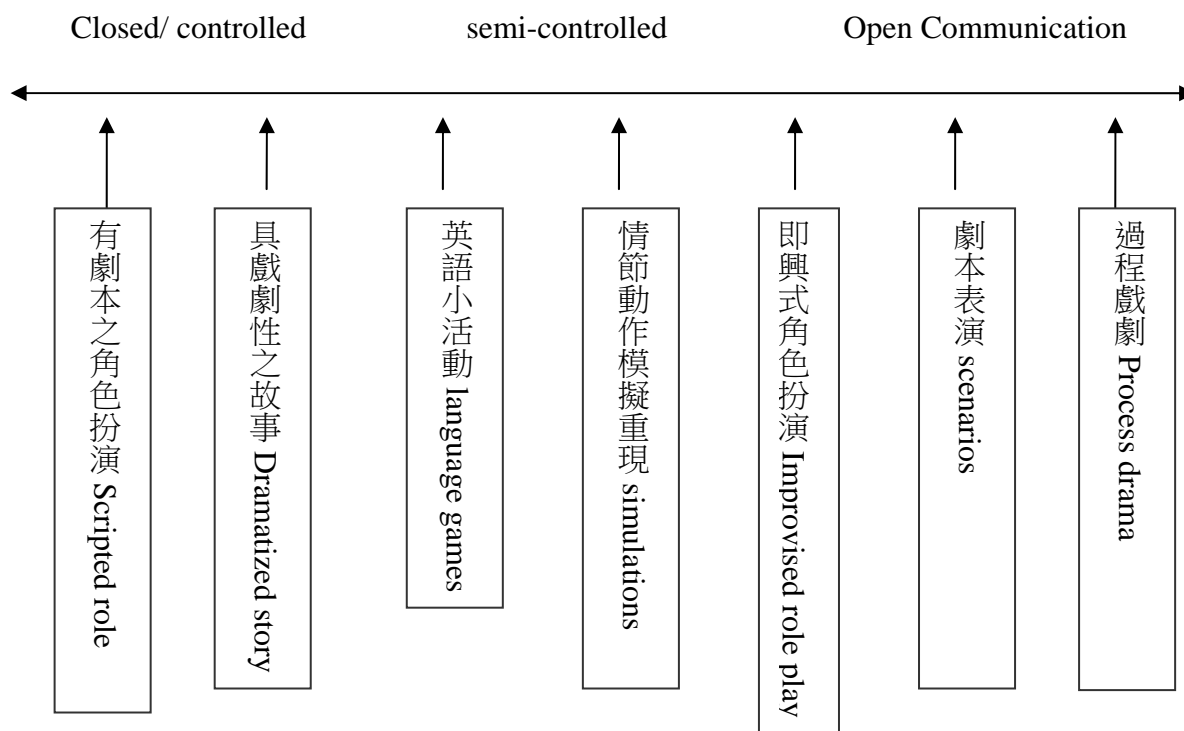
- a. 戲劇其實也就我們在日常生活中遇到的種種情境。
- b. 將戲劇帶入英語學習中，即是為了讓學生透過戲劇中虛擬實境及角色投射等過程，連結課本學習與生活經驗，發展出系統性整體思考。
- c. 透過戲劇，學生可與真實的“他人”相處(Confronting the others)，藉由非制式化及非定型之互動關係，學習發展及應用種種不同之語言經驗，並能以『他人的角度』，學習同理心、互相尊重及人際關係協調等能力。
- d. 戲劇活動最主要的優點是提供學生從安排好的語言練習到自由表達的機會，說一些他們真正想要說的話。
- e. 戲劇是溝通式語言教學的重要技巧，語言學習者的角色是主動的行動參與者，而非被動的訊息接收者 (Charlyn Wessels, 1987)。
- f. 戲劇提供語言學習者體驗真生活情況的機會，更者，因為戲劇活動中並不界定對或錯，因此學習者在自由的情況下使用語言，允許情感與心智的同時運作、同時表達。
- g. 廣義而言，使用語言及學習語言跟戲劇表演類似，皆以人與人之間訊息的交流溝通為目的。

## Appendix (i): Workshop proposal to MEHS (in Chinese)

h. 戲劇也是綜合式的學習過程，涵蓋了語言知識及語言技巧，鼓勵學習者獨立使用語言，因此能照顧混合程度的班級。

### 3. 戲劇與英語學習的關係

各種戲劇活動可依形式與功能之不同，區分為下列之層次：



(四) 計畫實施日程：2005/1/20-1/22 三天之課程

(五) 計畫實施程序：

1. 選樣(Random sampling)
2. 前測(Pre-test)
3. 實驗(Intervention)
4. 後測及訪談(Post-test and interviews)
5. 資料分析(Data analysis)

(六) 計畫所需人力：

1. 外籍英語老師 1 名
2. 戲劇表演及戲劇專長老師 2 名
3. 錄影及資料分析助理 2 名
4. 主訪談者 1 名

(七) 計畫所需場地及設備：

1. 音樂廳
2. DVD 影片
3. 錄影攝影機

## Appendix (i): Workshop proposal to MEHS (*in Chinese*)

4. 音響設備
5. 麥克風
6. 講義

## Appendix (ii): Syllabus

09jan2005

### **Drama & English Workshop,**

- Time: January 20-22, 2005      Venue: MEHS, Taichung City
- Participants: 25 IEP students (randomly selected from 120 IEP students) ages: 12-14      Genders: boys & girls
- Theme: New Student to the School (Jennifer: an immigrant to Thailand from Taiwan, is coming back to her original country with her parents because of the recent tragedy in Phuket. Jennifer's parents were running a restaurant in Phuket and Jennifer went to an International School in Bangkok.)
- Video to be previewed before the workshop: **The Day after Tomorrow**

### **Schedule & Syllabus**

1. Pre-test: Language Proficiency & Intercultural Competence
2. Language & Critical Thinking Tasks:
  - a. Asking questions
  - b. Listening to information
  - c. Describing & Expressing
  - d. Sharing information
  - e. Summarizing
  - f. Offering explanations
  - g. Identifying
  - h. Instructing
  - i. Sequencing
  - j. Inferring
  - k. Speculating
  - l. Persuading
  - m. Understanding the why and why not of complex issues
  - n. Evaluation & decision making
  - o. Conflict recognition & resolution

## Appendix (ii): Syllabus

09Jan2005

### MEHS Drama and English Workshop(20/Jan ~ 22 /Jan, 2005)

Time	Day 1:1/20(Thursday)	Day 2:1/21(Friday)	Day 3:1/22(Saturday)
A	8:00-8:10 Opening Ceremony	<b>Expression &amp; Communication 2</b> Video(to be arranged)	<b>Teachers:Mei&amp; Yen</b>
	8:10-9:00 <b>Pre-test</b> <b>Teacher Irene</b>		
B	9:00~10:30 <b>Knowing You, Knowing Me</b> (Drama Activities: 1. Flow: development of interpersonal spatial relationship 2. Reconstruction: shopping mall activities. 3. New Year Gift: what I want to buy (physical reconstruction and to whom--emotional interaction))	<b>Expression &amp; Communication 3</b> Discussion based on the video (presenting view, counterviews, recognizing and mediating differences, conflict resolution)	Writing the final script  <b>Teachers:Mei&amp; Yen</b>
	10:40-12:00 <b>Touching Me, Touching You</b> <b>(Expression &amp; Communication 1)</b> Students get up to talk about how they feel about themselves and others during the previous session, and the reasons why they choose to buy the gift for someone in their life.	<b>Expression &amp; Communication 4</b> Discussion based on the video (presenting view, counterviews, recognizing and mediating differences, conflict resolution)	Rehearsal  <b>Teachers:Mei&amp; Yen</b>
D	Lunch Break		

