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Bilingual Improv Theater

双语即兴话剧

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Introduction

This book offers an introduction to improvisational theater games both in English and Chinese, and can be used as a manual for improv workshops. You can use this book either as a workshop leader or as a player.

We have ordered our chapters in a certain way, to facilitate use of the book as a progressive manual. We encourage you to follow this structure, but you may have a different point of view, or your group may have different needs. We have arranged the various games to build up a season of themed workshops. Each workshop is designed to last between one-and-a-half and two hours in total. There are eight lessons altogether: seven lessons are dedicated to the practice of seven core improv skills, and the final lesson is a schedule for a stage performance. The games are inspired by the content of Beijing Improv Bilingual workshops that took place in Beijing in 2007-2008.

For the seven key skills chapters, we have divided each lesson into three parts: warm up, exercises, and stage performance. We encourage you to open every new session with an energetic warm up, to put your group members in an enthusiastic mood for improv. The eighth lesson is the performance lesson. In this lesson only features warm ups and performance games. This is an opportunity to review all the skills learnt over the season in the format of a small show – improve is, after all, all about performance!

To the reader hoping to lead improvisation theater workshops, we encourage you to organize warm ups as well as simple ‘closing’ games at each workshop. A good closing game could be a “war cry”. These simple games should be played at every workshop. Making small openers and closes part of the routine of workshops will help build your performers into a strong team.

Thanks

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Lesson 1: Basics/ Say Yes

Note

The basic rule in improvisation is to "say yes" and accept the propositions or 'offers' of other players.

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

Aim:

Physical warm up

Description:

1. Players stand in circle.
2. Together, the players shake their right hand five times and yell "1-2-3-4-5" in time with each shake. Then players shake out their limbs in the following order: left hand, right foot, left foot, and whole body for five shakes per limb.
3. Repeat the same actions but for four shakes. Repeat again for three shakes, then two and finally one shake per limb.

Tips:

The players should play the game with energy, increasing the speed at each repetition.

Name Ball

Aim:

Warm up, introduction of players

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. The first player throws an imaginary ball to someone else in the circle. When he launches the ball, he says his own name to the other player
3. The receiver receives the imaginary ball, and repeats the name of the sender. Then he sends the ball with his name to another player someone else. And so on...

Tips:

This is a good exercise to learn names of newcomers in a workshop.

Sound Ball

Aim:

Warm up, focus

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
 2. The first player throws an imaginary ball to someone else in the circle. He will use a sound (any sound) to launch it.
 3. The receiver mimes catching the imaginary ball and the sound, repeating the same sound the ball was thrown with.
- Then he throws the ball to someone else, using a new sound. And so on...

Tips:

1. The sender has to ensure that the receiver gets the ball. (use eye contact).
2. Several balls can be thrown out by the leader simultaneously to different people in the circle.
3. As this is an energetic exercise, player speed is important.
4. Players should train not to think ahead but use the first sound that comes to their mind.

“Yes, let's!”

Aim:

Warm up, accept offers

Description:

1. The players move freely about the space.
2. One of the players makes an offer for an action: "Let's do ...". The remaining players respond enthusiastically "Yes, Let's", and mime the action collectively until someone else makes a new offer.

Example: One player says "Let's ride a bicycle", everybody replies "Yes, Let's!" and mimes riding a bicycle.

Misname Objects

Aim:

Find ideas, imagination

Description:

1. Players move freely around the space.
2. They point at objects and name them with a loud voice.
(play a while with step 2, then continue to step 3)
3. They point at objects and give them a different name, with a loud voice.

Example

2. A player points at chair and says "Chair"
3. A player points at chair and says "Banana"

Tips:

Player speed is important – the faster the better.

Players can follow a theme to make it easier (list of animals, places, fruits etc.)

- Exercises -

“Yes, and...”

Aim:

Accept offers

Description:

1. Players work in pairs. One player is A, the other is B. They will switch, using the following patterns
2. First Pattern: A proposes something to B, and B replies "No, because...". Switch A and B after 5 propositions.
3. Second Pattern: A proposes something to B and B replies "Yes, But..." , Switch A and B after 5 propositions.
4. Third Pattern A proposes something, B says "Yes, and..." before adding something to A's proposal. Then B proposes something to A etc...

