ACTING AND SECOND LANGUAGE PRAGMATICS:
PEDAGOGICAL INTERSECTIONS

by

Artem Babayants

A thesis submitted in conformity with requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
Graduate Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Artem Babayants 2011
ACTING AND SECOND LANGUAGE PRAGMATICS: PEDAGOGICAL INTERSECTIONS
Master of Arts, 2011
Artem Babayants
Graduate Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
University of Toronto

Abstract

The study sheds light on the interrelations between interlanguage pragmatics and the use of a popular acting method, the Stanislavsky System, for second language (L2) acquisition. The theoretical investigation explores various uses of acting in second language education. The empirical enquiry represents an exploratory case-study of two adult EFL learners attending a theatre course in English. Through teacher journals, interviews, and the analysis of the students’ pragmatic performance as captured by a video camera, the researcher hypothesizes that the pragmatic development of the students involved in drama comes from three main sources: the script, the acting exercises, and the necessity to communicate in English during the theatre course. In all three cases, the zone of proximal development in relation to pragmatic competence emerged as a result of a teacher-generated impetus to use L2, numerous opportunities for imitation and repetition, continuous peer-support, and the collaborative spirit created in the classroom.
Acknowledgements

I have always been a believer in the old adage that actions speak louder than words, which should explain the brevity of this acknowledgment section.

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor Dr. Julie Kerekes and my committee member Dr. Kathleen Gallagher, as well as my professors at the University of Toronto: Dr. Merrill Swain, Dr. Nina Spada, Dr. Eunice Jang, and my faculty advisor, Dr. Alister Cumming. Their contribution to the shaping and constant re-shaping of my understanding of research, its possibilities, limitations and implications was invaluable.

Second, I owe a great debt to the participants of this study whose incredible patience made my data collection go so smoothly and so effortlessly. Third, my Master’s degree would not have been done without the assistance, encouragement and support of my teachers, colleagues and friends: Yelena Nosonovich, Svetlana Pakhomova, Francesca Carlin, Artur Khachaturian, Larisa Kaminskaya, Prof. Galina Kitaigorodskaya (Moscow State University), Shelley Liebembuk, Reed Thomas, and Vedran Dronjic.

I am also very grateful to the University of Toronto and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the financial support, which made it possible for me to complete my Master’s program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Special thanks also go to Cheryl Fretz who kindly offered her help when the time for proofreading finally came.

Last but not least, I am eternally indebted to my wonderful parents, Dzhulietta and Vladimir, for believing in me and simply being there for me whenever I needed them.
Dedication

In memory of my grandmother, Rosa-Areknazan
# Table of Contents

**ABSTRACT** ................................................................................................................................. II

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** .............................................................................................................. III

**DEDICATION** ............................................................................................................................... IV

**CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS AND ACTING** ............... 1

A Note on Theoretical Framework ................................................................................................. 1

Thesis Structure .............................................................................................................................. 2

Pragmatics and Drama: Research Rationale ................................................................................ 3

Conceptual Framework .................................................................................................................. 4

  - Pragmatic competence ........................................................................................................... 4
  - Drama versus acting: Terminological issues .......................................................................... 6
  - Acting and Pragmatic Competence: Connecting the dots ..................................................... 8

Research Questions ...................................................................................................................... 10

**CHAPTER 2: ACTING AND SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION: A THEORETICAL INVESTIGATION** ................................................................................................................ 11

Role-Play in Research on L2 Pragmatics ..................................................................................... 11

Second language education and acting ...................................................................................... 13

  - Teacher’s manuals: The world of unsupported claims ......................................................... 14
  - What ESL research shows .................................................................................................... 20

  - POSITION DRAMA: DRAMA WITHOUT ACTING TECHNIQUES ........................................... 20
  - ACTING TECHNIQUES IN TEACHING ORAL SKILLS ............................................................ 22
  - ACTING AND SLE: THE PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE ............................................. 23

**CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY: MOVING TOWARDS PRAXIS** ............................................. 26

Personal Context: The Need for Action Research .................................................................... 26

Research Setting ............................................................................................................................ 28

Research Participants .................................................................................................................. 30

Data Collection Tools .................................................................................................................. 32

Problematicizing the Original Research Design ........................................................................ 33

  - Problematicizing the original epistemology ..................................................................... 34
  - Problematicizing data representation ................................................................................. 38
Chapter 4: Pedagogical Intervention: An Analysis

Potential Sources for the Development of PC

Source One: Communication in English
  The emergence of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Source Two: The Script
  ZPD questioned

Source Three: Acting
  The first failure/discovery
  Script-free units of pedagogical intervention
    Individual Improvisations
    Group Improvisation
  Script-based UPIs
  ZPD confirmed

Chapter 5: Discussion: Mimesis and Language Learning

Advancing Research Questions

The Unresolved Issue of Intonation

Pedagogical Implications

Implications for Further Research

Limitations

Final Thought

References
List of Tables

TABLE 1 FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS IN PRAGMATICS AND THE STANISLAVSKI SYSTEM ...... 9

TABLE 2 PRAGMATIC COMPETENCY (ROYCE, 2007, P. 365) .............................................. 42

TABLE 3 LINE-ACTION BREAKDOWN ................................................................................. 73
List of Appendices

APPENDIX A INFORMATION LETTER FOR POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS.......................... 98
APPENDIX B CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS..................................................... 100
APPENDIX C THEATRE COURSE OUTLINE: A HANDOUT FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS101
APPENDIX D FIRST INTERVIEW WITH LINDA. TRANSCRIPT ........................................ 112
APPENDIX E SECOND INTERVIEW WITH LINDA. TRANSCRIPT ..................................... 116
APPENDIX F LINDA’S RESPONSE TO VIDEO EPISODES............................................... 120
APPENDIX G FIRST INTERVIEW WITH KATE. TRANSCRIPT .......................................... 122
APPENDIX H SECOND INTERVIEW WITH KATE. TRANSCRIPT ..................................... 125
APPENDIX I KATE’S RESPONSE TO THE VIDEO EPISODES ....................................... 130
APPENDIX J TRANSCRIBING CONVENTIONS FOR THE VIDEOTAPED EPISODES......... 131
CHAPTER 1:
Introduction: Interlanguage Pragmatics and Acting

A Note on Theoretical Framework

“I like the English compartment of my head because it feels like theatre. It feels like I’m playing a role, pretending to be someone confident and bold, . . . liberated from everyday drudgery and imbued with the power to be someone else. It is thrilling and a little dangerous.”

_Elena Gorokhova, A Mountain of Crumbs: A Memoir_

I have chosen to start my thesis with this quotation from the memoir written by a Russian-American writer, linguist, and teacher, Elena Gorokhova, *A Mountain of Crumbs*, because it illustrates so clearly and so vividly the role a foreign language may play in one’s life. It also positions the concept of ‘role’ as essential to the process of speaking in a foreign/second language (L2). Gorokhova compares speaking in a language that is not her first to performing a role, i.e., putting on a mask and being someone else, at least partially. She sees the process of using L2 as a liberating, exciting, empowering as well as dangerous experience.

The ideas this thesis is based upon are derived from the conceptual understanding of language that is very much in line with Gorokhova’s thinking. A language is not a mere sign system and, thus, should not be taught or learned like one. *Speaking*, and in a broader sense *using*, a language is a process that is affected not only by the rules of a linguistic system (such as grammar) but also by such aspects as the speaker’s voice, identity and ability to perform a social role. The knowledge of the linguistic form (e.g., grammatical rules or meanings of lexical items) only partially defines one’s mastery of L2.

My theoretical framework comes from the position developed within the sociocultural school of thought (also, sociocultural theory) that sees _language as a symbolic_...
artifact and “language activity, speaking and writing” as “the primary, though not exclusive, mediational means humans deploy for thinking” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 79). In sociocultural theory, language is not equal to thinking but it shapes thinking in a particular way, and it does so in conjunction with other artifacts, such as, for instance, gesture. A number of neo-Whorfian scholars bind speaking and gesture as two important artifacts that regulate our thinking. They also point out that the analysis of the dialectics of linguistic and non-linguistic signs may produce different effects than the study of linguistic artifacts alone (McNeil, 1992; Slobin, 2003). All these positions will find certain reflection in my research.

Seeing both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of what Selinker called interlanguage (Selinker, 1972), that is “the language system that each learner constructs at any given point in development” (Ortega, 2009, p. 110), as co-mediational means regulating thinking is what lies at the core of the scientific paradigm and pedagogical approaches used in this research. In other words, following sociocultural theory, I see interlanguage as a means emerging from thinking and reshaping thinking at the same time.

**Thesis Structure**

The thesis is a mode of presentation of research, not research itself. Moreover, a thesis is a mode of presentation which is very reductionist in nature. Like many before me, I was originally tempted to remove from my thesis what often gets removed from the final representation of research: its failures, inconsistencies, and unexpected or unwanted results, as, essentially, they threaten to shatter the validity of the research and undermine the reputation of the researcher. In case of praxis-oriented education research all those issues can also question the teacher’s professional competence. Disclosing such issues is never easy but it is necessary and important – they complicate the final picture immensely but they also enrich the results. Although I intend to adhere to the conventional thesis structure (research rationale – literature review – methodology – data analysis – discussion), there will be a number of logical diversions that will reflect on the personal nature of my research, on my methodological dilemmas, on the failures and challenges I encountered while teaching and on the contradictions that arose after the pedagogical intervention was over.
Chapter 1 will introduce the main areas of my research – the intersection of teaching L2 pragmatics and drama (acting), as well as the research questions, setting and participants. In Chapter 2, I will look into the current state of research and pedagogical practices on the intersection of L2 acquisition and drama, with a special accent on the learning/teaching L2 pragmatics. Chapter 3 will explain the methodological shift this research underwent. It will also cast a critical eye on the methods of data collection I had originally chosen and offer potential solutions to the methodological dilemmas I was originally struggling with. Chapter 4 will represent the analysis of the incidents representing the main pedagogical techniques used in my teaching praxis. Finally, Chapter 5 will offer a discussion on the use of acting for teaching L2 pragmatics and take up the limitations of this research.

Pragmatics and Drama: Research Rationale

Despite the fact that pragmatic competence (PC), originally called sociolinguistic competence by Canale and Swain (1980), was introduced to second language curricula approximately thirty years ago, it still remains one of the aspects of second language pedagogy that is only beginning to enter the area of teaching methodology, i.e., the praxis of teaching L2. Both educators and academics are struggling to find the answer to the question: How should pragmatic competence be taught? A growing amount of research suggests that role-play and drama may significantly improve students’ pragmatic awareness (Cohen, 2004; Hinkel, 2001). Various studies offer “hands-on” models for teaching pragmatics, which include dramatic techniques such as dramatized dialogues and role-play (Olshtain & Cohen, 1990; Garcia, 1996, 2001; Félix-Bradsdefer, 2006). However, these studies choose to focus only on a very limited range of dramatic techniques (typically, exclusively on role-play) and do not discuss at length the full potential of drama for the development of pragmatic competence. Thus, the actual applications of drama techniques to teaching pragmatics are still largely unexplored.

Similarly, drama educators and researchers seem to have been afraid to step into the uncharted territory of sociolinguistics. They, nevertheless, inadvertently (and often unconsciously) managed to draw connections between drama and various sociolinguistic aspects. One of the authors of the first significant work on drama in second language
acquisition, Stephen M. Smith (1982), identified many parallels that unite an ESL learner and a dramatic actor: both have a need to learn to understand and even manipulate the most subtle aspects of communication. Although Smith did not mention PC per say (in fact, at the time of Smith’s writing the term was only about to emerge), it is clear that the very ability to interpret and “manipulate the subtle aspects of communication” is, by far and large, what constitutes interlanguage pragmatics. Thus, the idea of linking drama and pragmatics has been in the air for quite a while but there has been no research attempting to establish deeper connections between these two disciplines. Not surprisingly, the role of drama in Second Language Education (SLE) is also commonly reduced to a teaching tool used most effectively as a motivation enhancer. Drama is seen by many ESL educators as an optional tool which does not directly affect any of the core aspects of second language acquisition.

My research will attempt to find more profound connections between drama and pragmatics on both theoretical and practical levels in order to see how acting, i.e. the activity that lies at the core of drama, can affect both students’ ability to accept new pragmatic norms, to interpret subtle meanings in various contexts (often expressed through non-verbal cues) and to apply these norms and meanings in their own L2 performance.

Conceptual Framework

The two key concepts upon which this research will rely will be drama and interlanguage pragmatics (IP). Both will have equal weight and both will offer two different perspectives on each other: drama through the lens of pragmatics and pragmatics through the lens of drama. However, due to the existence of multiple interpretations of these concepts in language education literature, as well as in theatre studies, I would like to suggest two specific terms for the concepts in question.

Pragmatic competence.

Pragmatic competence is not an easy term to define. It is not even a commonly accepted term. What some researchers describe as sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), is very often understood by others as pragmatic, or sometimes sociopragmatic competence. These are all different names for the idea that language use is not simply constituted by grammar and vocabulary. Following a number of prominent sociolinguists that
looked at the issues of teaching PC (e.g., Kasper, 1997; Huth & Talikhani-Nikazm, 2006), in my research I will be following David Crystal’s definition which identifies pragmatics as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication” (Crystal, 1985, p. 240). The key words here would be as follows: users (also commonly called ‘actors’ or ‘communication partners’), social constraints (also called ‘rules’, ‘laws of communication’ in a particular context – ‘community of practice’), participant’s choice of language, act of communication (speech act or communicative action). In a way, Crystal’s definitions points out the two major areas of pragmatics: the language user’s choice of the linguistic material (pragmalinguistics) and the social interface of conversation (sociopragmatics). Both will be addressed in my research.

It is also vital to point out here that pragmatics should not be reduced to one layer of language, for example, to its grammar or vocabulary. In my view, pragmatics as an integral aspect of communication, penetrates all the layers of language, including pronunciation, and in particular, intonation. It can also pertain to non-verbal language, i.e., gesture in a broad sense of the word. Reducing pragmatics to “pure” linguistics and more so to vocabulary choices certainly makes PC more easily measurable; however, this approach, despite being very popular among sociolinguists, ignores the simple fact that it could be the intonation, or facial expressions (mimics), or gestures that can signify the speaker’s ability to ‘conduct communicative actions’ and “act in accordance with the context” (Brachman, 1990, p. 87). For example, saying “hello” with a smile and a falling-rising intonation would be the “right” pragmatic choice in a formal English conversation. Using the same vocabulary item with a falling intonation pattern and without a welcoming smile in English may potentially mean unfriendliness or even hostility (however, the same body language and intonation are quite appropriate in Russian). It is the choice of intonation and gesture that make the same lexical item appropriate and inappropriate. In this case, vocabulary only works in conjunction with pronunciation, body language and communication context. To show the importance of smiling in the English linguistic and cultural context, Russian professor Ter-Minasova dedicated one whole chapter of her research on the cross linguistic differences between English and Russian. While Russians find that people in English speaking countries “often
smile for no reason” (Ter-Minasova, 2000, p. 189), English native speakers generally believe that Russians are “an unsmiling nation” (p. 187). A polite smile used in English greetings is commonly regarded as ‘fake’ and ‘unnatural’ by Russians. Removing a facial expression that comes with the speech act of greeting seems very reductionist in this view.

Another common reduction that takes place in research is narrowing down PC to pragmatic awareness, i.e., the knowledge of pragmatic “rules” of a language. Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) warn us that “higher pragmatic awareness does not necessarily translate into appropriate pragmatic production; that is, awareness is not likely to be a sufficient condition for the development of pragmatic competence” (pp. 254-255). This distinction between awareness (knowing about pragmatic norms of the language) and performance (being able to apply those norms in concrete real life situations) is going to be particularly important to this research.

**Drama versus acting: Terminological issues.**

Although in second language education (SLE) research the term “drama” is much more common than acting, other, both more general and more specific words, are also used. For instance, one of the first authors that attempted to join theory and practice of using drama techniques in SLE utilized quite a wide term – “theatre arts” (Smith, 1984), while in one of the most recent articles on drama in SLE a more elaborate, but also more precise, term – “embodied language performance” – was chosen to represent the general concept of drama (Haught & McGafferty, 2008).

In public discourse, drama can mean anything from a TV series to notoriously melodramatic behaviour. Due to the polysemantic nature of the term ‘drama’, I decided to purposefully avoid this word in my narration (except for stylistic purposes and in cases when I quote other researchers). Instead, I chose the collocation “acting technique” (or simply “acting”), frequently used in theatre research to refer to a specific set of activities that leads to the acquisition or development of acting/performing skills. Role-play, which is more commonly called improvisation in the acting world (also “étude”), represents only one of the activities student performers do in order to master the art of acting. I would argue that the word “acting” should help me “peel off” the unnecessary layers that “drama” and “theatre” may possess. For example, writing a play, sewing costumes, putting on make-up, designing a
set for a show, and stage managing a production, etc. can be part of dramatic or theatrical activity in a professional or educational environment. However, these activities do not constitute acting. Being an advocate of the Stanislavsky tradition, I see acting as interaction between characters (individuals) in given circumstances (Moore, 1974). Even in monologues, actors talk to somebody: either the ‘other’ self or an imaginary other. This interaction can be verbal or non-verbal; it can take part on a stage or in real life; it can be scripted (as in plays) or created on the spot (as in improvisations). Acting here would mean what the word “drama” originally meant in Greek – action.

The choice of the word ‘technique’ is not arbitrary either – it is meant to bring to the fore the methodological and technological of aspects of acting and lessen the performance-related bias. Human beings act all the time but they do not necessarily act for an audience or another third party. Therefore, acting does not necessarily mean theatre, as “theatre is primarily concerned with a communication between the performer and the audience”, while acting deals with the experience of interaction participants (Way, 1967, pp. 2-3). It is the latter that pertains to my research interests and to the study of PC, in general.

Acting is still a very broad term and needs to be explained as well, as it may easily refer to techniques that are different from each other and even opposed to one another. As I mentioned before, in this research, I will be working within the premises of one particular acting school – the Stanislavski system, developed by the Russian-Soviet actor, director, and theatre theorist Konstantin Stanislavski (1863-1938). Stanislavski’s original Emotional Memory Technique was based on the ideas of the French psychologist Theodule Armand Ribot (1839-1916). Ribot coined the term “affective memory” which Stanislavski changed into “emotional memory”, and the American followers of Stanislavski (most notably, Lee Strasberg) began to call “emotional recall”. The Emotional Memory technique was pushed into mandatory practice in Moscow Art Theatre, and later was accepted (not without recommendation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) in all professional Soviet theatres. Surprisingly enough, it was Stanislavski’s close friend and partner, Nemirovich-Danchenko, who had promoted the Emotional Memory technique, while Stanislavski himself was opposed to the fetishization of his System and urged actors to create their own methods. Later, when Stanislavski transformed his System into the Method of Physical Actions, many of his former disciples, including Nemirovich-Danchenko, refused to accept his new ideas.
Thus, now, whenever the System is mentioned, its understandings and interpretations can be radically different. Typically, in North America, it is the Emotional Recall Technique that is seen as the underlying principle of Method Acting. In Russia, it is the physical actions, their objectives and obstacles, that are usually considered the principal legacy of Stanislavski.

Some researchers believe that Stanislavski changed the System completely, since by the end of his life he had been already arguing that the actor was “a master of physical actions”. He believed that applying the right sequence of physical actions would trigger the actor’s emotional memory and produce the organic psychological life of a character. Others suggest that the Method of Physical Actions was a logical development of the Emotional Memory Technique, as it could also teach dramatic actors how to balance the psychology and the physicality of the actions, and also to control the unconscious – something that emotional memory inevitably employs. Understanding the differences between both methods (i.e., from the subconscious to the conscious and from the conscious to the subconscious) lies outside of the scope of this research; however, the teaching techniques employed by both ‘methods’ of the Stanislavski school will be used, studied, and analysed here.

Revisiting the terminological issues, I would like to state once again that the key terms I will be using interchangeably are:

A. L2 pragmatics and Pragmatic Competence;
B. Acting, acting technique, the Stanislavski System (the System).

The word ‘drama’ will be appearing mostly in citations and, when necessary to signify a larger range of theatrical activities (as opposed to acting).

Acting and Pragmatic Competence: Connecting the dots

A legitimate question could be raised here: Why the Stanislavski System? It is certainly not just the worldwide popularity of it, albeit, mostly, as Method Acting, or its status as a quintessential acting school (e.g., in Russia, where it originated, the System is seen as the ultimate acting training school, while other approaches are simply regarded as its cognates). The choice of the System is not merely a personal preference, although I must admit that I myself was trained in that tradition as an actor and a drama educator. It is the very essence of the System and its connection with realism in theatre that makes it more
relevant to the issues of language development. A brief comparison of key concepts used in interlanguage pragmatics (especially, in speech act theory) and the Stanislavski system shows a significant number of parallels which cannot be ignored (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Fundamental Concepts in Pragmatics and the Stanislavski System*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pragmatics</th>
<th>Acting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech Act / Communicative Action</td>
<td>Objective/Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-turn speech act</td>
<td>Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal action</td>
<td>Verbal action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social context, community of practice</td>
<td>Given circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicature / metamessage</td>
<td>Subtext</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn taking</td>
<td>Adaptation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The terminological pairs presented in *Table 1* do not mean that all the acting and pragmatics terms are necessarily synonymous, but rather demonstrate that these two different disciplines tend to deal with similar aspects of communication and may employ resembling methodologies in order to analyse interaction (e.g., communication analysis and action analysis). The pedagogical hypothesis underpinning this comparison could be that *involvement in acting exercises based on the Stanislavski System could be beneficial for language learners in terms of developing their pragmatic competence, especially its sociopragmatic component*. Discovering and accepting new sociopragmatic norms for a language learner is in a way similar to trying a new role/character for an actor. Drama may be able to provide second language learners with a holistic experience of using new pragmatic patterns in various social contexts. This assumption represents the groundwork for research on both theoretical and practical levels.
Research Questions

My initial research question, as stated in the original research proposal, was: Can acting be a significant mediational means for the development of interlanguage pragmatics? The subsequent question that arises from the possibility of the positive answer is: Which acting techniques can affect L2 pragmatics and how?

The sub-question for the theoretical part of my investigation (literature review) was to understand the current position researchers and teachers take on the role of acting in second language acquisition and, more specifically, for the development of PC.

The practical exploration was expected to provide answers to the following sub-questions:

1. Does EFL learners’ involvement in dramatic acting affect the development of their PC?
2. What changes in PC can be noticed in students’ linguistics performance?
3. What are the student’s and the teacher’s perspectives of the effects of acting on language development?

As we will see from the Methodology chapter, my questions were getting reshaped and reworded as the praxis of the research was developing, and so was my understanding of that praxis. A number of unexpected classroom episodes, as well as my students’ perspective, and my own teacher journals brought up new sub-questions that I had not been originally able to think of.
Chapter 2: Acting and Second Language Education: A Theoretical Investigation

Role-Play in Research on L2 Pragmatics

I can only wish it could be possible to write a comprehensive literature review on the interrelations of interlanguage pragmatics and acting. Sadly, at the current state of the development of research in applied linguistics that does not seem to be conceivable. What is possible to do is to find elements of various acting techniques in a few studies related to teaching L2 pragmatics.

As I indicated before, a small number of research studies show that role-play may significantly improve pragmatic awareness in L2 (Hinkel, 2001, Cohen, 2004). Some researchers suggest various pedagogical models for teaching speech acts. One of the most popular models includes Olshtain and Cohen’s (1990) five step classroom procedure, later used by C. Garcia in a replication study (1996, 2001). This model suggests the following order of step for developing L2 pragmatic awareness: (1) diagnostic assessment; (2) model dialogues; (3) evaluation of a situation; and, (5) feedback and discussion. Step (4) targets the actual practice of pragmatic skills and is represented by role-play. A similar structure is used in Huth and Taleghan-Nikazm’s study (2006) on the use of conversational analyses in teaching PC. When describing step 4 (role-plays) the authors note that “it is crucial that such structures be practised within a situational context given by the teacher, effectively providing students with meaningful tasks that allow for the joint co-construction of the verbal activity at hand” (Huth, Taleghan-Nikazm, 2006, p. 68). This shows that researchers recognize the complexity of role-plays and the importance of the social context.

Another model (Félix-Bradsdefer, 2006) includes three pedagogical units instead of five: (a) communicative action and cross-cultural awareness; (b) doing conversation analysis in the classroom, and (c) communicative practice and feedback. Although role-play is not formally included in that list, it actually still appears in the final phase of the suggested teaching procedure and is guised under the term “communicative practice”. Through communicative practice activities instructors try to develop students’ ability to conduct “communicative actions” – a very interesting term, which seem to replace the dated and less accurate term “speech acts”. Communicative actions imply that they can be expressed both
verbally and non-verbally, even through the absence of any speech (i.e., silence). Similarly, the Stanislavsky system calls any verbal and/or non-verbal attempt to achieve a particular communicative objective an action.