## Appendix (ii): Syllabus

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E	13:00-14:45	<p><b>Advanced Drama Activities::</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Passing the electricity(to build up and practice physical interpersonal connection)</li> <li>2. Story telling techniques</li> <li>3. Create a scene</li> </ol>	<p>a) Advanced Drama Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are you doing?</li> <li>▪ Improvisation storytelling</li> </ul> <p>b) Process Drama (3)-problem: Difficulties that Jennifer would be encountering in a) academic works b) living c) social relationship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a scene</li> <li>▪ Still image / dialogue in role</li> <li>▪ Jennifer’s daily letter to friend (writing in role)</li> </ul>	Teachers:Mei& Yen	Dress rehearsal
F	15:00-16:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher Mei</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Process Drama (1)-situation Video clip: “The Day After Tomorrow”(preview required before the workshop)</li> <li>2. Whole group image</li> <li>3. Introducing a character: Jennifer coming back from Phuket with her parents after the earthquake.</li> <li>4. Hot Seating: for Jennifer’s story and background.</li> <li>5. Create a scene</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teacher Mei&amp; Yen</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Process Drama (4)- Solution What can we do to help Jennifer?</li> <li>b) Advanced Drama Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Guessing a job/Character walking</li> <li>▪ Mirror/Improvisation</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) Process Drama (4)- Solution what would happen to Jennifer and to the world 10 years from now (because of what we have done) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Still image in sequence</li> <li>▪ Teacher in role</li> <li>▪ Role play/Short scene</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	Teachers:Mei& Yen	15:20~16:30 Presentation



## Appendix (ii): Syllabus

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<b>G</b>	<p>Written assignment (1)</p> <p>a) Write a diary about the experience and interaction today.</p> <p>b) Write a letter to Jennifer to welcome</p>	<p>Written assignment (2):</p> <p>Group assignment: write a script based on the discussion and development in session F.</p>	<p>Written assignment (3)-for winter vacation</p>
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- **All sessions with title “Expression & Communication” will be conducted by native English teachers**
- **Process Drama session will be coached by two professional educational drama teachers**
- **Follow-up workshop: 13 March, 2005 → Virtual Youth Forum on “ Visions of Tomorrow”**  
**For Teacher Andy: Day 1, Session C, & Day 2, Session A-C Syllabus Design**
- **Overall aim: To provide learning experiences to students for gaining an understanding and practice in the strategies of critical thinking , expression and communication.**
- **Teacher’s role: as a co-participant in students’ process of learning and discovery**
- **Syllabus:**

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**Day 1, Session C:**

**Touching Me, Touching You(Expression & Communication 1)**

Students get up to talk about how they feel about themselves and others during the previous session, and the reasons why they choose to buy the gift for someone in their life.

**Day 2:**

**1. Session A: Expression & Communication**

Video viewing & discussion 2  
 (recommndation:

The Sum of All Fears --<http://www.sumofallfearsmovie.com/>

The River Wild--<http://www.hollywood.com/movies/detail/movie/176023>

**2. Session B: Expression & Communication 3)**

Discussion based on the video

Introducing skills of conducting questioning, inferring, speculating, discussion , negotiating, and persuading

## Appendix (ii): Syllabus

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### 3. Session C: Expression & Communication 4

Discussion based on the video

(presenting individual views, counterviews, recognizing and mediating differences, resolving conflicts)

## Appendix (iii): Lesson plans

MEHS English & Drama Workshop

### Lesson plans

20-22/Jan/2005

**Day 1:**

Session	Theme	Teacher	Objectives	Activities	DVD nos.
1-A	Orientation	All	Orientation of the workshop	Completing questionnaires	
1-B	Knowing You, Knowing Me	(DT) Mei	To communicate with each other through non-verbal language	<b>Drama Activities</b> 1. Flow: development of interpersonal spatial relationship (whole group) 2. Freeze-frame activity(beginning level): a TV set (groups of 3P) 3. Freeze-frame activity(intermediate): a machine 4. Freeze-frame activity(advanced): a new year gift for someone special	<b>DVD 1</b>
		Mei	Impression of a new body – understanding the otherness	<b>Drama Activities</b> 1. Presentation of activity 4 (DVD 1)(volunteers) 2. Freeze-frame & create-a-scene activity (advanced) (4 groups/6-7 P)	<b>DVD 2</b>
1-C	Touching Me, Touching You	(FT) Andy	Verbal Expression & Communication:	<b>Self-reflection:</b> Students get up to talk about how they feel about themselves and others during the previous session	<b>DVD 2</b> <b>3-2</b>
				<b>Discussion &amp; presentation</b> the 5W of a new year gift they want to buy for someone special (in pairs)	<b>DVD 3</b> <b>3-3, 3-4, 3-5</b>
1-E	Face to face	Mei	1. To develop advanced drama techniques 2. To use verbal language through drama	<b>Advanced Drama Activities</b> 1. Passing the electricity(to build up and practice physical interpersonal connection) 2. Captain's Coming (whole group)	<b>DVD 3</b>
				<b>1. Improvisation, discussion, &amp; Story telling techniques:</b> freeze-frame +Create a-scene out of un-related sentences.	<b>DVD 4</b> <b>4-2, 4-3 4-4 4-5</b>
				<b>2. Group presentation</b> Enactment with un-related sentences above (5 groups)	<b>DVD 5</b> <b>5-1</b>
1-F	The Day After Tomorrow	Mei	To understand inter-personal relationship through a reflection on the movie	1. <b>Discussion</b> Most impressive keywords and moments from film "The Day After Tomorrow" (preview required before the workshop) 2. <b>Improvisation &amp; Whole group images</b>	<b>DVD 5</b> <b>5-1</b>

### Appendix (iii): Lesson plans

				To reconstruct the moments simultaneously	
				<p><b>Process drama session (1):</b>  <i>Setting-up situation</i></p> <p><b>1. Teacher-in-role (1):</b>            To introduce a character: Jennifer coming back from Phuket with her parents after the earthquake.</p> <p><b>2. Hot Seating:</b> for Jennifer’s story and background.</p> <p><b>3. Discussion &amp; preparation for create-a-scene:</b>            Jennifer &amp; her parents before, during, and after the tsunami</p>	5-3, 5-4
Home-work	Writing assignment(1): Letter to Jennifer	Mei	To record feedback thru writing	<p><b>Process drama session (2):</b>  <i>Entering the story</i></p> <p><b>1. Create a scene:--</b>Entering Jennifer’s world            To create three scenes on three sentences that would describe the before, during, and after the tsunami in Jennifer’s world.</p> <p><b>1. Teacher-in-role (2):</b>            The teacher of the class giving assignments to the students: a letter to Jennifer to welcome her.</p>	DVD 6 6-2 (8’30’-11’00” sound loss)

