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Presenting as Performance: Painless Practices for Presentation in Foreign Languages

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Abstract

Presenting is a complex task for language learners. It requires them to acquire and read material, extract main points and express them in their own words in the target language, listen to other presenters and react appropriately with good questions and comments – and, of course, speak out loud while presenting. Language learners activate all these skills on a daily basis in the language classroom. However, speaking *out loud in front of a group* about one specific topic for an extended period of time is usually not part of the daily routine and therefore demands special attention, care, and action. This article models a sequence for preparing, planning, practicing, delivering, and evaluating presentations and briefly discusses the role of visual slides, but focuses on speaking exercises and explains how they strengthen the presenters both as language learners and as performers. Two theater theories form the backbone to these exercises: Konstantin Stanislavski's "system", and Keith Johnstone's improvisation theater concept of status. The article describes each step of a practice sequence, including warm-up exercises, prompts for constructive peer feedback, and rubrics for (self-)evaluation, and reflects on the overall benefits of their inclusion in the language classroom.

In life you know how to walk and speak and sit and look but in the theatre you lose this ability, and say to yourself, when you feel the closeness of the crowd, "What are they staring at me for?" You have to be taught everything from scratch – onstage and in front of people. Konstantin Stanislavski: An Actor's Work

1 Presentation as Performance

We all know how painful presentations can be – for both the presenters and the audiences: Presenters are nervous, over-prepared with too many visually challenging PowerPoint slides or dizzying Prezi shows, yet often under-prepared to speak out self-confidently, loud and clear enough to a wider audience that cannot decide whether to focus on the presenter or on the slides. Additionally, the speakers have to meet not only the listeners' language levels and their entertainment expectations, but also fulfil the instructor's demands, who is most certain to grade the whole feat.

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How do language learning presenters manage to juggle all these aspects of a presentation without giving in to the urge to drop everything and just run away?

What is there to do for language instructors to make giving presentations enjoyable? How can they enable learners to deliver not only fact-based and grammatically correct, but also passionate and professional presentations? This article offers various practices and exercises on how to approach the complex task of preparing, practicing, delivering, and evaluating presentations in seven steps. The given examples stem from the deduction of certain principles of the Russian actor Konstantin Stanislavski's "system" as well as from the author's experience and current practice of short presentations of three to five minutes' length at the mid intermediate language learning level CERF for learners of German (Council of Europe: 60). However, the suggested practice exercises can be used individually, mixed, matched, or repeatedly according to language level, learner environment, and class size; they can be altered to specific needs, and added on to.

I deduct my approach from Keith Johnstone's concept of high and low status which he developed for improvisation and theater sports in *Improvisation and the Theatre*, and from aspects of Konstantin Stanislavski's "system" which demands from actors to re-naturalize their whole performing being when in front of an audience as opposed to the playacting that inexperienced actors and presenters often resort to when feeling insecure. His diaries describe how he himself went through his fears and difficulties of performing and to becoming the free and seemingly authentically acting person on stage. Stanislavski, by dint of concentration, seeks to instill a sense of heightened awareness into the performers, to reduce stage fright by focusing on the task, its importance and relevance not only for the audience but even more so for the performers themselves. My exercises for painless presentation practices are based on his "system" in as far as I seek to give learners their confidence (back) and impart the notion that *what they* present is relevant, noteworthy, and demands most of all practice and a great degree of authenticity that they can regain through the exercises described here as well as the awareness that presentation skills are not talent-based but trained, and that this training "does not happen in one day" (Stanislavski 2008: 612).

2 Topic

Presentation preparation should never start with an open computer, let alone with a PowerPoint slide. Rather, students should develop an offline idea (Roam 2008: 29, Reynolds 2008: 47) that is genuine, original, and authentically reflects the future presenters' approach to a topic, for only when genuinely interested in their topic can learners deliver good and engaging presentations. Thus, the learners should be the major drive in *deciding* on a topic, or, if the topic is determined by course contents, what the *focus* their presentation should be, and learners who approach their instructor with a concrete idea are at a clear

advantage as their intrinsic motivation for research is higher in comparison to that of those learners who need guidance in choosing one topic from a range their instructor might suggest. Yet even then do they have leeway in deciding on the topic's *focus*, and in any case, the instructor should ask all learners to "Bring one interesting detail" with their presentation. While learners tend to think that the *detail* is most relevant, it is in fact the choice of *what they deem most interesting*: it reveals more about the individual presenting learners' interests as they unearth anecdotes, fun facts, or give a new spin to a common or well-known subject. It ensures, in Stanislavski's terms, that the learners do not merely say some learned text by rote but by revealing facts in anecdotal, narrative style, incorporate the "given circumstances" (i.e. the fact that they do present in an educational setting into their "roles" as presenters and "start living them and then 'the truth of the passions' will arise of itself" (Stanislavski 2008: 54).