Example:

First Pattern

A: "Let's hold a party tonight!"

B: "No, because I have an exam tomorrow, I want to rest."

A: "Let's..."

Second Pattern

A: "Let's hold a party tonight!"

B: "Yes, but don't spend too much money on booze, we don't have much money."

A:"Let's..."

Third Pattern

A: "Let's hold a party tonight!"

B: "Yes, and we can invite a band to perform!"

A: "Yes, and we will record the music and put it on the web!"

B: "Yes, and ..."

Presents

Aim:

Accept offers, open offers

Description:

1. Players work in pairs. One player is A the other is B.
2. A gives an imaginary present to B. A has to be precise about the size, the shape or the weight of the present, but does not name it.
3. B receives and opens the present and names it, according to the mimed hints given by A. (B accepts the offer of A)
4. After practicing a while, A and B exchange their role.

Example:

2. A gives a present, the size of a fist and say "Happy birthday! I have a present for you."
3. B opens the present the present, says: "Oh! this is a Ming dynasty goblet, it's very valuable".

"I am a tree!"

Aim:

Warm up

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. The first player goes to the middle of the circle, freezes, mimes a tree and says "I am a tree". A second player comes and takes a position linked with the tree and names it. A third player comes and repeats as the previous player.
3. The first player chooses one of the two other players to leave the scene with him.
4. The player who stayed on stage keeps his position and repeats what object/person he is. The next player joins the game and builds a new picture and so on until a player retakes the position of the tree.

Example:

1st player: "I am a tree."

2nd player: "I am the plum on the tree."

3rd player: "I am a monkey picking the plum."

1st player: "I'll take the plum." and leaves with the plum.

3rd player: "I am a monkey."

4th player: "I am a lion."

5th player: "I am a flea on the monkey."

3rd player: "I'll take the flea." and leaves with the flea.

...

Tips:

Don't try to be too 'creative', or to confuse other players, just choose the most obvious objects/characters.

Try to not repeat the same characters during the game.

“What are you doing?”

Aim:

Find ideas, be spontaneous

Description:

1. Players work in pairs. One player is A other is B.
2. Player A mimes an action. Player B asks him "What are you doing?" Player A answers with an action which he is NOT doing. Player B mimes the action given by player A.
3. Exchange roles: player B asks A "What are you doing?" And so on...

Example:

A is running

B asks: "What are you doing?"

A says: "Brushing my teeth."

B brushes his teeth

A asks: "What are you doing?"

B says: "Swimming."

Tips:

To add a challenge, the game can be played competitively:

Players stand in a circle, two players are in the middle and play the game, increasing the tempo as they go along.

When one of the players hesitates or uses an action already done etc... he is 'out', leaves the middle of the circle and is replaced by another player.

Machine

Aim:

Group collaboration

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. One of the players stands at the centre of the circle and performs a mechanical, repetitive action, accompanied by a repeated sound.
3. A second player jumps in, performs a different repetitive action and sound that connects in some way to the first player.

4. One by one, other players jump in and perform actions and sounds, connecting to the players already in place. The idea, when everyone has taken their place, is to have a fully working machine.

Tips:

The leader can ask the players to speed up their machine (all the players together) or slow it down. He can also ask the machine to be louder or quieter.

- Stage games -

“Yes, and...” On Stage

Aim:

Accept Offers, Build Scenes

Description:

1. Two players on stage: player A and B
2. The leader gives an indication of a location and the relationship between the characters.
3. A begins the dialog by making an offer, B replies "Yes, and...", making another offer.
4. And so on, to reach a total of 6 lines.

Example:

In a hospital, A is a nurse, B is a patient.

A: "It's time for your medication."

B: "Yes, and I would like a glass of water."

A: "Yes, and you have to go to sleep."

B: "Yes, and you need to tell me a bed time story."

A: "Yes, and you should pay me for that."

B: "Yes, and here is the money."

Tips:

It can also be played in pairs.