#### Day 2:

2-A/B/C	If I Were You	Andy	To develop advanced inferring and summarizing skills. To learn to justify personal opinions with respect and empathy to others point of view	<p><b>1. Viewing film &amp; Discussion</b>            Students view movie and discuss the how &amp; why, the pros and cons of actions of the protagonists and evaluate the consequences of possible turning points.</p>	
				<p><b>2. Forum</b>            Presenting view, counter-views, recognizing and mediating differences, conflict resolution            a) Five opinion statements given to the students to discuss with two</p>	

Appendix (iii): Lesson plans

				opposing views of the statement. b) Each group presents their opposing views and search for audience's support through votes.	
				<b>3. Group presentation</b> short performance enacted on rough scripts from selected scenes of the film with dialogue and movements	<b>DVD 7</b> <b>7-1</b> <b>0'00''-9'</b> <b>54''</b>
2-E	What Are You Doing?	Yen	To understand intercultural interaction thru drama activities	<b>1. Advanced drama activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-two-three freeze</li> <li>• What are you doing?</li> </ul>	<b>DVD 7</b> <b>7-1, 7-2,</b> <b>7-3</b>
		Yen	Structuring the play	<b>2. Improvisation, discussion &amp; Create a scene:</b> With three sentences that describe Jennifer' s life before, during & after the tsunami.	
				<b>Process drama session (3):</b> <b>Jennifer is missing!---identifying the problems</b> <b>3. Compound stimulus + Hot seating</b> Exploring the difficulties Jennifer might be encountering in a) academic works b) living c) social relationship. <b>4. Report findings &amp; discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• list findings &amp; present</li> <li>• defining possible reasons</li> <li>• suggesting solutions</li> <li>• create a story line based on problem selected to present and solution for that problem.</li> </ul>	
2-F (evening)	Writing assignment (2) Scripts		Group projects	1. Internet research: tsunami 2. Developing the story line	

### Appendix (iii): Lesson plans

**Day 3:**

3-A	Our World		Structuring the play	<p><b>Advanced drama activities:</b></p> <p><i>Flow</i></p> <p><b>Process Drama (4)- Solution—story line presentation</b></p> <p>What can we do to help Jennifer?</p> <p><b>Process Drama (5)- Solution</b></p> <p>what would happen to Jennifer and to the world 10 years from now (because of what we have done)</p> <p><b>Script analysis</b></p> <p><b>Reading the play</b></p>	
3-B			Rehearsal		
3-C			Rehearsal		
3-E			Dress rehearsal		
3-F			Presentation		

**Appendix(iv) 1**  
**Letter of Consent**

08, Jan, 2005

Dear parents,

Thank you for letting your child to participate in a wonderful English learning experience. Before the workshop, we would like to keep you informed of the objectives and approaches of this drama workshop – please refer to the attachment for the detailed explanation. Meanwhile, as this workshop will contribute to a research study which will serve to enlighten the teaching staff in our school, the whole project will be recorded. While we will ensure all confidentiality and protection of anonymity of your child, we would like to obtain your written consent of your child’s participation in this project, and of all the data collection methods so involved.

Please sign and return this letter of consent to the Junior High Division office.  
Thank you very much.

Sincerely

W. Tang  
*Principal*  
MEHS

Attachment:  
The English Drama Workshop

---

*Student’s name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent’s signature* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

## MEHS English Drama: a research project

### MEHS 英語戲劇探索營 計畫

2004/12

(一) 計畫目的：

1. 透過“過程戲劇”(Process Drama)的發展及訓練，讓國中英語資優學生透過戲劇活動的角色扮演、模擬、情節推演、情境再塑等步驟，引動及組合課堂英語學習之語言技巧，連結生活經驗，發展邏輯推理及想像創造等深層語言學習經驗。
2. 藉由不同背景、程度之學習夥伴之共同學習經驗，深度探討全球化影響下，國中英語資優學生之跨文化溝通能力(intercultural competence)、跨文化溝通訓練(intercultural training)及文化適應(intercultural adaptation)等“世界公民”(world citizenship)之教育成效。

(二) 計畫對象：

國中英語資優班學生 20-25 人。

(三) 課程設計原理說明：

1. 語言學習的目的

- a. 台灣一般英語學習方式以背單字、句型為主要內容，然而此法並未達到使學習者能與人口語溝通的目的。主要原因是：課堂上課以虛擬之情節、固定之對應關係為主，未能具體模擬現實狀況，引發學生連結生活並內化語言之學習經驗。
- b. 大部份的英語教材設計，較少注意到情感與語言表達的關係。戲劇，尤其是以想像及再創作為目的之教育戲劇及過程戲劇(Educational Drama/Process Drama)應是協助學生發展深層英語學習經驗之助力。

2. 戲劇

- a. 戲劇其實也就我們在日常生活中遇到的種種情境。
- b. 將戲劇帶入英語學習中，即是為了讓學生透過戲劇中虛擬實境及角色投射等過程，連結課本學習與生活經驗，發展出系統性整體思考。
- c. 透過戲劇，學生可與真實的“他人”相處(Confronting the others)，藉由非制式化及非定型之互動關係，學習發展及應用種種不同之語言經驗，並能以『他人的角度』，學習同理心、互相尊重及人際關係協調等能力。
- d. 戲劇活動最主要的優點是提供學生從安排好的語言練習到自由表達的機會，說一些他們真正想要說的話。
- e. 戲劇是溝通式語言教學的重要技巧，語言學習者的角色是主動的行動參與者，而非被動的訊息接收者(Charlyn Wessels, 1987)。
- f. 戲劇提供語言學習者體驗真生活情況的機會，更者，因為戲劇活動中並不界定對或錯，因此學習者在自由的情況下使用語言，允許情感與心智的同時運作、同時表達。



