



University
of Glasgow

McClintock, Ann B. (1984) *An examination of the nature and purpose of drama in the special school curriculum: based on the analysis of a research project carried out in a sample of Scottish schools for severely and profoundly mentally handicapped children*. PhD thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/4830/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

AN EXAMINATION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF DRAMA IN THE SPECIAL
SCHOOL CURRICULUM: BASED ON THE ANALYSIS OF A RESEARCH PROJECT
CARRIED OUT IN A SAMPLE OF SCOTTISH SCHOOLS FOR SEVERELY AND
PROFOUNDLY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN.

BY

ANN B. McCLINTOCK
D.S.D.; A.C.P.; Dip. Ed.

VOLUME 1 OF THREE VOLUMES

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Ph.D.
The University of Glasgow

Research conducted in the Department of Education
Faculty of Social Science

JUNE 1984

(i)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research project could not have been carried out without the helpful contributions of a great many people, too numerous to mention by name. The author extends her grateful thanks to all of them and wishes to acknowledge the support, the help and the advice she received from them. Particular thanks must go to the drama advisers in Grampian, Lothian and Strathclyde Regions; to the staff in the remedial departments and drama departments of Jordanhill, St. Andrews, Craigie, Hamilton and Moray House Colleges of Education and to the movement and drama staff in Dunfermline College; to Mr A. Milne, HMI; Miss A. Richmond, senior lecturer in physical education; Mr G. McKay, educational psychologist, Miss I. Harvie, art teacher; Mrs J. Keen, music therapist; Miss E. McKenzie, drama therapist; Miss J. Laing, art therapist; Miss S. Jennings, drama therapist, and to the drama specialists - Mrs D. Heathcote, Baron P. Slade, Mr J. Hudson, Mr R. Heavey, and Mr K. Byron. Thanks must also go to Mrs M. Fuller and Miss M. Taggart who typed the manuscripts and prepared additional materials for the project, and to my family who gave support and encouragement throughout.

Particular thanks must also go to Mr W. Dunn, research supervisor, and to the Scottish Education Department and The University of Glasgow for grant funding. Finally, the author would like to acknowledge the very great contribution made by the pupils, the parents, the head teachers and the staff from all of the schools which collaborated in the project. Without their contribution the research could not have been conducted.

The author has also written a book based on her experiences of working with mentally handicapped children, both within and outwith this project:-

McCLINTOCK, Ann B. (1984) DRAMA FOR MENTALLY
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN
London Souvenir Press

CONTENTS

Page VOL. I, PART I

6	CHAPTER 1	<u>The Research Topic</u> A résumé of the problems investigated, the aims of the research, and the practical rationale for the investigations carried out..
20	CHAPTER 2	<u>The Research Design</u> An analysis of the theoretical rationale underpinning the choice of research design and the methods proposed for the project in the context of three existing theories of curriculum research and development.
47	CHAPTER 3	<u>Drama - A Neglected Curricular Element?</u> An estimate of the extent of the neglect of drama in Scottish special schools, and an examination of the factors which appear to be contributing to this neglect.
 <u>VOL. 1, PART 2</u>		
86	CHAPTER 4	<u>The Nature Of Drama And Its Aims In Special Education</u> A consideration of the nature of drama, its aims and the aspects of it which may provide a theoretical justification for its inclusion in special schools' curricula.
117	CHAPTER 5	<u>The Relationship Between Drama And Make-believe Play</u>
134	CHAPTER 6	<u>Learning Through The Use Of The Drama Process</u>
180	CHAPTER 7	<u>The Methods Of Drama, General Learning Principles And The Role Of The Teacher.</u> A comparative analysis.
224	CHAPTER 8	<u>The Activities Of The Drama Lesson</u> An analysis of the levels of difficulty inherent in certain drama activities, and a consideration of the specific teaching skills which may be required in their presentation.

VOLUME 2

Page VOL. 2, PART 3

258	CHAPTER 9	<u>Drama And The Profoundly Mentally Handicapped Child</u>
321	CHAPTER 10	<u>Observations And Practical Work Carried Out Within Three Schools For Severely Handicapped Pupils</u>
364	CHAPTER 11	<u>The Design Criteria, The Format And The Intentions Of The Curricular Materials Developed</u>

VOL. 2, PART 4

416	CHAPTER 12	<u>An Evaluation Of The Reactions Of Pupils And Staff To The Process Of Drama In The Collaborative Research And Development Stage Of The Project</u>
457	Chapter 13	<u>An Evaluation Of How Pupils And Staff In The Field Trial Schools Reacted To The Developed Materials</u>
503	CHAPTER 14	<u>Some Implications Of The Project For The Curriculum Research And Development Process</u> A discussion.
531	CHAPTER 15	<u>Recommendations And Conclusions</u>
545	APPENDIX A	Byron's questionnaire.
548	APPENDIX B	Charts devised for inclusion in the materials.
556	APPENDIX C	Alternative methods for recording assessment
558	APPENDIX D	List of schools involved in the project - in alphabetical order.

REFERENCES

.....

VOLUME 3

A Year's Course In Drama (Parts 1 & 2)
The materials developed in the course of the project and disseminated to schools for testing.

.....

TABLES

<u>Table Number</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Title</u>
1	51	Specialist teachers employed in Scottish schools.
2	51	The number of aesthetic subject specialists.
3	247	Learning about the drama process: Section 1.
4	250	Learning through the use of the drama process: Section 2a.
5	252	Learning through the use of the drama process: Section 2b.
6	255	Learning through the use of the drama process: Section 2c.
7	423	Pupil gains.
8	426	Table of results.
9a	465	The field sample.
9b	465	The original sample.
10	468	The geographical areas covered.
11	470 - 471	Analysis of extent and type of feedback provided by schools.
12	487	Ease of usage of materials.
13	487	Comments and criticisms on materials.

.....

FIGURES

Fig. 1	p.241	The relative difficulty of certain drama activities.
Fig. 2	p.241	Comparison with other activities.
Fig. 3	p.486	Example of teacher's diagram.

.....

Summary

The research was prompted by the anomaly which appeared to exist between the view of drama as it is presented in the literature, and its representation in special schools curricula. In the literature drama is presented as a desirable curricular element which can be a valuable means of benefiting pupils over a variety of learning areas. In practice, many special schools make no provision for drama, and in only a small proportion of schools is it taught on any regular or systematic basis.

The project established that the extent of the neglect of drama in special education was considerable, and that the reasons for the neglect lay more in staff's ignorance of its educational potential than in their perception of its value or lack of value. Analysis suggested that it would be necessary for staff to experience, at first hand in their own classrooms, the teaching of drama and the outcomes of that teaching in order that they might arrive at a personal assessment of its value to them in their work.

In order to achieve this, a curriculum research and development project was carried out. This involved:

- a) the analysis of the educational justification for drama in special educational curricula, its possible aims, the methods appropriate to teaching it, the activities it may comprise, and the role of the teacher in the drama lesson;
- b) an examination of the extent to which theory was borne out in practice under a variety of classroom conditions within schools for severely and profoundly mentally handicapped pupils, and in collaboration with staff within the schools;
- c) the development of lesson plans and teaching materials which would embody the principles outlined and which could be disseminated for use and critical testing to a wider cross-section of schools.

The following are the main conclusions:

1. Although it may be crucial to the development of profoundly mentally handicapped pupils to ensure that they have adequate stimulation through the provision of activities in movement and music, the provision of regular drama lessons by general staff

may be less essential since

- a) many of the pupils may not be sufficiently developed to comprehend the symbolic aspects of drama as an imaginative, enactive means of representing and interpreting experience;
 - b) the pupils who can respond to the process of drama may be those autistic or behaviourally disturbed children who may need specialist help if drama is to be made accessible to them on a regular and systematic basis.
2. Severely mentally handicapped pupils can benefit from drama in a variety of important ways, depending on the nature of the drama provision offered. Staff within the present project were more willing to learn and use the simpler drama techniques. While the more complex techniques can be used as a means of stimulating problem-solving abilities and imaginative development, the simpler techniques are useful in stimulating language development, in improving social skills, in reducing passivity in the more lethargic pupils, and in encouraging the emergence and development of corporate imaginative play.
 3. The pupils who appeared to benefit most from the provision of drama in the present project were those lively Down's Syndrome children who appear to have a natural aptitude for drama, and some of the more passive or withdrawn children. Most noticeable benefits were in the development of communication abilities, in the extension of dramatic play, and in the reduction of passivity.
 4. In this project, behaviourally disturbed and hyperactive, severely mentally handicapped pupils appeared to benefit least from normal classroom drama provision. There may be a need to make specialist provision for such pupils. There is a need for further research to clarify their reactions and the reactions of profoundly handicapped pupils with similar problems.
 5. As a result of their involvement in the project, staff from over forty schools were enabled to try out drama on a systematic and regular basis, and to arrive at a personal assessment of its value to them in their teaching. Over two thirds have gone on to include drama in their curricular schemes.

6. Staff involved in the collaborative research have acquired a degree of expertise in the curriculum research and development process, and in the teaching of drama. The author recommends that this expertise be utilised and exploited by encouraging such staff to regard their schools as resource centres and to be willing to help staff from other schools in the development and planning of lessons. Skill-sharing of this kind might go some way towards compensating for the lack of specialist drama teachers in this field of education. The anomaly between the neglect of drama and its value as represented in the literature is largely explained by a lack of appropriate teaching materials, staff's lack of knowledge of drama and its practices, and staff's unwillingness to attempt the more complex drama techniques. Skill-sharing might also help reduce some of these barriers to the adoption of drama in schools.

.....

The author also re-examines, in the concluding sections of the thesis, the rationale underpinning the method of curriculum research and development adopted in the project. She attempts to illuminate some of the strengths and weaknesses of this methodology by reference to the practical difficulties experienced in the course of the project. She argues that these reflect a more general disquiet in the research literature about the methods applicable to curriculum research, development and evaluation. She suggests that there may be a need for a reappraisal of curriculum theory to encompass the kind of practical difficulties which appear to be concomitants to collaborative research in education. And she argues that this reappraisal may be particularly important where, as was the case in this project, the research design incorporates the development of teaching materials and the dissemination of these for field testing within a sample of schools which have not been involved in the initial research and development.

- o O o -

PREFACE

This thesis is based on an educational research project carried out on a part-time basis over the period 1977-1981.

The initial question which prompted the research was why drama appears to have made so little impact on the curriculum in special education in spite of the inclusion of drama in training courses for teachers and instructresses, in spite of recommendations for its use in the literature on mental handicap and in published, government policy documents, and in spite of the many educational benefits claimed for it in the specialist literature on drama.

Investigation of this question raised a whole new set of questions concerning the gap which seems to exist between the theories of drama put forward in the specialist literature, and the actual practices employed in relation to it by the general staff in schools. These questions formed a basis for discussion and speculation and enabled a dialogue to take place with general staff and other educationalists on the methods, principles, aims and benefits which could, theoretically, be attributed to drama, and the constraints which, in actual practice, might serve to modify these.

The findings from this dialogue, coupled with a review of the literature, enabled tentative proposals to be advanced concerning the type of drama lesson which might be appropriate to the needs and capabilities of mentally handicapped children, and capable of presentation to them by general staff. These proposals were translated into curricular materials which could be tested in practice under normal classroom conditions in special schools by general staff with little or no previous experience in, or knowledge of, the principles and practice of drama.

The initial development and testing of these materials was carried out in collaboration with general staff from a small sample of schools. The materials were subsequently disseminated to a wider sample of schools for use and critical appraisal.

One of the tenets adopted in the development of these materials was that they should not be teacher proof. They should not require to be used under the same conditions, in the same way, and towards the same end by every user. Rather, there was an attempt to develop

lesson outlines which would be flexible enough in their format to enable staff to use them in a variety of ways, and to adapt them freely to serve different educational purposes, different classroom conditions, and differing pupil needs. There was also an attempt to build into the materials examples of the skills likely to be required in the general planning, development, presentation and assessment of drama.

Those involved in field-testing the materials were asked to provide the researcher with feedback not only on their individual assessments of the effectiveness and usefulness of the materials as a learning and teaching resource, but also on their differing conditions of usage and the ease with which staff had been able to adapt or modify materials to suit differing purposes. An analysis of this feedback enabled an assessment to be made of the effects on staff attitudes and practices and on the pupil development attributed by staff to the use of the materials under a variety of classroom conditions. This assessment was compared with the assessment carried out in the research and development phase of the study, and there was an attempt to identify any common trends emerging from the ideographic data supplied by individual staff.

In evaluating the findings arising out of the practical curriculum project an attempt was made to relate these common trends to the tentative proposals advanced in the earlier stages of the project, and to assess the extent to which the findings from this study appeared to support or negate these. The actual curriculum research and development methods used in the course of the study are also assessed in relation to the theories of curriculum research and development on which the research methods were based.

Because this project is one of the very few research studies which have been conducted into the way in which mentally handicapped pupils and non-specialist teachers relate to the process of drama, much of the theoretical input had to be drawn from the general descriptive and theoretical accounts of drama principles and methods advocated in the literature by leading drama specialists, from the research evidence of drama work carried out with non-handicapped or mentally ill people, or from the data base of research evidence from studies in other, related subject areas. This, coupled with the nature of drama itself - drama being not an easily definable, autonomous discipline, but rather a process which impinges on and is affected by a whole range of

other disciplines - made it virtually impossible to take a narrow, compartmentalised approach to a study of the implications raised by the neglect of drama within the curriculum of Scottish special schools. The arguments put forward in this thesis represent an attempt to take a broad-based approach to the study of a particular aspect of drama. In presenting these arguments the approach adopted has been to provide first the broad, general theoretical analysis and justification which appeared to support the need for drama provision to be made available on a regular and systematic basis within special schools. The report of the practical work carried out attempts to show how these theoretical aspects were modified by the practical realities experienced in the course of the research within individual schools.

The Lay-out of the Thesis

This thesis is in four parts. The first part attempts to provide a context for the later arguments by showing the status quo which existed at the start of the research project, and by showing the influence which this had upon the choice of research topic, methods, aims and practices adopted.

Part 2 represents a provisional, theoretical justification for the aims, principles and methods which may be applicable to the practice of drama in the curriculum of special schools. The evidence supporting these arguments is based partly on the literature cited earlier, and partly on the findings from a series of interviews and discussions carried out as part of the practical investigation within the project.

Part 3 gives a factual account of the collaborative project undertaken in the research. It shows the conditions obtaining within four schools which collaborated in the research, and provides an analysis and explanation of the extent to which the criteria for materials, which had been arrived at on the basis of theoretical analysis, differed from that produced as a result of practical work with pupils and staff.

The final part provides an attempt not only to evaluate the effectiveness of the curricular materials in meeting their stated aims, but also to illuminate common trends which support or contradict existing information on the role of drama in special education, and on the methods appropriate to researching this. The conclusions and recommendations represent an amalgam of the general and the particular -

the latter serving as a means of highlighting aspects of the former which appear to be significant in relation to general staff's perception of the value and purpose of drama in the curriculum of special schools for severely mentally handicapped children in Scotland.

PART 1

THE RESEARCH TOPIC, THE AIMS OF THE RESEARCH,
THE PROPOSED METHODOLOGY AND THE STATUS QUO OBTAINING
AT THE START OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

CHAPTER 1

The Research Topic

A resume of the problems investigated, the aims of the research, and the practical rationale for the investigations carried out.

CHAPTER 2

The Research Design

An analysis of the theoretical rationale underpinning the choice of research design and the methods proposed for the project in the context of three existing theories of curriculum research and development.

CHAPTER 3

Drama - A Neglected Curricular Element?

An estimate of the extent of the neglect of drama in Scottish special schools, and an examination of the factors which appear to be contributing to this neglect.

CHAPTER 1

The Research Topic

Introduction

The Melville Report (HMSO, 1973,a) in discussing the curricular provision and the forms of teacher training necessary to ensure that mentally handicapped children are given opportunities to develop the full potential of which each child is individually capable, suggested that

"the child's inability to achieve a given skill or level of understanding may be due not only to inherent capacity but also to his never having been given the opportunity to attempt it."

(p.13-p.14)

This report marked a considerable change of attitude towards the educational needs of severely and profoundly mentally handicapped children. Those children who had previously been regarded as ineducable, trainable, or in need of care and protection, were now regarded as being capable of benefiting from education and brought fully into the educational system. The 1974 Education (Mentally Handicapped Children) (Scotland) Act implemented many of the recommendations and proposals put forward in the Melville Report. Day Care Centres which, under the Department of Social Work, had provided physical care for the most profoundly mentally handicapped children, were redesignated as special schools and brought under the aegis of the local education authorities. Colleges of education set up new courses to improve the training facilities available for care assistants and instructresses, and, for the first time, qualified teachers were employed alongside those other staff members in schools for the severely and profoundly mentally handicapped, in order to increase the range and quality of educational experiences provided for pupils within these schools.

As a corollary to these legislative changes, government publications were produced outlining recommended curricular schemes and suggesting methods of teaching which would make many of the primary school activities possible for the more seriously mentally handicapped pupils. Publishers responded to the increased demands created by new courses and new legislation and there was a marked increase in the number of new publications dealing with the education of mentally handicapped children.

Drama in the Curriculum

In the majority of these textbooks drama is mentioned as a desirable curricular element. The Melville Report refers to it as being among the aesthetic activities from which pupils might benefit. The government-produced Education Pamphlet (No. 60) includes drama as part of its outline of a typical education programme for severely handicapped pupils, and refers to it specifically as a means whereby

"conversation, imitative behaviour and correct social response, as well as knowledge of the elements of an experience, may all be rehearsed and improved through the active participation of the children and the imaginative planning of the teacher."

(HMSO, 1975; p.17)

The more recent Warnock Report (HMSO, 1978) suggests that mentally handicapped children

"like all children, need to understand the world they live in and to have opportunities to develop their imaginative powers."

(p.32)

Art, music and drama are put forward as ways through which this imaginative development may be effected.

Not surprisingly, drama specialist also see a justification for including drama in the special school curriculum. The benefits they claim for drama range from simple statements such as

"drama is, or could be, an important means of helping the development of spoken language."

(Byron, 1977; p.3)

to more intangible claims such as

"a basic definition of drama might be simply 'to practise living' For this reason it is suggested that opportunities for drama should be provided for every child and should be the concern of every teacher..... drama need never interfere with crowded curricula; it is a way of education in the fullest sense; it is a way of living and, as such, aids rather than interferes with other study and achievement."

(Way, 1967; p.6-7)

While Jennings goes even further and suggests that drama is a means of

"stimulating the imagination, the development of social skills, encouraging body awareness, the sharing of feelings and the growth of self-esteem, the fostering of problem solving and decision making and as a medium to counter the effects of institutionalisation and there should be no group, however disabled, excluded from this type of activity."

(Jennings, 1979; p.1-2)

College of education staff would also appear to see a justification for the inclusion of drama in special education curricula, as training in the methods and principles of drama is listed as one of the subjects

offered in all courses leading to a qualification in special education.

Drama in Schools

Since policy-makers, drama specialists and educationalists all propose drama as a desirable element within the special school curriculum, one might reasonably expect to find it appearing as a regularly timetabled activity. At the start of this project, however, this did not appear to be the case. In the majority of Scottish special schools drama did not appear on the timetable, and many staff were offering pupils little or no drama on any regular or systematic basis. The neglect of drama appeared to be such that, for large numbers of mentally handicapped children, drama was one subject which they were being given little opportunity to attempt. Consequently, it was difficult to assess not only how capable of engaging in drama such children might be if given regular and systematic opportunities to practice it, but also the extent to which they might benefit in educational terms from doing so. Since many pupils had never been given the opportunity to attempt drama it could not be assumed, as Melville had pointed out, that they lacked the inherent capacity to engage in it, to develop a degree of skill in its practice, and to achieve an understanding of what is involved in doing drama.

The Neglect of Drama

The fact that drama was being neglected was evident from only a cursory examination of government reports and other surveys (HMSO 1974; SCOLA, 1975; HMSO, 1978,b) Official statistics showed that there were few specialist drama teachers employed in the special education sector (HMSO, 1974/75). There appeared to be very few textbooks on drama in special education (Jennings, 1973/75; Wethered, 1973; Hodgson and Richards, 1973) and, as far as the researcher had been able to determine, there were few commercially produced resources available for general staff to use in developing, planning and teaching lessons.

References do appear in the literature to the fact that general staff are not taking drama with their classes (Burton, 1955; Stephenson and Vincent, 1975; Byron, 1977/79). Such references do not, however, give a clear indication of whether the neglect of drama simply indicated that staff were omitting to teach it, or whether the situation was one of active rejection of drama by staff

at grass roots level. The latter situation implies that staff had attempted drama, and, on the basis of their experience of it, decided not to include it in their curricular schemes. The former situation is open to a wider interpretation as the reasons for omission need not necessarily include rejection.

If the situation were one of active rejection this would argue for a research investigation which was aimed at determining why grass-roots perception of drama appeared to be at variance with the claims put forward for its educational benefits in policy documents and other literature on mental handicap. If the situation were one of omission, this suggests that there would be a need to involve staff in testing drama within their own classrooms in order to discover whether this resulted in their subsequent acceptance of it as being useful to them or beneficial to their pupils. Regardless of whether staff accepted or rejected drama, their reasons for doing so would go some way towards demonstrating grass-roots attitudes towards drama. This, in turn, would provide some illumination of the extent to which the claims made for drama in the literature appeared to be supported in practice - or whether its claimed benefits appeared to be contingent on the input of specialised teaching or some other, as yet unidentified, factors.

The Preliminary Study

Thus the existing situation of neglect, and the reasons for this neglect, appeared to require some clarification before either the research topic or the research methodology in the present study could be defined with greater precision.

Accordingly, the initial stages of this research project were aimed at

- (i) obtaining clarification on the extent of the neglect of drama in this sector of education;
- (ii) identifying the reasons for the neglect of drama at grass-roots level.

In order to obtain information on these aspects an attempt was made to set up interviews and discussions with general staff within special schools, and with other personnel able to comment knowledgeably on the current situation.

Those contacted included staff and headteachers from over fifty special schools throughout Scotland, special education and drama

advisers, college lecturers, drama specialists working within and outwith Scotland, researchers in other related fields, and a member of the Inspectorate. Information from these sources was obtained by a variety of means - by letter, by telephone interview, in informal discussion and through structured interviews. The information from these sources was supplemented with a review of the published and unpublished literature available on the topic. The main thrust of this work was carried out during the first year of the project. The information obtained has been incorporated, where relevant, into subsequent chapters of this thesis.

The Conclusions of the Preliminary Study

The conclusions arrived at on the basis of this survey were as follows:-

a. Only about one in ten of the general staff interviewed appeared to be rejecting drama on the basis that it has no relevance to the needs of their pupils.

b. Almost without exception such staff were involved in teaching profoundly mentally handicapped pupils (ie. pupils with a measured IQ of under 30, with attendant emotional or physical disabilities, and, regardless of their chronological age, with a developmental level consistent with that of the normal child in the 0-3 years age-range (HMSO, 1969).

c. Virtually none of these staff had personal experience of having attempted drama with pupils, their perception of its irrelevance to pupils being the primary reason given for its rejection.

d. A similarly small number of teachers were actively using drama on a regular basis with their classes.

e. Their classes comprised mainly severely mentally handicapped pupils (IQ range 30-50), although, in some cases, classes also contained more profoundly handicapped pupils, or pupils with a milder degree of mental handicap (IQ 50-60), possibly accompanied by additional physical, behavioural or emotional problems.

f. such staff tended to be ones who

(i) either had a prior knowledge of drama and a conviction of its usefulness;

(ii) or had been given external support and advice in developing drama with their classes by specialist drama teachers or college of education drama staff.

g. The educational benefits of drama perceived by such staff lie mainly in the areas of social, imaginative and linguistic development, and on the factor of 'enjoyment', which staff appeared to regard as an important element in pupils' 'quality of life' and educational experience.

h. In the majority of the schools contacted general staff were not providing drama for pupils on a regular basis, and some were using no drama in their teaching.

i. In these schools the situation appeared to be one of omission rather than active rejection of drama by staff.

j. The reasons given for this omission were both varied and interactive. Their neglect of drama could not be attributed to any single factor, but to a range of diverse factors which, combined, served to mitigate against the provision of drama by general staff.

In order to avoid digression at this stage in the present argument, these factors have been given separate and detailed consideration in a subsequent chapter of this thesis (Chapter 3). In the present context it may be sufficient to assert that the factors which appeared to mitigate most strongly against the provision of drama were -

a. staff's lack of knowledge of drama, and their confusion as to the aims, methods, principles and activities which it might comprise;

b. staff's perception of their own lack of skill, and their perceived inability to present the subject effectively;

c. the lack of drama specialists qualified and willing to work in special education, and the scarcity of teaching materials for use in drama teaching in special schools;

d. staff's perception of the time and effort involved in the adaptation of existing materials which are designed for use with non-handicapped children, and their unwillingness to attempt such adaptation.

To sum up the situation which emerged from the preliminary investigation, therefore, it appeared that while a small minority of staff were actively rejecting drama, and an equally small number had already accepted it as a regular part of their curricular schemes, the general situation was one of omission. In the reasons identified as contributing to this omission, the possible educational value of drama to pupils appeared to be a factor to which the majority of general staff had given little consideration. Most of those inter-

viewed appeared to feel that drama was 'good for' their pupils. Some suggested that its benefits lay in the potential it held for the development of imagination. The development of language and self-confidence were other possible outcomes suggested by staff. But there was little evidence to suggest that staff had seriously considered how these outcomes might be achieved through drama nor how an assessment of them might be arrived at.

Thus, the existing situation appeared to be a paradoxical one in which, on the one hand, staff had no personal experience on which to base an assessment of drama, while, on the other, they perceived themselves to lack the necessary knowledge, skills or materials which would enable them to make an attempt to arrive at a personal assessment of its worth. It seemed that if staff were to make an attempt to test drama for themselves it would be necessary both to reverse the existing conditions - (ie. to enable them to acquire the skills, knowledge, materials etc) - and to find some means of altering their perceptions regarding their potential abilities in this area.

The Attitudes of Staff

In all of the preceding arguments, the abilities and perceptions of staff have been given priority. The rationale behind this emphasis was the projection that the scarcity of specialist staff was likely to continue for some considerable time unless there was a massive reallocation of resources to train and recruit such staff. Given the existing climate of educational cutbacks it did not appear likely that such resources could, or would, be made available in the foreseeable future. It was therefore argued that the onus for the provision of drama was likely to remain upon general staff in schools. Consequently, it was postulated that it would be their perceptions and their abilities which would be likely to determine the extent of the provision made in the near future at least.

The General Aims of the Project

On the basis of this assumption, the most pressing area of concern identified from the preliminary study appeared to be not the need to prove to staff that drama was of benefit to their pupils and of use to them in providing additional methods and activities for use in their teaching, but rather the need for staff to arrive at an informed decision of these questions for themselves. The over-

arching aims of this research project may, therefore, be stated in the form of two questions on which it seemed important to achieve clarification:

1. What will be the effects, if any, on staff's present omission or rejection of drama as a result of their having tested its usefulness to themselves and its relevance to the educational needs of their pupils within their own classroom situations?

2. What conditions may have to be met before staff will be both willing and able to attempt such testing?

The emphasis in these questions on the perceptions and abilities of staff suggested a need to base any practical research in the natural environment within schools, and to obtain the active co-operation of staff in carrying out this practical work.

Collaboration with Staff

The research methodology adopted in the project has been given detailed consideration in the next chapter in the general context of curriculum research and development theory. In the context of the arguments being presented in this chapter, it did appear that a collaborative school-based study would be a feasible method of research. Precedents already exist for such studies in other subject disciplines, and the preliminary investigation carried out in this study showed that staff have been willing to collaborate with college of education staff in the development of drama with their classes. These collaborations have not been aimed at enabling staff to assess drama. In the main, their aims have been to enable staff to include drama in their teaching. But, since a preliminary prerequisite for testing drama is a willingness to teach it, the effects of these collaborations may have relevance to the present study.

Very few of these collaborations have been documented (Byron, 1978, b). But interviews with college staff and general staff appear to support an assumption that such a collaboration can result in staff's including drama in their teaching. Very few staff appear to have rejected drama after such an exercise, but a number of schools were identified where staff continued to neglect drama after the specialist had withdrawn. In most cases the reason given was that there had been insufficiently frequent contact with the specialist, or that the work had not been continued over a long enough period to enable staff to acquire the skills and confidence to tackle the work. It did appear,

however, that the reasons why there had been lack of contact could have relevance for the present project. In some cases the reason was simply that the specialist lacked the time to provide on-going support and visits to schools. In other cases, however, strained inter-personal relationships, difficult conditions within the school, the particular teaching style or the range of methods and activities suggested by the college lecturer, had all contributed to a situation in which contact decreased and the collaboration was discontinued.

From the evidence obtained in these studies, it did appear that staff were, in the main, willing to become involved in collaborative projects with specialist drama staff. This suggested that it would be feasible to attempt to involve staff in such a collaboration, and that it could result in staff's being willing and able to attempt drama teaching and, subsequently, to attempt to assess the effects of that teaching on the development of pupils. The discontinued studies, however, suggested a need for the work to be sustained over a sufficiently long period for staff to acquire the necessary skills. And, in order to maintain this contact, it might be necessary to give some thought to the other factors identified, such as the maintenance of reasonable inter-personal relationships between the researcher and staff, and a willingness on the part of the researcher to work under the same conditions as those facing staff.

Whether such a collaboration would, in the longer term, result in staff's acceptance or rejection of drama, was speculative. But it was postulated that, regardless of the long-term outcome, the considered assessment advanced by staff in the course of this project could further the existing state of knowledge more than was possible in the present situation of uninformed neglect. For example, it did seem possible that this approach might provide some insight into the anomaly which existed between the specialist view of the relevance of drama to the capabilities of the more profoundly handicapped pupil, and the lack of relevance perceived by staff working with such pupils. The anomaly may have arisen simply because the specialist view expressed in the literature is based on personal experience of using drama with such pupils, while staff's perception of its relevance is based on an assessment of pupils' needs and capabilities, and does not include personal experience of how pupils have reacted to the process of drama. On the other hand, there may be other, as yet unidentified, factors which may have to be taken into

account. Hence it was envisaged that collaboration with staff in schools where pupils were mainly designated as 'profoundly' mentally handicapped would provide either some corroboration of the claims made by specialists, or, alternatively, some more detailed information to explain the anomaly which presently exists. Since there appeared to be less scepticism among teachers that 'severely' mentally handicapped pupils were capable of engaging in drama, it was envisaged that collaboration with staff in schools where the population comprised mainly severely mentally handicapped pupils would provide more detailed information on the methods, activities and subject matter which staff assessed as being most appropriate to their capabilities.

The number of schools which can be involved in a collaborative project of this kind is necessarily small over the time-scales possible within an academic research project. And such an approach has two major drawbacks. First, virtually all of the information presently available on drama in special education is based either on the published accounts of the work of drama specialists or on the unpublished information obtainable from those who have been involved in a collaboration with a specialist. The information presented by the former is not necessarily representative of the situation facing the non-specialist. It has already been argued that, because there are few specialists available, and because of the high contact time involved, the number of schools which can have access to collaboration with a specialist is likely to be limited. As the majority of schools will have no access to any form of on-going collaboration with a specialist, the accounts of those who have been involved in such a collaboration give little indication of the situation facing this majority. The findings which arise out of individual collaborative studies may therefore be limited in terms of their general applicability. Given the small numbers of specialists available, it could be some considerable time before enough such studies have been conducted to enable more general conclusion to be drawn.

Secondly, it has been argued that the majority of staff, who had no access to collaboration with a specialist, were unlikely to attempt drama as a result of their perception of their own lack of ability in this area, and because suitable teaching materials were virtually non-existent. It appeared, therefore, that, while collaboration with staff within a small sample of schools would provide information on the one aspect of drama which appeared to be crucial -

namely, how can general staff, with no specialist skills and with no access to specialist skills and teaching materials, assess the value of drama to them in their own teaching? As all the evidence pointed to the fact that these staff would, for some considerable time, remain in the majority, it appeared reasonable to consider whether this aspect could be tackled within the present project.

The Development of Teaching Materials

One possible route appeared to be through the development of teaching materials. It was postulated that

- a. if staff had appropriate teaching materials for use in drama,
- b. and if such material contained in-built instruction and demonstration whereby staff might acquire a knowledge of the methods and principles of drama, and of how their existing teaching skills might be utilised in the presentation and assessment of drama,
- c. and if such materials were sufficiently flexible to enable them to be freely adapted for use under differing classroom conditions,
- d. staff might be willing to attempt to use these materials, and their use could provide staff with a vehicle for testing the effects of drama on their pupils, and for assessing its usefulness to themselves in their teaching.

Clearly, the information obtained from such an exercise would only provide evidence on how a particular sample of staff, using a particular set of teaching materials, perceived the value of drama, and on whether they did, or did not, alter their existing practices in relation to drama as a result. Limited as this information may be, it nevertheless represents a considerable advance on the existing state of knowledge identified at the start of this project, and argued within this chapter.

However, in order to discover whether the criteria for the materials postulated above could be met, it was envisaged that it would still be essential to collaborate with staff within a small sample of representative schools in order to identify what they regarded as being appropriate methods and activities for their pupils, and an appropriate level and style of instruction within the materials for the provision of the practical and theoretical knowledge which staff might require. It appeared, therefore, that it might be possible to combine the collaborative approach identified as being a possible way forward in

establishing the reactions of pupils and staff to experience of drama, with a collaboration which was aimed at the research and development of teaching materials for use by others - the lessons and methods used and tested in the former forming the basis for the latter. Thus, it was envisaged that the collaboration with staff in a small sample of schools could lead to the development of teaching materials which could be researched, developed and tested within these schools before being disseminated to a wider cross section of staff for critical testing. The conditions facing this latter group would, it was hypothesised, be more representative of the conditions facing the majority of general staff who have no access to specialist help or support in the development, planning, presentation or assessment of drama.

An analysis of the findings obtained from the small collaborative sample, together with an analysis of the findings provided by those involved in field testing of the materials, would enable comparisons to be drawn between the reaction of the two groups. These comparisons would enable tentative conclusions to be advanced concerning

a. whether staff appeared to need in-situ contact and demonstration by a specialist as a means of developing skills and knowledge in drama, or whether staff could acquire sufficient skills as a result of using a set of teaching materials to enable them to attempt drama with their classes;

b. whether the provision of teaching materials could, in itself, result in increased provision for drama by general staff;

c. whether those involved in the collaborative project assessed the benefits to pupils in similar areas and to a similar extent as those who used the materials in field trials;

d. whether the provision of teaching materials had resulted in stereotyped conditions of usage, or whether staff had been able to adapt the materials to suit the differing needs of differing groups.

These conclusions could then be placed alongside the findings obtained in the preliminary study on the neglect of drama and should provide some illumination on

a. the factors which appear to be important in determining whether the neglect of drama will continue in the future;

b. whether staff's assessment of the value of drama in this project support a need for change in the existing situation;

c. whether the benefits to pupils appear to be sufficient as to

warrant more general educational concern that they do not continue to be deprived of opportunities for the experience of drama;

d. whether, and for what reasons, this research project has itself effected, or failed to effect, any changes in the existing situation within the two groups of schools involved.

Summary

To sum up finally, therefore, it has been argued in this chapter that the research topic upon which this thesis is based began with a general question concerning the possible extent of the neglect of drama in special education. The literature suggested that the neglect was widespread and at variance with claims for the value of drama in both policy documents and other specialist publications. If, as seemed likely from an examination of the literature, drama was of potential educational value to mentally handicapped pupils, then its exclusion from the curriculum in many special schools for severely and profoundly mentally handicapped pupils was a cause for concern. A preliminary survey established that the benefits of drama to pupils was a relatively minor consideration in the extent to which general staff were prepared to offer drama in their curricular schemes. Other factors, such as their own lack of knowledge of drama, had prevented their arriving at an assessment of its benefits and had resulted in a lack of personal teaching experience in it.

It appeared likely that responsibility for the provision of drama would continue to lie with general staff. And it was hypothesised that it could be their abilities in drama and their assessment of it, on the basis of practical experience of using it with their classes, which would, to a large extent, determine whether they would accept it as a regular part of their curricular schemes, continue to neglect it, or reject it as having little value for themselves or their pupils. It was argued that practical school-based collaboration between the researcher and staff would enable staff to acquire skills in the presentation of drama and allow them to research its value to themselves and to the pupils in their own classrooms. But it was argued that the sample involved in such a project would be small and that the findings could be unrepresentative of the situation obtaining in the majority of schools where no access to specialist staff was available. It was, however, hypothesised that this collaboration could enable the development and testing of curricular materials, which contained in-built instruction

and which were flexibly capable of adaptation to suit a variety of differing classroom conditions. It was further hypothesised that the dissemination of these materials to a wider sample of schools where no access to specialist help was available could generate findings which would enable more general conclusions to be drawn on how staff assessed the value of drama to themselves and to their pupils under the more representative conditions obtaining within this sample. And it was envisaged that the information generated in this project should provide some illumination on whether general staff shared the specialist's view that drama was a potentially beneficial educational experience for mentally handicapped pupils, or whether their assessment of it, as a result of having been involved in this project, continued to be at variance with the claims put forward for it in the literature. The former supports a need for a change in the status quo in order that children do not continue to be deprived of a potentially beneficial educational experience as a result of lack of provision for it. The latter supports a need for further research which will further illuminate the contradictory views expressed and provide an explanation of why the two perspectives on the value of drama in education appear to be at variance.

In this chapter, therefore, it has been argued that, while the research topic began with a general question concerning the reasons for the neglect of drama, the practical experiment carried out sought to examine in detail one specific aspect of that question - the personal reactions of those pupils and staff involved in the research, development and testing of a particular set of curricular materials in drama. The common trends which emerge from an analysis of the findings may, however, serve to illuminate some of the reasons why general staff's neglect of drama was, at the start of this project, at such variance with claims put forward in the literature to support its inclusion in the curriculum of special schools.

In the next chapter the research methods adopted in the project will be given consideration, and their rationale discussed in relation to other theories of curriculum research and development.

CHAPTER 2

The Research Design

Introduction

In the previous chapter there was an attempt to provide a broad general outline of the research topic, the aims of the research and the methods envisaged for achieving these aims.

In this chapter there will be an attempt to examine these methods in more depth and to provide a context for the arguments which will be presented in subsequent chapters by showing the practical and theoretical influences which affected the choice of curriculum research and development methodology adopted. Since the choice of method has a direct bearing on the kind of information and data obtained within the project, on the nature of the inferences which may be drawn from this data, and on the evaluative strategies which are appropriate to analysing this data, any discussion of these has to be set against the intentions underlying the research methods.

The methods adopted within the project will be discussed in relation to three existing models of curriculum research, development and dissemination - the 'centre-periphery' model, the 'grass-roots' or 'client-centred' approach, and the 'collaborative-investigative' model. It will be argued that the intentions underpinning a centre-periphery approach to innovative curriculum research and development are, in many respects, the antithesis of those implied in the present project, although there may be some similarities in the actual practices adopted within the project. It will be argued also that, although there was a strong element of client-centredness within the work attempted at grass-roots level, a completely client-centred approach has limitations in a situation where there is no clearly held consensus of opinion on the nature of the problem and the solution to be aimed for. And it will be suggested that within the present project there was no such consensus.

Consequently, it will be argued that the 'collaborative-investigative' approach, which regards any curricular offering as a means of testing a series of hypotheses about a problem, rather than as a means of providing a solution to a problem, appeared to be most relevant to the issues raised by the neglect of drama in special education. Such an approach advocates the need for educational research projects to invite 'classroom responses' rather than 'laboratory responses'. This implies that the conditions under which the research is carried

out are not artificially controlled for the purposes of the experiment, nor is there an attempt to modify the classroom environment to make it more suitable to the purposes of the research. Implicit in this approach, therefore, is the acceptance of the totality of the scene encountered and a need to work within the constraints of that scene.

A number of the practical and theoretical objections to this methodology will be discussed, and it will be argued that some of the objections which may apply within mainstream educational establishments may apply less markedly within the special education sector where conditions are somewhat different from those applying in other areas of education. Finally, it will be argued that the recommendations and conclusions arrived at by this method of enquiry may themselves be viewed not as definitive answers to the questions researched, but as a further series of hypotheses which may themselves require to be tested before their general applicability and validity may be assessed.

The Centre-Periphery Model of Curriculum Research and Development

It has been noted that one of the central aims of this project was the research development and dissemination for field testing of a package of teaching materials for use in special schools by staff with no prior specialist knowledge of drama and little access to specialist support.

The development of packages of curricular materials has, traditionally, been associated with the centre-periphery model of curriculum innovation, with its assumption that the curriculum materials will be fully researched, developed and completed by a specialist central agency outwith the school before their dissemination to schools (Schon, 1971). The implication is that the curriculum developers and the users will be two different groups. The diffusion of the materials will be a centrally managed process in which staff are provided with materials, given training in their use and incentives for their use by the prospect of achieving more effective teaching results. The intention behind the development of such curricula is to ensure that existing materials and practices are bettered and that the innovation is accepted. The approach is a proselytising one which seeks to persuade staff in schools of the value of the innovation. The aim is the raising of standards of education by the development of materials which are more appropriate to the needs of the learner group aimed at, and are more effective in promoting pupil learning.

