

ON SOME DRAMA TECHNIQUES FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION IN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The article focuses on the educational purpose of foreign language teaching in a culturally diverse world and it aims at finding out how to teach a foreign language from an intercultural perspective. The article describes how language teachers may provide students with insights into the target society. The paper suggests several effective drama techniques in EFL classroom to develop intercultural competence.

Keywords: culture, culture shock, intercultural communication, intercultural communication barriers, intercultural education, role-play activities, real-life situations, stereotype, prejudice

Rezumat

Articolul pune accent pe scopul educativ al predării limbilor străine într-o lume cultural diversă și urmează scopul de a găsi soluții efective de a preda o limbă străină din perspectivă interculturală. Articolul descrie modul în care profesorii de limbi străine pot utiliza tehnicile dramatice care stimulează exprimarea orală prin intermediul unor schimburi verbale reale. Lucrarea propune câteva tehnici dramatice eficiente pentru dezvoltarea competenței interculturale la orele de limba engleză.

Cuvinte-cheie: cultura, șocul cultural, comunicarea interculturală, bariere ale comunicării interculturale, educația interculturală, joc pe rol, situații reale, stereotipuri, prejudecăți

Introduction

"Intolerances breed each other. One side does not accept its minority status, the other side is not satisfied with its majority status, and it wants complete domination. Both sides madly fear each other. Both sides want an illusionary purification. The common denominator of such positions is the primitive belief that those like us are inherently good, and those like them are inherently bad. Nothing can be built in this way. Mutual understanding and acceptance must prevail peacefully" (M. Mudure, *Coveting Multiculturalism*).

In a recent issue of IIE Networker, published by the Institute of International Education, D. Deardorff (see Deardorff) offers advice on how to make our lives and those of others as successful and enriching as possible. In her research, Deardorff highlighted the idea that if teachers and professors are interculturally competent, they can help their students to develop their own competence in this realm and facilitate students' global

preparedness, mentioning that such professors should understand the complexity of intercultural competence; they can teach them from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and provide feedback to students in their intercultural journeys.

The author also mentioned that to form interculturally competent students, we, the teachers, need to be mindful of intercultural knowledge and awareness, intercultural skills and attitudes. Deardorff considers that that the components of intercultural competence develop by degree, and having components at *the lower levels* of competency enhances the upper levels. From her point of view, the elements at the lower levels of competency include: requisite attitudes (respect, openness, and curiosity), knowledge and comprehension (cultural self-awareness, deep understanding of culture, and sociolinguistic awareness), and skills (listening, analysing, etc.). The elements at *the upper levels* of competency include internal and external outcomes. Internal outcomes involve an "...internal shift in one's frame of reference," whereas external outcomes "behaving and communicating appropriately and effectively in intercultural situations" (Deardorff, 2004, p. 196).

There is a whole range of role-play activities that can enhance the intercultural competence of our language students: from the simple to the complex, from the structured to the unstructured; some role-play activities consist of socio-dramas, sketches; others stick to story dramatization, mock interviews, business meetings and even debates. Working on the topic of our research in developing intercultural competence by dramatizing real-life situations in EFL classroom we apply to non-academic thesis "Education Pack" (published by *European Youth Center* in 1995) where we have found new ideas and activities that can be adopted and used in EFL classrooms. Its theoretical and practical parts provide not only a general overview of the current situation in the European countries, but argue to introduce intercultural education in educational language programmers. The activities suggested by the authors are very adaptable to the current situation which exists in a specific country, region or town on issues of equality, racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and intolerance.

Besides the linguistic specificities, the cultural and social differences of every group of language students, we, the teachers, can adapt the ideas in this pack to our own real-life situations. The success of the educational approach relies on the use of the students' own experiences, feelings, attitudes, skills and knowledge during dramatising suggested situations and finding solutions. The suggested activity should have such a step as "*discussion*" that we consider central to the educational process; after the activity we have to make a *debriefing* and an *evaluation*. Evaluation and reviewing are essential parts in the learning process because students have to talk over what they have learnt and how it relates to their own lives, their

community and the wider world. We can also use body language, drawings, sculpting etc.