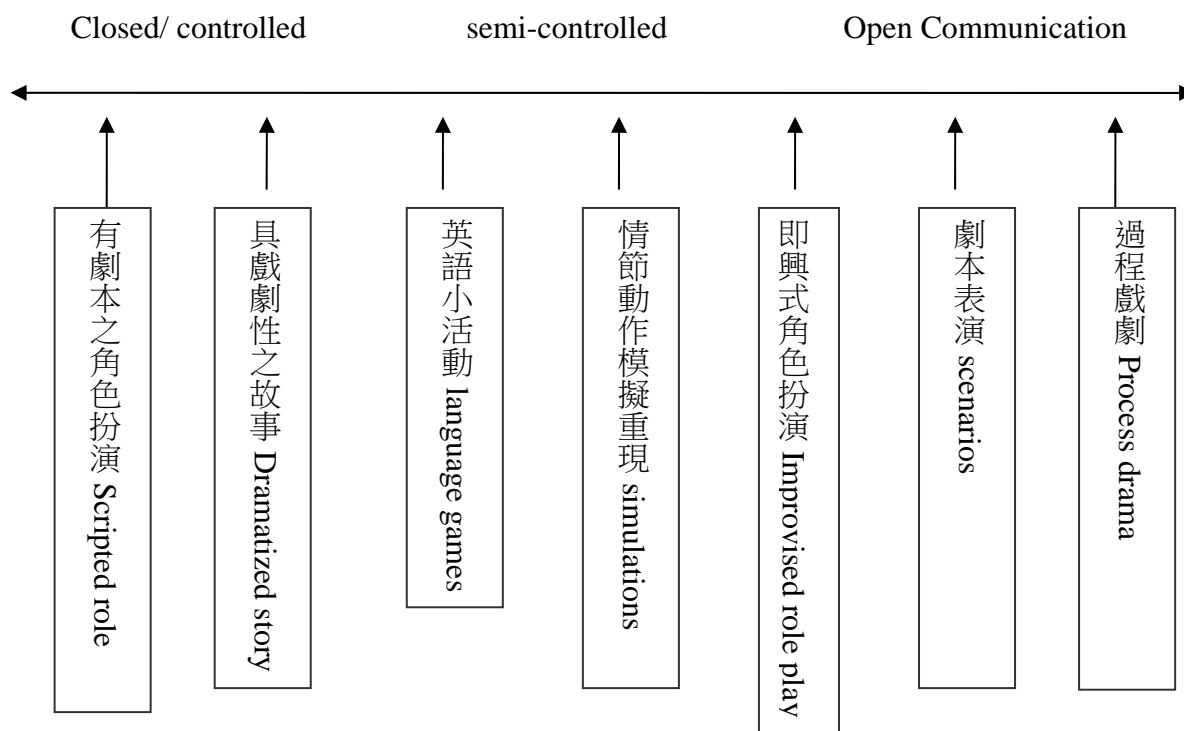
g. 廣義而言，使用語言及學習語言跟戲劇表演類似，皆以人與人之間訊息的交流溝通為目的。

### Appendix (i): Workshop proposal to MEHS (*in Chinese*)

h. 戲劇也是綜合式的學習過程，涵蓋了語言知識及語言技巧，鼓勵學習者獨立使用語言，因此能照顧混合程度的班級。

#### 3. 戲劇與英語學習的關係

各種戲劇活動可依形式與功能之不同，區分為下列之層次：



**Appendix(V)**  
**MEHS English Drama Workshop**  
**Questionnaire**

Jan, 2005

*Dear participants,*

*Thank you for taking parts in this wonderful experience. Before we start the programme, would you please complete the following questionnaire?*

*The purpose of this questionnaire is to help the workshop teachers and the facilitator to know better about your language learning experiences. Please be assured that your names will not shown on these questionnaires or on the future data analysis. Your response will be very helpful to the workshop facilitators and the researcher.*

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

**I. About yourself:**

1. The year you were born: \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You are a  boy  girl.
3. How do you describe yourself?

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**II. About your language learning experiences:**

1. What languages do you speak?  
 Mandarin  Taiwanese  Hakka  English  Spanish  
 French  Japanese  Other \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which languages do you speak at home?  
 Mandarin  Taiwanese  Hakka  English  Spanish  
 French  Japanese  Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which languages do you speak most often at school?  
 Mandarin  Taiwanese  Hakka  English  Spanish  
 French  Japanese  Other \_\_\_\_\_
4. Which languages do you speak most often with your friends?  
 Mandarin  Taiwanese  Hakka  English  Spanish  
 French  Japanese  Other \_\_\_\_\_
5. How much time you spent on learning English (in average hours per week):
  - **In junior high school:**  
In school: \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

After school: \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week, at \_\_\_\_\_

• **In primary school:**

In school: \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

After school: \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week, at \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you ever studied abroad?

No  Yes: Where: \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What types of books (in English) do you enjoy reading most after school?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Who is your favorite author (who writes in English) and why do you like him/her?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Please evaluate your strengths and weaknesses in English proficiency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you consider are the purposes of learning English? Give three reasons, list them in order of importance from your point of view.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. If you have been taking English courses in places other than schools,

Where is/was that? \_\_\_\_\_

How often do/did you go there?

When you were in primary school:

once a week  twice a week  more than 3 times a week  five days a week.

Other \_\_\_\_\_.

When you are in junior-high school:

once a week  twice a week  more than 3 times a week  five days a week.

Other \_\_\_\_\_.

12. Which one of the following activities helps you better in English learning?
- learning through English textbooks
  - talking to native English teachers
  - talking in English with other students.
  - talking in English to Chinese English teachers.
  - singing English songs.
  - learning English through playing games.
  - learning English through drama.
  - traveling abroad
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Other than English learning, what do you think you can get from the activities above?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
14. What are the reasons why you decided to participate in this drama workshop?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
15. Have you ever participated in drama activities before?  yes  no
- When? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is the title of the drama? \_\_\_\_\_
- What language did you use for the performance? \_\_\_\_\_
- If it was conducted in English, did the experience help you to improve your English proficiency level?
- yes (reasons \_\_\_\_\_)
- no (reasons \_\_\_\_\_)

### III. About your inter-cultural experiences

1. Have you ever traveled abroad?
- No (if your answer is NO, skip the following questions and go to questions #3)
  - Yes: Where: \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_
- For how long? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did you use English to communicate to the local people when you traveled?
- yes  no
- If the answer is “no”, how did you communicate with people, then?

\_\_\_\_\_.

Is English the official language of the country you were traveling to?

yes  no

How did you use English when you traveled? (multiple choice)

to buy/order foods

to ask for directions

to make friends with local people

to ask about the local culture

to introduce your own culture

other \_\_\_\_\_.

3. What would you like to find out about a foreign culture? List three in order of importance from your point of view, and give your reasons why.

\_\_\_\_\_

reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you ever used English to talk about your own culture to foreigners?

no  yes

If yes, what aspect of your own culture did you talk about?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why did you choose these aspects?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. If you have chance to use English to talk about your own culture to foreigners, what would you like to say about your culture? List three in order of importance from your point of view, and give your reasons why.

\_\_\_\_\_

reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

~~End of questionnaire, Thank you~~

To Jennifer

When I heard the news from TV about this big disaster in South Asia, it would become a serious problem. Some of them might lose their children and others might lose their parents. Though, somewhere in the world which has good-hearted try their best to help them not only contribute money but dedicate psychical supporting.

To the children who lose their parents, although this disaster gave you uncompleted family but tried not to give up your life. From the all of the world which have charity heart will give all your need and support you to move on your next step. Let your mind out of the past and the good man will guide the right direction to you.

Life can not be perfect but you can make it completely!

94.01.20.



Appendix (vi)  
Students' writing assignment (1):  
Letters to Jennifer

*To Jennifer:*

*Welcome to Taiwan, I've heard that you had suffered from the terrible things which happened in south-east Asia. I felt sorry for the things that happened to you, your family and your country. I wish that the area can recover in a few months. I'm sure that you will have a good time here.*

*From Ben*






Jennyfer:

Hello. Nice to meet you. My name is Kenny. Welcome to Taiwan. If you have question, you can ask me. It's my pleasure. Don't be shy. Be outgoing.