The effect tends to be that such materials may be made as teacher-proof as possible to ensure that even poor teachers will be able to achieve reasonable results if they use the materials in the prescribed way.

Selection of Content

In a situation of this kind there is an obvious need to ensure that the curriculum materials are as 'right' as possible in order to ensure the success of their adoption. This need for materials to be 'right' has engendered considerable debate on what constitutes the most appropriate criteria for the selection and organisation of content within any curricular scheme. Some have argued that the selection and organisation of content should be made on the basis of logical and philosophical consideration of the nature of knowledge and the forms of knowledge appropriate to various disciplines and subject areas (Hirst, 1965; Phenix, 1964; Peters, 1973; Soltis, 1968). Others have proposed a taxonomical ordering of knowledge to ensure that adequate attention is given to the higher order forms such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 1964; Shaw, 1972). Debate has also centred around whether information should be presented to pupils in hierarchical sequence, each previous element of information making possible the acquisition of new information, or whether the presentation of information should be such that central concepts recur in spiral form throughout the educational process, and that these concepts will gain in diversity and complexity as appropriate to each new developmental stage or period of learning (Bruner, 1960; Whitehead, 1932; Nisbet, 1957; Piaget, 1972).

Assessment of Curricular Materials

The need to demonstrate the effectiveness of the claims made for various curricular materials also led to a further debate on evaluation in education. The specification of objectives was proposed as a means whereby precise learning outcomes might be predicted. Results could be measured against pre-determined and standardised criteria which would enable evaluation and measurement of the extent of learning achieved using specific curricular schemes (Tyler, 1967; Taba, 1962; Gagné, 1970; Mager, 1962).

Characteristics of Teaching Packages Produced by Central Agencies

The range of characteristics which may be associated with the

centre-periphery approach to curriculum research and development may be summed up as follows:

a. Materials are researched and developed by subject specialists, research workers or professional curriculum developers.

b. In Britain there is also a strong element of teacher participation in the design and development of resources.

c. Curricular materials are developed outwith schools, tested within a sample of schools, modified, adapted and, finally, disseminated to schools as a complete package of learning and teaching resources.

d. Materials are standardised in their format - they may, or may not be capable of adaptation for use in forms other than the standardised form presented within the package.

e. Staff in schools are encouraged to adopt the innovation represented by the developed materials and are given training in the use of materials by the development team.

f. The effectiveness of the innovation is judged by

(i) the learning outcomes achieved;

(ii) the adoption rate of the innovation.

The Advantages of the Centre-Periphery Model

The advantages of the centre-periphery approach are that it has led to a considerable increase in the published materials available for use by staff in many subject areas - notably in maths and science. Staff have a wider range of curricular options open to them and can select from that range those which appear to be best suited to their teaching purpose. The proselytising for change and innovation which has occurred as a result of the development of new materials and courses, has resulted in changes in educational practice which might not have occurred had the initiative for making changes been left entirely to individual staff within schools. It is, for example, dubious how far the 'new maths' would have achieved recognition within schools without a centralised and co-ordinated attempt to provide materials, training and support for this form of work (HMSO, 1965; Nuffield, 1961/66/67; HMSO, 1967). Moreover, the research and the debate engendered by the search for the 'right', the 'worthwhile' and the 'representative' in curriculum materials, has created a wider appreciation of the many factors which may have to be taken into account in the selection and organisation of content within any given subject area (Gordon and Lawton, 1978).

The concept of specifying objectives has been instrumental in encouraging teachers to re-think the purpose of their own teaching and has provided a number of alternative methods of evaluating the results of any learning/teaching encounter. The concept of criterion referencing, for example, has a number of implications for the abilities of slow-learning pupils. Such pupils may be capable of achieving the same results as more able pupils in certain areas of the curriculum, providing they are given sufficient time to master the skills involved (HMSO, 1965; Harlen, 1975).

The Disadvantages of the Centre-Periphery Model

On the debit side, it has been argued that the provision of centrally produced teaching resources may lessen the motivation of staff to acquire personal skills necessary to adapt their teaching materials or practices to meet the needs created by these new conditions (Shipman, 1976). The production of materials in a standardised form may also result in a situation in which the materials used are only suitable to the needs of a section of the learners in any given teaching group. Pupils' failure to learn, however, may be attributed to pupils' inability to learn, and staff may fail to take account of the possibility that the materials or methods being used might not be suitable for these particular pupils (Petrie, 1975; Brown, 1976).

It has also been argued that the emphasis on the selection and organisation of content can lead to the neglect of other, equally important factors in any learning/teaching interaction. It has been argued, for example, that the effect of organisation of the learning environment, the 'hidden agenda' in any educational contact, teacher effectiveness, and factors outwith the school which may affect the cultural or social ethos of the school, can all have an effect on the extent to which pupils benefit from any specific aspect of educational provision in school. (Jones, 1972; McDonald et al, 1971; Bernstein, 1961). Moreover, it has been argued that there has been a tendency for those working within centrally directed curricular research projects to seek to meet educational problems by the production of new or better teaching materials, rather than by seeking to carry out research which will elucidate the 'real' nature of the problems in education which may, or may not, be a shortage of appropriate teaching materials in any given case. (Stenhouse, 1975; Shipman, 1976).

Summary

To sum up, therefore, the centre-periphery model of curriculum research and development represents an attempt to create changes in the existing situation within schools as a result of a centralised agency taking the initiatives and encouraging staff in schools to adopt the proposed innovation. This innovation often takes the form of new course materials and programmes of instruction in specific subject areas. The development of these is generally a response to the curriculum developers' perception of a need for a change in the status quo. And it has been argued that, in spite of the objections which may be levelled at the centre-periphery approach, such an approach may be an effective means of promoting change in a situation where staff in schools lack perception of a need for change or lack the will or facilities to make changes without external support or direction.

The Applicability of the Centre-Periphery Model to the Present Project

Since general staff within special schools either do not perceive there to be a problem in relation to the neglect of drama, or do perceive a problem but lack the will or the skill to take initiatives to solve that problem, it could be argued that a centralised approach towards solving the problem of the neglect of drama in special education would be appropriate. And this could be particularly the case if it were clear that those best suited to redress the neglect were the general staff within schools, and if it were proved that the development of appropriate teaching materials was a major stumbling block to drama's adoption.

The basic argument against a centralised approach within the present project is to be found in the conditional 'if' in the statement above. It has already been argued that the preliminary survey showed the lack of teaching materials to be a contributory factor in the neglect of drama. There was, however, no evidence to show that the provision of teaching materials would, on its own, be sufficient to motivate staff to adopt drama in their teaching. The preliminary survey showed that pupils appeared to benefit educationally from the provision of drama by specialist staff. And evidence from the small number of general staff who were already using drama regularly in their teaching suggested that pupils could benefit from its provision by non-specialist staff. There did not, however, appear to be much evidence to suggest why, under what conditions, and in which ways pupils would benefit from exposure

to drama. There was little evidence to show the extent to which benefits differed when the work was supported by visits and demonstration by a drama specialist, and when the work was an on-going feature of the general curriculum. There was even less possibility of making an accurate assessment of the value general staff placed on drama as an adjunct to their existing repertoire of teaching methods and activities since so few staff were, in fact, using it in their teaching. And, in spite of the fact that it seemed likely that any redress of the existing neglect of drama would be left to general staff in schools, there was no evidence to show that such staff were best suited to be the innovators and implementers of drama in the curriculum.

Consequently, it was argued that it could be premature to attempt to persuade staff to adopt drama as a curricular innovation, and equally premature to seek to persuade staff that drama was a valuable addition to their curricular schemes in the absence of strong evidence to show that this was so. As a result, although the development of curricular materials was seen as a central ingredient within this research project, the intentions in researching, developing and disseminating these materials were quite different from those inherent in the centre-periphery model - a model which seeks, primarily, to secure the adoption of the innovation it proposes.

Differing Intentions

In this project, it was not the intention to proselytise either for drama or for the materials themselves. Staff were invited to take and test the materials, but no guarantees were given as to the expected outcomes of their doing so, nor of the projected usefulness of the materials themselves. Similarly, it was not the intention to press for changes in the status quo within schools, but rather to seek to understand better the reasons behind the status quo and to identify the ways in which it might or might not be amenable to change, either as a result of internal or external pressures for change.

There was an emphasis on attempting to suit the materials to the needs of pupils and staff, in the hope that staff would see the possibility of their utilising the materials in their teaching, thereby enabling them to assess the value of drama to them in their teaching. But this emphasis arose from the need to identify the reaction of pupils and staff within the collaborating schools and to seek to test the hypothesis that the reactions of these pupils and staff would be

representative of the larger population of pupils and staff within other schools, rather than from a desire to produce a 'full' or 'finished' curriculum in drama.

Thus, the intention in the development of materials was not simply the provision of appropriate teaching materials which staff might take and use in the teaching of drama. Rather, the intention was to discover how pupils and staff reacted to the process of drama, and the materials represented a vehicle by which to test the assumptions about drama which were embodied in the materials.

Staff were encouraged to see the materials as being capable of adaptation to suit a variety of purposes, but, again, whether staff did adapt or modify the materials was their own decision. And, again, it was the reasons given by staff which would constitute the evaluative information rather than the fact that they did or did not require to adapt, modify or extend the materials in particular ways.

No persuasion was exerted to ensure that staff who took the materials did, in fact, use them. It was assumed that the reasons given by staff as to why they did not use materials would provide valuable information to compare and contrast with the information given by those who did adopt the materials. Similarly, if staff rejected the materials but subsequently introduced drama into their curricular schemes using other materials or under other influences, this too would provide valuable information in evaluating the project. There was, therefore, no assumption that the effectiveness of the materials developed in the project would be judged by their take-up rate or by the extent to which they achieved pupil learning in the expected areas, or, to be more accurate, the effectiveness of the materials might be judged by these criteria, but the effectiveness of the materials was regarded as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself.

As ineffective materials could prevent staff from being able to experience and assess drama for themselves, it seemed logical to base the materials on these methods, procedures and activities which had proved effective in practice within the collaborating schools. To have given little thought to the selection and organisation of content within the teaching materials would have been to create unnecessary barriers to the adoption of drama by presenting staff with curricular materials which could be, at best, sloppy in their conception and presentation, and, at worst, completely irrelevant to the needs of pupils and staff within special schools. Thus, while the materials

did not seek to be a 'finished' curriculum in drama, nor to put themselves forward as the only 'right' or 'appropriate' materials for use at this level, they did seek to be representative of the aims, the principles and the methods which, by theoretical analysis and practical testing, had proved effective in one situation and could, it was hypothesised, prove effective in others. It would be up to general staff in these other situations to prove or modify this hypothesis.

Similarly, as staff's inability to utilise drama procedures effectively as a result of lack of personal skill in teaching drama could also prevent their arriving at an informed assessment of drama, there was an attempt to provide in the materials an element of in-built instruction.

The inclusion of in-built instruction does not equate to the staff training provided in the case of centre-periphery diffusion models, as the training envisaged was the acquisition of skills in the presentation and assessment of drama in general, rather than specific training in the specific methods to be used within particular lessons in the materials. There was no assumption that all users should use the materials in the same way. There was an emphasis on establishing whether and how staff with differing teaching styles and differing educational aims might relate to the materials, and might adapt or modify these to suit their own needs.

Finally, there was no attempt to arrive at a standardised format for assessing the effectiveness of the materials. Instead, it was envisaged that individual assessment would be based on the individual teacher's subjective judgment of how effective or useful lessons had been in relation to that particular teacher's educational aims and teaching requirements.

In almost every respect, therefore, the intentions of the present project differed from those implicit in the centre-periphery model which seeks to initiate change and innovation in response to an identified need.

And, for all the reasons argued above, the centre-periphery model of curriculum research and development may be rejected as inappropriate to the aims of the particular investigation on which this thesis is based. It has, however, been necessary to include some consideration of this approach for the following reasons. First, because of the similarities which have been discussed, it did appear to be necessary to make a clear distinction between the differing intentions in the

two approaches. Many of the points raised in discussing why the centre-periphery approach was rejected, also provide a context for many of the arguments which will be expanded upon in subsequent chapters. Secondly, the validity of this approach will be returned to and discussed in the final section of this thesis and will have some importance, in the light of the conclusions and recommendations arrived at on the basis of the evidence from this project. Thirdly, the arguments against this approach to the development of curriculum materials have, to an extent, been responsible for the refusal of drama specialists to countenance the possibility of the production of standardised resource materials for use in special education. And, in a subsequent chapter, it will be argued that this has contributed to the difficult situation facing those staff who might wish to include drama in their curricular schemes, but are unable to do so because they lack the necessary materials for teaching it (Chapter 3). Finally, it is out of the debate engendered by the centre-periphery approach that the more collaborative, client-centred and investigative models of curriculum research and development have evolved, and these approaches have considerably influenced the methodology of the project.

The Grass-Roots, Client-Centred Approach

Nisbet (1981) describes this pattern of collaborative research and development as one in which

"Objectives are defined by participants and modified in the course of experiments, leading to small but incremental changes in practice. These 'field development studies' are based on a philosophy which rejects the mechanistic notion of research as something which is invented in one place and can be applied elsewhere."

(p.173)

In this grass-roots or client-centred approach to curriculum research and development, the emphasis is on the need for curriculum research and development workers to involve teachers at every stage in the research and development process, and to provide support for those schools who are themselves developing innovative curriculum strategies. Underpinning this approach is the assumption that

"genuine innovation does not occur unless teachers become personally committed to ensuring its success. Unless this commitment occurs, new materials and methods may eventually be permanently relegated to the store-cupboard or used only in an unsystematic manner."

(Hoyle, 1971; p. 233)

Such an approach does not, therefore, seek to proselytise for the innovation, but seeks rather to identify areas in which teachers perceive a real need for change, and to collaborate with teachers in effecting the changes necessary to answer that need.

These changes may involve the development of new curricular schemes or materials, or they may involve organisational or other changes. In general, however, the changes effected by this approach tend to be confined to the schools involved in the collaboration, and such an approach may be less concerned with generalising changes over a wider segment of the educational population. The success of the innovation is not judged purely on the extent of its adoption, or on its effectiveness in meeting the aims of the research. Such factors are regarded as important. Of equal importance, however, is the dialogue which occurs during the research and which is aimed at reciprocity of learning and skill-sharing between the various parties involved in the collaboration. This approach also seeks to answer the objection levelled at curricular materials developed and disseminated by the centre-periphery model, which is that by presenting teachers with packaged materials one is lessening their personal motivation to acquire skills in curriculum development. The fact that materials are being developed in collaboration with teachers, for these teachers, and in direct response to their specific needs should increase, rather than lessen, their motivation to acquire skills in developing curricula. While the danger that the professional curricular worker or subject specialist may impose his ideology on potential users, is negated by the fact that staff of various ideological persuasions can form an input into the development of materials for their own use, and staff are encouraged to regard newly developed resources as being capable of adaptation to suit the particular needs of different pupil groups or teaching situations.

As will be evident from the brief analysis given above, many of the features of the present project have been influenced directly by these theories of curriculum research and development. There is, however, one area in which the approach adopted within this project does diverge from the client-centred approach.

It has been argued that the advantage of such an approach is that it addresses itself to areas of real need, identified by staff, and seeks to work alongside staff in finding a solution to the problems identified. Because the curriculum change occurs in response to real

or perceived need, there is a much stronger likelihood that the change will be implemented. And, because staff have been involved in creating the conditions whereby the change may be implemented, they ought to be in a position to use the new materials/apply the new procedures/implement the necessary organisational changes, etc., with an understanding of the aims and intentions inherent in the changes.

The disadvantage of such an approach would appear to lie in the fact that it is 'solution-oriented'. Because it seeks to answer real, or perceived needs, and to solve problems identified by staff, it may fail to take account of those areas in which problems may exist but staff either fail to perceive these problems, or perceive the solutions to lie in areas which do not, in fact, contain the solutions to the real problems which require to be addressed. And this appeared to be the situation pertaining to the neglect of drama in special education at the start of this project. Many of the staff interviewed saw no pressing need to redress the neglect of drama. Others regarded it as important to redress the neglect, but did not regard themselves as being either the appropriate or the competent people to do so. There were conflicting views on the nature of the problem - shortage of teaching materials, lack of specialist staff, inadequate training facilities, and a number of other factors being advanced as the root cause of the neglect. Some staff did not perceive that the neglect of drama constituted a problem, in that they did not regard its neglect as a cause for concern because they believed it to be irrelevant to the educational needs of their pupils. If to this we add the fact that, even in the specialist literature on drama, there is no clear consensus of the aims towards which drama in special education ought to be directed, nor is there a recognised body of knowledge which describes the activities, the methods, the subject content or the procedures appropriate to teaching drama at this level, the logical inference is that in order to 'solve' the problem of the neglect of drama it will be necessary to understand much more clearly than at present the nature of the problem which exists, or even to establish with some degree of certainty that the neglect of drama does, in fact, constitute a problem of educational concern.

Thus, while the procedures adopted in the present project do share many common features with the collaborative, client-centred approach to curriculum research and development, the intentions of the project

were much more influenced by theories put forward by those who, like Stenhouse, suggest that all the approaches discussed so far

"have about them the implication that in some sense or other a curriculum is a policy recommendation expressed in a framework of action. The curriculum developer is seen as he who offers solutions rather than as one who explores problems. And his success depends upon his finding the right solution, his advocating the 'correct' course of action - or at least the best available course of action The developer is seen as the creative artist or the man with a mission. The evaluator is the critic or the practical man who tempers enthusiasm with judgment In order to move from product or process models of curriculum development towards a research model, it is necessary first to cast the developer not in the role of the creator or man with a mission, but in that of the investigator. The curriculum he creates is then to be judged by whether it advances our knowledge rather than by whether it is right. It is conceived as a probe through which to explore and test hypotheses and not as a recommendation to be adopted."

☺ (Stenhouse, 1975; p.124/5)

Such an approach still advocates a need for research to be firmly rooted in the practicalities of everyday classroom reality, and there is an emphasis on close collaboration between the researcher and school staff. And it has been argued that both of these features appeared to be conducive to establishing the kind of information required from the present project. However, the investigative approach described by Stenhouse appeared to be much more appropriate than a problem-solving approach, given the uncertainties in the situation being researched.

The Collaborative-Investigative Approach

This approach to curriculum research and development has largely stemmed from the theories and work of those writers associated with the Centre for Applied Research in Education at the University of East Anglia (CARE). Just as the grass-roots, client-centred approach developed in reaction to centre-periphery models, so the theories of this group were developed as a reaction to the solution-oriented and problem-solving bias which had evolved as a result of the client-centred approach.

Whitty (1981) suggests that

"the strength of most of the writers associated with CARE lies in their commitment to the integrity of lived experience and their abiding interest in the subjective interpretations of curricular reality made by teachers and pupils."

(p.62)

Stenhouse expresses this commitment in the assertion that

"fruitful development in the field of curriculum and teaching depends upon evolving styles of co-operative research by teachers and using full-time researchers to support the teachers' work. This probably means that research reports and hypotheses must be addressed to teachers, that is, they must invite classroom research responses rather than laboratory research responses."

(Stenhouse, 1975; p.162)

Stenhouse suggests that it is not only necessary for research workers to study the work of teachers, it is equally necessary for teachers to take a critical attitude towards their own work. He argues that teachers must be encouraged to see themselves as researchers within their own classroom situations, and the collaborative-investigative model which he proposes as an approach to curriculum research and development in schools is one in which any curricular offering may be regarded as

"a way of translating any educational idea into a hypothesis testable in practice. It invites critical testing rather than acceptance."

(Ibid; p.142)

The curricular offerings put forward for practical testing should, therefore, not be presented as unqualified recommendations, but as provisional specifications, the aim of which should be to

"feed a teacher's personal research and development through which he is progressively increasing his understanding of his own work and hence bettering his teaching."

(Ibid; p.143)

He makes no assumptions as to who should initiate the work of curriculum research and development, nor is the provision or development of classroom materials to support the line of enquiry excluded.

Stenhouse's theories have been quoted at some length because many of the intentions - if not all of the actual practices - in this project, were considerably influenced by these. The approach he advocated seemed to be particularly well suited to the investigation of drama in special education. First, because, as we argued in the previous chapter, many staff members regard themselves as either unwilling, unable or unfitted to take drama with their classes. In such a situation a research project which aims at a controlled 'laboratory' response may add to the body of knowledge available on the effects of drama in such a situation. As such information is in relatively short supply, such a project could be useful in 'academic' terms. In order to be of practical use, however, such information

would require to be put to the test of practice in a normal classroom environment. The 'laboratory' experiment might be effective in identifying the range of skills or materials necessary for the effective presentation of drama to mentally handicapped children, and it might go some way towards demonstrating the benefits gained by pupils. It could not, however, demonstrate the effect of drama on pupils when it is used by non-specialist staff in a naturalistic context. Whereas a project which is set within the normal classroom environment and which involves teachers as researchers may enable these teachers either to acquire the skills they feel they need in order to provide drama for their classes, or it may enable them to identify the skills required, whether or not they are themselves capable of acquiring these. And, if they decide not to use drama, this should be a conscious decision based on educational grounds, rather than simply a negation of its usefulness on the grounds that they don't know how to teach it. It could be argued that both an acceptance of drama within their curricular schemes, and a rejection of it on sound educational grounds, constitute more informed teaching practice than is the case at present.

Secondly, it has been argued that insufficient research evidence presently exists on the role of drama in the education of mentally handicapped children to provide justification for its inclusion in the curriculum on anything other than theoretical grounds. Evidence from research with non-handicapped pupils suggests that its educational usefulness lies in the potential it holds for developing the imagination, as a means of exploring ideas, situation and role behaviour, in the language flow it engenders, in the opportunities it provides for corporate activity, for rehearsing social situations or for speculation on how interpersonal or social problems may be simulated and solved. All of these are clearly relevant in providing an 'education for living' and may have some relevance within programmes which seek to train the mind or induce vocational readiness. It has not yet been proved, however, that drama is useful to mentally handicapped children in the same ways. Theoretical analysis, and the few accounts of drama with mentally handicapped children which already exist, do suggest that it is, but only practical testing will determine whether and under what conditions it may be so. Again a 'laboratory' research project could provide information here. Such a project, however, by nature of the controlled experiments implied within it, can only provide certain types of information. It would be unlikely, for example, to provide

insights into the way general staff - those who, it has been argued, will have responsibility for the provision of drama - will relate to it under normal classroom conditions. Hoetker argues that the controlled experimental approach is limited because

"the commitment to repeatability, generalisability, quantification and control leads, in practice, to research studies that investigate not what is important, but what is economically measurable according to our poor and stunted psychometric technology. Things of real interest to educators - appreciation, understanding humaneness, self-respect, creativity, sensitivity - are largely uninvestigated simply because these things cannot be operationalized in terms of scores on available instruments of dubious relevance to the phenomenon in its naturalistic real world manifestations."

(Hoetker, 1975; p.86)

He goes on to argue, therefore, that

"the process of discovering what drama means in the lives of the students, the teachers, and their school will involve the investigator in interacting with the students and teachers and being accepted by them. It will involve locating several informants who will explain, answer questions and correct the investigator's tentative formulations. It will involve the recording, for later comparison and analysis, as much as possible of everything that is seen and said and thought The report of such a study would attempt to give the reader a version of the investigator's own experience, of the process by which he learned, as well as what he learned, and it would undoubtedly be augmented by lengthy quotations from the evidence on which the investigator's formulations are based."

(Ibid)

Hoetker, an American researcher, adopted this position as a result of being involved in the Educational Laboratory Theatre Project, the largest and most expensive single experimental study of English teaching that has, so far, been carried out. He notes that by the end of the four year research period he had become

"along with others on the staff, a pronounced sceptic about the value of the 'scientific' research we had done. Indeed, the most useful parts of our reports, for one interested in understanding the programme and its successes and failures, were the comments of the students and the informed insights of the expert observers."

(Ibid; p.81)

Hoetker's position with regard to the research of drama is very similar to that expressed by Parlett and Hamilton, two of those who have advocated the collaborative investigative model of curriculum research and development. They argue that the traditional pre-test, post-test formula for controlled research is inadequate to elucidate the complexities of an educational experiment which is conducted

under natural classroom conditions. Thus, while the laboratory experiment may provide a number of hypotheses about what may happen in practice, there will, in the practical situation be atypical results, methodological problems, or unusual constraints which will considerably modify the generality of the findings obtained from controlled experimentation. Like Hoetker, they suggest that the evaluation of a research programme should aim to give an illuminative account of that programme, rather than simply to measure the observed effects. They suggest therefore that

"illuminative evaluation is introduced as belonging to an 'anthropological' research paradigm. Attempted measurement of 'educational products' is abandoned for intensive study of the programme as a whole; its rationale and evolution, its operations, achievements and difficulties. The innovation is not examined in isolation, but in the school context or 'learning milieu' Observation, interviews with participants (students, instructors, administrators and others), questionnaires, and analysis of documents and background information are all combined to help 'illuminate' problems, issues, and significant programme features The aims of illuminative evaluation are to study the programme; how it operates; how it is influenced by various school situations in which it is applied; what those directly concerned regard as its advantages and disadvantages; and how students' intellectual tasks and academic experiences are most affected."

(Parlett and Hamilton, 1972; p.1)

Clearly, much of this paradigm has been influential in determining the evaluation strategies and methodology envisaged for the present project - particularly in the later stage of the dissemination of materials. It has been argued that the data for this stage will be the subjective data provided by individual staff on the situation obtaining within their own classrooms, while an analysis of this data will be concerned to compare, contrast and expand upon the general and atypical findings which emerge.

It must be noted, however, that, while the laboratory approach may be criticised on the grounds that it does not take account of the effects which can be created by the random factors which may occur in any individual instance of practice within the natural environment, the illuminative approach is not free from criticism. Nor is the collaborative-investigative approach to curriculum research and development. For example, such an approach is unlikely to produce findings which can be unequivocally generalised to other situations, since the whole point of the approach is to note how individual differences modify the commonality of theoretical formulations in individual cases.

The insistence on the importance of the individual situation may correspondingly decrease the attention which is paid to the wider social and political factors and the study may fail, as Whitty argued, to address itself to the problem of why, in spite of individual differences

"teacher behaviour is apparently so generalisable across classrooms, subject areas and schools".

(Whitty, 1981; p.63)

Stenhouse accepts the potential validity of this criticism, but argues that, although the individual teacher is not concerned to generalise beyond the experience of her own classroom situation,

"each classroom should not be an island. Teachers working in such a tradition need to communicate with one another. They should report their work. Thus a common vocabulary of concepts and a syntax of theory need to be developed. Where that language proves inadequate, teachers would need to propose new concepts and new theory. The first level of generalization is thus the development of a general theoretical language. In this, professional research workers should be able to help. If teachers report their own work in such a tradition, case studies will accumulate, just as they do in medicine. Professional research workers will have to master this material and scrutinize it for general trends. It is out of this synthetic task that general propositional theory can be developed."

(Stenhouse, 1975; p.157)

The onus, therefore, is on the researcher to provide the degree of generality which will answer the criticism put forward by Whitty. Moreover, the present author would contend that there is no reason why this generalization should not be extended to include a consideration of the wider political or social factors which may have a bearing on individual situations. For example, in the present project it was possible to identify a number of teachers who, individually, held particular attitudes towards the value and status of drama within the special school curriculum. In examining the reasons behind these attitudes, however, it was impossible not to take into account the wider cultural, social and ideological ethos which had given rise to them and which was exerting an influence on the common behaviour of a considerable number of individual staff.

Another criticism levelled at the collaborative-investigative research paradigm is that it is only possible to operate such a paradigm within a school situation in which attitudes are 'open'. Open attitudes are defined as a willingness to take a critical stance in relation to one's own teaching and to be prepared to make that teaching available for scrutiny and critical comment by others, and a willingness to allow intervention which may lead to changes in classroom practice. This degree of openness in classroom interactions may not suit the temperaments of those who prefer to operate autonomously 'behind closed classroom doors'. Teachers, accustomed to working within the closed confines of individual classrooms, may feel personally threatened when asked to take a critical approach to their own teaching and to expose this teaching to criticism by others. This may be particularly marked when teachers are attempting new practices, since it means that they may well be exposed to additional criticism at a time when, in trying out new practices, they are operating at unusually high levels of ignorance or incompetence.

Consciousness of their weakness in teaching drama, for example, may make teachers less than willing to collaborate in the research, especially if, in addition, they have preconceived attitudes towards drama's lack of value or relevance in the curriculum. It is in just such a situation, however, that there needs to be close contact between the specialist and the class teacher in order to break down the barriers which each party perceives. The evidence from collaborative studies in other subject areas suggests that it may take some time to establish the kind of interpersonal relationships which will enable effective communication to take place. Such studies also indicate, however, that teachers have been persuaded to adopt a research perspective when they have perceived that the research study offers the possibility of being of some practical value to them in the classroom (Shipman, 1976; Partlett and Hamilton, 1972).

In the present project it could not be guaranteed that the research would be of practical value. Since the curricular practices or materials were put forward in order to test, rather than to prove, hypotheses, the possibility that the hypotheses would not stand up in practice had to be conceded. While such 'failure' may be acceptable to the professional curriculum developer or to the research worker - in that it may advance the state of knowledge - it may be less

acceptable to the teacher who has to balance up the effects of existing practices on pupil learning with the possible effects that may occur if new practices are adopted and achieve less effective results. While the teacher may learn from the experience and, as a result, better her subsequent teaching, the pupils who have been involved in the "experiment" may have to recover the time lost through an experiment which has failed. Since mentally handicapped pupils - almost by definition - learn slowly, it appeared that time could be an important consideration in the extent to which staff were prepared to collaborate.

In order to minimise the extent to which staff would require to risk 'exposure' in the early stages of the present project, it was proposed that a period of preliminary, exploratory practical work would be carried out within the schools who had agreed to collaborate. It was envisaged that this would serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, it would enable the researcher to obtain some immediate, personal feedback on how pupils reacted to the process of drama. On the other, it would provide a period of time in which to establish communication with staff in a non-threatening situation. By making the researcher's attempts at practical work with pupils available for scrutiny and comment by staff, it was envisaged that staff would be in a better position to decide for themselves whether they wished to make the investment of time and personal effort which could be involved in attempting to test drama for themselves within their own classrooms. At this stage, therefore, it was the researcher who had to adopt an 'open' attitude in the hope that staff would eventually be prepared to reciprocate and become open to personal involvement.

Again, Stenhouse himself acknowledges that openness is a necessary characteristic for the research paradigm he advocates. And he agrees that, in certain sectors of the school community, staff may feel that they require to take a 'closed' attitude towards intervention and exposure. Admissions of incompetence in trying out new ideas may be regarded as a possible drawback to promotion prospects. Experimentation, especially when it cannot offer guarantees of success, may carry with it the possibility that external examination standards may not be met in as effective a way as was the case using tried and proven methods. While staff who rely on personal competence in order to maintain classroom discipline and order, may be reluctant to place themselves in a situation in which this discipline may be threatened and their authority undermined.

These criticisms, however, appear to apply less to the special education sector, which does, in general, appear to hold fairly open attitudes to criticism, self-criticism and intervention. The reasons for this would appear to lie in the fact that the need to increase the numbers of personnel, trained to work in this sector of education, has led to a situation in which almost all schools are used as training grounds in which post-graduate students in psychology or special education, as well as trainee teachers, can gain experience in observing and in participating in the work within classrooms. The increased interest which has been taken in special education over the last few years has also led to an increase in the number of visits schools receive from externally based research personnel or college of education staff. Again, such personnel are likely to observe or be observed in practical work with pupils.

From discussion with teachers, it appears that, while staff do not necessarily like to work in this more exposed situation, they do, in general, accept it. Their attitude appears to be that it is a necessary part of teaching in special education at the present time. In addition, because some staff within schools for the severely and profoundly mentally handicapped are relative newcomers to the education system, and because materials and methods for teaching such pupils are less well established than in most other areas of education, many of the programmes of work which staff are using need to be assessed, modified or adapted by them as a natural part of their attempts to find ways of overcoming the barriers to learning posed by children's specific disabilities. In a situation like this, in which problems may be more numerous than solutions, staff do appear to be less resistant to appraising their on-going classroom practice. Forums already exist for the exchange of information between staff from different schools in the many in-service courses and conferences which are run by the colleges of education and the various other societies which exist to promote the welfare of handicapped people. These courses appear to be particularly well attended, and staff do appear to use the opportunity presented by these courses to discuss with others the problems or issues affecting their own teaching situation. Since there are few easy solutions in this area of work, staff tend not to see the discussion of problems as an admission of professional incompetence and are, consequently, prepared to make such problems available for comment by others.

Moreover, because of the paucity of available materials,

methods and information on special education teaching, staff tend to expect that any research which is carried out within their schools will, in fact, be aimed at providing information, material or guidance which is of practical help in the classroom. This expectation has been fostered by the work of educational psychologists and college of education lecturers, both of whom have adopted a positive policy of going into schools and working with staff to help tackle some of the problems which they are finding most intransigent to deal with. Staff appear to accept that such personnel are, like themselves, seeking to understand the problems and to extend their own knowledge, rather than attempting to impose their own ideologies or practices upon staff. And, like the general staff, such personnel tend to have no easy answers to problems at this level. Staff do appear to be amenable to changing their practices in response to suggestions from such external personnel. They are unlikely to continue to adopt the changes suggested, however, if they see no beneficial results from doing so.

In fact, the assumption by staff that a research project would, automatically, seek to produce particularly useful changes, worked against the present project in the early stages within two of the schools. Staff in these schools had, in the previous year, been approached by a drama lecturer from a local college of education. Staff had been asked to complete a questionnaire on their attitudes to and priorities in drama. They had co-operated in this and indicated that they had spent some time in ensuring that the questionnaire was properly answered. They had not, however, seen any practical results from their efforts, had not been given any indication of the results of the survey or of the subsequent research undertaken by its compiler. In fact, this survey did form part of a larger research study which did lead to the development of a training video and a booklet containing ideas and suggestions for work in drama in special education. But staff were not aware that this was being developed and did not receive information that the resource booklet was available. Consequently, some staff members expressed a distrust of 'academic' research which asked for their collaboration but which, as far as they could see, produced no practical end products. These staff were, initially, somewhat antagonistic to the idea of a researcher in drama in the school and were slightly annoyed that their head teacher had volunteered their co-operation in such a project.

Staff's negative reactions to this situation appear to lend support to Stenhouse's contention that curricular research, while being firmly grounded in theory, must not only expose that theory to the test of practice, but must be seen to do so by those who will be expected to implement the theories in their teaching. Had staff seen the practical outcomes of their contribution to the questionnaire, it is possible that they would have felt less 'used' and more 'useful', and would have been less distrustful of the value of academic research into drama. The impression was gained that staff would be more willing to co-operate in the research project if they say that the research worker was willing to work in the classroom and to face the kinds of problems faced by staff in working with children with severe disabilities or particular problems of behaviour or management. Thus the early exploratory period referred to earlier provided not only a means of enabling staff to decide whether they wished to undertake the commitments involved in collaborative research, but also provided a means of reassuring staff that the intentions of the project were not 'purely' academic. Nevertheless, it had to be conceded that the ultimate practicality of the project would depend on the extent to which staff themselves perceived any utilitarian value to themselves from adopting drama within their teaching schemes.

In spite of the criticism which may be levelled at this type of curriculum research paradigm, it does appear to be one which is relatively well suited to investigating and seeking to understand the problems and issues involved in relation to the provision of drama within the special school curriculum. It does maintain the close collaborative links with schools which will ensure that the research does not become divorced from the exigencies of practical reality. And the open attitudes of the special education sector make it a potentially fruitful setting for this type of research.

The other constraint which Stenhouse identifies, however - namely the need to extrapolate general trends from ideographic data - remains. In the present project it was envisaged that some common trends might emerge from the practical work carried out within the four collaborating schools. But it was recognised that it would be difficult to establish that these trends were more widely applicable unless the research were replicated within a larger number of schools, or unless there was a body of case study material available for comparison. It has already been argued that the lack of research into

drama has, as yet, prevented the accumulation of case study or other research data. Thus it was argued that it was in order to provide a degree of comparative data for the project that the final aspect of the project was conceived - namely the dissemination of the curricular materials which had been developed in the course of the collaborative-investigative research.

Dissemination and Testing of Curricular Materials

It has already been argued that this phase of the project represents a somewhat different research paradigm from that involved in the collaborative-investigative stages of the project. In these stages the users and developers of curriculum materials were the same people. In this phase of the work, the users were being asked to assess and comment on something which they had not helped to devise. It has already been argued that staff were not being asked to comment on a 'finished' curriculum, but to describe the ways in which they had shaped the curricular materials to their own needs, to indicate what they saw as shortcomings in either the materials or the process of drama itself, and to suggest not only how these shortcomings might be compensated for, but why they were seen as shortcomings and how important these were in relation to the existing aims and curricular priorities of staff. It can, therefore, be argued that such staff were also involved in a collaborative-effort and were being asked to take a critical stance not only to their own practices but also to the materials themselves. Nevertheless, such collaboration is essentially different from the collaboration of the earlier stages. These could be described as 'partnership', whereas this stage represented what Shipman has described as a process of 'horse-trading' (Shipman, 1976).

The 'trade-off' in the present project was one in which staff were being presented with material for use in the classroom in exchange for information on their classroom practice. In order to provide information on their classroom practices staff would, obviously, have to take a critical stance towards that practice. This, however, does not mean that teachers would have been prepared to adopt such a stance had they not been given the materials as part of a research project, nor does it necessarily indicate that staff accepted that such a critical attitude towards their own practices and towards the materials they use is either essential or desirable. Within the sample of teachers who volunteered to test the materials there were some who, quite

clearly, simply wanted materials to use. From the feedback they provided, it was not clear whether having the materials enabled them to 'better' their teaching - in the sense of understanding more clearly why they were using a particular method or activity - or simply to vary it by including the dimension of drama within their overall teaching schemes. This point will be taken up and discussed in more detail in the latter part of this thesis. In the present context it may be sufficient to note that some of the staff who participated in field trials were more interested in acquiring teaching materials than in adopting the research paradigm of the teacher as researcher within her own classroom. This does not, however, negate the value of their contribution to the project. In fact, staff's obvious desire for teaching materials in drama lends support to the assumption that the lack of such materials is a significant contributory factor in the general neglect of drama. Moreover, staff's perception of the usefulness or otherwise of the materials did, in itself, provide some information on the type of resources teachers are looking for to use at this level. Since information of this kind is currently in short supply, and since teachers may not be able to articulate what it is that they need until they have tried something out and identified its strengths and weaknesses, the information provided by staff who were more interested in materials than in personal self-development as a teacher not only adds to the body of existing information but, it could be argued, would be difficult to obtain in the absence of developed materials from which to draw comparisons.

Thus, it could be argued that the specific and subjective information staff provided on the type of resource which did or did not appear to relate to their curricular needs enabled some rather more general contentions to be advanced concerning criteria for teaching materials in drama at this level. However, just as it could not be assumed that the findings from the small, collaborative sample were general, so it could not be assumed that the findings from this somewhat larger sample would have a degree of generality to schools operating under other conditions. In both cases, therefore, the findings had to be regarded as tentative - speculations put forward for further testing and validation. The findings from the small sample were tested within the present project by exposing them to the critical scrutiny of the larger sample - the teaching materials providing the concrete embodiment of the principles which were being tested. The findings from the larger

sample, however, must continue to be regarded as a focus for speculation unless they have been further tested in practice and proved to be of more general applicability.

The provisionality of the findings which will be reported in this thesis is probably the single, most important factor which distinguishes the collaborative-investigative or the illuminative research paradigm from more conventional laboratory research. The latter regards the findings obtained as proof to a specified degree of certainty that, given X conditions Y results will be obtained. The illuminative approach attempts to show that under X conditions Y was obtained, and, in discussing the reasons why this was so, to provide a focus for informed speculation on the conditions and parameters which may require to be present before the Y effect may be obtained. Thus the results obtained must themselves be regarded as a hypothesis which, like the curriculum research and development undertaken in the project, may be translated into a form which is capable of being further tested in practical classroom application.

To sum up, therefore, the research methods envisaged for this project were primarily influenced by theories of curriculum research and development which suggest that it is desirable

- a. to take an anthropological stance to educational problems and to view these in the context of the whole scene in which they occur, rather than to attempt to study specific problems in controlled situations and in isolation from their natural environment;
- b. to adopt an investigative, rather than a prescriptive or solution-oriented perspective in researching such problems;
- c. to involve teachers at every stage of this investigation;
- d. to regard any practical work carried out as a means of putting hypotheses to the test of practice;
- e. to regard a 'curriculum offering' in the form of teaching materials as an embodiment of these hypotheses;
- f. to carry out the practical testing
 - (i) within the confines of individual schools and classrooms;
 - (ii) in collaboration and co-operation with teachers;
- g. to encourage these teachers to see themselves as researchers, and as a source of expertise within their own classrooms;
- h. to seek, from the subjective and ideographic data obtained from individual teachers, to highlight the general trends which appear

support, modify or refute the original hypotheses;

i. to reformulate theoretical hypotheses in the light of the findings obtained, and to regard these modified theories as, themselves, capable of further verification, modification or adaptation in subsequent practical testing.