3 Research

Before announcing their presentation topic to both the instructor and the class (cf. 5.1), students should be given time to do some independent research with at least three resources beyond Wikipedia (and Wikipedia in different languages) for a three-minute talk with one single slide (cf. 6.1).

When learners produce the first draft of the corresponding (one-page) paper about their topic prior to giving their presentations, they have gathered information and re-phrased the topic in their own words in the foreign language. They have to read and think through the material, acquire the respective vocabulary, and condense the relevant information for their papers and presentations. Learners bring their papers to class, and, possibly after a group editing session, revise and submit their papers, which they soon thereafter receive back corrected from their instructor. They learn from each other, and they already inherently teach other learners in their editing group new facts and new vocabulary. This step assures learners to be on the right track for their presentations, they receive both informal and formal feedback from fellow learners and their instructors that both language and contents are comprehensible, and, in fact, worth presenting.

4 Reduction and Transfer

A seemingly minor yet utterly important step towards presentation readiness is the reduction and the transfer of the mass of gathered information to the most relevant keywords of the topic. Max von Blanckenburg and Adrian Haack's worksheet provide a most useful grid for the structure of a presentation that learners could use to prepare their talk at home (Blackenburg and Haack 2016: 35f.) In class, however, learners receive *one* palm-sized notecard. They extract *five* keywords, e.g. names, numbers, dates from their papers, and copy them to

one side of the notecard. This short exercise gives learners the opportunity to review the raw structure of their paper and talk. Additionally, the use of the notecard during the following practice step prevents learners from looking at the PowerPoint slides or reading directly from their papers while presenting (Reynolds 2010: 38).

5 Practice

So far, the learners have prepared the contents of their talk, acquired vocabulary for their topic, and checked their use of grammatical structures. Now is the time to transform the written word to spoken language that sounds naturally (as opposed to learned by rote), and to practice speaking out loud facing others, and this is where theater and improvisation come into play.

There are various ways to practice presentations. Often, both instructors and learners underestimate the importance of practice, whereas anyone who has been on stage in a thespian environment knows that no play works without practice, and even improvisation is based on repetition and a great amount of practical experience: Like all acquired skills, presenting, when regarded as a form of performance, requires practice, and the more meaningful and less monotonous the practice exercises are, the more natural and convincing the final presentations will become (Stanislavski 2010: 88). Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that the average number of times TED talk presenters practice before speaking onstage is 300 (!) times (Gallo 2015: 81). In comparison, asking learners to practice their presentations out loud three to seven times does not seem like such a huge commitment anymore. However, merely telling them to practice (out loud) at home hardly ever harvests any success as learners either do not have the time, the partner to speak to, or the experienced-based assurance that practice actually does make a difference. Thus, rehearsing several times *in class* offers all learners practice opportunities in a safe environment with fellow presenters (What happens in the classroom stays in the classroom!) and guided exercises with direct feedback from both instructor and fellow learners and time for reflection and repetition. It also transforms the classroom into a stage with, for the time being, the fourth wall being closed off (cf. Stanislavski 2008: 9ff).

5.1 Introducing the Topic to the Class

One student in class gets up from the chair, looks into at least three pairs of listeners' eyes, introduces himself or herself and the topic, and thanks the audience (e.g. *"Guten Tag, ich heiße Carson, und ich werde heute über Fußball in Deutschland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg sprechen. Vielen Dank"*). It is often useful that the instructor model the expected behavior to stress and reflect on the advantages of the presenters slowing down and waiting for everyone's attention before beginning the talks. This exercise teaches learners to take their time, own their space, speak slowly, make eye contact to establish a relationship

with their audience, in short, to set their stage through body language, and to employ appropriate terms in the target language that mark beginning and end of their presentation as opposed to the awkward *"Das ist alles! (That's all!)"*, which not only belittles themselves and their knowledge but also robs the audience of the opportunity to ask questions, since if that *"Is all"*, there is no need for the listeners to ask for additional information, clarification, or for further differentiation. Furthermore, the presenters do not indicate to the audience that it is time for a round of applause if they do not verbally declare the end of their talk. (This is also a good moment to teach learners of German about the students' habit in German universities rather to knock their knuckles on the desk than to applause, cf. Beiseler 2004). Presenters also show get a round of applause/knocking prior to presenting to get encouraged and warmed-up, like Viola Spolin proposes counting off for improvisation contests (Spolin 1986: 20).