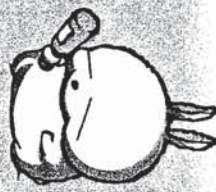



My teacher told me what happen to you. It's very horrible. I am sorry that the bad things happed to you. If you are boring, you can call me. My number 24616086. Welcome.

Dear Jennifer:

Welcome to jeng, no my name is  
 Nurse. I am thirteen years old. I  
 like to read books and watch TV.  
 My favorite subject is music, art  
 and English. There is fun! I play the  
 piano well. And I like to swim.  
 I wish we could be good friend.  
 Have a nice day!

Your new friend  


*Happy New Year!*



Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

NO.

DATE

Dear Jennifer:

I've heard your ~~st~~ story. You're really poor.

I wish you can have a good job here.

Just look on the bright side and you will  
feel good!

honestly,



Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

2009/11/10

[Redacted]

*May joy and happiness fill every minute of your day.*

Dear Jennifer:

We've heard a lot from Nancy about you. You're really young, and the world is waiting for you to discover it more. I know it's really sad to leave your parents. But I think you can have a lot of fun from us because I think our English is not really poor. Time will bring everything gone. Think of the bright side. The world won't be always darkness. Try to make friends here by yourself. Everyone will loves you. Inculding the people that you don't know but they know you. If you got any problems from anything. Tell us!! We'll always be happy to help you solve the problems that you got!

sincerely

[Redacted]



Appendix (vi)  
Students' writing assignment (1):  
Letters to Jennifer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

To Jennifer:

Hi! Jennifer. I know some news about you. It is very terrible. I hope you can be my new friend, because I have many good and nice friends, I think you will like them. How old are you? Which food do you like? What class is your favorite? I'm very exciting to see you. Please tell me all about your and South Asia's news. I think you are friendly, so Let's make friend! <sup>story</sup>



94.1.20

Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

[Redacted]

Page :

Date :

Hello Jennifer :

Welcome to Taiwan. Our teacher (your aunt) talked about you with us yesterday. We know that because of the tsunami you have to come back to Taiwan, it must be a terrible experience. But don't worry, everyone here is kind, we'll help you with it. I know the feeling of being to a new place, and there is no one there you know. So don't be afraid Jennifer, just ask us whenever you need a help. We know that it's really terrible to know that your home had been destroyed, but you can do nothing about it. So don't be very sad, time heal all wounds. I believe we can get along very well, it just need some times to get use to an unfamiliar place. We truly hope that you wont have nightmares anymore.

p.s. I have a dreamcatcher I bought in Canada. It's a thing that Indians use to keep the hightmares away and catch all the good dreams. Maybe it'll help you.

Sincerely,

[Redacted]

2005.1.21

Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

DATE :

文字構成一頁頁的生活...

Dear Jennifer:

Hi! My name is . Nice to meet you. I form  
Taiwan, If you have question, you can tell me, ok.

Have good luck



## A Letter to Jennifer

No. Date : : 

Dear Jennifer:

I am sorry to know that you suffer from tsunami. I am glad that you can be my classmate. We welcome you. Don't be afraid of Chinese, we will help you by English. Mingdao is a great school, and I like my life in it. So enjoy your time in Mingdao. What do you like to do in Bangkok? I like to read books, laugh, and be funny. Maybe we can be friends. How did you survive from the tsunami? It's amazing. Many people died because of tsunami. You come to Taiwan, but your parents don't. I heard that your parents want to stay there. If you have a chance to go back, try convince your parents to come here, then you won't be lonely. Be happy!

Yours truly,

Dear Jennifer:

I'm happy what we have a  
new classmate. I'm sorry to heard that your  
native land had been destroy by Tidal  
waves, we excited that you are coming to  
Ming-Dao high school tomorrow, maybe we can make  
a party for you. I'm sorry that I forget to  
introduce myself, my name Tom, 13 years old.  
I think be happy in our class, you will  
never sleep in class, laugh will wake you  
up, happy can make you forget the tsunami,  
you can tell us the thing in your  
country, the special thing.

your new classmate



Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer



No.

Date

Jan. 20, 2005.

Dear Jennifer,

How are you? When are you going to back? Are people nice and friendly in there? Tell me all about it.

Today in Taiwan is a very beautiful sunny day, you will like the weather in Taiwan, it is colder than

Hey! Don't worried to your parents, they will be fine, o.k? Min - Dao - High - school is a very big and beautiful school, I like this, but do you? Can we make a friend? If you have any questions, you can ask me, so I can tell you if I know. My friends and I are funny, they are very "yellow" (Not me!)!

We can help you a lot! What will we can do for you?

Best Regards,





Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

Jennyfer:

You are so poor! But don't worry, be happy.  
happy can change your life. I know you have many problem.

Do you have any question? I can help you, What  
do you want? I can give you..... (joke). Don't be  
shy. I'm not bad people.

When you have problem

You can call me:

"049-22?????"

HA! HA!



Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

Dear Jennifer :

Well, I wish your parents

will be safe be healthy.

Don't you have an apartment

in Taiwan? If you don't,

you'll live in your

cousin's house?

### Beautiful Memory

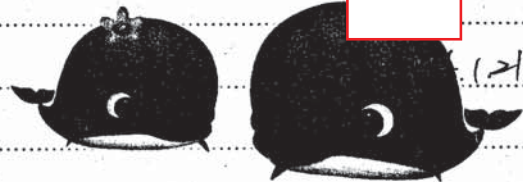
Dear Jennifer:

Nice to meet you. I'm so sad to hard that.  
 Our teacher want us to help you. I think you are not  
 happy. Because you had lots of problem. And  
 your father and mother couldn't come to Taiwan.  
 You have to come to by yourself. You must be afraid.  
 Taiwan is a nice place, and people are nice. They will  
 will help you. You come to Taiwan is right. You can  
 make it fun, forget that bad thing. Can you  
 tell us your problem? Don't worry! We can  
 help you. Make it fun, We will be your best friend.

"Don't worry, Be happy 加油!"



"We will help you."



You bring sunshine to those who know you.





Lovely Jennifer:

I'm the eighth grade in Ming-Dao High school. I can't wait to see you until tomorrow. I heard your story from your aunt who is very worried and care about you. It's too bad to heard about that. Alough I am not very good at speaking English, but I will try my best as possible as I can. So if you have any prombles, I will give you some ideas or solve it for you. And Don't afraid about be a friend with us. Because we are kind and friendly that you can't imagine it. What ever, it is very excited to meet you. I hope it will be a good situation to help you and make you happier.

2004. 1. 20

Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer

Dear Jennifer,

I'm sorry about that things happen to you. I know that your

Chinese is not very good, but no problem, I will help you with

your Chinese lesson. Welcome to

our class. Our classmates are very

friendly, so you don't need to worried

about it. You will feel very peaceful

in this class. Wish you can join us.

I know a little thing about you

from our teacher. Can you tell us

more? Maybe we can make a friend,

And I can interview some of my friends.

They would like to be with you. Just don't

be sad. We will help you as well as we can. so don't worried about it.

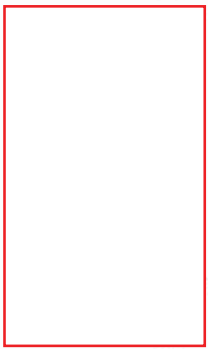
At the end. I would like to tell you

my name. My name is

Peggy

Nice to

meet you.