Lesson 2: Offers / Objects / Stage

Note

It is important to handle objects properly to that the audience believes in what the actor is doing.

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

Misname Objects

See Lesson 1

Monster Chasing

Aim:

Energy, character building

Description:

This is a tag game.

1. All players are in pairs, spread in the room, except two.
2. There is a player playing a Monster and another player playing the Prey. The Monster chases the Prey.
3. When the Monster tags the Prey, they exchange roles.
4. The Prey can join a pair of player by grabbing another player's arm. The other player in the pair has to leave and becomes the Prey.

Tips:

Safety first - be careful when running around!

The goal is not to catch the Prey as soon as possible, but to act as Monster and Prey and have fun with it.

- Exercises -

Make an Object

Aim:

Shared control

Description:

1. The players work in pairs.
2. The leader names an object. Within in each pair the players have to quickly make a statue that represents this object, without speaking.
3. Repeat point 2 a few times.
4. Same exercise with groups of 4 players.
5. Same exercise with all players.

Example:

For pairs or 4 player groups : Vase, Coffee machine..

For all players : Airplane, train ...

Drinking Game

Aim:

Mime practice

Description:

1. Players spread out in the space.
2. Players individually mime drinking a bottle of soda. Players must pay attention to all the specific details of the action: taking the cap off, drinking, and putting the bottle down.
3. Players individually mime other actions, continuing to pay attention to how they use objects.

Tips:

When picking up or dropping an object, make a "click" with the tongue to call attention to it.

Reuse and Add

Aim:

Building a Space

Description:

1. Players are in small group of three to five.
2. In each group, one player acts a very short scene, miming the use of an object.
3. The second player enters, reuses this object and adds new objects. Repeat. Scenes should be conducted in silence.
4. The game continues until all players have contributed.

Example

The first player takes a glass from a table, drinks and put the glass back on the table.

The second player takes the glass on table, opens the microwave and puts the glass in it and heat the glass. Then he takes back the glass and puts it on the table.

Tips:

Players need to respect the location of the objects, and not change the position of any of them. It will look more real to an audience. For example, a table, unless deliberately moved, is always in the same place. The glass, unless smashed against the wall, is always in the same position on the table...

- Stage games -

10 Seconds

Aim:

Group collaboration

Description:

1. Players are in groups of four or five.
2. Leader asks a team to take the stage, and gives them a location.
3. The players have 10 seconds to take their positions in a tableau illustrating the location.
4. The team plays the very beginning of the scene

Example:

A place that smells bad, a dark forest...

Leave Together

Aim:

Group collaboration

Description:

1. Four players are on stage, sitting on four chairs facing the audience. The leader gives them a location.
2. Without speaking, the players have to find a reason to stand up and leave the scene, together.

Little Voice

Aim:

Shared control

Description:

1. One player is on stage, one player is offstage
2. The player on stage begins a scene, alone.
3. The off-stage player uses his voice to play the role of an object that makes up part of the scene.
4. The player on stage interacts with this magical talking object.

Tips:

To make the scene more interesting, the object can ask the character to fulfill an important wish it has.

Lesson 3: CROW

Note

In a scene, it is very important for the audience to know basic information about characters. We call it CROW.

C for Character : who are they ?

R for Relationship : what are the link between the characters (Husband and wife, boss and employee...)

O for Objective : what does the character want, what is their target (e.g: repair a car, break up a relationship...)

W for Where: what is the location of the scene (In the bedroom, in an airport...)

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

Monster Chasing

See Lesson 2

“I am a tree!”

See Lesson 1

- Exercises -

CROW Building

Aim:

CROW

Description:

1. Players are in pairs: A and B

STEP 1: A mimes an activity. B offers the first line of dialogue, revealing the activity A is miming. Repeat several times with different activities and switch A and B.

STEP 2: Add the following to STEP 1: A reveals the relationship between A and B. Repeat several times with different activities and switch A and B.

STEP 3: Add the following to STEP 2: B reveals the location of the scene. Repeat this game several times with different activities and switch A and B.

STEP 4: Add the following to STEP 3: A reveals the motivation of both characters. Repeat this game several times with different activities and switch A and B.