Figure 1: Learners introducing their topic to the class

5.2 Informal Partner Talk

Learners sit in pairs and talk informally about their topics using nothing but their single notecard. They receive direct verbal and non-verbal feedback about unclear information, vocabulary, and mispronunciation, which at times they might find easier to accept from peers than from their instructor (Bo Wang & Shulin 2016). This first talk also gives learners an idea how long their talk will be and they can compare themselves to their partners' information and make adjustments where needed.



Figure 2: Two learners having an informal talk about their topics

5.3 Mini-Presentations

Learners present to a small group of listeners (e.g. from four to five learners in a class of 20 in the first round; to eight to ten learners in the second round of presentations) while *standing* in front of the small group. As several groups listen to these small-scale presentations at the same time, there still prevails a certain level of informality and privacy with a reduced level of ambient sound in the classroom. The repetition of this phase with seven to eight learners per group usually generates the best, most carefree, and most engaging presentation results as presenters perform confidently, knowing that half of the group has already heard their talk in the informal sessions, when they had the opportunity to experience how the audience responds to their language, vocabulary and pronunciation, their "interesting details," and anecdotes, and they can still make adjustments to their final presentations. Overall, this phase is marked by extreme concentration, like in a play's dress rehearsal. Nevertheless, it still exudes some informal atmosphere as learners feel unobserved by their instructor.

5.4 Status Awareness

Between this and the next step, learners hear about the fundamentals of *high status* and *low status*: According to Keith Johnstone, body language of high status suggests an open posture, with feet slightly outward, shoulders down, arms open, and an uplifted head. A person in high status appears both confident and accessible, not arrogant or superior. In body language of low status, on the



Figure 3: Three resp. eight learners listening to a presentation in their group, presenter standing

contrary, a person's posture features contracted muscles, a shy glance, limbs close to the body or hands even touching face and/or body, and a low voice (Johnstone 1987: 36ff). Low status exudes fear and discomfort, and even though presenters about to speak might not yet have said a word, the audience members will already have judged them and set their expectations (Wargo 2006).

It seems to help learners to see both states in exaggerated ways, e.g. the instructor can perform examples of high and low status presenters opening their talks. Better still is to ask learners to get on their feet and test high and low status themselves, e.g. through typical improvisation and theater warm-up greeting exercises in an assumed status (e.g. lowest status is 0, highest status is 5, learners choose a status, then add 2, then subtract 2, or have them find their natural status and add 4 for the presentation, etc., cf. Johnston 1987: 56). Beyond that, the instructor can ask learners if they can think of their own instructors, teachers, or professors in their respective high or low statuses and where they see themselves on the status spectrum. When learners recognize that status, like presenting, is not an inborn talent but a learned skill which they can acquire, they feel empowered to test it (and where else better than in a classroom, in a safe space!), for the best status is not necessarily the person with the highest status, but rather the one who can adopt their status according to situation, who can assume it at a specific height *on demand*. Status is fluid, and those who can direct its flow, who can raise and lower it according to current and immediate needs in conjunction with others, own not only their body language but also their status – and usually the situation as whole.

In her seminal talk *Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are*, Amy Cuddy (2012) calls high status by the name of power poses (e.g. stretching out arms and legs, standing tall, smiling). Her own research reaches the conclusion that doing power poses for various minutes shortly before a presentation renders the speaker more powerful and in control. It is a good idea to convey these concepts to the learners at least a day before their final presentations so they have the time and the opportunity to try out the status/poses, e.g. in the privacy of their homes or dorms.

5.5 Overall Evaluation Rubrics

Learners usually do not deliver their talk on the same day as the practice session described above but during the following session because they need time to plan changes and or to practice more. They also obtain rubrics at the end of the practice session so they learn what skills will be graded during the actual presentation.