Appendix (vi)

Students' writing assignment (1):

Letters to Jennifer



Dear my new friend, Jennifer:

Hello! My name is Susan, your friend in Ming Dao junior high school. I'm soory about the things happen in your hometown. Our teacher tell us something about you, she tell us that you can speak English, but can't speak Chinese very well. I just want to tell you don't worry about that. We are the English focus class student. We can help you. Don't be afraid of us or worried anything. If you need any help. Come! And tell us. We will help you. The last I want to say "Welcome to Taiwan."

Your friend,



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MING DAO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

## Appendix (vi)

## Students' writing assignment (1):

## Letters to Jennifer

## 隨堂考試用紙

科目		考試時間	月	日	年	班	號	姓名		成績	
----	--	------	---	---	---	---	---	----	--	----	--

Dear Jennifer:

~~we~~ Welcome you to our class; we are happy that you can enjoy our class.

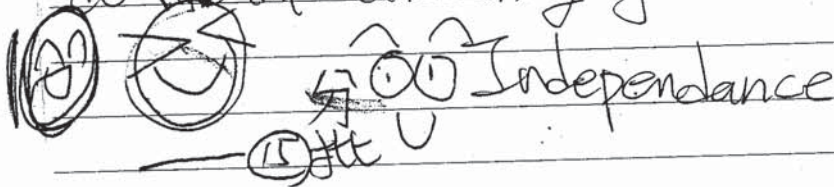
Will, It is sad to hear your home was destory by tsunami. I wish you can fell better in ~~the~~ Taiwan, .... and don't worry about your parents, they will be fine, ... So take a good care of yourself.

BH! I froget to tall you my name, my name is Sandy, We will see each other soon.

from



1. Should we always listen to authority figures?  
 No, because sometimes people would make mistakes  
 or wrong choice for you. make the way yourself ~~it~~  
~~that~~ is good for you. And you don't have to blame  
 anybody else except you. Because sometimes if you  
 blame your friend, your friend will blame you back  
 then you guys's friendship would broke ~~easy~~ easily.  
 To save the friendship. Make the decision by your  
~~self~~ yourself. no listen to anybody. Everyone would  
 make mistake. Trust yourself. Cause only you can  
 do the important thing yourself.



No, because parents would chose the way that  
 you don't like to most. For example. surf the net  
~~the~~ serch the information or go ~~the~~ to the library  
 find them in the book. Maybe find the book is a  
 good way to do. But most of the kids won't like  
 that. They loves using the computer. The authority  
 will like ~~to~~ the one go ~~the~~ to the library



## Writing Assignment

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and your classmates offered to help her?

Ans: Jennifer feels strange about this new society, she has no one to depend on, she feel lonely and full of sorrow. We are offered to help Jennifer's relationship and friends at school, and we have a lot of ideas.

2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions to help her?

Ans: She comes to a brand new society, and she don't understand the customs, languages or habits. I will suggest her to join some of the clubs or group to know some people, and soon she will get suit to the new environment.

3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.

Ans: 1. the recycling activities. 2. The education about lives, nature, and love. 3. a lot of foundations established.

4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

Ans: "Tomorrow is always fresh...there are no mistakes in it." From "Anne of Green Gables"

The comfortable weather, beautiful view, everybody's smile A good environment of education, the grades are not so important but everyone can learn happily on any kinds of knowledge.

The world is peace, no wars and no argues.



Appendix (vii)

Students' writing assignment (2):



Written Assignment

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and you classmates offered to help her?
2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her?
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.
4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

1. <sup>(1)</sup> She can't speak Chinese and she don't know what's mean. Everyone think she is stupid. So she don't have any friend.

<sup>(2)</sup> We give a cell phone to her. If she has any problem, She can call us.

2. <sup>(1)</sup> Because she never came to Taiwan or everywhere they <sup>speak</sup> Chinese. She just live in America.

<sup>(2)</sup> Teach her some Chinese conversation.

3. (1) Yes, I do.

<sup>(2)</sup> ① The polite is trying to recycle the trash, because we make lots of trash in a day. If they don't recycle, the trash will pollution our natu

② The polite control the car make more CO<sub>2</sub>. They know we can't live in a dirty place. and the CO<sub>2</sub> can make the air be black and dirty.

③ The polite say we can not burn the trash by ourself.

4. No pollution, No trash, lots of green plants and very fresh in there.

My Assignment ~ 🐾

## Reflections

I think Jennifer encounter problem was the language. Because while the teachers were in class, she couldn't what the teachers said, so her scores are always bad. It struck her courage to make friends. We can teach her Chinese, and she can teach me English. Like it, our English will be better than better, and her Chinese will, too.

I think our society is trying to improve the environment. The government is improve the trash separate to recycle. They plant the tree, too. The weather is be too hot, the ice berg of the pole was start to melt.

In my ideal picture for a better tomorrow, there isn't too hot or cold, like fall. People are live in hope and love. Nobody is poor; nobody can smoke. People can live with many animals. There are many park. In the park, there are many tree. People can play or take a break under the tree. In my ideal picture for a better tomorrow, there are not flood, earthquake, typhoon, tsunami, high mare, there are not any disaster. ~ 🐾





### Jennifer's new life in Taiwan

Last December, Jennifer's parents died in the large waves in Indonesia. Therefore, she lost the center of life. Jennifer followed her relations coming to Taiwan. You may image that a teenage girl come to Taiwan alone. Her feeling was so helpless and lonely.

She has the change coming to our school. All students and teachers welcome her coming. They would like to help her. Her classmates show her the campus after class. And they talk about her past life and help her to forget the unhappy memory. They also try to teach her Chinese and then she can talk with other people without any problem. And then she understands other people's kindness and doesn't feel lonely.

There are many people meet the same situation in our society. We should give them some help to face the new life in future. And let them to believe that tomorrow will be better.



## Written Assignment

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and you classmates offered to help her? 遭遇 解答
2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her?
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples. 社会
4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

Jennifer encounter a lot of problems, Our team was able to explore and solution an encounter about Jennifer's family problem.	11
When Jennifer went to her aunt's house. She may have some cousin.	20
How to get along with her cousin and join the family is the most important things that Jennifer will meet it first, I act Jennifer's aunt, I am the important person to conduct Jennifer. We had a family reunion, Aunt have to be the reunionist of the family. We talk to the cousin and let cousin can accept a new person to our house. At the end we solve the problem of family with Jennifer.	32 46 57 69 81 95 107
Of course our society is trying to improve the environment; If we don't improve it. Our society will be pollution. For examples we try hard not to cut the trees and grow more trees. The government make some politics about the environment too. We all want the good earth. We don't want any earthquake, any typhoon, any disaster. Even though we don't want more people die in the disaster. There are a lot of people in the world just like Jennifer. They lost their parents, so our country had some foundation to help them, We just give them some money and we may save many people's life.	119 130 143 155 165 176 188 198 211 214
I think, if we don't keep destroy the world, Let the earth take a rest, I could even see the beautiful picture in my mind, To let our living space clean and no pollution is not hard at all. It just need every one to help.	226 239 252 260

# English Report

1. what kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and your classmates offered to help her?