Example

STEP 1:

A is cooking,

B says "Mmm your pasta smells good."

STEP 2:

A is cooking,

B says "Mmm your pasta smells good."

A says "Yes, darling. I know you like my pasta!"

STEP 3: A is cooking,

B says "Mmm your pasta smells good."

A says "Yes, darling. I know you like my pasta!"

B says "It was a good idea to rent this yacht!"

STEP 4: A is cooking,

B says "Mmm your pasta smells good."

A says "Yes, darling. I know you like my pasta!"

B says "It was a good idea to rent this yacht!",

A says "Yes especially for our anniversary."

Digging a Hole

Aim:

CROW

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. One player goes in the middle and mimes digging a hole. A second player enters and begins a short scene with the first player. The scene should introduce CROW quickly. When CROW is established, the first player finds a reason to leave and leaves.
3. The remaining player begins to dig a hole. Then another player comes and so on...

Example:

A mimes digging a hole.

B: "David, I think it's deep enough."

A: "You're right, darling, the pool is ready."

B: "Yes, I think we can fill it up now."

A: "I'll go and get the hose."

A exits.

Tips:

This exercise can be played in pairs.

Freeze Tag

Aim:

CROW

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. Two players step into the middle and begin a short scene.
3. At any moment, another player calls "FREEZE". The players freeze.
4. The caller designates one of the players by touching their shoulder. The designated player leaves the scene and the new player takes up exactly the same position of the leaving player. The new arrival then begins a new scene with the remaining player in the circle, justifying their position in its new context.
5. The game continues.

In this lesson the players should focus on CROW and establish it as soon as possible. Other players should wait for CROW to be established before calling "Freeze".

Tips:

Players should make big movements and to change their body posture during the scene in order to guarantee interesting suggestions for the next scene.

- Stage games -

Space Jump

Aim:

Justification

Description:

1. A group of four players (A, B, C, D) comes on stage.
2. Player A begins a scene, alone on stage. At some point, the leader calls "Freeze" and player A freezes. Player B enters stage and begins a new scene, using the frozen position of Player A.
3. At some point the leader calls "freeze", C joins the stage and begins a scene utilizing the frozen positions of A and B.
4. Same thing for Player D: he begins a new scene with 4 characters.
5. When the leader calls "Freeze!", D leaves the scene. The 3 remaining players (A, B, C) will continue the scene they were playing together before D's arrival, but have to use their current frozen position.
6. Leader calls "Freeze!". C leaves the scene. Players A and B continue the scene they were playing before C's arrival, but justifying their current frozen position.
7. Finally, the leader calls "Freeze!" B leaves the scene. And A finishes his scene alone, starting with his current frozen position.

Words of wisdom

Aim:

Team building, lesson ending game

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. One by one, players say one word each to compose a sentence.
3. Once the sentence feels finished, it has become the group's "words of wisdom". Everybody says "Yes, yes, yes" and tap their fingers together sagely.
4. Repeat a few times.

Lesson 4: Status

Note

It is nice to see clearly the status of characters in an improv scene. It is also important to see characters' statuses change during a scene. The basic status transactions for a player are the following:

Lower your own status
Raise your own status
Lower your partner's status
Raise your partner's status

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

Body Part Walking

Aim:

Character building, warming up

Description:

1. Players move freely around the space.
2. They have to move as if they were pulled by a part of their body. The leader names the body parts.

Walking with Status

Aim:

Status

Description:

1. Players move around freely in the space.
2. Leader calls out a status (high or low). Players have to adopt this status in their movement and interaction with one another.

3. Leader calls out the opposing status, and players' movement and interaction changes accordingly.
For example: the leader says 'walking with low status.' Then all walk with low status, like beggars, waiter...'

- Exercises -

Card Cocktail

Aim:

Status

Description:

1. Leader distributes one playing card to each player. The card designates the status of the player, with Ace as the highest status and 2 as the lowest status.
2. Players put their card on their forehead, without looking at it. Then they move freely around the space and react to other players in a manner appropriate to the card that player is displaying.
3. The player, through the interaction with the other players, will eventually sense their own status level. At the end of the game, the leader asks the players to form a line in front of him or her, from lowest to highest status. The players can then have a look at their card and check if they guessed correctly.