I can …	not yet do this.	do this a little.	do that well.	do that very well.	do that and much more.
speak in complete sentences.					
use dependent and independent clauses.					
conjugate verbs correctly.					
use the case system correctly.					
avoid filler like „eem," „aaah".					
resume my talk if I lose the thread.					
recognize mistakes I made and correct them swiftly.					
use various sentence openers.					
apply appropriate vocabulary.					
avoid speaking English.					

Figure 4: Rubric for oral skills during presentation

Learners pre-evaluate where they reckon they are on the rubrics but do not share this information with their instructor until after their final presentations. Once they will have received their results, they have material to compare and, in a one-on-one meeting with their instructor, can discuss potential discrepancies

directly and examine individual strategies for improvement based on criteria that are transparent for learners and instructor (or might even have been developed together).

6 Slide and Appearance

6.1 The Slides

Only now that the presentation has been held informally and practiced repeatedly, do learners complete their PowerPoint slide and send it to their instructor for revision on the night before their final presentations. At this point, learners truly know what they want to say and do not have to stick to and rely on the slides but use them as narrative props. The instructor can correct potential spelling or grammar mistakes or ask students to reduce too wordy, messy, or cluttered slides. Then the instructor can align the slides in one single document and upload that to the institution's online board (e.g. Blackboard, Moodle, Sakai, etc.). This procedure not only saves class time but also seems to abbreviate the discussion of who is the next presenter as the prepared order prescribes who is next in a way that learners deem acceptable.

My learners may not have more than up to three images and three to five terms on their one single slide. That is all: No animations, no videos, and, most of all, no bullets, for bullets kill! This presentation minimalism prevents presenters from staring at the screen while talking, and audiences from reading instead of focusing on the presenter. With so few images at their disposal, learners choose their visual material wisely as they want their images to convey the most of meaning possible. They select words more carefully as well, usually dates that they would forget otherwise, or important keywords around which they are forming a narrative that is worth telling and that at the same time does not require learning the words by rote or reading from cue cards. They also leave enough "whitespace" (Duarte 2008: 106f) on the slide, so looking at it does not overwhelm the eye. They choose not more than three colors from the color wheel (ibid. 130f), and avoid red and green as eight to ten percent of the male population suffer from red green color vision defects. To prevent this population from confusing red and green texts or words, it is recommended that "[c]olor presentations that are not confusing to observers with color vision defects can be used in educational settings" (Deeb and Motulsky 2015). Learners add a second slide with the used sources and last dates of access. As will be seen in chapter 7, slides may be subject to an evaluation rubric too (cf. Fig. 8).

6.2 Appearance

Hernández-Julián and Peters (2015) have shown that more attractive and well-dressed students receive higher grades than less attractive ones. Briefly discussing with learners how this implicit bias can be addressed (as it does not seem avoidable) helps them embracing appearance as a conscious strategy, just

as a costume on stage helps actors define a role. In this context, learners get to know Stanislavski's notion that ambience (e.g. props, furniture, or dressing) can impact the way we re-act, e.g. we move more slowly and more elegantly in business clothing, and that but "a small push" might do the trick to bring a learner's presenting personality out (Stanislavski 2008: 256). Hence, learners should be advised to go the extra mile and wear a shirt, become comfortable in dress shoes, and show themselves and their environment that giving a presentation is not necessarily just a burdening task but a good opportunity to practice for their future career life outside the classroom. Dressing is no part of the evaluation rubrics but discussing it gives students the opportunity to make informed choices and decisions, and the final classroom presentation becomes the dress rehearsal for real life when actor-presenters and real occurrence melt and "transforms [them] for the stage" which marks the ideal situation of a performer/presenter (ibid. 612).