To further highlight the topic of role-play, it becomes necessary to understand its shortcomings. Although role-play is gaining more and more recognition as a powerful tool for teaching pragmatics (especially on the productive level) and evaluation of PC, there are two major problems that researchers identify with it. The first problem is the caution with which role-plays should be designed. Because role-play simulates real life conversations, the number of variable contexts that may be taken into consideration during instructional role-plays can be simply overwhelming. The participants of role-play activities might need to consider such factors as power, place, time, age, gender, mood, origin, religion, and appearance. In addition to that, they, being L2 learners, are required to carry out a conversation in the target language. This combination of tasks can be daunting for language learners, who are not, nor should they be, professionally trained actors.

The other problem with role-play is that it defies any standardization, which makes it a very unreliable instrument for PC measurement. For this reason, Discourse Completion Task (DCT) is often preferred to role-play for measuring pragmatic awareness. Pragmatic awareness, though, does not fully represent PC and can even be misleading simply because the learner’s assumption about what they are going to say and the actual manner in which they conduct speech acts in L2 can be dramatically different.

This roughly sums up all the published research (in English) that pertains to the use of role-play. Overall, researchers assume that role-play is a natural activity that could easily be carried out in a language classroom. They never discuss the very skill of role-playing in a foreign language and how that skill, which is only one of the many acting skills, can be developed. Role-play is often treated as a grammar substitution exercise or a simple vocabulary game, i.e., as if it does not require specific skills on the part of the participant. What also limits applied research in L2 pragmatics is that linguists prefer not to go beyond role play and discuss other types of acting exercises/activities and their applications to the development of L2 pragmatics. To see a wider range of acting techniques I will have to
broaden the focus and look at the general SLE research and pedagogical practices that advocate the use of acting in a language classroom.

Second language education and acting

The objective of the second part of my literature review is to analyse the available pedagogical literature that focuses specifically on the use of acting techniques (for example, role play) in SLE. The “What” and “Why” questions, i.e. the content (What is being taught?) and purpose (Why is it being taught?) of pedagogical practice will be my focal points. I will also attempt to look into the questions of efficiency of acting techniques used in SLE, although due to the scarcity of research in the area, this particular aspect will get less attention than the first two. Overall, all three questions should potentially lead to identifying gaps in current research and pedagogical practice related to teaching drama in SLE, as well as to the pinpointing the place that acting techniques occupy in SLE.

In spite of my determination to go around the term ‘drama’, I could not avoid having it as a keyword in the search engine I used for this article (Scholar’s Portal, Arts and Humanities division, including ERIC). The only other key phrase I used was ‘second language’. Although the results of my initial search looked quite impressive at first sight, a closer look revealed that most of my findings were either abstracts of dissertations or articles where drama was not interpreted as ‘acting’ or ‘acting techniques’. Having removed those from my list, I then selected the articles that targeted specifically teaching English as a second/foreign language (ESL) – at that point the pickings already looked quite slim. Finally, the last criterion – articles written in English only – helped me narrow down the results even more, and the lack of research in the relationships of drama and ESL became glaring: only five of the found articles were published in peer-reviewed journals. Further search, this time through the University of Toronto Library engine, showed another tendency: relationships between drama and ESL are more commonly approached from a practical point of view: practice-oriented manuals for ESL teachers significantly outnumber research studies in the field. Moreover, most of the research available was represented by case-studies based on pedagogical practice. To my utter disappointment, no longitudinal or large-scale studies have yet happened, albeit it may be said that the number of dissertations devoted to Drama/ESL relationship is slowly but steadily growing.
This review is structured according to the two categories of literature I was able to find. In the first part, I will attempt to examine what the vast array of drama manuals for ESL teachers has to offer and how the use of acting techniques is justified by various authors. The second part will cover the available studies, this time – books and articles, which concentrate specifically on “acting”, either as a teaching tool (teaching ESL through acting techniques) or as a teaching objective (teaching acting in order to teach ESL). The “contents” (what?) and “purpose” (why?) questions will be reflected in both parts of my work, but only the second part will cover the effectiveness of the use of acting techniques in the ESL curriculum.

**Teacher’s manuals: The world of unsupported claims**

The two books I would like to analyse first seem to share the same level of popularity among language teachers and researchers. One was published in Great Britain and the other in the USA. One was written from the perspective of a drama teacher working with ESL students, the other from the perspective of a language teacher interested in using acting techniques to enhance both his teaching and his student’s language acquisition. In a way, these books set two different directions which later authors continued to pursue.

The first book was first published more than 30 years ago and has been reprinted many times since. Maley and Duff’s *Drama Techniques for Language Learning* (2002) represents the first attempt to justify the use of acting techniques in a language classroom and put together exercises and games related to drama. Although Maley and Duff get quoted in numerous research papers, it is important to remember that the book is written by practitioners and for practitioners. The authors insist on teaching the language meaningfully, i.e. putting language in a context in which it functions in real life. The context is identified by the term “situation”, which is comprised of the setting (physical environment), role and status of the speakers, their moods, attitudes and feelings, and shared knowledge. A sociolinguist would see familiar notions in all those names: status and role are closely related to the concept of power; setting and shared knowledge can be linked to the term “community of practice”; mood, attitude, and feeling are nowadays commonly dealt with by interactional sociolinguists. A theatre theorist might also notice familiar terms: role, mood, attitude, and feeling are common acting terms, and the word “setting” could, in fact, stand for “given circumstances”, the term coined by Stanislavski about 80 years ago. Maley and Duff prefer to
avoid professional acting and linguistic lingo but it is possible to find connections in their work with both acting and sociolinguistic concepts.

Maley and Duff (2002) specify the two major functions of acting exercises in a language classroom:

1. putting the language into a personal, social and cultural context,
2. enhancing students’ motivation.

Sadly, the activities in the book do not always serve those two purposes. Far too many non-verbal exercises borrowed from actors’ warm-up routines do not really concentrate on the language itself but rather on the development of the sense of trust, or overall development of students’ senses.

Some activities do not actually provide the “meaningfulness” (context) to the language practice (e.g., Shapes and Figures) but simply work as entertaining games. Their connection to acting often seems quite loose and their use in the language classroom is not always clearly justified. Despite all these flaws, Drama Techniques in Language Learning is still considered one of the fullest collections of drama-related activities suitable for a language classroom.

The second major work was written only four years after Maley and Duff’s manual, and it represents a much more profound attempt to connect acting and teaching L2. In his book Language Teaching and Theater Arts, Stephen M. Smith (1982) draws many parallels between the ESL learner and dramatic actor. Actors, in Smith’s interpretation, are “students of the language”, as they have to learn “a new language” (by that Smith actually means “accent”, “dialect” or a manner of speaking) each time they learn a new role. The teacher, whose role is equated to one of a theatre director, cannot simply ask his/her students to act without providing them with the tools of ‘how to act’. The set of tools comes from Method Acting. Smith draws from Stanislavski’s theory of acting, utilizes Stanislavski’s techniques, and uses the vocabulary typical of the Method school: motivation, obstacle, ensemble, and subtext, etc. In order to acquire the necessary acting techniques, students need to develop their voice and body, or what Stanislavski called “the physical apparatus”. Learning a new language for an actor and a language student means not just acquiring a new code (language, accent, manner of speaking), but also learning about the behaviour of the character and the
culture in which the character functions. This requires an in-depth analysis of the character and culture, which in the acting world is realized through working on the script (scene study). It also requires the development of empathy which Smith regards as the central point of Method acting. In order to communicate with native speakers (Smith uses the term ‘natives’) a language learner (Smith uses ‘foreigner’) should empathize, but not necessarily sympathize. In Smith’s words, acting ‘without having compromised one’s own values and beliefs, can ease the foreigner’s own internal conflict, allowing him or her to use empathic strategies to keep channels of communication open’ (Smith, 1984, p. 17).

The theoretical parallels provided by Smith are undoubtedly interesting and valuable but the very foundation on which the SLE student-actor equation relies is prone to critique. It is debatable that Stanislavski’s focal points were language and empathy. As I pointed out earlier, Stanislavski moved away from empathy (as a connate of the Affective Memory) and began advocating the idea of physical actions. Language was seen by him only as a verbal action, i.e., a particular type of the physical action. According to Stanislavski, the actor’s role is to turn the ‘dead’ lines of the play into meaningful goal-oriented verbal actions.

Another problem lies in the differences between the actor’s and language learner’s specifics of using a new language. A speaker of a new language has to use the language spontaneously (most of the time), coming up with on-the-spot decisions of what language to use and how to use it. Thus, a language learner should be able to produce utterances, which differs greatly from what actors usually do, i.e., reproducing the lines written by the playwright. Actors’ lines are typically scripted; language learners’ lines are usually improvised. As we can see, Smith ignores these differences completely and provides us with a “broken” parallel between the actor and language learner.

Smith also suggests two applications of acting techniques to SLE. The first one replicates a theatre rehearsal, where students (most probably in an elective Drama/Language course) would be working on a play. He relies on his own pedagogical experience as a drama teacher and introduces a wide range of acting techniques which include:

- observations (observing and imitating people’s behaviour, also observing “cultural circumstances”)
- character study (character background, character development, etc.)
- exercises for developing voice and body
- practicing communication strategies (creating a role in given circumstances)
- simulations (similar to sociodrama: role-play for solving social situations, conflicts)
- scene work (scene study, rehearsals and presentations).

The list of activities recommended for a language classroom does not significantly differ from a typical acting class based on Method Acting. The choice and the order of exercises show Smith’s high expertise in drama; however, his pedagogical recommendations related to language practice do not always seem grounded in proper linguistic or pedagogical research.

Despite its inconsistencies, Smith’s book remains the first serious attempt to apply a particular acting technique (Method Acting) to SLE. Unlike his predecessors, Smith created a new standard for a drama manual: the manual that suggests teaching L2 (with an emphasis on speaking and cultural awareness) through a systematized set of activities adapted from a specific actor training school. Smith also distinguished quite clearly between process-oriented (training) exercises and product-oriented exercises (production). The latter certainly suggest that teachers wishing to apply Smith’s ideas to practice should obtain at least basic training in acting, directing, and teaching acting technique.

It is hardly surprising that the majority of authors chose to follow Duff and Maley’s example and ended up publishing books that would simply contain a list of process-oriented acting techniques relevant to language teaching (e.g., Hayes, 1984). In many publications, drama activities were part of the overall strategy to enhance students’ motivation in a language classroom (Wright et al., 2006), to improve a specific language skill or competence (Rinvolucri, 1984; Ladousse, 1987), or simply provide teachers with a range of texts for a classroom production (e.g., Watcyn-Jones, 1978). It is assumed that it is the instructor’s responsibility to choose drama activities, put them in order, and plan a drama-oriented class.

Susan Holden’s book Drama in Language Teaching (1981) stands out in the long list of handbooks for teachers due to the fact that it offers a specific method of integrating process-oriented activities into a language curriculum. She focuses mostly on role-play and improvisation, which in her interpretation is seen as ‘extended role-play’, and identifies the
functions of both role-playing and improvisational activities and their place in the ESL classroom. One of the functions she introduces is improving the quality of coursebook dialogues – decontextualized texts which normally contain nothing but the target language, meant to be studied in one lesson or a set of lessons. Holden recommends “dramatizing” the dialogues, turning them into meaningful contextualized role-play. Dramatization means acting something out. Acting requires personalisation (empathy) and the analysis of the contexts. For these purposes, Holden draws from the acting exercise called “character study”. Asking questions like: Who am I? What am I doing in the scene? How do I feel about the other character? may help the actor/student to act out the given dialogues in a realistic manner. The questions Holden suggests also come from the Stanislavski school of acting, although the author never acknowledges that fact.

Charlyn Wessels in her book *Drama* (1987) addresses both process-oriented exercises and production-oriented activities. Following Smith, she divides her work into different sections: one deals with acting exercises, the other with the production process. The structure of the first part in many ways resembles Duff and Maley’s work, but the typology of activities recommended for a language classroom is very different from her predecessors’ classification. Wessels attends to the need of language teachers to know exactly which aspects of language teaching and language learning can be developed, improved or promoted by acting activities. The sub-sections of the first part include: drama games (motivation boosters, icebreakers, class ending exercises), dramatized presentations of coursebook dialogues, drama in teaching of pronunciation (actor’s voice and diction training), teaching spoken communication through acting activities (role-plays, dramatized readings, scene study), and drama for teaching literature. The purpose of all these activities is to improve either a linguistic skill, promote interest towards a specific area of language or reduce the flaws of course materials (especially, coursebooks).

The second part deals with “the drama project” and describes the process of staging a dramatic production with ESL/EFL students. This process also relies on the Stanislavski System (although Wessels never mentions the theatre guru or any of his disciples) and represents a very simplified version of a standard rehearsal process: moving from script readings to “standing rehearsals” through improvisations.
A much more elaborate and detailed description of what the production-oriented work should look like is given in Burke and Sullivan’s handbook for teachers (Burke & Sullivan, 1992). The books offers a step-by-step description of how a drama course can be planned and implemented. The work should start with process-oriented exercises, such as warm-ups, exercises on breathing, articulation, trust building, etc. They prepare “would-be actors” for the actual work on a production, rather than simply help the teacher to introduce the course material in an entertaining way or practice various linguistic skills. The next step is choosing a play for production or generating a performance text. It is interesting that although Burke and Sullivan also rely on Stanislavski’s tradition and in many ways copy his system of working on the production, the generated text is probably something that comes from a different acting school. I might suggest a connection with ‘devised theatre’, which also uses actor generated texts and builds productions around improvisations and exercises. This approach allows us, at least partially, to “repair” the broken parallel found in Smith’s seminal work: in “devising theatre” language learners will perform the lines produced and refined by them, not by a different person (playwright).

Burke and Sullivan also extended the range of functions acting can have in SLE. Besides its value for the enhancement of motivation, pronunciation, a sense of community, and a sense of realism (using language for real purposes), one other aspect comes into play. The authors claim risk-taking is an integral component of acting which “heightens language retention” (p. XXI). The language produced (or reproduced) during performance will be better memorized. In addition to that, “thinking quickly on one’s feet transfers” to communication in L2 in real life. This certainly brings us back to another “broken parallel” found in Smith’s work: the introduction of acting techniques to a language curriculum can potentially have a positive effect on the spontaneity of students’ speech production in L2. It is important to remember, though, that many authors of teacher’s handbooks rely on nothing but their own pedagogical experience (at least, this is the case with Smith, Wessels, Burke and Sullivan) or put together the approaches and technique practices by other instructors (Maley & Duff). That is why all their claims regarding the usefulness of drama do not carry much weight unless relevant research supports it.
What ESL research shows

As we have seen, acting, commonly understood as Method Acting and its variations, is believed to be able to:

- improve students’ productive skills in L2, especially speaking,
- improve students’ pronunciation,
- enhance students’ sociolinguistic competence,
- enhance students’ motivation,
- promote risk-taking, necessary for everyday communication
- promote cultural awareness and develop cultural tolerance,
- develop a positive atmosphere in the classroom by creating a sense of community and sense of trust,
- improve the quality of material presentation in ESL coursebooks.

Research into the relationships between acting and SLE does not yet cover the full range of aspects presented above, nor does it necessarily go along with the acting method preferred by the authors of the teacher’s manuals we have discussed. In fact, numerous studies in drama/ESL integration tend to draw from the available research in L1 and concentrate on a different approach – the so-called position drama (also known as educational drama or drama in education).

Position drama: Drama without acting techniques.

Position drama comes from L1 teaching practice and “is concerned with the development of a dramatic world created by both the teacher and the students working together” (Liu, 2002, p. 54). Although the structure of a position drama class does imply role-play in which the teacher and the students will have to “wear” role masks (usually social roles), acting techniques are not specifically taught in position drama. It is assumed that learners are able to act without the tools used in professional acting. This assumption contradicts Smith’s position on the use of drama in L2 classroom: Smith argues that language learners should be explicitly taught acting tools in order to acquire communicative skills in a new language. Another problem with position drama is that there is no linguistic exemplar provided BEFORE the role-play. The stage of reflection comes AFTER the “dramatic event”. Liu writes: “In experience reflection, the central purpose is to give learners the opportunity to
focus on themselves and their reacting and feelings in different phases of learning through Process Drama. In linguistic reflection, the focus is on whether the learner uses appropriate linguistic means to perform the social functions necessitated in the Process Drama”. The “post-mortem” reflection does not provide the learners with the opportunity to use the language correctly: it is obvious that during the dramatic event a lot of negative language transfer from L1 to L2 would occur but the students would only learn about their mistakes after the event.

Shin-Mei Kao and Cecily O’Neil, who provided the most complete account of teaching a second language through process drama, have to admit linguistic growth does not always accompany the use of process drama (Kao & O’Neil, 1998). In one of the case studies they present, the subject’s performance on the post-test, i.e. after pedagogical interference through process drama, was comparable to her performance in the pre-course test. There were two tests conducted (on speech clarity and communicative competence), and both showed that the learner’s performance after the pedagogical interference remained almost unchanged and was lower than the class mean score.

A more recent qualitative study (Ntelioglou, 2008) showed that process drama may indeed have a positive effect on cognitive and affective learning, language comprehension and retention, the amount of classroom interaction, risk-taking, and class community building. It also makes classes more enjoyable, but first and foremost, it encourages cultural understanding and acceptance. Interestingly enough, Ntelioglou stays away from making conclusions about the growth of students’ communicative competence, and especially its grammatical component. Position drama claims to affect it, but there are still no studies supporting this claim.

An interesting side remark also came up in Ntelioglou’s (study: one of her interviewees, a language instructor who was involved in the drama classes along with the researcher (Ntelioglou conducted action research), stressed that her lack of training in acting technique was actually the biggest obstacle for implementing drama activities (p. 111). This remark not only shows us one of the shortcomings of Process Drama in SLE but also brings us back to the importance of teaching “acting techniques” – this time not only to students but also to language teachers.
Acting techniques in teaching oral skills.

Another popular trend in SLE/Drama research is to target the acquisition of communicative competence, in particular “oral skills”. Typically, this type of research is based on pedagogical practice and does not differ much from the numerous teacher’s manuals on drama in SLE. Most authors prefer to explore the theories of L2 acquisition but ignore completely the theories of drama. Subsequently, this kind of research does not normally revolve around a particular method of acting but rather makes use of various actor training techniques. Many researchers distinguish process-oriented and product-oriented activities and sometimes merge them together: the former provide sufficient training in acting and then progressively lead the latter, culminating in a class production of a chosen play (Miccoli, 2003). The effectiveness of drama activities is assessed through the teacher’s and student’s perspective: both sides reflect on their classroom encounters with drama and turn their reflections into a written narrative. Due to the subjectivity of both teachers’ and students’ accounts on the learning process, this research does not contribute much to the understanding of effectiveness of acting techniques for the development of student’s communicative competence.

Oral skills research also has other typical flaws. Certain researchers simply list the dramatic activities they recommend for the enhancement of oral skills (Pross, 1986). However, those lists may often include activities which have very little to do with acting, theatre or drama. The following example shows the researcher’s inability to distinguish between a regular guessing game and a theatre game, that is, the one that implies the “as if” component:

A variety of objects is placed in a box. The lid is firmly secured and the hole is cut on one side (...). One by one the children are invited to place a hand into the box through the hole, pick up an object, describe it with objectivity and precision, and take a guess at what it might be. After everybody has had a chance, the lid is taken off the box and they are allowed to see how close or far they were to guessing the right object.

Practice-driven research also concentrates on more specific areas of communicative competence, such as pronunciation. Hardison and Songchaeng (2005) presented a set of exercises on articulation, breathing, voice projection, and pitch, adapted from a standard voice training course for dramatic actors. The exercises are to be used in a particular
progression: from muscle relaxation to presenting a dramatic monologue, and later a dramatic dialogue. The voice training is supported by technology – the authors recommend the use of computer software that increases the amount and the quality of language input. When it comes to rehearsing the dramatic monologue, the following factor bears particular importance: “to perform monologue effectively, one needs to understand the character and the story in order to be able to express the material with appropriate intonation, rhythm, and stress” (p. 604). *Empathy leads to appropriate pronunciation, study of character is required to act out a monological or dialogical text.* It is impossible to ignore the connection with the realistic acting (Method Acting), although the authors do not specify the origins of their pronunciation exercises, nor do they mention a particular method of acting they draw from.

*Acting and SLE: The psycholinguistic perspective.*

The first study that attempted to provide grounded scientific support to the notion that drama facilitates communication in L2 by promoting certain psychological factors was Susan Stern’s research (Stern, 1981), which incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods (a fairly rare case in drama research). Stern’s study showed that motivation (“degree of enjoyment”), self-esteem, empathy, sensitivity to rejection, and spontaneity may be enhanced by the use of improvisations and dramatization of scenes from plays. From my perspective, it is more important to consider how exactly improvisation and scene dramatization were approached. When working on the dramatic material the students were asked to say the lines “with meaning and feeling”. This resembles what dramatic actors try to do onstage, i.e. justify and personalize the scripted word. After the dramatization, the students were asked to perform an improvisation: either an imaginary interview with the character, or a similar scene “with a significant twist in character or the plot” (Stern, 1981, p. 88). This type of activity also replicates actors’ improvisations which are normally conducted during the rehearsal period in order to explore the given character and/or the scene. Stern does not use the word “acting” in her paper – she sticks to the more customary term “drama”, but it is obvious that she limits drama to the activities that implore acting in both scripted and improvised texts.

Another article that connects acting and SLE on the psycholinguistic level and provides empirical data of that connection came out 30 years after Stern’s publication. In
Haught and McCafferty’s (2008) work, drama, or what I have been consistently trying to call acting, is seen as “the ability [sic] to momentarily be another person or to encounter a situation outside of our everyday experience” and this ability is “akin to creative play” (p. 147). Following Vygotsky’s ideas, the authors state that creative play starts with imitation, which is central to creating a zone of proximal development. The learner can only imitate something which is within his/her level of development. Imitation involves appropriation and later leads to internalization. The empirical data in this study show how adult language learners working on written dramatic scripts imitate and internalize the instructor’s intonation and gestures. What differentiates this approach from other approaches, more typical of acting in L1, is that it values imitation. Imitation is not typically regarded as a part of acting practice: in fact, directors working with Method actors are often discouraged from showing the actors what to do – instead, the actors need to discover their own way of doing actions and saying words. However, L2 learners, unlike native speaker actors, need a language sample to imitate, as this sample has the potential of creating a collective zone of proximal development, i.e. a process when new intonation patterns and gesticulation can be internalized.

Our brief journey into the relationships between acting and ESL shows that despite its thirty-year history, the research in this interdisciplinary area is still at its initial stage, as there are far more teacher-oriented compilations of activities than scientific papers based on empirical data or theoretical research. The available research revolves around pedagogical practice (it is either induced by teaching or analyses it) and is normally qualitative with very few exceptions. Another indication of the “immaturity” of this stage is the very lack of terminological agreement, which results in a situation in which each and every researcher comes up with a unique understanding of drama and related terms.

There are three major pedagogical approaches that are currently being studied: position drama that requires no specific acting technique and mainly promotes the acquisition of new culture, production-oriented drama and process-oriented drama. Both production-oriented and process-oriented activities rely on acting techniques based on the Stanislavski system, although most authors do not acknowledge the origins of the activities they
recommend for the use in L2 classroom. An interesting new trend – adapting Stanislavski acting method to Vygotsky’s psychological ideas – seems to be emerging; however, more research is needed in the area. There is clearly a need for more studies analysing the actual effects of the use of acting techniques on the development of L2 learners’ communicative competence and specifically, pragmatic competence.
Chapter 3: Methodology: Moving Towards Praxis

In the first part of chapter three, I will reflect on my own research methodology, starting from the way it was laid out in my research proposal and then implemented at the data collection stage. The second part will provide a new perspective on the collected data – the one that helped me reconcile my understanding of qualitative research with the methods of data collection and interpretation I used and/or was initially intending to use.

Personal Context: The Need for Action Research

I started using drama techniques in my teaching about sixteen years ago when I was only beginning my career as an ESL/EFL teacher. Some techniques I borrowed from popular teacher manuals (e.g., Maley & Duff, 1982), some I adapted from my own acting training, and some I invented on the spot. Being a second language learner myself, I saw my students struggling with the same problems I was struggling with when I was learning English and French – my second and third languages respectively. It was not just grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, but also other more subtle aspects of L2 acquisition, which I could not quite name at that point. What I noticed, however, was that the students who, in my opinion, were particularly good at acting, also managed to sound more ‘English-like’, although neither their grammar nor their vocabulary (i.e., linguistic competence) was better than the grammar and vocabulary of their peers.

In 2004, I was invited by one of the leading EFL language schools in Moscow, Russia, to take the position of the academic director of the drama project for advanced language learners. The school administrators backing up the project were concerned with the fact that a lot of their intermediate and advanced learners did not receive what they called “the native-speaker like training in speaking” (whatever that strange combination of words may mean). It was suggested that involvement in drama activities may potentially contribute to the students’ language development. For the next three years the project took almost all my time: I was working on the curriculum, I was giving regular acting classes, I staged shows and showcases, I also consulted students, teachers and parents. But most importantly, I was also observing, although unintentionally and, to my deepest regret, erratically, what was happening to my students’ language. The students who had been taking acting classes for two
or three years (four academic hours a week) seemed to speak and behave differently from the students who were only joining the classes in the project. Although the mission of the drama project shifted from specifically targeting language acquisition to the acquisition of acting skills in English and show production, it was still obvious to me that my students’ verbal and non-verbal behaviour was going through tremendous change. I was noticing more and more elements that were not characteristic of monolingual speakers of Russian (e.g., keeping direct eye contact while speaking to someone, maintaining a “polite” smile while addressing others in English, thanking people more, and posing requests in the form of questions, not imperatives).