Example Scene:

A cocktail party, a wedding, a premiere...

Move on!

Aim:

Status

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. One player (A) sits on a chair in the middle of the circle.
3. A new player (B) enters and begins a dialog with A that uses a status transaction in order to force A out of the chair.
4. Once A leaves the chair, B may sit down.
5. The next player in the circle (C) enters and repeats Step 3.
6. When all have played, the status transaction changes and the game is repeated with the new transaction.

The four status transactions to use are:

- 1) Lowering others' status

- 2) Raising others' status
- 3) Lowering your own status
- 4) Raising your own status

Example:

1)

B: "Sorry sir, but your ticket is 2nd class."

A leaves and B sits.

2)

B: "Mr. President, your plane is waiting for you."

A leaves and B sits.

3)

B: "We have arrived, the taxi fare is 20 RMB."

A leaves and B sits.

4)

B: "I am pregnant, could I please sit here?"

A leaves and B sits.

Status War

Aim:

Status

Description:

1. Players work in pairs. They act out a short scene using only the lines below:

-Hello.

-Hello.

-Been waiting long?

-Ages.

2. The goal is to attain high status in the scene. Play it several times.

3. The goal is now to attain low status in the scene.

Tips:

Let players discover what makes someone high or low status. For example and generally speaking:

1) A character standing up often has a higher status than a character who is sitting.

2) A character who loses his temper can easily lower his status

3) A character who stays still will often have higher status than a character who moves about erratically.

This can be played on stage, with the audience voting for the winner.

- Stage games -

Status Goals

Aim:

Status

Description:

1. Four actors on stage. They choose a number between 1 and 4 without informing others.
2. "1" is the lowest status, "4" is the highest status.
3. They play a short scene in which they have to act according to the number of their status.
4. Following the scene, the audience will guess the number the players have chosen according to their performance. Then the players disclose their numbers.

Yearbook Photo

Aim:

Justification

Description:

1. A group of players freeze in a 'yearbook photo' tableau.
2. One by one each player steps forward and tells the audience who they are and what their relationship is to the other characters in the photo.

Tips:

It is important that each player accepts what other players say as true.

Lesson 5: Character Building

Note

In each scene, the actor will personify a character. It is important that the actor fully endorses the characteristics of the character in order to make them as believable as possible.

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

Body Part Walking

See Lesson 4

Animal Walking

Aim:

Character Building, Body language training, Physical warming-up

Description:

1. Players move freely in the space
2. The leader names an animal. The players have to adopt the characteristics of that animal in their movement and interaction with one another.
3. Leader names a new animal. Repeat several times..
4. Players now choose their own animal, and adopt its characteristics in their movement and interaction with one another.

Tips:

The players can explore their behavior as animals and reuse some properties to build a character in a scene.

- Exercises -

Naming

Aim:

Invent characters, find names

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. A player (A) points to another player (B) in the circle. A gives the occupation and a description of a character to B, then B has to give a name to the character.
3. B points to another player (C) and continues the game.

Example :

A: "A rich tailor."

B: "John Smith."

Tips:

Try not to use real names (like team members or celebrities), but imaginary names.

Try to connect the character's name to his occupation and description.

You can give more details in the description.

Arms

Aim:

Shared Control, character building

Description:

1. Players are in groups of three: A, B and C.
2. Two players (A and B) will play one character : A must sit in a chair and clasp his or her hands behind their back, then B kneels behind A and puts their arms through the spaces between A's arms and torso. A speaks while B performs the corresponding hand gestures.
3. C is the interviewer; while the character played by A+B is the interviewee. The players choose a topic which A+B is an expert on.
4. C asks A+B questions. A answers the questions vocally, with B providing hand gestures.
5. When the interview has ended, players switch roles and the game is repeated, with C playing the interviewee, A playing the arms and B playing the interviewer. The game is repeated three times in total.

Tips:

This is a shared control exercise. The hands have to listen to the voice and the voice has to respond to the movements of the hands.