It has been argued that the criticism which may be applied to this form of research may be less applicable to the special education sector which appears to be characterised by fairly open attitudes towards criticism, self-criticism and intervention, and it has been suggested that the value of this project ought to lie in the fact that it should provide illumination of the issues relating to the practice of drama at this level. Given the fact that so little research has already been attempted on drama in special education, the findings from this project should provide an additional focus for informed speculation on the relevant issues, and, in so doing, should advance, to some extent, the existing state of knowledge.

All of the arguments which have been presented in the two previous chapters have rested on an assumption that drama was being neglected in special education, and that general staff profess a degree of ignorance about drama teaching which prevents their redressing this neglect even if they wished to do so. In the previous chapter it was argued that these assumptions were arrived at on the basis of a preliminary survey carried out during the first year of the project. In the next chapter we return to this preliminary study in an attempt to examine in more detail the status quo with regard to drama at the start of this project. The reasons for the neglect of drama, and the extent of that neglect, will be discussed in relation to the insights they provide on what staff will and will not accept as appropriate to their teaching situation and the needs of their pupils, and on the wider social, and educational factors which have affected staff attitudes to and practices in drama. This information will provide a basis for the hypotheses which will be advanced in subsequent chapters, and which formed the basis for the practical experiments carried out in the course of the work.

CHAPTER 3

Drama - A Neglected Curricular Element?

Introduction

In the two previous chapters it was argued that the lack of existing research on drama in special education suggested that there was a need to investigate the potential role of drama in special schools, and it was postulated that it would be productive to do so by research methods which would enable general staff in schools to arrive at their own assessment of the purpose and value of drama in their teaching situation. The arguments presented in these chapters were based on an assumption that the existing role of drama in special education was a relatively minor one - drama did not figure either regularly or prominently in the curriculum followed within the majority of Scottish schools for severely or profoundly mentally handicapped children.

That assumption had been arrived at on the basis of a cursory examination of the literature, and from personal, prior experience of working for a number of years as a specialist teacher of drama within a school for mildly mentally and physically handicapped children. In the early stages of this research project, however, additional support for this assumption was drawn from three other sources -

- a. a more detailed review of the published and unpublished literature;
- b. comments gathered in interview and discussion by personnel conversant with the 'state of the art' in special schools in Scotland;
- c. detailed observation of four schools over a prolonged period, and shorter, less detailed, observation and discussion with staff in a number of other schools.

While none of these gives sufficiently conclusive evidence by itself to indicate the extent of the neglect of drama, it was argued in the previous chapters that the general trend which emerged from a consideration of all three sources was sufficiently marked to suggest that the neglect of drama was both geographically widespread and considerable. In these chapters also some of the reasons for the neglect of drama were advanced in the general context of the arguments concerning the choice of research topic and methodology.

In this chapter the evidence for the neglect of drama will be

examined in more depth, in an attempt to provide a rather more detailed view of the status quo obtaining at the start of this project. This will enable a return to the arguments presented in the earlier chapters, and an attempt to expand upon these and examine them in more detail in the context of the reasons behind the neglect of drama. Each of these reasons will be considered separately in an attempt to show the relationship between them and the wider social, cultural and educational factors which appeared to be exerting an influence on the prevailing situation. It will be argued that, while some aspects of that situation appeared to be in the process of change, other aspects seemed to be resistant to change. It will be suggested that it seemed unlikely that extensive changes in the status quo would occur spontaneously in the foreseeable future. And it will be argued that, in order for a significant change in the status quo to be effected nationally, it would be necessary to solve such problems as the provision of support and teaching resources, the reversal of cultural and attitudinal bias, the increase and improvement of training facilities for general and specialist staff, increased recruitment of specialist staff, all of which were among the factors identified as contributing to the general neglect of drama. It might also be necessary to persuade publishing houses or other resource suppliers that there was a market for textbooks and other materials in drama, and to persuade specialist staff with a knowledge of teaching drama to mentally handicapped pupils to undertake the development of such resources. To effect such changes nationally would entail a major redirection of resources and manpower. In order to make the concerted effort which would be necessary to change the status quo, there would require to be agreement by all of the agencies concerned - (the department of education; unions; school and college staff; local authorities; publishers, etc) - that drama merited this degree of attention, and it is unlikely that the various agencies involved in the process of education change would agree to the expenditures necessary unless they had some guarantee that the hoped for changes in the status quo would occur as a result of their efforts, and would be of significant benefit to pupils and staff.

It has already been argued that, although the existing research evidence suggests that drama may benefit pupils in a number of important ways, there was little evidence available to support the wider assumption that general staff would use drama in their teaching when

barriers to its adoption were removed. Nor, it was argued, was there evidence to show that general staff could develop the skills necessary to use drama, that staff would have the inclination to use drama, or that staff would find the experience of using drama a rewarding or motivating teaching experience. Consequently, it was argued that it would be premature to adopt a preselytising research method in a situation where so many of the outcomes were unpredictable. In this chapter it will be argued that it was equally premature to suggest that policy makers, unions, staff and others would, or even should, allocate resources to overcoming the neglect of drama in special education when it was not known that doing so would benefit pupils and staff.

On the other hand, it will be argued that the present project, limited as it was to a relatively small scale by its budgetary constraints, its proposed methodology and its finite time-scale, could simulate a micro-model of the larger, national situation. Within the small scale operating within the project it ought to be viable to reverse at least some of the conditions identified as contributing to the neglect of drama. The provision of staff training, demonstration and materials could be prohibitively expensive on a national scale. The provision of these within the present project ought to be possible, and their provision ought to create a situation in which, with the removal of the physical barriers to the adoption of drama, staff's reactions to its adoption should prove illuminating.

Finally, it will be argued that one of the reasons for the neglect of drama - namely, staff's ignorance and confusion about the aims, activities and methods which may, appropriately, be attributed to drama - has not been explored within this chapter. Within this chapter, for reasons of clarity and brevity, drama has been treated as a discrete educational entity. In the final section of the chapter, however, it will be argued that drama is not so much a single 'subject' as a collection of diverse methods and activities which share a common process - that of the 'acting out' or symbolisation of experience. It will be argued that the term 'drama' has lent itself to a degree of semantic confusion even among specialist practitioners and that, in such a situation, it is important to ensure that all of those involved in the research have a common language of concepts and theoretical constructs about the subject under investigation. It will be suggested that the first task facing the research worker in any

educational research project is likely to be that of attempting to define the subject under consideration and to provide a coherent rationale for its practice. And it will be suggested that such theoretical analysis and definition may be even more important in a situation where semantic confusion is readily engendered. The actual definition and analysis will, however, be attempted in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

The Extent of the Neglect of Drama

Personal Experience

From working in special education, and from attending the appropriate in-service courses and conferences, the impression had been gained that, while there were many teachers who would welcome visits from a specialist drama teacher to their schools, they themselves were doing little to promote drama in their schools and to provide their pupils with opportunities to engage in it. Comments made by those conversant with the practices currently being employed within special schools which catered for pupils with the more severe or profound forms of mental handicap, suggested that, although such schools are well equipped with the appurtenances necessary for spontaneous dramatic play - the house corner, the shop corner, properties and toys for dressing up, etc - staff made little use of these in promoting drama activities. Personal observation within such schools confirmed this*, and in only two of the schools visited was drama included in the timetables drawn up by head teachers.

Published and Unpublished Documents

Published educational statistical documents, which give an indication of the subject allocations within various categories of school, were not particularly helpful in clarifying the extent of drama provision within Scottish schools since, in many of these publications, drama is not specifically mentioned but comes under the general heading 'other'. This, in itself, however, would suggest that drama had made little impact on the curriculum in Scottish schools generally, and there was no reason to suggest that special schools were out of line with the general trend.

(* Details of this observation are provided in Chapter 9 of this thesis.)

The figures which are available relate mainly to the provision of specialist teachers. Table 1 shows the situation obtaining in 1974/75.

Table 1 Specialist Teachers Employed in Scottish Schools

Subject	Primary	Secondary	Special Education	Total
Art	777	1784.5	21	1882.5
PE	113	1765.1	2	1880.1
Music	121	896.8	5	1022.8
Drama	9	114.2	2**	125.2

(HMSO, 1974/75)

Up to date figures giving the number of specialist teachers employed in the primary sector indicate that, although the number of drama specialists has increased, the numbers employed are still low relative to the other aesthetic or creative areas (Table 2).

Table 2 The Number of Aesthetic Subject Specialists

Subject	Specialists
Art	176
PE	244
Music	249
Drama	29

(HMSO, 1980)

(** One of these was the present author.)

Up to date comparative figures for the secondary and special sectors have not yet been documented, but it is believed that the numbers employed in secondary schools have increased to 151, while there is now only one full-time specialist working in special schools (SADIE, 1979). Grampian division, does, however, encourage its peripatetic drama staff to visit the special schools in the division.

In recent years also, there has been an increase in the numbers of drama lecturers from colleges of education who have adopted a positive policy of self-education in dealing with mentally handicapped pupils and who visit, on a fairly regular basis, a number of the special schools which lie within their college catchment areas. Moreover, since the start of this project, a special education component has been introduced into the syllabus of courses leading to the specialist degree or diploma in drama. As yet, none of these students has taken up employment within special education, but it is possible that the inclusion of such a component within their course may encourage some to do so in the future. Even so, in terms of numbers, the impact which such specialists can make is likely to remain negligible, in the near future at least.

There is, therefore, a lack of specialist provision for drama within both mainstream and special education. In Scotland, however, the emphasis, at both the primary and special school level, has for many years been on the generalist nature of the class teacher. Teachers employed within these schools are expected to be able to cover all aspects of the curriculum, including such subjects as art, music and drama. Thus the lack of specialist provision may not necessarily be taken to indicate that drama is not being provided by general class teachers.

Here, however, reference to the literature is somewhat more helpful, and there are clear indications to show that the general class teacher within the primary sector tends to neglect not only drama, but, to a lesser extent, the other aesthetic subjects also (HMSO, 1980,a). The Young Report on Drama in Scottish Schools (HMSO, 1978,b) notes that many primary teachers are not taking drama with their classes. Even in the infants departments, where the most visible evidence of some drama work being attempted was to be found, teachers were reluctant to claim that they had any expertise in teaching it. A SCOLA survey, carried out in 1975, showed that only 38% of the teachers in the survey were taking any form of drama with their classes on

a regular basis. The Inspectors' Report on Learning and Teaching in p.4 and p.7 puts the figure even lower at 25% (HMSO, 1980,a). many of the teachers who retrain in order to work within special schools are drawn from the primary sector, it may not be too unreasonable to assume that drama will be similarly neglected by such teachers when they take up posts in special education. Certainly, the picture which emerged from talking with staff from special schools for the more seriously mentally handicapped pupils in the early stages of this project was that teachers were, in the main, doing relatively little in the way of aesthetic or creative work with their pupils.

Additional support for this view comes from a number of minor studies, all of which have been carried out within the Strathclyde area, although the staff represented in two of these were drawn from the whole of Scotland (Powell, 1979; Borthwick, 1978). Powell's study was carried out among a group of thirty primary trained teachers who were undergoing retraining in order to work in special schools. 25% of those surveyed said they were 'not qualified' to take drama with their pupils and did not do so. A further 23% said they would not teach drama even if they had further training in it, and considered it to be inappropriate to the needs of profoundly mentally handicapped pupils. The remainder indicated that they were prepared to attempt drama, but that 'inadequate resources' and their own lack of skill in the subject had prevented their doing so regularly until now. Powell obtained similar results when this survey was replicated with instructresses in training. Borthwick's study was carried out with a different sample of a similar size, using a slightly different method of survey. Again, however, the findings were almost the same. Byron (1978,b), carried out a survey of the attitudes and priorities of 50 staff members within 12 schools in the Strathclyde area. He adopted a very broad definition of drama (See Appendix A p.546). His survey showed that, while there were few teachers who did not do some form of drama, within the broad definition provided, virtually none was doing so in any regular or systematic way. The reasons given were similar to those reported in the other studies. The many references in the specialist drama literature to class teachers' 'reluctance' to take drama with their classes, and to 'unfavourable attitudes' to drama suggest that these local studies may reflect a more widespread view within special education as a whole (Pidgeon, 1980; Petrie, 1975; Heavey, 1979; Vogel, 1975).

It would appear, therefore, that while the extent of the neglect of drama within Scottish special schools may be difficult to assess in precise, statistical terms, there are sufficiently strong indications to warrant an assumption that little systematic or regular teaching in it is being carried out. Throughout the course of this study, the accuracy of this assumption became plain, not only through the comments made by teachers, but by the considerable number of requests made by teachers for help in developing what they clearly regarded as an under-developed aspect of the curriculum.

Reasons for this Neglect

Since the lack of drama provision would appear to be endemic to the Scottish educational system in general, rather than peculiar to the special education sector, it may be necessary to look to the wider educational context in identifying the reasons for this. Passing reference has already been made to some possible reasons - the lack of specialists working to justify and popularise the subject, teachers' unfavourable attitudes to drama, teachers' perceptions of their ability to teach it effectively, and a general confusion as to what drama comprises.

What drama may be, its aims, and the activities and methods appropriate to teaching it, are sufficiently important aspects of this study to warrant individual and detailed consideration. This consideration has, however, for reasons which will become apparent later, been postponed to subsequent chapters of this thesis. For the present, therefore, no attempt will be made to define and explain what is meant by drama, and, for the remainder of this chapter, it will be assumed that drama is a single educational entity. Thus, while teachers' uncertainty about drama may be a contributory factor to its neglect, consideration of this factor will not be undertaken in the present chapter in order that the arguments presented will not, at this stage, become too diffuse.

The other reasons which appear to mitigate against the practice of drama may be divided into four, broad categories -

1. historical and ideological factors within the cultural ethos of the Scottish educational system;
2. teachers' lack of knowledge or training;
3. scarcity of support facilities and resources;
4. teachers' perceptions of the 'business they are in'.

Historical, Ideological and Cultural Factors

A number of educationalists have suggested that the Scottish educational system was, and still is, considerably more authoritarian than is the case in England and Wales (Brown, 1980; Nisbet, 1970; Hunter, 1971; Bell and Grant, 1977). Emphasis is still placed on the traditionally academic areas of the curriculum in most secondary schools, while in primary schools teachers regard "the three r's" as their most important curricular priorities. Although the Primary Memorandum advocated a move towards more progressive, child-centred methods of teaching in which the emphasis was on discovery and stage managed heurism, a recent government report suggests that Scottish primary teachers are, in many cases, using the more traditional 'chalk and talk' approaches, and maintain a climate of learning in which the teacher is the recognised authority and the pupils the relatively passive recipients of a one-way flow of information (SCRE, 1977; HMSO, 1980,a). Discipline still tends to be equated with a class of quiet, orderly children engaged upon sedentary tasks within a small group or individual setting.

Within the primary sector, therefore, drama may fail to find favour with teachers on three possible grounds. First, drama tends to be both active and fairly noisy. In a school situation in which teachers do not wish to be judged by their peers as incompetent in maintaining discipline, the noise and movement level generated by a drama lesson may be unacceptable within classrooms where soundproofing leaves something to be desired. Since the central hall is generally timetabled for physical education, for media broadcasts, for films, and, in some cases, also does double duty as a dining hall, teachers may be restricted in the number of occasions in which they can gain access to the one area in the school in which noise and movement tend to be regarded as relatively acceptable (Burton, 1955; HMSO, 1972).

Secondly, drama is not generally seen by teachers as relating directly to the three 'r's'. It is regarded as a peripheral subject - a "frill" - to be engaged in only as and when the real business of the day has been accomplished. There is, moreover, a tendency among some teachers to equate 'hard work' with learning and 'enjoyment' with recreation (HMSO, 1980,a). For such teachers, the fact that children enjoy activities such as music, art or drama may form part of their pattern of discipline, with these subjects being presented as rewards for good behaviour or, alternatively, withheld as a form of sanction.

Thirdly, older teachers may never themselves have experienced a drama lesson within their own pattern of schooling, and, if they were trained before the mid-sixties, are likely to have received much more formal training in speech and phonetics than in the forms of drama being advocated in present educational documents. Younger teachers, on the other hand, who will have received training in drama within their college courses, may well feel constrained to demonstrate their competence in classroom management, and, for the reasons outlined above, may do less drama than, otherwise, they might do.

Apart from the possibility that teachers may transfer attitudes acquired in mainstream education to their teaching in special schools, however, there is less likelihood of these factors being applicable within the special school sector. For example, within special schools there tends to be considerable freedom for children to move around within the classroom, and, in the main, higher noise levels are acceptable than is the case within the average primary school classroom. A teacher's competence is, therefore, less likely to be judged on the basis of the noise and movement level evidenced in her classroom. Since drama is no more active or vocal than many of the other activities mentally handicapped children naturally engage in, there is less likelihood that this is a major factor affecting its neglect at this level. The withholding of such activities as art or drama is less likely to be thought of as an effective disciplinary sanction in a situation in which children are free to engage in other forms of play with toys, sand or water, for much of the day. It is, therefore, less likely that teachers are neglecting drama as a means of making it a reward for good behaviour or effective work in other areas.

There is, however, one way in which the authoritarian nature of the Scottish educational system may be exerting an influence on the neglect of drama at this level. Teachers who have themselves spent their formative years within such a system, may not have learned to express themselves through the medium of drama (Byron, 1977). Many such teachers, finding themselves having to move and speak in role before their peer group in drama sessions during their college of education diploma course, have found themselves embarrassed or inhibited as a result of lack of previous practice in such situations. One teacher of severely mentally handicapped children seemed to sum

up the feelings of many such teachers talked to when she said

"I felt I was making a complete fool of myself and I couldn't see the point in it all"

The 'point of it all' will be excluded from consideration in the meantime. The fact that teachers do appear to have experienced such feelings of foolishness or inhibition may, however, have resulted in their seeing less point in the activities presented than, otherwise, they might have done.

Several teachers admitted that they might be more willing to 'let themselves go' in the privacy of their own classrooms. Even so, many felt that they were personally ill-equipped with the imaginative or creative ability which they regarded as necessary for the effective teaching of drama and they suggested that these feelings of personal inadequacy had been reinforced by their difficulties in coping with drama in their college courses. It would appear that, for some teachers at least, their previous educational experience in school and their expectations of an educational situation being one in which a one-way system of information flow was the norm, may have left them ill-prepared to engage in and learn from the spontaneous, interactive and expressive work demanded of them in drama sessions (Byron, 1977).

Lecturers and teachers also suggested that those students who can respond to this work enthusiastically tend to be regarded by their peer groups as either 'talented' or 'exhibitionist'. In Scotland the term 'exhibitionist' is generally regarded with a degree of disapprobation - again, possibly as a result of the discouragement of such behaviour within a school system in which it can threaten the order and discipline of the classroom. Moreover, the traditional Scottish emphasis on

"maximising the opportunities for the able child."

(Bell and Grant, 1977; p.24)

has led to an expectation that 'cleverness' is generally more acceptable to teachers than 'creativity'. Children who can remember and regurgitate facts are also likely to obtain more examination rewards than children who produce more creative, and possibly less accurate, solutions to questions put (Warnock, 1979). Thus, by the time student level is reached, the emphasis on academic learning may have reinforced the attitude that certain aspects of education, such as aesthetic or creative subjects, are non-academic and are, consequently, deserving of lower status and attention than the more obviously academic areas

of the curriculum. This, coupled with early discouragement to "showing off", may be one reason why students who respond with overt enthusiasm to drama are regarded by their peers as 'exhibitionist', rather than simply enthusiastic or hard-working. And this may be particularly true if the enthusiastic student does not also possess an obvious talent for dramatic expression.

At the same time, those with obvious talent tend to be regarded as the exception rather than the rule, thus reinforcing the idea that for the majority of people such talent is not inbred and is, consequently, unattainable. Because much of the instruction in drama within colleges of education is based on giving students an experience of participation in drama work at the adult level, there may be a tendency for students to equate being good at acting with being able to teach drama effectively, and being good at acting may, itself, be regarded as a talent which not everyone possesses or can acquire.

It appears that, for many teachers, the drama specialists they have met have reinforced in them the stereotype of the personality and the talent required to teach drama. In teaching drama such specialists may display a lively, confident and outgoing manner, the ability to adopt and sustain a role, and vocal or movement patterns which are more flexible and varied than is general in the average college of education student. This is perhaps not surprising when one considers that over 75% of drama teachers and lecturers have been trained in drama colleges where 'acceptance is on the basis of competitive audition', and where a large part of the training is geared towards the development of voice, movement, self-confidence and the ability to project a role (Chandler, 1959). Like other subject specialists, much of their final examination is based on their ability to demonstrate competence in the practice and theory of their chosen specialism. One would expect, therefore, that the drama specialist would display more confidence and ability in the presentation of drama than the average primary trained teacher who has had, at most, some 60 to 90 hours of instruction in drama. Teachers, however, appear to equate this competence with both talent and personality and to feel that only those with certain personality traits are likely to possess the talent necessary for the effective presentation of drama (HMSO, 1980, a).

Finally, it would appear that demonstration by a subject specialist may, on its own, do little to change teachers' existing practices. Those teachers, met with in the course of this study, who had seen a video-recording or live demonstration by an expert such as Heathcote, tended to assume -

- a. that the method demonstrated was the 'right' or the 'only' way to approach drama with their classes;
- b. that, since they were ill equipped with the personality or skills to match the level of competence demonstrated, there was little point in attempting to do so;
- c. or, that the methods and conditions demonstrated differed so much from their own teaching situation that they were interesting, but not particularly relevant.

Those who had seen less effective demonstrations, on the other hand, were simply more convinced that drama was a rather unorthodox and relatively valueless approach to teaching mentally handicapped children. Borthwick's survey (1978), showed that teachers regarded 'one-of' demonstration lessons as being relatively unhelpful in communicating the practices and principles of drama, while Burton (1955) suggests that teachers will not be convinced of the value of drama until they have had personal experience of teaching it successfully. Burton makes the point, however, that the concept of a 'successful' drama lesson may be difficult to put across since evaluation of drama is based on the observing, recording and assessing of events which are actually happening, while they are happening, and not on tests applied after the event. While not all drama specialists are convinced that evaluation of drama does need to involve such a subjective process (Day, 1975; Hoetker, 1975) there is common agreement that it is considerably easier to discuss the criteria by which a lesson may be judged if, in addition to watching demonstrations, teachers can relate the methods and effects seen in demonstrations to their own practical experience of teaching drama. Without such experience, demonstrations may be less meaningful (Stabler, 1978; Stenhouse, 1982,b; Brossell, 1975; McGregor et al, 1977). The fact that many Scottish teachers lack such experience may mean that they are less able to profit from demonstrations provided for them in college pre-training or in-service courses.

Another way in which the Scottish Educational system may be having

an effect on the neglect of drama is the traditional Scottish emphasis on the general nature of the training the Scottish primary teacher receives, and the fact that she has to be able to cover all aspects of the curriculum. This means that colleges of education have to provide some training for teachers in all these aspects. Because students have to cover so many aspects, the time which can be allocated to any one may have to be correspondingly reduced. Thus, while students have an opportunity to specialise in a particularly aesthetic subject as a part of their course, not all students choose the same subject. Those who have elected not to choose drama - and these tend to be in the majority rather than the minority - will have received only limited instruction in drama within their course.

The Inspectors' report on learning and teaching in P.4 and P.7, referred to earlier, comes out strongly in favour of redressing the bias which exists against such subjects as music, art or drama, by providing students with more training in these areas within college courses. The report goes further, however, and suggests that the traditional Scottish emphasis on the need for the primary trained teacher to be a generalist may be placing too heavy demands on class teachers in terms of the subjects they are expected to be knowledgeable about and to teach within their classrooms. The report puts forward recommendations for making better use within schools of those teachers who have undertaken a special study of one of the aesthetic subjects. It also urges that, in employing teachers within a particular school, local authorities should take account of their specialist interests in relation to those of other teachers within the school in order that a balance may be achieved between the various aesthetic subjects about which teachers within the school are knowledgeable. The Report also recommends that all students should be encouraged to take one aesthetic subject for special study within training courses, and that more specialist teachers should be trained and employed to work alongside the general class teacher in developing and presenting lessons. The implementation of these proposals could well, in the future, have an effect not only on the attitudinal bias which exists within Scotland towards aesthetic subjects, but could also result in their being less neglected. Implementation, however, may be a problem; and the report carries a warning that -

"efforts to improve the quality of teaching through training will be costly in time, effort and financial resources. It is, therefore, important that the Department, education authorities and teachers' associations reach some measure of agreement on matters of principle and orders of priority."

(p.21)

Such talks will take time, and, given that drama presently achieves even less priority than any of the other subjects mentioned, it is unlikely that, in the present socio-economic climate of accountability, restraint and cutbacks in economic resources, the outcomes of such talks will do much to improve the existing situation with regard to drama provision within the primary school. For the next few years at any rate, the person likely to have responsibility for providing drama will be the general class teacher.

On the other hand, the increase in drama specialists which has taken place in the secondary sector, coupled with the emergence of a career structure which, for the first time, enables such teachers to take posts of responsibility within the school, may mean that more school leavers are now entering colleges of education with some prior experience of participation in drama. Assuming that such teaching has been competent, and that it has been continued over a sufficiently long period to enable pupils to learn how to express themselves in and through drama, this may mean that the next generation of student teachers may be less resistant to engaging in drama, and their attitudes concerning skill, personality, talent and teaching methods may be different. This, coupled with more liberal attitudes towards discipline and the subject-content of education (HMSO, 1977, a and 1977, b) may mean that the historical, ideological or cultural factors influencing the neglect of drama at the present time may exert less influence in the future.

This, however, is speculative. For the present, it may be necessary to take account of the existing constraints imposed by the factors outlined in the earlier argument.

The fact that, in the past, the nature of the instruction given in drama has not been congruent with students' prior expectations and attitudes, has exerted a restricting influence on the extent to which teachers are currently prepared to engage in any form of drama with their classes, and goes some way towards explaining the negative attitudes which some staff members hold in relation to the educational value of drama for their pupils.

And, it may, for example, be necessary to investigate

methods of enabling students to engage in drama training sessions without arousing the inhibitions and feelings of inadequacy with which such sessions appear to be associated by the present generation of teachers.

Lack of Knowledge and Training

There is, however, another aspect of drama training which appears to have contributed to staff's reluctance to teach drama. College of education courses in drama not only seek to provide students with personal experience of engaging in drama activities at an adult level. They also aim to equip students with a knowledge of the methods and principles of drama, and with the skills necessary to teach it. From conversations with teachers it would appear that the quality of this instruction may, in some cases, have left something to be desired. Many of the teachers indicated that they simply did not know how to go about the business of taking drama with their classes.

This may be partially explained by the fact that drama is a relative complex subject and one which can comprise a large number of apparently diverse activities. The limited time available within college courses for lectures in drama means that college staff may be hard pressed to cover the work in the time available, and may be unable to provide students with the level of detail necessary for a full understanding of the subject. Students are expected to supplement lectures with background reading. But many of the teachers talked to admitted that they had 'never got round' to doing so and, consequently, their knowledge of the theory of drama was sketchy. College staff have indicated that it does not seem likely that time allocations will be markedly increased in the near future. The onus would, therefore, appear to be on students to undertake the private study necessary. They are unlikely to do this, however, unless college staff can find the means of firing students with the enthusiasm for the subject which will lead them to take a more active interest in it. Some college staff appear already to be creating this enthusiasm. With the present climate of accountability in education, others may follow suit.

In addition, some of the teachers talked to indicated that, as they had never seen a drama lesson taken with children, they consequently had no opportunity to discuss the reality of such a lesson in the context of the theories presented. Others had seen drama taken, but had, themselves, had no opportunity in teaching practice to

attempt it. Again the fault appears to lie partially with the system, and partially with the attitudes of students themselves.

For example, some students were afraid that they might risk a poor teaching mark from methods tutors who were not, themselves, drama teachers. They felt that such tutors might fail to appreciate that drama is, by its nature, an active and possibly noisy pursuit. Students were afraid that they might lose control of the lesson and that the chaos which might ensue would be more damaging to them than a similar failure in classroom management within a situation in which children were less active and mobile. In some cases, therefore, lack of opportunity to take drama at student level was the result of personal choice - a choice which was influenced by fear of failure or fear that their intentions might not be clearly understood by those assessing them. In other cases, however, students had no opportunity to attempt drama as they were placed for teaching purposes in schools where drama was not an accepted practice.

The other reason appeared to lie in the fact that some college staff are reluctant to provide students with detailed lesson outlines and materials as models from which students may adapt their own lessons. Without such guidelines, students, who had not seen a lesson taken with children, felt ill-equipped to tackle the work on their own. Some also felt that the nature of the work suggested by college staff, the amount of preparation time it involved, and the degree of disruption it would occasion in the normal primary school classroom, served to dissuade all but the most enthusiastic of students from trying out the work. Some teachers felt that the ideas suggested by some staff members were unrealistic in relation to the actual conditions obtaining within primary schools.

This criticism was applied even more forcibly with regard to drama lectures in special education training courses. There appeared to be a fairly general feeling among teachers that the ideas and suggestions they were given on these courses were irrelevant to the capabilities and needs of special school pupils, and would be difficult to apply, given the classroom conditions operating within these schools*.

One teacher, for example, described a suggestion that, with her class of eight year old severely and profoundly mentally handicapped pupils, she might try enacting the life of an Aztec village,

(* See Chapter 9 for a detailed account of the conditions observed)

"complete with masks and sun chants". To another teacher the suggestion was made that encouraging the pupils to converse with each other using 'gibberish' would help them develop more varied intonation patterns. While such suggestions might not be impossible to execute with mentally handicapped pupils who had developed proficiency in drama over a period of sustained practice, the experience of the present project suggests that they are somewhat ambitious for the non-specialist teacher to attempt as an initial exercise with pupils. Such suggestions were not atypical and the general impression gained from talking with teachers was that the majority were somewhat disenchanted with the quality of instruction in drama which they had received within their college courses.

One reason for the relatively poor quality of instruction may lie in the fact that it is only in recent years that college drama staff have been amassing personal teaching experience of working with mentally handicapped pupils. In the past there were very few drama lecturers who had a sufficiently detailed knowledge of the mentally handicapped child and his particular problems to be able to suggest the kind of material, methods or principles which might apply. Consequently, the suggestions given tended to be simplified versions of primary work or activities based on the theoretical principles gleaned from the work of other specialists who had knowledge of working with handicapped children. Emphasis was placed on the work of such pioneers in drama with mentally handicapped children as Heathcote, Sherbourne and Jennings (Heathcote, 1968, 1975, 1978; Sherbourne, 1969, 1975; Jennings, 1973, 1975).

In the main, the work carried out by such pioneers has been based within the English educational system, where drama is more established in both special and ordinary schools, and where different forms of teacher training, different traditions and different educational influences have evolved (HMSO, 1965; Allen, 1980). The effectiveness of the methods devised by these pioneers is not questioned, merely their applicability to the situation obtaining within Scotland, and to the capabilities and attitudes of staff within Scottish special schools. For example, Heathcote's work, in particular, has been well documented on film and video. As noted earlier, many lecturers either presented students with the recordings of her work, or presented lessons based on the teaching methods and principles she advocates. The effectiveness of her methods in attracting the attention of a group of mentally

handicapped people, and of maintaining their interest and involvement throughout the course of a lesson is amply demonstrated in recordings of her work. It has already been argued, however, that students may not see in these the possibility of utilising their own levels of skill. Moreover, it appears that when college lecturers present these methods without demonstrating them with a group of handicapped children, the methods themselves may be questioned - as may the results obtained by them.

The methods used by Heathcote involve a degree of preparation and disruption of the learning environment which teachers, with no prior commitment to the practice of drama, may be unwilling to provide. In addition, in many of the recordings she is seen working in a situation in which the ratios of non-handicapped to handicapped people are high. Such ratios are possible for the visiting specialist who can involve the whole staff of a school in the experience she provides on her visit to the school. They are also possible for the lecturer who can take along with him or her a group of people who have some knowledge of the practice of drama to act as helpers in the lesson. Such ratios may be difficult for the average, inexperienced teacher to achieve within the ordinary classroom situation. Therefore, even when the instruction given to students was soundly based on principles and methods tested in use by other specialists, it may not have been immediately obvious to students, or to teachers on in-service courses, how this material could be adapted and applied to their own teaching situation. From the comments made by teachers, it appears that lecturers were not, in the main, particularly successful in communicating to students how this might be achieved.

Thus, while teachers' attitudes to drama may have been coloured by prior educational experience and reinforced by participation in drama at their own level, the quality of the instruction provided in communicating the skills, methods and materials to be used may have contributed to teachers' perception of their lack of knowledge and ability to tackle and develop drama with their classes.

Again, the signs are that this situation is improving. It has already been noted that drama lecturers have adopted a positive policy of self-education and personal experience in working with handicapped people and this is likely to have an effect on the quality of instruction being provided now and in the future. Indeed, in the present project, although the majority of teachers professed

a lack of skill in drama and admitted that they were doing little in drama, the author met a small number of teachers who were, enthusiastically, providing regular provision in drama for their pupils. Some of these had developed an interest in drama during pre-service courses and were carrying out the work, independently, within their own classrooms, regardless of the extent of drama work being done within the school generally. In one of the schools the majority of the teachers had begun to provide regular drama for their pupils. These schools tended to be ones which had established close links with a drama lecturer from one of the colleges. The lecturer had not only demonstrated drama work in the classroom with pupils but, over a period of time, had established good relationships with staff and had helped them prepare and devise on-going programmes of instruction which they could use with their classes. In some cases such links were still being maintained. In other cases, staff had continued to provide drama after the specialist had withdrawn from the situation. In a small proportion of such schools, the amount of drama work carried out by staff dropped markedly when the drama lecturer withdrew. But staff indicated that this did not imply that they intended to stop using drama, only that other factors had, in the meantime, intervened or that the work with the specialist had not been continued long enough for them to establish fully their own skills in devising and presenting material. Again, the effects of such collaboration between drama specialists and class teachers is relevant to the present project in that the research methods envisaged for the project were ones which attempted to place any practical work carried out, within the framework of a collaboration with teachers under classroom conditions.

In much of the argument presented so far there has been an emphasis on the primary trained teacher. This is because, with the implementation of the 1974 Education Act, trained teachers were, for the first time in many areas, employed to teach within schools for severely and profoundly mentally handicapped children. The number of such teachers employed, and given training to work within this sector of education, will rise as the policy of employing trained teachers continues to be implemented in the future. Thus the attitudes and skills of the primary trained teacher are exercising an influence on the practices encountered within special schools now, and may, in the future do so more markedly.

Prior to 1974, however, staff within schools for the severely and profoundly mentally handicapped were instructresses who had undergone, within one of the further education colleges, a three month or one year course of training in working with mentally handicapped people. Care assistants who often had no formal training were also employed. At the present time the number of such staff still exceeds the number of trained teachers employed, and, in some schools, the head teacher is, in fact, an instructress with many years of experience in working within such schools.

Some of the arguments presented above - for example, the bias created by the nature of drama provision within the colleges of education - do not apply to these staff members. In fact, it emerged from discussion with such staff that, although drama appears on the syllabus of training courses for instructors, few had actually experienced doing any and few remembered any specific instruction in drama, other than the provision of simple action-rhymes or songs which they might use with their classes. Moreover, while these staff expressed similar attitudes towards the personality factors necessary for teaching drama, their attitudes towards its value appeared to be less coloured by such factors as the 'academic/non-academic' status of drama as by their own lack of knowledge of it.

By far the most common reason given by instructresses for their neglect of drama was, quite simply, that they did not know how to tackle it, or that it had simply not occurred to them to attempt it as a regular and systematic curricular element. This reason was generally coupled with a complaint that materials for teaching it were scarce or not easily available. For these staff members, a lack of training and experience, and a lack of adequate teaching materials appeared to go a long way towards explaining their neglect of drama. One of the aspects of drama which it appeared to be necessary to research in the present project, therefore, was the way in which those staff involved in the project might acquire more knowledge of the principles and practice of drama. Since not only knowledge, but materials also, appeared to be in short supply, it was postulated that the development of knowledge and skill might be accomplished by inviting staff to co-operate with the researcher in this project in the process of teaching drama to pupils within their own classrooms, and by asking staff for their active collaboration in the research, development and assessment of teaching materials which they considered appropriate

to the capabilities of their pupils, and consistent with their existing practices and teaching aims.

Scarcity of Support Facilities and Resources

It has been argued above that many teachers and instructresses profess only a limited knowledge of how to go about teaching drama and developing lessons for themselves. It has also been argued that both groups of staff believe that teaching materials are difficult to obtain. An examination of the teaching materials and resources available suggests that, in absolute terms, such resources are scarce and those which do exist tend to be in a form which is relatively inaccessible to general staff.

For example, film or video recordings of specialists at work have to be ordered direct from the publishing body and are also fairly expensive to hire (Heathcote, 1976, 1978; Sherbourne, 1978; Byron, 1978,b). Articles on drama appear in specialist publications of limited circulation, such as 'Teaching Drama', 'Young Drama', 'The Journal of Dramatherapy', or in pamphlets produced by the Educational Drama Association in Birmingham. Because these are circulated only on request, or to specialist members of drama associations, such publications are not readily available in resource centres or general libraries.

Similarly, although there has recently been an increased interest into the contribution which drama may make to pupil learning in special education, much of the research done in this area has been carried out in single-scale testing conditions, or by psychologists with an interest in the value and purpose of children's make-believe play (Hudson, 1974; Pessa, 1969; Nitsun et al, 1974). Again, the reports of this type of work also tend to appear in specialist journals. Although these are generally available within resource centres and college or university libraries, it appears that, in general, teachers are unaware that they exist and do not tend to seek out such publications. The academic language used in many of these papers may also tend to make them less than generally acceptable as resources from which to obtain information for developing drama work with classes.

Articles on drama with the mentally handicapped do appear in some drama textbooks of a more general nature (Wagner, 1976; Hodgson, 1972; Stephenson and Vincent, 1975). Such textbooks are readily available in libraries, but are, in the main, theoretical rather than practical

in their emphasis. Also readily available on the commercial market are a fair number of drama kits and books of lesson outlines (Bayliss et al, 1974; Walford et al, 1973; Casciani and Watt, 1969). These are not, however, aimed at mentally handicapped children, and the ideas contained within them may require quite extensive adaptation for use with such children.

A few textbooks have been aimed specifically at teachers of the handicapped (Jennings, 1975; Upton, 1980; Wethered; 1973). Again, these tend to take the form of individual ideas and suggestions which would require to be combined and adapted in order to form a programme of instruction. Two recent booklets more closely resemble a resource model, and contain detailed suggestions for developing lessons (Byron, 1978,b; Heavy, 1979). Again, however, neither of these is commercially available and neither has been widely disseminated to resource centres or college libraries. One even more recent publication gives a detailed explanation of how to develop one aspect of drama - puppetry - with mentally handicapped children (Astell-Burt, 1981). Another, from the same publisher, gives a similarly detailed account of how to teach mime and dance (Levete, 1982). The very practical bias in these two publications is, according to the publisher, in direct response to readers' apparent wish for books which deal directly with the 'how to' of teaching mentally handicapped children, rather than with the 'why' of detailed theoretical explanations (Harrow, 1981).

Books of this type tend to be the exception rather than the rule among publications on drama. There does appear to be a reluctance on the part of some specialist drama authors to provide textbooks which give detailed lesson plans or outline possible schemes of work. Many such writers are strongly opposed to the centre-periphery model of disseminating materials and ideas for use in drama with mentally handicapped children. They argue that the 'packaged' or 'cook-book' approach to disseminating information on drama -

"reflects a basic misunderstanding of the nature of creative drama In special education the success of creative drama requires teachers who possess detailed knowledge not only of handicapped children as individuals, but, equally important, the characteristics of the group of which these same individuals are members. The teacher plays a crucial role because a considerable degree of flexibility is required in relating this knowledge to the principles of creative drama."

(Petrie, 1975; p.15)

Pidgeon, like Petrie, would be reluctant to provide packages of materials for use in drama on the grounds that

"ideas in this form cannot take into account the specific needs of children, the complexities of special education and the teacher's style."

(Pidgeon, 1980; p.2)

His main objections would appear to be centred on the fact that any specific example of material provided in such books would be suitable for only a section of any learner group. He would argue that, for reasons of expediency or as a result of ignorance of the theories on which the materials were based, staff might attempt to use the lesson plans wrongly, unadapted, in unsuitable situations or for the wrong purpose. Pupils might therefore fail to benefit, benefit little, or be harmed by the instruction provided. Drama might be dismissed as of no value when, in fact, the failure lay less with the drama as with the staff member presenting it.

However, the reluctance of drama authors to provide drama textbooks which give detailed lesson plans or 'recipes' for lessons, has led to the existing situation in which materials which provide anything other than individual anecdotes or theoretical principles are exceedingly scarce. It could be argued, therefore, that the very ideals which have led to a reluctance on the part of drama specialists to provide detailed books of instruction for fear that these will be misused and prove potentially harmful, have also led to a situation in which staff feel that they either have to forego the use of drama or else have to devise and plan their own curricular materials. Since the specialists firmly believe that drama is of benefit to pupils, it is ironic that they may, unwittingly, be contributing to a situation which is conducive to its neglect. Because, although there are a number of teachers who are willing and able to acquire the necessary expertise to develop their own curricular schemes from first principles, or with the support of a specialist, there also seems to be a need to make available materials which will extend the range of curricular options open to those teachers who lack either the knowledge or the time to do so.