In hindsight, my sporadic observations could have provided evidence for the changes in students’ sociolinguistic/pragmatic competence. I believe my students were gradually accepting the norms of communication in the new language and the language choices typical for English speakers. However, at the time of my observations I was not even aware of the existence of interlanguage pragmatics and was not able to connect the dots.

In 2007, I had to abandon the project due to personal circumstances and a move to another country. Luckily, in 2009, I was given a unique opportunity to return to the same pedagogical environment in order to assist the troupe in staging their new production in the English language. I could not afford to lose this chance to conduct a more thorough investigation into the problem that had been on my mind for a significant part of my teaching career. I returned to Moscow to teach a short-term intensive theatre course for students performing in L2.

My research comes from and will rely on the personal experience (the teacher-researcher’s perspective). I originally saw it as a means to improve my own pedagogical practice, which aligns it quite nicely with the strand of research in social sciences broadly called action research. My intention was to conduct systematic observations of the students’ language acquisition and change my teaching according to the observations I was able to make during the course of the instruction.

Besides improving my own pedagogical practice, my other personal aims included:
1. to deepen my own understanding of the relationships between acting and interlanguage pragmatics;

2. to create a general theoretical framework (on sociolinguistic, theatrical, and pedagogical levels) justifying the use of certain types of dramatic activities for language instruction concerned with the development of L2 pragmatics;

3. to explore through close observation and thick description the intricacies of the pragmatic development of L2 users taking an acting course;

4. to lay groundwork for further research on the relationship between acting and pragmatics.

**Research Setting**

Investigation into the effects of drama is an extremely difficult task, as acting is essentially a holistic activity, recreating life in all its fullness. In theatre, multiple context always come into play, in theatre education there happen to be even more contexts.

The praxis of my research was done in a unique educational setting: an intensive acting course for EFL learners conducted entirely in English. The course was offered to a closed group of 35 students through the English Language Drama Club (name changed) in Moscow, Russia, and lasted 4 weeks (11 August - 9 September, 2009). I named the course *Theatre BootCamp* and designed a unique syllabus for it, which comprised the following:

- group meetings for scheduling purposes and administrative issues (approximately 5 % of the course time)
- one 60 minute workshop on raising pragmatic awareness
- one 60 minute workshop on the fundamentals of English intonation
- one 90 minute workshop on the fundamentals of the Stanislavski system
- group rehearsals (app. 70 % of the course time)
- one-on-one rehearsals (one to two hours with participants playing principal parts in the show).

Overall, the course consisted of 96 hours of classes, meetings, and rehearsals, all conducted in English (for detailed syllabus-schedule of the course see Appendix C). Out of the three workshops offered, two focused on language skills per se (“How-do-you-say-it? Workshop” and “The English Intonation Workshop”). The first workshop provided the students with a set of professional theatrical terms that they were expected to use during the BootCamp (e.g., in the wings, go stage right, cue somebody in, cheat out, backdrop), in combination with the everyday language for drawing attention, clarifying, apologizing, and making requests (e.g., Could you cue me in here, please?). The English Intonation workshop introduced the five basic English tones (rise, fall, fall-rise, rise-fall, level) and provided initial practice of those tones and their potential use for the actual script lines. Finally, the workshop on the Stanislavski System reviewed all main terms of the System and their application to the roles in the current production. The main purpose of that workshop was to ensure that the students could understand the professional lingo that pertained to the System and they were expected to be used throughout the rehearsal process.

The major pedagogical objective of the course was to introduce students to the show production process based on the Stanislavski system, i.e. from character breakdown, études, scene study, such as objectives, scene arc, superobjective, etc., to blocking rehearsals, technical rehearsals, dress rehearsals, and finally, the premiere of the show. Other objectives also included the following:

- to improve the students’ acting skills,
- to provide the students with better a understanding of the Stanislavski System and its applications to musical theatre.

An important remark must be made here. Musical theatre is commonly and mistakenly viewed as an ‘unrealistic’, presentational and clichéd type of acting different from straight drama. I do not share this belief. My understanding is very much in line with the approach of theatre educators and practitioners Joe Deer and Rocco Del Vera, who being the authors of the first and only comprehensive acting course for musical theatre actors, chose to begin their acting textbook with nothing less than one of the System’s principal techniques:
The great acting teacher and director Konstantin Stanislavski coined a term that actors have used since he first came up with it a century ago called the Magic “IF”. He simply asked us to consider one question: How would I act if I were in the situation? It is on that little idea that most contemporary acting theory is based, because it begs us to pretend that we are someone else with specificity, sensitivity and commitment. (Deer & Dal Vera, 2008, p. 8)

The authors continue to introduce all the other main components of the System throughout their course, arguing that acting in musical theatre, even while singing, is based on the same principles as acting in straight drama and should not be regarded as a separate technique.

I believe that it is not the genre of theatre but rather one’s artistic choices that define how one approaches particular dramatic material. The show I was working on was a musical based on Dr. Seuss’s works called *Seussical: The Musical* and it was a balanced combination of spoken and sung scenes. The show had been chosen long before I was invited to teach the course and I did not have the right to alter the production material, nor did I have a legal right to change any of the lines in the script. What matters though is not so much the play but the acting techniques chosen by me and my colleagues for the training of our student actors and for this production, i.e., the Stanislavski System.

**Research Participants**

The contingent of the BootCamp participants was predetermined by the school administration and consisted exclusively of the students of the English Language Theatre Club. Although there was no actual audition for those who wanted to join the course, by signing up for the course the students knew that they would be working on *Seussical*, either as chorus members or principal actors. The students varied in age (from 14 to 30 years old), knowledge of English (from low intermediate to advanced), motivation, stage experience, and acting ability. The roles of the participants had been allocated by the musical director of the production long before the beginning of the course. While most participants were given a part in the chorus of *Seussical*, only the third and fourth year students were offered the leading roles, i.e., the ones that would have actual lines in spoken scenes and the ones that would require full-fledged character work.
On the first day of the course, I announced the opportunity to participate in the research for the actors in principal roles, and five students expressed interest in participating. The first interview showed that only two out of the five volunteers were not expecting to be exposed to other forms of English instruction during the course. Those two students were shortlisted and became the main participants of my research. Linda (pseudonym), playing Jo-Jo, the Mayor’s Son, and Kate (pseudonym), playing the-Cat-in-the-Hat, were expected to provide a more focused look into Pragmatic Competence. The participants signed an Informed Consent form approved by the Ethical Review Board of the University of Toronto and took part in pre- and post- pedagogical intervention interviews. All the other students were informed that the study would take place during the course. They were also informed that the school administration would be videotaping classes for production improvement as well as research purposes. All students signed a consent form indicating that the video footage can be used for production improvement and research purposes, and I received a written permission from the school administration to use a copy of the videotaped material for my own research. The original copy of the footage remained at the school. I would like to reiterate here that in my research I only focussed on two participants: Linda and Kate, but the others students’ performance was also occasionally noticed in my teacher journals and captured by the video camera. Let me now introduce Linda and Kate.

**Linda** is a 21-year old student of German/Jewish descent. She is a native speaker of Russian and she speaks English and German as foreign languages. She has been studying English since the age of three: in kindergarten, primary and secondary school, and with a private tutor. She has been with the English Language Theatre Club for more than 2 years but has not performed principal roles yet.

**Kate** is 21 years old and has been studying English for approximately 10 years both at school and with a tutor. She also speaks German but not as well as English. She has been with the English Language Theatre Club for 5 years and has previously played principal roles in other productions in English.

Linda and Kate were seen as two separate case-studies, originally not meant for direct comparison, despite the fact that they differed greatly in their pragmatic performance. Having two participants provided me with a more profound understanding of my pedagogical
practice and gave me an opportunity to have a more focused look into the issues of the L2 pragmatic development, as sometimes the pragmatic failures of one participant would shed light on the successes of the other, or vice versa.

**Data Collection Tools**

My original research design included three data collection tools: pre- and post intervention interviews, daily teacher journals and videotaping of the rehearsals. All these instruments were meant to capture and interpret the observable moments of the development of PC. They were also supposed to provide three different perspectives on the same moments: the students’ (through interviews), teacher-researcher’s (through teacher journals) and the researcher’s (through the analysis of the video footage).

The students’ perspectives were expected to be revealed in the researcher-student interviews: first – *a structured interview* – coming before the pedagogical intervention, and second – *a semi-structured interview* – after the pedagogical intervention. The function of the baseline interview was two-fold: it would provide information on the background of the research participants, such as age, mother tongue, years of studying English, and stage experience, as well as show, albeit quite superficially, the level of the student’s competence in English, including PC. The post-intervention interview was geared more towards the discussion of the development of the participants’ acting and language skills during the course. Among other questions, the students were to be asked:

- What is your impression of the theatre course you have just finished? Was it useful in terms of the development of your acting abilities? If yes, how?
- Do you think that course affected your speaking abilities in English?
- When recreating a character on stage, did you experience any language problems? If so, describe.
- Did you learn any new language items throughout the course? Specify, what exactly did you learn (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.)? Did you have a chance to use them?
- How difficult was it to communicate in English during the rehearsals?
- Have you ever used the lines from the current production in a natural conversation?
The teacher’s perspective was expected to be seen from the analysis of daily journals, where I was supposed to reflect upon the instances which would indicate the participants’ pragmatic development or the lack of it (e.g., pragmatic failures, L1 negative transfer). Finally, the researcher’s perspective would have been revealed in the post-intervention analysis of the videotaped classes and rehearsals that would encompass 90% of the time of the theatre course I was teaching. The camera was expected to capture the same moments the teacher would write about in his journals. Those moments were to be transcribed and analysed in terms of the development of students’ PC. The camera was positioned in the corner of the rehearsal that created the widest possible angle to capture the whole space. There was no operator, and the camera was turned off during breaks.

**Problematizing the Original Research Design**

Needless to say, my research design was essentially flawed. Distinguishing between the teacher’s and researcher’s perspectives was impossible to achieve due to the simple fact that the teacher and the researcher were the same person. Even though the researcher was able to watch the videotaped material only after the data collection was complete and the teacher was writing the journals during the course of pedagogical intervention, separating one from the other was neither feasible nor meaningful.

The actual research setting made things even more complicated. First of all, my interviewees revealed in the very first interview that their primary goal was not to learn about L2 pragmatics or even improve their English (including PC), but to improve their acting skills and subsequently get a role in the forthcoming production. Ironically, it was a very different sort of pragmatics that prompted them to take the theatre course with me. Their goals happened to clash with my research intentions.

Second, during one of the rehearsals I quite unexpectedly had a chance to observe the negative effect of the acting method (the Stanislavsky System) I was using on a particular student’s English pragmatics (see Chapter 4 for the analysis of that episode). That was a shocking revelation which made me question my whole research methodology, let alone my pedagogical competence and understanding of acting methods. Sadly enough, the circumstances of that particular teaching episode did not allow me to set up the camera and,
subsequently, that very important incident never got videotaped. Due to sheer luck, it was recorded in one of my teacher journals – another research tool that I was hardly able to keep up-to-date, due to extreme exhaustion caused by everyday involvement in teaching and creative matters.

_A failed hypothesis, serious flaws in design, and inconsistencies in data collection_ – that was the state of my research when I realized, albeit too late, the need to understand qualitative methodologies better before plunging into the realm of data interpretation. Despite the fact that my pedagogical experience proved to have been very successful and, as my post-study interviews showed, highly enjoyable and useful, I was in doubt regarding the outcome of my research. What was more important – I did not know how to approach the rich, albeit inconsistent data I had collected.

**Problematizing the original epistemology**

After my data collection was complete, it took me a while to come to terms with the failure the data seemed to represent – my research participants did not show a lot of signs of improvement in terms of L2 pragmatics. My extensive reading in the field of qualitative methodology eventually led me to a rare article – one that described a similar research failure – Kari Dehli’s *Coming to terms. Methodological and other dilemmas in research* (2006). Although my own research project was far from school councils and parental involvement in Toronto, nothing could describe my research struggle better than Kari Dehli’s first dilemma:

The first dilemma led me to realize that the epistemological position and conceptual tools that I had planned to use were not adequate for the complexities of the research. (2008, p. 47)

Dehli reminisces on her failure to produce a book expected as a result of her study. I was unable to produce any sort of writing due to the inadequacy of my original epistemological position. Relying on Foucault’s governmentality studies, Dehli warns us: “Qualitative researchers … are implicated in practices of power, whose dimensions and effects we cannot completely grasp” (p. 48). The concepts of power, power distribution, power balance, power resistance, let alone the idea of governmentality, were never my concern. In my research, the position of power in the Teacher-Student relationship was never questioned or investigated. It was I who created the course syllabus; it was I who
implemented the course: it was I who designed my research study, and it was I who collected and interpreted the data. The traditional institutionalized teacher-student power relationship was taken for granted. As was the director-actor status. As was the researcher-participant status. Driven by my determination to demonstrate that acting is an effective aid in the acquisition of L2 pragmatics, and by my theoretical analysis comparing the conceptual similarity of the Stanislavski system and the study of pragmatics (see Chapter 1), I was convinced I would easily get confirmation to prove my hypothesis. The reality of the research made that almost impossible.

As I mentioned before, at least one of my research participants was showing arguably no improvement of L2 pragmatics; in addition to that, at some point a standard ‘emotional recall’ exercise typical of the Stanislavski system, even produced a disastrous effect. That happened very early in the course and in many ways made me feel at a loss. The rest of the data collection was conducted quite mechanically, as I was blindly following my own design as described in the research proposal and the ethics review protocol. At no point did I think to step down as a teacher/researcher, give the floor to the ‘unsuccessful’ participant and let her speak about her own performance. I assumed that my main hypothesis failed and instead of giving the voice to the participants, turned away from her to continue the collection of data. I could have certainly probed deeper and looked into the reasons for that failure: maybe the participant was not aware of her inappropriate pragmatics, maybe she was unwilling to give up her L1 pragmatics for the sake of L2, maybe she was not even concerned with her language performance but was merely trying to be “a good actor”. Those questions were never asked and I chose to go on with my silent assumptions. Being a director, teacher and researcher gave me a lot of power and shaped my thinking in the wrong way – I saw myself as the ‘knower’ and my participants as ‘subjects’.

The very concept of pragmatic competence and the expectations of “development” were also inadequate and should have been problematized. I had a positivistic understanding of both, seeing the development of L2 pragmatics as a direct transfer of certain linguistic items (be it vocabulary, grammar, intonation) into the speech of my participants. I had been affected by a number of studies that attempted to measure pragmatics quantitatively (e.g., Yamashita, 1996; Hudson et al., 1995; Liu, 2006) and aim to develop “objective” tools for its assessment. I saw pragmatic development as a progression of knowledge and skills, not as a
messy process where languages and cultures may conflict with each other and where context matters. What is worse, I never saw it as a ‘choice’ issue.

As we have seen, David Crystal defines pragmatics as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make ...” (Crystal, 1985, p. 240). Choices are not always determined by the level of language acquisition, they are part and parcel of people’s inner desires, aspirations, emotions, etc., they are also heavily affected by external circumstances that could not be replicated in any positivistic test attempting to measure L2 pragmatics.

As a researcher, I never approached my participants to see what had prompted their ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’ pragmatic choices. Instead I quite presumptuously assumed I knew it was their lack of competence in L2. My understanding of L2 pragmatics, as well as the positivistic concept of competence, proved to be limiting.

Kari Dehli writes:

The social researcher is inescapably enmeshed in the social world that she studies and about which she writes, and the promise of distance offered by modernist social science, be it as a stance of objectivity in positivism or of critical reflection in ethnography, is at best conditional, at worst suspect and dangerous. (2008, p. 61)

My stance of distance and objectivity was an ineffective filter that did not allow me to dig below the superficial level of understanding, to go beyond the conceptions and measuring systems developed by other scholars studying PC, and in many ways compromised my research. To start the analysis of the collected data, I had to:

1. develop conceptual frames that would allow me to treat PC less positivistically;

2. produce another set of data where I would ask my research participants to reflect on the incidents in question and, perhaps, on my hasty assumptions and conclusions.

To address the first issue, I turned to a number of studies on language assessment, which argue that “the idea of a ‘stable competence’ is unattainable, and that ‘variable capability’ is the only defensible position” (Fulcher & Davidson, 2006, p. 16). So measuring a PC, which is simply a construct developed mostly for teaching and testing purposes, is
implausible simply because constructs do not “really exist within individuals”, instead, “our abilities are variable, and change from one situation to another” (Fultcher & Davidson, 2006, p. 16). Therefore, to understand what happens to L2 pragmatics one needs to look in detail at a situation in which certain pragmatic choices are made. In my case, it should be a classroom situation in all its fullness.

This naturally dovetails with another important principle that has always defined my pedagogical work, which is – seeing *praxis as valid science*. Similarly, I went through a major shift as a researcher and my position shifted from the view typical of conventional social sciences that ‘greater relevance and engagement automatically involve a loss of scientific validity or a loss of courage in the face of the yawning abyss of endless subjectivity” (Greenwood & Levin, 2000, 95) to a much more praxis-driven and praxis-oriented approach. In other words, this means I had to learn to trust my data, which represented my pedagogical practice and my understanding of that practice. Methodologically speaking, I had to start from the data that illustrated my practice and allow the data to lead me. Instead of starting with pre-conceived constructs, such as measurable PC, I allowed data to ‘reveal’ the instances when PC and acting might be intersecting and attempted to analyse those instances from a pedagogical point of view.

In terms of the procedure, I decided to start with the teacher journals: I read through my own notes in order to establish the moments of my pedagogical practice that had caught my attention, and then tried to find either respective and/or related moments in the footage. I also watched the whole footage of the rehearsals in order to see whether there were more instances of pragmatics-acting intersection, which I might have missed while teaching. Obviously, this approach significantly reduced the amount of data, as the fragments that were irrelevant (for instance, video footage of the rehearsals of sung lines, and technical rehearsal) got excluded from the analysis. The moments that stood out in terms of the affect on the students’ pragmatics were analysed. The analysis was based on my own linguistic judgement without attending to any external help.

As I mentioned before, my interpretation of L2 pragmatics relies on the idea of choice: pragmatic choices whether they are conscious or unconscious are still the choices of the speaker. This means that ignoring the speaker – in my case, my research participants –
would be contrary to my understanding of PC. To address this problem I returned to my research participants and asked them to reflect on the moments of ‘pragmatic development’ (or non-development) selected by me. The concurrent analysis of the learner’s perspective on the same data enriched the data in ways I could not originally predict. Overall, the procedure I pursued in my analysis was as follows: teacher journals – video footage – researcher’s interpretations – video footage – participants’ interpretations – analysis and implications for further research.

**Problematizing data representation**

Research in Applied Linguistics does not like the body or emotion (McCafferty, 2008). Neither does second language pedagogy. Even in sociolinguistics – the branch of linguistics that studies pragmatics – it is the ‘pure’ linguistic sign that gets most representation. Body language is often seen as a secondary mechanism, less intricate, less subtle and less important. Sociolinguistic transcriptions, even those that pertain to conversation analysis, would attempt to depict the actual wording, i.e., the sounds of language, but would typically, although not always, avoid going into the uncharted territory of anything visible, not aural. Oddly enough, sociolinguistics studies the “social interface of communication”, something that is often expressed in body language as much as in the spoken word (see Chapter 1 on the discussion of the role of gesture and intonation).

In my very first observations, I realized it would be impossible for me to concentrate on the spoken word only, especially if that word conveyed emotion (which word does not?). Moreover, the Emotional Recall Technique I was using with my students at early stages of the pedagogical intervention requires the full spectrum of expressive tools available to actors. Removing body language from the data would mean killing the emotion and reducing the data to the part that was not particularly telling. The body in my research mattered as much as the words but I did not know how to capture it and how to represent the ‘body’ data in the actual analysis. Attaching video slides to my analysis seemed to be ideal but unrealistic.

A postmodernist researcher, Caroline Fusco, pointed out a number of possible ways to get around these dilemmas of analysis and representation of the body. At first, the idea of studying and representing the body in all its fullness, including the remains of human activity
such as hair, feces, etc., as Fusco did in her study, disgusted me. Later, I came to realize that excluding the body would be contrary to very foundation of my research and my pedagogy.

Describing the body is difficult and even elusive. Fusco (2009) points out that postmodernism treats the “body as wholly constructed discourse”, which means that the body is apt to disappear as “a material or biological phenomenon” (p. 171). She follows up with a question she was struggling to find an answer for: *How could I ‘capture’ the body and space in ways that moved me beyond the ‘body as text’ and toward the ‘body as flesh’?*

She decides to use photography as her main tool representing the “fleshness” of body. In my case, since I was not allowed to reveal my participants’ identities by providing photographs, I had to opt instead for thick dynamic descriptions of actors’ actions. In addition, they would have to be attached to the actual lines my actors were saying.

This brings me to another aspect of Fusco’s methodology that affected me – her avoidance of transcripts. To demonstrate the transformational power of transcripts Fusco quotes Kvale (1996, p. 165) who calls transcripts “interpretative constructions” that “de-contextualize oral discourse”. In her research, Fusco chooses to deal with the “lived face-to-face conversation”, not with a transformed mode of that conversation. She also asks an important question: “What is the most useful transcription for my research purposes?” (2009, p. 169).

By asking myself the same question I arrived at two different answers. The interviews I conducted with my research participants would have to be fully transcribed, since it is the contents of the answers that would provide me with the necessary information about my research participants, such as background, experience with the English language, stage experience, etc. The videotaped material was a different matter, though. Its main purpose is to make the context visible and audible, i.e., to embed the pragmatic choices my participants were making in a particular conversation environment. De-contextualizing those conversations would be unproductive and contrary to the objectives of my study. Instead, I decided to focus on the key incidents of successful and unsuccessful linguistic performance and use a transcription system that would include the ‘thick’ description of visual and audible contexts. Following Fusco’s methodology, I had to invent a ‘hybrid (re)production’ of my data while staying vigilant in terms of the shortcomings of the chosen representation mode.
The hybrid transcript mode that I was lucky to discover for my study does not come from the field of sociolinguistics. It was originally used in Heath’s study (2004) on medical consultations. While using traditional CA (conversation analysis) conventions, indicating various phonological features, such as semicolon meaning elongation of a vowel, Heath adds a whole new line for body language – the line where physical actions are written above the words that they accompany timewise (see Extract 1).

**Extract 1.**

*Heath, 2004: 274, fragment 1, adapted*

```
walks
up down up down up down up down

P: I was coming up the steps like this all the way up I felt.
writes turns to turns to nods and
D: prescription P’s face P’s legs smiles
```

This transcription is followed by a thick description/interpretation of an episode that reveals more information on the intricacies of doctor-patient communication in progress.

This form of transcribing supplemented with thick description I found adequate for my purposes, as it allowed me to include various non-verbal features, such as pace, eye contact, facial expressions, as well as linguistic features, including pronunciation. It was also consistent with *the principle of readability* that Jane A. Edwards rightfully proclaims as the fundamental principle of discourse transcription (1993, p. 6).

**Problematizing the unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis in studies on PC typically comes from the dominating theories in sociolinguistics, be it a Speech Act theory, Politeness theory, or any other. Consequently, PC is measurement revolving around the dominating ‘concept’. There have been attempts to create an all-encompassing tool taking a number of known aspects of pragmatics into consideration. One of the most significant works that suggested an ‘all-in-all’ assessment
system for PC was Hudson, Detmer, and Brown’s study (1995) that concentrated specifically on Japanese learners of English and included three different Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) and a role-play. In addition to that, self-assessment of the oral DCT and role-play focused on students’ metapragmatic knowledge.

The multiple-choice DCTs were conducted only after the researchers processed the information on native versus non-native speakers’ choices to be able to include the so-called distractors: strategies typically taken by non-native speakers in certain contexts (but not taken by native speakers in the same situations). The role play consisted of eight different scenes and was assessed along with the oral DCT by native speakers of English who had been specially trained for the assessment procedure. The criteria for the assessment of the oral performance included:

- ability to use the correct speech act,
- formulaic expressions,
- amount of speech used,
- information given,
- level of formality,
- level of politeness,
- level of directness.

My initial intention was to use Hudson et al.’s seven rubrics for the measurement of PC, i.e., I was going to try and see how my students would learn to use appropriate speech acts, formulaic expressions, etc. However, as I pointed out, my research derives from my praxis, and as it turned out none of the seven rubrics described above happen to have been the centre of my praxis. Nor did I collect sufficient amounts of data to show significant changes in my participants’ level of directness or politeness.

When revisiting my notes in the teacher journals, I realized that I had actually been more concerned (perhaps, as any other teacher) with how my students responded to my specific pedagogical techniques. Throughout the Bootcamp, I used a number of exercises adapted and/or adopted from the Stanislavski system. Some were used only once, some were employed on a regular basis. Some did not produce any visible/audible effect on L2 pragmatics while others immediately drew my attention, as their effect on my students’
language was more than noticeable. Those ‘units of pedagogical intervention’ (UPI) were my main focus, as I was exploring the effectiveness and efficiency of each and every one of them for the course I was teaching. Although my study would not be able to see any long-term effects of the UPIs, it was possible to observe the immediate effect they produced and analyse why that effect occurred.