The factors that contribute to the barriers of intercultural competence in FL learning are *culture shock*, *stereotypes* and *prejudices*, and *intolerance*.

Culture shock is the difficulty people have adjusting to a new culture that differs markedly from their own. Living in a new culture can cause strong emotions or feelings. According to C. Dodd, culture shock refers to "the transition period and the accompanying feelings of stress and anxiety a person experiences during the early period upon entering a new culture" (Dodd, 1995, p. 211). Many students try to apply for different exchange programs nowadays such as *FLEX*, *ERASMUS MONDUS*, *DAAD*, *ERASMUS PLUS* etc. If they are lucky they can continue their studies abroad in a foreign country. The reality can sometimes provoke "a cultural shock". Fear of the foreign can result in two different and contradictory reactions: *xenophobia* (the aversion to persons who represent the foreign) and *exoticism* (love and adoration of the foreign). The new culture is strange to us, as a rule. We may feel happy, then sad. We may feel excited, then homesick, confused or afraid.

The main reason of a culture shock is the difference between cultures. Every culture has a set of symbols and images, as well as behaviours by which we can automatically act in different situations. When we are in a new culture, a familiar attitude control system becomes inadequate because it is based on quite different views of the world, other norms and values, stereotypes of behaviour and perception. Normally, being in our own culture, one does not realize that there is the hidden part of the "cultural iceberg." We are aware of the existence of this hidden system that controls our behaviour and norms; and values only when we come in contact with a different culture. The result of this process is a psychological and often a physical discomfort, i.e. *cultural shock*. Some scholars (Oberg, Adler, Bennet, etc.) focus on the general symptoms of experiencing this phenomenon: *feelings of helplessness, irritability, fear of being cheated or injured, desire of home and friends, psychological stress reaction, anxiety, frustration, loneliness, defensive communication*.

How can we prepare our students to merge successfully in other cultures? The university course of "Intercultural communication" was elaborated for the students with double speciality (English-German, English-French, English-Spanish, English-Romanian) and is designed to help students understand how to communicate with culturally diverse people, to examine own cultural identities and students' interactions with others during intercultural incidents in real life situations. At the end of this course the students will be able to identify intercultural communication processes, to analyze intercultural communication in a variety of contexts, to compare the role of historical, political, and religious factors in creating cultural stereotypes, perceptions, fears, desires, and misunderstandings between groups and to demonstrate effective intercultural communication skills. At

our laboratory lessons we used different drama and role-play activities to fulfill our aims.

Drama activities for EFL classroom

Activity 1

The first activity that we suggest is “Dreams” (adapted from Education Pack, 1995) and it should generate solidarity and empathy and to create a positive atmosphere in the group, encourage co-operation and get to know each other better. In small groups of 5-6 persons, the students should spend the first five minutes reflecting on their own, how they would like things to be the future - in terms of family, job, hobbies, housing, personal development, civil rights, etc. Then we ask the students to share their dreams and aspirations saying what they are giving reasons. They should write down, or preferably draw, any common features on a flip chart (e.g. *having a job, travelling, having children, their own house, etc.*). Then we ask each group to present their drawings or conclusions to the rest of the groups in the classroom. In the part of *debriefing* and *evaluation* the teacher asks students to share the feelings they experienced while doing this activity and then to say what they enjoyed about the exercise using the following questions :

Was there anything that surprised you ?

Do you think that everybody should have the right to pursue his/her own aspirations ?

Do you feel that some people may have more chances than others?

How can you support each other in practical ways to overcome the barriers and make your dreams come true ?

This activity can be a good stimulus to the group and to individuals providing they manage to be specific about their dreams and to identify practical things which they can do together.