It is not denied that teachers would require sufficient knowledge of the subject in order to choose appropriately from a range of curricular options the ones most suitable to their purposes. Nor is it denied that teachers might require to exercise skills in development

and planning in order to fit drama work into their overall curricular scheme, and, where necessary, to modify the materials chosen in order to make them more suitable to the needs of individual children. It could be argued, however, that these are teaching skills and that they do not require anything like the kind of input of time and effort which could be required to develop curricular schemes from first principles. And this has a direct bearing on the final contributory factor to be examined - teachers' perceptions of the business they are in.

Teachers' Perceptions of the Business They Are In

The Warnock Report (HMSO, 1978, a) suggests that

"each kind of educational difficulty and special need will have its own curricular requirements."

(p.32)

and points to the need for staff to see themselves as a source of expertise in the development of suitable curricular schemes for pupils. Staff themselves, however, while prepared to accept that they required to be relatively expert in their knowledge of the needs and problems of handicapped children, indicated that they saw themselves as being in the business of teaching rather than that of curriculum development. In the main, they tended to see themselves as implementors rather than innovators, and they pointed out that in many aspects of their teaching - for example, behaviour modification and language programmes - they were able to follow clear guidelines laid down for them by psychologists and advisers. Certainly, psychologists and advisers do appear to be providing considerable support, advice and encouragement to staff in helping them to initiate and establish such programmes. But they tend to place less emphasis on the more creative and aesthetic aspects of the curriculum. Some of these interviewed suggested that the reason for this was their own lack of knowledge in these areas, and they indicated that, while they are interested in ensuring that all aspects of the curriculum are covered, they have found it difficult to compile the kinds of lists of materials and resources for teaching the more aesthetic subjects, which are relatively easy to compile for other aspects of the curriculum. And, in the case of drama, the lack of specialist teachers with an interest in special education made it more difficult for them to obtain advice and information to pass on to teachers.

Where they were not receiving a strong lead from psychologists, advisers, visiting specialists or college of education lecturers, staff tended not to take initiatives in developing drama (and certain other aesthetic activities) with their classes. This is in line with the observation made by Nisbet (1970) who suggests that it may be unrealistic to expect that staff who have been trained within the centralised Scottish educational system will take curricular initiatives without a strong lead from the centre. However, necessity born of lack of money or unsuitable existing resources, may lead to invention by staff. In the observations carried out within the present project it was noted that where there was a case of real, perceived need which could not be met by existing means, staff were prepared to spend time and energy in devising ways of overcoming the problem, whether or not they had been given external support or encouragement to do so. For example, in the absence of suitable eating implements for certain pupils with physical disabilities, staff had devised and made suitable cutlery. Similarly, for pupils with poor eyesight, staff had produced jig-saws and other materials which were larger and bolder than anything available on the commercial market. And in one school the staff had taken a lead and devised a complete behaviour modification programme for a particular child. This was completely different (and appeared to be more effective) than that suggested by the psychologist who liaised with the school. These, and similar examples suggest that staff may be more capable of innovation and curriculum development than they are prepared to claim. Nevertheless, for the majority of teachers spoken to, the planning and development of curricular schemes in drama and in certain other aesthetic subjects, did not represent a need which they regarded as sufficiently pressing as to occasion innovative effort on their part.

Staff suggested that this type of curricular exercise in a subject like drama was, they felt, a specialist task. As they pointed out, for the specialist, drama is the only subject on the curriculum. For general staff drama is but one facet of an overall programme. And they considered that it was unrealistic to expect staff to be able to have the time available to develop individual curricular schemes in the areas of the curriculum which they are expected to cover.

As already noted, a degree of official support for this view is expressed in the recent Inspectors' Report (HMSO, 1980, a), which

suggests a reversal of the generalist trend and a move towards employing more specialist teachers, and more primary trained staff with special interests in some of the aesthetic and creative subjects. As argued earlier, however, there is unlikely to be an increase in the former in the near future. Nor is there any guarantee that large numbers of those primary teachers with special interest in one of the aesthetic subjects will make the transfer from the primary to the special sector of education.

There is, however, a possibility that the policy of recommending the recruitment of staff with a balanced variety of differing expertises within any individual school, may also be expressed by the Consultative Committee which is at present examining the whole question of the curriculum in special education. If so, and if this policy were implemented, such staff could form the basis of a pool of expertise within individual schools and could provide a lead for their colleagues in the development of lessons and curricular schemes. As the Committee's findings have not yet been published, this observation must be regarded as speculative. What can be stated with a degree of certainty is that a number of the committee members do have an interest in the aesthetic subjects, drama is being considered by them as a recommended curricular element, and the findings from the present project have formed an input into their enquiry.

What can also be stated with confidence is the fact that, in schools where drama forms a regular part of the curriculum, there is generally at least one staff member whose active interest and enthusiasm in the subject has been communicated to her colleagues. Moreover, in those schools where there have been close links with college of education drama staff, general staff have sometimes gone on to develop their own programmes of work. Again, this suggests that, given a lead, staff may be less resistant to becoming curriculum developers than one might assume from their spoken comments on the business they are in. It appears that, as staff develop skill in the presentation of drama, and as they absorb the principles on which the material they present is based, they become more alert to the possibilities which exist in other materials and situations for adaptation to their own use. They also tend to find that the adaptation and utilisation of these becomes a less effortful and time-consuming task, because they have developed some knowledge of the kinds of dramatic stimulus which children can relate and respond to.

In the research project on which this thesis is based, the present author attempted to capitalise on this finding by involving staff at every stage of the curriculum research and development process. As will be argued in a later chapter, this approach did have some measure of success, in that staff who had collaborated in the research and development of materials did go on to adapt and modify these materials for future classes, and began to develop their own lessons on the principles which they had found to be effective in practice. Even so, among those teachers to whom the developed materials were disseminated for field testing, there was a sizeable number who appeared to be less interested in developing their skills as curriculum devisers and planners, and more interested in having material which they could take and use without extensive and time-consuming adaptation.

It does appear, therefore, that although the way forward in the longer term may be to encourage staff to develop expertise in curriculum planning, and to facilitate this by the recruitment of staff with special expertise in specific areas of the curriculum, in the shorter term there is a need for more teaching resources to be made available for those staff who are, as yet, unwilling or unable to perceive themselves as anything other than implementors and teachers, and for those who simply lack the necessary time to develop their own materials for every area of the curriculum.

Summary and Conclusions

To sum up, the situation pertaining at the start of this project, examined in the preliminary study and argued within this chapter, seemed to be a fairly confused and complex one. Clearly the assumption that drama was being neglected could be supported but, because of the lack of documented statistical evidence, it was difficult to arrive at a precise quantification of the extent of the neglect. There were also regional differences throughout the country. Schools lying within the catchment areas of local colleges of education tended to have established links with the colleges and to be rather less neglectful of drama, and other aesthetic aspects, than was the case in schools where these links were less evident or more sporadic. At the policy level, both Strathclyde and Lothian expressed strongly positive attitudes to the use of drama in special education, but local authorities within these regions had taken few practical steps to ensure that

drama was, in fact, represented on the curriculum. There were few in-service courses in drama, virtually no specialist employed, and no career structure for any specialist who wished to be employed. These factors mitigated against the practice of drama in schools in these regions, and in other regions such as Fife and the Borders. Grampian, on the other hand, made no distinction between the need for drama teaching in mainstream and in special schools, regarding both as important. In Grampian region attempts were being made to ensure that special schools did receive some visits from the pool of peripatetic drama specialists employed in the region. Such staff also provided a number of staff training workshops. In spite of these regional differences, the general picture which emerged nationally was one in which it appeared that -

a. Somewhere around two thirds of all special schools had never had a visit or a demonstration lesson from a drama subject specialist;

b. Between one third and one half of all staff working in special schools for severely or profoundly handicapped pupils had never received any training in drama, lacked personal experience of it, and may not have been aware that drama could be incorporated into their general teaching schemes.

c. Primary trained staff, all of whom have received training in drama at both pre- and post-graduate course levels, complain of the quality of this instruction, the extent of it, and its lack of relevance to the needs of mentally handicapped pupils. It was estimated that around two thirds of all primary trained staff in special schools did not use drama in their teaching and had failed to have transferred or utilised the knowledge of drama gained in training courses to on-going teaching practices;

d. It was estimated that around 20% of all special school staff - but mainly those working with pupils with the more profound forms of disability - regard drama as relatively valueless or inappropriate to the needs of their pupils. (This estimate is surprisingly low when one considers the number of references in the literature to 'unfavourable' attitudes to drama. It is, however, representative of the percentage of those interviewed who did admit to these attitudes and, in the two local Scottish studies available, the percentages were 21% and 23% respectively.)

e. Around 15% of all special schools do offer drama as a regularly timetabled activity. There is also evidence to suggest that, in

a further 5%-10% of schools there are individual staff members who take drama on a regular basis with their own class, regardless of the extent of drama done by other staff members within the schools as a whole.

These findings, in themselves, highlight some of the possible reasons for the neglect of drama in special education. They imply a lack of specialist provision, inadequate training facilities, unfavourable attitudes to drama and a general lack of knowledge of the subject. In this chapter these, and other factors such as teacher's perception of their role, the lack of support facilities and textbooks, the general cultural and ideological bias which may be operating against drama, coupled with staff fears that drama, as an active, vocal pursuit, might lead to a breakdown of classroom order and discipline, have been explored in some detail. It has been argued that here, too, the situation is a complex one which does not lend itself to precise quantification. It was not, for example, possible to identify and assign a level of priority to a single factor, or hierarchy of factors, which might be held responsible for staff's lack of drama provision. It appeared that a range of factors - personal, social, educational and practical - were combining and interacting with each other to produce a cycle of neglect which was, to some extent, self-sustaining.

The weightings which could be given to any one factor in the neglect of drama appeared to vary across individuals. But it was possible to detect some general group tendencies. For example, among instructors and care assistants the most often cited reasons for their neglect of drama were lack of knowledge and training; lack of teaching materials and lack of support facilities. With primary-trained staff the situation was more complex - personal bias, previous training, a perception of their role as 'teacher', were all mentioned almost as frequently as, for example, the lack of materials and support facilities, or the lack of personal knowledge and skill.

It was also possible to estimate the relative permanence of the various factors. For example, it seemed highly likely that the lack of trained specialists and the lack of teaching materials were factors which were likely to remain virtually constant in the foreseeable future. Cultural attitudes and ideological bias against the 'aesthetic' or 'non-academic' subjects may be relatively resistant to change but, if the present trends in educational policy continue, may change

slowly over time. On the other hand, the quality of instruction on in-service training courses in drama, the potential available to provide additional support for staff wishing to develop their own initiatives, and the additional knowledge generated by collaboration between college staff and staff in schools, are all factors which are already changing and may continue to do so in the future. It is, however, too soon to assess how extensively these latter factors may affect a change in the status quo within schools. There may also be a proviso, that the permanence of the other identified factors may somewhat diminish the potential changes which may occur as a result of better training and support. It may happen, for example, that better training and support cannot compensate for the lack of materials and resources, or cannot outweigh entrenched attitudes against the use of drama.

It has been argued, therefore, that in order to change the situation nationally it would be necessary to remove the existing barriers to the adoption of drama. Some of these barriers are, as argued above, already diminishing. But as the situation identified comprised a complex admixture of inter-related factors, it seemed likely that the cost of removing the barriers to the adoption of drama nationally would be high, both financially and in terms of the effort and time required to effect the necessary changes. Given the existing lack of knowledge of the effects of drama on pupils and staff; given the currently low status of drama relative even to the other aesthetic or creative subjects; given the current policies of cut-backs and the amount of consultation which would be required by a number of different agencies (the colleges, staff in schools, publishers, local education authorities and the unions; etc) in order to change the status quo, it appeared highly unlikely that there would be any major moves to ensure that the barriers operating against the adoption of drama by general staff would be removed in the foreseeable future.

In the previous chapter, however, it was argued that it ought to be possible within the limited scale of a research project to create conditions which, on a national scale, would be practically and economically prohibitive to attempt. It was argued that teaching materials could be devised and developed; on-going support and training for staff could be made available by the collaborative research process; and the process ought itself to enable dialogue on assessment procedures, methods, aims and the activities which would be appropriate to the special school child and his environment. It was argued, therefore that it ought to be possible to remove many of the factors identified

in this chapter as being contributory to the neglect of drama, and thereby to create a situation which was conducive to its adoption. And it was argued that when some of the 'reasons' for the neglect of drama had been removed, it would be informative to find how staff reacted to it, and whether staff attitudes and practices would change as a result.

But, before any measures could be taken to reverse the existing conditions and to introduce drama into the collaborating schools, there appeared to be a need to tackle, at the theoretical level, some questions which were crucial to the research of drama and about which almost all the staff interviewed in the project expressed ignorance or confusion. The most fundamental of these questions was that concerning the nature of drama itself. It has been noted, earlier in this chapter, that although the term 'drama' may be applied to a variety of methods and activities, it was useful, for the purposes of establishing the extent of and reasons for its neglect, to regard it as a single educational entity.

Staff's Perceptions of the Nature of Drama

It was also noted, however, that many of the staff interviewed held differing, and in some cases conflicting views, as to what constituted drama in education. In establishing staff's views on their use or neglect of drama it was important, therefore, to establish their perception of the nature of drama. Consequently, it was not enough simply to ask staff how often, or in what form they used drama, or to ask for an explanation of their neglect of it. It was also necessary to engage in a dialogue with staff as to what they considered drama to be, the aims they would expect to attribute to it, and the methods and activities they would subsume within the term 'educational drama'.

What emerged from this dialogue was that, in general, staff's views on what constituted drama in education had been coloured by their own previous experience of it. For example, those whose knowledge of drama was limited to participation in school concerts or amateur dramatic societies appeared to equate drama with theatrical performance. Such staff tended to be among those who were sceptical of the relevance of drama to the needs of pupils who were severely limited mentally, barely verbal and, in some cases, virtually immobile. Other staff, particularly those who had engaged in improvised drama

at their own level as part of their College of Education Diploma courses, were unsure how to take an adult activity which involved quick thinking, and fluent speech and movement responses within a relatively unstructured and spontaneous, interactive situation, and to translate this into activities which would be within the limited speech and movement capabilities of their pupils. Such staff tended to regard drama as having nothing to do with theatre. They regarded it more as a creative experience, the essence of which was spontaneity and imagination. They found it difficult, however, to express what they meant by spontaneity in the drama lesson, and it transpired that many of their fears concerning possible chaos developing in the lesson were based on their assumption that spontaneity implied a lack of control by the teacher, with the pupils 'doing their own thing' creatively!

Many of the teachers interviewed were, however, aware that drama could comprise a variety of different activities including role-play, spontaneous dramatic play, music and movement, dramatisation, etc, but indicated that they were unsure of the common elements linking these diverse activities or of how they might be combined to form a systematic curriculum or scheme of work. There was also a degree of confusion as to the aims towards which these differing activities might, appropriately, be directed. These staff tended to be ones who had acquired some knowledge of drama from attending college courses at either the in-service or pre-service level, and had done some reading around the subject. These staff also indicated that their reading around the subject had not been particularly helpful since much of the literature on drama appears to be contradictory.

Problems of Defining Drama

It has already been noted that some of the reasons for staff's confusion as to what drama is and can be aimed towards may be attributed to poor teaching or inadequate experience of drama in the past. And this aspect has already been explored within the present chapter. It is the case, however, that as staff suggested, much of the literature referring to drama in education is contradictory. One of the problems would appear to lie in the fact that the word 'drama' has no single or universally understood meaning. It is a general term which can be used loosely to describe a wide variety of different activities. Even the more specific term 'educational drama' may be interpreted

in different ways by different educational theorists. For example, some theorists regard educational drama as any type of drama in which the emphasis is on the needs of the participants rather than on those dictated by the needs arising out of performance, and, particularly with younger children, would regard any form of performance as counter-productive to the personalised aims of educational drama (Slade, 1968, 1976; Way, 1967; Pemberton-Billings and Clegg, 1965). Other theorists see performance as a perfectly legitimate part of educational drama, which may be interpreted as any instance of dramatic activity which occurs within an educational institution and which is carried out with some educational aim in mind. (Day, 1975; Courtney, 1974; Compton, 1978). What these aims are will be determined by the age and capability of the participating group, and by the purpose for which the teacher is using drama, but, providing the aim is an 'educational' one, the specific activities which may be used are not restricted to any single group of drama activities.

In addition to the fact that drama can comprise a wide range of different activities, it is also possible for the same activity to be referred to by a variety of different names. Alternatively, the same name may be given to a whole range of different activities within the theoretical constructs of different specialist writers. For example, Moreno (1972) makes a distinction between 'role-play', 'role-taking' and 'role-enactment', using each of these words individually to refer to separate activities within his theories of psychodrama. Heathcote, on the other hand, would use any or all of these words interchangeably, making no distinction between different aspects of role behaviour (Heathcote, 1975). And, in the general literature on drama, similar semantic confusion surrounds such activities as dramatisation, improvisation and creative drama (See Chapter 8).

Indeed there are, in the literature, so many prescriptive and theoretical controversies surrounding drama, that a number of specialists have been moved to comment on this. For example, Blewitt (1975) concluded that

"drama, like much else today, is bogged down in semantics and methodology, but no-one seems actually to ask why we should want to use it."

(p.10)

Wilks (1975) made a similar point and argued that

"sooner or later a proper philosophic study of the nature of drama and its place in man's development will have to be undertaken.

Only then will it be possible to consider in any depth the particular contribution that drama can make to the education of children."

(p.93)

While McGregor (1976) argued that

"there is no general overview of the variety of practices found in drama teaching. Neither has a theoretical basis been given for the distinctive nature of the subject and its specific contributions to children's development. A theoretical framework is therefore needed which gives a coherent theoretical structure characterising and reflecting the variety of practices possible in drama teaching Once the distinctive nature of the subject is clearly defined it is then possible to see whether the activity itself could develop children in certain ways, regardless of what drama method is being used"

(p.95)

And she goes on to argue that

"one of the problems of establishing a rationale for drama teaching is that there are a number of controversial issues in drama about which there is little agreement..... These include concepts such as imagination and creativity, play and social development More work needs to be done on the different educational functions drama can have within the school curriculum and the ways in which drama can be integrated into the organisational structures of various schools."

(p.107/108)

It was in response to the semantic and methodological confusions surrounding the principles and practice of drama, that the Schools Council Drama Project was set up. Its remit was to attempt to provide a coherent rationale which would define drama and highlight the areas of commonality within different theories and methods.

The findings from this project were published in 1977, just as the present author's project was beginning (McGregor et al, 1977; Stabler, 1978). Although the project did not include special schools in their study, the definition of drama which the team arrived at was one which appeared to be relevant to the present project and to provide a stepping off point from which to begin to study drama in relation to the educational needs and developmental capabilities of the mentally handicapped child.

The project team defined drama as

"an active, social process which draws on the child's capacity for role-play - for projecting into imagined roles, characters and situations - as a way of exploring and expressing ideas through the body and the voice."

(McGregor et al, 1977; p.4)

They suggested that the distinctive feature of drama is that it makes use of the capacity to 'act-out' or symbolise experience

that 'acting-out' is the exploration and representation of meaning using the medium of the whole person.

Since much of the argument presented in subsequent chapters of this thesis is underpinned by the theoretical rationale implicit in the definition of drama adopted within the project, and since the adoption of this definition has a direct bearing on many of the findings (particularly in relation to the role of the drama specialist and the needs of the profoundly mentally handicapped child) it might be useful, at this stage in the thesis, to take the time to examine this definition in some detail, and to indicate the philosophical constructs which were placed upon it by the present writer. In the next chapter, therefore, there will be an attempt to examine in more detail the definition of drama, to look at the nature of drama and the justification which exists, at the theoretical and philosophical level, for its inclusion in educational curricula, and to suggest where these aspects may be applicable to the principles and practice of drama in special education.

VOL. 1 - PART 2

PART 2

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF DRAMA

- CHAPTER 4 A consideration of the nature of drama, its aims and the aspects of it which may provide a theoretical justification for its inclusion in special schools' curricula
- CHAPTER 5 The relationship between drama and make-believe play
- CHAPTER 6 Learning through the use of the drama process
- CHAPTER 7 The methods of drama, general learning principles and the role of the teacher - a comparative analysis
- CHAPTER 8 An analysis of the levels of difficulty inherent in certain drama activities, and a consideration of the specific teaching skills which may be required in their presentation

PREFACE TO PART TWO

In the first part of this thesis, there was an attempt to provide a context for the research project on which the thesis is based by showing the aims and methods envisaged for the research, together with a description of the status quo obtaining at the start of the project. It was argued that an analysis of the status quo was important as a means of discovering the reasons behind the gap which appears to exist between the view of drama as it is advanced in the specialist literature, and the contradictory views of its value held by general staff.

One of the conclusions arrived at in Part I was the fact that there is, in existence, little in the way of a coherent rationale for the process of drama in special education, and that general staff are, in the main, confused and ignorant about the aims of drama, the methods, the principles and the activities which it may comprise. There is also a degree of uncertainty about what the term 'drama' itself means.

In Part Two we go on to examine these questions and to seek to provide, at the theoretical level, a coherent overview of what might be entailed in drama in special education. An analysis will be carried out of the aims, the methods, the learning outcomes, the activities and the teacher behaviours which may be appropriate to the practice of drama at this level. In this section of the thesis all of these are advanced as possible criteria on which the materials developed in the present project might be based. In Part 3 we go on to describe and analyse the practical element of the project, and to show how the theoretical analysis advanced in this part was supported, refuted or negated by the constraints and conditions operating in the practical situations encountered.

CHAPTER 4

A Consideration of the Nature of Drama, Its Aims and The Aspects Of It Which May Provide A Theoretical Justification For Its Inclusion in Special Schools' Curricula

Introduction

In the previous chapter it was argued that drama has tended to suffer from a lack of identity as a result of the semantic and methodological confusion and controversies which have abounded within its specialist literature, and which have been propounded by specialist exponents with differing ideological constructs on the nature and purpose of drama in education. It was argued that, although there are many interactive reasons to account for the neglect of drama, the confusion surrounding the nature of drama, its aims and methods, has been a fairly important contributory factor to its neglect.

If the comments made by staff are accepted at face value, it would appear that some teachers were not only consciously neglecting drama, but were also unaware that there were occasions when they had, in fact, used it - as, for example, when they had encouraged pupils to act out the parts of simple singing games or action play. This isolated or sporadic use of drama hardly equates to curricular provision for drama. But it is difficult to see how staff could have devised means of integrating drama systematically into their curricular scheme if they did not even know when they were using it. And if they did not know what it is, or how its aims might relate to their general teaching priorities, they were unlikely to perceive that their neglect of it as a regularly timetabled curricular element could constitute a potential deprivation of experience for their pupils.

Thus, the present author would contend that before staff can attempt any assessment of drama they must be aware of what constitutes drama in education. A necessary first step in this process is the adoption of a common definition of drama, one which delineates its unique characteristics, provides it with an identity and enables its principles, practices and outcomes to be discussed on a common level by all of those involved in the research.

Stenhouse (1975) whose theories have been quoted as a major source of influence in the choice of methods and intentions within the present project, argues that one of the primary tasks of the research worker in any educational research project must be the development of a general theoretical language which will enable the formation of a

common vocabulary of concepts about the problem being researched. Without such a common language, misunderstandings may occur. There may be a breakdown in communication between the different parties involved in the research. In some cases, apparent differences of opinion may be purely differences in semantic interpretation. On the other hand, there may be occasions when differences in semantic interpretation lead to very real differences in practice. Some of these differences may be unrepresentative of the principles which the project is attempting to research. But, due to the breakdown in communications, this fact may not be readily noted by those evaluating the research. Data which purports to describe the same phenomenon in two individual cases may, in fact, be based on very different methods and practices. Hamilton (1980) provides an example of this when he refers to the misunderstandings which arose within the Scottish Integrated Science Project. Here, 'integration' was interpreted in many different ways by those involved in the research. Some of the resultant practices were completely at odds with the principles envisaged by those who devised and planned the curricular experiments, and the methods being tested within the project. Hamilton suggests that such a breakdown in communication is difficult to avoid. But he argues that more careful delineation of the theoretical principles in the early stages of the project could help minimise the risks of a communication failure occurring.

There may be less chance of communication failure occurring when the subject of the research is one about which there is, already, a fairly strong consensus as to what the subject involves. For example, although there could be disagreements as to what might constitute a representative curriculum in French, the term 'French' is, itself, likely to be interpreted in similar ways by those for whom 'French' constitutes a foreign language. It has already been argued, however, that about the term 'drama' there is no such consensus of agreement. In a subject like drama, which is so open to a variety of theoretical interpretations, it may be essential to ensure that a common conceptual language be found. This will not, nor should it, rule out differences in practice in relation to the subject, but it should minimise the risk that differences in practice go unrecognised and therefore unrecorded.

In discussing the theoretical formulations put forward by the research worker at the start of a collaborative project, however, Stenhouse also notes that

"the adequacy of such concepts should be treated as provisional. The utility and appropriateness of the theoretical framework of concepts should be testable; and the theory should be rich enough to throw up new and profitable questions."

(Stenhouse, 1975; p.157)

In this chapter there will not only be an attempt to show the theoretical rationale put forward, but also to indicate the practical implications arising out of this which formed the basis of practical testing within the project. Undoubtedly, the theoretical rationale underlying the definition of drama adopted in the project does raise a number of questions concerning the role of drama in special education. As far as the present author has been able to determine, at least some of these questions - particularly those surrounding the use of drama with profoundly mentally handicapped children - have not been posed in the existing literature on drama. On the other hand, the very act of posing these questions did, as will be seen in the arguments presented in a subsequent chapter of this thesis, raise some doubt as to the adequacy of the definition for this segment of the special school population. Nevertheless, it did provide a baseline from which to begin to communicate with staff and it did enable the formulation of a number of theoretical hypotheses which could be translated into practice and tested within schools.

In the arguments which follow it will be suggested that drama may be regarded as a symbolic process which makes use of the individual's capacity to project into a role or situation imagined. It will be suggested that a child who lacks this ability could find it difficult to engage in and benefit from drama. And it will be noted that, within the practical work carried out in the project, there was an attempt to examine and assess how profoundly mentally handicapped (PMH) children reacted to the imaginative and symbolic aspects of the drama process.

It will also be argued that just as imagination may be a necessary prerequisite for engaging in drama, so engaging in drama may itself result both in an improved capacity to imagine or symbolise experience, and in an improved ability to portray, by the use of the voice and/or the body, the elements of the imagined experience.

It will be suggested that it is the combination of imagination and physical portrayal which is unique to drama, and that this constitutes a particular form or way of knowing which cannot be achieved by other means. It will be argued that this particular form of experience is to be found in every instance of drama, whether it be the drama of adult,

theatrical performance, or the spontaneous dramatic play of the young child. 'Educational Drama', it will be argued, is the application of this process in order to achieve the specific learning outcomes anticipated from the use of drama by the 'educator' responsible for providing the opportunity for its use.

It will be argued that these aims may be subsumed within two broad categories -

a. those aims which seek to develop the participants' skills in the process of drama in order that they may be better equipped to benefit from experience of the form of knowledge drama characterises;

b. those aims which seek to effect learning which may be related to the drama process, but which need not be.

The former aim is concerned primarily with finding appropriate means of enabling the participants to engage fully in the experience of drama; the latter is based on the subject matter which provides the context for dramatic activities. It will be argued, therefore, that drama may function both as a discipline and as a methodology, and that it may be this duality of function which has given rise to some of the methodological and semantic controversy surrounding it.

In order to understand the practical implications of these controversies, it is necessary to look briefly at the historical origins of drama in education and to examine the conflict between theatre-based and paediocentric views of drama. It is also necessary to note that a variety of different influences - psychological, social and anthropological - have given rise to new theories and practices. It will be argued that some of the problems of confusion in drama have arisen because adherents to one or other of these views have put their case forcibly, excluding the possibility that other methods or practices could be equally valid, given that not all exponents of drama will share the same educational aims. It will be argued that there is no 'right' way to teach drama, but rather a range of possible methods and activities, some of which may be more appropriate than others in achieving a specific series of educational aims. Assessment of drama will depend on how effectively lessons appear to have achieved the broad aims of the educator in any given instance. It will also be argued that 'broad aims' are more likely to be realistic learning outcomes than narrow, behavioural objectives in a subject like drama, where there are likely to be no 'right' answers or behaviours, but rather a range of diverse responses depending on the maturity and diversity of

of the participants. Similarly, the extent to which a teacher exerts her own direction and control upon a lesson may vary, depending on the extent to which her aim is for pupils to learn about a specific subject, or to develop their own abilities to take group decisions, develop qualities of leadership, or to develop personal autonomy in decision-making etc.

Finally, it will be argued that the methods and activities adopted in any drama lesson, may depend not only on the aims of the educator but also on how well she perceives it to be possible to translate these aims into practice within her own teaching situation. It will be argued that if drama is regarded as either 'a unique mode of experience' or as 'a means of effecting learning', there is a theoretical justification for its inclusion in special education. How far this theoretical justification may be negated or modified by the actual circumstances operating within schools for profoundly or severely mentally handicapped children remains to be tested in practice. And it will be suggested that the remaining chapters in Section A provide the theoretical formulation for the hypotheses tested in this project. Section B examines the adequacy of these theoretical concepts in the light of actual practice within schools.

Ritual

It is generally agreed that the drama of any culture has its origins in the early ritualised observances of that culture together with the myths and folk-lore which have permeated the culture.

Suzanne Langer (1957, 1963) has suggested that one of man's basic needs is the need to symbolise his experience in word and deed. The imaginative and dramatic play of the young child serves the same function as ritual in primitive societies - that of synthesising disparate elements of experience into a meaningful whole. Early primitive rituals may represent an attempt to understand and control the unknowns in the environment. They may have served as rehearsals for a re-enactment of the survival activities of the group - the preparation for the hunt, the chase, the kill, the communal feast, etc) - and as expressions of religious belief - (the need to propitiate the Gods, the 'sympathetic magic' of animism, or the 'mimetic magic' of reproducing in symbolic form the elements of an event hoped for or feared).

Durkheim (1963) suggests that these religious beliefs themselves constitute a survival mechanism arising as a result of man's social nature. He suggests that religion answers man's basic need for social cohesiveness, and his need for a collective ideal which arises out of the group's collective consciousness of its needs. He suggests that 'rites' are the rules of conduct which operate in the presence of secular or sacred objects, and rituals the symbolic enactment of these rules of conduct.

He suggests that ritual observances serve four main functions:

1. A Disciplinary and Preparatory Function - learning to adjust personal needs and conduct to the demands of living in society.
2. A Revitalising Function - the perpetuation of tradition, the renewal of faith, the transmission of values.
3. A Cohesive Function - coming together to reaffirm common bonds and to reinforce social solidarity.
4. A Euphoric Function - the pleasant feeling of well-being that comes from shared emotional experience.

With the passage of time, and in response to changing needs within a society, the relative importance of any one function may change in respect of particular rituals, and thus the rituals are changed, discarded

or modified to suit another purpose. At the same time there may be an exchange of myths and ritual between cultures. The myth may be borrowed without its accompanying ritual and vice versa. A meaningful ritual, based on the religious or secular rites of one society, may become an activity which satisfies a different need in another society; and it acquires a rationale based on that society's response to it. Thus, for example, an activity based on the need to contact the Gods of tree and leaf (in an animistic society) and to ensure the fertility of the tribe, may satisfy a more euphoric or recreational function in another society.

Certain rituals, also, cease to be a means to an end and performance of the ritual becomes an end in itself. The prospective benefits to the tribe from the observance of the ritual become less important than the immediate benefits obtained by the individual in participation. The 'regulatory social' role of the ritual becomes the 'personal need gratification' role of the activity. The activity thus acquires an importance in its own right.

Drama

Drama is one such activity. Because of the strong similarities it has with ritual, it has been suggested that drama appeals powerfully to man's basic survival instincts (Lorenz, 1965; Freud, 1946; Maslow, 1970;).

Certain writers (Strauss, 1959; Sapir, 1961; Mead, 1934) have suggested that drama and ritual are so closely related as to be virtually synonymous - early primitive rituals being regarded as 'drama without a stage'. There is one important difference, however, which characterises drama and differentiates it from ritual. Ritual observances require a committed act of faith to a sustained belief or value system. Drama requires the participants to suspend belief in the actuality of the here and now and to accept, for the duration of the dramatic experience, the reality of the enactment.

Drama thus creates a cognitive dissonance in the minds of the participants. The actions of the participants in the here and now create the illusion which is the reality of dramatic experience. The participants must therefore remain actively conscious of themselves and of what they are doing with voice and body in order to sustain the illusion for themselves and for the other participants. At the same time they require to project themselves mentally into the character

they have adopted, to imagine how the character might react, in order that their voice and movements will be appropriate to the role. The need to be, at one and the same time, ourselves and another, results in a type of gestalt in which the figure (the role) and the ground (the actor) are constantly having to be balanced one against the other in order to create a meaningful whole.

It has been suggested (Bolton, 1979; Festinger, 1957) that the dissonance so created has the effect of making us more fully aware of our own actions and perceptions by sharpening our insight into other possible reactions and perceptions.

Paradoxically, the cognitive control exercised in drama may allow emotion to be experienced by allowing experimentation with emotion. By 'acting sad', for example, we can create the physical characteristics of sadness and can test out what it feels like without having to experience the real events which give rise to grief. Similarly, power may be exercised without the long-term responsibilities that power entails, and aggression can be expiated without fear of consequences.

It is, however, difficult to imagine grief or joy, or any other human emotion, abstracted from the events which gave rise to it. In drama, therefore, the emotion is set within a time/space continuum of events which may, like the role, be divorced from the time and space operating in the here and now. This means that events may be abstracted, ordered, sequenced and synthesised in a way which is not possible in real life. This process of abstraction and synthesis again allows a sharpening of perception of cause and effect, and allows us to make associative links which may not be possible during the experience of the real emotion. The tortured prisoner, for example, is unlikely to spend much of his time in worrying over the conflicts in the mind of his jailor. The actor, however, can experience something of both viewpoints by adopting different roles within the drama and can, therefore, see the chain of events in a variety of causal perspectives.

Thus, although drama may be regarded primarily as a cognitive activity which manifests itself in voice and movement, the subject of the drama is generally more akin to the more basic survival mechanisms operating in ritual - the enactment of man in his interactions with other men, with 'God' and with the environment, the conflicts which arise during these interactions and the emotions experienced as a result.

For the participants the experience is gained in the participation. Spectators may experience the same ideas and emotions vicariously by watching the events enacted. Like the participants, the spectators must be prepared to suspend disbelief in order to experience the illusion.

Greek Drama

It was this conflict between illusion and reality which formed the basis of Aristotle's model of drama which has influenced much of Western Drama until the present day. Plato, while emphasising the social and political necessity for the ability to make an impassioned speech or to argue cogently, and while allowing that the ideal of beauty could be expressed in grace of movement, held that the use of voice and speech in the enactment of drama was to debase man. The poet or dramatist he saw as a trader in lies and thus a bad influence on a society which should be striving towards the higher virtues of truth and beauty.

Aristotle, however, put forward the view that the poet dealt with universal truths rather than historical fact. By selecting out elements of truth and synthesising these into a story, the 'real' truths would emerge more powerfully. The exaggeration of faults (in comedy) and of virtues (in tragedy) would highlight these and present them with more veracity than a simple factual account could do. For the populace, the catharsis achieved by vicariously expending an excess of emotion would restore emotional equilibrium and prevent an outburst of emotion in less socially desirable forms.

The Aristotelian definition of drama as 'doing the deed' or 'the deed done and its consequences' has, as its core, man and his interaction with his environment. As the environment alters (Gods withdraw their favours, the forces of nature assert their supremacy over the resources of man, interactions between men cause chain reactions etc) the universality of the many facets of man's nature are revealed.

In Aristotle's view of drama, therefore, the subject matter is man (or creatures with human characteristics). The resources are the human voice, body and mind. The methodology the willing suspension of disbelief and the emotional involvement of actors and spectators which arises out of the need (1) to adopt and sustain a role and (2) to place that role in a sequence of events. The function of drama is to explore, explain and express the universal truths of man's existence. The aim is to understand and communicate these truths, to achieve

moral conduct as a result, and to acquire social and emotional balance in the populace.

This view of drama is primarily performance oriented. It has been suggested that the performance element of Greek drama is a development stemming from the maturity of the civilisation. The rituals out of which Greek drama grew were based on 'rites of passage' whereby man was progressively initiated into the more adult forms of personal and community life (Shumaker, 1964).

The relative sophistication of Aristotle's view of drama, drawn mainly from an analysis of the plays of Sophocles, shows this influence in his pre-occupation with the gradual development of man as an independent being with a maturely developed sense of morality and social conscience. Aristotle emphasised the need for form and beauty in presentation if effective communication between actors and spectators is to be achieved. Thus Aristotle put forward the view of drama as, not merely an activity which satisfies the emotional, intellectual, physical or social needs of individual participants, but as an art form of a high aesthetic order which should combine beauty in execution with the ideal of truth, and, by implication, a one-way system of communication from players to spectators. It could be used to maintain the status quo by reinforcing social beliefs and customs, or as an agent for change by encouraging man to question accepted principles. It could thus become an important manipulative political and educational methodology. In the process, the emphasis on the needs of individual participants became subservient to the needs of the performance, and the actor became interpreter and communicator of the ideas of others rather than instigator of the ideas or experiences enacted.

Educational Drama

The educational force of drama was also recognised in medieval times when dramatic performances presented to the common people in the market place represented an opportunity for the church to teach them the principle of Christianity and to make them aware of the stories of the Bible. Like Aristotle, the Church saw in drama a means of informing and controlling the populace.

With the passage of time, however, the educational force of drama declined and the more secular and entertaining aspects of the medieval mystery plays took precedence. By the 18th and 19th centuries drama was synonymous with entertainment rather than education, but

there were marked differences between the bawdy or sentimental works produced to cater for popular taste, and the mannered performances staged for the wealthy. By the Victorian era art, music and drama served as vicarious entertainment for the poor. Participation in art or music became social graces of the wealthy. Engaging in drama was not, however, considered to be 'proper' for those of any standing.

With the introduction of compulsory state education, aesthetic subjects figured hardly at all in the public sector of education, although they continued to form an important element in the Private sector where abilities in art and music were still regarded as socially desirable. In Scotland, the 'able' child could progress educationally regardless of home background. The educational opportunities offered, however, were mainly in the realms of academic rather than aesthetic education. This, coupled with the emphasis on the professionalism of the teacher, produced a climate of learning in which the teacher was the recognised authority and discipline was autocratic. The attitude prevalent in many Scottish schools was one which precluded freedom of speech and expression of movement.

It was against this background of social division in England and authoritarian repression in Scotland, that drama was gradually and officially introduced into the school curriculum, either in the form of 'elocution' or in performance and in the study of dramatic texts. The first specialist teachers were either English teachers with an enthusiasm for drama or the designated 'Speech and Drama' teacher - with the emphasis on speech rather than on drama.

The Influence of 'Progressive' Educational Methods

In 1914, Caldwell Cook, a teacher of English and an advocate of the 'play-way' in education had aroused interest in his methodology, but exerted little immediate influence in terms of curricular change. Cook advocated a revolutionary approach to play-making which was based on improvisation around a given text (generally Shakespearian) in an attempt to make performance less stilted and more spontaneous, and in order that pupils might understand better the situations, characters and plot of the play concerned (Cook, 1914).

With the upsurge of progressivism and the move towards greater freedom within the classroom and with the introduction of activity-based methods of learning, Cook's work once more aroused attention and drama became a recognised part of the curriculum in many primary

and secondary schools. Cook's influence can be seen in many schools in the approach to the study of texts and in 'the school play' which may well contain many scenes which have been built around improvisation. The approach, too, is popular in theatre, in education companies, in drama workshops and in youth and community drama groups.

Progressivism in educational theory led to a reassessment of the place of drama in education. Leading drama specialists - notably Slade (1963) and Way (1967) in Britain and Ward (1933) in America - began to question the Aristotelian view of drama and the need for performance-oriented drama with its emphasis on the need to develop skills in order to interpret and communicate the words of others. The elitist nature of performance-oriented drama was seen as a negation of the current egalitarian view that 'education' was the right of every child not simply those of superior intelligence, talent or social standing. There was a commitment to the view that child drama, like child art, was an entity in itself, different in both purpose and character from adult drama and fulfilling different aims.

The term 'creative drama' was introduced. In creative drama improvisation was still the basis of the activity but much less stress was laid on dialogue and the story-line and more emphasis placed on movement, use of space and freedom to express oneself by whatever means seemed most appropriate or comfortable for the individual or group concerned (Pemberton-Billings and Clegg, 1965).