7 Delivery Day

7.1 Warm-Up

On presentation day, learners presenting first often feel ill at ease or consider themselves at a disadvantage even though, from an instructor's point of view, they have the advantages of setting the standard for the following presenters. Starting the lesson with one or two warm-up activities might help learners lose these inhibitions, so here are two warm-up exercises:

Sound Trellis — Each learner teams up with a partner of their choice. Each of these partners split up and stand on opposite walls of the classroom, facing each other (cf. Fig. 5). The learners on one side of the room deliver their complete talks, all of them at the same time, while the learners on the other side of the room function as focus of attention and active listeners. Contradictory as it might seem, the ambient noise grants each practicing speaker privacy. The rather unusually loud exercise helps learners to practice *standing in front of a group* yet they concentrate only on their respective partner. The listening learners urge their speaking partners to complete the talk out loud, enunciate well, and keep eye contact. The presenting students receive once more non-verbal feedback that they can take into consideration for their final presentations, and they anticipate what it is like to speak out really loud to a partner or a group in the precise location where they will be presenting. This exercise thus functions as dress rehearsal *on stage*, so to speak.

Presenting to the Wall — All learners remain standing but now they all face the wall at the same time. Reminded of the importance of status, they deliver their talks *to the wall*, and usually their presentations vary greatly from earlier practices in that they are smoother, accompanied by natural gestures, and often without any notecards in hand at all (cf. Gallo 2015: 78): This time-saving and



Figure 5: Learners forming a trellis and presenting to the learners opposite, simultaneously

privacy-granting exercises also works well because all learners are focused on themselves, and the ambient sound assures them that other learners do exactly as they do.

7.2 Delivery

Finally, the learners deliver their presentations. By this time, they have become seasoned presenters of their subjects. They know that a certain percentage of the group has already listened to them, and they have experienced how others might respond to their use of certain words, grammatical structures, to references on the slide, and to anecdotes. They are prepared and want to talk, and they know that their slide is flawless and available without them having to take care of opening their email accounts or Google drives etc., in short, now is the time to let the show begin.

Not only the presenters but all learners should be active in this important phase, and to raise the listeners' attention while one learner at a time presents, they receive a sheet with various categories as while-listening activity. They take notes to strengthen their listening and writing skills. The instructor may collect these sheets to get an impression of how the learners understand and evaluate their fellow learners' presentations. The sheet's categories I used include the speakers' names, their topics, information about the topic, e.g. birthdates, important works, interesting details, a column for new or specific vocabulary they glean from the presentations, and two columns for feedback in adjectives to find expressions and broaden their vocabulary, and for comments on what



Figure 6: Learner facing the wall and presenting to the wall

they observed in each individual presentation and presenter (cf. chapter 7). Blanckenburg and Haack's evaluation sheet complements the one presented here as it focuses on the rhetorical aspects of presentations/speeches but leaves out the aspects that I focused on (Blanckenburg & Haack 2016: 37).

Name:	Topic:	Information:	Interesting Details:	Vocabulary:	Evaluation (Adjectives):	Comments/ Feedback:
Michelle						
Tonya						
Dereck						
Flynn						
Sabine						
Chris						
Chaojun						
Cong						
Katherine						

Figure 7: Worksheet for learners as while-listening activity during the presentations

Alternatively, though not additionally, as it would distract the listeners' attention, the instructor may hand out one notecard for each listener with one of several observational tasks, e.g. observing the presenters' efforts for

pronunciation, grammatical correctness, slide contents and design, speaking volume, eye contact, gestures, and body language. Listening learners can use the information gathered from the observation of a task to give feedback in the ensuing feedback round.

8 Feedback, Evaluation, and Follow-Up

The listening learners give feedback immediately after each presentation. The instructor models the feedback format by asking learners to laud the student first with the phrases: *"Ich habe gesehen, dass. . . "* ("I saw/heard that you. . . "), phrases that ensure that learners merely describe and not judge the presenters' (non-verbal) activities while presenting. Only then should learners recast a defined amount of constructive criticism, e.g. *"Ich habe von dir gelernt, dass. . . "* ("I learned from you . . . "), or "*In Zukunft könnte man . . . "* ("In the future, one could . . . ") (Bo Wang & Shulin 2016).

Presenting students receive their feedback rubrics as soon as possible after their presentations, and here it is to be distinguished between a rubric for the language use during the presentation (cf. Fig. 4) and a more general rubric for the overall engagement in the complex project of finding a topic, researching it, defining its key elements and transferring them to notecards and the slide, for participating actively in the practice phase, the slide's contents and design, delivery, question and answer, and asking other presenters (cf. Fig. 8). The last line of the overall rubric, "comments", leaves room for specific observations, praise, suggestions, or an invitation to speak with the instructor individually.