Activity 2

In order to break down intercultural communication barriers and to encourage students to express their opinion, to challenge students' views and opinions on xenophobia and intolerance, the teacher can use the activity “Please stand up if/ or Make a step forward if...”. The teacher reads out statements and then those participants who agree with the statement should move or stand up. The teacher should draw out the links with everyday reality and the students should explain to others when they have experienced the situation described in the statement. The teacher can ask two or three students to dramatise the situation on their choice. The following statements can be used in the discussion:

Please stand up silently if...:

You were ever criticized because of your clothes or appearance;

You have ever heard people say put-downs or jokes about women, people of colour, people of various religions, and people with disabilities;

You've spread rumors or gossiped about someone else;
 You or someone you know was physically or emotionally hurt and you were too uncomfortable or afraid to say something;
 You have ever felt uncomfortable in a situation because you were the only member of your ethnic group;
 You were ever forced to fight or otherwise defend yourself against another student;
 Your ancestors were forced to leave their home and move somewhere else.

Evaluation and debriefing can be based on the following questions:

- How did you feel during the exercise ?
- Are there any comparisons between what people did and said during this exercise and reality ?
- Are the statements valid ?
- Was the exercise useful ?

Activity 3

To explore the variety of groups to which we belong to and to explore our attitudes to people in these groups, we can use the activity "Find a monster" in EFL classroom. The students choose two group-mates to be the monsters. The teacher asks one half of the group to go to the top of the room and the other half to go to the bottom. The monsters stand in the middle. The teacher reads out the first set of groups from the list below, for example *vegetarian/meat-eater*. Students belonging to the first group in the set (*vegetarian*) should go to the top of the room and participants belonging to the second group in the set (*meat-eaters*) should go to the bottom of the room. Students have to go to one end or the other. As they change places the each monster catches someone. Those caught become the new monsters and the old monster goes to whichever side they belong to. The teacher asks the groups to call out any feelings they have towards the other group. Repeat for each of the sets of groups. Some participants may find the comments made by others regarding particular groups upsetting.

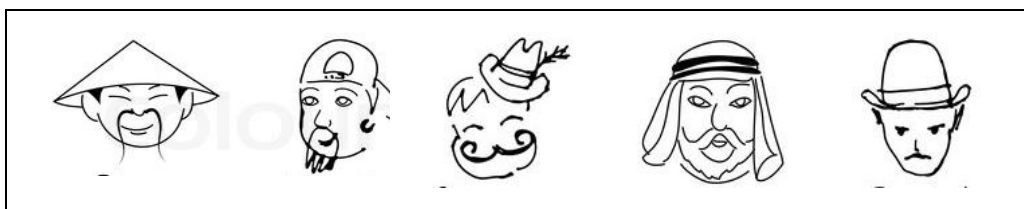
Groups
 vegetarian/meat-eater
 sports fan/not into sport
 Chinese food lover/Chinese food hater
 cat lover/cat hater
 live in rural area/live in city
 smoker/non-smoker

Ensure that debriefing after the activity provides an opportunity for these participants to share any reactions they have to these comments and that it addresses any anger or frustration that the game may provoke. We suggest

the following questions for debriefing - *Which of the groups are you pleased to be in? Are there any groups you are not pleased to be in? Did you like/ dislike any of the comments you heard? Were there any sets of groups that you didn't feel happy being on one side or another?*

Activity 4

Learning from the media and communicating with people of some European countries, we pick up a lot of stereotypes about other nations. In every country there are plenty of stereotypes about residents, some may be true but most of them are untrue and very wrongful. For instance, the most common image people have of a typical Englishman is a man wearing a bowler hat, a pin striped suit, a newspaper under the arm and carrying a long unopened umbrella. To discuss culture and have students deconstruct their own culture, to practise social English and small talk, to give students a practice in role playing and reduce the phenomenon of "culture shock" we suggest the following activity called "Stereotype Hats". We ask the students to take a hat (from some hats prepared beforehand of different cultures):