Creative drama was considerably influenced by Laban's approach to dance, characterised by its freedom from set steps and routines, its principles of contrast, the refining of movement into a series of discernible elements and awareness of the use of the space surrounding the body in all directions (Laban, 1950 and 1963). As the popularity of Laban's approach spread in both drama and in physical education there was a blurring of the boundaries between movement in drama and movement in physical education. (In theory, educational dance is a more creative abstract expression in movement than creative drama (or dance drama) which tends to be tied to a relatively specific situation. In practice, however, it often became difficult to distinguish between the two).

Child Drama

In the fifties, Peter Slade and his colleagues formed the Educational Drama Association and introduced the notion of 'child drama'.

Child drama completed the progression away from performance-oriented drama (though the school play still continued to flourish as an end of term or extra-curricular activity in many schools). In child drama, performance, certainly in the early stages of education, was considered to be inappropriate, if not actively harmful. Performance was regarded as an excuse for indulging children's natural tendency to 'show-off' to the detriment of both the drama in which they were engaged and their own natural forms of expression.

Child drama, as the name implies, had, as its central tenet, the view that drama in schools should be based on the activities which arise naturally in the course of a child's development. To impose 'theatre' at too early an age, before the child is developmentally ready for it, would hinder the child's progression towards an appreciation of drama in later life.

Slade's works (Slade, 1954, 1969, 1965) outline the various stages in child development as they relate to drama - the crawling and exploratory stage, the stage of walking and running in which the circle or spiral form is most marked, the 'dawn of seriousness' at which children become more concerned with externalising their feelings and with social activities, and so on. There are close parallels between Slade's theories and the developmental stages outlined by Piaget, and similar philosophical concepts can be seen in both. Parallels can also be drawn with A N Whitehead's view on education (Whitehead, 1932). The romance stage in which the child experiences the joy and excitement of discovery, followed by the stage of precision in which the child is concerned with defining and refining his knowledge, and leading on to a further romantic phase in which the child may again discover the excitement of new experiences made possible as a result of the earlier progressions, are very similar in concept to the stages of drama outlined by Slade.

The climate of progressive, child-centred education in the sixties contributed to the popularity of these new approaches to drama. Unfortunately, the concept of drama was so all-embracing and drama specialists so vigorous in their advocacy of it, that it became difficult to define drama with any degree of precision or to delineate the boundaries of the subject. Thus the use of music or percussion to express a mood or emotion could be termed drama. The visual arts of painting and photography could form an input to a drama lesson or be a climax towards which a lesson might progress. The methods of

drama - dramatisation, improvisation, movement and dance - were employed as a means of teaching other subjects such as history, religion, social studies, etc, and accorded well with the current theories on the value of imitative and dramatic play as a means of learning.

Although this multi-disciplinary approach made it difficult to define drama, it broke down subject boundaries and was well suited to many of the current curricular experiments such as team teaching, block-timetabling, centres of interest and horizontal rather than vertical subject relationships. The aims of child drama too were consistent with the aims of progressive child-centred education, being concerned with 'the individuality of individuals, with the uniqueness of each human essence' (Way, 1967). Factors such as 'personal growth', 'self-awareness' and 'sensitivity' tended to be more important in the literature than specific lesson content, and there was considerable popularity for the view that drama was concerned with these intangibles and, by implication, immeasurables. There was also considerable support for the view that drama should be presented as a methodology rather than a subject or discipline, and, in the primary sector especially, arguments were put forward in favour of drama lessons being taken by the class teacher, who knew the children and had a good relationship with them, rather than by visiting drama specialists.

The Influence of Psychology and Sociology

In the sixties, there was increased popular awareness of the growth movements in humanistic psychology. Many of the methods used in drama were seen to be ideally suited to the group approach to therapy. In the security of the group situation fears and aggression could be acted out and re-experienced as a form of catharsis, a striving towards emotional equilibrium, not unlike that aimed at by early Greek drama.

Free dance movements were used to release tension and as an aid in the expression of emotion, and role-play was used to resolve conflicts arising out of the dynamics of the group or from life situations. Moreno, one of the foremost exponents of this use of drama, and a prolific writer, had introduced the term 'psychodrama' to describe the admixture of psychology and drama so produced. Role-training, the rehearsal of future possible situations, and role-play, a function of both role-perception and role-enactment, form the basis of activity in psychodrama (Moreno, 1945).

Advocates of the principles of group counselling in sociology

(Ruddock, 1969; Argyle, 1967). also found these methods useful and further terms like socio-drama and social drama were introduced to describe the use of drama techniques in attempting to solve social problems within family or occupational groups, and to describe the acting out and resolution of problems of etiquette and social manners such as introductions, control and management of committees, dining out, etc.

This, in turn, led to an awareness of the importance in social intercourse of tone of voice, patterns of speech, body language and gesture. Again, the work of psychologists and anthropologists such as Desmond Morris and Margaret Mead and the linguistic theories of Basil Bernstein interacted with the current work on drama and especially in working with the handicapped (Morris, 1976; Mead, 1946; Bernstein, 1965, 1961; Sherbourne, 1975, 1969; Jennings, 1973 and Wethered, 1973).

The growing availability of hardware, such as videorecorders and cassettes, made it possible to study speech and movement in greater detail and considerable use was made of these resources in industrial management training courses (and, eventually, in schools) where simulation and gaming, using many of the methods of drama, were becoming popular teaching methods (Jones, 1972; Davidson and Gordon, 1979).

This proliferation of new theories and approaches towards drama from the fifties onwards, was reflected in the growing body of literature on drama. Much of the literature produced was descriptive rather than theoretical (Wagner, 1976; Bowskill, 1974) and in the theoretical works there was a strong polarisation of views towards one of the current theories (Adland, 1964; Heathcote, 1965). Schisms began to develop between those who felt that drama had moved so far from its origins in theatre as to be barely recognisable as drama, and those who felt that educational drama had established itself in its own right, disparate from theatre and with separate aims which were quite unlike those necessary for successful theatre. Thus controversy arose in drama circles on whether drama should be regarded as performance or experience, subject or methods, and over a suitable definition for drama and what it should comprise.

Pressure for Accountability

The seventies brought a reaction to the wholesale adoption of

child-centred progressive methods of education. There was concern over the possibility of falling standards in the 'basics' and a clash of views between those who wished to carry progressive methods to their logical conclusion by the abolition of external examinations and the schemes of work so imposed, and those who advocated a need for uniformity of standards which could only be achieved by external examination, and a return to the more traditional forms of teaching (Day, 1975; Cox and Dyson, 1969, 1970, 1975, 1977). The prevailing climate in the seventies was one which advocated a return to greater accountability on the part of both pupils and staff and the need for the formulation of precise aims and objectives in all subjects.

The growing trend towards accountability put pressure on drama specialists to put forward clear aims and objectives for the teaching of drama and to evaluate their work in such a way as to provide convincing arguments for the benefits it claimed.

Since drama had gained a place as a recognised curricular element within the educational system, the cognitive and affective functions it might serve became of major importance. A more cautious approach was now being taken towards the claims made for the place of drama in education. And, like teachers of other subjects, drama teachers were now being expected to demonstrate the learning outcomes expected from their teaching. In schools where drama was directed towards performance the performance itself could stand as a record of the teacher's and pupils' work. This work was demonstrated and made publicly accountable in the end product - the performance. Similarly, in the few schools where drama had become an examinable subject (CSE mode 3), examination passes could demonstrate the competence or otherwise of teachers and pupils. If, however, the teacher is opposed ideologically to examination or performance of drama, professional accountability is more difficult to achieve and may depend on the teacher's ability to articulate his aims and to demonstrate how far these aims are being met in practice.

Where there is a conflict between the aims of the drama teacher and the ethos of the school, the actual achievement of certain aims may, paradoxically, serve to depress rather than boost the status of either subject or teacher. For example, the pupil who has been encouraged in drama to develop the ability to think for himself, and to develop the self-confidence in expression to articulate his own individuality in matters of opinion, may be seen by other staff (and

by parents) as giving evidence of the subversive nature of drama and its adverse effect on traditional learning situations. (Clegg, 1976; Prior, 1976). In such a situation it is extremely difficult for the drama teacher to demonstrate the 'benefits' of his subject since these benefits are not necessarily regarded as such by other members of his profession.

Similarly, the Aristotelian theory that drama can act as a catharsis for excessive or damaging emotions is still widely held among many drama specialists, and, in particular, those who have been influenced by the field of humanist psychology. Such specialists would defend the use of drama in which there is an excess of emotional involvement, aggression or violence within the controls of the contrived drama situation. Teachers who tend towards the behaviourist school might argue, however, that such drama can actually increase the tendencies it seeks to expiate. Since there is a certain amount of evidence in support of this latter view (Bandura, 1971, 1973; Allen, 1979), some drama specialists have become cautious about the formulation of aims which predict affective changes as a result of exposure to drama.

Those who believe that performance has no place in educational drama tend to suggest that, as drama no longer aims at communicating truths to an audience, the development of skills in voice and movement are important only in so far as they enable the participants to take part in the drama. The development of such skills may be regarded as an outcome of participation in drama rather than the aim of doing so. The aims are more likely to be directed towards less tangible outcomes such as the development of self-awareness, self-confidence or creativity.

To some extent, however, the controversy over 'drama-as-performance' and 'drama-as-experience', or personal growth) has been resolved by the increasing use of the term 'Theatre Arts' to cover those aspects of drama which relate to performance. There appears to be a fairly general move towards regarding 'theatre' as an aspect of drama in education appropriate to the secondary school child, while drama of the less formal kind is regarded as being more appropriate for the younger child. Performance-oriented drama, and theatre arts courses, are tending to be seen as expressions of drama as an aesthetic or recreational subject, or as an art form. The less formal aspects of drama - improvisation, movement work, role-play, etc - are regarded as learning experiences, the individual content of which is determined in any instance by the aims of the teacher or therapist leading

the drama. This form of drama training is also seen as a means of developing in the pupil those skills and appreciations of drama which will enable the child, at a later stage in his development, to engage in or benefit from theatre oriented drama as an aesthetic, a creative or a recreational activity. Even so, it must be noted that the 'school play' continues to flourish as an end of term or extra-curricular activity in many primary and secondary schools. In some schools it is the only form of drama attempted by non-specialist staff. There are still many specialist teachers of drama who would regard this as a violation of children's rights not to have adult theatre imposed upon them before they are ready for it. And there is still some controversy over whether drama should seek to serve the needs of the participants, or should aim towards the development of skills which will enable communication between the participants and to an audience.

Summary

To sum up so far, it has been argued that drama grew out of ritual. The observance of ritual serves both a personal and social function. On the one hand, it helps the individual affirm his links with particular social, religious or cultural groups. On the other, it maintains the degree of social cohesiveness within groups which enables these groups to continue to function effectively as groups, and to achieve a common purpose. Theatre-based drama, as described and defined by Aristotle, explored the rituals, the rites and the myths of individual cultures and provided a vehicle whereby the essential truths of these could be communicated to the populace. Thus, theatre-based drama became an important political, educative and controlling force as well as an experience which could be both social, cathartic and aesthetic.

Drama in education began with theatrical performances and a study of their texts, but evolved to embrace concepts from progressive, paediocentric educationalists, from humanist psychology, from sociology and from a number of other, related disciplines. The result is that any instance of educational drama may serve any one of a variety of different purposes. The methods and activities adopted may differ depending on the purpose chosen on any occasion. And the individual differences in these methods, activities and purposes have created both confusion and controversy as to what is, or is not, admissible practice in drama in education. This has resulted in

questioning as to what legitimately may constitute experience of 'drama' and of the aims towards which drama in education ought to be directed.

As McGregor notes

As drama teachers are often unable to articulate their aims and objectives clearly, and as there are a variety of views about the purposes and practices of drama, the subject seems to lack any coherent rationale and people are therefore reluctant to give it the status of a discipline in its own right. However, if common assumptions and practices could be found in all the different practices, a case for the subject as a distinctive educational feature could be made."

(McGregor, 1976; p.8)

In the remainder of this chapter we go on to examine the distinctive features of drama and to look at the implications of these to the special education sector.

The Distinctive Feature of Drama

It has already been argued that, following the lead of the Schools Council Drama Project team, the common working definition of drama which was adopted within the present project was that

"Drama is an active, social process which draws on an individual's capacity for projecting into imagined roles, relationships and situations, and for acting these out through the expressive use of the body and the voice."

Implicit in this is that this process will involve the participants in accepting a shift in the conventions of behaviour towards each other by -

- a. agreeing to suspend normal roles in identifying with the new, imagined roles;
- b. agreeing to make different use of the environment and its artifacts, and/or to employ a different time/space continuum from that operating in reality;

Thus, participation in drama implies engaging in a process of symbolic representation which, through the medium of the whole body, externalises internal processes and makes abstract ideas overt and communicable. For example, the abstract constructs of love, hate, goodness, etc, may be expressed in a form which can be communicated to others by acting out, or representing, the kinds of behaviour in which human beings engage when they love, hate, etc. Similarly, the internal processes may be revealed by what the individual says or by what is said about him by the others participating with him in the course of the drama activity. And this process holds good whether the participants are acting out the drama created by another - as for example in Macbeth - or

creating their own drama by, for example, improvising a scene and acting out a simple, everyday situation such as the purchase of a loaf of bread.

This definition therefore seeks to marry the Aristotelian, theatre-based view of drama, with the paediocentric or experiential view. The core activity in each case is the same - that of imaginative enactment. This definition also avoids the controversy of whether drama should be regarded as a 'subject' in its own right, or as a method of teaching other things, by suggesting that the process will remain constant regardless of changes in the subject matter, the aims or the specific methodology adopted.

By adopting this definition it also becomes possible to make a distinction between activities which must be classed as drama, and those which may be regarded as discussion, movement play, exploratory physical play, percussion or dance. It is important to be able to make this distinction because, as was argued earlier, many specialists have taken such a broad view of what drama might encompass that it ran the danger of becoming something so amorphous as to defy both description and theoretical justification. This, in turn, led to claims for its benefits which were difficult to substantiate in practice, because the claimed benefits were, themselves, so intangible.

The one aspect which would appear to link all drama activities, and to distinguish these from other activities, is that drama makes use of the human capacity to imagine and enact experience out of the context of, and in a way that may digress from, the reality of that experience. Clearly, there may be times within a drama lesson when other forms of experience are encountered. The drama lesson may also overlap into other subject divisions. But the core activity which is unique to drama and which represents a form of knowing and experiencing which cannot be achieved by other means is this property of imaginative enactment. Stenhouse describes this property thus

"drama is a discipline of thinking dramatic action is a complete and bounded world of thinking with its own dynamics and its own principles drama is a form of activity bounded in time and space. It tells its tale through the imitation of human behaviour or the representation of human behaviour drama depends therefore on acting, on representation, on that make-believe of experience So drama in schools depends on acting growing in the classroom. But you don't learn to act first and then secondly begin to learn through drama. You learn to act through acting together. You learn by doing it. But acting is generally agreed to be a matter less of mimicry, exhibitionism

or imitation than of the ability to react to imaginary stimuli."

(Stenhouse, 1982b p.28/30)

The Imagination of the Profoundly Mentally Handicapped Child

If, as we have argued, drama is a process of imaginative enactment, of acting, which may, in turn, be regarded as the ability to react to imaginary stimuli, this raises a number of questions concerning the relevance of drama to the needs of a profoundly mentally handicapped child. Almost by definition a profoundly mentally handicapped child may have little concept of object permanence, may have little awareness of himself as an entity separate from his environment and may have little capacity, at this stage in his development, for the symbolisation of experience implied in the drama process. Depending on one's view of what constitutes imagination, one could argue that such a child will be incapable of engaging in the drama process and that drama will have little educational relevance for such a child.

It was argued earlier in the thesis, that a number of general staff in schools for the profoundly mentally handicapped have taken this view and reject drama. It was also argued that the majority of specialist drama teachers argue that no child should be debarred from participation in drama by his handicap. It must be noted, however, that a close inspection of the activities suggested by them as being suitable for the profoundly mentally handicapped child reveals that many of these activities do not contain the property of imaginative enactment which, we have argued, is the distinctive quality of drama.

It appeared, therefore, that in the practical work attempted within the project there would be a need to examine closely the extent to which profoundly mentally handicapped children were capable of engaging in or responding to this distinctive feature in the drama lesson. At the same time, their reaction, or lack of it, might provide some information of the adequacy of the definition itself.

The Aims of Drama

If, in the meantime, we accept that the distinctive and unique feature of drama is this property of imaginative enactment, this also makes it possible to examine with more clarity the broad aims which may underlie a particular choice of activity. For example,

a teacher who is concerned with giving pupils an opportunity to develop gross motor skills through the use of physical movement, may well teach a lesson which includes no imaginative or enactive elements. Nor is there any reason why it should. On the other hand, it could be that including such a component within a lesson might help pupils move their limbs in less accustomed ways and provide a stimulus for their so doing. In such a situation the teacher is deliberately incorporating the drama process into a movement lesson as a means of achieving her aims in movement. If, on the other hand, the lesson is directed not towards the development of physical, motor skills but towards encouraging pupils to use their bodies as a means of communicating ideas or feelings, the teacher might well place the entire lesson within an imaginative and enactive context. By contrasting the aims in these two situations it is possible to suggest that, in the first case, drama is contributing to a movement lesson, while in the second, the movement work is an integral part of the drama lesson. Thus, paradoxically, by making a theoretical distinction between movement and drama (two subjects which are frequently linked and treated as synonymous in the specialist literature on drama), it is possible to see how each can be integrated with the other in making a specific and distinct contribution towards achieving the aims of an individual lesson.

Similarly, the drama process may be used within, for example, a history lesson, while history itself may form the subject matter for a drama lesson. In the former case drama is being used as an additional means of exploring and experiencing the factual information presented in the history lesson, while in the latter, the facts of history serve as a basis for an exercise in developing skills in the imaginative and enactive process.

It would appear, therefore, that any instance of drama may be subsumed within two distinct categories of aims. The first of these would relate to providing opportunities for people to experience the particular 'way of knowing' which is characterised by drama. The second to the use of drama as a tool in teaching other things. And, as argued earlier, this reconciles the controversy over whether drama should be regarded as subject or method. Depending on the category of aim, experience of drama may be directed towards developing the skills which may enable the participants to engage fully in the process; or experience of drama may be directed towards extracting and

exploring meaning by the use of the process. In either case, the mode of experience will remain constant.

Drama as a Discipline

If it is accepted that drama embodies a distinct way of knowing or experiencing which remains constant regardless of differences in aims; which remains constant whether the drama enacted is one's own or that of others; and which remains constant regardless of whether the drama takes place in a classroom or on a stage, then this provides a theoretical justification for the inclusion of drama within the curriculum, in that it is in line with the philosophic views of those who have recommended that, within any curricular scheme, a high priority should be given to those modes of activity which constitute for us distinctive ways of knowing and interpreting experience (HMSQ, 1977, a; 1977, b; Hirst, 1965; Phenix, 1964).

Hirst, for example, suggests that the inclusion of any aspect within a curricular scheme should be determined by whether it can be reduced to a unique and characteristic 'form of knowledge' which can best be achieved by the methods and ways of knowing applicable to that form of knowledge. He suggests that in terms of the logical, deductive form of knowledge common to the sciences it is manifest nonsense to speak of 'angry magnetic fields' or 'coloured actions'. In the symbolic form of knowledge common to literature and poetry, however, the animism of these phrases is perfectly legitimate and they may be used to enhance understanding of the underlying connections or differences which exist between man's ego-centric view of the universe and the universal laws which operate outwith man's volition. Similarly, in the enactive and representational form of knowledge which drama characterises, there may be an opportunity to explore and express ideas through the use of the body and in the development of symbolic forms through which we can seek to understand the elements of personal response and make sense of the physical environment by extending the boundaries of that environment in new combinations.

Phenix, too, suggests that drama lies in the realm of symbolics. Because it comprises both verbal and non-verbal representation, and has within it the possibility for ritualistic forms of expression and for the investing of everyday objects with ritualistic or symbolic significance, he suggests that it may represent a particular form of symbolic thought which may be classed alongside mathematics, and languages as

'symbolisms'. He notes, however, that what he describes as the 'non-discursive symbolic forms', of which drama is one -

"are not widely recognised as being comparable to languages, nor are the materials generally available for studying and teaching them, as are materials for ordinary languages and mathematics. One reason for this is that there are many kinds of non-discursive forms, making any common measure more difficult than for ordinary languages and mathematics. Another reason is that these symbolisms cannot always be treated as autonomous disciplines independent of the field of meaning in which they are used. Nevertheless, one feature distinguishes them making it appropriate to include them all within one realm and to bear a common name, Characteristic of all is that they are humanly constructed formalisms. They are instruments for the expression of meaning. The emphasis in learning any symbolism is not on the content of the meaning expressed but on the conventional expressive forms used to objectify and communicate meanings. The content of the meanings to be expressed is the subject of other realms of meaning."

(Phenix, 1964; p.91)

Whether acting-out can be regarded as 'humanly' constructed formalism may be open to question in that the play, courtship and mating rituals of many other species appear to share several common features with the forms of expression employed in the dramatic play and ritualistic enactment of humans. Nevertheless, as an active, social process, drama is concerned with expressing the elements of human experience by verbal and non-verbal means in an agreed imaginative context. If we accept Phenix' contention that one should distinguish between the emphasis placed on the forms used to objectify and communicate meaning and the content of the meanings to be expressed, this provides further justification for suggesting that the aims of drama may relate both to the forms of expression employed in the process and to the meanings explored throughout the process. The ability to interpret and respond appropriately to the expressive forms used by others, and the development of personal skill in this expression, are aims which relate directly to experience of the process, while, as has been argued, other aims may relate to the meanings which occur as a result of the context within which the activities are set.

Moreover, within a drama lesson itself, the exploration of meaning may occur at two levels - the real and the imagined. First, in the understanding of the actual context within which the activity is set, there is a need to understand and explore not only the subject matter, but also the ways in which an imagined situation may be resolved in real terms. Thus the participants require to be aware of the decision-making and problem-solving process in action, of how

the actions of one group member may affect and be affected by the words and actions of others, and of the processes of human interactions which have to occur if the dramatic action is to progress. These meanings may be largely unexpressed in words and may, in fact, be comprehended only subconsciously as part of the active process taking place.

Even so, in objectifying and communicating the overt meanings in the content of the activity the child may be developing an awareness of the process in which he is engaged and, in so doing, may be increasing his ability both to project into the imagined situation and to relate to the real people working alongside him in the real event. In order to develop skill in the acting out process, therefore, there must be a capacity for symbolic thought which can differentiate between the real and the imagined in any given situation.

The extent to which mentally handicapped pupils appear to be capable of comprehending this distinction and of demonstrating their capacity to do so, is an important element in this study, and it will be argued later in this thesis that the fact that a child has not previously exhibited the capacity to understand this distinction should not be regarded as evidence that he is incapable of doing so, or of learning to do so, under changed environmental conditions, or when given teaching, support and guidance by an adult. If the mentally handicapped child does prove to be capable of engaging in and comprehending the form of knowledge which drama characterises, then there is a strong theoretical justification for ensuring that experience of drama forms part of his total educational experience - especially when we consider that the handicapped child may, unlike his non-handicapped peer, be deprived of experience of make-believe in his life as a result of the fewer opportunities such a child has for this form of play with his peer group. This point will be returned to in the context of the following chapter which deals specifically with the relationship which exists between spontaneous make-believe as it occurs in play, and the make-believe which occurs in the course of a lesson in drama. For the present, it may be sufficient to assert that deprivation of make-believe play may increase the need to compensate for this by increased opportunity for drama in special schools, relative to mainstream schools. If this is the case, the present situation, in which the opposite applies, should give rise to educational concern over the special school child's being deprived of this experience as a result of staff's neglect of drama.

Developing Skill in the Drama Process

It has already been argued that one aspect of developing skill in the drama process is that which is concerned with the ability to project into the imagined situation and to relate to the real people and events occurring at the same time. This suggests that engaging in drama may enable the participants to develop a tolerance of the viewpoint of others, the ability to take individual or group decisions, and the ability to react, as Stenhouse suggested, to imaginary stimuli provided by either the environment, the others in the drama or the teacher leading the drama. Moreover, since the portrayal involves the use of the voice and/or body it is possible that engaging in drama may have an effect on the participant's ability to use voice or body more effectively in other situations.

In subsequent chapters of this thesis, therefore, it will be suggested that the development of skill in the process of drama, is synonymous with the development of imagination, social skills, communication and movement skills. It will be argued, however, that it is possible to regard the development of these skills either as a means to an end - that of enabling a more profound experience of drama - or as an end in themselves. If the development of such skills is regarded as a planned product of engaging in drama, one might argue that, in this case, one is using the experience of drama as a means of effecting these specific learnings. And again, in subsequent chapters there will be an attempt to examine how the teacher may best utilise the methods and activities of drama to effect learning of this kind. It will be argued that the subject matter of the drama lesson provides an additional vehicle for this type of learning, and, in the case of severely and profoundly mentally handicapped children, may be a particularly useful means of enabling them to learn both the social skills necessary for adult life, and to learn about their physical and social environment. If it transpires that, in practice, drama can achieve these aims, then the learning which can be achieved through the use of the drama process provides an additional justification for the inclusion of drama in the special school curriculum.

The Assessment of Drama

It has already been argued that the educational relevance of drama as a mode of experience may well depend on the extent to which a child is mentally capable of conceptualising the symbolism involved

in that process. The justification for the inclusion of drama in the curriculum may, therefore, be contingent upon its relevance as a mode of experience, rather than on the specific benefits which, it may be demonstrated, can accrue from the experience. An analogy may be drawn with art or music. The inclusion of art or music in a curricular scheme is not, generally, in order that the school may produce proficient musicians and artists - although there may well be occasions when this does occur. Similarly, although the provision of art or music may result in pupils having a better eye for colour, more appreciation of rhythm, etc, the principle aim of providing music or art on the curriculum is not usually these outcomes but simply the awareness that without experience of art or music a pupil is deprived of a particular mode of experience which is unique to these forms of expression.

But if the aim in any given instance is to provide an experience, then it may be extremely difficult to justify the educational value of that experience by reference to its 'benefits'. What are the benefits of singing? If one argues that the benefits of singing are increased breath control, better articulation, more appreciation of social relationships through sharing a social experience, etc, one may have to demonstrate that such benefits do occur, and, in developing curricular schemes, may have to assign a priority to these benefits relative to others, or, alternatively, show that 'singing' produces these benefits better, or more quickly than other educational practices might do. On the other hand, one might simply justify the inclusion of singing within a curricular scheme by suggesting that its uniqueness of experience qualifies it for inclusion.

So too with drama. One might argue that there is no need to attempt to quantify or assess the benefits of drama as a means of justifying its existence on the curriculum. On the other hand, in order to present drama at all one has to make a number of choices concerning the material to be used, the methods to be adopted, and the extent to which the group will simply be left to 'experience' drama in particular ways. Most teachers would make these choices on the basis of the needs of their pupils, the physical environment and the limitations it imposes on the type of work which can be done, and on the basis of the teacher's own predilection for a specific method or series of activities. And these choices would undoubtedly be influenced by the teacher's own ideological conception of what she was

attempting to achieve as a result of her teaching. Even when the lesson was basically aimed at 'experience', therefore, it is possible that the choices the teacher made in selecting that experience would be based, to some extent, on the outcomes which she would predict as occurring from that experience. Where the teacher is concerned less with providing experience and more with either developing skills or effecting learning through the use of the drama process, the expected learning outcomes might be even more clearly stated.

As Normań notes, however, these outcomes are unlikely to be framed as precise behavioural objectives. Rather, he suggests that

"We might expect a drama teacher to have an aim for a lesson such as 'today we shall explore the concept of charity'. The aim would not be 'that by the end of this lesson the children shall have learned that charity is a good thing'. We would expect that drama teachers by making the abstract concrete through a feeling experience in drama to help children think through the meaning, implications and consequences of human action and decide for themselves. We would not expect the drama teacher to prescribe given learning outcomes but rather to help frame the unpredictable action of drama and assist children to make sense of their own life experience."

(Norman, 1982; p.26/27)

The precision with which a teacher may frame the expected outcomes of engaging in drama will be returned to and examined in more detail in a later chapter. So, too, will the assessment procedures which may be adopted by the teacher in evaluating the short or longer term effects of her teaching. In the present context it may be sufficient to note that, while there may be theoretical or philosophical justification for drama in the curriculum as a mode of experience, practical justification in relation to other curricular aspects and their educational benefits may depend on the extent to which the teacher can effect, and demonstrate that she has effected, 'worthwhile' pupil learning.

Clearly, 'worthwhile' is a value loaded term. What a teacher judges to be worthwhile in any given instance will depend on her particular view of education. And this, in turn, will influence her choice of method and activity, and the amount or type of authority she exercises in her teaching. Thus, although it has been argued that all drama teaching may be subsumed within two categories of aims, it must be noted that each of these broad categories represents a whole range of different methods and activities. Two teachers, both of whom were aiming to develop their pupils' skill in the use of the drama

process in order that they might be better able to benefit from experience of it and to understand and explore meaning through it, might provide very different learning experiences for their pupils.

For example, for the teacher whose pupils are following a Theatre Arts course, learning to use the drama process could involve the development of a whole range of technical skills in lighting, sound, production, costumes, scenery, etc. By our definition, none of these activities, in itself, may be regarded as 'dramatic' as none contains the element of imaginative enactment. On the other hand, these activities may be used to enhance the total experience of imaginative enactment for both the participants and the audience. And this may enable the meaning of the experience to be more clearly understood and communicated. Simple speech and movement exercises might serve a similar function for the young, or mentally handicapped child. The development of these skills may enable the child to adopt more convincing role behaviour in an improvised drama. This, in turn, may help others in the group to respond more appropriately to the imaginary situation being created. And this may make the dramatic experience a more memorable or meaningful one.

On one level, therefore, the aims in these two situations are the same. Both strive towards a more meaningful experience of drama. The activities which enable that experience are, however, very different in each case - theatre and improvised drama being at the two ends of the controversy over admissible practice. Similarly, two teachers, both of whom were using the drama process as a means of effecting other learning, could use very different methods and activities to achieve the same end. There is, therefore, no single 'dramatic method' which may be applied in the teaching of drama, nor is any one range of activities intrinsically 'better' than another. It may be possible, however, to identify those methods and activities which appear to be more appropriate to the needs and capabilities of a given learner group, and to identify the particular teaching skills, physical environment, or other conditions which, in practice, will make it easier for a teacher to adopt a particular range of methods to suit her teaching aims.

In the present project, the learner group is severely and profoundly mentally handicapped children. The teachers are those about whom, in the previous chapter, it was argued that preconceived attitudes, lack of skill, or experience of drama in college courses, had created a

particular set of expectations about their own ability to present drama. The combination of these two factors, plus the additional facet that this study is set within the Scottish educational ethos with all the attendant biases which that may create, makes it necessary to look at drama not only in terms of the broad theoretical principles which may be applied to it, but also in terms of the particular methods, activities and principles which, in practice, may be applicable to the learner and teacher groups in the study.

Summary

In this chapter, therefore, there has been an attempt to examine the historical factors which have given rise to controversy and confusion about the nature, activities and aims of drama in education. It has been argued that the Schools Council's definition of drama represents an attempt to reconcile these differences by identifying the core activity which makes drama unique and which links all the different manifestations of drama by a single process. That process has been identified as the symbolic one of imaginative enactment.

It has been argued that this definition of drama may require to be tested as to its adequacy in accurately delineating the essential element of drama. If, however, drama does constitute a particular form of knowledge which can be achieved by no other means, then this provides a philosophic or theoretical justification for its inclusion in the curriculum. It may also provide justification for the provision of more drama for those mentally handicapped pupils who have access to less than normal opportunities for this form of experience outwith school.

It has been argued that, if drama can effect learning through the use of the drama process, this also provides a practical justification for its inclusion in the special school curriculum, assuming that the learnings which may be achieved are relevant to the educational needs of such children. The extent of this justification may also depend, however, on the extent to which drama compares favourable with other methods of learning. The specific activities and methods which a teacher chooses to adopt in effecting learning through drama, or in providing opportunity for pupils to engage in the experience of drama, will be coloured not only by the capabilities and needs of the learners, but also by the teacher's own skills, her teaching situation and her personal ideological persuasions or the ethos of the school.

In this chapter, therefore, there has been an attempt to provide a broad analysis of the drama process. In the chapters which follow, there will be an attempt to refine this further and to suggest in more specific terms, the kinds of activities, methods and learning principles which may be appropriate to the needs of severely and profoundly mentally handicapped pupils, and consistent with the skills, attitudes and teaching situations facing staff. Like the broad principles suggested in this chapter, these more specific principles, will be put forward provisionally as the basis of hypotheses which may be tested in the curricular materials and practices explored within the collaborating schools. The adequacy or usefulness of the concepts explored in this and subsequent chapters ought to become more clear as they are exposed to critical testing in practice.

In the following chapter, there will be an attempt to explore at the theoretical level, the usefulness of one aspect of the definition of drama advanced in this chapter - namely, that drama is a process of imaginative enactment. It will be argued that, for the younger handicapped child, this process is synonymous with that which occurs when an adult seeks to extend and develop a child's ability to engage in spontaneous dramatic play. It will be suggested that this is very necessary for the mentally handicapped child. The specific aims which may be ascribed to the development of skills in dramatic play will be explored, and there will be an attempt to indicate the learning outcomes one might expect to observe as a result.

CHAPTER 5

The Relationship between Drama and Make-Believe Play

Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was argued that the unique characteristic of drama is that it involves a process of imaginative representation and enactment, and it was suggested that any activity which makes use of this process may be subsumed under the general heading 'drama'. The spontaneous, make-believe play, which occurs naturally as a feature of normal child development, clearly involves this process. As such, therefore, it may be regarded as an instance of drama. Indeed, there is widespread support among drama specialists for the view that spontaneous make-believe play is the forerunner of all subsequent dramatic activity (Slade, 1965, 1968; Pidgeon, 1980; Petrie, 1975).

Stabler (1978) also accepts this view, but he suggests that a distinction requires to be made between the function and purpose of the play which occurs spontaneously, and that which is engineered as part of a drama lesson. He suggests that -

"what was intermittent and often a matter of choice, where roles could be slipped into or out of easily and the situation changed at will, becomes something more specific, time-determined, commonly shaped by class or group under the purposeful eye of their education guide. Situation, role-enactment, gesture, mime and language are still the common framework for make-believe activity but now the broader educational objectives of the teacher are emphasised."

(Stabler, 1978; p.72)

Stabler's premise would appear to be that the purpose of the child's spontaneous make-believe play is not so much known as inferred from his behaviours. This purpose may change during the progress of the play, and it is doubtful whether the child himself is aware of any purpose in his play other than that of engaging in it. The purposes inferred by the observer may well be determined by the theoretical or ideological constructs which that individual places upon the role of dramatic play in the development process. Whereas, in the drama lesson, the aims of the play are made overt by the teacher and the progression of the play structured and guided by her towards the achievement of these aims.

In the analysis of drama in the previous chapter it was suggested that the aims of the teacher in using drama may fall into two broad

categories - first, the use of the process of drama to achieve learning which is not directly related to the process itself; and, secondly, aims which seek to enable pupils to understand and become skilled in the use of the process. It was suggested that, since the drama process cannot be divorced from the context in which it is set there is a certain duality in the drama lesson between those outcomes which occur as a by-product of the use of the process, and those which occur as a direct and planned consequence of exploration of the context in any given instance. For example, by learning how to act out a particular character in a more skilled way, the child may be learning, in addition, more about that character and his role in reality. If the teacher's aims were simply to encourage more skilled acting out, then the understanding of the character in real terms would be a by-product of this aim. On the other hand, the teacher may have planned the lesson so that a greater understanding of the character, and a better portrayal of it, are both planned consequences of the lesson.

For the moment, however, let us ignore those understandings which may occur as a planned consequence of the use of drama in exploring the context of the lesson and look in more detail at those which concentrate on the development of skill in the acting-out process itself. It has already been suggested that the process involved in the drama lesson is the same as that which occurs naturally in make-believe play. If, therefore, the teacher seeks to enable children to become more skilled in this process within the drama lesson, it is reasonable to postulate that a by-product of this might be that children demonstrate this improved skill in their spontaneous make-believe play outwith lessons. They might, it could be argued, engage in more frequent, longer or more complex episodes of make-believe play, and they might show an improved ability to join with and interact with others in the development of play sequences of this type.

If this were the case, what are the likely consequences of their doing so in terms of their cognitive, social or emotional development? To answer this question, it is necessary to look briefly at the theoretical inferences which have been made about the make-believe play of normal children, and to contrast the play development of the normal child with that of the mentally handicapped child. On the basis of such an analysis, it may be possible to suggest not only the aims which the teacher may ascribe to the use of the drama process, but also the ways in which she may seek, in her teaching, to improve this

process. Thereafter, it may be possible to postulate the kind of outcomes which might occur as a by-product of this, if, in fact, pupils did show enhanced spontaneous make-believe play behaviours outwith lessons.

Spontaneous Make-Believe Play

Since the start of this century, considerable educational interest has focussed on the normal child's apparent need to engage in make-believe play at a certain point in the development cycle. A variety of theories have been put forward to explain this need, to assess its educational value and to indicate its purpose in the general development of the child.

Some psychologists and social anthropologists see play as an instinct common to all the higher-order primates, and regard the play of the young of the species as a rehearsal of, and preparation for, survival and adaptation to adult life (Lorenz, 1965; Tinbergen, 1957; Thorpe, 1963).

Psychoanalytic theory sees in play the need to achieve emotional equilibrium by the sublimation or expression of repressed sexual fantasies, and as a means of wish-fulfillment. It also provides a means of reducing aggression or fear through the catharsis achieved by the symbolic representation of these in play (Freud, 1955; Erikson, 1943; Klein, 1955).

Other theorists have suggested that play may represent a learned response originating from the orienting reflex which arouses curiosity, exploration and the urge to investigate and experiment (Luria, 1966; Levy, 1980) or as a result of associative links formed early in life by the pairing of accidental responses with rewarding experiences (Tolman, 1957; Hull, 1943; Skinner, 1971). In the former case, dramatic or make-believe play represents a means of investigating social roles and relationships by experimenting with these, while in the latter, make-believe play has rewarding consequences such as the ability to control or manipulate the behaviour of others, the pleasure of social contact or social approval.

Other theorists have postulated close interactive links between cognitive development, language development and the emergence of make-believe play (Lowenfield, 1935; Whittaker, 1980; Nicholich, 1975; Brown, 1973). Piaget, whose conceptual framework of child development has exerted considerable influence on research in the field

of special education, suggests that pretend play is one aspect of the semiotic function - the general ability to symbolise, which also includes deferred imitation, drawing or graphic representation and verbal expression. He suggests that the emergence of pretend play is an important landmark which signifies the presence of the semiotic function and the capacity for the development of new cognitive skills which allow the solution of problems by mental combinations rather than by sensori-motor experimentation.

From the preceding, brief outline, it would appear that play serves not one but many functions in the development process, and that the various claims made for the purpose or benefits of make-believe play relate to virtually the whole spectrum of human development. This being so, the emphasis placed on any given area of development may well be governed by the particular theoretical construct adopted. Similarly, whether one postulates a causal, reciprocally interactive or an associative link between play and development will depend, to a large extent, on whether one takes an experiential or developmental view of child development. That a link does exist, however, would appear to be undisputed.

Moreover, although differences exist in the theories themselves, there are a number of areas of commonality across theories about which there appears to be a degree of consensus. For example, it is generally accepted that make-believe play emerges relatively late in the childhood cycle of development. This play is preceded by exploratory or manipulative play, and solitary make-believe play itself precedes interactive or co-operative, group play. It is also generally accepted that children who, for whatever reason, have failed to establish this form of play, or in whom this play is grossly impoverished, also exhibit poor cognitive, social, emotional or linguistic abilities. Whether the lack of play depresses functioning in these areas, or whether depressed functioning itself causes the lack of play, is a moot point. If the latter is the case, it is unlikely that providing teaching which will enhance the make-believe skills will have a great deal of success, unless the other factors are tackled at the same time. If, on the other hand, the lack of such play is causing, or even contributing to, the poor functioning in these other areas, it could be argued that development of skills in the acting-out process will not only enhance play behaviour but should have an effect on the child's general functioning in these other areas.

Both the point in the development cycle at which make-believe play emerges, and the relationship between such play and the general development of the child, are particularly important in the context of the present study, since this study is concerned with mentally handicapped children who are, by definition, retarded in their general development, and whose play behaviours tend to be impoverished relative to their developmental peer group (Kephart, 1960; Tizard, 1964; Mittler, 1970; Kellmer-Pringle, 1973; 1965). Before going on to examine how the provision of drama teaching might affect the child's development if it were proved to enhance make-believe play, therefore, it might be useful to provide a brief outline of the ways in which the handicapped child's play differs from that of the non-handicapped child, and to suggest some of the possible reasons put forward to explain these differences.

The Play of the Mentally Handicapped Child

A number of researchers have investigated the play of the handicapped child within the framework of Piaget's developmental scheme. These studies suggest that, while the sequence of play development tends to be similar in both handicapped and normal pupils, there are certain differences between the play of the handicapped child and that of non-handicapped children (Lowe, 1975; Nicholich, 1977; Levy, 1980; Woodward, 1962; Jackson, 1965). Most researchers are agreed that, in the handicapped child, each stage of play lasts considerably longer and the child may experience some difficulty in making the transition from one stage to another. Moreover, whereas in normal children acts of self-pretence, such as pretend feeding or grooming, tend to precede role-play, interactive play or play which involves pretending at another's behaviour, in the mentally handicapped child acts of self-pretence may be rare, or such acts may persist even when the more advanced play behaviours begin to emerge.