To be able to analyse that effect, I had to keep in mind not only the seven measurable components of PC, as suggested in Hudson et al’s study, but a far more complete picture of PC that includes a much wider number of items. In other words, I was in need of a more inclusive and less assessment-oriented definition of PC. Terry D. Royce in his article on multimodal communicative competence offers a non-reductionist approach to PC. He skilfully summarizes the works of Richards and Schmidt (2002) and Savignon (1983) on communicative competence in one concise table.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pragmatic Competency (Royce, 2007, p. 365)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociolinguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Pragmatic Competency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumed for various communication situations by a specified speech community and culture.</td>
<td>Repair, fillers, etc., non-verbal cues (gestures, eye contact, interpersonal space).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>The ability to comprehend how the members of a particular culture behave with each other, and to interact with them in acceptable (and recognizable) ways.</td>
<td>A general appreciation of a culture’s social structure, the way of life espoused, and the typical rules which govern how society is organized.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instead of identifying measurable constructs, Royce’s work provides four general areas of consideration: functional, sociolinguistic, interactional, and cultural. He also relies on the concept of ‘ability’, which he separates from knowledge (cf., performance versus awareness). Instead of using terms like ‘grammar’ and ‘vocabulary’ he uses the word ‘language’ implying the full range of linguistic resources, including phonology and intonation. Most importantly, his table includes the ability to use appropriate body language as part of PC. I believe Royce’s table serves as an excellent framework and his examples as clear guidelines for my analysis of the video footage I made during the Bootcamp.

The following chapter will present the analysis of a number of UPIs based on the Stanislavski System and my reflections on how I believe those UPIs affected or failed to affect my research participants’ PC. My understanding of the UPIs will be balanced by the research participants’ interpretation of the same moments. Chapter 5 will discuss pedagogical implications of the research results, directions for further research and the limitations of this study.
Potential Sources for the Development of PC

As a teacher, I originally saw the potential for my students’ pragmatic development coming from three major sources: the script, acting exercises, and the necessity to communicate in English during the whole rehearsal period. Although it may occasionally be hard to distinguish one source from the other in the actual pedagogical practice, I would argue that it is possible to trace the origin of certain pragmatic norms (be they L2 lexis, grammar, pronunciation or non-verbal behaviour) in one’s speech. The key to that understanding lies in the idea of ‘input’. For instance, if a student begins to use a line from the actual script outside the context in which that line was first encountered (or learned), we may assume that it was mainly the script that prompted the development of PC. The idea of input does not undermine the student’s agency, nor the teacher’s influence, nor any other circumstances that shaped the learning process. It simply allows us to explore where the verbal or non-verbal material students begin to use (or not to use) initially comes from. Let us look more closely at these potential sources for pragmatic development.

First of all, the eighty five page script of *Seussical* provided an invaluable collection of appropriate, and sometimes inappropriate, “playful” use of language typical of Dr. Seuss. Written mostly in verse, the script contained a few lines in prose as well as a number of ad lib lines for the Cat-in-the-Hat. As a teacher, I was expecting direct and indirect, i.e., slightly modified, transfer of the lines of the script into the students’ interlanguage.

Second, all the acting activities from basic script readings and discussions to working on individual characters, blocking, and improvisation, could have served as another significant resource for the development of PC. The exercises concerned the development of characters, working on character interaction, objectives, and given circumstances.

Last but not least, our course was conducted almost entirely in English – that is interaction in English between the teachers and students as well as among students was encouraged and promoted. Although the students were aware that I could also speak Russian, the Russian language was only used when major misunderstandings would occur, i.e., when I had to explain a complicated concept or a word and all the preceding explanations in English
had failed. Since most of the time the students communicated in English and used speech acts such as greeting, request, verification, clarification, gratitude, etc., this continuous input and practice of pragmatic norms of English could be considered another resource for PC.

Although my primary interest was the acting exercises used in the course, i.e., the second source of PC development in my own classification, it would only be fair to address all the sources in the order they appeared in my observations. I will start with the ones that I noted in my Teacher Journals and then discuss the ones that happened during the watching of the video data. I believe these observations shed light on the complexity of dramatic activity per se as well as raise a number of important questions in terms of the development of PC in L2.

Source One: Communication in English

My teacher journals, for the first four days of rehearsals, did not seem to produce any revelatory remarks. I tended to have noticed several pragmatic successes and failures of my students, which were mostly related to the workshop I conducted on the second day of the course. The workshop was entitled *How do I say it?* and it was aimed to provide my students with the functional language necessary for partaking in rehearsals in English. In the workshop, I addressed various grammatical, lexical and pronunciation issues with a specific emphasis on speech acts. We looked into the appropriate language to express the following:

- greetings (How are you? – I’m good. Yourself?)
- requests (Can I…? Could you…?)
- asking for instructions (Should we go from the top?)
- clarification (Am I supposed to stand here?)
- wishes (Break a leg! Congrats on… !)
- gratitude and responses to gratitude (Thank you! You’re welcome.)
- suggestions (I suggest we rehearse Scene 3. Why don’t we…?)
• compliments (I think you were great. Great job!)

• saying goodbye (Have a good evening! See you tomorrow).

We also talked about the level of politeness especially in requests and took up the question structure *Can I get...?*, as opposed to the imperative structure *Give me, please!*, which is far more typical of the Russian language. We discussed the use of *be supposed to* instead of *must*, which Russians tend to overuse in many cases when there is a need to express a mild obligation. The issue of answering the question *How are you?* was also addressed: I pointed out that in English it is common to give a short positive reply such as *I’m fine/good* that can often be followed by a reciprocal question (How are you? Yourself?).

Complaining about life, current illnesses, miseries, troubles or the general state of affairs is not exactly common practice, as it is often in Russian. We even practiced “high fiving”, both the gesture and the phrase, as a way of demonstrating support and camaraderie or expressing informal congratulations on some individual or mutual achievement (see *The Quick English Guide* in Appendix B for the full list of expressions covered in the workshop). The workshop included a general discussion of speech acts, repetition after the instructor and initial practice of the target speech acts in pairs.

In one of my first journals written after the workshop, I note my students’ successful and unsuccessful use of the target language:

**Teacher Journal. Day 3**

Before the rehearsal Linda talked to me about the camera. She’s been very helpful – she loves helping with the equipment. Her rate of speech seems to be faster than she can grammatically process.

A lot of people never ask questions, even though we covered questions. Those who ask seem to follow the Russian word order for questions: direct word order, as opposed to inversion.

In response to *How are you?* – most people say ‘fine’ but only one or two regularly ask back. I wonder if they forget to ask or is it because I’m a teacher.
When asking for clarifications: only one person said ‘should’, no one yet used ‘supposed to’ or ‘do’. However, ‘must’ hasn’t been used either, unlike on the first day where every other sentence contained it.

As we can see, after the workshop my students seemed to have begun avoiding ‘must’ (Must I stand here? Must I cheat out? Must he go onstage?). Also, I note the use of the appropriate answer to the How are you? question – such as ‘fine’ or ‘pretty well’ – was beginning to emerge. At the same time I notice that most of the students were still forgetting the appropriate reciprocal response – How are you? Only two students would ask me the same question back on a regular basis. I believe it is safe to assume that the “How do you say it?” workshop may have produced some positive effect on the students’ pragmatic choices. In addition, everyday rehearsals gave my students a chance to practice the target language, and while some of them were reticent at the beginning (I notice that few of them asked any questions), as the course progressed my students were becoming more and more versatile in the ways of expressing themselves.

During the second interview, Linda and Kate were asked to speculate on how the course had affected their speaking skills (I never mentioned the term “pragmatic competence” in the interviews or even introduced that term to the students). After expressing great satisfaction with the course Linda praises it on the grounds of being a good opportunity to communicate in English. She says that in August she typically goes abroad for several weeks to practice her English. In the year of 2009, she stayed in Russia and the Theatre course became somewhat of a successful substitute for an overseas trip:

I think it helps me mainly when you know it’s summertime and I don’t have a lot of practice and here is a month of you know drama English and that’s why it helps me not to forget it. So of course, as I said at previous questions I’ve learnt some phrases, collocations for myself but mainly it helps me not to forget English because nowadays it is difficult for me because I have no English no more at my university and I cannot meet with my tutor every day to speak in English, yeah. But I have this opportunity here.

Kate’s response was very much in agreement with Linda’s:
I was learning English and then I stopped doing it. I had no lessons or classes for a long time. When I have a break, like two summer months having no English classes. I have no classes of English in the summer time. It was something that was locked inside my mind, not it’s activated. And I think that this particular course is a great punch that to have all my knowledge I mean English language to be on for a long time. Now I think it’s going to be like year in the future to have everything like on the top of my abilities.

I also invited Linda and Kate to speculate on other positive effects acting could potentially have, without specifying any particular skills. Both students recognized the importance of drama but their answers took different directions. In her answer, Linda compares studying acting to studying any other subject in English (or indeed in any other second/foreign language):

> When you try to study any lesson, it can be geography, it can be math, it can be drama in another language, it helps you learn it deeper somehow.

In Linda’s view, drama does not occupy any specific place in the range of subjects that can be studied in L2. Linda sees it only as a subject that allows her to understand the language “deeper”. But so does geography. Or math. Linda does not assign any unique qualities that improve second language acquisition to drama. To her, involvement in drama means communicating in English, as would involvement in the study of geography, provided it were studied in English.

Kate’s take on communication in English looks a little different.

I don’t know why but when we had our original classes, me and other students usually we let ourselves to speak Russian. But here, it was like: oh, I got it’s so interesting to speak English all the time. I don’t know what happened. Actually I understand it’s very important to speak English here. But I’m such kind of person. I can switch and it’s... I have no problem speaking Russian or speaking English. Maybe I’m mistaken but I think so. But I understand that I am an example for another people, like another students. But here it was like: oh, it’s so cool. But not the kind of rule it was before. It’s a NEW rule. So we were
talking in English. So it wasn’t a part of rehearsal, it was part of life. We were talking about the sweets and the candy. We were talking in English.

She compares her previous drama classes where she and other students could occasionally let themselves speak Russian to the Bootcamp course, which encouraged everyone to keep communicating in English. It is clear that she really enjoyed communicating in English and found it useful because it looked as if it were “part of life”, i.e., authentic, genuine.

I believe that Linda and Kate’s responses are consonant with my first observations that indicate it was the necessity to communicate in English to solve actual communicative tasks, i.e., the necessity to use appropriate language in various speech acts that was the driving force of my students’ language development. Those speech acts were real, not orchestrated by the teacher, as often happens in a language classroom. In other words, doing production work in the English language provides students with a unique opportunity to use their L2 in multiple situations and is akin to living in a foreign country where the target language is used on a regular basis for authentic interaction. This source of pragmatic development cannot and should not be ignored.

The emergence of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Before moving to a more in-depth analysis of the Communication in English as the first source, I would like to clarify my understanding of the word “development”. I share the view deriving from the works of the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, the father of sociocultural theory, who considered development to be a process undertaken within a certain cultural-historical context and shaped by the agglomerate of all the social relations an individual finds himself/herself part of. Following Vygostky, an American psychologist and drama practitioner, Lois Holzman, points out that development is “the activity of creating who you are by performing who you are not. It is an ensemble – not a solo – performance. And Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development is not a zone at all, or a societal scaffold, but an activity – simultaneously the performance space and the performance” (Holzman, 2009, p. 19). This means that seeing development as a mere correlation of two variables, i.e., pragmatic competence and acting, where that latter affects the former, is in the least naïve and reductionist. It also means that while analysing a possible effect of acting on second
language acquisition one has to take into consideration the social situation in which that effect was taking place. Let us attempt to look at the first source through the social perspective in order to understand the emergence of the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

My students were taking an intensive acting course aimed to produce a new musical in the English language. At the very beginning of the course I laid out an important rule for our community of practice: my student actors were encouraged to speak in English during the course. They were also provided with a short list of functional expressions necessary to keep the rehearsal process in English and given a brief introductory “drill” of those expressions. This “Speak English” rule was reiterated in the written form in the brochure handed out to the students during the very first day of the course (see Ten Simple Rules in Appendix C):

**Try to use English as much as possible.** Avoid switching to any other language, especially right before going onstage. Do not distract your stage partners by using a different language during the rehearsal.

Not only was this rule stated in oral and written forms, but also exemplified throughout the course: I never used Russian for communication with the students, nor did my assistant director. Moreover, if we had to switch to Russian (for example, to communicate with our stage manager), we would lower our voice to a minimum, so that the students would not hear us speak another language. The very first class and the very first activity were conducted entirely in English. As so were the very last rehearsals and the farewell party that concluded the course.

The “Speak English” rule did not mean the ultimate first language prohibition with no linguistic help provided. On the contrary, the list of conversation expressions I introduced during the first workshop contained a specific line for asking for a translation: “How do you say ______ in English?” My students were given an explicit sign that they were welcome to ask me for a translation whenever it was needed. Second, they were provided with continuous support from their peers. During the very first day of the course, I invited some of the students who were very advanced speakers of English to volunteer for the English language committee. That invitation was reiterated in the student’s brochure (Appendix C):
**English Language Committee**: your English is amazing and you’d be happy to help others with their language learning – choose this committee. You may also be asked to do some cuing during the rehearsals.

The English language committee was one the eight student-run committees working during the course. Five students readily agreed to provide immediate “language rescue” to those who needed it and formed the committee. This linguistic assistance was sustained throughout the course and asking me or the committee members for language help such became a very common practice. Many such requests for help were recorded in my teacher journals, and one case even occurred in one of the interviews. In fact, it was Kate who used the opportunity to explicitly ask for a translation in the post-intervention interview. Kate did not hesitate much before asking for an English word:

Kate: And now… hm… *(struggles for the right word)* how do you say “sravnivaya”?

*R*: Comparing.

Linda was also actively using the established support system asking for the right words, as well as correct pronunciation and intonation. In fact, in her post-intervention interview, she expresses appreciation for the continuous linguistic facilitation that was going on during the course:

*R*: How difficult was it for you to communicate in English all the time?

*L*: No problem. It was quite free. Sometimes maybe little problems with words which I don’t know how can I pronounce it in English. Well, but it’s not a problem. And the same thing about which I told in my first interview. Sometimes I can mistake in grammar and … well, you know that. You told about my mistakes. Sometimes the students between us, I mean between students can hear you made a mistake. Somebody can hear you. Oh, really? How should I pronounce it? Oh, ok.

According to Vygotsky, ZPD occurs with the help of a more capable peer, be it a teacher or another student. Our community of practice was guided by the “English only” rule and the conditions that made linguistic assistance readily available. Those two factors, in
conjunction with the very necessity to deal with authentic problems, issues, and concerns related to production work prompted the emergence of ZPD. As we have seen, Kate emphasizes the difference in the use of English before the course and during the course: before the Bootcamp, communication in English was only reserved for talking with the instructor, while during the Bootcamp the students were willingly promoting L2 communication among each other. That environment did not emerge simply because it was an acting class but because there were a number of specific conditions created to support that continuous communication in L2.

Source Two: The Script

To understand the omnipresence of the script in our rehearsal process and why I stress its importance so much, one needs to take into consideration the number of times each section of the script was addressed in one way or another in our rehearsals. In production work, it is typically the script (or the play) that dictates the linguistic content of what actors, or in my case – student actors, have to say repeatedly.

The schedule of the Theatre Bootcamp was very much a reflection of the production I was working on: Seussical required a lot of ensemble work, which could only be built through quality multiple repetition. That was why I attempted to set up the schedule so that each scene of the show would be rehearsed at least eight times. The approximate rehearsal procedure included both acting-focused (AF) and language-focused (LF) stages. Although there was a great deal of variation in the actual order of rehearsal types, the list below demonstrates the general framework for scene work used in the course (for the full schedule see Appendix C):

1. “Table reading”: initial reading of the scene, correction of language errors, initial discussion about objectives, character relationships, given circumstances, scene climax, other important aspects of a particular scene. (AF and LF)
2. Études (or improvisations) based on the objectives or character relationships (AF, optional stage)
3. Initial Blocking rehearsal: the first rehearsal when actors along with the director develop the actual blocking of the scene (AF)
4. **Blocking Fix** (AF and LF): a runthrough intended to improve blocking, interaction between characters and delivery of the lines.

5. **Scene Runthrough**: a runthrough of a logical sequence of scenes (usually 2-5), with the emphasis on the links between scenes and scene changes (AF)

6. **Pronunciation Fix**: a one-on-one tutorial with a pronunciation coach (LF) where the actor would play their scenes (talk through in songs) so that the coach could provide corrective feedback on their pronunciation (optional stage).

7. **Technical Run-through**: a cue-to-cue run-through intended to set the lights and sound levels for the actual run of the show, minor blocking changes are possible

8. **Full Dress**: a dress rehearsal with the props and costumes (AF).

It is obvious that my students had a chance to become completely immersed in the script and, in turn, I believed the script would provide them with an incredible amount of linguistic material. Most students knew their lines by heart, and even at our very first rehearsals I felt there was no need for a prompter.

It is hard to say whether the script and more specifically our “table readings” when we discussed Seuss’s unique use of language affected my students’ pragmatic awareness. In fact, I was more concerned with their pragmatic performance. I was expecting direct (no changes) or indirect (with changes) transfer of the lines, expressions or words from the script, especially the ones that were repeatedly used in various scenes in the actual communication.

Contrary to my expectations, the teacher journals indicate only one use of the directly borrowed line, which came from the following scene:

HORTON (*counting clovers*)

Two million, nine hundred and nine-thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine. It’s hopeless.

MAYZIE (*on a palm tree*)

You said it, kid.

HORTON
Who’s there?

MAYZIE

It’s me. Maizie. Up here.

HORTON

Mayzie… Are you on a nest?

MAYZIE

Yeah. You wanna make something of it?

HORTON

NO, I just never thought I’d see you on a nest.

MAYZIE

Neither did I, Hort… Neither did I.

“You said it, kid” was all of a sudden used by my assistant director, who responded to a student’s answer to one of his questions. Neither the question nor the answer is relevant to the subject of our discussion. What is relevant is the very fact that my colleague gave our students an idea of how they could employ script lines in a natural conversation. Unsurprisingly, all the teacher journals after that even clearly demonstrate that students picked up on that idea and began to use “You said it, kid” in various situations, but only when talking to each other (never to a teacher) and always for expressing irony or sarcasm. The line would naturally spur some laughter among the listeners and it seemed as if the students were enjoying that new sense of experimenting with the script language.

Sadly, neither the journals nor the available video footage contained any other uses of script lines. It is important to mention here that the positioning of the camera did not allow me to hear tête-à-tête conversations during the rehearsals. Due to the large number of people in the rehearsal hall it was not always easy to decipher what people were saying, especially if there was more than one conversation happening at once. In order to understand whether or
not a direct transfer from the script is a useful resource in forming PC development, I turned to the interviews. In the second interview, there was a specific question that invited the participants to reminisce on the use of script lines in regular conversations. Linda’s and Kate’s answers were confusing.

On the one hand, they both mention using lines from the script as a joke. Here is Kate’s description of how she tried to use a line from a play in a real life encounter:

Yes, I think we have such a thing as gags or how to call them? By the way, in the real life, I think a few days ago, last week after the rehearsal, we met somebody. I think he was not English but he was speaking to us and asking about the way to some kinda club. We were talking to him – it was about five minute conversation. Usually when I happen to speak to someone in English. When I hear the phrase “Me too”, or “Let’s go”. Hm… I can’t remember that…

Linda and Kate failed to produce a clear example of the direct or indirect transfer of any new language borrowed from the script, or at least the examples they gave did not show that they necessarily had learned lines, since those lines contained overly simplistic vocabulary for their level of English proficiency. It may be argued that Seussical. The Musical does not really contain many phrases that can be easily transitioned; however, both Kate and Linda mentioned their previous production that was entirely in prose, written in everyday language – a true motherload of modern English usage. It is with great difficulty that Kate recalled only one line, again a very simple one (“Me too!”), and even after that she still seemed uncertain of how that line had been used in natural conversation.

What they both agreed upon was the fact that lines from the scripts are used primarily for humorous purposes and the recognisability of those lines makes them appealing to those who are aware of their origins.

**ZPD questioned**

The lack of data on the direct borrowing of lines from the script does not allow me to theorize on why the text of Seussical did not become a major resource for pragmatic learning. However, there are few important instances that might illustrate where ZPD could have emerged and even advanced. First of all, it is important to recognize the unexpected
efficiency of the example given by my assistant director, i.e., a more capable peer in Vygotskian terms. Even though we had worked with the script before that incident, the script was only used within the “world of the show”. It was only addressed when we had to break down scenes, work out role characterizations, as well as relationships between characters, and scene arcs. Despite the fact the script did contain a number of expressions that could be pragmatically useful for an English learner, I never gave my students an impetus to use those expressions for anything but rehearsal purposes. For instance, there were no improvisations on the use of the actual script lines in “real life” interactions. Even the short dialogue between Maizie and Horton contained a number of useful expressions, such as “it’s hopeless”, “you wanna make something of it?”, “I never thought…”, “neither did I”. There could have been an improvisation constructed just around these lines. Nevertheless, this never happened, because in my pedagogical situation the production essentially mattered more than learning a language. My participants also prioritized production work over language development, which came up in one of the interviews. Here is an excerpt from the first interview with Linda that demonstrates her confusion when she was asked about her expectation in regards to the potential language development during the course:

---

R: and in terms of your language development what do you expect from this course?

L: I expect to understand how people er live on the stage.

R: No-no. In terms of you language development... in terms of your English, do you have any expectations from this course?

L: Hm… No. I told everything. I mean?

R: Like if you’re taking it to improve your English, you might have some expectations. Or if you don’t have expectations, you might be taking it to develop your acting skills.

L: In fact, you are quite right. The language I think is one of the main part of this course. We can learn when we play. For example, she read her role. Ok, she found a new word.
Kate also appears to prioritize acting over learning a language, even though she does mention intonation as a “language problem” she hopes to work on (See Appendix G). Here is how she explains her reasons for taking the course:

I’m interested in developing my like abilities, knowledge and my how do you say it? All that stuff like singing and dancing and acting. ‘cause I want to stay in N. (name of the company) for the future and I think I need some special course like this.

It is evident that both my students were more concerned with the production-related issues. In that light in it not surprising that direct language transfer from the script turned out to be a fairly rare phenomenon. Language development was an important but secondary concern.

However, there is more to be said about ZPD in relation to the appropriation of script lines. Going back to the idea of the teacher-generated impetus, I would like to emphasize the ease with which my students picked up the line “You said it, kid” – a very peculiar English expression that does not quite have a Russian equivalent. Expressions like this are notoriously difficult to teach and they are rare in leaners’ pragmatic performance.

Neither I nor my assistant director had to explain the meaning of the expression to the students – in fact, just one occasional use of the line in a particular situation gave our students a clear indication of what it means and how it can actually function. Thus, there was no explicit instruction on pragmatic awareness, there was only an example of pragmatic performance. That example was picked up and appropriated by the learners, as they started using that line almost immediately, improvising with it and putting it in different contexts. The ZPD in relation to L2 pragmatics emerged, even though that was not exactly planned by the instructors, nor was it the primary concern of the course participants. It was a small success that did not get any follow-up but this interesting incident shows that the role of the script and its potential for pragmatic development are clearly something that deserves a lot more attention that I gave it as a teacher.
**Source Three: Acting**

**The first failure/discovery.**

So far, I have looked at the two sources of pragmatic development: the script and the necessity to speak English. Both are linked to acting but do not represent acting itself. It is time now to have a closer look at the focal point of my research – the acting activities based on Stanislavski’s principles and ideas.

The following analysis will take up various units of pedagogical intervention as employed in the rehearsal process. It will also roughly follow the original chronology of my “discoveries”: from the first observation that triggered my interest in a particular acting technique to a more detailed discussion of my core participants’ speech samples transcribed from the available footage.

It was not until the second week of rehearsals that one of the acting exercises I was doing with my students produced rather unexpected results and all of a sudden caught my attention as a teacher. The exercise I used was based on the techniques **Substitution** and **Emotional Recall**.

I would now like to divert a little from my narration to clarify my understanding of these techniques. Emotional Recall is frequently regarded as one of the core training and rehearsing approaches used in the Stanislavski System. Emotional Recall brings up particular natural responses of the body through evoking the memories, specifically emotional experiences of the past, the actor has lived through. By focusing on a particular memory episode or an object related to that memory episode, actors are able to produce believable representations of strong emotions such as utter terror, profound grief, etc. In order to perform “crying” as a result of being touched or moved, a Stanislavskian actor would have to go back to the moment in his or her life when he or she was profoundly moved by something or someone and evoke the same emotional state. The body is expected to naturally follow the mind and produce visual and auditory components of sympathy: tears, shaky hands, sobbing, pauses in speaking, and intonation leaps.