Then we ask them to read what is written and drawn on the hat (it can be written the name of a culture "Russian" or "French", or "Indian" etc.). Then we ask the students not tell the other role players what is written on the hat and to make up their speech (include customs, traditions, speech habits, national food etc) in 5-6 sentences while the others should guess what country you are from. In the *debriefing* part, we can ask the students: *How does a person in the hat feel? Where did stereotypes start? Why do people hold the stereotypes? How does this stereotype affect people who share a cultural background?*

A *stereotype* is an exaggerated belief, image or distorted truth about a person or group of people (Kottak & Kozaitis, 2003). They are based on images in mass, media, or reputations that are passed on by parents, peers and many other members of society. Most of stereotypes are negative and are aimed at classifying people based on generalizations (e.g. *All white Americans are obese, lazy, and dim-witted*) but they also can be positive (eg. *All Asians are good at maths*). A *prejudice* is an opinion, prejudgment or attitude about a group or its individual members. It is an unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason. It is an unfavorable opinion formed against a person or group based on a

stereotype. The prejudgment may be based on an *emotional experience* people have had with a similar person, a sort of their own personal stereotype (e.g. *Elderly people are frail and boring. All gypsies are thieves*). When we are prejudiced, we violate three standards: *reason, justice, and tolerance*. We are unreasonable if we judge others negatively without evidence or in spite of positive evidence or use stereotypes without allowing for individual differences. We are intolerant if we reject or dislike people because they are different, e.g. of a different religion, different socioeconomic status, or have a different set of values.

Activity 5

The activity "Nationalities and their stereotypes" is adapted from G. Counihan (Counihan, 1998) and aims at examining the stereotypes held by students in the class; to explore how and why they originated; to recognize that they are often invalid and lead to misunderstanding. The teacher asks the students individually and spontaneously to write down on a piece of paper the typical characteristics of a set of nationalities. (We have to keep in mind that the exercise is a matter of personal opinion). For example, *The French are proud ...; The Irish are talkative ...; The Italians are loud ...; The Spanish are passionate ...; The Dutch ...; The Germans ...; The Swiss ...; The Japanese ...; The Indians are ...* etc. Then the teacher gets them to reveal their choices and see how many students got similar descriptions. Then they together can debate the correctness or the truth of the choices. Then the teacher shows them a list of the stereotypical characteristics of a "typical Englishman". Then the students write the corresponding stereotypes alongside the English ones under the heading "You" about themselves (For example, *in the Basque country the typical person would wear bright clothing, and does not have a garden; they have plants instead*). Then all the students compare the "facts":

	<i>English</i>	<i>Basque</i>	<i>You</i>
<i>Works</i>	In a bank	Factory	
<i>Lives</i>	In a house	In a flat	
<i>Hobby</i>	Gardening	Watch TV, hill-walking	
<i>Carries</i>	An umbrella	-	
<i>Drinks</i>	Tea	Coffee	
<i>Wears</i>	Dark suit/clothes and a bowler hat	Colourful	
<i>Behaviour/Emotions</i>	Reserved/Cold	Gregarious/Can be serious	

Activity 6

Based on the definition of tolerance and the description of the up-to-day situation in our society, we can identify "intolerance" as the quality of

personality, characterized by negative and hostile attitude to the characteristics of the culture of a social group in general or to individual members of these groups. We can say that intolerance is a lack of respect for practices or beliefs other than one's own. It can even mean that people are excluded or rejected because of their religious beliefs, or even their clothes and hairstyle. The role-activity "In our block" (adapted from "Educational Pack", 1995) tries to analyse conflicts between people from different cultures and the solutions of how these conflicts can be solved in a positive way. This activity analyses the situation of conflict and the way students deal with it, depending on the origin of their social and cultural background. The students should role-play a situation that could happen in anyone's daily life. The teacher reads or gives everyone the following text:

In our block

There is an apartment block near where you live. One of the apartments is rented to a group of foreign students who often have visitors from home staying and who also frequently organise parties. Some neighbours, especially those living in the apartments closest to the students, are annoyed and complain that the students and their friends make lots of noise, don't let them sleep and don't take care of the building. The neighbours have called a meeting to try to solve this problem.