Because her hometown's school is been a tsunami, so she had to come to Taiwan for school. But she is shy and couldn't speech much Chinese, so we helped her by having more conversation with her and teach her Chinese

2. what do you think were the cause of Jennifer's problem? How would her suggestion help her?

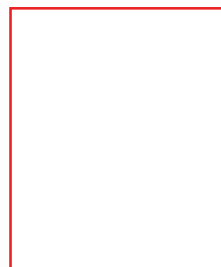
I think not understanding the Chinese is the cause of Jennifer's problem. Actually, I don't really think her suggestion can help her.

3. do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.

First, we started to do recycle. Second, we stared to plant more trees. And the last, we had stopped doing the high pollution thing.

3. what would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

I want to be a famous doctor and help many people, and after I have enough money. I am going to travel around the world.



## Students' writing assignment (2):



## Written Assignment

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and you classmates offered to help her?  
The tsunami destroy her homeland. We help her to learn Chinese. And lecture everywhere when she grow up.
2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her? The big tsunami destroy Jennifer's homeland. She has no place to stay, she will come to Taiwan because we can help her. First, she have to learn Chinese to live in Taiwan. When she grow up, she can be an orator, to tell people her experience of the tsunami.
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples. I think our society is trying to improve the environment. Like we donate money to them, or donate food, and help them to rebuild their homeland.
4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?  
I want to be a doctor. Oppose gerins and save people's live.



I think she is so shy, and she can't speak Chinese very well, so she doesn't want to talk with us, so we can active to teach her Chinese, and talk a lot English to her, and be her friends.

She is come from the other countries, she only can her langer, so we also teach her a lot of Chinese. If she talk with us, I can know what she talk about.

Our world is so terrible, because we have big problems. That problem is we have dangerous society, so we can take bus and don't ride scottle and drive a car, and ride bicycle a lot.



Appendix (vii)

Students' writing assignment (2):

Reflections



Written Assignment She can't communicate with her family, she can't adapt this environment, ...

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and you classmates offered to help her?  
We thought to help her to learn Chinese.
2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her?  
I think she can't speak is the cause. If she can speak Chinese, all problems are solved. Chinese of problems
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.  
Yes, I do. The government is setting into action. For example, they adopt the politic to force the cities and families recycle. After the disease of mosquitoes, and SARS, people are cleaning their hand and pouring out the dirty water in the containers. After all, "green ideas" are popular now. Like green houses, green inters, green left over, ..., there are lots of them!
4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?  
If our social order would be better and China won't blockade us, Taiwan will be heaven. Why do we have so many social news on the TV today? Because our society is not in order. More and more criminals are producing in Taiwan. Besides, China blockades us when we are out of the United Nations. I don't know why do they want to annex us. In my opinion, this is unreasonable. Well, I think these are two dreams, it's hard to come true.

- ② I wanted to talk with her new family. Told them Jennifer's encounter in school. Wish them would give Jennifer a chance to share her feeling with them. First, they could console her hurt about leave her parents and the tsunami. It would help her a lot. She would rather to listen to them. Then they could take her to do something to relieve boredom. I believed it would let them be closer. Finally, keep an eye on her what she need to solution. Maybe those were the best way to help Jennifer.
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.
- ① No, I don't think our society is trying to improve the environment.
- ② Because along with develop our industry, we pollute more. Even though we have care about it, but we don't take effect heavy. We usually take from nature, but don't care about the biosphere. Biosphere is the important part of our nature. We must to remember nature is not inexhaustible in supply and always available for use.

4. What would be your ideal picture for better tomorrow?

People live in the earliest nature. There is no pollution around there. People won't be nervous and crowded. There has big smiles everywhere on people's face. Parents will teach children about their interest and share the funny things in the day. The age and in high standing people chat or enjoy the time with each other. Everyone around the world just like the family and easy to get along. That's will be my ideal picture for better tomorrow.



1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter?  
What was the solution you and your classmates offered to help her?



① She couldn't understand Chinese, so she did a terrible grade on tests. She was very depressed, and no one of her classmates came to comfort or encourage her. That's a big problem that Jennifer hates school.

② We wanted to use the way she could accept to taught her Chinese. We let her know Chinese is a good and had lots of fun language to learn. We took her to the night market play some games. As we played, we also taught her how to speak Chinese with it. She practiced it a lot. She was very proud of herself when she spoke Chinese. We were cheerful and felt more close to each other.

2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her?

① I thought the main reason is her family. Because we found out she wrote some bad thing about her aunt's uncle in the diary. And she ran out of school, she didn't come home. So if we wanted to help her, we had to solve her problems of her aunt's family.

## Written Assignment

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and you classmates offered to help her?
2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her?
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.
4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

Jennifer's family has a restaurant in disaster area, restaurant provide free food and victims can stay at there, their restaurant is on the hill, the tsunami don't come up. When Jennifer comes to our school, we can speak English with her, or teach her Chinese to her, we had writed a card welcome and soothe to her, this is the way to help her. The natural disaster causes of Jennifer's problem, don't be to worried that her parents will came to Taiwan in a few weeks, when her hometown be clean you can go back to your country, when she in Ming-Aao high school we will take her like our best friend, she can make a lot of friends in our school. Our society is trying to improve the environment, there are many group improve our environment, like WHO  $\Rightarrow$  World Health Organization help to improve our environment. My ideal picture for better tomorrow, is science and technology in prospective we are know the natural disaster before it comes,



① I think she had many problems. And she had to confront about "how to say Chinese" and "If nobody wants to talk to me" and "how to get along with each other."

My classmates and I offered:

1st: We can try to learn English. Because we can talk to her with English.

2nd: We teach her Chinese. Because speak Chinese is very useful in Taiwan.

② Maybe she was very afraid to come to Taiwan. Because she doesn't have any friends here. And her parents need to fix their house. So her parents can't come with her.

Our suggestion is: We can be her friends because she doesn't have any friends in Taiwan. And teach her Chinese. Then, she also can teach us English. I think we will be best friend.

③ Yes, I do.

1st: Our society is trying to exercise a close supervision over sort trash because our society is pollution. Just better than one country in the world.

2nd: We don't cut natural forest anymore. Because we have to do soil and water conservation.

3rd: Our society is researching vaccin and build many hospital. That can let's death rate lower.

④ Maybe many ~~year~~ <sup>later</sup> ~~everything~~ will be convenient. like cars can float in the sky. People create many useful machine. We also create robots. Robots can wash clothes, dishes and even they have feelings. but now, I just want every alright. I hop no more fight, commit a crime and war in the world. though these thing can't stop, but I wish everyone can apologize and to shake hands and make up.

DATE :

筆與書的私人秘語...