One survey, carried out on Down's children, noted that no child in the survey with a developmental age of under twenty months had exhibited any form of make-believe or symbolic play (Wing and Gould, 1980). The authors postulated, therefore, that children under this developmental age were likely to be unready for such play, regardless of their chronological age. This would suggest that the mentally handicapped child develops make-believe play at around the same point in the development cycle as do non-handicapped children. However, a number of

researchers have suggested that many handicapped children do not in fact develop make-believe play skills spontaneously, even when they appear, in other areas of development, to be cognitively equipped to do so (Jeffrey and McConkey, 1974; Watson and Fischer, 1972; Fenson and Ramsay, 1980). Such writers point to environmental factors such as a lack of adequate opportunity for social play, or inadequate teaching to develop such play, as being contributory factors in such children's poor make-believe play performance.

Other researchers have suggested that features inherent in the mentally handicapped child's brain structures may be responsible for his inability to develop such play. Kephart (1960), for example, noted that whereas a normal young child can readily be taught how to develop a mature and flexible strategy for exploring around objects, and in his subsequent play will demonstrate the learned capacity to explore systematically the play possibilities of objects in his environment, and will show that he can adapt and relate these to other objects, the mentally handicapped child's behaviour may be inhibited by an apparent lack of curiosity. This lack of curiosity will make it difficult to teach the child the play strategies he needs to develop in order to learn. Butler (1960) also postulated that the mentally handicapped child lacks the normal orienting-exploratory behaviour so characteristic of primates and will, therefore, fail to be motivated to explore and interact with his environment. As a result he will be deficient in his understanding of cause and effect and will fail to make the associative links he requires to make in order to pretend. This is also in line with the work of Luria and other Soviet psychologists who suggest that the ability to orient to a given stimulus, to maintain arousal and to self-regulate behaviour, are directly related to cognitive ability and developmental maturity, and that children who have suffered even minimal brain damage may lack the ability to carry out these functions effectively (Luria, 1961; Wozniak, 1972; Vygotsky, 1962). Again, since these abilities are directly related to the development of symbolic thought processes, they may affect the amount and quality of make-believe play a child will be capable of engaging in.

While there is considerable support for the view that the mentally handicapped child's inability to alert and maintain arousal long enough to remember, learn and act upon information received may be directly attributable to brain damage, some recent studies have shown that some of these problems may have physical origins, such as poor hearing or

intermittent hearing loss, poor visual acuity or poor motor control which makes exploration of the environment difficult (Chazan, 1980; Kiernan, 1977; Nolan, 1980). Children who suffer from such physical disabilities will have poor perceptual ability and may thus appear to lack curiosity and the motivation to explore, when, in fact, they are either not receiving the stimulus or are unable to respond sufficiently quickly to it. The study by Nolan, in particular, showed that even minimal hearing loss could seriously limit a child's performance on a variety of test batteries with the result that a wrong diagnosis could be made of that child's real potential. It is, therefore, not inconceivable that at least some of the children who have not yet developed the ability to engage in make-believe play have potential for doing so if ways can be found of compensating for their lack of sensory acuity. It may be necessary to provide stronger or more unusual stimuli in order to attract the perception and hold the attention of children with poor sensory acuity.

Another argument for providing a stimulus large enough, strong enough or unusual enough to attract the mentally handicapped child's attention is that put forward by those researchers who have noted that mentally handicapped children, while they have poor recall for immediate events, often have relatively good long term memories (O'Connor, 1966; Spedding and Samuels, 1979). They suggest that, while initial failure to learn may be due to factors inherent in the child's disability, it may be compounded by a failure to attend to information sufficiently long for it to gain entry into the long term memory store. Learning which has been established, however, tends to persist. This can have the disadvantage that the child continues to employ learned behaviour patterns in inappropriate novel situations, and to persist in certain activities long after mastery has been achieved, so reducing the capacity to develop new responses. This could explain why mentally handicapped children tend to persist in very immature make-believe play sequences even when capable of more mature behaviours. On the other hand, it also suggests that if children can be encouraged to attend to new stimuli - by making the stimuli sufficiently attractive to them - they may be encouraged to discard outmoded patterns of behaviour and adopt new behaviours which, themselves, can form the basis for further learning.

It has been noted that mentally handicapped children also find difficulty in engaging in corporate sequences of make-believe play

(Evans, 1956; Lovell, 1968; Cooper, 1978). Again this may be due to inherent factors, such as the inability to make the cognitive associations necessary to take a different perspective and see another person's point of view, or to accept and act on the suggestions given by another; to emotional or behavioural maladjustment, which may have either a primary or secondary origin in the inherent handicapping conditions; or, alternatively, the lack of such play may be attributed, to some extent, to a lack of practice in such play either with their normal peer group outwith school, or within school itself. (Watson and Fischer, 1972; Fenson and Ramsay, 1980).

Finally, a number of researchers have pointed to the fact that the mentally handicapped child tends to employ linear patterns of thought which may mitigate against the type of imaginative associations required in make-believe (Woodward, 1962; Jackson, 1965; Benda, 1969). These writers suggest that the child's cognitive structures tend to be less complex since this capacity for transfer and generalisation is limited. Again, it is suggested that developmental immaturity may be the root cause. Butler (1981), however, suggests that children's poor cognitive performance may be due to the fact that contextual cues are needed by them in order to identify the particular information which they are required to extract from the general mass of information presented to them. He suggests that because children do rely heavily on contextual cues it may be necessary to provide the same information in a variety of contexts, not as the apex of a learning situation - as in the generalisation process employed in behavioural learning situations - but in the very early stages of the presentation of new information. In this way, he argues, a pattern of associations and connotations are established at the same time as the new item of information and this should enable the child to make better use of information he is presented with. If Butler's premise is justified, it may be that, by using such a method of teaching, it may be possible to encourage less linear thought patterns, and, consequently, more imaginative associations in play.

To sum up, therefore, it would appear that there is considerable evidence to support the view that the make-believe play of the mentally handicapped child differs from that of the normal child in, at least the following ways -

- a. while some children do show a similar play progression to the norm, others are retarded in their play behaviours relative to their behaviours in other areas of development;

- b. some children fail to develop make-believe play skills;
- c. those children who do exhibit make-believe tend to persist in immature play patterns long after the stage of mastery has been reached, or may not spontaneously evolve for themselves new imaginative associations in play;
- d. children may exhibit difficulty in playing alongside others peacefully, or they may show an inability to interact co-operatively with others in the development of shared play sequences.

These differences have been attributed to a variety of inherent factors such as neurological, physical or genetic impairment. Clearly, however, environmental factors have also exerted an effect and may have interacted with and compounded the deficits naturally present as a result of the handicapping condition.

The Aims of the Drama Lesson in Relation to Make-Believe Play

On the basis of the deficits reported in the make-believe play behaviours of mentally handicapped children, therefore, it could be argued that, for such children, developing skill in the use and understanding of the drama process may be aimed, in broad general terms, at

- a. encouraging the emergence of symbolic or make-believe play skills in children who have not yet spontaneously exhibited a capacity for these;
- b. encouraging children to make the transition from the more immature self-related play behaviours, to those which involve pretending at the behaviour of others in imaginary situations;
- c. providing opportunity for, and guidance in, corporate dramatic play;
- c. providing a variety of contextual settings for dramatic play in order to encourage more flexible, associative mental processes.

The Effects on General Development

The extent to which drama provision may be capable of achieving these aims will, obviously, be limited by the extent to which these aspects of development are determined by inherent factors which are resistant to change or acceleration. It has been argued, however, that inherent factors in themselves are not sufficient to account for all the difficulties experienced in play development by the mentally handicapped child. If, for example, McConkey (1978) is correct in his

assumption that lack of opportunity for social play, or lack of specific teaching which is aimed at the development of skills in play, may go some way towards explaining many of the developmental deficits shown in the play behaviours of mentally handicapped children, then it is possible that the simple expedient of providing specific teaching in the areas outlined above, together with the increased opportunity this affords for children to engage in play with the help and guidance of an adult, say, in itself, effect some improvements in general development.

As far as the present writer was able to determine, there was, at the start of this project, little research evidence available to show that mentally handicapped children do transfer what they have learned in the drama lesson to spontaneous play behaviours outwith lessons. Consequently, there was little information available on the effects which such a transfer may have on general development. Various leading drama specialists have claimed that such a transfer does occur, and that it has a beneficial effect on all-round cognitive, emotional and social development. But, with the exception of Byron (1978, b) who published the findings of a survey of the views and observations of a number of independent non-specialist teachers, most of the writings tend to be aimed at proselytizing for the use of drama, rather than at providing either qualitative or quantitative evaluation of its effects in practice. (Saltz, 1974; Way, 1967; Petrie, 1975). Byron reports that in his sample of fifty teachers there was a degree of agreement that drama could affect spontaneous play and that this seemed to have an important effect on the development of spoken language. He concluded that the specific factors which had assisted the development of language were the spontaneity of the drama work, the high degree of social interaction which is an integral part of drama and dramatic play, and the opportunity for children, through taking on many different roles, to use language appropriate to various roles and to speak in many different ways.

While evidence on the effects of drama on mentally handicapped children may be slight, there is a considerable body of evidence available to show that social and dramatic play training can enhance spontaneous play behaviours in pre-school children of normal intelligence who have been exposed to disadvantaging factors such as emotional stress, lack of adequate social relationships, a lack of stimulation in their environment, and inadequate opportunities to engage in play and/or conversation with other children or adults (Dansky, 1980;

Smilansky, 1968; Rosen, 1974; Bernstein, 1961). Such children tend to show impoverished play behaviours similar to those seen in mentally handicapped children. Since, by virtue of their handicapping condition, many mentally handicapped children may also have suffered similar disadvantages, and, since many mentally handicapped children are operating at a development level consistent with that of the pre-school child, it is possible that the finding from these studies may be relevant to the arguments being presented here.

Bernstein (1961) suggests that before certain pupils can enjoy or benefit from engaging in dramatic play, they may require to be taught how to do so. Cultural factors such as a lack of 'elaborated' language in the family environment can affect the capacity for symbolic thought, and children from disadvantaged home backgrounds may never have been given the opportunity to develop and use this capacity. This can have a cumulative effect on subsequent learning capabilities and on attitudes and motivation towards learning so that pupils continue to fall behind their more advantaged peer group when they go to school. It has been demonstrated, however, that the provision of intervention programmes based on sociodramatic play training can enhance not only children's make-believe play activity, but also their general ability for symbolic thought in the use and understanding of language (Faires, 1976). While the lack of ability for symbolic thought may have different origins in mentally handicapped children, the effects of their inability to employ such thought may be similar. They may be frustrated in their attempts to use and understand language, and this may result in a lack of motivation to attempt to do so. If such children can learn to associate dramatic play with enjoyment, this may increase their motivation to continue to participate in the play within lessons, and may, ultimately, affect the extent to which they can learn from such play outwith lessons. Ensuring that lessons are enjoyable for the child, therefore, may be of considerable importance.

Smilansky (1968) in studying the play behaviours of a group of severely disadvantaged pre-school children in Israel, noted that one of the most striking aspects of the behaviour of these children was the lack of sequence in their actions and conversation and the lack of flexibility in their ability to develop a theme, thought or game. Their make-believe play behaviours, at a very immature level at the start of the project, improved through the project as a result of being given opportunities to engage in purposeful dramatic play under the direction

of an adult guide. The children also made gains in measured overall cognitive functioning and in the use and understanding of language. Smilansky suggests that make-believe play helps conceptualisation and abstraction by the necessity it creates for projecting oneself into a hypothetical situation. The child must combine separate elements of past experience and express them in action or words in a sequentially ordered context. Although, in the early stages of the development of make-believe play, the child may be concerned principally with representing experiences to and for himself in order to understand or come to terms with these experiences, the setting of experiences within a group situation under an adult guide may lead to a sharing of experience and, eventually, co-operation and communication between the participants. It is possible that this process of abstraction, and the sequential ordering of information within the drama lesson could have a similar effect on the mental processes employed by mentally handicapped children.

An experiment carried out by Dansky (1980) on disadvantaged pre-school children in America, sheds further light on the mechanisms which may be operating in this situation. Again, the play behaviours of the children in his study were at a very immature level, and his study attempted to

"clarify previous findings by examining the influence of socio-dramatic play on two broad spheres of cognitive functioning:

- a. the ability to comprehend, recall and produce meaningful sequentially organised information;
- b. the dimension of imagination or creativity."

(p. 47)

Three modes of play were presented to three matched groups -

1. exploratory play with objects under adult guidance;
2. sociodramatic play training, again with adult guidance;
3. opportunities to engage in free play with the same objects

and properties provided for both of the other groups but with very minimal adult help in developing play.

Dansky found that simply presenting opportunity for free play was insufficient to encourage children to increase the amount of play engaged in, and there was no observable effect on the quality of play. None of the children in this group showed any significant gains on the pre-test, post-test batteries. Presented with the play objects and the opportunity for play, children did not play purposefully but exhibited aimless, desultory behaviours. Even more significant, perhaps, is

the fact that the children did not, on the whole, seek to engage the adult in play or to seek adult guidance in the development of play. In both of the other groups, in which the adult took the initiative and helped to guide and structure the play sequences, significant gains were noted in all the children taking part. These gains, however, differed between the two groups and the nature of these differences are relevant to the present study.

Children, trained in exploratory play, appeared to have learned to abstract information from available stimuli in a more efficient manner and were, consequently, able to give significantly more detailed descriptions after examination of a 'curiosity box' than were either of the other groups. Thus, Dansky postulated that

"Exploration training increases a child's tendency to gain specific information about the specific stimulus properties of his immediate environment, whereas sociodramatic play training does not."

(p.55)

On the other hand, children given sociodramatic play training improved significantly over the other groups in tests designed to measure associative fluency, comprehension, recall and construction of sequentially organised and causally related events. Dansky, therefore, suggests that

"involving non-players in sociodramatic play can provide them with an adaptable medium for constructing meaningful connections among the many information fragments they are bombarded with daily. It provokes the formation of meaningful associations between new experience and prior adaptations and it does so in a context which also encourages flexibility and imaginativeness."

(p.56)

The relationship which exists between cause and effect, and which can be demonstrated to, and by, children in the acting out of a sequence of causally related events, may be the aspect of drama which enables children to make flexible mental associations. Whether this applies equally to the mentally handicapped child, however, is one of the aspects which appeared to require to be tested in the present study.

What is clear from the literature is that there is, in mentally handicapped children, a close association between the emergence of make-believe play and the use and understanding of language. Whittaker (1980) found that the emergence of doll-related play was significantly associated with

"the advent of speech at the one-word utterance level, the understanding of novel instructions, and the transition to simple relational play with non-symbolic toys."

(p.254)

Nicholich (1975), Brown (1973) and Sinclair (1971/73) have shown that the development of more complex symbolic play parallels the transition from one to two word utterances, and the beginnings of more complex language systems. It is not clear whether these developments merely occur in parallel or whether there are causally interactive links between them. A number of other linguistic studies, however, do suggest a causal link and attempt to explain this (Maratsos, 1973a; 1973b; Bever, 1970). Maratosos' studies on pre-school children of normal intelligence show that children who have been given the opportunity to act out responses to sentences which contain an ambiguous pronoun showed an improved appreciation of abstract concepts and relationships within such sentences, and were, subsequently, able to identify to whom the pronoun was referring on the basis of intonational stress patterns alone. Role enactment and successful role reversal were the factors in their enactment which appeared to facilitate this. Bever also demonstrated that children's concepts of reversibility improved as a result of acting out, with toys, the reversible sentences presented to them. The fact that children performed less well on sentences in which the reverse was linguistically possible but interpretatively improbable, suggested that children were using active processing strategies to determine sentence meaning, and using concrete experience in their acting out with materials to text their conclusions.

While these linguistic studies do not necessarily lend support to the contention that drama will enhance spontaneous play, they do support the claim that communication skills, and the ability to understand cause and effect, can be improved, in normal pre-school children, as a result of being given opportunity to engage in imaginative enactment and enactive play with toys. Again the relevance of this to the mentally handicapped child remains to be demonstrated.

Summary

To sum up, it does appear that similar mental processes are involved in the imaginative enactment of drama and make-believe play as are involved in the comprehension and production of symbolic thought and language. There does appear to be sufficient evidence available to show that training and guidance in dramatic play within the drama lesson will enhance the spontaneous make-believe play of

children from a variety of disadvantaged cultural, emotional or social backgrounds, and that the effects of this on imaginative cognitive functioning and on communication skills can be significant. There is less evidence to show that this holds true for the mentally handicapped child, but, since the reasons put forward for the improvements noted would appear to relate to at least some of the learning difficulties experienced by the mentally handicapped child, it is possible that it may do so.

It has been noted that, for severely disadvantaged, and possibly also for mentally handicapped children, the simple provision of opportunity for free play may, in itself, do little to encourage the emergence of more mature play behaviours since such children may be unable to make effective use of this opportunity, may not comprehend that play can be enjoyable, and tend not to seek out the help of adults or the company of other children in their development of play. Consequently, children may fail not only to learn how to play but also may fail to achieve the understandings which non-handicapped children achieve through play. The guidance and support of an adult, in initiating and helping such children to develop their play skills, would appear to be crucial.

Linguistic studies have demonstrated that the particular type of imaginative thought and language development achieved as a result of training in drama may differ from that achieved by other forms of play training. The exploratory play training given to children in Dansky's study is not unlike many of the language intervention programmes currently in use with mentally handicapped children (Barnes, 1978; Gillham, 1979; Cooper et al, 1978; Kiernan et al, 1978). Many such programmes seek to present specific items of vocabulary and encourage labelling and categorising rather than a free flow of associative language in a naturalistic context. Dansky's findings suggest that drama training appears to facilitate the latter rather than the former. It may not be unreasonable to postulate, therefore, that training in drama will not replicate methods currently being employed in the development of communication skills, nor will it produce the same effects as the learning achieved by such methods, but it may supplement these by providing an additional form for linguistic expression and development even when the lesson is not specifically aimed at the development of language, but at the development of the symbolic skills involved in the process of imaginative enactment.

Thus, the provisional theoretical justification put forward in this chapter in support of regular drama lessons which are aimed towards the development of skills in the drama process are these:

a. Mentally handicapped children, being deficient in their ability to enjoy, engage in and learn from spontaneous make-believe play, will need adult help in overcoming these deficiencies.

b. Drama and make-believe play share a common process - that of imaginative enactment. For children at an early stage in development, training in developing skill in the drama process may be synonymous with training which is designed to structure and guide pupils in the development of skills in make-believe play within the drama lesson.

c. Such training within the lesson may generalise to situations outwith the lesson and may result in an increase in the frequency and complexity of spontaneous make-believe play behaviours engaged in outwith lessons.

d. The provision of dramatic play training within the lesson, coupled with the postulated increase in spontaneous play, should produce some observable effects on children's use and understanding of language, on their capacity for imaginative thought, and on their ability to interact with others in corporate play, both within and outwith lessons.

Some of the mechanisms in the drama process which would appear to facilitate the development of these abilities are

(i) Increased opportunity is afforded pupils to practise role-taking and enactment within a structured situation.

(ii) The work is potentially motivating as a result of pupils' enjoyment of it.

(iii) In role-taking and enactment, events are presented in a sequentially ordered context; this may enable pupils to make flexible mental associations between causally related events.

(iv) Enjoyment, coupled with the necessity for action and interaction among the participants, may lead to more sociable behaviour.

In this chapter, therefore, it has been argued that certain outcomes may occur naturally as a result of the mechanisms operating within the drama process, and that these outcomes may occur as a by-product of engaging in this process, even when the lesson is not specifically aimed at these but is aimed purely at the development of skills in the drama process. It has been argued, however, that such outcomes need not be left to chance, but that lessons may be specifi-

cally structured towards effecting improvements in those areas which have a clear relationship with the process of drama. In the next chapter there will be an attempt to examine in more detail some of the ways in which the teacher may seek to effect these improvements in lessons which are aimed specifically at the use and development of imagination, the development of skills in communication, and the development of social skills.

CHAPTER 6

Learning Through the Use of the Drama Process

Introduction

In the previous chapter consideration was given to the symbiotic relationship which exists between drama and spontaneous make-believe play. It was suggested that one category of aims in drama - those involving the development of skills in the drama process itself - may be synonymous with the development of skills in make-believe play, and with an increase in the variety and complexity of the role-taking and role-enactment skills displayed within an imagined context. It was argued that certain outcomes may occur naturally as a by-product of the development of these skills - an increase in the use and understanding of language being postulated as one of the more probable of these outcomes.

It is logical to assume, however, that such outcomes need not simply occur as an unplanned by-product of the drama lesson, but that lessons may be specifically structured towards effecting improvements in areas of development which have a clear relationship with the process of drama. This brings us to the second category of aims postulated for the drama lesson - those which concentrate on the specific learning achieved as a planned consequence of the use of drama.

In this chapter there will be an attempt to consider briefly three areas which appear to have a clear relationship with drama, and to examine the relevance of these to the needs of the mentally handicapped child. The evidence, or the theoretical justification, which would support the structuring of lessons towards these areas of development will be discussed. On the basis of this discussion specific criteria for the structure of lessons will be postulated.

The areas chosen for consideration in this chapter are:

- a. the use and development of the imagination - because drama, by definition, involves a process of imaginative enactment;
- b. the development of skills in communication - because the drama process is enacted through the use of symbolic movement and through speech;
- c. the development of social skills - because the drama process involves a degree of social interaction, and because the subject matter of drama centres around man and his interactions with the social and physical environment.

Clearly, these three areas are inter-related and do not represent discrete categories. For example, the development of skill in communication may affect, or be affected by, the development of a social skill such as the ability to co-operate with others. Similarly, the ability to learn the conventions of social behaviour from an enactment of a social situation may well depend on the extent to which an individual can use his imagination to project himself into the social roles involved in this. Nevertheless, in any individual lesson, one or other of these areas of development may be given particular prominence in the specific aims for that lesson, and, as will be argued later, the particular area of development aimed at in a given lesson may well affect not only the subject matter chosen for that lesson but also the methods employed in structuring and presenting material. Thus, while the aims for a series of lessons might well include all three areas of development, the aims of a single lesson may centre on a specific aspect of the particular area of development aimed at. In this chapter, therefore, each of these areas will be given separate consideration, but, since imagination would appear to be a crucial and intrinsic element in the drama process, this will be considered first, and will be referred back to in the context of the other two areas of development.

The Use and Development of Imagination Through Drama

Of the possible benefits accruing from the use of drama, imagination, and the related concept of creativity, are possibly among the least tangible and the more difficult to assess. There is considerable controversy among educationalists and psychologists as to how these elements should be defined. Do they represent discrete areas of human thought, or should they be regarded as the single entity, creative imagination? Or are creativity and imagination merely manifestations of the overall cognitive capacity of the individual?

In the latter case, one should assume that children with depressed cognitive abilities would exhibit impoverished imaginations and a lack of creativity in speech or action, while in the former it might be possible to postulate that mentally handicapped children could have fertile imaginations and a capacity for creativity which need not be related to their general abilities to use and process language or to handle abstract or numerical constructs.

Imagination And Creativity As Separate Cognitive Dimensions

There have, in fact, been a number of reported cases in which pupils, labelled as mentally handicapped, have subsequently displayed particularly creative abilities in such non-verbal areas as art and music. And it has been hypothesised that right-hemispheric dominance may be responsible for abilities in these areas (Gazzaniga, 1970; Bever, 1970; Lumsden and Wilson, 1981). Thus, the mentally handicapped child, who has suffered brain damage to the left hemisphere of the brain may, nevertheless, have creative or imaginative abilities which, by virtue of poor motor control, poor linguistic comprehension, or other environmental or emotional factors, he is unable to display.

Nevertheless, in the majority of reported cases, it has subsequently transpired that individuals who have shown these creative or imaginative abilities have been the victim of wrong diagnosis at an earlier stage in development. Although assessed as mentally handicapped, they may have been autistic, dyslexic, physically handicapped, mentally ill or maladjusted, none of which need necessarily be accompanied by mental retardation of a more general nature (Axeline, 1973; Gross, 1978). Thus, although the studies on lateral dominance do suggest a correlation between certain patterns of brain activity, and specific creative abilities, the evidence on the extent to which the mentally handicapped child may possess these abilities is inconclusive.

Many of the research studies on imagination and creativity in the general population are based on the ability to make 'lateral' associations between diverse ideas or to suggest unusual uses for everyday objects (De Bono, 1977; Guilford, 1968). These tests may be inappropriate in assessing the imaginative abilities of the mentally handicapped child who, it has been argued, may employ linear thought patterns and whose perceptions may remain context-bound. This need not be taken to imply, however, that the mentally handicapped child could not learn to employ more associative modes of thought, given suitable training in doing so. Similarly, the fact that the mentally handicapped child may display impoverished play behaviours need not, necessarily, be taken as an indication that he lacks imagination. It may simply be that he has failed to learn to use the imagination he possesses, or has had limited opportunity to learn to do so by virtue of poor linguistic ability. Thus, although it may be difficult to devise means of assessing and identifying the creatively gifted or imaginative mentally handicapped child, this need not mean that such children do not exist.

At the same time, those studies which have reported an increase in imaginative or creative behaviour in mentally handicapped persons who have been given specific training in these areas, do tend to show a correlation with a general increase in measured intelligence (Nitsun, et al, 1974; Pessa, 1969). In addition, a number of other research studies have shown a clear correlation between the ability to adopt a different perspective and to engage in imaginative role-taking situations, and mental age (Devries, 1970; Affleck, 1975a/b; Bender and Carlson, 1982; Leahy et al, 1982). It would appear, therefore, that the evidence is inconclusive as to whether the dimensions of intelligence and creativity operate independently of cognitive functioning in other areas, but the general consensus would appear to be that there is at least some correlation between imagination and general intelligence, even if innate giftedness in some sphere of creative activity may be a separate dimension.

The Creatively "Gifted" Child

Warnock (1976) for example, distinguishes between the 'imaginative faculty' which she regards as being present in, and needing to be developed in every child, and the particular abilities of those children who are 'gifted' or whose abilities in one sphere are manifestly superior to other abilities in the same child, or to those of his age norms. This distinction has relevance to the present study in that it was observed that some of the livelier and more outgoing Down's children displayed, in the practical drama work carried out, a degree of acting ability and mimicry, which was considerably in advance of most of the other children. This could simply be taken as confirmation of the hypothesis that children who are developmentally retarded rely more on imitation as a means of learning than do children who are more developmentally mature (Uzgis and Hunt, 1975; Yando, et al, 1978). It could also be taken as confirmation of the finding that Down's children, who may have physical as well as mental difficulties in relation to speech, often learn to develop their non-verbal and imitative skills as a means of communication (Share, 1975; Greenwald and Leonard, 1979; Ryan, 1975). It does not explain, however, why children of comparable developmental maturity and general intelligence do not display the same degree of ability in mimicry and acting as do these Down's children, especially if they share a similar degree of linguistic impairment.

It may be/certain Down's children are simply 'gifted' in their ability to adopt and act out a role. But, since this ability is dependent on the ability to use the imagination in projecting oneself into that role, it may also be the case that certain Down's children are displaying in their acting a degree of imagination which is not consistent with their level of cognitive functioning in other areas. There may, therefore, be a case for suggesting that these children may be regarded as among the more creative or imaginative members of the population of severely mentally handicapped children. It could be argued, of course, that recognition of such ability in Down's children may be relatively easier since such children are, themselves, readily identifiable as a genetic grouping. But this argument is negated by the fact that not all Down's children did display these superior acting abilities. Moreover, interviews with teachers from other schools served to confirm the impression that those pupils who responded most imaginatively to the drama lesson tended to be either those whose cognitive capacity was least impaired relative to their peer group, or individual Down's children who displayed lively, sociable personality traits.

Clearly, this observation would require to be confirmed by replication by other researchers. The recommendations based on this finding are dealt with in more depth in a subsequent chapter of this thesis. In the present context it may be sufficient to note that, at the very least, the drama lesson may provide a descriptive index of those children who appear to display marked abilities in 'acting', and that such lessons can provide an outlet for the creative imagination of such children.

Imagination As a Facet Of General Cognitive Capacity

But whether the drama lesson can 'improve' imagination, as opposed to providing an outlet which will encourage its expression in speech and action is a moot point. Again, this hinges on the relationship which the dimension of imagination shares with general cognitive capacity and developmental maturity. Piaget, for example, suggests that -

"dramatic imagination is at the centre of human creativity. Imitation is a key factor in human learning and in communication which can only begin on a basis of identification. Dramatic play, then, is directly related to the development of children's thought.

(Piaget, 1972; p.89)

Thus, Piaget argues that developmentally immature children do not possess the cognitive capacity which enables meaningful links to be made between diverse experiential elements, and that creative imagination is a product of the development of the capacity for symbolic representation. Dramatic play, then, may be regarded as the overt expression of the symbolic thought processes involved in dramatic imagination. Piaget, however, does not suggest that the development of symbolic cognitive ability is purely a product of maturity. He regards it as being dependent on the interaction between the organism and the environment, and he argues that experience of the physical environment, coupled with both the action of the social environment and the organism's action upon the environment, will determine the rate at which the hierarchical stages in cognitive growth are achieved.

In the previous chapter, therefore, it was argued that training in drama may represent one means of creating an environment which will enhance and accelerate children's development of dramatic play within, and possibly outwith, lessons. And it was argued that this may, in itself, contribute to the development of thought and language. If, therefore, the capacity for imagination is regarded as a component of this cognitive development, it could be argued that the provision of drama will contribute to the development of imagination. Consequently, it could be argued that not only is drama training, in the early stages, synonymous with the provision of structured and guided training in dramatic play, but that such training will automatically include the component of training which is designed to enhance and extend the ability to imagine.

Theoretical Justification for the Provision of Drama as a Means of Enhancing Imaginative Development

There are, therefore, two distinct arguments for the provision of drama as a means of enhancing imagination and/or creativity. First, if imagination and creativity operate as discrete cognitive elements, disparate from, and not necessarily dependent on the kind of neural activity involved in other forms of mental processing, drama may provide an outlet for the creative imaginations of those pupils who are gifted in the sphere of dramatic activity. For those less gifted pupils, training in drama may help create the kind of lateral associations which are commonly regarded as indicative of imaginative prowess, and provide an opportunity for children to externalise

these associations in words and/or action. By noting those children who appear able to achieve these lateral associations easily within the drama lesson, the lesson itself may provide a descriptive index of both gifted and imaginative pupils.

Secondly, if, on the other hand, imagination is regarded as being simply another manifestation of the overall cognitive capacity of the individual, and if this capacity may be increased as a result of interaction with and stimulation from the environment, then the provision of drama may be regarded as one means of providing this stimulation and interaction, and of helping pupils develop the forms of expression, in words and movement, which will enable them to benefit from this stimulation and interaction. However, in this context, it might equally be argued that, since drama requires that the child makes an act of imagination in order to engage in the process at all, only those children who have learned to imagine will be able to engage in, or learn from, drama. If one accepts this argument, the corollary to it is, that lessons which seek to extend the forms of expression involved in dramatic action may, themselves, require to be preceded by lessons which are designed to establish the imaginative abilities which will make engaging in this dramatic action a learning experience.

In what follows, therefore, there will be an attempt to examine how the teacher may seek to extend the imaginative development of those pupils who are not yet cognitively equipped to engage in dramatic play; to examine how drama may seek to extend the existing capacity of those pupils who already have some imaginative development; and to look at how the teacher may encourage lateral associations within the drama lesson. It will be suggested that, regardless of the other elements which comprise imagination, a crucial component in the exercise and development of imagination is the ability to remember and recombine mentally, elements of past experience. And it will be argued that it is this aspect of imaginative development towards which the drama lesson may profitably be aimed.

The Relationship Between Imagination, Memory and Experience

The poet, Spender, suggests that imagination may be regarded as

"an exercise of memory. There is nothing we imagine which we do not already know. And our ability to imagine is our ability to remember what we already once experienced and to apply it in some different situation I believe that, in theory, there are very few situations in life which a poet should not be able to imagine because it is a fact that most poets have experienced almost every situation in life. I do not mean by this that a poet who writes about Polar Expeditions has actually been to the North Pole. I mean, though, that he has been cold, hungry, etc, so that it is possible for him by remembering imaginatively his own felt experiences to know what it is like to explore the North Pole."

(Spender, 1970; p.72)

If we concede that Spender's assumption is even partially correct, this would suggest that in the very young, and in the handicapped child who may lack both experience of the wider environment and the perceptual and intellectual ability to take more than a transitory interest in events, there may be a lack of remembered experience on which to draw, and the capacity to imagine may be reduced as a result. Moreover, since language itself is a symbolic system which enables the child to categorise, compare and remember the verbal labels which can make experience meaningful, and enable cross-referencing of elements of experience, the mentally handicapped child may be limited in his ability to imagine by a lack of linguistic comprehension.

It was for this reason that, in the previous chapter, it was suggested that some children may require considerable training in learning how to perceive, attend and remember before they may be able to engage in drama per se. And it was argued that teachers who are providing pupils with such training may, in fact, be helping to accelerate the emergence of symbolic understanding.

On the other hand, it was also suggested that some mentally handicapped pupils may appear to be less developmentally mature than they, in fact, are, and that such pupils may well be cognitively equipped to engage in drama even if they have not yet exhibited evidence of imaginative ability. Moreover, even the mentally handicapped child who is operating at around the one-year old developmental level cannot necessarily be regarded as the equivalent of a normal one-year old. In the first place, the mentally handicapped child may have achieved a physical maturity which is considerably in advance of his mental prowess, and will, therefore, have been exposed to physical interactions with the environment and with other people which the less physically developed one-year old could not have experienced. For example, a study by Nicholich (1975) showed that two differences in the experience of

normal and mentally handicapped pupils of around the same mental age were (a) the fact that mentally handicapped children slept in beds rather than cots and (b) the fact that mentally handicapped children had free access to chairs, rather than being in a high chair for meals. While these differences may be trivial in themselves, they do indicate that the range of experience open to the two groups differs qualitatively. It may also differ quantitatively in that the mentally handicapped child of school age has been in the world for a longer period of time and will, therefore, have had the opportunity to be exposed to more numerous experiences.

Thus, while it has been argued that the mentally handicapped child may be deficient in his ability to perceive, attend to, remember and experience, he has, nevertheless, had a number of years in which to amass experience, and it may not be too unreasonable, therefore to postulate that at least some of the many experiences he has been exposed to will, in fact, have been assimilated into his memory store, and may, therefore, possess sufficient meaning for them to be recreated in imagination.

Hebb (1972) suggests that what catches and holds the human attention long enough for it to reach the long-term memory store is a mixture of the familiar and the unfamiliar. The task of the teacher would appear to be to identify those elements of experience which the child already understands and can remember, and seek to use these as a basis for adding new information and experience. And again, while drama may not be the most appropriate means of introducing new and specific items of information, it may, nevertheless, provide a means of consolidating and extending this information and for prompting children to recall experience, to recreate it in imagination and to externalise it in action.

Imagination in Action

For example, children may be given experience of playing with real balls. By interacting physically with these they may learn something of the properties of balls - they can roll, they can be thrown, kicked, caught, etc. In the drama lesson, they can be prompted to recall this experience and to carry out some of the actions involved, but without the actual objects. At first, this may be an experience which is devoid of meaning for them. They may, in fact, simply be engaging in

the movements demonstrated by the teacher with no understanding that the empty space towards which their movements are directed could symbolically represent the physical object; a ball. But it could be postulated that, by juxtaposing the real and the imagined experience several times over, children might eventually see the connection between the two and make the imaginative leap required. The act of imagination required to reach this stage may, therefore, be relatively greater than that required in subsequently, for example, looking for an imaginary ball in the non-existent undergrowth on the bare boards of a classroom floor. Because, in the latter case, the principle of enactive imagination has already been established through the earlier work.

Once this principle has been established, however, the drama lessons may relate to experience in another way. It should now be possible to act out experiences which have not yet been encountered in reality, but which, nevertheless draw upon elements of remembered experience and recombine these in new ways. For example, the child who has learned to imagine that he is kicking, throwing or catching a ball, but who has had no experience of what actually happens when a ball lands in, for example, a pool of water, may be encouraged, by physical experimentation, to observe and attend to what happens when the ball is placed in the water tray. On a subsequent occasion in drama he may be able to draw on his memory of this experience in the creation of a sequence of dramatic activity in which a ball is thrown, lands in a pool of 'wet' water, and has to be retrieved. The child may, therefore, be able to imagine something of the difficulty involved in retrieving the ball without getting wet and the teacher may be able to add to his imaginative perception by suggesting that, for example, it may be necessary to remove shoes or socks in order to wade into the pool. Children who have not yet established fully what it means to 'pretend' may, in fact, remove their clothing in reality. If, however, the child does not do so but simply mimes the actions involved the teacher may be able to move on to more complex episodes which need not be tied to experiential reality. Thus drama cannot be divorced, in the early stages at least, from real experience, but, in the later stages, would appear to represent a constant interplay between real and imagined experience, each drawing from and adding to the other.

In this context, however, it must be noted that the drama lesson

in itself constitutes an experience which is lived through in real time. If, therefore, a child has comprehended the enacted experience of searching for a ball in a pool, he could, to some extent at least, be said to have had the experience of this activity, so that, if this same situation were encountered in reality, the real experience might then have elements in it which were familiar, and remembered from the dramatic experience. These familiar elements may facilitate attention to the real experience, and enhance perception of its qualities. The new elements culled from the real experiences may form an input into any subsequent dramatic re-enactment, enabling a more varied and complex dramatic, or imaginative, sequence to be evolved. Thus, just as a work of art may challenge our perceptions of everyday objects, places or events by presenting their qualities in a new way, so that we learn to see them in a new way, so the acting out of real experience can enable the focussing in on elements of that experience which were meaningful. Elaboration of the dramatic action to include aspects which have not yet been experienced may enable old experiences to be recreated in novel or different ways, and new experiences to be approached from a different perspective.

Thus, Wilks (1975) suggests that the particular type of imaginative thought which is stimulated by drama is one which creates a need for a 'hypothetical world'. In adopting a role the child can transform the 'here and now' into the 'anywhere' and 'anytime', simply by choosing, or by being directed, to do so. Thus the child in a role-play situation may, for example, recreate the experience of travelling by bus to the seaside. In a group situation, however, the presence of other group members with a different perspective on the same event may add to his memories of that event and help him to remember more. The teacher may then introduce the hypothetical 'what if'. What if he were the driver of the bus and responsible for the passengers in his care? What if he were the authority figure who suggests that the sea is too cold or dangerous to bathe in? How would he exercise this authority? How would others react to his authority? What if he were a bather? Or if he lost his friends and could not find his way back to them? What would he do? How would he feel? By presenting the child with these hypothetical questions the teacher may stimulate him to make imaginative associations which, unaided, he might not arrive at. Having acted these out, however, they now form part of his store of remembered experience and, on subsequent occasions, the child may be

able to make these associations with less prompting.

For the child who has firmly developed the capacity for abstract thought, the mental combination of diverse elements of experience may go beyond the bounds of the possible and result in an enactment of non-realistic events, set in a non-realistic world, and peopled by mythical beings. Here the exercise of imagination is one which explores the boundaries of the known and the possible, by attempting to transgress these in the creation of a situation which never has been, nor never could be experienced, and to imagine and act out something which has not been seen. Thus, in modern parlance, the terms 'fantasy' or 'imagination' have come to be associated with the unreal, the impossible, and creative imagination to be regarded as the ability to arrive at original combinations of ideas, or solutions to problems - even if these ideas or solutions are implausible and impracticable. In this chapter, however, there has been an attempt to argue that the creation of the original, the novel or the fantastic involves essentially the same process as that employed in the initial recreation of remembered experience in the very early stages of the development of imaginative thinking.

Thus it has been argued that drama represents an interplay between the real and the imagined, the familiar and the unfamiliar, the remembered elements of past experience and the imaginative projection and enactment of new combinations of that experience. And it could be argued, therefore, that it is not drama per se which enables imaginative development, but the contrast between the mode of experience which drama can provide and that provided by the reality of experience. Moreover, since the particular mode of experience typified by the process of drama is one which, it has been argued in an earlier chapter, can only be achieved through engaging in drama, it may be that the drama lesson is particularly well suited to achieving the kind of imaginative development we have been discussing here. This is not to be taken to imply that this is the only form of imaginative development possible, nor that this combination of real and dramatic experience is the only effective method of developing imagination. Indeed, it has been stressed that imagination may emerge as a result of other forms of conceptual and perceptual training and that the child who is developmentally unready for symbolic thought will need these forms of training before he can begin to engage in drama. Nevertheless, the particular form of hypothetical thought which may evolve as a result of engaging in drama, coupled with the fact that this can be externalised in words and actions

within the reality of the lesson, does represent a means of extending pupils' experience to include events which they might, by virtue of their handicap, never be able to experience in reality.

Thus, if we agree with Warnock that one of the aims of providing an education for all children, including the handicapped should be

"first to enlarge a child's knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding, and thus his awareness of moral values and capacity for enjoyment."