The leader can ask the interviewee to give a specific flavor of the character, like being slow, being fast, being physically low or being physically high.

I am, I am coming from, I am going to

Aim:

Character

Description:

1. Players form 2 lines (Line 1 and line 2), facing each other.
2. The first player of line 1 crosses the room and walks to line 2.
3. During his walk, he acts a character and says "I am ...", "I am coming from ...", "I am going to ..." Thus the player names their character, their origin and their destination. The player should walk as his character would walk.
4. Then the first player of line 2 crosses the room to join Line 1, then the 2nd player of line 1 and so on.

Silly Walks

Aim:

Character building, using observations to build characters

Description:

1. Players are in pairs (A and B), but only one pair plays at a time, and all the other player watch.
2. A crosses the room, walking normally.
3. B crosses the room, imitating and exaggerating the first player's way of walking.
4. Repeat for every pair in the group
5. Exchange roles (A and B)

- Stage games -

Switch Left (with character assignation)

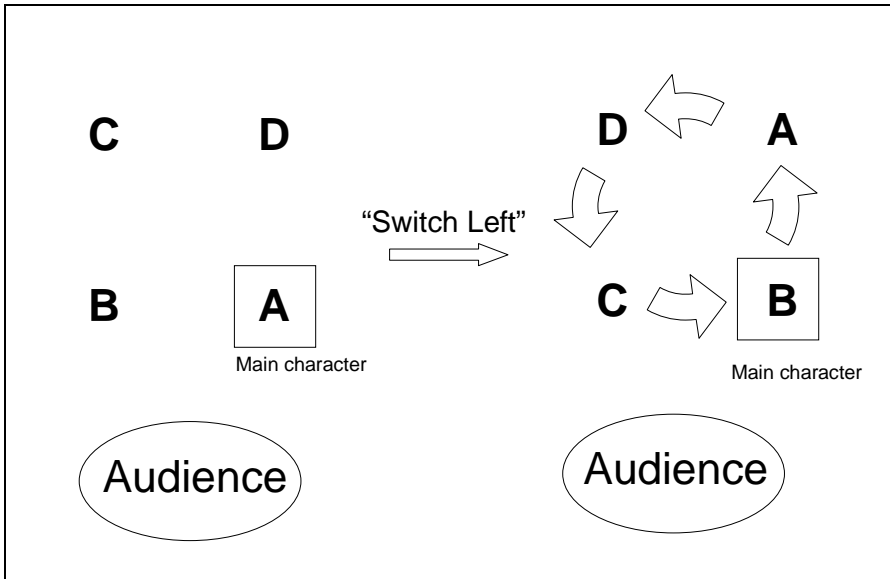
Aim:

Character development

Description:

1. Five players on stage. One player is MC, the others are acting (A, B, C and D). They stand as shown in the picture below.
2. Whenever the MC calls "Switch Left" the players rotate the square anti-clockwise, with A moving to D's position, B moving to A's position, C moving to B's position, and D moving to B's position. (see picture).
3. A is on the left-hand-side facing the audience (upstage right). He or she asks the audience for a character.

4. MC calls "Switch Left".
5. The new player upstage right (B) asks the audience for a character.
6. MC calls 'Switch Left'. Repeat until all four players have a character.
7. When A is back in his original position, they repeat in a loud voice their character. MC says "Switch Left", and this continues until all four players have repeated their characters.
8. When A is back in his original position, they begin a scene with player B.
9. The character standing upstage right leads the scene. (See picture)
10. The MC will say "Switch Left" and B and C begin a scene. And so on.
11. When the 2 first players (A and B) are back in their starting positions upstage, they should continue the scene they played at the beginning.
12. This continues for several repetitions, or until a natural ending is reached.



Dinner party

Aim:

Character building

Description:

1. Players are split into 4 groups: Mothers, Fathers, Sons and Daughters.
2. Each group must have a specific characteristic, for example: Fathers are knowledgeable, Mothers are hardworking, Sons are happy, Daughters are sad...
3. One player from each group goes on stage to play a member of a family. They act out the scenario of a family dinner.