It is imperative to have a second round of presentations during the semester or school year so learners can learn from their mistakes and show improvement. In the second round, the practice may be shortened, individualized, or altered. The proceedings can also be topic before the next round of presentations, and learners can propose which exercises seemed helpful or predominantly memorable from the first round, and which of these they would like to employ in future presentation preparations.

9 Reflection

I have developed this concept of preparing, practicing, and delivering presentations over a number of years while teaching both public speaking to speakers of English in English (Wells College, Fall 2015 and 2016) and to undergrad learners of intermediate German 201 and 202 (Syracuse University, Fall 2015 to Spring 2017). It has occurred to both my learners and me that those learners with experience in public speaking or theater were initially at an advantage: They felt more secure presenting in the foreign language as the techniques that lead to convincing presentations were more familiar to them. The proposed exercises worked well to level the differences between those experienced learners and less experienced learners. What is more,

	1 The learner…	2 The learner…	3 The learner…
1. Topic	needs support in choosing a topic from a given list.	choses an adequate topic from a given list.	The student suggests an appropriate topic.
2. Research	looks up less than 3 sources and has nothing interesting or new to tell.	chooses general sources from the internet. There is information that is new only to 50% or less of the audience.	's paper shows superb research from various resources and teaches the audience something new/interesting.
3.Paper	's paper is flawed, contradictory, or shows plagiarism (lack of sources, copied language etc.).	's paper reflects that s/he has a general understanding of the topic.	wrote a paper in his or her own words and combines interesting ideas, giving a new spin to the topic.
4. Keywords	has not submitted the paper.	cannot decide which keywords to select and highlights too much or too little.	selects 5 relevant keywords from the paper.
5. Transfer	does not complete this task.	writes too much or too little on the notecard.	transfers the keywords to one notecards.
6. Practice	is unwilling to practice with a partner/a group, is distracted, or speaks English.	reverts in parts to English or shows the notes to the partner/s while practicing.	practices with a partner and in small groups using the notes in the target language or no notes at all.
7. Slide	has no slide/s.	's slide has too many or too few pictures and phrases/no reference slide.	's presentation consists of one slide with 1-3 pictures and 3-5 phrases, and a reference slide.
8. Delivery a. Free Speech	does not present or reads from the script/slide.	is sitting in front of the group, tries hard to make eye contact albeit artificially, and reads the notes or slide occasionally.	stands in front of the group, seeks eye contact to the listeners, and speaks without notes.
b. Body Language	's body language expresses the desire not to present.	's body language expresses some nervousness and low volume but the student adapts in the course of the presentation.	's body language expresses passion and professionality (no hands in pockets, open body language, calm movements).
c. Comprehensibility	's pronunciation or grammar is very difficult to understand.	makes minor mistakes that occasionally impede the understanding.	's use of language is clear, fluent, and without any mistakes that would impede an understanding.
d. Vocabulary	uses English words when not knowing the appropriate term in the target language.	Chooses vocab that everybody understands.	chooses vocab that everyone understands but also introduces 1-3 new terms.
9. Q & A	does not or cannot answer questions.	knows some answers to some questions and/or has some difficulty expressing them in the target language.	answers questions knowingly and with enthusiasm, good pronunciation and grammar.
10. Asking	has no questions for other presenters.	has some obvious questions or difficulty expressing them in the target language.	has some intriguing questions that s/he can express well.
Comments:			

Figure 8: Overall rubrics for the complete project

all learners were mentally and physically completely engaged in speaking, listening, observing, and rehearsing so that prior experiences of some learners did not show off toward others. The class as a whole went through a substantial learning experience that in terms of group dynamic, is very similar to that of what a director in a school production experiences, only in an extremely condensed form. Everyone was busy, responsible, and engaged. Therefore, presenting as a real-life simulation not only equals an onstage performance in its structure from approach to the subject via rehearsal to production and delivery but also in its long-term effects and application possibilities: Learners procured feedback on how they benefited from the acquired skills in other classes, group discussions, and even job interviews, which reflects how Stanislavski's "system", as far as employed here, works well even beyond immediate presentation purposes.

I hope to have shown that the seemingly disproportionate time investment in these exercises and activities yielded success not only with respect to a more elevated use of language use, situated between performance and free speech, but also with such overall goals as class dynamics and life skills that, in my experience, are comparable to elements of a stage production (cf. Reynolds 2008: 199).

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