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Title	Foreword
Authors	Küppers, Almut;Surkamp, Carola
Publication date	2010
Original Citation	Küppers, A. and Surkamp, C. (2010) 'Foreword', Scenario: A Journal of Performative Teaching, Learning, Research, IV(1), pp. i-vii. https://doi.org/10.33178/scenario.4.1.0
Type of publication	Article (non peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	10.33178/scenario.4.1.0
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Download date	2026-10-30 20:55:28
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/12960



UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

ISSN 1649-8526
Scenario
Language • Culture • Literature
Volume 2010 · Issue 1
http://scenario.ucc.ie

Foreword

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Dear Scenario readers,

We would like to thank the editors Susanne Even and Manfred Schewe for the opportunity to present in this seventh issue of SCENARIO the results of our workshop "drama pedagogy in the foreign language classroom" which was held at the 23rd Conference of the German Society for Foreign Language Research (www.dgff.de) in Leipzig/ Germany from September 30th-October 3rd 2009. Three of the articles in this edition are the written versions of contributions to this workshop (cf. below, Wedel, Haack, Cieślak); they are complemented by a programmatic piece by Wolfgang Hallet as well as by teaching suggestions on the topic of 'Life with the Wall' by Steffi Retzlaff.

The rubric *Texts around Theatre* features the text "An Actor" by the Swiss author Robert Walser (1878-1956).

Drama pedagogy has come to be a widely recognized approach in the field of foreign language teaching – the publishing of SCENARIO being part of this development. While drama pedagogy has already been established as an essential method in the teaching of German as a foreign language, it now appears to be gaining rapidly in interest in the field of teaching English in Germany as well. It paves the way for new influences from the stage as well as from the sciences of art or theatre which bear great potential for the development of new innovative concepts of teaching and learning. In accordance with established principles of foreign language teaching such as student-activating, action-oriented approaches, task-based learning, cooperative methods and, above all, inter-/transcultural learning, drama pedagogy embraces a holistic understanding of the individual as well as the personality development of foreign language learners (as intercultural speakers). Even more than the other approaches, it includes the performative dimension of learning a (foreign) language, such as movement, physical aspects and interaction, which add to the special potential drama pedagogy represents for the development of intercultural competences.

This edition therefore opens with the article on 'Performative competence and foreign language teaching' by Wolfgang Hallet (University of Gießen). Wolfgang Hallet discusses a term which has been playing an important role in various disciplines for quite a while, but which has not yet been conceptualized systematically for that of foreign language teaching. The

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https://doi.org/10.33178/scenario.4.1.0

concept of 'performative competence' is being thoroughly examined from different perspectives the outcome of which is a comprehensive definition which we invite the readers of SCENARIO to discuss.

Next, Heike Wedel (Berlin) puts 'Everything upside down' looking at the subject 'Darstellendes Spiel' and its contribution to intercultural learning. She observes that while 'Darstellendes Spiel' has been an established subject in the curriculum of German schools for a long time, it has not yet been taught as a bilingual subject. Differentiating from the usual way of using drama conventions and elements from theatre in language classes in order to promote linguistic and inter- / transcultural competences, Wedel points to the possibilities of 'Darstellendes Spiel' being taught as a bilingual subject to develop skills in both the foreign language as well as in the aesthetics of the theatre. Wedel refers to EFL classes in Germany as an example to map her idea of a bilingual drama class.

In the third article on ‚Artists of improvisational performance' Adrian Haack (Göttingen) takes a clear stance by addressing the interesting question what competences are required of future teachers if drama pedagogy is taken seriously as an approach in foreign language teaching. Furthermore, he demands performative elements to be included into teacher trainings at university, so that student teachers can develop an understanding of teaching as an art.

Steffi Retzlaff (Ottawa) proposes a drama-pedagogical approach to 'life with the wall', a topic which was of special interest in 2009, twenty years after the fall of the Berlin wall. The author introduces a teaching unit she taught based on *Schießbefehl* (approx. transl. 'The order to shoot') by Reiner Kunze with the aim of enabling the students of a language course to experience with all their senses a topic which may seem inaccessible at first and which is not part of their own reality.

In the last contribution, Renata Cieślak (Lodz / Polen) leads the way 'From the text to the image' by looking at an everyday aspect of a language teacher: working with the textbook. Based on drama pedagogy she develops a series of teaching suggestions to go with the regular textbook work of teaching German as a foreign language. She argues that an understanding of the text does not necessarily have to be initiated by the pictures in the textbook, but that instead, it can take the other way around, text to image, in order to put more emphasis on the capacity for imagination of the students.

As a conclusion, we would like to sketch here the results of the workshop 'drama pedagogy' in Leipzig (for details see http://www.uni-leipzig.de/dgff2009/programm/ag9.html). In animating, critical and constructive discussions the participants of the workshop formulated the following questions and whishes with regard to drama pedagogy and foreign language teaching:

- (More) programs of further education are needed that do not only use drama methods but also focus on drama and theatre pedagogy. Such qualifications seem even more necessary when considering the fact that some of the recently published textbooks suggest small-scale drama

conventions (such as freeze frames, hot seat etc.) as the means to activate the students and to liven up the language class. The potential of such methods, however, could be wasted or even counterproductive if the teacher does not put it into a reflected context.

- It is of equal importance to develop drama-pedagogical concepts for teacher training courses at universities. If future language teachers are supposed to apply drama methods, they have to have the opportunity to be educated accordingly – which includes trying out these methods in practice and to evaluate them.

- A special drama-pedagogical textbook or an introduction to language teaching with such a focus would be especially desirable.

- The participants of the workshop agreed that drama-pedagogy – in particular in the foreign language class – can have long-lasting effects and can provide both students and teachers with a feeling of empowerment. If, in the context of a drama in education oriented foreign language class, we understand (foreign language) research and art as complementing each other, we have yet to find the means and instruments of adequately researching and evaluating the complex learning processes of drama pedagogy (or even just aspects of it, like the role of the teacher, developing intercultural competence and language acquisition).

It will be interesting to see what impulses can be gained from drama pedagogy in the future, also regarding the current discussion about transcultural learning or about (performative) teaching competences and how to qualify for them. The participants of the workshop expressed the wish to maintain a dialogue across the disciplines and to keep up a network to go into more detail of some of the aspects. We hope that this edition of SCENARIO may contribute to the discussion and we now wish you an inspiring reading.

The Guest Editors
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Frankfurt/Göttingen, July 5, 2010