4. The rule is that the scene continues until a member of the family leaves the table.

5. Change the group and repeat several times.

Tips:

It is interesting to have strong characters in the scene.

Before the scene, the leader can ask to each group to discuss the specifics of the characterization, for example; why is the daughter sad? The player can use ideas from the discussion in their performance...

Arms (on stage)

Aim:

Shared control

Description:

1. Five players on stage.
2. One player is the interviewer and the four others will act as two interviewees as in the game "Talking arms".
3. The two interviewees know each other, and the interviewer asks them about their relationship.

Example: If the two interviewees are a couple, the interviewer might ask them about their first date.

Tips:

The interviewer can ask the audience for a suggestion for the relationship between the two interviewees.

Lesson 6: Emotions

Note

The sixth lesson involves developing emotive ability as a performer. The actor builds a character but also needs to show emotion and the change of emotion.

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

Emotional Walks

Aim:

Emotion, communicating emotion

Description:

1. Players move around freely in the space.
 2. The leader calls out an emotion, and players temporarily adopt this emotion in their movement and interaction with one another.
 3. Leader calls out other emotions, and players adopt them accordingly.
- Repeat.

- Exercises -

Rant

Aim:

Emotion, stress relief

Description:

1. Players are split into 2 groups facing each other.
2. Each member of the first group yells a story that happened to them recently and made them angry. All members of the group yell in the direction of the other team simultaneously.
3. The teams exchange their role.

Raise Emotions

Aim:

Emotion, find degrees in emotion

Description:

1. Players stand in a circle.
2. Leader chooses an emotion.
3. One player acts this emotion at level 1 (very light), the next players in the circle raise the emotion to level 2, and so on until level 7. At this level the performance becomes extreme.
4. Leader chooses another emotion, and this new emotion moves around the circle from Level 1 to Level 7.

Example emotions:

Happy, sad, angry, nervous, bored, shy, in love, embarrassed...

More

Aim:

Emotion

Description:

1. Two players are on stage.
2. One emotion is chosen by the leader. The players act the emotion out, with gradually increasing intensity. Beginning at a low level, the intensity increases as the performance progresses. The audience should yell "More! More!" to encourage them to push the emotion to the extreme. The players really have to go to the very limits of their designated emotion using facial expression, vocalization and body language but without playing a scene.
3. Do it with another emotion and different players.

Tips:

This game can be done with one, two or three players but not more.

- Stage games -

Taxi Driver

Aim:

Emotion

Description:

1. Two players on stage. Two chairs are placed on stage: one in front, one behind.

2. One player sits in front and acts as the taxi driver, the other acts as a customer.
3. The customer chooses an emotion, and acts with this emotion. He takes the taxi, and the taxi driver acts with the opposite emotion.
4. To finish the scene, the customer has to find a reason to leave the taxi.

Emotion Zones

Aim:

Emotion

Description:

1. The stage is divided into 3 zones. Each of them is associated with an emotion.

Whenever a player is in a zone, he has to adopt the corresponding emotion.

2. Two or three players perform a scene, using the rules above.

Tips:

Players have to pay attention to move between zones during the scene.

Lesson 7: Narrative

Note

The story told by the actors has to be clear, as structured as possible, with a beginning, an end, and connecting elements that move the action forward.

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

Misname Objects

See Lesson 1

Presents

See Lesson 1

- Exercises -

Gibberish Expert

Aim:

Justification

Description:

1. Players are in groups of 3. One of the players is the interviewer, one is the expert, the third is the translator.
2. The interviewer asks the expert questions in English, the expert replies using Gibberish, and the translator translates his answers to English.