Essentially, Emotional Recall is part of a much broader concept – **substitution**. Often they are even equated. In fact, substitution helps actors to believe in the reality of
actions prescribed by the script, it also guards them from overacting or from 'showing', not living through, actions or feelings. One of the greatest American proponents of the Stanislavski technique, Uta Hagen, writes: “Substitution can be used in every moment of the actor’s homework and throughout the rehearsal period for every stage of the work. Consequently, it can have its effect on every moment of the actor’s life on stage. I use substitutions in order to “make believe” in its literal sense – to make me believe the time, the place, what surrounds me, the conditioning forces, my new character and my relationship to the other characters, in order to send me into the moment-to-moment spontaneous action of my newly selected self on stage” (Hagen, 1973, p. 35).

Following Hagen, I will be using the term ‘substitution’ as I find it more accurate for the description of the technique I tried employing at the rehearsals of Seussical.

Emotional Recall is only one type of substitution and used for very strong emotions only.

Substitution drew my attention very early in the rehearsal period. On Day Five my troupe were working on the first spoken scene of the show where Jo-jo was being scolded by his parents. In the previous scene, Jo-jo was late for an evening meeting of the Whos, the inhabitants of “the tiniest planet in the sky”. The meeting was presided by his own father, Mr. Mayor. After everyone has left, Mr. Mayor begins to scold his son. He demands that Jo-jo immediately stop imagining unreal worlds and fantasising about being somewhere else rather than on the planet of Who. Mrs. Mayor follows her husband, but her demands lack the same strength – she seems to be balancing between threatening and persuading. In the end, Jo-jo gets grounded and both parents leave in despair. Although the scene is written in verse, it is in fact a very realistic, even naturalistic, part of the show. In the end, a lot of parents do scold their children.

After the initial reading of the script we discussed the characters, the objectives and the obstacles of each character in this scene. After identifying entrances and exits I decided to let the actors have their own take on the course of action. Because the actors were not completely off-book at that point, I also allowed them to use their scripts and should it be necessary, even change their lines. Instead of the actual lines, I asked them to concentrate on the objectives of their characters.

Below is what happened at the rehearsal, as recorded in the teacher journal:
Teacher’s Journal, Day Six

Rehearsal with Mayor, Wife and Jojo

Scene 5

I ask the actors to read the script. No language mistakes – pleasant surprise. Next step - performing. They perform. My thoughts: No need to read the script. Both are overacting, especially Mayor’s Wife – also her pronunciation sounds very unnatural to me. I have to work on it.

I ask the actors to put down the books and perform the scene focusing solely on the objectives. For Mayor it is to demonstrate his own importance and lash out at Jojo; for the Mayor’s wife, it’s to tone down Mayor’s indignation and appeal to Jojo’s conscience. Jojo’s objective is to pretend to be listening as most teenagers do and wait impatiently till the parents are done with their speech. I encourage them not to focus on the lines – the can speak in prose. Jojo can speak too, although he technically has no lines in this scene.

What a disaster! While the Mayor who speaks English better than anybody else here (he’s lived in England for a while) does try to improvise and uses the right intonation, Mayor’s wife sounds more Russian than ever before. I asked them to switch roles – she has just heard what Mayor was doing. No effect. She seems to be trying hard but her intonation is more Russian than ever. Even her facial expressions seem to be Russian. Mayor is doing a good job again.

I ask them to go back to their roles again. I ask them to go back to the times when they were in their teens – not so long ago, in fact. Did your parents ever scold you? What would you do? Don’t play Jojo, Mayor, and Mayor’s Wife – play yourselves. What would you do? What would you say? They tell me about their experience with their actual parents. Everyone has something to refer to.

We do a little improv – they are taking turns playing ‘a teenager’. I’m doing the scolding – we’re improvising the lines in prose. The actual text doesn’t matter any more.
This time they are really into it. They are really trying. It looks like they have been scolded many times. I feel it should work this time. But what happens to their English!!! The sentences are entirely Russian, this time it’s not only the intonation but also the word order (mostly, Subject-Object-Verb), tenses – everything is messed up. Each and every sentence sounds as if it is back translated from Russian. Only A. (Mayor) is doing a good job. I give up!

We go back to the script – they repeat the sentences after me. Many times. We talk about the intonation. I ask them to act it out. It looks and sounds much better.

It feels like Emotional Recall actually brings out L1 and should be avoided.

This short rehearsal of a very straightforward scene became a pivotal point in my teaching and my research. On the one hand, it turned out to be a major disappointment for me, as one of the core Stanislavsky techniques produced a counter effect – not only did it evoke the emotionality associated with scolding but also evoked the language associated with it. I hypothesized that the participants had previously experienced scolding in L1, not in L2, thus, when they began improvising their lines in English, they began transferring the emotions along with the language to their performance in L2. The only person who did not follow the same pattern was Mayor. It is important to note here that he was the only student involved in that particular rehearsal who had lived in England before and his spoken English was notably higher than anybody else’s in the company. As I found out after the rehearsal, he had also had an experience of being scolded both in Russian (by his parents) and in English (by his school teachers in England). I assumed that it was both the level of English proficiency and the actual experience in L2 that allowed him to use the substitution successfully.

As a teacher, I was unpleasantly surprised to learn that substitution related to Emotional Recall failed to have worked with non-native speakers and made a conscious decision to avoid it in my further practice. I was afraid that the application of substitution and especially Emotional Recall might cause more negative transfer from L1, especially in the area of intonation.
Although this first observation made me completely rethink my teaching practice, it also triggered my interest in the fact that pragmatic choices made by non-native speakers can be significantly affected by the emotion or a degree of emotion which is coherent with the delivered lines. As I said in Chapter 3, to my deepest regret, that first significant moment of observation described in the teacher journal was never filmed due to technical difficulties.

That had a frustrating effect on me, but at that point, I was still hoping that similar moments of L1 interference would eventually occur in the rehearsal process and I would be able to videotape them. Ironically enough, when I turned to the actual footage of the rehearsals, those moments were not easy to find. Although I felt that during the actual rehearsal moments like this were in abundance, I had to watch through the whole footage many times before I was able to identify similar episodes which were related to my original observation. Some were not clear enough to suggest that Substitution caused negative L2 transfer, others included too much inaudible speech.

Going back to my first observation, there was another conclusion worth mentioning. I write in my journal that when I asked my students to improvise using substitution, their pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary became notably different, as my students (Mayor excluded) produced Russian-like language. My suggestion was that when being robbed of their lines, i.e., a pre-set wording of the sentences, learners are put under more pressure. At that point, I began differentiating two types of units of pedagogical intervention (UPI): script-based activities and script-free activities. I hypothesized that they produced a different effect on the learner’s verbal and non-verbal performance.

While script-based activities provide the actor with his or her lines, i.e., utterances with appropriate grammar and vocabulary (but not pronunciation), script-free activities require ad lib lines to be produced on the spot. It is obvious that in the first case the speaker is already given correct pragmatic choices and technically has both functional and sociolinguistic competencies covered (see Table 2, p. 40). The speaker still has to deal with the pronunciation of each line, with a specific emphasis on intonation, prominence, rhythm and tempo. Pronunciation remains the only linguistic layer not present in the script, albeit some basic guidelines might occasionally be provided by the playwright, for instance, “speaking slowly”, “whispers”, “shouting”, “angrily”. Pronunciation is the only leftover of
the functional competency that is not a given in script-based activities. However, the bulk of
the actor’s work in this kind of activity refers to the other components of PC: the speaker is
still required to produce the correct non-verbal language, follow the interactional rules
(pauses between turns, silent and verbal fillers) and adhere to the cultural norms of
communication. All these can be deduced at some point of the rehearsal process but they are
not conspicuous in the script.

**Script-free activities** put far more pressure on the speaker, as they require him or
her to produce the whole spectrum of pragmatic competencies on the spot. There is no
linguistic input provided and there is usually no requirement to say specific lines. The lines
could be completely improvisational or partially improvisational. The focus of this type of
exercise is to explore characters and character relationships, to draft the possible blocking for
the scene, to play with the objectives and obstacles, to probe more deeply in terms of the
character interpretation, and to draft possible substitutions for certain moments in the scene.
The actual lines of the play can be entirely abandoned, the storyline can be twisted or
completely changed.

An important remark should be made here. While I do occasionally use the term
‘improvisations’ (or études), I do not equate improvisations to script-free activities. There are
improvisations that require actors to meticulously follow the actual lines of the script with no
changes allowed. What *can* be changed could either be the given circumstances or the
objectives of each character or the relationships between characters, but not the lines. The
very distinction based on the use of the scripted lines is particularly important for me because
I deal with L2 speakers performing in English: in script-free activities the whole language-
processing issue comes into play. The learners are confronted with at least two tasks at the
same time: acting and language-processing. With script-based activities language-processing
still takes place but it is reduced to coping with pronunciation only.

My first observation almost turned me away from script-free activities, as they
produced an almost disastrous effect on the learner’s language. Nevertheless, there were a
few moments when they were still used. In order to see what exactly happens in those
moments, I transcribed Linda’s and Kate’s spoken performances in both script-free and
script-based UPIs.
Script-free units of pedagogical intervention

Individual Improvisations.

The very first exercise I asked my students to do was *Introductions in Character*. The goal of this UPI was multi-faceted: I needed to get a general impression of each student’s acting abilities as well as their capability to use English simultaneously. I also needed to understand their awareness of the roles they wanted to play in the upcoming production. Finally, there was a social goal – establishing rapport with the students and learning who is who.

*Introductions in Character* is essentially an improvisation requiring the participants to introduce their real selves as if they were a Dr. Seuss character, i.e., the students would have to use their real names and facts about themselves such as a hobby, an occupation or age, but their manner of speaking, their gesture, their pronunciation should be of an actual character from the play. The introductions had to be brief (30 seconds in length) and performed in front of the whole company that was sitting in a big circle of approximately 35 people. The students were allowed, but not required, to use any props as well as interact with the “audience”. After each introduction, the “audience” was asked to guess which character was being portrayed.

Linda was one of the first students who volunteered to give this activity a try. The following transcript demonstrates what Linda said and did during her *Introduction in Character* as well as her audience’s reaction (indicated as “A”):

**Video Episode 1**

*Linda’s Introduction in Character*

- Pulls her chair into the centre of the circle.
- Sighs and sits down slowly.
- Sighs as if tired.
- Shakes her right leg as if very tired.

L: ▶ I’ll use it? → I’m Linda. And (.)
A: ▶ Aah! ▶ I’m twenty one.

Giggle.
Turns around to give the laughers a look.

L: Yeah, (.) it’s really true.  🔄 What are you laughing at?  🔄 It’s really true.

A: Calm down.

Looks up as if looking for a topic.

Turns back and looks down. Sits back on the chair.

L: I’m twenty one. I studied at (0.1) Well in fact (.) what I am talking about?=

A: 

Looks at the people on her right, performing for them.

L: I am studied at a lot of ( )

A: 

stands up, walks behind the chair, looks at the people behind her

starts ‘squeezing’ the back of the chair with both hand and looking around

L: at United States you know (. ) university. And my ( . ) you know

A: 

Walks around the chair and tries to ‘perform’ for as many people as possible.

L: specific ( . ) is connected with author’s rights. I’m very interested in it.

A: 


Gets more excited. Sighs again.

L: 🔄 I really like it. Well, (.) besides,

A: Laughs.

Looks down as if lacks confidence.

L: you know that (..) I fond of some 🔄 inventions and, you know theatrical 🔄 stuff.

A: Several people whisper discussing their guesses.

Raises her eyes, looks around. Thrusts her right fist down as if reaffirming ‘for good’.

L: → So I believe everything that is doing (.) is doing 🔄 for good.

A:

Sits down and puts her hands on her laps.

L: ↗ So here I am...

A: Applause and cheer.

The audience was able to recognize the character almost instantly— Linda played Jo-jo. When I asked her to re-watch this moment and explain what exactly she was portraying, Linda said that she was trying to show modesty, shyness and awkwardness (See Appendix F). All these explain her slow speech rate – something that is not characteristic of her usual manner of speaking. In the interviews, her speech rate tends to be much higher than in this
performance. She also pauses a lot here, apparently showing Jo-jo’s lack of self-determination. Her vocabulary and grammar choices resemble the ones in her interviews. When asking if she could use a chair she employs a Russian structure: direct word order with a change of intonation (’I’ll use it?), instead of a more appropriate inverted sentence (Can I use it?). Her vocabulary choices, especially the ones in longer sentences requiring more elaborate use of words, are often back translated from Russian:

My specific is connected with author’s rights.

(In Russian: Моя специализация связана с авторскими правами).

*Cf:* I specialize in copyright issues.

I noticed this trend during the very first interview with Linda. Linda seemed capable of producing correct English sentences but only if they were short, e.g.: “What are you looking at?” “I’m really twenty two.” “It’s really true”. She usually fails to make appropriate linguistic choices when there is a need to use less common vocabulary or more elaborate grammar in longer sentences. Interestingly enough, instead of asking for help or avoiding structures like this, Linda actively engages her L1 and back translates words, expressions and sometimes even grammatical structures from Russian.

Another tendency I noticed was also most peculiar: both in her interviews and the episodes above Linda seems to overuse the filler “you know”, especially in the most unexpected places, such as, for instance, in a noun phrase between the determiner and the noun, e.g., “my you know specific” (in the meaning “my specialization” or “my major”).

I compare Linda’s performance in this activity to her performance in the interviews, i.e., in the activity where she did not have to be any character but herself, to show the similarities in her language choices. There is one glaring difference between these activities – Linda’s intonation. As I noted above, when in character, she modifies her rate of speech. But there is one more aspect of intonation she modifies significantly – the intonation contour. When she is caught off guard, i.e. when the audience begins to laugh, she, still in character, becomes more emotional and subsequently uses more emotional intonation:

```
L: Yeah, (.) it’s really true.  What are you laughing at?  It’s really true.
```
If during the “regular”, more controlled performance, she is able to employ English tones every now and then, her “emotional” intonation becomes completely Russian, as she employs Russian intonation contours to express spontaneous surprise and mild indignation caused by the unexpected audience laughter.

Now, let us look at a different performance – Kate’s. First of all, Kate’s interview showed her level of pragmatic performance was much higher than Linda’s: she tends to make more appropriate vocabulary choices; her grammar is usually correct, and her intonation (at least in my opinion) has only a slight hint of a Russian accent. While Linda volunteered to be first in *Introductions in Character*, Kate took her time to prepare and had a chance to observe other students’ introductions before she plucked up the courage to do her own. Her introduction was very short compared to Linda’s and other students’. As she explains in her written response, she was very nervous when doing it. Despite the brevity, her introduction was a very peculiar example of pragmatic choices, simple and unoriginal. At the same time her body language performance was much richer than other students’. It seemed like she tried to express her character – the Cat-in-the-Hat – mostly through non-verbal means.

**Video Episode 2**

**Kate’s Introduction in Character**

Does a quick cart wheel towards the centre. Jerks both arms up and smiles. Faces the people in front of her.

Slides to the right. Slides to the left.

L: (singing) Tah-dah. My name is Kate. It’s my fifth year here.

A:

Claps her hands on ‘be’. Puts her hands up again, turns to the people to the right of her and gives a smile.
L: I like to be here very much. ( )

A: Laugh and clap excitedly.

Unlike Linda, Kate chooses simple linguistic structures – something that allows her to stay in a safe territory and minimize language processing. Her body language compensates for the simplicity and brevity of her lines: an introductory cart wheel and all the quick and unexpected gestures mark her incredibly fast transformation into the Cat-in-the-Hat. She is handling English really well – her pragmatic choices are mostly accurate. Her performance, however, has an interesting twist: at the end she raises the degree of emotionality – right when she says her final line. As soon as Kate gets emotional, despite the brevity of her performance and the simplicity of her lines, she suddenly switches to a Russian tone.

When I asked Linda why she chose to be so brief in her introduction, she became very self-deprecating:

Actually I wasn’t ready and was really nervous – as always… But anyway, the main trick was in the sudden acrobatic movement, cause the words weren’t enough to express my feelings of the character. And again I dislike the last phrase – it sounds stupid, as if I have elementary English level!

Her response confirms that she was under a lot of pressure having to do the cart wheel and just being generally nervous. It also shows that Kate is very much capable of distinguishing the Russian sounding line in her performance.

One may argue that my participants’ occasional inability to use English tones comes from the fact they had not been yet introduced to the intricacies of English intonation. However, if we look at another script-free activity, the one that took place after Linda and Kate attended the Intonation workshop, we might find similar behavioural patterns.

Group Improvisation.

On Day Eight, in order to prepare for one of the scenes, I asked the actors to do an improvisation “At the Cinema”. They were free to choose their own characters, their own lines, and their own partners for this activity. It was a group improvisation so I divided the
class into two large groups (approximately fifteen people in each) and asked them to show how people go to the movies. In the “stage” part of the rehearsal hall, there were two rows of chairs facing the audience and representing the rows in an actual cinema. The students were asked *through watching the movie* on the invisible screen to make it clear: a. what kind of movie it was, b. what was happening on the screen, c. who the characters were and why they came to the cinema (for example, a school group with a teacher, a married couple with children, a lonely tourist killing time at the cinema).

The students’ pragmatic performance in this improvisation turned out to be a very interesting blend of two strategies. The first strategy most people decided to employ was not to speak at all or speak only a little using short simple expressions such as “Shut up! Shhhhh! Oh, my god!”. Although there was no ban on the spoken language – it was not a silent improvisation – most students preferred to use gestures rather than produce spoken lines. In a way, this strategy is reminiscent of Kate’s behaviour in the first UPI I described, i.e., the reduction of language processing and focus on acting.

In this activity, Linda, who chose to play a very aggressive thug that came to see a horror movie, managed to produce only two lines: “What?!” in the meaning “What did you just say?” and a bit later “Come on now!” as a “gauntlet throwing” line. Those lines were said in response to another character’s obnoxious behaviour. They represented Linda’s character’s immediate reaction. Her “Come on now!” was accompanied with a typical gesture Russian hooligans use when they want to start a fight. Unfortunately, not only were Linda’s gestures derived from the Russian cultural context but also her intonation, as both her phrases were uttered with a typical Russian tone. None of the English tones Linda had been taught appeared in her speech. Her grammar and vocabulary stayed correct though, which can only partly be explained by the brevity of her lines.

Acting often implies emotionality and spontaneity – these two features seem to slow down language processing immensely. As the improvisations showed, learners tend to choose either a safe path of producing very simple language (i.e., reducing the necessity to make pragmatic choices to a minimum), or getting emotional employing the intonation resources of their first language. This, however, may very much depend on the learners’ background and their overall competence in English – as we remember, “Mr. Mayor”, who is
a more balanced bilingual than the other participants was capable of handling both acting and pragmatics. The preparation time matters as well: as we remember, in the first UPI Kate took some time to prepare what she was going to say, thus, her performance looked almost polished. Linda was one of the first volunteers in that activity and subsequently, paused a lot to be able to find the right means of expression. Overall, script-free UPI turned out to be very challenging for the students in terms of language production.

**Script-based UPIs**

I would like to start the analysis of script-based UPIs with Linda’s mention of one particular line that she was struggling with. In one of the scenes, Jojo excitedly comments on what has just happened to his friend Gertrude, the bird who used to have only one feather in her tail and then turned to a doctor to improve her appearance. Jojo says: “So Gertrude is happy! Her tail’s nice and long!” He is happy for Gertrude as her dreams finally came true. He shares his excitement with the Cat and the audience. This particular line, despite its seeming simplicity, turned into a stumbling point for Linda:

Oh, ok. My favourite was “So Gertrude is happy. Her tail is nice and long”.
This one. The intonation. I know it’s quite easy to remember it but you try to remember it again and again and again. Sometimes it’s *(changes intonation, in Jojo’s voice)* Nice and Long. Or *(changes her intonation again)* Nice and Long. Sometimes I asked [name of a student]: Can you repeat it one more time please? In this case.

Linda points out that it was hard for her to remember the new intonation for this line. She was using the Russian intonation for excitement which she came up with herself after the reading rehearsal, then she used the same intonation during the blocking rehearsal, and quick fix rehearsal when I finally had to stop her to demonstrate a more appropriate intonation contour:

Her tail’s nice (.\(\nearrow\)) nice long.

*(Cf: → Her tail’s nice and long.)*

Linda repeated the line after me with the appropriate intonation. It is important to say that by that time the basic English intonation contours had already been introduced and
practiced. Linda was successful in emulating my example. However, each time Linda was in character and got excited, as her character was supposed to in this scene, her intonation would reverse back to its initial contour. No changes of given circumstances or blocking were able to help. The video footage actually captured a few moments during the run-throughs of the scene, when I had to stop the rehearsal and work on Linda’s pronunciation.

In her second interview, Kate also mentions a particular line she struggled with and offers an interesting take on the subject of intonation:

I think first of all, it is intonation which was developed through all this whole Bootcamp. For me, it was total surprise when you told me that ‘With a cat such as me’ ([demonstrates the English falling-rising tone]). And it was kinda shock for me that I have to say this phrase, this usual phrase that I was saying many times before, and that is wrong, the way which I was saying it. So sometimes when you’re rehearsing, it’s ok to think about lots of things: how do I move my hands and my feet and all that stuff, how do I sing, how do I smile. But when you’re on the stage you’re overfulled with emotions, you are in your character. You can’t think about all the parts of your body as an actor. You are your character and about all that things that are happening here. I mean in the musical. I can’t think of your body, so what about difficulties, yes? The intonations should’ve been worked here to be… to become my native intonations. That was the difficult part of it. So when you’re on the stage you may forget to think of it but you have to do like it naturally. So when you’re overwhelmed with emotions and everything, you’ll use the right intonation and the right words and the right things.

Kate is certain that when an actor is carried away by emotions, his or her intonation is apt to come out right. As we have seen, when there is improvised text involved, it is not always the case. Let us now look into Kate’s own performance in the rehearsal where Kate and I were trying to work out the right delivery for the Cat’s very first lines, i.e., another script-based UPI. In this scene, her character appears on stage climbing out of a big “magic” box in the stage centre. Here is Kate’s initial take on the lines:
Video Episode 3

Kate’s Pronunciation in Prologue

After all those years being stuck on a page, (0.1)

Did you ever imagine you’d see me onstage? (0.1)

Now I’m here, (0.1) there is no telling what may ensue! (0.1)

No, (.) there’s no: telling what! (0.2)

But I’ll give you a clue…

My teacher journal on that day indicates that I found her delivery somewhat ‘wooden’ and unoriginal. Her intonation was impeccable but she sounded very much like the actor on the album of the Broadway cast recording, which she had listened to many times. As a director, I was trying to find a way to prevent Kate from copying another person’s performance. The Stanislavsky System encourages observation, not superficial imitation. It insists on searching for a unique way of performing. Technical copying and imitating, in Stanislavski’s view, is the worst approach an actor could possibly take as it leads to a mechanical, unnatural performance and ruins the sense of belief in what is happening onstage for the actor and for the audience. I needed to help Kate with finding her own manner of performing, one that would be concurrent with our interpretation of the play, its superobjective, as well as Kate’s character and her own acting abilities.

In order to create a different take on the lines, I helped Kate to break down the script and identify an ‘action’ for each line:

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Action Breakdown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Line</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After all those years being stuck on a page, Did you ever imagine you’d see me onstage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Now I'm here, there is no telling what may ensue!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No, there’s no telling what!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>But I’ll give you a clue…</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the action breakdown, Kate was still struggling to deliver a different kind of intonation. She tried the same lines a number of times; she even tried to use actual objects that were available at the rehearsal hall to create the feel of the set. It did affect her body language. Kate’s acting training came in handy: she excelled at finding new gestures and movements while staying in character; however, her intonation did not change. She was able to intensify the volume but not to alternate the tones on her own. A couple of times, I even had to interrupt Kate to demonstrate the “correct” intonation, as she was not able to find the right tone for the right action on her own. In the end, due to the lack of time I decided to let Kate use the intonation she was more accustomed to.

A similar episode happened at the individual rehearsal with Linda when we were working on her opening lines. After the scene breakdown and multiple tries, Linda was still unable to produce the appropriate intonation patterns. I ended up making her repeat the intonation patterns after me. I do not provide the transcript of that episode because the procedure I used with Linda was similar to Kate’s and so was the outcome. The only difference was that Linda’s lines were not originally on the Broadway CD and she did not have any example to follow. She had to come up with the right intonation herself and that proved to be a difficult task for her. The scene breakdown we did together at the rehearsal helped her find Russian intonation contours instead of the English ones.
Both these cases occurred fairly late in the rehearsal process (Day 13), i.e., after the pragmatics workshop, the intonation workshop and the workshop on the Stanislavski System. Both Linda and Kate were well-acquainted with the play and with their characters. The scene breakdown helped them understand what was happening in the scene and provided them with a clear justification for saying those particular lines. Despite all the input, neither of them was capable of making the right intonation choices and in turn, I had to employ different tactics. I myself had to provide the intonation contours for the required actions and emotions. In other words, an explicit linguistic input was necessary for them to establish connections between the intonation contour, the action and the words.

ZPD confirmed

The last class of our course took place in an actual theatre with a huge stage and a 1,000 seat auditorium. After an exhausting four-hour cue-to-cue run-through, the actors were given a short dinner break. What followed was their first full technical rehearsal on the actual stage on which the show was scheduled to run later in the month. There were more than 60 guests invited to see the open rehearsal. The actors were wearing costumes, makeup and wireless microphones. The level of apprehension was exceptionally high. Even though both Linda and Kate had performed on that stage before, it was their first large-scale Broadway musical, where they had to do vocal harmony in every song, a few solo and duet numbers, dance, act, and overall, be onstage throughout the whole eighty-five minute show. Having friends and family in the audience, as well as a few critics, who were expected to stay for a talkback after the rehearsal, added even more anxiety and anticipation.