(HMSO, 1978a p.5)

then there would appear to be a fairly strong theoretical justification for the inclusion of drama within the curriculum. Thus, one of the aspects which was looked at in the practical work carried out in this project was the extent to which drama did appear to affect the imaginative development of pupils, and whether this did appear to extend his knowledge of the environment, his awareness of the environment and his capacity to find enjoyment in enacting elements of this experience.

For the moment, however, let us assume that this assumption holds good, and, on the basis of this assumption, look at the implications which aiming a lesson towards imaginative development may have in terms of the subject-matter and content of lessons.

The Subject Matter and Content of Lessons

It has already been argued that the subject matter of the lesson may be dictated by two factors

- a. the pupils' existing imaginative capacity;
- b. the extent of pupils' existing capacity to remember previous experience.

And it has been argued, that, with the least able pupils, there may be a need to plan the drama lesson as part of a series of lessons in which real experience with physical objects is juxtaposed with attempts to help pupils to carry out the same sequence of actions in pretence. The use of balls was cited as an example. Other fairly obvious examples might include the re-enactment of play with sand, water, dolls or other toys and the recreation after the event of some element in the school day - for example, dressing, eating, boarding the school bus etc. As the child becomes more adept at pretending, 'eating' might be extended to include the eating of some favourite/sticky/messy/nasty food, while 'boarding the bus' might involve the introduction of different kinds of weather and clothing. These, then were the kinds of topics

which, it was postulated, might be possible for pupils at the earliest stages of development. The actual reactions of pupils to these topics is discussed in the later stages of this thesis.

Similarly, it was postulated that the same theme might be introduced to pupils with a wide range of imaginative ability if it were simplified or complexified to take account of their experience. Thus, for example, it may be suggested that the theme of 'struggle' could be presented in a whole variety of ways. For the pupil with a well developed imagination, the theme of struggle might well be introduced in the context of myths and legends in which the struggle is between man and beast, man and other men, or man and the elements. For children with less well developed imaginations, however, this theme may well have to be translated into the much more simple struggles of, for example, pretending to engage in a tug-of-war, attempting to lift a heavy weight, or battling against the wind on a windy day. For the child who has little conceptual understanding of what it means to struggle, and whose imagination is poorly developed, the theme of struggle might have to be broken down still further into a series of lessons which exemplify the elements of struggle - eg. big/little; weak/strong; easy/difficult, etc. And the same argument could be applied to almost any theme. Thus, while 'a visit to the seaside' might provide a suitable topic for the imaginative enactment of reality by less able pupils, the same theme, presented to the more able pupil, might require to contain some development of plot or character which would render it exciting, amusing, sad or thought-provoking for such pupils. With the very least able pupils, the enactment of such a theme might only be feasible if a real visit to the seaside preceded the lesson or if, at the very least, pupils had been given concrete experience with sand and water.

Finally, it has been suggested that the teacher may help pupils make associations between diverse objects, and recognise potential for diverse or symbolic uses for common objects within the lesson itself, and by the way in which she prepared for the lesson. By suggesting that a table, for example, be used as a bus, or a piece of paper represent a pool in the middle of the room, she may help pupils to develop the symbolic understanding that one thing may 'stand for' another. By making sure that she has available within the room, before the start of the lesson, artefacts which may be required in the lesson, or those

which may be used symbolically as properties within the lesson, she may provide a means of enabling pupils to 'discover' something which can be used in the course of the lesson. This 'discovery' may not only help the progression of the lesson but may reward pupils and help to make them more aware of the potential inherent in objects within their environment.

Summary

To sum up, therefore, it would appear that the evidence is inconclusive as to whether mentally handicapped children might be creatively gifted or imaginatively endowed in spite of their handicap. Drama training may provide a descriptive index of these children who might be gifted in the sphere of dramatic activity, and the provision of drama ought to provide an outlet for the imagination of these and other pupils. Drama may also provide a means of enhancing imaginative ability as part of general cognitive development. The provision of structured and guided dramatic play within the drama lesson may, in fact, be a means of encouraging this development. If one of the principal aims in the provision of drama is the development of imagination it may be necessary for teachers to

- a. identify the elements of experience with which the child is already familiar;
- b. present new information within the context of information which is already familiar;
- c. juxtapose real and 'imagined' experience as a means of establishing the meaning of imaginative enactment;
- d. provide in the environment readily accessible artefacts which may be used symbolically or imaginatively within a lesson;
- e. draw children's attention to these in the course of the lesson, and encourage children to 'discover' and use these in the course of the lesson;
- f. determine the level of difficulty of subject matter required and choose a theme which can be simplified or complexified to the correct level of difficulty for the pupils concerned;
- g. in the presentation of material, make use of the 'hypothetical what if' to encourage pupils to make imaginative associations which, unaided, they might be incapable of making.

Finally, it was argued that it may be necessary to teach children how to imagine, before they will be able to learn other things from

engaging in the imaginative, enactive process of drama. It is to one of these other things which we now turn our attention - namely, the development of skills in communication. And there will be an attempt to provide first, a brief indication of the needs of handicapped pupils in this area, and secondly, consideration of where drama may help.

Communication

The prevalence of language difficulties among mentally handicapped children has been well documented in the literature (Mittler, 1970; Luria, 1963; O'Connor and Hermelin, 1963; Segal, 1965; Shakespeare, 1975; Tomlinson, 1981). These difficulties may range from mild articulatory defects, often accompanied by physical deficits in the speech production mechanism or by auditory problems, to complete aphasia, with or without attendant comprehension. It is generally recognised that the more severe forms of mental handicap, especially those arising from extensive brain damage, tend to be accompanied by delayed or deviant language acquisition (Schiefelbusch 1977; Lenneberg, 1967; Hinde et al, 1973; Chomsky, 1981). But even those children with no obvious evidence of brain damage may show delayed or patchy linguistic development. For example, a retrospective study carried out in the Isle of Wight in the sixties showed that the late development of speech was six times more common among educationally subnormal children, than among other children (Dunn, 1963). An analysis of the curriculum in twenty-nine American schools also showed that one of the major causes for concern among teachers of the severely mentally handicapped was the communication difficulties of pupils (Hudson, 1961). In a recent study, Gibbs (1983) found that the development and assessment of communication skills was still an area of major priority among British teachers, while Cheseldine et al (1983) found that of the 214 teenagers in their survey 78% could not be clearly understood by others or give and receive information. And most theorists are agreed that the lack of verbal output and comprehension can adversely affect children's general ability to learn or be taught many other things (Leeming et al 1979; Reiter and Levi, 1980).

It has already been argued that the provision of drama - even when the lesson is not specifically aimed at language development - may have some effect on pupils' understanding and use of language. And it was suggested that two possible reasons for this may lie in

a. the enjoyment of dramatic play, resulting in a desire to recall and recount something of the experience after the event, and

b. the possibility which acting-out holds for placing even fairly abstract words within a movement and play sequence which makes their meaning contextually clear.

It has also been argued that the imaginative capacity of children may be either enhanced or given opportunity for expansion through drama. Since imagination appears to be closely linked to both thought and language, the development of imagination may help strengthen the symbolic capacity of which linguistic development is a component. If such results do occur, drama would appear to be a potentially useful resource in the teacher's repertoire of strategies for overcoming language difficulties. At the start of this chapter, however, it was suggested that drama may achieve more specific results in linguistic development if the drama lesson is planned with this aim in mind. In what follows, therefore, there will be an attempt to analyse some of the ways in which lessons may be aimed at the development of skills in communication, both verbal and non-verbal.

Prerequisites for Communication

Ervin-Tripp (1977) suggests that three essential prerequisites for the emergence of spoken language are -

- a. functional knowledge of things and events in the environment;
- b. symbolic play behaviour which indicates an awareness that one thing may be made to 'stand for' another;
- c. acts which indicate a desire to communicate - either verbal or non-verbal

Kiernan (1978) also accepts that a desire to communicate is essential, but she argues that before such a desire can occur the child must also

- a. have something to communicate about;
- b. have the need to realise that communication is possible;
- c. have some means of expression open to him;
- d. have some means of understanding the communication of others.

Something To Talk About

It has already been argued that drama may help to develop the child's symbolic play behaviours and by encouraging the use and development of imagination, may help create an awareness of the environment and an extension of referential experience. Similarly, the first

of Kiernan's categories is naturally present within any drama lesson. Drama, by its very nature, is set within a context - someone does something, somewhere and for some purpose. This context, the subject matter of the lesson, provides a topic for expression, by word, movement or gesture. This expression is itself an act of communication, either between the participants, or between the teacher and the group. If as suggested earlier, the topic chosen is one which utilises and capitalises upon children's existing experience or interests, it is possible that the acting out of these experiences will enable children to realise that, in these, they have a source for shared communication.

Obviously, drama is not unique in this, and it could be argued that the provision of 'something to talk about' could equally be achieved by teacher-led discussions in which pupils are invited to contribute their own experiences on a given topic. In such discussion, as in drama, input from the pupils can be accepted and elaborated on by the teacher as a means of encouraging further output. Even in the most skillful hands, however, there is a limit to the amount of elaboration which can be made from a single comment from an individual child, and, inevitably, the discussion will be led on to include contributions from others. And the teacher will require to make the verbal links in the discussion between the contributions of the various children involved. Some children may find it difficult to follow the verbal comment linking the various parts of the discussion. Nevertheless, a well-chosen discussion topic is likely to engender conversation between pupils and teacher, and, if interest has been aroused and maintained, may lead to increased output afterwards.

In drama, however, the pace is - and must be - slower. Because the topic is not simply talked about, but is also acted upon, the pace at which ideas can be introduced and explored will be limited by the pace of the actions which arise from these ideas. Thus, in drama, children's contributions are not simply accepted and elaborated on by the teacher, they form the basis for action. And, since this action takes place immediately following the suggestion which gave rise to it, the link between the two should be more obvious to the child who contributed the idea. Moreover, this can be reinforced by personalising the suggestion. For example, something along the lines of -

"So you dig at the seaside, John? Let me see how you dig.
I see. With a spade. Alright, let's all have spades like
John, and see if we can help him to dig. You show us how to
do it, John."

By encouraging the group to act upon an individual child's contribution in this way, his communication of that contribution becomes an important element in the activity which follows. Other contributions by other children can be dealt with in a similar manner. And, because action has to be linear in its progression, children may not only get some idea of cause and effect, but also begin to understand the reciprocal and interactive elements of communication. The fact that the ideas have been explored in action may cause them to be remembered while the importance which a child's contribution has achieved within that action may reward the child and give significance to the topic. If the whole experience has been relatively undemanding and pleasureable, the child may not only have something to say but a desire to say it.

The Non-Verbal Child

Moreover, the fact that, within the drama lesson, mime, movement and gesture are all acceptable components of the drama process, may mean that even those children who have limited means of verbal expression can make a contribution to the action. This may be of particular relevance to those children with specific language disabilities, whose understood vocabulary is considerably in advance of their produced speech. Such children may have evolved a relatively effective gestural system for satisfying their needs. They may initiate communication if they need to do so, and they may well be able to respond in gesture to questions or remarks made to them. But they are unlikely to engage in 'conversation' by such means, and if they attempt to do so, they may be frustrated by their inability to convey in gesture a 'comment' rather than a need or want (Segal, 1974).

Again, drama is not the only means of enabling an extension of communication in such children. Signed and symbolic systems have clearly enabled many such children to find a means of expression. But the drama lesson does provide a socially acceptable context for the use of naturalistic gesture. By a gesture a child can indicate his contribution to the topic. In exactly the same way as before, this contribution can be accepted and acted upon. In addition, in the course of the activity, a child may initiate a new action which can be commented on by the teacher and incorporated within the group activity. Thus, for example, in the illustration given earlier, if a child had, in the course of his 'digging', looked as if he were building a castle/digging a moat/

filling a pail, etc, it would be a relatively simple matter for the teacher to ask for clarification from the child and, having made sure that he was, in fact, doing what she suspected, to suggest that others within the group might like to incorporate this idea into their activity.

It could be argued that this merely reinforces non-verbal communication and, consequently, could be counter-productive to the acquisition of speech by encouraging non-speaking children to persist in the use of gesture as an alternative to speech. On the other hand, Lamberts (1979) suggests that

"the positive value of gestural communication is often overlooked. Such communication, after all, allows the child the experience of a rewarding exchange with an adult or other child. His subsequent desire for further communicative opportunities may then slowly be shaped in the direction of oral communication."

(Lamberts, 1979; p.274)

A similar argument is presented by Fouts and Neil (1979) in their review of the effectiveness of signed systems in encouraging the emergence of produced speech. As they suggest, children learn that communication is possible by means of the signed system, and this leads to an upsurge in the desire for communication in other ways, including verbally. They suggest that the emergency of language may be explained, not only by the increased desire for communication, but by the fact that there appears to be

"an overlap between the neural control of speech and that of certain motor activities, particularly serially organised manual movements. A close neural relationship between speech and manual gestures might explain the spontaneous appearance of speech skills which coincides with the acquisition of a manual language."

(Fouts and O'Neil, 1979; p.272)

In addition, they note that the acquisition of spoken language appears to be further facilitated by the use of 'total communication' - the pairing of signed and verbal systems.

Clearly, the gesture of the drama lesson does not approximate to the 'serial organisation' of signed systems. But it does provide an opportunity for the pairing of words and movement in a more deliberate and exaggerated way that is present in ordinary speech. And the possibility which exists naturally within the drama lesson for this pairing of word and gesture may be strengthened by deliberately seeking to find ways of incorporating such links into the dramatic action. For example, it ought to be possible to include both descriptive words and phrases

and the evocative use of single sounds or phonemes as an accompaniment to action. The sound of waves as children pretend to jump over them, the sound of the wind, the sound of mechanical gadgets within the home, the sound of milk being poured, etc, can all be demonstrated by the teacher in single sounds, and copied by children as an accompaniment to action. This pairing of sound and action may enable the child to realise that he can - without undue frustration or difficulty - supplement movement with sound. If, as a result, the child begins to enjoy the making and hearing of such sounds for their own sake, this may lead to an increase in experimentation with the making of sounds and may lead, eventually, to greater awareness and use of language.

Experimenting with Sound Production

It is this type of experimentation with sound which Clark (1979) postulates enables the young baby to trace the mechanisms of the vocal tracts and, on the basis of the auditory and kinaesthetic feedback received, to develop neural connections which will facilitate the emergence of 'meaningful' babble - protowords used with appropriate intonation and other prosodic features - and, at a later stage, the words and phrases of the native language (McLean et al., 1972). Those who adhere to the theory of 'critical periods' for the development of speech suggest that the babble stage of sound production is developmental and, if the child does not master the mechanics of babble at an early stage in development, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to establish later, satisfactory verbal language (Lenneberg; 1967). Since many school-age mentally handicapped children are operating at a developmental level consistent with that of the baby learning to babble, it may be that, for such children, there is a need to experiment with babble. But, while babbling is regarded as an acceptable and necessary aspect of infant sound production, the babbling of an older, mentally handicapped child may be socially unacceptable and, consequently, unrewarded. The use of single sounds within the drama lesson may provide an opportunity for children to practise the elements of babble within the framework of a socially acceptable situation and may serve a similar developmental purpose to that of the infant's spontaneous babble production.

If, on the other hand, there are no 'critical' periods for the development of aspects of language (Fromkind et al, 1974; Davies, 1975;

1977) it may be even more important to provide practice in the development of the vocal mechanisms even with children who are more mature developmentally. And, although phonological approaches to language acquisition have become somewhat unpopular in recent years among both drama specialists and psychologists who are more interested in the development of language as part of a larger cognitive process than as a mechanical skill, there is some recent evidence to support the use of specific vocal imitation exercises in helping the speech development of Downs, and other, mentally handicapped children (Share, 1975; Greenwald and Leonard, 1979; Ryan et al, 1975).

To summarise the argument thus far, therefore, it would appear that the drama lesson can be presented in such a way that it goes some way towards meeting the first three of Kiernan's criteria for communication. The subject matter provides something to talk about. By choosing a subject which is within the experience of pupils, and by inviting and acting upon pupils' verbal or gestural comments on that subject, it may be possible to invest it with the interest and significance which will give it the potential for generating a desire to communicate about it spontaneously on subsequent occasions. By accepting and rewarding gesture as well as language, children for whom spoken language has been difficult and unrewarding may begin to develop more positive attitudes to the communication process in general. By pairing words and gesture, sound and movement, children may learn to make mental associations between these and will gain practice in the elements of sound production within an undemanding and socially acceptable context. This may provide children with either a gestural or verbal means of expression and may enable some children to realise that communication is possible.

Imitation

The least able children within a group, however, may simply copy the words and movements of the teacher with no real understanding of the 'communication' aspect of these. But it has already been noted that many theorists argue that imitation is a key factor in establishing the ability to use and understand language. Thus, such children may, in fact, be establishing a basis for the future development of communication (Piaget, 1972; Jeffree and McConkey, 1974; Bolton, 1979). For those children who already have some understanding of communication, however, the imitation within the lesson may be even more valuable. For example, there is some research evidence to suggest that developmentally

immature children will tend to imitate more in a situation in which an adult has first imitated them (Smeets and Kauffman, 1980; Kauffman et al, 1976; Uzgiris and Hunt, 1975; Hallahan et al, 1977). It could be argued that, by accepting and elaborating on children's words and movements, the teacher is, in effect, copying them and encouraging others to do so also. If the evidence from the above studies is accepted, this would suggest that there will be an increased likelihood of children reciprocally imitating the teacher's demonstration of words and movements and that this will, consequently, increase children's repertoire of both.

Motivation

Finally, if, as Soviet psychologists suggest, language plays a crucial role in the regulation of both thought and behaviour, then inability to use language may represent considerable loss of control in relation to objects and people within the environment. This loss of control may lead to what Seligman (1975) has described as a condition of 'learned helplessness'. Because the child has experienced difficulty in using and understanding language he reacts somewhat like the animal who has been exposed to an 'inescapable shock' situation. An animal, placed in a situation in which he has no control, may respond by becoming listless and apathetic in other situations and may fail to adapt its behaviour to take account of changed situations. Similarly, the mentally handicapped child who has learned that he cannot communicate in a number of situations may develop an expectation that he cannot communicate in a situation and this, coupled with his perceived inability to change or control his situation, may result in a passive and lethargic attitude in general. It has already been argued that even a minimal gestural or movement response can be accepted and elaborated on within a lesson. The fact that such a minimal response may have a major impact on the lesson may help to change such children's attitudes towards the extent to which they are capable of exerting an influence and this may increase their motivation to develop the communication skills which will enable them to increase the extent to which they can control and manipulate their environment in meeting their needs or wants. As Seligman suggests

"if the lack of appropriate response initiation is a consequence of the organism's anticipation that a particular response will not work, a reversal in expectation should eliminate, or at least

reduce, this inappropriate passivity By reaching these children communication behaviours that can be transmitted to and interpreted by others (thus providing the children with more control over their environment) their expectation about the use of communication can be changed."

(Seligman, 1974; p.264)

The fact that a child may be able to contribute to the lesson may change his expectations. But, more importantly, the fact that a child has practised expressing himself in word or gesture within the lesson, and in a specific range of contexts, may increase the possibility that, if he attempts to communicate something of what he experienced within the lesson to others, he may experience slightly more success in doing so because of the increased expressiveness of his gestural repertoire. If, in addition, he gives the impression of purposefulness in attempting to communicate, this may encourage the listener to persevere in attempting to understand. If such a child can make himself understood on even a few occasions, his motivation for communication should be increased.

Understanding Others

All of the foregoing, however, presupposes that the children involved in the drama lesson have sufficient understanding of what the teacher is saying and doing as to be able to imitate her, to respond to her and to contribute, even minimally, within a lesson. And this brings us to the final criterion suggested by Kiernan - some means of understanding the communication of others. The pairing of words and movement may go some way towards establishing this, in that children can be given clear contextual cues by this means. Moreover, a variety of naturalistic situations can be presented using the same vocabulary range, but within a different context. For example, the teacher may mime, and encourage children to copy her actions in, 'putting in' and 'taking out'; 'jumping in' and 'jumping out'; 'getting dressed to go out' or 'removing outdoor clothes when coming in'. In each situation the same prepositions are used in different contextual settings, and this may help children achieve a general understanding of the concepts involved.

It has, however, been suggested that handicapped children appear to understand more than they actually do, and it has been demonstrated that, in the absence of contextual clues and gestural accompaniment, some children fail to respond appropriately to words which they had

previously appeared to understand. This could be explained by the demotivating factors involved in removing such cues and, with them, much of the interest of the communication being directed towards the child. Gibbs, for example, notes that

"a child reported by one teacher was capable of speaking in sentences when motivated by something that inspired his active interest. However, in a standardised test he revealed a level of only one-word and two-word utterances."

(Gibbs 1983; p.24)

Nevertheless, some researchers have suggested that children should only be credited with understanding those items of vocabulary to which they can respond appropriately without peripheral cues (Cooper et al, 1978; Crystal, 1976; Gillham, 1979).

While it is clearly desirable that children should eventually learn to distinguish words and phrases in isolation, the present author would contend that, in the early stages of sound comprehension and production, children are rarely going to need to understand words in isolation - especially abstract words like prepositions which are only really meaningful when used in a specific context. It is, for example, only necessary to understand the concept of 'in-ness' as a contrast to the other directional concepts of 'out-ness', 'up-ness' etc. Thus, the ability to respond to words in context may be more socially necessary than the need, in the early stages at least, to understand the abstract concepts. It has already been argued in the previous chapter that the acting out of such abstract concepts may promote an understanding of them. This, coupled with the cues given by the teacher, may facilitate understanding within, if not necessarily, outwith lessons.

Thus, it would appear that the drama lesson can go some way towards meeting all the criteria which were suggested earlier as being necessary to establish and develop communication skills. And it has been suggested that there are a number of specific devices which the teacher may employ in shaping lessons towards this end. It must be noted, however, that it has not been argued that the drama lesson is unique in its ability to meet any of these criteria. Nor has it been argued that the drama lesson is intrinsically better at doing so. For example, the slow pace of the drama lesson, and the activity base of such a lesson, may increase its potential for generating both a topic for conversation and a desire to communicate on that topic. Offset against this, however, must be set the possibility that the slow pace of the lessons enables less ground to be covered in the time available.

Similarly, the motivational aspect of drama may be less marked for those children for whom concrete reinforcement is more rewarding than engaging in dramatic activity.

Drama as a Means of Language Intervention

Such comparisons are only important, however, if the intention is to establish the 'best' means of approaching language intervention. This was certainly not the intention in the present project. What this analysis of the role of drama in the communication process has been aimed at, is establishing that, at the theoretical level at least, there does appear to be justification for suggesting that teachers should

a. expect to see some development of communication skills as a result of pupils' engaging in drama; and

b. can employ certain strategies which may increase this effect. Both of these, therefore, were important elements to be tested within the practical work carried out within the project. And it was postulated that, if lessons could incorporate the devices described in this section, and if, as a result, pupils did show benefits, the reactions of teachers to this would be highly informative. If, for example, it is accepted that teachers do accord the development of communication skills a high priority within their curricular schemes, one might expect to see them including drama within those schemes if it provided an additional strategy for this development. If, on the other hand, drama does appear to enhance communication skills, and yet teachers are still reluctant to incorporate it within the curriculum it would appear that factors other than the perceived benefits to pupils are influencing this decision. These factors may be the same as those put forward to explain the current neglect of drama, or they may be substantially different. In either case, investigation of them, should help establish a more realistic assessment of the role of drama in the education of mentally handicapped pupils by the general class teacher at the present time.

Summary

To sum up, therefore, it has been argued that the communication difficulties of mentally handicapped children may be considerable. The aetiologies of these difficulties are diverse, as is the range of difficulty experienced in individual cases. Teachers are aware of the need

to extend the communication skills of pupils and place a high priority on this aspect of development within their curricular schemes. If drama can be seen to provide a useful additional means of intervention in this area, teachers may incorporate drama within their curricular schemes. A teacher who does incorporate drama into her general teaching should expect to see some increase in 'language flow' as a result of pupils' experience of drama. For children who lack the symbolic or imaginative understanding to engage in drama, it may be necessary to provide lessons aimed at the development of the kind of imaginative ability necessary to engage in dramatic play, and, in addition, to provide opportunities for pupils to engage in structured and guided dramatic play in either a one-to-one or group setting. Because drama is, of necessity, a slower method of introducing specific language teaching, and because, as was argued in the previous chapter, drama appears to facilitate 'communication' rather than the specific acquisition of linguistic skills related to labelling, categorising and extracting specific information, the use of drama may be aimed more at enhancing and extending the communication skills of those children who

- a. are ready, or have been taught how to, engage in dramatic play;
- b. already have some form of verbal or gestural communication;
- c. have verbal understanding in advance of their level of produced speech.

Children who lack these abilities may benefit from engaging in 'imitation' within a lesson, even if they do not fully understand the purpose of that imitation - the assumption being that such imitation may eventually lead to the kind of spontaneous, deferred imitation necessary for the production and understanding of language. In order to enhance the skills of those children who already possess the abilities above it is postulated that the teacher may require

- a. to choose subject matter for the lesson which is sufficiently within the child's range of experience to enable him to make a verbal, gestural or movement comment on the topic;
- b. to accept and use these comments as a means of initiating dramatic action which exemplify them;
- c. to pair such action with verbal language, with deliberately expressive, naturalistic gesture as part of a 'total communication' experience;

d. to incorporate within lessons the deliberate pairing of movement or gesture with single sounds or onomatopoeic words as a means of enabling children to practise the elements of sound production and articulation. And it was argued that the use of such devices may

a. generate both a topic for conversation and a desire to communicate on that topic;

b. provide gestural and contextual cues as an aid to understanding of the topic;

c. provide pupils with an opportunity to practise and rehearse single phonemes; vocabulary related to the dramatic action; naturalistic gesture related to the dramatic action;

d. this practice may encourage a more expressive use of purposeful gesture, words or sounds which may facilitate the listener's understanding if the child attempts to communicate on the topic of the dramatic action;

e. pupils who are capable of, or who have given only, a minimal movement or gestural response to the topic of the lesson, may experience magnified feedback from that response in the dramatic action which follows, and is based on it. This may result in

1. a reversal of the expectations of those lethargic or passive pupils whose experience of attempting to communicate has led to the frustration of believing that their efforts at communication may exert little influence on events and situations.

The final category of lesson to be looked at in this chapter is that which centres on the use of drama in the development of social skills. This has deliberately been left to last as it will be argued that, in order to use drama for this purpose, children must already have established a degree of imaginative ability and also the kind of linguistic understanding and expression which will enable them to engage in the kind of role-taking and role-enactment activities necessary for the rehearsal of social situations and interactive role-relationships within these.

Social Skills

A recent survey carried out by members of the Hester Adrian Research Centre gives a detailed breakdown of the specific difficulties faced by mentally handicapped teenagers (Chesseldine et al, 1982). This survey showed that, whereas between 60% and 80% of the 214 pupils surveyed were adept in self-help skills such as feeding, washing or dressing, and between 50% and 60% were capable of carrying out

simple domestic tasks without supervision, only 13% knew how to summon help in the event of an emergency, only 8% could react appropriately to signs giving directions, and only 2% were reported to be capable of making use of public transport and amenities in familiar and unfamiliar situations. Thus the authors of the report suggested that

"it is in areas which may be of importance when in contact with other people that the young people particularly seemed to lack skills,"

and they concluded that

"many disabled adolescents still require structured programmes on many aspects of social skills even when they are coming to the end of their school career. Without these skills they will be unable to benefit fully from the opportunities presented to them in the outside world."

(Chesseldine et al, 1983; p.22)

Robertson makes similar points with regard to the social skills of mentally handicapped children of all ages, and, in a survey of programmes designed to effect improvements in social skills, he notes that

"the content of social skills training programmes for mentally handicapped people has tended to concentrate more on the development of skilled interpersonal behaviour and less on the perceptual, cognitive, motivational and environmental aspects of this behaviour relatively little attention is paid to the training of aspects of social cognition such as role-taking ability and referential communication skills."

(Robertson, 1982; p. 2)

McLean et al (1972) and Affleck (1975 a/b) have both demonstrated that skills in role-taking and referential communication are highly correlated with social effectiveness in mentally handicapped people. This is supported by a number of other studies which show that groups who have been given training in role-play, and in the rehearsal of social events and situations, have not only improved in their role-taking ability, but have generalised the knowledge they gained in role-play to situations in reality (Stacey et al, 1979; Perry and Cereeto, 1977; Matson and Sevatore, 1981; Holley, 1980).

It would appear, therefore, that not only do mentally handicapped pupils lack social skills, but that the lack of drama provision within the curriculum may be preventing them from gaining the opportunity to practise these skills in role-play and enactment. In this final section of the present chapter, therefore, let us examine some of the ways in which the drama lesson may be structured towards the development of social skills for both older and younger pupils.

The Social Needs of the Younger Child

It could be argued that the kinds of skills in social living identified in the Hester Adrian Survey are likely to be more necessary for the older than the younger mentally handicapped child since

- a. it may be inappropriate for younger children to be out alone for any length of time;
- b. younger children are unlikely to require to use public transport and amenities without adult supervision;
- c. younger children will still be at the age at which it is considered normal for parents to buy and choose their clothing or other personal items, and the inability to handle money, for example, may be less obviously a problem.

The skills in social living which the younger child requires are, therefore, less likely to focus on problems such as the above, but on fostering the ability to relate socially to other children in play, to conform to social norms within the home and in the supervised situations encountered in the wider environment.

Earlier it was argued that the mentally handicapped child's failure to learn both about his environment and from interactions with his environment may stem from a variety of causes, including 'learned helplessness', a lack of apparent curiosity, reduced perceptual acuity or lack of opportunity to engage in social play with his normal peer group. It was argued that the provision of opportunities for corporate play within the drama lesson may help compensate for the lack of opportunity for social play outwith school. It was suggested that the provision of a strong perceptual stimulus, coupled with the motivating effect of being able to make an impact on the course of a lesson by minimal verbal or gestural response, may help children perceive, attend to and participate in drama work, thereby increasing the possibility that the child will remember what has been taught to him within such work. It was also argued that if a child could be encouraged to remember elements of previous experience and to act these out in the context of the drama lesson, this should enable the gradual feeding in of information related to novel experiences and should result in a strengthening of the ability to recognise familiar elements in novel situations - the familiarity of these new elements being achieved as a result of the real experience of acting out real events in an imagined context.

It may be, therefore, that by providing the child with lessons which are aimed at the development of play, communication or imagination, the teacher is, automatically, also helping the child to take an interest in his social environment and to react appropriately in situations he might encounter within it. Moreover, because the process of drama cannot be implemented in isolation from the subject matter of the lesson, it ought to be possible to enhance and extend a child's perceptions of social situations and events by exploring, within the drama lesson, events, characters and situations which relate to aspects of social reality. Jennings suggests, for example, that

"whatever the skill it can be rehearsed through the drama session, thus reinforcing the learning process and making it enjoyable. Basic independence skills such as dressing, tying shoe laces, cleaning teeth etc, can all be rehearsed. Future events can be anticipated such as outings and holidays. The use of the telephone, how to cope in emergencies, simple first aid, can all be experienced in an imaginative way through the drama session. Perhaps we should look upon the drama session as a rehearsal for life."

(Jennings, 1979; p2)

Whether drama can be regarded as a 'rehearsal for life' is debatable. As Allen points out, there is little evidence to suggest that those teachers who have been rigorously trained in drama are any better at 'living' than those who have had not such training (Allen, 1979). Similarly, it is difficult to see how a child could acquire the ability to manipulate and tie shoe laces through miming such actions within a session in drama, and with no recourse to practice with the real objects. What the drama lesson may do, however, is provide practice in placing such events as dressing, feeding, etc, within a context which makes plain why such experiences are necessary and reinforces the sequence in which they may be carried out. For example, it may be impractical to expose a child to the reality of shivering outside in inappropriate clothing. It is perfectly feasible to introduce the idea of being inappropriately dressed within the imaginative situation of drama, and the corollary of this is to emphasise the appropriateness of certain items of clothing to specific environmental conditions, and to show that the sequence of dressing before going out is a logical one. The present writer would, therefore, find it difficult to justify the statement that 'all' skills can be rehearsed through drama, and that drama is a rehearsal for 'life'. It does appear, however, that certain real experiences can be extended and

enhanced through drama, and that certain aspects of social living may be highlighted within the drama lesson. In aiming lessons at the development of social skills for the younger child, therefore, it may be the choice of subject matter for the lesson which is important, rather than the specific teaching techniques adopted in presenting the lesson, and, for the younger child, the lesson which is aimed at the development of communication or imagination may well be synonymous with the lesson which is aimed at the development of social skills. Similarly, it may be possible to encourage more corporate and interactive play between children by providing subject matter in which, for example, children have to work reciprocally in pairs, where the contribution of each child is important to the success of the group activity, or where children have to work in unison on the same activity. As noted in the previous chapter, however, the extent to which such corporate play within lessons will be reflected in spontaneous play behaviours outwith lessons, will be dependent upon the validity of the assumption that children will be able to transfer learning from one situation to another.

There may, however, be a number of practical difficulties to overcome in ensuring that all children in a group can be given opportunity for corporate and interactive play within the drama lesson. Aggression, hyperkinetic behaviour, distractability and withdrawal have all been identified as possible problem areas in the social behaviour of mentally handicapped pupils (Whellan, 1976; Boswell and Wingrove, 1974). Children who manifest such behaviours in extreme form may make it more difficult for the teacher to ensure that children do interact or co-operate within lessons. In practice, it may be necessary to try to provide dramatic stimuli which will help aggressive children to behave in more peaceful and constructive ways, to provide situations in which the over-active child can be encouraged to engage in and appreciate moments of stillness, and to provide the stronger or more forceful stimulus needed to attract the attention of the withdrawn child. Clearly, it would be difficult to incorporate all of these elements within a single lesson. For example, the strong stimulus which attracts the more passive child may be over-stimulating to the hyperactive child. The lesson which seeks to provide a disciplined framework of constructive activity for the aggressive child may be too rigid to excite and involve the more passive child. Therefore, in using drama as a means towards establishing corporate play among children who manifest the more extreme forms of socially disturbed behaviour, the teacher may have to try to balance up the needs of the individual children through a series

of lessons, rather than attempting to meet the needs of the entire group on any one occasion. And this may well create problems in class management. During a lesson which seeks to curb the aggression or hyperactivity of some children, it may be possible to ignore the possible non-involvement of the more passive children since they are unlikely to cause active disruption to the lesson. In a lesson which seeks to stimulate the more passive child, on the other hand, the possible over-stimulation of the livelier children is less likely to be able to be ignored since such children may well be actively disruptive rather than passively uninvolved.

When working with a group in which there are children with social problems of some severity, therefore, a case could well be made out for grouping children according to specific social need, rather than in their normal classroom grouping. In theory, it ought to be possible to select a group of children according to need and to provide them with specific teaching sessions away from other children, or to work on an individual basis with a single child who has needs different from those of other pupils in the class. In practice, and in particular, where the ratio of adults to children is not high, it may be difficult to achieve this without a reorganisation of school or class timetabling. Head teachers and staff may require to have a degree of commitment to ensuring that children are given drama teaching consistent with their social needs before they will be prepared to carry out the necessary organisational changes.

In the specialist literature on drama considerable claims are put forward for the use of drama training as a means of containing aggression, stimulating pupils, or developing an appreciation of stillness (Doyle, 1974; Hudson, 1974). Drama is, however, by no means the only method of approaching such problems, and current programmes in, for example, behaviour modification do claim a high success rate in these areas (Johnson & Werner, 1980a/b; Wing, 1980). It will be argued in a later chapter that such programmes are widely used in Scottish schools and that they have the advantage of being fairly straightforward to learn, to apply and to assess. It will also be argued that skills in the presentation of drama may be more difficult to learn and to apply, and the assessment of the outcomes of a drama lesson in terms of pupil behaviours may be less easy to determine over a limited time-scale. If, therefore, teachers are

happy with existing methods of tackling these specific social problems and if they perceive the provision of drama as requiring organisation changes in the teaching practices within the school there may be less incentive to adopt drama as means of tackling such problems than might be the case if other suitable methods were not available.

There is one other point which may mitigate against the adoption of drama as a means of tackling the more acute social problems. If children are grouped according to social need it follows that in any one group the children will all be either disruptive, aggressive, or whatever. One aspect, identified in the initial chapter of this thesis as being a constraint against the introduction of drama by the non-specialist teacher, was the fact that many teachers do appear to have a fear that they will be unable to control and direct the progress of a drama lesson and that the lesson will, consequently, disintegrate into chaos. It will be argued later in the thesis that this fear may be reduced by ensuring that teachers are aware of the methods they may adopt in preventing such a situation from occurring, and by gaining practical personal experience of implementing these methods. But even the experienced drama teacher might have some misgivings as to her ability to stimulate, to control or to create an enjoyable learning situation when working with a group in which all children are exhibiting a marked degree of the same type of deviant social behaviour. Thus, while claims that drama can produce benefits among children with marked social problems may be justified, and while a theoretical case can be made out for grouping such children according to specific need, this theoretical possibility may be less easy to achieve in practice under normal classroom conditions, and by the teacher who has no special training in drama or experience of carrying it out. One-to-one teaching sessions with individual 'problem' children would obviate the need for skilled group management, but, again, such sessions may create organisational problems within schools where the staff/pupil ratios are low, and create additional time-pressures within schools where individual programmes of work in other areas are already being implemented.

The extent to which staff could, or would be prepared to, make organisational changes, and the extent to which they would be either willing or able to acquire the skills necessary for the presentation of drama within 'social need groups', appeared to be questions

which might have to be asked before any assumption could be made as to the value of drama in the development of social skills among pupils whose social difficulties are compounded by the behavioural problems posed by aggression, hyperactivity or extreme lethargy.

In the following chapter it will be argued that where such social and behavioural problems are caused by, or strongly related to, severe emotional disturbance, ordinary classroom drama taken by the class teacher may be a less appropriate means of intervention than dramatherapy. And it will be argued that dramatherapy is a specialist technique which is unlikely to be within the general class teacher's repertoire of existing teaching skills, that the acquisition of skills in dramatherapy would require the teacher to undergo fairly extensive training, and that in schools where there is a desire to see this form of work introduced, there will be a need for a sustained input of specialist support and guidance over a period of time. In the present context it has simply been argued that aggressive, hyperactive or extremely lethargic children may pose specific problems in group drama, and that helping such children develop their skills in relating socially to others may necessitate either a regrouping according to need, or the provision of individual drama teaching sessions, both of which may create organisational problems within schools, or call for particular skills in group or class management on the part of the teacher.

These arguments appeared to be borne out in the practical work attempted within this project. In discussing this work in subsequent chapters of the thesis it will be argued that the practical work carried out in this project highlighted the need for further research into the applicability of drama in helping overcome intractable social problems caused by the behaviours discussed above, and indicated that, where specialist resources are scarce, it may be necessary to concentrate the resources of specialists in dealing with the more 'problem' children, thereby creating more favourable conditions for the class teacher to carry out ordinary classroom drama work with the remainder of the pupils, whose inability to relate socially may be attributed to

a. lack of perceptual awareness and curiosity about their environment, and a consequent lack of knowledge about how they might be expected to react to people or events within that environment.

b. lack of skill in corporate, interactive social play as a result of inadequate opportunities to engage in this form of play with their peer group, or as a result of a lack of training and guidance in

developing and practising the skills involved in this form of social interaction.

Summary

It has been argued that the social needs of the younger mentally handicapped child are likely to relate to interactions in play, in the home, and in supervised situations outwith the home. The subject matter chosen for the drama lesson may reflect these needs and provide opportunities for children to rehearse and elaborate on the social behaviour appropriate both to real-life situations and to the process of imaginative, dramatic play. The teaching techniques appropriate to the development of dramatic play, imagination and communication may be equally appropriate to the development of social skills in that

- a. such techniques also seek to extend the child's perception of the real environment;
- b. to encourage active participation and to motivate the child to explore, through acting out, events and roles drawn from the child's existing experience;
- c. to extend this experience by encouraging the child to act out, in an imaginative context, events or roles which may not yet have been encountered in reality, thus providing a rehearsal of or preparation for the real events;
- d. to establish sequential ordering of cause and effect in acting out, thus enabling the child to see why certain behaviours are appropriate in certain situations and why certain series of actions have to be carried out in a particular order.

For the younger child, therefore, it has been argued that, while the development of social skills may be an aim in itself, the subject matter or activities chosen to achieve this aim may well be subsumed within the framework of lessons which seek also to establish skills in other areas such as the development of play, of imagination or of communication - the exception to this general statement being those children with very extreme social problems for whom more controlled or therapeutic methods of presenting drama may be necessary.