The teacher gives the personal cards with roles to the students:

Young foreigner

You speak and understand the language of the host country very well but do not understand why your neighbours are upset. In your opinion, both you and your student friends behave perfectly normally. You will not leave the apartment under any circumstance.

Leader of the residents committee

Your apartment is far away from the one the foreign students live in. Personally they cause you no bother. But you do not like foreigners and you don't want them living in your building.

Young woman (25-30 years old)

You live alone and are afraid of the young students because they seem very strange and different from you.

Young person

You are also a student. You do not have any clear opinion about the problem but you would like to move into the apartment where the foreign students live.

Refugee

You are also a foreigner, although from a different country than the students. You and your family do not have much to do with other people in the block. You have never had any problems with anyone despite the fact that you feel rather isolated.

Elderly couple (this role should be played by two people)

You are both aware of the problems that force many people to leave their home country and try another life elsewhere. You support an organisation which provides aid to developing countries.

Unemployed neighbour

You strongly disagree with policies that allow foreigners to come to live and work in your country. You think that foreigners should only be allowed in as tourists.

The owner of the building

The young foreigners always paid their rent punctually and you don't want to lose

the income from that apartment. But you don't like foreign people very much and you see this conflict as a possible opportunity to raise the rent for the foreign students. On the other hand, you also have the possibility of renting them another apartment on the outskirts of town.

Some students will be volunteers and will play the roles of the neighbours and other will act as observers. The teacher shares out the role cards between the volunteers and gives each observer a copy of the "Observers notes". The players have to come up with a solution to the problem then start the role-play. The observers should note if the players respect each other's turn to speak or they should note if anyone tries to take a lead and to facilitate the meeting; what kinds of arguments players used; they should note if there were any change in the attitude and behaviour of the players after they received the "clues for finding a solution".

Debriefing and evaluation can be done in the following way - the actors (volunteers) and observers get together in a large group for discussion, which should be divided into two parts: talking about what happened in the role-play and answering questions for actors and for the observers.

Questions to the actors:

1. How did you (the actors) feel about it?
2. Was it difficult to get into the role you were given?
3. What did you find hardest and what easiest in this task?
4. Was it easier to find arguments for or against the students?
5. Was the problem resolved and was everyone happy with the outcome?

Questions to the observers:

1. What did you (the observers) record and what were your impressions of what happened during the role-play?
2. Does anyone try to take a lead and to facilitate the meeting?
3. What kinds of arguments did players use?

Questions to everybody:

1. Did the role-play reflect any reality in daily life?
2. What were the similarities and what were the differences?
3. Did anything seem to be exaggerated?
4. Which of the characters most faithfully reflected common attitudes in our society?
5. When we face a conflict involving people from different cultural backgrounds do we look for a solution that may satisfy everybody, or do we rather try to impose our point of view and neglect those who think or feel differently from ourselves?
6. To what extent is the conflict actually related to differences in culture rather than to other things such as personal or economic interests?

7. Has anyone any experience of this sort of conflict? What were the circumstances?

Finding solutions to the suggested situation and making decisions are difficult processes because students need to have good communication language skills, be sensitive to the needs of others and show imagination and trust so that they can explore the issues honestly. It is easier when students argue about their interests and try to find some common ground or consensus for mutual gain so that each person has some of their needs met and a stake in the outcome.