I am describing the environment of this last rehearsal and the demands it put on my students in such detail in order to demonstrate how much pressure my students were experiencing that day. That rehearsal became everyone’s final examination, even though it was not announced as one. The fact that I was in the audience with the expectation to hear and see the results of our mutual efforts (let alone with a pen and paper for taking notes) raised the stakes even higher. Performing at a high stakes open rehearsal is the ultimate test for actors, as anxiety and stress can easily ruin all the previous work put into the process of creating a role. Both Linda and Kate passed the test with flying colours: their performance was praised by our small audience and in my last journal, I remarked that their high-energy
acting that night carried the show through despite multiple technical problems and blocking issues. Kate even earned compliments from English native speakers in the audience inquiring if she was actually a language learner or native speaker, as her pronunciation was exceptionally good throughout the show.

If we look specifically at the episodes I described in the section on non-scripted UPIs, we will notice that Linda’s and Kate’s development appears to be different, though.

**Video Episode 4**

**Linda’s Performance at the Open Rehearsal**

So Gertrude is [happy](.1) Her tail is [nice](.) [and](d) long.

Linda delivers the line she has been struggling with a perfect combination of English falling and rising tones, i.e., the tones she used to constantly replace with the Russian intonation contours with a much narrower range. Obviously, her own determination, my persistence throughout the rehearsal process and the help from members of the English language committee, whom she mentions in the interview, paid off. She was able to link the new intonation with the gestural expression and, what is more important, with the action-emotion of her character (Jo-jo is excited about Gertrude’s success and shares this excitement with everyone). It is a clear sign that ZPD propelled Linda to the new state: the state where she becomes capable of using the appropriate English intonation for excitement. Whether or not she will be able to apply this skill to real life conversations remains to be seen – what matters is that in a very high stress situation of stage performance, she no longer needed “peers’ assistance” to produce the correct emotional intonation pattern.

Kate’s performance resembles her original take on her lines, i.e., what she technically copied from the Broadway CD. Even though her phrasing became more distinct (hence, more pauses), the intonation contours stayed the same.
Video Episode 5

*Kate’s Pronunciation in Prologue*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Rehearsal</th>
<th>Open Rehearsal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After all those years being stuck on a page. (0.1)</td>
<td>After all those years being stuck on a page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you ever imagine (.) you’d see me onstage? (0.1)</td>
<td>Did you ever imagine (.) you’d see me onstage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now I’m here, (0.1) there is no telling what may ensue! (0.1)</td>
<td>Now I’m here, (0.1) there is no telling what may ensue! (0.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, (.) there’s no telling what! (0.2)</td>
<td>No, (.) there’s no telling what! (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But I’ll give you a clue…</td>
<td>But I’ll give you a clue…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This, however, is not surprising given my decision to abandon work on this verse and let Kate keep her original manner of delivery. Kate did not attempt to work on it either, so the main mediational tool that affected her performance here was the CD track she had copied her pronunciation from. The transcript does show certain changes (e.g., better phrasing) but, overall, in this case mostly due to my complacency and general time pressure we only created a very limited ZPD.

Kate’s development can be noticed in another episode, though – an episode that brings us back to pragmatic competence. In *Seussical*, Kate’s character, the Cat in the Hat, has a few moments where her lines are not scripted. One of the longest ad lib episodes is the auction scene where the Cat turns into an auctioneer and goes straight into the audience in order to sell the elephant, egg, nest, and tree. Kate and I worked on this episode only once and her first attempt at this scene very much resembled her performance in the first script-free activity – *Introductions in Character*. She chose a very safe path of adlibbing only a few lines and kept them very short in order to reduce the language processing pressure. While working on this scene, I encouraged her to be more active and suggested she take time to play a little with the audience. I also invited other actors to perform as audience members, so
that Kate could get a chance to interact with them. Kate kept rehearsing this scene during run-throughs but I never focused on the scene again as a director.

To my surprise, her performance at the open rehearsal was more than I could possibly expect. Not only did she interact with an audience member but also created at least eight lines of her own and added a joke. All that with the appropriate English intonation.

*Video episode 6*

**Kate’s Performance of ad lib lines (scripted lines are italicized).**

Kate: *Good evening, ladies and gentlemen! And welcome to Seussiby’s! Our first item is lot 39, a pendulous pachyderm, also known as an elephant, on Egg, Nest and Tree. The bidding will begin at 10,000 dollars. Do I hear 10,000? Well, actually, it’s a very small price for such a big thing. Do I hear 20,000 dollars? Twenty thousand dollars? Are you sure? Going once. Going twice. Sold! And now please, welcome as only you can, the new owner of the Elephant, Egg, Nest and Tree. Now let’s learn the name of the luckiest girl in the world. (Holding the microphone in front of an audience member.) What’s your name?*

Audience Member: [name]

Kate: Please give a round of applause to [name]. Don’t be shy! It’s a normal thing to buy an elephant for your own private use. So you can take your seat. We’ll pack it for you and you’ll get it right after the show. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention! Our elephant is sold. (*Continues with the script lines.*)

This moment of correct pragmatic use of L2 is particularly important, as it is not a simple matter of using expressions that are alien to Russian pragmatics (e.g., “as only you can”, “give her a round of applause”, “do I hear 10,000”, etc.). If we look at what Kate said during the first interview the importance of this episode will become especially clear. What asked about her problems with spoken English, she identifies her main problem as one related to PC:
My personal problem is that when I’m speaking Russian, I speak very fast. ‘cause I don’t know how if it is all the people think so fast. But when I speak English, yeah, like my things are running much more faster than I can actually speak foreign language. So for me it’s a problem. In Russian it’s ok. I know everything that I want to say. In English sometimes. I want to speak fast but I have a problem with choosing the right words and expressions and everything. So sometimes I catch myself trying to figure out how to say something. That’s the problem. So I have maybe lots things to say but I have to turn it into a few words.

“Choosing the right words and expressions” and doing it fast enough to support a natural flow of conversation is exactly what PC is. As we have seen in the ad lib episode, Kate handles both the choice issue and the time issue exceptionally well. The rehearsals provided her with the opportunity to experiment with her ad lib lines, to work with multiple partners, to watch my and other people’s reactions on her verbal and non-verbal performance. She was also encouraged her to take a creative take on the role of the Cat and she pursued that advice to the fullest. Her ZPD was different from Linda’s, as the latter was only beginning to acquire the English intonation contours and needed peer help to start using them. Kate was originally more advanced in terms of intonation, she was ready to move on to the creative use of her L2. This was her unique ZPD and it was directly related to PC and in particular to one of its components: functional competence. Kate, who was shy and inarticulate during script free activities at the beginning of the course demonstrated an exceptional functional competence in L2 at the end of it. Her ZPD was confirmed.

I have now analyzed the three sources that mediated learning during the period of my pedagogical intervention: the necessity to communicate in English, the script and the acting itself and how those aspects along with the social environment of the course, the rules of our “community of practice” helped create the ZPD for my research participants. In the following chapter, I will theorize how the Stanislavski System upon which the course was built contributed to my students’ development and take up the pedagogical and research implications as well as the limitations of my research study.
Chapter 5: Discussion: Mimesis and Language Learning.

Advancing Research Questions

At the beginning of my research, I was enquiring if acting could be a significant mediational means for the development of L2 pragmatic competence? It is important to consider now how my research process modified my understanding of acting as an activity and, consequently, my research questions. Even though my data showed that acting produces various immediate effects on different student actors at different points of their development, I now see it more as a combination of factors and suggest that acting should be seen as embedded in a larger context: the pedagogical context that includes the rules of the community of practice (e.g., class, course, school), the teacher’s and the participants’ objectives and aspirations, the demands and the constraints of the creative process, etc. Acting does not exist in a vacuum void of social relationships, that is why it is next to impossible to see the affect it produces on language acquisition without looking at the social environment in which acting takes place.

Lev Vygotsky, in his short essay on the psychology of actor’s work suggests a sociocultural perspective on the analysis of acting: “The psychology of the actor is a historical and class category, not a biological category. (...) Consequently it is not biological patterns primarily that determine the character of the actor’s stage experiences. (...) It is not the nature of human passions that determines directly the experiences of the actor on the stage; it only contains the possibility of the development of many most varied and changeable forms of the stage implementation of the artistic form” (Vygotsky, 1987, 240). Similarly, in education, in order to understand “the possibility of the development”, we need to look into the social aspects that mediated that development. In order to understand acting, we need to analyse acting as part of the social whole.

My students were taking an intensive acting course aimed to produce a new musical in the English language. The course (or rather I myself) laid out an important rule for our community of practice: my student actors were encouraged to speak in English and to employ English pragmatic norms in conversations with each other. A similar requirement was imposed for their performance on stage: in fact, the rehearsal process was in many ways
constructed so it would lead students towards a realistic performance of characters that speak like native/proficient speakers of English. That is why I included a workshop on English intonation in the syllabus, conducted all the rehearsals completely in English, created the student-run English language committee, and even added one-on-one meetings with a pronunciation coach for all the actors performing main roles in the production. In our community of practice, performance “like a native/proficient speaker” was highly valued and a specific emphasis was put on the students’ pronunciation. Our community of practice was unique (as, I might argue, any classroom in any school anywhere in the world): it was a student theatre troupe existing in an environment where speaking in the English language was promoted, encouraged and even admired. It was also a community where a lot of support was coming not only from the instructors but also from the students. As we have seen, Linda mentions in her interview that she was given continuous help from her fellow students who assisted her in acquiring the appropriate intonation patterns. In her second interview, Kate also praises the theatre course on being very inclusive in terms of students’ input and collaboration:

K: When you came, I was afraid that “Oh, my god! Now he will tell me what to do, which side to move, what kinda shape to open my mouth”. And you said: “No, improvise! You can do whatever you want”. And then just tiny little changes. And I was thinking: “Oh, my god! It’s like communication between actors and directors”. And now (...) comparing working on Share and Share Alike and on Seussical, I see that before we had that feeling.

R: Right, right. When everybody was contributing.

K: It was wonderful. Now I’m happy before the class, during and after. ‘cause before it was sometimes frustrating for us. I don’t mean that we don’t want to do it that way and the director wants to do it the other way. I mean the atmosphere. And now it’s so constructive, so creative, so fun. We are having fun here. We are working and having fun.

In this highly collaborative and supportive environment, the students’ development was being shaped by multiple factors and was coming from various social sources, with acting being only one of them.
Ultimately, I need to reformulate my initial question to make it more specific: *How can a zone of proximal development in relation to L2 pragmatics be prompted in a production-gaered acting course for L2 learners?* Given the fact that my data come from two student participants and the teacher (myself), I can now look into the teacher’s and students’ perspectives on the development of PC during the pedagogical intervention.

Both my participants agreed on the fact that collaboration was an essential characteristic of our acting course. Kate speaks highly of our collaboration because it allowed her to be more creative while working on her character and to take ownership of her work. Linda also emphasized the role of collaboration, even though for her it was more the linguistic side of it that mattered, specifically pronunciation.

In addition to that, both my participants found the “English speaking” rule of the course very useful. Kate called the course environment “the new way of living” (i.e., living in English) and Linda compared it to living a foreign country. This clearly indicates that the course was a useful environment for the students to practice their spoken English. In other words, the course required the students to make regular pragmatic choices in L2, and provided them with enough feedback and support to gear their choices towards the ones proficient speakers of English make.

My own take on the process was slightly different. Even though it was I who originally gave impetus to establishing and promoting the English speaking environment in the course, I myself was more concerned with acting exercises and their effect on my student actors. As a teacher, I found that script-free activities put more pressure on the learners and I tried to avoid them given the time constraints within which I had to deliver the course. I favoured script-based activities, as they, in combination with the continuous linguistic support, seemed to produce better results in terms of the delivery of the lines. I also found the Emotional Recall technique unsuitable for L2 learners as it prompted immediate retreat to L1, which was particularly apparent in my students’ intonation. The lexical (or pragmatic) richness of the script language did not deserve much attention in the course and the only time when a script line was directly borrowed from the script was more or less an incident, unanticipated by me in any way possible. Nevertheless, the transfer occurred and was duly noticed by the students, which means that the script can potentially play an important role in
the development of PC, but in order for transfers to occur they might have to be exemplified by a more proficient speaker of the target language (for instance, a teacher).

Overall, it seems like “impetus” and “support” were the key words to understand the ZPDs happening during my course. I encouraged my students to speak English. I also provided them with the initial linguistic input. Last but not least, I established a system of linguistic assistance functioning throughout the whole course of my pedagogical intervention. In the case of the script language transfer, the impetus came from my assistant director and was quickly picked up by everyone, myself included. So inadvertently, my students were exposed to multiple repetitions of the humorous use of a script line. In turn, the acting exercises I was using encouraged the students not to just say their lines but to appropriate them, make them their own – an extremely hard task to do when one has to play a character, whose “first language” (that is if I took the liberty of assigning first languages to the characters of *Seussical*) was different from one’s own. Through acting exercises we were collaboratively looking for ways to learn to represent “the other”. Again, the instructor-driven impetus was to create a realistic character that can speak very good English and learn to empathize with the character, not simply deliver the lines of the script.

It is highly important to understand that these teacher-generated aspects (i.e., impetus and support) in no way undermined the learners’ agency. I believe that if not for the learners’ determination and their desire to learn, to contribute and to excel, I would hardly have been so insistent on raising the bar for their performance (including their linguistic performance) so high. My learners’ investment in the process certainly spurred my own interest in it and pushed me to raise the bar for performance to the point comparable to a native English-speaking actor. Both my participants were able to meet that standard and I attribute that to a combination of factors where their own determination and commitment played an important part.

Both Linda and Kate were extremely active participants: they were taking part in various committees, staying after classes, working on the costumes, and helping others. They also constantly asked for additional help and support from me and other teachers. We also saw that Linda, who was aware of her intonation problems, would repeatedly ask her fellow students and me for samples of correct intonation in order to master the right tone. This
certainly shows her involvement in the process. Last but not least, both Kate and Linda were rehearsing to play the two main characters in the show, which inadvertently gave them more rehearsal time and more attention from my side, as well as raised their own interest in the show and the rehearsal process. In addition, they both agreed that they were taking the course primarily because they wanted to become better actors and (quite pragmatically) they wanted to play leading roles in *Seussical*. In sum, their interest in the show and the course was one of the determining factors for the emergence and development of their ZPD.

**The Unresolved Issue of Intonation**

Since intonation, and especially intonation contours (being part of PC), deserved my particular attention, I think it is valid to look into it in more detail. Intonation along with other auditory and visual means of expression is typically one of the actor’s primary concerns, at least in traditional text-based theatre. Thus, it is not surprising it came up as an important issue in my course. If we looked at the research in Drama and L2 acquisition, we might easily notice that there is a common underlying assumption that L2 actors can acquire the right intonation contours through empathy, i.e., an association with the character they have to play. Empathy, being the quintessence of the Stanislavski System, is commonly suggested as a reliable mediator for intonation acquisition. Gary Carkin, who specializes in the study of drama in the language classroom, included various Stanislavski techniques in his methodology of using plays for pronunciation practice. He writes:

> Although tremendously important, the inner monologue, a technique analyzed and developed by … Konstantin Stanislavski, is often overlooked by ESL/EFL coaches of student actors. However, the development of this technique not only leads to committed and focused acting, but to the students’ understanding of the culture in which he is an actor playing a character. (Carkin, 2010, p. 3)

He continues to speak about the use of inner monologues and then proceeds to talking about teaching students to focus on character’s intentions (objectives of actions). In conjunction the inner monologue and the focus on character’s intentions are expected to produce “desired natural intonation and linguistic expression as learners link character needs to objectives, objectives to thought and thought to speech” (p. 4). Carkin concludes his paper with the following:
Through the action, the student learns to make him/herself clear when speaking and express feeling through paralinguistics of intonation, pitch, stress, gesture and movement (p. 5).

Although I did not analyse the use of internal monologues per se, I would agree that they, along with other forms of substitution, can enhance acting skills and improve students’ understanding of the play. Nonetheless, as my experience with Kate and Linda has shown, substitution does not necessarily help learners to achieve natural intonation and the appropriate forms of linguistic expression. Ironically, substitution may well produce the “desired natural” expression as it would be in the learners’ first language. Linda was unable to find the correct intonation contours, simply because she was only beginning to appropriate English tones. There was nothing natural about English intonation for her, that was why substitution exercises kept bringing up her L1 intonation contours. Kate, who was a much more proficient user of the English intonation contours, was successful in copying the right intonation tones from the sample CD (another important mediational tool) but failed to alter them on her own in substitution exercises.

Later on, Linda acquired the right patterns through multiple repetitions prompted by her fellow students and teacher, so it took her some time and effort before the “desired” intonation began to happen. Kate, whose intonation was originally better, points out that it also takes her some time to “appropriate” her lines and begin to “speak in character”:

As an actor I’m a bit slow in getting in the role… Usually it’s all bad for some time, but then happens a sudden switch, when I finally understand the character. And it becomes better and better, as I start to feel comfortable saying the lines, I start to THINK them truly.

Both cases show that substitution alone does not invoke “natural” intonation. Acquiring the appropriate intonation patterns is a lengthy process that requires a lot of investment on the part of the speaker and multiple repetitions of the target contours in given circumstances. An L2 learner has to repeatedly experience the use of a contour within a specific line or utterance said in a specific situation and linked to a specific action/emotion.

To understand this process better it may be useful to see it through the idea of *mimesis*. Steven McCafferty, in his recent article on mimesis, identifies two prominent roles...
Mimesis plays in L2 education: one is linked to gestural expression, the other to the formation of L2 identity (McCafferty, 2008). Following Donald (2001), McCafferty understands mimesis as “an analogue style of communication that employs the whole body as an expressive device. It manifests itself in pantomime, imitation, gesturing, sharing attention, ritualized behaviours, and many games” (p. 240). Mimesis is essential to our behaviour and allows us to be part of a social group, to have an identity (including L2 identity). Mimesis is also essential to L2 learning and can be defined as a creative/transformative representation of the target linguaculture. Mimetic behaviour is predetermined in human beings and is often linked to mirror neurons (Gallese and Goldman, 1998).

Mimesis as bodily imitation-transformation is interpreted by McCafferty first and foremost as imitation of gesture, i.e., of something visible. L2 learning, in his opinion, is a mimetic process and should not ignore gesture, as gesture and language are in fact part of the one integral system of communication. I believe that intonation, and indeed pronunciation in general, is very much akin to gesture. The reason for that is that pronunciation, unlike other layers of language such as vocabulary and grammar, has its own physical representation: mostly audio but also visual (articulation). Pronunciation is linked to the whole bodily experience more than any other aspects of oral language. It is a visceral experience that includes various speech organs: lungs, vocal chords, uvula, tongue, palate, teeth, lips. On the other hand, pronunciation is linked to emotion and on a larger scale to identity (Morgan, 1997; Pavlenko, 2002). Thus, what an L2 learner should become capable of is the ability to imitate the pronunciation of a native speaker and the ability (and desire) to appropriate it, i.e., make it his or her own. Mimesis is the process that unites L2 learning and acting (based the Stanislavsky System): actors and L2 learners have to appropriate somebody else’s behaviour (bodily performance) through mimesis. The Stanislavski System provides actors with tools to represent the other efficiently, or in Stanislavski terms, organically, i.e., with a significant degree of believability. Some of the tools are based on empathy (Emotional Recall, for instance), some on observation and quality imitation, and some on improvisation.

This brings us back to Linda’s struggle with L2 intonation. Learning intonation as part of the whole bodily experience (that is with gesture) is also essentially mimetic. L2 learners have to go from direct imitation to appropriation – that is, when they make a
conscious decision to appropriate the native speaker “ideal”. Linda, who was hardly able to use English tones at the beginning of the course, had to take that path. During the first substitution exercises she was unable to link the English intonation tones with her lines and the rest of her bodily experience. By the end of the course, she was much better at handling all these expressive aspects. I do not assume that her impressive performance at the open rehearsal means a complete appropriation of L2 intonation contours, but it may be safe to assume that the course provided Linda with a bodily and emotional experience of using something which was essentially alien to her and to her L1 culture. I believe this could be seen as a stepping stone to the appropriation of the full L2 experience. Linda’s journey to the appropriation of the English intonation is not over. In fact, it is just beginning.

**Pedagogical Implications**

In my analysis I argued that impetus, support, environment, time and all the other aspects of my pedagogical intervention were important for the emergence of ZPD. Acting and production work are in essence multi-faceted activities, so what exactly may affect PC in L2 is hard to predict. What is clear though, is that the “multifacetedness” of acting provides students with numerous resources that can be useful for the development of their pragmatic awareness and gives students ample opportunities for the training of pragmatic performance. This ties in to what Linda had to say about the course in her last interview:

I usually visit a foreign countries in summer and this summer I didn’t. In foreign country, like Germany, you feel that your brain remember some collocation and phrases. And this time I didn’t go but it was I remember. The brain starts to work in the same way. I think I found some times that I start thinking in English.

Although Linda did not speak specifically about PC but rather meant “thinking in English” prompted by the drama course, I feel it opens up a whole new perspective that may potentially “grant” drama with the ability to form new cognitive functions. Linda mentions the brain working “in the same way”, i.e., the way it works in a foreign country where you constantly need to communicate in L2.
There is another pedagogical implication worth mentioning. When I asked Linda and Kate to watch their respective performances in *Introductions in Character* they were both capable of spotting exactly the same moments of inappropriate use of tones I analyzed in Chapter 4. However, they offered a different explanation to what had caused the “Russianness” of their linguistic performance. Both blamed their nervousness. Speaking in L2 is an activity that increases nervousness. Acting (especially acting for an audience as in *Introductions in Character*) is also inextricably connected to being worried or apprehensive about one’s own performance. Increased nervousness affects performance in L2 and causes L1 transfer. It may be hypothesized that acting could induce a higher degree of nervousness similar to the nervousness oral communication in L2 (especially with native speakers) requires in real life. In other words, acting can potentially train a new L2 speaker to perform better in L2 in difficult conditions, for example, when under pressure or when being observed. One’s capability to perform in L2 naturally in such conditions could be a necessary prerequisite to the successful acquisition of oral skills in the target language.

**Implications for Further Research**

Since acting and pragmatics overlap on so many different levels, there are multiple directions further research may take. The obvious ones are: conducting a similar study with larger participant numbers, using participants who are at different levels of their L2 proficiency, and involving participants from different language groups or cultures. A more interesting direction would comprise identifying more parallels between the disciplines in question or establishing parallels between other types of acting (for example, Brechtian) and L2 pragmatic development.

Another interesting path research could take would be stepping into the uncharted territory of second language and emotion and studying how emotions are expressed through the mediational means of L2. It is not a secret that the expression of emotions is rarely taught in L2 education, at least not in formal instructional settings. Ironically, oral communication in any language does not exist without emotions, as even the most emotionless or bland speech still expresses some feeling (for instance, boredom or indifference). Anything we say in real conversations is filled with emotions and yet, research on L2 acquisition is only beginning to look into this unpredictable and ethically complicated area. I believe acting
could be a valuable asset in such an investigation, especially if that investigation focused on the pedagogical applications of acting to second language learning.

Regardless of what directions further research on the interrelations of pragmatics and acting could take, I believe there is one methodological concern that any researcher would have to overcome – the transcripts. Acting represents life, while life is unattainable and impossible to transcribe without being reduced or simplified. The least researchers working on this interdisciplinary topic could do is include the body language of participants of the conversation and provide as much social context as possible. My study showed that often times spoken lines themselves do not allow researchers to trace development (or the lack of it) in participants’ speech while intonation and body language, sometimes as a reaction to external factors, often serve as clues to what is actually happening in the participant’s performance.

Limitations

I partly touched upon the limitations of my research in Chapter 3 when I was discussing the shifts in my epistemology and methodology. Below I list four more limitations, which I consider equally important.

The main limitation and the main strength of this study lies in its authenticity. By authenticity I mean the fact that it was defined by my pedagogical praxis where it was precisely the praxis (not the study) that was the ultimate focus of my attention (at least during the course of the pedagogical intervention). Being a teacher and a researcher, I had to prioritize pedagogy over research, which, as we know, resulted in inconsistencies in my data collection, specifically the writing of teacher journals. The journals were fast to turn from a daily activity to a weekly burden. The reality of teaching (and being overloaded with work) did not allow me to be an efficient data collector.

The reality of teaching also required me to perform multiple roles: the listener, observer, facilitator, corrector, and knower – all at the same time. As we know, teachers have to decide on the spot whether or not their students’ performance is correct, appropriate and relevant. Depending on that decision, they provide feedback or input that can potentially further their students’ development. The amount of the input depends on the students’ current
stage of development, individual manner of learning, and the time and space affordances that are a given in any teaching situation. It is typically up to the student whether to accept that input or not. This study is based on the trust in the teacher’s and students’ judgement, which I see as a weakness and strength at the same time.