Jennifer encountered a lot of problem. Like her family is broken or She doesn't have food to eat. And her aunt will take her to Taiwan. She can't to get with environment. Mayb we can talk to her "Jennifer, we are all you friend, so don't cry!" or "Don't you want to learn Chinese to talk with us?" An other is bring her to <sup>take</sup> a trip. It can take she relax. Maby she will want to talk to us. It's not impossible. If we want to help her to go out with no father and mother shadow. We can't just say "You have to forget you parents" or "You! don't have parents" She would very sadly. You have to treat her very friendly, nice and kind. Help her about life trouble or She just cry her mind would be comfortable. But an other good way is She have to regulate. we just her friend can't help her to She is a old woman. So She must to tune up of her mind. After tsunami we can see this world is very sweet and nice. Lots of people take their hand to help their sibling. Give the people food, money and "love". They need our encourage, concern and love. That would be very important for them. We can see the society is very warmth. For Jennifer we are all her best best friend. Because we help her to go out a big bad shadow. She would be very happy to have a lots of gentle, nice, friendly friend.



1. I think Jennifer's problem is she doesn't have friend, lonely and she sometimes doesn't go to school, I think she is missing, and her Chinese is very bad, we must to help her, we have offered some problem of answer, can make her friends, play with her, teach some Chinese to her, and she can teach some English to us, too.
2. The causes of Jennifer's problems is she goes to Taiwan by herself, why she is lonely, and why she doesn't have friends, because she is very shy, why she is very shy, because she is coming a new place, we must to help her, suggestion is approach her and help her, if we approach her, she never shy, if we help her, she can help us, too.
3. I think our society is trying to improve many things, I give three examples for us, 1.ride bicycle, not drive car  
2.do not throw the garbage on the ground 3.do not  
hack many trees. Our earth is sick, we make many Co2, the ozonosphere is breakage, so we must help our



Appendix (vii)  
Students' writing assignment (2):  
Reflections

earth. Our environment is very dirty, because we broke our society. Why our mountains have many 土石流, because we hack a lot of trees.

4. The better tomorrow, our society is very advance, is coming the technology's era, have many engine and some robots in our society, it's very convenient, they can help us many things, can talk with us....,I very like our the day after tomorrow, I wish that day can be very soon.

1. (1) Jennifer is a survivor from the tsunami. Her house has been destroyed in this catastrophe, so she came to Taiwan, but she has many problems to study in Taiwan. She couldn't have communicate with her classmates, and she couldn't understand what teacher said in class.

(2) We can request some classmates who has better English and having communicate with her helping her study. Or doing some body action helping her understand.

2. (1) Because she lived in The Eastern of Asia, probably she had more English education, so she couldn't speak chinese very well and to cause classmates will thought she is different in class, maybe she will be reject.

(2) I'll suggest her to be on the initiative with her classmates.

3. (1) Yes, and the result will be reveal itself in the future soon.

(2)

1. Her relations with others will be more better, she will have more friends in class.
2. She will have more fun in the other subject excluding English. Her classmates will help her understand so she can learn more.
3. She won't be lonely because she has more friends

4. Jennifer has a lot of friends, she have more fun in school, she will be more self-confident, she won't be reject, she will be happy after all.



I think she can not live in Taiwan. She can't talk to each other. We can not understand that she say, so we can't help her. She wants to say Chinese, but study Chinese is not easy. It will spend long long time.

We can learn English first. And try to talk to her patiently. Maybe we can be her first friend in Taiwan.

The weather is strange in this year. It's hot in the winter. She is a person. I am a person, too. We are in a "Family". We should help each other. If we can help each people, the world will be very peace.



## Writing Assignment

1. Q: What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and your classmates offered to help her?

A1: She has no place to live, and she doesn't have food, money.

A2: We offered her a place to stay and live, and give her a place to study.

2. Q: What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions to help her?

A1: I think it was the tsunami that causes her so many problems.

A2: Donate some money to her country; donate some cloth to her and her country.

3. Q: Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.

A1: No, our society is to help Jennifer and her home land.

A2: 1. Help her family.  
2. Help her country, her homeland.  
3. Donate things that you can.

4. Q: What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

A: Scientist can make a tsunami dictator, to protect the people near the ocean.





Appendix (vii)

Students' writing assignment (2):

Reflections

Jennifer is a poor child, her home, family and everything are destroyed by a tsunami at one night, her mother send her to Thailand as a teacher's aide, my

the aunt to bring Jennifer to the school and introduce to us. from now on, we are going to be Jennifer's classmates.

We <sup>have to</sup> help her forget the night war, and that her learn happy.

Maybe she will feel scare to the new environment, and she language cause a big problem. We help her to learn Chinese, and be friendly to her. make her don't be that scare.

Yes, we do think our society is trying to improve the environment

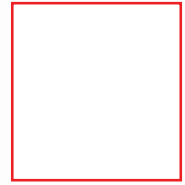
1. Don't pollute the air
2. Stop making or making fast the CO<sub>2</sub> or anything that can pollute
3. Don't destroy the forest anymore, or we can't have any CO<sub>2</sub>.

I wish the world can be better, and the air can be clean, and stop the green house effect. people will save the world and stop doing the thing that will make the environment getting bad.



Written

Appendix (vii)  
Students' writing assignment (2)  
Reflections  
Assignment



Jennifer encounter a problem about 'tsunami'. Her house is disorder. And her parents have to stay in South Asia to clean the house, so Jennifer has to come to Taiwan. We think she will be lonely, so we give some solution

number 1. We can teach her Chinese, and we can talk to her.

number 2. We can bring Jennifer to visit our campus.

number 3. We can teach her math, history, biology and some difficult question

We believe the reason is because the tsunami. The tsunami let Jennifer's house get mess and broke. So her parents have to stay in Taiwan. We can donate money to South Asia or give them some water.

I think our society is trying to improve the environment. For examples

They give them water, food, money, they dispatch serviceman to South Asia, they also go South Asia to encourage them.

I think a better tomorrow should be clean, and many trees, flowers and grasses, I wish a better tomorrow didn't have any pollution.

Appendix (vii)

Students' writing assignment (2):

Reflections

Written Assignment

1. What kind of problem did Jennifer encounter? What was the solution you and your classmates offered to help her?
2. What do you think were the causes of Jennifer's problems? How would your suggestions help her?
3. Do you think our society is trying to improve the environment? Please observe and give three examples.
4. What would be your ideal picture for a better tomorrow?

She couldn't know how to read Chinese, how to write and how to speak. We offered to teach her Chinese after class. ~~He~~ We told her how to read and talk to her.

I think she couldn't speak Chinese is the causes of Jennifer's problems. We helped her to study Chinese.

Yes. Like natural resources recover. The government, if people don't recover, it would put money to them.

And many people would plant the trees to improve our environment.

My ideal picture of for a better tomorrow.

As many trees and don't have garbage.

**Appendix(viii)**  
**Interviews questions for the Chinese drama teachers (DTs)**

1. How did you set up the teaching goals for the workshop?
2. In what way the workshop was run differently with other drama workshop?
3. Did you facilitate the programme more as a language class or a drama class? In what way it was so/not so?
4. Have the teaching goals been achieved? Why and why not?
5. As this workshop was conducted in English, not in native language, did you find any differences in the process, in terms of:
  - a. teaching methods,
  - b. learning outcomes,
  - c. effectiveness of expressions
  - d. interpersonal communication.
6. How did you adapt your teaching styles in the process?
7. What was the most impressive moment during the workshop? Why?
8. How do you find drama helpful for English learning?