Activity 7

As tales and fables are considered the main educational tools with a great intercultural power (L. Black, S. Krashen, J. Zipes) they can be used to build up the learners' intercultural awareness/competence. Once an eminent Italian author of children's literature Gianni Rodari said that "it is possible to enter the house through the front door, but entering through the window is more fun" [1] and we consider that this idea sums up the effects of using tales and fables in intercultural EFL classroom, which can teach students to remember morals, values and beliefs and create a more stimulating approach to intercultural learning. Tales are considered one of the most interesting and revealing expressions of culture. Anchored in history, verbally transmitted, they are also the carriers of the main values of a culture and values for life - cooperation, diversity, freedom, happiness, hope, honesty, humility, love, peace, respect, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance and unity. Thus, imagery has the power to simultaneously cross cultures and join peoples revealing their identities. Intercultural EFL learning by dramatising tales or fables gives students a chance not only to enrich vocabulary, but also to enrich their knowledge understanding better the socio-cultural reality of the world. The famous scholar E. T. Hall (Hall, 1996) states that the techniques and content of folktales "involve a study of human culture and encompasses universal themes of tradition, celebration, wisdom, creation, aesthetic appreciation, and community" (p. 12).

Dramatisation of international fairy tales or fables provides different approaches and learning styles and reinforces material delivered in other formats. The activity we suggest next is called "The Strawberry" (Țaulean, 2012, p. 127). It is a "Zen Tale" from Japan (attributed to Buddha) and deals with appreciating the moment in life. The task for students can be the following - to read the Japanese tale and say why the strawberry was so sweet for the man.

The Strawberry

There was once a man who was being chased by a ferocious tiger across a field. At the edge of the field there was a cliff. In order to escape the jaws of the tiger, the man caught hold of a vine and swung himself over the edge of the cliff. Dangling down, he saw, to his dismay, there were more tigers on the ground below him! And, furthermore, two little mice were gnawing on

the vine to which he clung. He knew that at any moment he would fall to certain death. That's when he noticed a wild strawberry growing on the cliff wall. Clutching the vine with one hand, he plucked the strawberry with the other and put it in his mouth. He never before realized how sweet a strawberry could taste.

Questions for debriefing can be the following:

1. Whom was the man chased by?
2. What was at the edge of the field?
3. What did the man do in order to escape?
4. Were there more or less tigers on the ground?
5. Who was gnawing on the vine?
6. What was growing on the cliff wall?
7. What did the man do with the strawberry?
8. Do we always appreciate the things we have?
9. Do you appreciate the help your parents give you?

Working with another story "The blind wild boar" (This tale comes from Tigrea, Ethiopia, Africa; adapted from *Education Pack*, 1995), we can make our students explore the perceptions (and stereotypes) they may have about different cultures. The aims of the activity are to arouse curiosity about tales from other cultures and peoples, challenge stereotypes and prejudice about other cultures' values, puzzle participants and introduce a good atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher hands each student a copy of the tale and gives them 15 or 20 minutes to read it. The teacher asks each student to try to guess where the tale comes from.

The blind wild boar

Once upon a time there was a hunter who went out into the bush with his rifle. There, he caught sight of two wild boars walking one behind the other. The hunter took aim and shot at the second boar but something that astonished him happened: The leader ran away, while the other one did not seem to know what to do. It was left standing with something that looked like a dry twig in its mouth.

The hunter carefully approached, because he thought the wild boar would attack him. He soon noticed that it stood where it had stopped, without following his friend. Curious, the hunter came closer to have a better look. Then he saw, that what had looked like a dry twig, was the tail of the wild boar that had run away. Now the hunter understood that the wild boar was blind, and that his bullet had hit the leader's tail and had cut it off. He caught the blind wild boar and took it home and all the while it still carried the cut off tail in its mouth.

In his house, the hunter fed the wild boar and took care of it in the best way possible. It is funny. Even the animals show consideration for their fellow creatures. Should not we, people who have been gifted with intelligence, take care of our parents, siblings and friends who happen to be in need of help?