The second limitation also comes from the very nature of my research. My research is a small case-study focusing on only two participants in a unique teaching environment. As mentioned earlier, my two participants were very pro-active learners and stayed very much engaged throughout the whole process. Nevertheless, there were also 33 other students. Some of them were not playing main characters in the production, some were not ready to invest as much time, effort and energy as Linda and Kate did, some missed the workshops on PC and/or on intonation; some did not receive one-on-one appointments with the pronunciation coach. It is clear that each student followed their own path of development and Kate’s and Linda’s examples cannot be generalized.

To overcome this limitation, instead of looking at the whole or coming up with numbers (for example, a number of correct uses of a particular speech act), I tried to zoom in on specific moments in my pedagogical practice, specifically the ones that had signs of the emerging ZPD. I transcribed and analysed only a few episodes of my participants’ speech in L2. Although there could be no generalizations made on the basis of my data, I believe it provides a uniquely detailed outlook on what happens in the acting classroom and on what happens to the students’ language when they perform (or learn to perform) in their second language.

The third limitation is associated with my data collection tools. In this respect, I would like to discuss two issues: the language in which all the interviews were conducted and the issue of the presence of the video camera.

Regarding the first issue, it is important to remember that both interviews were conducted in a foreign language. Being fluent speakers of English, Linda and Kate still make a lot of mistakes in English. Most of them do not impede understanding but it is obvious that my participants could have expressed themselves more fully in their first language. The choice of language (in this case, the interviewer’s priority) framed the interviews in a particular way: it limited the modes of expression for Linda and Kate and inadvertently
moved the researcher to a higher power position by the mere fact that he was a much more proficient speaker of English than the interviewees. An interview in Russian would have introduced a more equal power balance and could have produced much more data, let alone more emotionality and mutual understanding. Conducting interviews in English was my conscious decision as it provided more consistency in terms of language choices and reinforced the “Speak English” rule. As we remember, I had to prioritize my pedagogical goals over my research objectives.

With respect to the video camera, there are also a few points to be made. Only when my data collection was over, did I realize that I treated the camera far too lightly in my research. During the rehearsals, the school’s video camera was peacefully standing on a tripod in a far corner of our rehearsal hall and was recording everything that was happening during the rehearsals and workshops (excluding breaks) without close ups or being moved during the rehearsal.

Recording rehearsals is a common practice in the troupe I was working with and it was the company’s policy to videotape most rehearsals and performances. From the Ethics Board’s point of view, I was going to use secondary data for my research, i.e., the company’s recordings of rehearsal. That “secondary data feel” reinforced my perception of the camera as a simple observing tool. Consequently, I was only paying attention to it when I had to change a media storage device or a power source. I never asked my students whether or not they were bothered by the presence of the video camera in the classroom.

My second concern is my interpretations of the footage coming from a very particular ‘angle’ prompted by the positioning, perhaps, not a very useful one, of the camera in the corner of the rehearsal room. “The camera lens works to ‘enframe’ the field into compositions” (Dicks et al., 2005, p. 82) and by that creating inequalities and inconsistencies of representation. In certain cases, a research participant could be inadvertently facing the camera and saying something that would indicate “correct pragmatic choices”. However, in other cases, the same research participant might be standing full back to the camera or far from the camera and I would not be able to hear the actual wording, nor see her face. The angle, the proximity, the position (higher, lower) of the camera are the factors that certainly affected my choices of footage useful for transcription and my understanding of that footage.
To my defence, I must add that in some way I attempted to return the “camera” gaze to the participants, when I asked them to watch certain episodes and offer their interpretation of what was going on but it was still I who chose the episodes and asked the questions. The power balance was very much skewed towards the researcher [or the teacher].

**Final Thought**

As we have seen, there are far too many connections on the theoretical and practical levels between pragmatics and the System to deny the usefulness of the one for the development of the other. It also clear that the System does not exist in a vacuum and the social aspect of the System implementation should be considered. It is also clear that some exercises in the System could be less useful for L2 learners, and they might need to be avoided or modified. There is no need to follow the System blindly. The System requires work, experimentation, determination, and creativity. In the end, I would not be able to say it better that Stanislavski himself:

The ‘system’ is a guide. Open it and read. The ‘system’ is a reference book, not a philosophy.

The ‘system’ ends when philosophy begins.

Work on the system at home. Onstage put it to one side.

You cannot act the ‘system’.

There is no ‘system’. There is nature (Stanislavski, 2008, p. 612).
References


Appendix A
Information Letter for Potential Participants

August 9, 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name Art Babayants and I am graduate student of the University of Toronto, Canada. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study which will take place from August 12 to September 8, 2009. The study will be based on Theatre BootCamp 2009 where I will be the principal instructor. The purpose of the study is to observe the development of English proficiency of the participants and see how acting affects the acquisition of the second language.

The study will include:

- introductory interview,

- teacher observation and completion of teacher journals throughout the drama course Theatre BootCamp 2009 in which you are participating,

- the analysis of the videotaped classes and rehearsals,

- post-course interview.

The pre- and post-study interviews will take place outside the regular classes of Theatre Bootcamp 2009. Each will last about 45-60 minutes of your time. The interviews will occur at a time and place that is convenient for you. The discussion will be on subject material which pertains to the research topic. No other time commitments, except for the interviews, will be required.

Please note that participation in this project is entirely voluntary and that you may withdraw from it at any stage and for any reason, without any negative consequences, in which case I will immediately and systematically destroy any data pertaining to your participation. You need not provide justification for your withdrawal. Also, you may refuse to answer any
question or complete any part of any task in this project. Your withdrawal from the project will not affect your participation in *Theatre BootCamp 2009*.

I do not foresee any risks for you if you decide to participate in this project other than the (highly unlikely) possibility of your personal information being revealed. I will take every precaution to prevent this from happening: I will be the only person familiar with your participation in this project. Although my research supervisor, Dr. Julie Kerekes of the University of Toronto, will review the data, your name and any other identifying information will be erased from them. At no time will I reveal any identifying information about you. I will conceal your identity in storing all data collected during the study. I will store all data on paper and erasable compact discs kept inside a locked cabinet at my home for a period of two years. I will systematically destroy all the data at the end of this two-year period by erasing and shredding them. Every participant will be assigned a pseudonym. Results will be reported in aggregate and, if individual participants’ responses are discussed, I will only mention their pseudonyms and will never make reference to any identifying details.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have. You may contact me by email, xxx.xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxx.xx, or telephone + x xxx xxx xxxx.

You may also address any questions or concerns to my research supervisor, Dr. Julie Kerekes: email xxxxxxx@xxxx.xxxxxxx.xx, and tel: + x xxx xxx xxxx.

If you have any questions about your rights as research participants, you can contact the Office of Research Ethics of the University of Toronto by email: ethics.review@utoronto.ca or by telephone + x xxx xxx xxxx.

If you are interested in the results of this project, I would be pleased to send you a summary of my findings. I intend to present my results at various conferences and to publish at least one article about the study.

Faithfully,

Art Babayants
Appendix B

Consent form for Participants

Informed Consent Form

If you wish to participate in this project, please complete this form and return it to me in the attached envelope.

I have read and understood Artem Babayants’ information letter dated [date of letter] and I agree to participate in his study as detailed in the letter. I understand that participation in this study is strictly voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw from it at any time and for any reason. Also, I may refuse to answer any question or complete any part of this research project. I understand that there will be no negative consequences for me if I do so. I am keeping a copy of this consent form and of Artem Babayants’ letter dated [date of letter] for my records.

My name is (please print):

Contact information (please provide at least one of the following):
  - address:
  - telephone number:
  - email address:

Signature:

Date:
Appendix C

Theatre Course Outline: A Handout for Teachers and Students

Welcome to
Theatre BootCamp – 2009

“Oh, the thinks you can think!!!”

-----------------------------------

August 11 – September 7, 2009

(Name of the Company)

Moscow
Hi there!

My name’s Art, and I’ll be your principal instructor during Theatre BootCamp - 2009. I’m very excited to start working on “Seussical. The Musical” with you, and I hope you enjoy the process.

If you happen to have any questions, please, don’t hesitate to ask me in class or email me at Dr.Seuss2009@gmail.com. Also, each day we will allocate about 30 minutes of class time to deal with various organisational issues and answer your questions.

This little booklet will get you acquainted with our rehearsal process. I’d advise you to bring this booklet to each and every rehearsal and take note of any changes that will undoubtedly occur (possibly, many times).

Ok, let’s start at the very beginning… First of all, meet your instructors:

- **Art Babayants** (Art) – director, co-producer
- X. – director
- X. – co-producer, musical director
- X. – choreographer, dance captain
- X. – pronunciation coach
- X. – assistant director

Also, you might want to talk to our wonderful production team (this time in Russian), if you have concerns about costumes, props or makeup:

- X., set designer
- X., costume designer
- X., stage manager

All rehearsals from Aug 11 till Sept 3 will be held in School N. The open rehearsal on Sept 7 will be held in N.

All major rehearsals will be starting at around 6 pm and ending at around 10 pm. Non-mandatory review classes as well as workshops and individual calls will be held between 4 and 6 pm. All workshops will be repeated at 9 pm. No classes or rehearsals will be scheduled for any of the weekends unless an emergency occurs.
Since you’re expected to be speaking English all the time when you’re working on *Seussical*,
I suggest you first go through this

**Quick English Guide**

**Greeting**
Q: Hi! How are you doing? How is it going?
A: I’m good/ok/pretty well. Yourself?

**Requesting attention**
Q: Excuse me, can I just say…?

**Information Request**
Q: How do you pronounce this word?
Q: How do you say ________ in English?
Q: Who strikes this scene? What’s my cue?
Q: From the top? Where do we start?
Q: When does tomorrow’s rehearsal start/end?
Q: What do we do now?

**Asking for instructions and giving instructions**
Q: Should we go from…(the top / page 38 / my line)?
Q: Do I go stage right? Do you want me full front? How/Where do you want me?
Q: Do you want me to cheat out more?
Q: Should we start now?
   A: Sure, go ahead.
   A: No, I don’t think so.
   A: I’m not quite sure, you better ask someone else.

**Clarification**
Sorry, I didn’t quite understand. Could you say it again?
Am I supposed to… (be here / be miked / enter from the downstage wing / wait offstage)?

**Polite Request**
Q: Could you repeat that, please? Could you not (do that)…. please? Could you cue me in here, please?
Q: Do you mind going through this again? Can we do it again, please?
Q: I have a question (for you). I am wondering if… (I could understudy for this role)?
Q: Can I get a….., please?
Q: Can I borrow your … (eye-liner, lipstick, etc.)?

**Wishes**
W: Break a leg!  A: Likewise!
W: Congratulations on … (your new role)!  A. Thank you!

**Gratitude**
Thank you! Thanks! Cheers!
You’re welcome. No problem.

**Suggestions**
I have a suggestion. Could we all …?
I suggest we do/rehearse scene 2 again.

**Complimenting**
I think you were great! Good/excellent job! Well-done! Hi 5!

**Parting**
Bye! Have a nice evening/good night/nice weekend!
Enjoy! Enjoy it!
Staging a new show is never easy. To make this process as enjoyable as possible for everyone we ask you to follow this set of

**10 VERY SIMPLE RULES**

1. **Always come on time!** If you’re late, please text your instructor or one of the students indicating when you’ll be arriving. If you don’t know your instructor’s cell phone number, then text one of the classmates and ask him/her to pass the info to the instructor.

2. In the rehearsal hall and onstage, **please wear your dance shoes**. No street shoes are allowed.

3. **One person talks at a time.** If you have a question, raise a hand and the person in charge will give you the right to speak next.

4. **Try to use English as much as possible.** Avoid switching to any other language, especially right before going onstage. Do not distract your stage partners by using a different language during the rehearsal.

5. **Do not distract your instructors and peers** when scenes are being rehearsed. Avoid leaving or entering the room, slamming doors, walking, talking, singing and producing any other excessive noise while scenes are rehearsed or when the instructor is speaking to the cast.

6. Don’t forget to **eat well and drink plenty of water.** Bring a snack or two to each and every rehearsal. Our rehearsals are 4-6 hours long, chances are you’ll get hungry.

7. If you are an understudy, **practice your piece while it’s being rehearsed.** It’s best to use the available space (upstage) behind the principal actors without distracting the directors.

8. Do something, when you’re not actively involved in the rehearsal process. We have almost 40 actors and there are going to be moments when you’ll have nothing to do. Use this wonderful opportunity, to **go through your lines, practice your dance moves, learn a new role, drill your English sounds,** etc. Ask more experienced actors to help you with your practice.

9. Most importantly, please keep in mind that Seussical is all about the **ENSEMBLE.** We don’t have time to deal with divas, starts, and other rather unpleasant people. Make sure you **offer help to anyone who needs it.**

10. Last but not least, **enjoy the process and have fun!** Seussical is all about fun, isn’t it!
We all want to make Seussical a very successful show. To make sure it will run as smoothly as possible, we ask you to volunteer for one of the following committees. The committees are established to help the production and the creative teams to do their job faster and better. A typical Broadway show costs 14,000,000 dollars and employs an army of people to assist the production team. We can’t have that luxury, that’s why we ask you for a little bit of your time and your talent. Hope that the committee work becomes a useful and interesting experience for you.

Committees you might want to participate in:

1. Props committee: if you’re organized, careful and love fixing things, sign up for this one
2. Costumes committee: if you can sew and/or mend clothes, our costumes committee is the right pick for you
3. Makeup Committee: if you’re good at drawing, this may be the right team for you.
4. Puppets Committee: you’re fascinated by puppets, sign up for this one. You will be able to sew puppets, mend puppets, take care of puppets and hopefully, teach others how to deal with puppets.
5. Dance Captains: you are a gifted dancer? you remember all the routines well? you’ve never missed a dance class? why don’t you become a dance captain?
6. English Language Committee: your English is amazing and you’d be happy to help others with their language learning – choose this committee. You may also be asked to do some cuing during the rehearsals.
7. Stage Management Crew (must be over 18 years old): Seussical is a very complex show and we might need an assistant stage manager. If you want to learn about theatrical machinery, scene changes, special effects, etc., apply to this committee.
8. Videotaping committee (must be over 18 year old): you are in charge of the videotaping process. It doesn’t mean you will have to be a permanent cameramen, but you’ll have to set up the equipment, make sure it’s rolling. We need all the rehearsals to be filmed.

The working language for all committees will be Russian; however, the use of English is welcome too. You can certainly belong to two committees at the same time but this might make your work a little bit tedious. So choose wisely!
Just to make sure that we’re all on the same page, I thought it may be useful to put in a couple of lines about

Seussical, The Musical:
The Director’s Vision

Seussical is the musical that defies reality. It’s about people who can think and imagine. It laughs at people who follow rules, orders, fashion without ever questioning those... I imagine a realistic world with ubiquitous cell phones, glitzy magazines, Levi’s jeans being turned into a glorious realm of fantasy and imagination. The message of the show is simple: If you can dream it, it’s possible! That’s why Seussical is also about YOUR OWN imagination. We are looking forward to your ideas and contributions. Anything that defies boundaries is welcome! Remember: Everything’s possible!

In terms of performing, Seussical should be ONE BIG ENERGY POWERHOUSE! Every song, every scene, every line should be filled with energy up to 150%. We are going to have about 30 actors onstage at the same time – signing, dancing, acting, and interacting with the audience!!! It is the actors, not the special effects, expensive sets or costumes which are going to be the driving force of our production. Your amazing singing, dancing and acting skills should make the audience stand on their feet!.. And don’t forget – Seussical is VERY VERY VERY FUNNY! Make sure you also make the audience roll in the aisles.

Well, now we are on the same page, I guess. Let’s get back to the boring logistics… First, Financial Matters…Although we can’t dump 14,000,000 dollars into this production, the amount of money our sponsors give us to produce Seussical is still very very big. This is a licensed show which means MESS pays a huge chunk of money to Musical Theatre International, Ltd. simply to have the rights to perform Seussical. And we have to pay for EACH performance, not just one time. Plus, there is, of course, theatre rent, sets and special effects, props, stage management, lighting crew, and other aspects that require a lot of cash. We don’t ask you to pay for those. All these wonderful perks are free for you.

However, there are some things we’ll ask you to pay for. Those are your INDIVIDUAL COSTUMES and FOOTWEAR. They will include: your dance shoes, your jeans, socks, and T-shirts. Those will have to be purchased before September 1, as you will be asked to have those costumes on for dress rehearsals. Our costume designer will specify later what kind of costumes are required and where you’ll be able to buy those.

Financial matters aside, there’s plenty of fun awaiting! Yay!
Below is a list of scenes and musical numbers we will be working on. The bolded scenes are going to be staged from scratch (even though, some of them might have been blocked already). The scenes in italics are the ones that have been blocked and we are just going to add minor corrections to them.

**SCENES, or What We Are Going to Do**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 0. Prologue (All Cast)</td>
<td>Reality-Fantasy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 1. Oh, The Thinks You Can Think. (All Cast)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2. Horton Hears A Who. (Principals only)</td>
<td>TV Talk-Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 3. Biggest Blame Fool. (All Cast)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 4. Here On Who. (Some principal + Ensemble)</td>
<td>Choir Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 5 Jojo and Parents. (Individual Call)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 6 It's Possible (Jojo and Ensemble)</td>
<td>Puppet Th-re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 7. How to Raise A Child. (Individual Call)</td>
<td>Military Training Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 8. The Military. (Some Principals + Ensemble)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 9. Alone In The Universe (Principals only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 10. Amazing Mayzie and Gertrude (Principals only)</td>
<td>Audition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 11. Gertrude and Dr. Dake (Principals only)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 12. Monkey Around (All Cast)</td>
<td>In the movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 13. Chasing The Whos (All Cast)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 14. How Lucky You Are (Cat + Ensemble)</td>
<td>Broadway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 15. Notice Me, Horton (Some Principals + Ensemble)</td>
<td>Clover field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 16. How Lucky You Are Reprise (Some Prins + Ensemble)</td>
<td>Cabaret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 17. Horton Sits On The Egg (All Cast)</td>
<td>New York Auction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 18. Egg, Nest and Tree (All Cast)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 19. Amazing Horton (Principals)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 20. Solla Sollew (Principals)</td>
<td>Puppets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 21. The War (Some Principals + ensemble)</td>
<td>Reportage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 22. Havin’ A Hunch (All Cast)</td>
<td>Pantomime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 23. All for You (Principals only)</td>
<td>Rock Concert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 24. The Whos Return (Principals)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 25. The People Versus Horton the Elephant (All Cast)</td>
<td>Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 26. Yopp! / Alone in the universe (All Cast)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 27. Finale – Oh, the thinks you can think (All Cast)</td>
<td>Fantasy-Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 28. Green Eggs and Ham – Curtain Call (All Cast)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Principals** are Cat, Horton, Jo-jo, Birds, Wickershams, Maizie, Gertrude, Sour K., Mayor, Mayor’s Wife, General. All principals are miked (i.e., will have an individual head microphone).

**Ensemble**: puppeteers, dancing members of the cast, etc. They represent circus animals, flowers of clover, Gertrude’s tail, cabaret dancers, new-yorkers, jungle citizens, etc. Ensemble members are not miked but may be asked to say lines in a hand mic.
Finally, we’ve come to the nitty-gritty of the rehearsal process – our wonderful Schedule

To understand the schedule, please read THE LEGEND carefully:

- **S** – staging rehearsal (the scene is created from scratch),
- **C** – corrective rehearsal (a blocked scene will be revised, major changes can be expected)
- **R** – review (the scene is reviewed, only minor corrections can be made)
- **Q2Q** – cue-to-cue rehearsal: only the beginnings and endings of scenes will be rehearsed in order to identify problems with scene changes, props, costumes, light and sound.

**Dress Rehearsal** – all sets, props and costumes are required

**Technical Rehearsal** – focus on light and sound only (the most boring rehearsal EVER!)

**Open Rehearsal**: rehearsal open to general public (usually press, peers and critics are invited)

**Extra time**: extra time is, in fact, not extra at all. This time is usually for organizational issues, your questions, and for additional rehearsals. It may also be used as a break.

**Workshops** are practice-oriented sessions that will focus on a specific aspect of performing. All workshops will be conducted in English. The maximum number of participants varies for each type of workshop. Attendance is not mandatory. You will have to sign up for the workshops on the first day of rehearsals.

2. **Intonation Workshop** (recommended for actors in principal roles and understudies who have spoken lines). Runs 60 minutes, 16 people max.
3. **Applying Stanislavski to Musical Theatre** (for actors in principal roles and anyone who would like to improve their acting skills). Runs 90 minutes, 20 people max
4. **One-on-one Pronunciation**: a quick-fix workshop with our pronunciation coach (for those who are interested in accent reduction and better speech delivery). Available only for actors in principal roles. Max. 20 min, one-on-one format only.

All workshops are free but you need to sign up for them. Changes are permitted provided there are free spots on the participants list.

*Italicized* are the items that do not involve actual production work (warm-ups, review sessions, etc.). It’s ok to miss those due to work circumstances.

**Ensemble, Principals, All Cast**: see p. 7

**TBA** – to be announced

**NOTES.**

Individual singing and dance classes are not shown on the schedule. You are welcome to arrange those with instructors of your choice OUTSIDE THE MAIN REHEARSAL TIMES.

All actors are expected to be familiar with the script before Aug. 11. There’ll be no reading rehearsals and no line-drilling sessions. Work on your lines at home – you have Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays for that exciting exercise.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Work to Do</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Instructors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Aug 11, Tues</td>
<td><strong>5.00-6.30 Singing Warm-Up and Songs Review for Week 1</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.30-7.30 Induction Session:</strong> Introductions. Schedules. Organizational Issues. Signing up for workshops and committees. 7.30-8.30 Role Development Session 8.30-9.30 <strong>Prologue</strong> Devising (# 0) S 9.30-10.00 Extra Time</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug 12, Wed</td>
<td><strong>4.00-5.00 How-do-we-say-it? Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.00-6.15 Dance Warm-Up and Review</strong></td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.30-8.30 Oh, the thinks you can think and Prologue (# 0,1) S</strong></td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>8.30-9.00 Extra Time</strong></td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>9.00-10.00 How-do-we-say-it? Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug 13, Thur</td>
<td><strong>4-6 It’s Possible (# 6) S</strong></td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.00 Extra Time</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.30-9.30 Oh, the thinks you can think, Horton Hear a Who Biggest Blame Fool, Here on Who (# 1, 2,3,4) C</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>9.30-10.00 Extra Time</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Aug 17, Mon</td>
<td><strong>4-5.30 Vocal Review for Week 2</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.30-6.00 Extra Time</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6-8.15 Havin’ a Hunch (#22) S</strong></td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>8.30-10.00 Applying Stanislavski to Musical Theatre (workshop)</strong>*</td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug 18, Tue</td>
<td><strong>4.00-5.30 Applying Stanislavski to Musical Theatre (workshop)</strong>*</td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.30-6.00 Extra Time</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.00-9.00 The Whos Return, The People Versus Horton the Elephant (# 24, 25) S</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>9.00-10.00 All for You (# 23) S</strong></td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug 19, Wed</td>
<td><strong>4-5.30 Dance Warm-up and Review</strong></td>
<td>TBA // Cat</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Cat Individual Call: How Lucky You Are</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.30-6.00 Extra Time</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.00-7.00 The People Versus Horton The Elephant (# 25) C</strong></td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7.00-9.00 Zop! / Alone in the Universe and Finale (# 26,27) S</strong></td>
<td>Jo-jo, Parents</td>
<td>Jo-jo, Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>9.00-10.00 Jo-jo and Parents (#5) C // Dance Calls</strong></td>
<td>Jo-jo, Parents</td>
<td>Jo-jo, Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Work to Do</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 20, Thur</td>
<td>4-5 It's Possible (# 6) C 5-6 The War (# 21) S 6-6.30 Extra Time 6.30-7.30 Scenes # 0,1,2,3,5,6 R 7.30-9.30 Having a Hunch, All for You, Zop!/Alone in the Universe, The Whoes Return, People vs Horton, Finale (# 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27) C 9.30-10.00 Extra Time</td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 24, Mon</td>
<td>4-5.30 Vocal Warm-Up and Review 5.30-6.00 Extra Time 6-8.30 Monkey Around and Chasing the Whos (# 12,13) S 8.30-10.00 Scenes # 22,23,24,25,26,27 R</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 25, Tues</td>
<td>4.30-5.30 Intonation Workshop * 5.30-6.00 Extra Time 6.00-7.00 The War (# 21 ) C 7.00-8.30 Military (# 8) S 8.30-10.00 Amazing Gertrude and Mazie, Gertrude and Dr. Dake (# 10,11) C // Pronunciation</td>
<td>Signed Up</td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 26, Wed</td>
<td>4-5.00 Dance Warm-up and Review 5.00-6.30 Notice me, Horton (# 15) S 6.30-7.00 Extra Time 7.00-9.00 Horton Sits on the Egg; Egg, Nest and Tree (# 17,18) S 9.00-10.00 Intonation Workshop// Dance Calls</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Gert + Hort+ Ensemble</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 27, Thur</td>
<td>4.00-5.00 Military (# 8) C 5.00-6.00 Solla Sollew (# 20) C 6.00-6.30 Extra Time 6.30-7.30 Costumes, Props and Puppets: Talk 7.30-10.00 Monkey Around, Chasing The Whos, How Lucky You Are, Notice Me, Horton, HLYA Reprise, Horton Sits; Egg, Nest &amp; Tree (# 12,13,14,15,16,17,18)</td>
<td>See p.7</td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 31, Mon</td>
<td>4-5 Cat in the Hat (improvisations) 5-6.00 Jojo and Horton S (# 9) // Singing WarmUp 6.00– 6.30 Extra Time 6.30-9.00 Scenes # 7,8,9, 10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20 R 9.00-10.00 Extra Time</td>
<td>See p. 7</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 1, Tue</td>
<td>4-6 Individual Calls // Pronunciation * 6-9 Runthrough: Scenes 0-14 R</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Work to Do</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9-10 Extra Time</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2</td>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>4-6 Individual Calls // Pronunciation *</td>
<td>Committees</td>
<td>All Instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6-9 Runthrough: Scenes 15-28 R</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9-10 Extra Time</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Thur</td>
<td>4-5 Preparation for Dress: Committees</td>
<td>Committees</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5-7 Q2Q Runthrough</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.00-7.30 Extra Time</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.30-9.00 Dress Rehearsal (#0-28)</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.30-10.00 Extra Time</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Five</td>
<td>Sept 7**</td>
<td>3-4 Singing Warm-up, Mic Adjustment, Stage Prep</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>4-6.30 Technical Runthrough</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.30-7.30 Break</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.30-9.00 Open Rehearsal (Technical Dress)</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.00-10.00 Audience Feedback // Clean Up (for actors)</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.00 Wrap Up, Good-bye hugs and kisses</td>
<td>All Cast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** A separate schedule sheet will be provided for September 7.
Appendix D
First Interview with Linda. Transcript

The introductions and interview instructions are omitted in this transcription. L. Stands for Linda, R. – for researcher.