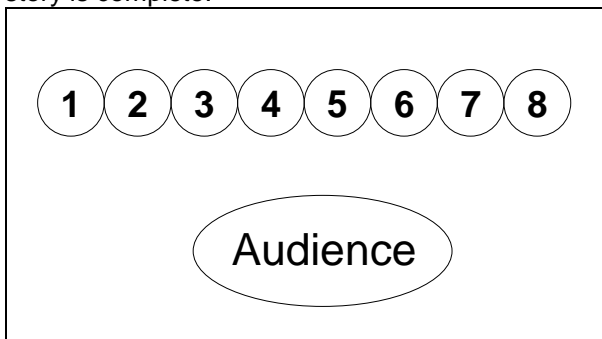
String of Pearls

Aim:

Story telling

Description:

1. Eight players go to the side of the stage.
2. The first player takes a position (any position) in the "string of pearls" (see picture).
3. He speaks a sentence.
4. One by one the other players take position in the "string of pearls".
5. When they take their position, they speak a sentence which has to be linked with the other sentences.
6. After each person speaks, all the players that have already contributed to the "string" repeat their sentences once more in order to give the next "pearl" a good understanding of the narrative progression.
7. The game ends when all the players are in the string of pearls and the story is complete.



Tips:

The number of players can vary but should be around eight.

The first players to join the string of pearls should give unrelated propositions in order to make completion of the story challenging.

TV Sports

Aim:

Story telling / emotion

Description:

1. Two players are on stage, facing the audience.
2. They pretend to watch a live sport event on TV.
3. They use language, body language, emotion to show to the audience what is happening on TV.

Once Upon a Time

Aim:

Story telling

Description:

1. Players sit in a circle.
2. Each player in the circle, one by one, makes a sentence, with the following openers for each sentence:
 - Once upon a time...
 - And every day...
 - Until one day...
 - And because of that...
 - And because of that...
 - Until finally...
 - And ever since that day...
 - The moral of the story is...

- Stage games -

Typewriter

Aim:

Shared control

Description:

1. On stage, one player sits in the corner of the stage. He portrays author typing his book on a typewriter. He begins to tell a story.
2. Two or three players go on stage to act as the characters of the story.
3. During the scene, sometimes the author is speaking and tells the story, sometimes he is silent and the players continue the scene by themselves.
 - When the author speaks, the players have to listen to his narrative and act accordingly.
 - When the players are acting, the typewriter has to take into account what the players are doing when he resumes his narrative.

Tips:

This is a shared control game: both actors and author can push the story forward.

Gibberenglish

Aim:

Justification

Description:

1. Two or three players come to the stage and perform a short scene in Gibberish.
2. Other players come to the stage and play the same scene, but in English. They have to demonstrate their own interpretation of the scene.
3. Then other players can then step in and perform the scene in English with their own interpretations

Tips:

The team that plays in English needs to respect the story structure and reuse as many details as possible from the gibberish story.

Lesson 8: SHOW

Note

In this lesson, the players will only do a warm up and play games on stage. This is an opportunity to invite family and friends to practice and show what they have learned.

- Warm Up -

1-2-3-4-5

See Lesson 1

Sound Ball

See Lesson 1

- Stage games -

Space Jump

See Lesson 3

Freeze Tag

See Lesson 3

Typewriter

See Lesson 7

New Choice

Aim:

Justification

Description:

1. Two or three players begin a scene on stage.

2. At any moment, the leader can call "New Choice". The player who was speaking has to change their last words and propose new ones.
3. Leader can call several "New Choices" in a row, until the answer is sufficiently interesting for the scene to move forward.

Example:

"May I have a cup of coffee?"

"New Choice!"

"May I have a cup of tea?"

"New Choice!"

"May I have your phone number?"

Tips:

The leader can ask several times for a new choice, until the player has an idea which is sufficiently different from the first proposition. The goal of New Choice is to incorporate unexpected elements into a scene.

Little Voice

See Lesson 2

Taxi Driver

See Lesson 6

Fill the Picture

Aim:

Warming up, closing session

Description:

1. The leader chooses a non-geographical location i.e. a bank, a lake, the desert
2. All the players take a position and freeze to illustrate the location, without speaking. It has to be done quickly, less than 5 seconds.

Example:

The leader calls "The beach"

The players take positions that represent the beach: people lying on the sand, fishes, the sun, children playing...

Yearbook Photo

See Lesson 4

String of Pearls

See Lesson 7

Emotion Zones

See Lesson 6

Genre Zones

Aim:

Justification

Description:

Same as Emotion Zone, but each zone is associated with a movie/entertainment genre (Western, Horror, Romance...)

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