The activity works best if students are able to go beyond the strict practical circumstances (like the climate, or whether a certain animal exists in a given region) and look also into the values (or the morals) transmitted by the tale. In the part of *debriefing and evaluation* the teacher, working with tales or fables, should tell students to think about the main idea of the story, the main characters, the important events and the end of the story. Students should know the story and characters well enough to improvise action or a dialogue. The dramatisation can be recast with different students playing different parts each time it is played so that everyone has an opportunity to step into the roles. Many stories have characters and elements that can be played by several students so that all can participate in a story dramatisation. Stories with a clear story line, strong characters, repeated dialogue, and especially a character or element that many students can play at the same time, so that all students can be involved in story dramatisation, are ideal. Heinig [*apud* 17] suggests the following steps that lead to dramatizing a story: a) reading and discussing the story (while reading students note the setting, characters, and sequence of events or plot, as well as the most exciting parts, the climax, the way the story ended (i.e., the resolution), mood and theme, and important phrases and characteristic things characters say); b) making a story chart (the teacher can record students' ideas about each of these on chart paper for younger students and to model planning a story dramatization, and older students may do this independently in groups); c) making a story map (where students place the settings needed for the story); d) taking volunteers for the first cast (all students can be engaged in each dramatization by using stories that have a type of character that can be played by many students); e) playing the scene (a narrator can be added to read parts of the story); f) debriefing and discussing.

Activity 8

The next activity is based on Kit's ideas (Kit, 2001) and aims at exploring how our perceptions of minority groups affect our behaviour towards them and at examining how it impacts young people's individual identities. The teacher divides students into six groups and gives each group one set of role cards and ensures that each person in the group has a card. Students have five minutes to get into their role and explain their role to others in their group. The groups can be as minority/majority ethnic group, traveler group, group with disabilities, refugee group etc.

Here are sample role-cards:

Enny

I am fifteen and have been deaf since birth. I am fluent in sign language. I am active in my local youth club and enjoy reading and watching videos.

Mirabella

I came to Ireland four years ago. I'd like to make friends my own age, but Irish people aren't very friendly. At home we speak Romanian. I don't see myself staying in Ireland for too long. My English is not so good so I have to be put in a lower class

at school.

Sally

I was born in Galway and I'm in the fourth year at school. I want to be an engineer. I like all outdoor pursuits, particularly water sports. In my youth group we go on hikes and do canoeing. My mother is from Sierra Leone and I am black.

The teacher tells three groups that they are the hosts and the other three groups that they are the visitors and pair up the groups. Then the teacher gives the groups five minutes more to prepare for the visits and then asks them to think about the group they are going to meet, where the meeting will take place and whether the group they are going to meet will have any special needs. Later the teacher asks the groups to act out the visits, and then asks each group to discuss what happened on the visit, how they were treated by the other group, how they responded to that treatment and how it made them feel. At part of *debriefing* the teacher brings all the groups together and asks the participants to share their experience:

Does this happen in real life?

Is it particular only to Ireland/or does it happen elsewhere in the world?

How are our actions affected by these attitudes?

What effect does it have on the people we meet?

Where do we learn these attitudes?

Conclusions

Generally speaking, it is a moral and ethical question to us, language teachers, to use the opportunities for intercultural education in teaching English as a foreign language in high schools or another educational institution. We consider that cultural information should be presented in the form of role-play activities, creative dialogues, mini-plays, dramatizing real-life situations at the lessons. By all means, as drama is an appealing teaching strategy which promotes cooperation, collaboration, self-control and goal-oriented learning, as well as emotional intelligence skills, it bridges the gap between the classroom and real life situations by providing insights into how to overcome intercultural misunderstandings or other difficult situations. As shown in examples above, drama in the EFL classroom is ultimately indispensable because it gives students the chance to use their own personalities, to act in someone's role, to deal with problems and to find the right solution. In such a way, drama or drama techniques put language into context, and by giving students experience of success in real-life situations, they arm the learners with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom. Moreover, the activities suggested in this article keep students more interested and more motivated in EFL learning, create their positive attitudes towards people with a different cultural background, develop their intercultural awareness and competence, and their academic success - language four skills. At the same time, students need to be introduced to certain clues or background information about the culture of "others" to add them to their own cultural repertoire because only in this way language learners will develop sympathy and appreciation for diverse cultures.

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