R: You speak Russian and English. Do you speak any other languages?

L: Er… Well, I can speak German but not so good as in English. Er … I understand it but you know in my school er English was first language because I learnt it in English specialized school or we can call it gymnasium. German there was only one time a week.

R: Ok. So you learned English in a specialized school where English was the first foreign language. Did you take any other courses?

L: Yes, I … tutoring … Since I was four, since I came to school. Because there was an experimental class. There were … you know we call it zero class. Zero A, zero B. And then will be the first class, normal one.

R: Did you have English there?


R: Ok. In English?

L: Yes.

R: So are you taking an English course right now?

L: Right now, no. Sometimes I meet with my tutor just because we’re good friends. And try speak English (giggles) just for ourself.

R: And your tutor was a native speaker? Or…?

L: No, the tutor wasn’t a native speaker but she lived for some period of time in America and in England. She lived there for about two years or three … I don’t remember.
R: Ok. Thank you. So these were general questions and now let’s talk about your acting experience and your English. Have you ever studied the Stanislavski System before?

L: Only in M.E.S.S. And my drama teachers advised us to read the book. So I read that. I read it. And that’s all what I know about Stanislavski connected with actors. And besides, I bought myself some books connected with Meyerhold and Stanislavski eh… courses of directors… Can I call it like this?

R: Yes.

L: So… I bought it for myself because I’m interested in this.

R: If asked you to describe the Stanislavski System in brief, could you describe how you understand it?

L: Well, I understand it like that. Well. For example, when you need to make the character you use impressions from life to make it real. Using your body like ‘oh, my god’ or ‘oh, it is great’ (demonstrates gestures). Like this gestures.

R: Yeah! Very good. Thank you! Why are you taking this BootCamp?

L: Sorry? What?

R: Why are you taking this course? What is your motivation?

L: Well … It’s simple, I think. Because I would like to learn everything what is connected with theatre and the cinema. I mean to choose the second high education as a director I want to learn everything what is connected with it. How the script is doing, how the props are making, how people usually talk while they are rehearsal. I think it’s good school, in this case.

R: In terms of your professional development… as an actress… what do you expect from this course?

L: Errr…

R: If you have any expectations.
L: Well. Knowledge. If fact, from my point of you, I’m not an actor in the meaning people from university… theatre university usually mean.

R: U-hu.

L: I can do some … I don’t know. How … in English we usually say “krivlyats’ya”?

R: (puzzled noise) Hm ... Show off?

L: Yes. Show off? Doing something like that (demonstrates)...like that... of that kind.

R: Oh, ok.

L: And sometimes I make something near the mirror, for example, using my mimic and work on it.

R: and in terms of your language development what do you expect from this course?

L: I expect to understand how people er live on the stage.

R: No-no. In terms of you language development... in terms of your English, do you have any expectations from this course?

L: Hm… No. I told everything. I mean?

R: Like if you're taking to improve your English, you might have some expectations. Or if you don’t have expectations, you might be taking it to develop your acting skills.

L: In fact, you are quite right. The language I think is one of the main part of this course. We can learn when we play. For example, she read her role. Ok, she found a new word.

R: We’re half way through the interview. The next question is when communicating in English what kind of problems do you experience?

L: I think there are no many problems. But one problem is new words.

R: What aspects of language learning do you find easy or difficult?
L: For me it may be speaking because you can’t say “Let me go to the dictionary and check myself”. You know when you write something, it is a little bit difficult. But you can check.

R: During this course do you expect to have any exposure to English outside of the classroom?

L: No.

R: When communicating in English, how much attention do you give to the context of communication? By context I mean who you’re talking to, where and when the communication occurs, the level of formality, etc.

L: It depends on the person with whom I’m talking. For example, if it’s in an office at my job place, I don’t pay attention to other people and just understand there’s only job and I must do it and how to achieve the aim. And if it’s friend or teacher, I usually pay attention: “Oh, it’s nice weather today”. And also pay attention, like my friends can be sad. All these things. It depends on the person.

R: Do you do it in English or in Russian?

L: Yes, I do it in English, of course. Sometimes when I speak in Russian, as a joke I can pay attention on it in English. Just like… I cannot make an example. So sometimes I...say: “Wait, wait, shssss, silence!” And somebody asks me: “Linda, why in English?”

R: Have you experienced situations when what you learned here helped you with communication in real life?

L: Yes. It helped. It helps a lot because you know I remember some phrases or collocations and maybe some slang words that I didn’t leant or didn’t read it and didn’t hear at school or from my tutor.

R: Could you give me an example of how you used words in real life?

L: Again, it depends on situation. Right now when you ask me now I can’t remember that but when I’m talking, talking and talking, I see, oh well, I remember that. Just again, it can be like this.
Appendix E
Second Interview with Linda. Transcript

R: You just finished Theatre Bootcamp 2009. What is your impression on this course?

L: I liked work here… working much. And I learnt much. . Actually I understood clearly Stanislavski’s theory but it was much clear to me than I read it myself in books. And I you know liked this activity time it was really positive for me. I liked that we worked worked worked. And then time… and … (laughs) I liked this process.

R: Was it useful for you in terms of developing your acting activities?

L: Understand and doing is different things. Because I understand it on my mind but I still trying to feel it my emotions and my body. I think I told you last I don’t think I’m good actor because I don’t try in every day. I mean try to eh make my character, to read text. But I did it every day in August. So I felt that it’s very hard sometimes. If your character has had emotions, different feelings. It can be dull, it can be funny. It was rather interesting and attractive.

R: Thank you. It’s very interesting.

L: I think I didn’t do my character up to the end but I will.

R: Ok. Cool. You kinda starting answering my next question. What was new in this course?

L: New? Ah… Hm… As I went to study in VGIK (Russian Institute for Cinema Studies), if it will be…. director … Can I say so or?... It was very interesting for me to look at you how you work with people. So I liked this process er I mean the way you did it. Just er Because it’s really hard. I know what I’m talking about... er... because I had little experience at my university when I did some little shows in it. But it wasn’t so big, of course, it was a little one. But I understood that there can be a lot of problems. So you must work as if nothing has happened. Be concentrated on each point, each thing, each character. That was very interesting for me and it’s great school.
R: Ok. Thank so much. Let’s move on to talking about your English. Do you think it affected your speaking abilities?

L: Yes. You know… In fact… I think it helps me mainly when you know it’s summertime and I don’t have a lot of practice and here is a month of you know drama English and that’s why it helps me not to forget it. So of course, as I said at previous questions I’ve learnt some phrases, collocations for myself but mainly it helps me not to forget English because nowadays it is difficult for me because I have no English no more at my university and I cannot meet with my tutor every day to speak in English, yeah. But I have this opportunity here.

R: When you’re creating a character onstage here, did you experience any language problems?

L: Er…Well, I had some problems, of course. Because sometimes I didn’t felt maybe the tact.

R: What do you mean by the tact?

L: How I should pronounce the words. Sometimes I must pronounce its quicker. And you know… pronounce all endings: not to forget about the “mind”, all the things you may “find”. Like this. All that stuff. I felt like I had that problem. Just the pronunciation.

R: During the course did you learn any new language items?

L: (sounds puzzled) Yes… Concerning language or acting?

R: Let’s talk about it all together. Language and acting. It doesn’t have to be the words.

L: Well, I’ll start with acting and feeling myself on the stage. When I did Helen Fish (Linda’s role in a previous production) it was you know like first steps. Jo-jo is maybe the second step for me. When I did Helen I though was like: don’t show to the audience my back part. I tried to show only my face, maybe, to be correct at this point. And when I did Jo-jo, I understood that it depends on the situation. So you can show all your body everywhere but it depends how you will do it. I looked at how you worked with other characters, like with the Cat and I
understood that there are different ways of moving and how she can use it. So I tried to learn everything, not only what was connected only with my character.

R: *So that was in terms of acting but you also said that you learned some expressions in English. Could you give us any examples?*

L: Expressions mainly connected with Dr. Seuss’ phrases. Like in mine lines were “Ga-zet” or “a stripe loving pipester”. (*Laughs.*) And what was that? I liked you know this the German speaking doctor. I like it very much. I liked this way of speaking. It’s great.

R: *Ok. How difficult was it for you to communicate in English all the time?*

L: No problem. It was quite free. Sometimes maybe little problems with words which I don’t know how can I pronounce it in English. Well, but it’s not a problem. And the same thing about which I told in my first interview. Sometimes I can mistake in grammar and … well, you know that. You told about my mistakes. Sometimes the students between us, I mean between students can hear you made a mistake. Somebody can hear you. Oh, really? How should I pronounce it? Oh, ok.

R: *So other students were correcting you?*

L: Yes.

R: *Do you remember any examples?*

L: Oh, ok. My favourite was “So Gertrude is happy. Her tail is nice and long”. This one. The intonation. I know it’s quite easy to remember it but you try to remember it again and again and again. Sometimes it’s Nice and Long. Or nice and Lo:ng. Sometimes I asked Arthur: Can you repeat it one more time please? In this case.

R: *The last question is: Have you ever used any lines from the show in real life conversations?*

L: Yes. Seussical the Musical, Share and Share Alike again…

R: *That’s very interesting. Where and when? And what did you use?*
L: Well, of course it’s easy to use these kinds of words in private conversations with those people who know that and it looks like a joke. For example, when you’re talking or just sing together any song. It can be popular, sometimes from a musical. And it turns like you know English or American KVN (a popular Russian TV show). But when I talk to some people, well, you know, not from the theatre, I use sometimes lines, for example when I’m talking to my teachers from university. from the shows. Like “revise! Revise!” from Share and Share Alike and lines like this. So sometimes it happens.

R: Do you have anything to add in terms of how drama or acting helped your language acquisition?

L: You know I think another… when you try to study any lesson, it can be geography, it can me maths, it can be drama in another language it helps you to learn it deeper somehow. I remember when me and some students came to another university and there’s was literature discussion concerning Pushkin. There was a lady from Africa, she knows Russian, her native language and English. I liked her composition because she used simple words and er she learned Pushkin’s poetry in Russian. And she wrote in her composition just simple words that we use every day but she did in this case that it was simple for everyone. That’s why I think learning in another language is great.

R: Thank you so much!
Appendix F
Linda’s Response to Video Episodes

Section 1. Watch your Introduction in Character on the very first day of rehearsals (folder Day 1, file 1).

1. How do you feel about your intonation? Does it sound Russian or English to you? Is there a moment when it becomes very Russian?

- I think, that my intonation could be better. I estimate it as so so. Because, when I was viewing myself I felt that, not each of my ideas were looking as well as I thought.

- Yes, the beginning of my intonation sound VERY Russian. The word order was more Russian, especially at the beginning

- It became very Russian for me when I’ve said: « …it’s really truth…». I dislike the intonation, it’s similar Russian. And, I’d love to say: « That’s truth». I don’t know, why I didn’t say that so. I think, I worried a little bit.

2. What emotions were you trying to express in your introduction?

- I tried to express: modesty, shyness, curiosity and be awkward
Section 2. Watch the individual rehearsal with you (in the folder “Jojo and Kangaroo”, files 1 and 2).

How do you feel about your performance here? Were there any problems you were struggling with while performing different ideas of the same scene?

I laughed very much at myself, when I reconsidered this video. I do not think, that it is possible to name «acting» in general. I remarked that, I was thinking too much, instead of acting. You can see it in awkwardness of my movements, intonation and speech.

I didn’t feel, that I struggled with something. But, for me it was difficult to make a new version of the same scene GOOD at once. I can explain it so: a kind of considering and accustoming program switch on inside when I am trying a new scene version. I try to believe myself that, the word I pronounce are my (Characters). And I am not Mary Linder! I am Jo-jo! Not at once I can do an internal construction of the character in myself. It takes time. I tried to repeat the same scene more and more at home. Yet I did not find necessary execution on that video, on my point of view.
Appendix G
First Interview with Kate. Transcript

The introductions as well as the interview instructions were are omitted in this transcription.

R: What other languages do you speak?

K: I speak German. But not as well as English. Well, that’s it.

R: Where and how did you learn English?

K: First at school, but it were only first and second class. Then later, I had private lessons with a teacher, maybe a year. And actually that’s it.

R: And who was the teacher?

K: It was the son of my English teacher at school.

R: Are you taking any English classes at the moment?

K: Unfortunately, no.

R: Have you studied the Stanislavski System before?

K: I had some special course in university but it was like only how to say it? Theoretic knowledge. We didn’t apply it to real acting.

R: Ok. Good. Why are you taking this course?

K: I’m interested in developing my like abilities, knowledge and my how do you say it?. All that stuff like singing and dancing and acting. ‘cause I want to stay in N. (name of the company) for the future and I think I need some special course like this.

R.: What was your primary interest?

K: English, of course. When I came here, the first thing was language but than I got started. Now I’d say that acting, singing and dancing is more interesting. I wouldn’t say important but interesting.
R: *What do you expect from this course in terms of your English?*

K: First of all, the biggest problem from my point of view is language problem. I mean the right intonation. This is the first thing. I hope having you and [name of the pronunciation coach] here for this lessons is to develop right pronunciation. All the stuff that we didn’t develop in school.

R: *In terms of professional development what do you expect from the course?*

K: I like the thing that our schedule now is pretty like the schedule of real Broadway. Originally, we had 3 hours a week, divided into two days. But here we come here at 4 and we are here till 10 pm and that’s great. Half a day we’re speaking only English and doing all the stuff. I like the fact that we have such an… Well, I think you understand.

R: *When communicating in English what kind of problems do you experience?*

K: My personal problem is that when I’m speaking Russian, I speak very fast. ‘cause I don’t know how if it is all the people think so fast. But when I speak English, yeah, like my things are running much more faster than I can actually speak foreign language. So for me it’s a problem. In Russian it’s ok. I know everything that I want to say. In English sometimes. I want to speak fast but I have a problem with choosing the right words and expressions and everything. So sometimes I catch myself trying to figure out how to say something. That’s the problem. So I have maybe lots things to say but I have to turn it into a few words.

R: *So you kind of think in Russian and trying to process it in English? You’re trying to analyze your speech?*

K: In right expressions. ‘cause I’m trying to analyze my speech. This stops me sometimes.

R: *So if you’re not sure, what do you do?*

K: If I’m not sure, I’m trying to find another words, another way to say. I feel confused ‘cause in Russian I sometimes. For me it’s very important like I feel. And maybe sometimes if you choose another words, it may change something.

R: *Which aspects of English do you find the easiest?*
K: For me, reading is quite all right. And I think the same is with writing. Because I think we have time to analyze to think something. But actually it’s not a problem. If I meet some English man, or American. But if they are talking to me, sometimes it difficult to understand. You as a teacher, you try to speak slowly.

R: So the difficult thing is to listen to native speakers?

K: Yeah. Which is not like talking as a lecture or something.

R: During the course what exposure to English are you expecting to have outside the classroom?

K: My bigger deal of the BootCamp is develop the way of speaking.
Appendix H
Second Interview with Kate. Transcript

R: *What are your impressions on the Bootcamp?*

K: Oh! I’m like overwhelmed with emotions. ‘cause yesterday we had a show. And this morning when everything is happened already I was thinking like Oh my god! It was this Bootcamp, four weeks bootcamp, which we were waiting so much, I think. Just from the moment that we just heard this idea to ask you to come here and do something with us. Until that moment, and we were waiting for it so much. Now it’s already done. And I was thinking like it was so cool to have this wonderful Bootcamp. The days we were doing so much in such a short kinda piece of time – how to say it - I’m very proud to be part of it and very happy that we had it. Before we had few songs, few dances and few kinda numbers already done but we didn’t have the whole musical … and all the numbers connected. And now we had only 4 weeks and 24 day… It’s 24 days. Yeah? Or how much?

R.: *You mean days of classes? There were 16 day, I think.*

K: Yeah and a year before we were learning dances and songs and everything. And then just these wonderful 16 days and we’ve done everything. And I’m shocked but it’s like a good emotion. 

R: *Was it useful in terms of your development as an actor?*

K: Yeah, a lot. First of all, mmm… it was very hard to do … mmm… the evolution of the character before when it was only singing and dancing. Or singing and dancing without really action, ’cause for the May concert *(end of the year concert – a showcase of students’ achievements)* we did *All the Thinks* and *Here on Who* but it was like a concert number. We WERE characters but the ( ) bigger piece of this idea was to show off for the audience. And NOW we get the chance to do the whole stuff as an actress and as characters. And for me that was like superuseful for my own evolution by working on this character *The Cat in the Hat*.

R.: *What was new for you in the course?*
K: Yeah… First of all, the feeling of everything. It was like totally new for me. To have so many hours in a day, doing all that stuff, connecting some things that I learned months ago, a few months ago, maybe half a year ago. It was like a challenge or a final point when you use what you learned before. So for me it was quite new. And I think everybody can say that. Mostly, because we were waiting not only for you as a person but like waiting for work with you.

R: Do you think this course affected your speaking abilities in English?

K: Yes, I think so. First of all, as I said before. I have a problem with that… I was learning English and then I stopped doing it. I had no lessons or classes for a long time. When I have a break, like two summer months having no English classes. I have no classes of English in the summer time. It was something that was locked inside my mind, not it’s activated. And I think that this particular bootcamp is a great punch that to have all my knowledge I mean English language to be on for a long time. (…) Now I think it’s going to be like year in the future to have everything like on the top of my abilities.

R: So you mean the intensity of the course

K: Yeah. The intensity was like… wow!

R: When creating characters, did you experience any language problems?

K: Hm… I think first of all, it is intonation which was developed through all this whole Bootcamp. For me it was total surprise, when you told me that ‘With a cat such as me’ (demonstrates the English Falling-rising tone). And it was kinda shock for we that I have to say this phrase this usual phrase that I was saying many times before and that is wrong, the way which I was saying it. So sometime when you’re rehearsing, it’s ok to think about lots of things: how do I move my hands and my feet and all that stuff, how do I sing, how do I smile. But when you’re on the stage you’re overfulled with emotions, you are in your character. You can’t think about all the parts of your body as an actor, you are your character and about all that things that are happening here. I’ mean in the musical. I can’t think of your body, so what about difficulties, yes? The intonations should’ve been worked here to be… to become my native intonations. That was the difficult part of it. So when you’re on the stage you may forget to think of it but you have to do like it naturally. So when you’re
overwhelmed with emotions and everything you’ll use the right intonation and the right words and the right things.

R: Did you learn any new language items during the course?

K: Yeah. I’ve learnt first of all I learned intonation. It was the best part for me. And of course, the vocabulary is now … I don’t think … may so much… engaged…. Or how to say it? Enlarged? Enlarged. I don’t know it… enlarged? And I think it’s quite a thing that I get through Bootcamp.

R: Why do you think this happened?

K: I don’t why but when we had our original classes, me and other students usually we let ourselves to speak Russian. But here, it was like: oh, I got it’s so interesting to speak English all the time. I don’t know what happened. Actually I understand it’s very important to speak English here. But I’m such kind of person. I can switch and it’s… I have no problem speaking Russian or speaking English. Maybe I’m mistaken but I think so. But I understand that I am an example for another people, like another students of (name of the company). But here it was like: oh, it’s so call. But not the kind of rule it was before. It’s a NEW rule. So we were talking in English. So it wasn’t a part of rehearsal, it was part of life. We were talking about the sweets and the candy. We were talking in English.

R: This is so good. That was one of my goals.

K: Yeah. It happened.

R.: How difficult was it to communicate in English during the rehearsals?

K: It was a like a normal way of living. When we were here in the school and we opened the door of this class… Although we sometimes were talking Russian. It was like Oh, my god!

Here I can speak English easily. So it was like the atmosphere here like that.

R: Have you ever used the lines from the production you’ve just done in a natural conversation? Could you give me an example?
K: Yes, I think we have such a thing as gags or how to call them? By the way, in the real life, I think a few days ago, last week after the rehearsal, we met somebody I think he was not English but he was speaking to us and asking about the way to some kinda club. We were talking to him – it was about five minute conversation. Usually when I happen to speak to someone in English. When I hear the phrase “Me too”, or “Let’s go”. Hm… I can’t remember that…

R: Take your time.

K: Actually, when I hear the phrase “Me too”, I usually want to say “And I want to go to strange places like Solla Sollew”. And you can ask other students, it happens all the time. It makes us laugh hysterically. So I think it some kind of a gag for most (name of the company) students.

R: Did you say it to the guy?

K: Yes, yes. And of course, he doesn’t understand And actually in Share and Share Alike we had phrases. Maybe I won’t remember them for now. We have some phrases that we met in Broadway Babies, Share and Share Alike and them in Seussical. If we hear the first part of the line from someone ninety nice per cent may then say the rest of it.

R: These are all my questions. Do you have anything else to add to what you’ve said in terms of acting and usefulness of drama for language learning?

K: What about the acting… I think now it’s the time that many actors of (name of the company). I mean the advanced ones the director is waking up in them. Now we think we’re so cool. Sometimes when I know here we have a mistake in blocking. Or we here we have something to change. And now I understand that When you came, I was afraid that “Oh, my god! Now he will tell me what to do, which side to move, what kinda shape to open my mouth”. And you said: “No, improvise! You can do whatever you want”. And then just tiny little changes. And I was thinking: “Oh, my god! It’s like communication between actors and directors”. And now… hm… (struggles for the right word and then asks in Russian) “sravnivaya”?

R: Comparing.
K: And now comparing working on *Share and Share Alike* and on *Seussical*, I see that before we had that feeling.

*R: Right, right. When everybody was contributing...

K: It was wonderful. Now I’m happy before the class, during and after. ‘cause before it was sometimes frustrating for us. I don’t mean that we don’t want to do it that way and the director wants to do it the other way. I mean the atmosphere. And now it’s so constructive, so creative, so fun. We are having fun here. We are working and having fun.

*R: Thank you so much!"
Appendix I
Kate’s Response to the Video Episodes

A. Please watch your Introduction in Character you did on the very first day of our rehearsals.

1. How do you feel about your intonation? Does it sound Russian or English to you? Is there a moment when it becomes very Russian?

In general it sounds to me quite all right, except of the last phrase. The intonation is very Russian.

3. Your introduction was relatively short (compared to others). You also chose to use very simple language in your introduction. Why did you decide to keep it short and simple?

Actually I wasn’t ready and was really nervous – as always… But anyway, the main trick was in the sudden acrobatic movement, cause the words weren’t enough to express my feelings of the character. And again I dislike the last phrase – it sounds stupid, as if I have elementary English level!

B. Please watch the first individual rehearsal with the Cat.

How do you feel about your performance here? Your intonation doesn’t change much while you’re trying different versions of your initial line? Do you agree with that? If yes, why do you think is this is happening?

Yes, agree. As an actor I’m a bit slow in getting in the role… Usually it’s all bad for some time, but then happens a sudden switch, when I finally understand the character. And it becomes better and better, as I start to feel comfortable saying the lines, I start to THINK them truly. On the video I look like Russian teacher at school, or a stupid girl with a permanent smile in cheap commercial. Not the Cat, not the MC at all.
Appendix J
Transcribing Conventions for the Videotaped Episodes

(. ) a very brief pause, less than a second

(0.1) a one second pause

\Falling tone

\Rising tone

\Level tone

\ narrow range fall (typical of the Russian language)

\ narrow range rise (typical of the Russian language)

**House** stressed word

**mu:ch** elongation of a vowel

( ) incomprehensible stretch

A: audience

K: Kate

L: Linda

R: researcher

/\wik/ (as in *week* or *weak*): non-standard pronunciation

**giggles** verbal and non-verbal interface of the conversation as hear on the audio tape

( ) unintelligible piece of conversation

( **word** ) Parenthesized words are possible hearings
= no gap between the two lines.