The Social Needs of the Adolescent

Earlier in this chapter it was argued that the social needs of

the mentally handicapped adolescent are likely to centre around the acquisition of the social skills necessary to enable the child to benefit fully from the opportunities presented to him in the outside world. This statement reflects the change in attitude towards mentally handicapped people which has taken place progressively over the last twenty or so years. Whereas, previously, mentally handicapped people with a measured intelligence quotient of under fifty were considered to be either ineducable or in need of care and protection, current legislation asserts that no child is ineducable and that the task facing educators is to discover and devise means whereby all mentally handicapped children may be encouraged to develop the full potential for which each is individually capable (HMSO, 1944/45/69/70/73/74/75/78). The Warnock Report, for example, stresses the need for the mentally handicapped person to become as fully integrated into 'normal' society as is possible, and suggests that the aims of education for all children, including the handicapped, should be

"first, to enlarge a child's knowledge, experiences and imaginative understanding and thus his awareness of moral values and capacity for enjoyment; and, secondly, to enable him to enter the world after formal education is over as an active participant in society and a responsible contributor to it, capable of as much independence as possible."

(HMSO, 1978 a;p.5)

The Report defined educational need as being determined in terms of whatever is essential for the attainment of these aims. Even within special schools which cater for pupils who may never achieve 'complete' independence in social living, there will be a need to identify and exploit those areas of independence and autonomy towards which the individual might realistically aspire.

Although the Hester Adrian Report cited earlier suggests that the mentally handicapped adolescent is particularly lacking in social skills, the report also indicates that this is a growing area of priority in the curriculum of mentally handicapped pupils (Chesseldine et al, 1983). Within the present project this was borne out in discussions with teachers who placed the development of social skills high on their list of curriculum priorities for older and more able pupils. In many schools adolescent pupils appear to have developed a fair degree of self-help skills in feeding and dressing, and in some schools specialist teachers are now being employed to teach

pupils the basic elements of personal care, health and hygiene, home economics and technical subjects. This teaching is supplemented by outings designed to enable pupils to gain practice in using public transport and amenities, to carry out the mechanics of simple shopping, or to live for a period of time independent of their parents in the communal atmosphere of a school camp, where pupils themselves carry out many of the daily tasks necessary for communal care and comfort. Clearly, much of this teaching is aimed at giving pupils an opportunity to experience social situations within the context of reality.

As Petrie notes, however, there are certain social skills which cannot be practised adequately in real life situations and which may require to be practised more vicariously within the classroom. He observes that

"the correctness of emphasizing first-hand experiences will be generally recognised, but quite clearly all social skills cannot be learned through these. The ability to make a 999 emergency telephone call is one obvious example. It is also undesirable that handicapped youngsters, in situations of great importance to them, such as being interviewed for a job, will only be able to learn from their mistakes. And mistakes, if not pointed out may not be recognised and may be repeated.

Social drama, therefore, can play a crucial role in preparing for such situations and in influencing the success of their outcome. In this respect the needs of handicapped children may differ widely. A child may be unable to make a telephone call because he has not mastered the skills necessary to do so; in contrast, an emotionally disturbed child may possess these skills but lack the confidence of putting them into practice. Rehearsals will be of value in both cases but their aims will be different.

(Petrie, 1975; p.14)

Petrie goes on to suggest that not only is drama useful in the rehearsal and development of social skills, but that drama provides an effective vehicle for exploring

"numerous issues relating to ethical values, social roles and family relationships."

(Ibid; p.15)

He argues that an approach through drama may have advantages in that

"personal views may be expressed more freely through role-playing because a role, very much like a puppet, provides some kind of shield. Role-playing, too, enables a situation

to be experienced rather than just being evaluated hypothetically."

(Ibid)

But earlier in this chapter it was argued that the growth of imagination may arise as a result of the juxtaposition which can be made between the mode of experience typified by reality and that typified by the conditionality of the imaginative situation of drama - not only the re-enactment of reality but the reconstruction of reality, complete with any alterations which are included as a result of exercising the hypothetical 'what if'. It could equally be argued that the value of role-playing lies not in the fact that it enables 'a situation to be experienced' but that it enables a situation to be experienced within a different kind of reality, and to be contrasted with reality. In a role-play situation the participants are in control of the reality they are experiencing in that they may choose, at any point, to extract themselves from the role situation and to become their 'real' selves. And, in fact, a feature of role-play with normal students in classroom drama tends to be the withdrawal periodically from the imagined situation to discuss the situation in real terms. In a life situation it is relatively unlikely that it will be possible to distance oneself from the event as it is taking place to reflect upon that event and to plan the next stage in the action. It is possible to reflect on an event after it has taken place, and indeed, to plan a future course of action for subsequent occasions. But there must be relatively few life situations in which one can withdraw from the situation at will, where one can stop the action, as it were, and replay the situation from a different perspective or in a different role. Thus, in role-playing, or in acting out a situation, it is possible to reorder events, to pose new conditions, to experiment with possibilities, or to opt out of participation in a way that is not possible in reality.

But unless this activity has some frame of reference in known reality, it is unlikely that it will be possible to learn about reality from it. For example, a mentally handicapped young person may already know that money may be exchanged in shops for goods. He may not yet understand the concept of value for money, or realise that one is capable of exercising choice in ensuring that the goods obtained are in line with personal preferences. By simulating

conditions of choice and acting out the possible consequences involved in making different choices, the person may begin to understand something of what is meant by choice and preference, and that value for money may have both a utilitarian and a preferential component. But if the individual is never subsequently in a position to exercise freedom of choice in reality, it could be argued that the learning achieved as a result of the acting out experience may either be relatively valueless in terms of social development or may lead to a degree of frustration in that expectations have been aroused with little chance of being realised.

This emphasis on the reality principle may be less marked when dealing with non-handicapped young people who can, as noted earlier, reflect upon role-play or acting out situations in an abstract way in discussion and who may consequently be able to make mental associations and relationships between the reality they have experienced and that which has been postulated in the hypothetical situation of the drama. But even with non-handicapped people, the charge has been made that drama can be a subversive activity in that young people may be encouraged to explore issues such as personal choice or degrees of authority, and may find that if they attempt to carry over these realisations into other spheres of life, they may find that the freedom of choice postulated in the drama session may be less easy to achieve in reality, and they may need to re-appraise the reality of situations in terms of their altered perceptions of what is possible (Postman, 1969; Yando, 1978). Nevertheless, the principle of testing reality against the hypothetical reality experienced in drama remains.

To take this argument to its logical conclusion, however, one might require to argue that the probability of an event occurring in reality should be the criterion on which one bases the subject matter chosen for acting out drama situations which seek to establish social skills. Using this criterion, it must be relatively improbable that more than a tiny fraction of the population of severely mentally handicapped people will ever have to make a 999 telephone call, and even less probable that any mentally handicapped person will take on the life role of doctor or policeman, whereas it is relatively more probable that at some point in his life the mentally handicapped person will have to exercise some personal choice in the spending of money and the selection of goods.

On the other hand, practice in making telephone calls or in acting out the roles of others may, under the guidance of the teacher, enable the child to understand something of the purposes behind the acting out - eg. the doctor gives pills or injections in order to help people; the telephone is an instrument for the giving and receiving of information, etc. The understanding of this kind of information may, in the longer term, lead to more effective social behaviour in that the child may, for example, react without fear in the presence of a doctor, a policeman or other uniformed official. But again the utility of such concepts may be conditional on some aspect of the learning achieved being reinforced in reality.

Thus, just as in the choice of subject matter for the younger child, so in the choice of subject matter for the drama lesson aimed at the development of social skills for the more mature child, there may be a need to ensure that the drama lesson is placed within the context of the reality which the child may encounter in his life, and to base the introduction of information on experiences with which the child is already familiar. In curricular terms, this may mean experiences that the child is already being introduced to in other subjects, or in outings. The concrete experience of reality may provide the child with practice in the mechanical and behavioural skills appropriate to various social settings, while drama work may help extend the child's perception of the underlying reasons for particular behaviours being appropriate in any given situation.

This section began with a quotation from Robertson's survey, which suggested that there was a need to give attention in social skills training programmes to such aspects as perception, cognition, motivation and environmental conditions. Thus far it has been argued that the inclusion of drama in the curriculum may provide both a perceptual and cognitive element in the development of such skills, and that the subject matter may take into account environmental conditions which the child may be expected to encounter in reality. The motivational aspect has been touched upon only indirectly in the suggestion that frustration or dissatisfaction may occur if a person is encouraged to raise his level of expectation while being unable to satisfy that expectation in any real sense outwith the drama lesson.

Robertson, for example, questions whether it is

"desirable to train interpersonal skills without attempting to ensure that there is an appropriately responsive environment in which such skills are meaningful, useful and rewarded."

(Robertson, 1982; p.2)

The frustrations arising out of unfulfilled expectations could either be simply demotivating, or, at a more extreme level, could lead to an increase in the kind of socially unacceptable behaviour which social skills training programmes seek to minimise, eg. frustration may manifest itself in withdrawal and passivity, in anger or in aggression. It may, therefore, be necessary to exercise a value judgment as to which social or interpersonal skills the individual will require to have reinforced in order to comply with environmental reality, and provide motivation for the acquisition and retention of these skills. One might, for example, have to exercise such a value judgment in determining whether it is 'right' to provide a training designed to enable the individual to express personal opinions and to assert his own individual preferences within an institutional setting in which the behaviours stemming from such attitudes could be regarded as disruptive to the other inmates or counter-productive to satisfactory social adjustment within such an institution. And the way in which one resolves such questions of judgment may well be determined by the value one places on such issues as conformity to the existing norm, on adaptability or on self-actualisation.

In attempting to realise the educational aims suggested by Warnock, it may, under certain environmental conditions, be difficult to achieve an extension of imaginative understanding, moral values and independence while, at the same time increasing the capacity for enjoyment within the life situation in which the individual has to operate. And it will be argued in a subsequent chapter that the value judgment compromise opted for in the development of materials within the present project, was to present such issues as freedom of choice and the role of authority within relatively mundane settings and to suggest how these settings could be translated into experiential reality in the kind of follow-up work which all but the most restrictive environment might be able to provide. It will also be argued that although such a compromise does not exploit the full potential of drama in exploring interpersonal and social issues, it is a compromise which relates to the generalist skills of the class teacher in presenting drama, whereas the exploration of more complex issues through drama may require the

on-going skills of the specialist.

Throughout all of the preceding argument there has been an assumption that the adolescent mentally handicapped person will be capable of engaging in the process of role-taking and enactment with a degree of understanding and enjoyment. Many older handicapped children will, in fact, have established the mental capacity to relate to imagined events in enactment, even if their ability to engage in this form of activity has not been developed through specific training in corporate dramatic play. As argued earlier, for such children the simple expedient of providing more opportunity for and training in the imaginative, enactive and interactive process of drama may well be all that is required to increase the child's capacity for this form of activity and to enable him to learn from it. There will, however, be a proportion of mentally handicapped children of all ages who are so developmentally retarded that they are, as yet, incapable of appreciating and engaging in the process of drama. Before a programme of social development through drama can be contemplated for such pupils it may be necessary to aim lessons at the development of communication, motor skills and perceptual awareness. And it has been argued that, although the use of drama may enhance such skills, the initial development of the cognitive capacity to acquire such skills may depend on both the inherent capacity of the individual, and training which, although it may provide a foundation for the emergence of symbolic cognitive ability, does not itself contain an imaginative or enactive component. For the child who has some imaginative capacity already present the kinds of lessons in the development of play, imagination or communication argued for in the earlier parts of this chapter may be equally appropriate for the older, but developmentally immature, mentally handicapped child. Since it was argued that the choice of subject matter in such lessons may well be influenced by the existing interests or experience of the child, the fact that the child is chronologically more mature may be of less importance than the range of his interests and experiences.

Finally, it was argued that children with severe behavioural or emotional problems in social adjustment call for special treatment. This may hold true for both the older and the younger child. The problems arising out of aggressive or hyperactive behaviour in the older child may, however, be correspondingly increased not only by his greater physical size and strength, but by the fact that such behaviours are more

obviously 'abnormal' in an older child and the reaction of society may be less sympathetic. A temper tantrum in a six year old may be acceptable; the same temper tantrum exhibited by a physically large and obviously older child may be less easy for others to accept or excuse. This may mean that the social isolation or rejection of the older child with such problems is more marked than is the case with younger children. It may be possible to group the more withdrawn older children in a social grouping for drama work, but the more aggressive and less easily contained pupils may need the kind of individual instruction, and possibly the kind of specialist teaching, which it was suggested earlier may be difficult to provide unless there is either specialist help or the school itself is committed to organisation practices which will make individual and social group drama possible within the timetabling arrangements of the school, and teachers are both willing and able to carry out the programmes of instruction necessary.

Summary

To sum up, it has been argued in this and in the previous chapter that the process of drama is the same as that involved in spontaneous dramatic play, that the drama lesson may be regarded as synonymous with structured and guided dramatic play for the younger child, and with role play and enactment for both younger and older pupils. It has been argued that, providing the child is developmentally capable of some imaginative understanding, the opportunity provided in the drama lesson for the child to develop and practice his skills in dramatic play, may lead to an increase in spontaneous dramatic play and a consequent increase in his capacity to learn from such play and to develop his skills in communication, imagination and social living.

It has been argued that the teacher may aim the use of the drama process of role-taking and enactment within an imagined context towards the development of specific skills in communication and imagination. In doing so she may have to incorporate within her lessons such devices as the deliberate pairing of words and actions, the introduction of opportunities to practise the elements of babble, the pairing of real and imagined experience and the provision of artefacts within the environment towards which children's attention may be directed in the course of the activity, and which may serve to help them make the cognitive associations necessary to use such artefacts symbolically and imaginatively.

It has been suggested that the subject matter of such lessons may be drawn from the child's existing interests and previous experience, but that the hypothetical and enactive component in the drama lesson enables that experience to be elaborated on, expanded and subsequently tested against reality in novel situations. It has been argued that the testing of imaginative experience against reality may be particularly important for the handicapped child who may lack the normal child's capacity to make abstract relationships in discussion or reflection. It may, therefore, be particularly important to ensure that the mentally handicapped child receives drama training which is not isolated in subject content from other curricular areas and experiences, but is linked to these and integrated with them as a complementary mode of experience.

It has further been argued that, for the younger, or developmentally young, child, lessons which are aimed at the development of play, communication or imagination, may also have an effect on the child's ability to understand and relate to social situations because of the perceptual, the motivational and the interactive nature of such lessons. For the older child, the development of social competence related to independent living may be a priority area within the curriculum, and, again, it has been argued that drama may provide a means of extending and elaborating on certain aspects of life and social competence in conjunction with other curricular aspects which deal with the concrete realities of such situations.

While engaging in drama may be an enjoyable, and therefore potentially motivating experience for children, it must be noted that the extent of this motivation may well be tempered by the type of learning achieved in relationship to the environment in which the pupil is placed, and it was argued that it may be necessary to exercise a value judgment in determining the types of social learning which one wishes to introduce to pupils in any given environmental setting.

Finally, it was argued that the behavioural or emotional problems of certain pupils may be such that they require a special form of drama provision which may, or may not, be capable of being provided within the existing structures of schools, and may demand certain specialist skills from the teacher.

In the next chapter there will be an attempt to look in more detail at the learning principles and teaching methods which are currently in use with handicapped pupils, to compare and contrast these with the

teaching methods currently advocated in the teaching of drama. It will be argued that the use of certain methods may be more consistent with the realisation of certain aims, or more appropriate to pupils of different ages and abilities, and that the particular teaching strategies and methods of presentation adopted by an individual class teacher may well depend as much on the teacher's level of skill as on her priorities of aims or on the capacity of the method to benefit pupils. And it will be argued that in the practical work carried out for the development of materials in this project, there was a need to take account not only of the methods of presentation and the structure of lessons which could achieve benefits with pupils, but that there was a need to investigate the practical realities of which aspects of drama teachers would or could be capable of tackling within the environmental constraints of their own schools and classes, and given the levels of skill they perceived themselves to be capable of acquiring.

CHAPTER 7
The Methods of Drama, General Learning Principles
and the Role of the Teacher -
A Comparative Analysis

Introduction

In the previous two chapters there was an attempt to indicate some of the areas of learning towards which the drama lesson might be directed. It was argued that each of these areas has a direct relationship with the drama process, but that learning effects may be enhanced by the judicious planning of the teacher in her choice of subject matter and general methods of presentation.

In this chapter there will be an attempt to examine the methods of drama in more detail. The approaches adopted by a number of the pioneers in drama with mentally handicapped people will be analysed for areas of commonality with each other, with existing theories of learning and with current practices in special education. In the course of this analysis, reference will be made to the importance of the teacher's role in the drama process.

It will be argued that, irrespective of the particular aetiology of individual handicapping conditions, research has shown that many mentally handicapped children have been helped to overcome learning difficulties and to acquire self-help, motor or communication skills as a result of systematic programmes of teaching (Butler, 1981; Glidden and Klein; 1980; Fouts et al, 1979; Cooper, 1978; Jeffree and McConkey, 1974). At the present time, much of the impetus for this work has derived from three broad areas -

- a. programmes which are based on behaviour modification principles;
- b. programmes which make use of the Piagetian assertions that cognitive development arises out of and interacts with physical action, concrete experience and developmental maturity;
- c. programmes based on psychoanalytic or humanist approaches towards cognitive and emotional development.

The learning principles which underlie the programmes in each of these three areas will be examined, in an attempt to highlight the aspects of each which have been, or might be, incorporated into the presentation of drama. It will be argued that while the Piagetian and humanist learning principles have fairly obvious

links with the symbolic, imaginative and enactive process which characterises drama, the links with behaviourism may appear to be more tenuous. Of the three, however, behaviourism is exerting the greatest influence within Scottish special schools. Staff are already well versed in the principles, and experienced in the practice of behaviourist theory. It may be possible for them to utilise some of their existing skills and knowledge in the practice of drama, thus enabling them to approach the teaching of drama with a degree of confidence in their ability to present it.

For this reason, and because some drama specialists are currently tending to the view that the drama lesson, like any other activity, may be viewed as a series of behaviour which may be modified and changed as a result of the learning experiences encountered in the course of the lesson, behaviourist learning principles will be examined at some length.

The strengths and weaknesses of behaviourism will be analysed in relation to the drama process. It will be argued that the strict application of behaviourist principles within a tightly controlled environment is unlikely to be appropriate to a subject like drama in which diversity and spontaneity of response are valued. It will be argued, however, that many of the learning principles of behaviourism are, or could, be incorporated into lesson in drama - particularly those lessons in which the aim is a fairly specific range of observable learning outcomes such as the development of corporate play or an increase in verbal output following lessons.

It will also be argued that where the aim is towards the development of less tangible and more internal factors - such as self-esteem, self-awareness, trust, etc - movement approaches based on Piagetian principles may be a preferred method of approach. The work of a number of drama specialists who use movement principles will be touched upon briefly. It will be argued that, although such specialists may not take a behaviourist approach, there are areas of commonality between the methods used by these specialists and some of the learning principles discussed in the context of behaviourism. They do, for example, employ imitation, modelling, cueing and prompting in an attempt to help pupils develop cognitive and perceptual awareness. And both intrinsic and social reinforcement may occur in the course of the work. It will be suggested, however, that although movement approaches to the teaching of drama are popular

with drama specialists, they may be less well accepted by general staff. It will be argued that inhibition, the difficulties inherent in controlling movement work, the fear of chaos developing and the possibly high ratio of adults to children necessary for this form of work, may be practical barriers to staff's adoption of a movement-based approach to the teaching of drama.

One of the foremost pioneers in drama with mentally handicapped people is Dorothy Heathcote. Unlike those mentioned earlier, she does not take a movement-based approach to working with the handicapped, although her approach is a strongly cognitive one. It is also highly controlled with a distinctly individualistic style. Her methods have exerted some considerable influence on the methods adopted or advocated by other drama specialists in schools and colleges, but have exerted less influence on general staff. It will be argued that the reasons for this may be found in the high degree of professionalism, skill and intelligence necessary for the implementation of her methods. These methods will be discussed in some detail, as her influence in special education has been so great. It will be argued that, when analysed, her methods appear to have several aspects in common with behaviourism, but these areas of commonality are either so subtly used or presented with such exaggeration that they require a considerable degree of skill.

Finally, the humanist or psychoanalytic method will be looked at. It will be argued that there is evidence to suggest that these methods can produce results in individual cases. It will be suggested, however, that the therapeutic application of drama, with the aim of achieving emotional stability, lessening fears, decreasing aggression, encouraging self-expression, is a specialist task, requiring special skills and training. For this reason, it was not considered as a possible method for inclusion within the curricular materials devised in the project and designed for use by general staff. (Though the use of dramatherapy with profoundly mentally handicapped pupils, and by specialist staff, may be an area which would repay further investigation.)

In the final part of this chapter it will be argued that the aim here has not been to identify the 'best' practice in relation to the teaching of drama with mentally handicapped pupils. Rather, the intention has been to examine a number of examples of practice, to

indicate the role of the teacher and the teaching skills which appear to be suited to each, and to suggest the teaching aims which each seems most likely to be able to achieve in practice. This enabled a number of hypotheses to be advanced concerning the type of methods and principles which general staff in Scottish schools would, or would not, be willing or able to attempt. These hypotheses were tested in practice in the course of the project.

Behaviourist Learning Principles

In behaviour modification programmes, teaching strategies which employ precise instructional procedures have been evolved to match the stages of learning defined as acquisition, strengthening, maintaining, generalising and applying novel procedures (Haring and Brown, 1976; Krumboltz, 1972; Kiernan et al, 1978). Such programmes stress the need for relevance in the material to be presented and suggest that intensive individual assessment will be necessary to determine the relevance of a programme to an individual child's capacity or specific needs. Complex tasks are analysed into small sequential units, which are taught in successive stages and with due regard to the individual child's specific difficulties and reinforcement preferences. All such programmes stress the need for immediate repetition and elaboration of correct response, and strategies such as modelling, shaping, cuing and prompting, and the pairing of primary and secondary reinforcers, are employed to ensure that correct responses are more likely to be rewarded than incorrect ones.

Superficially, at least, behaviourist learning principles may appear to be inapplicable to the teaching of a subject in which spontaneity and diversity of response are generally considered to be desirable components of the lesson, and in which not one but a range of individual and different responses within a group may be equally acceptable within the context of a situation being enacted (Bolton, 1979; Brittin, 1978; Allen, 1980). Indeed, it was suggested in a previous chapter that this spontaneity and diversity of response may be one of the factors which leads to a general increase in 'language flow' as a result of engaging in drama, while the more precise methods commonly applied in behaviour modification approaches may lead to the development of specific items of vocabulary or syntax.

Nevertheless, in recent years, some drama specialists have been tending towards the view that the drama lesson, like any other lesson

can be regarded as a series of behaviours (Prior, 1976; Davies, 1978; Day, 1975). It is not argued that internal processes are unimportant in the drama lesson, but it is recognised that, within lessons, teachers do aim towards the development of a certain range of behaviours and seek to modify or change those behaviours which are counter-productive to the progression of the lesson. Thus, given that the drama lesson may be viewed in this way, it is logical to suggest that at least some of the learning principles on which behaviour modification strategies have been based may apply also within a lesson in drama.

Moreover, behaviour modification programmes would appear to be exerting the greatest influence within Scottish special schools. Virtually all of the schools involved in this project were using some form of behaviour modification approach towards individual children, and in some schools these approaches were being used almost to the exclusion of other methods. For example, within one of the participating schools which catered mainly for pupils with the more profound forms of handicap, the whole ethos of the school was geared towards this approach. Clear objectives were laid down for individual children and there were strict schedules of reinforcement based on concrete rewards. There was a high level of staff-head consultation and programmes were regularly updated or subjected to review if they did not appear to be having the desired effect. The result was that some of the children had acquired a better level of continence and self-help in feeding than might have been expected of them, considering their diagnosed levels of handicap. In addition, these results had been obtained fairly quickly using a behaviourist approach, whereas previous attempts by other methods had had little effect. Given this level of success, it is not perhaps surprising that staff within this, and other, schools regarded behaviourist approaches as effective.

Objections to Behaviourism

However, objections to the behaviourist approach have come from a number of writers who are worried about the ethics of such procedures as punishment schedules (Meisels, 1979; Hawkins, 1979; Elkind, 1978). Such writers have also suggested that the narrow focussing on specific objectives may reduce the flexibility of programmes and make it difficult for teachers to capitalise on incidental learning which may occur outwith training programmes. Hawkins, for example, describes case

studies of observed pupil behaviours in which the strict, or unthinking, application of behaviourist theory has led to sterility in the teacher/child interaction and served to extinguish 'curiosity' in both child and teacher. She suggests that teachers fail to notice chance events in pupil performance outwith the parameters of the training programme and consequently do not make use of these to effect learning. Similarly, such writers argue that a lack of underlying knowledge of the principles on which programmes are based may lead to a situation in which teachers find it difficult to deviate from a set reinforcement routine with the result that both social and concrete reinforcers may be used mechanically, or even inappropriately. Teachers may become so bound up in the mechanics of applying the programme that they become over-involved in these and fail to notice indications which might appear obvious to the more detached observer.

In fact, within the present project, one such incident occurred. One child caused disruptions at meal-times at apparently random intervals. Staff applied the extinguishing procedures which they had been taught to apply generally to anti-social acts on the part of this child. No-one, however, had asked the rather obvious question of whether there was a particular item of food common to these disruptions. It transpired that there were two possible items. The child simply did not like the texture of these particular foods and was making a protest in the only way available to him in the absence of effective verbal expression. When either of these items was removed before he received his plate, the incidence of meal-time disruption dropped markedly.

This example serves also to illustrate another of the objections put forward. Some have argued that, while it is undoubtedly true that much of human behaviour is governed by the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, the majority of 'normal' children learn to modify their behaviour in a wide variety of social relationships and have a large number of forms of physical and verbal expression available to them with which they may attempt both to satisfy their needs and to control or manipulate the behaviour of others. Normal children quickly learn that among their peer group there are some children whose behaviour they can influence by bribery, bullying, persuading or ignoring, while there are others on whom such tactics have little influence. Similarly, they learn to differentiate between appropriate child/child and child/adult exchanges, and the ways in which they learn to gain or avoid adult attention, approval or disapproval, may be subtle and varied. The

severely mentally handicapped child, on the other hand, is likely to have been limited in his range of social contacts and relationships and may not have learned reciprocity in relationships. In addition, the child with limited verbal and cognitive ability may have relatively few forms of effective expression open to him in controlling his environment, and many of these may be aggressive, destructive or otherwise socially unacceptable. Therefore, the child whose parents and siblings are co-operating with teachers in applying a programme designed to encourage specific behaviours and to ignore or negatively reinforce others, may be denied the normal autonomy and rights of reciprocity of behavioural control in relationships (Goffman, 1974; Berne, 1964).

It could equally be argued, however, that behaviourist theory, far from denying the right of reciprocity to the child, actually redresses the balance of reciprocity in a situation where the child has learned to control and manipulate the behaviour of others by anti-social activity. As early as the nineteenth century Seguin described this form of behaviour as a manifestation of negative will, in which the child displays resistance to eliciting active and adaptive response. Ball (1971) suggests that this type of anti-social behaviour represents -

"a learned and highly rewarding method of controlling the environment the child actively controls others and through repetitive, self-stimulating behaviours they provide their own reinforcement."

(p171)

Thus it could be argued that in a properly controlled programme it will be the child's response in any situation which will determine the subsequent responses of others. By focussing attention on desired behaviours and rewarding these, the teacher enables him to experience success and social approval where formerly he had only encountered censure. Thus, by acquiring socially acceptable forms of behaviour he eventually gains more personal autonomy and will, consequently, be happier, better adjusted and more able to engage in social intercourse..

Again, examples of such 'negative will' were to be found within the observation phase of the present study. It was noted that some of the most aggressive and difficult pupils showed a high degree of social awareness, albeit negative, causing disruption, and, in spite of attempts by staff to ignore these behaviours, generally succeeded in forcing the staff's attention to them. Moreover, on occasions when staff members expressed interest in or approval of a child's productive activity, this often resulted in the child's immediately reverting to less acceptable

forms of behaviour. Interpreting these behaviours subjectively, it was almost as if children were determined to maintain their independence and control even if it meant a reduction in what was, apparently, a pleasurable activity. The effect of this was that, with these very difficult children, staff were inclined to leave well alone and to ignore the child if he were quiet and not disruptive, with the result that certain children only really received staff attention when they were creating a disturbance. This was clearly somewhat at odds with the principles which they were attempting to apply.

Summary

To sum up, therefore, it would appear that while the behaviourist approach has both advantages and disadvantages, some of the objections to this approach appear to stem less from a denial of the validity of the approach per se, as from a realisation that, in practice, not all teachers possess the necessary skills, personality traits or underlying knowledge of the principles involved to carry out the programmes effectively. Thus, for example, the need to focus on specific objectives may be interpreted as a need to ignore chance opportunities, rather than, as McConkey suggests, a need to be sufficiently flexible as to incorporate these into the framework of the programme (McConkey, 1978). Similarly, the mechanical application of social reinforcement may result in a decrease of spontaneous expressions of social approval and a consequent reduction in the affective dimensions which behaviourist theory suggests ought to be present in any teaching situation. Nevertheless, since such programmes have to be carried out by people, the failure of people to carry out the programme effectively may be tantamount to a failure in the programme itself. Moreover, in terms of drama theory, the objections to the behaviourist approach may be as relevant as the theories behind it, since it is in these areas most commonly objected to that drama theory finds least commonality. Before going on to look at these areas of commonality, therefore, it might be useful to provide a brief list of the most commonly identified advantages and disadvantages of the behaviourist approach. The advantages would appear to be -

1. the emphasis placed on the assessment of individual differences and the need to formulate objectives which are appropriate to the needs and capabilities of the individual child;
2. because of the precision with which learning principles have been defined it is relatively easy to describe these principles and the

procedures which accompany them, thus making it easy to communicate these quickly and enabling them to be used by people who have had little previous training in their use;

3. the results of such programmes are fairly easy to assess. Feedback on the results can be obtained within a reasonably short time, and the programme can be modified or adapted on the basis of this assessment. Thus, less time may be spent on unproductive teaching - time being an important consideration when dealing with pupils who need to be taught so many things which normal pupils learn spontaneously;

5. there is considerable evidence to suggest that these programmes produce results.

On the debit side -

1. the effectiveness of programmes may be largely influenced by the skill and sensitivity of the teacher, and teachers may have to exercise considerable skill in order to ensure that the affective dimensions are given the same emphasis as cognitive or motor development;

2. the fact that programmes may be fairly easy to learn and to apply by adults with little previous knowledge or training, may be a disadvantage in that they may become inflexible in attempting to stick firmly to the practice rather than the principles of the programme;

3. there could be a danger that pupils come to be regarded as 'passive organisms, waiting for some stimulus to goad them into a response' rather than as 'active information-seeking organisms', whose interests and emotions may vary across situations and from day to day (Meisels, 1979);

4. some question the ethics of the more extreme forms of negative reinforcement and the use of punishment schedules involving such procedures as time-out.

The Relationship between Drama and Behaviourism

It has already been argued that, within a drama lesson, there is generally not one, but a range of possible and acceptable responses which children may make to any given stimulus. As a result, the narrow focussing on specific objectives tends to be less appropriate within such a lesson. Rather, most theorists are agreed that the objectives of the drama lesson will be what Eisner describes as 'expressive' -

"intended to serve as a theme around which skills and understandings learned earlier can be brought to bear, but through

which those skills and understandings can be elaborated, expanded and made idiosyncratic."

(Eisner, 1974; p.15)

Since diversity of response is valued, there ought to be an opportunity afforded to capitalise on chance events occurring within the lesson and a consequent opportunity to make use of incidental learning. Moreover, Jones (1972) suggests that it is considerably easier to maintain the affective dimension in a teaching situation which is not bound by the need to stick rigidly to achieving a narrow range of specific outcomes. The diversity of response possible within the drama lesson, therefore, may enable pupils to exercise some autonomy of choice in response and, because of the spontaneity involved in doing so, may enable the lesson to remain one in which the affective dimensions operate positively. The type of response made may also serve to demonstrate the nature and direction of pupils' interests and allow the formulation of aims for subsequent lessons which will take account of these individual preferences. Thus, although lessons may be planned in such a way that the individual capabilities of children suggest the range of method and content to be employed, and although lessons may be designed to increase these capabilities in particular ways, there may be considerable freedom of choice in particular responses at particular times within the lesson.

On the other hand, in order to make a choice of response, children will require to have some knowledge of the possible range of responses open to them. The mentally handicapped child who has difficulties in comprehending and responding to verbal instructions may need to be taught some of the range of responses possible before he is capable of making a choice for himself. In presenting drama to such children - and particularly when working on an individual rather than a group basis - there may be occasions when there is a need to focus in on specific target words or target behaviours as the desired outcomes of a lesson. On such occasions there may be a need to employ the kinds of modelling, shaping, or prompting techniques employed in behaviourist programmes. Such lessons may represent occasions when it is necessary to feed in the kind of appropriate behaviours from which children may be able to choose in subsequent, less rigid lessons.

But, even within such rigidly structured lessons, there are likely to be some differences in the techniques employed. The range of language used, for example, is likely to remain relatively naturalistic, and the specific words or behaviours to be learned are likely

to be presented within not one, but a variety of contexts. Consequently, even within lessons which seek to achieve fairly narrow and specific outcomes, there will be a degree of complexity in the language used in presentation, and a range of contextual cues comparable to those which are normally only associated with the later stages of behaviourist programmes, such as generalisation or applying novel procedures. Thus, although there may be occasions when the drama lesson seeks to achieve fairly narrow outcomes, and although the teacher may make use of imitative techniques in achieving these outcomes, it is unlikely that the drama lesson will ever have the rigidity of structure and presentation which may occur within a behaviour modification programme. Because of this, the teacher may experience more difficulty in assessing the extent to which she has succeeded in establishing these targets over a limited time-scale. For example, if the teacher has aimed at the specific objective of enabling children to identify the part of their body referred to as feet, it may be relatively easy, within the lesson, to get pupils to respond imitatively to such phrases as 'touch feet', 'feet up', 'feet down', 'wave feet', etc. They may even respond in the absence of modelled cues. In order to be sure that children did understand that the particular item common to all these phrases was 'feet', however, it might be necessary to devise fairly complicated assessment procedures. Whereas, if only one dimension had been introduced in the lesson - for example, touching feet while repeating the word - the number of correct responses can be recorded, monitored and rewarded. It is dubious, however, that this latter situation should be regarded as 'drama' since there is no imaginative or enactive content on either the part of the teacher or the pupil. In order to introduce such a content it would be necessary to introduce some of the words which indicate the kinds of actions which feet can perform and to enact some of the situations presented. It is unlikely, therefore, that the 'drama' lesson would ever aspire to as narrow a range of outcomes as those anticipated in the early stages of behavioural programmes at least.

Moreover, within the drama lesson there are likely to be no strict, pre-planned schedules of reinforcement. This does not mean that reinforcers will not be used. Some of these may be built into the lesson, and there is no reason why they should not be chosen to match the interests and capabilities of the individual child. For a child with a strong rhythmic sense, material may be chosen which gives

the child the opportunity to engage in rhythmic movement or sound patterns as part of the acting out. Similarly, the use of music as an aid to expression, the tactile stimulation provided by a furry glove puppet, the use of physical objects such as dressing up materials or the manipulation of visual aids in the development of a story sequence, may provide not only a means, initially, of catching the child's attention, but also a means of providing him with the reinforcement he may need to ensure that he continues to attend and will be motivated to repeat the experience.

The use of such objects within the lesson, however, is likely to be governed more by the particular content of any point in the lesson than by the specific behaviour engaged in by an individual child. Such objects are used more as a means of making the whole experience a pleasurable one than as a means of rewarding particular behaviours. Moreover, there may be occasions when such properties are inappropriate to the methods being adopted in the particular lesson being taught. In such lessons intrinsic reinforcement - such as the pleasure experienced as a result of engaging in the experience - or externally applied social reinforcers, such as praise or social approval, become more important. As Jennings says -

"it is difficult for the mentally handicapped person to experience self esteem without a dependency pat on the head There is also a sense of worth which comes from being able to respond to challenges and overcome them. We can build these challenges into the drama lesson."

(Jennings, 1979; p. 7)

Leaving aside the question of challenges for the moment, since this is one of the aspects of the drama lesson which will be discussed later in this chapter, it does appear that Jennings is suggesting building into the drama session both the opportunity for social reinforcement, and the kind of intrinsic reinforcement which comes from successful mastery.

Because expressions of praise or social approval will occur in the context of the particular moment in the lesson in which they are appropriate, rather than after every correct response, there is some likelihood that such expressions will have a degree of spontaneity. The fact that they may occur spontaneously may mean that a wider variety of expressions are used. From the practices observed within schools in the early stages of this project, it seems that some teachers, in presenting behaviour modification programmes, use only a restricted

range of experiences. In some cases 'good boy' or 'good girl' were virtually the only social reinforcers used.

A practical example of this can be seen in the resource video-recording produced by Byron (Byron, 1978). In a movement lesson presented by Byron, the range of social reinforcers used was considerable and varied. A similar lesson, presented by a member of the general staff, was accompanied by the phrase 'good boy' with no variation. While this might appear to negate the argument that the non-specialist will, in the practice of drama, use more spontaneous and varied reinforcers, it illustrates the theory that the drama lesson can be structured to provide such opportunities. The extent to which the non-specialist can learn to maintain spontaneity in this situation is an aspect which may require investigation. Without such spontaneity and diversity in expressions of social approval, it may be correspondingly more difficult to maintain the positive affect characteristics which will help motivate and reward pupils, and ensure their continued participation.

If such positive affect characteristics can be maintained, however, and if pupils do enjoy the lessons, teachers ought themselves to be rewarded by the evident enjoyment of pupils. Because of the mutually rewarding and pleasurable interactions which are taking place, the drama lesson ought to be one in which the learning milieu is relatively free from stress and in which the child may develop positive attitudes towards the learning process which is taking place. Thus, within the drama lesson, reinforcement to both pupils and teachers is likely to be an important element in the success of the work, but this reinforcement is unlikely to be administered in the same way as in behaviour modification programmes.

One additional point which must be noted in this context, however, is that there are a number of leading drama specialists who - while they accept that the drama lesson should be an enjoyable experience - reject the need to provide expressions of approval to pupils in the course of the lesson. They suggest that expressions of approval are inappropriate because they may lead to competitiveness on the part of children and generate a desire to please the teacher. This may result in behaviours which are directed outwards towards the teacher rather than in behaviours which stem from the personal involvement of the child in the role or situation being enacted (Slade, 1954; Hudson and Slade, 1968; Way, 1967; Pemberton-Billings and Clegg, 1965). Such

writers suggest that a need for approval may lead to superficiality in the work and a consequent lack of personal self-development. This is not a theory which is subscribed to by the present author who considers expressions of approval as representing one means of establishing a rapport between pupils and teacher. Nevertheless, this negation of approval has considerable support in the literature, and the fact that the present author does not subscribe to this view must be noted in that it constitutes a bias which was present in the practical work carried out as a direct reflection of the personal teaching style of the researcher.

There are, however, a number of other areas in which drama theory appears to find commonality with behaviourist principles and some of these occur across the spectrum of theorists, including those cited above whose stated aims relate to internal processes such as 'self-awareness', 'personal self-development', 'sensitivity' and 'creativity'. Slade, for example, though he does not use the terms 'reciprocal imitation' or 'reinforcement' actually describes examples of both when he advocates the use of techniques in which the adult copies the young child's spontaneous banging or tapping rhythms in order to encourage the child to develop his own personal sense of rhythm (Slade, 1954). In another study by Slade and Lafitte (1978), mention is made of the fact that the severely subnormal adults in the study might have been helped more in their linguistic development if the lessons had been presented in smaller, sequential stages, and if there had been a more conscious pairing of movement and gestural prompts with appropriate verbalisations.

It has already been noted that in behaviourist theory tasks are broken down into extremely small units, successful completion of which can constitute the precise objectives for the lesson, and it was argued that drama work was unlikely to be aimed at such a narrow range of objectives. Nevertheless, a number of drama activities do lend themselves to being broken down into component parts. For example, in the dramatisation of a story, the various elements in the story can be enacted, rehearsed and developed separately before they are combined into a dramatic reconstruction of the story line. In this way pupils can be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the attendant vocabulary, gestures, or movements involved in the roles. This allows for a degree of natural repetition and elaboration of acceptable responses at each of the various stages in the development of the dramatisation.

Similar opportunities exist for mastery of movement and speech activities to be introduced and consolidated in the early part of a lesson before introducing dramatic play or improvisation sequences in which the same sounds and movements are set within an imagined context. Such opportunities for repetition and elaboration may help facilitate retention and recall. Moreover, the pairing of physical action and verbal expression may allow the child to experience feedback from his actions which will be accessible to a number of sense modalities. Again this may facilitate both retention and understanding.

In order to experience this kinaesthetic, auditory, visual or tactile feedback, however, the child has to be an active participant in the process. There must be some means within the lesson of engaging and holding the child's attention and ensuring that he does, in fact, participate. Nowhere in the literature on drama was the present author able to find any reference to ways of forcing the unwilling child to attend. On the contrary, the consensus appears to be that it is up to the teacher to provide a learning situation which creates a willingness on the part of the child to participate, and that children who are not motivated to do so should be allowed to remain passive until they become so motivated. Heathcote and Heavy, whose work is discussed in some detail later in this chapter, have both devised some highly ingenious devices for ensuring the children's attention will be engaged and that they will, consequently, be motivated to take part. Other writers have pointed to the more obvious devices of ensuring that the material to be presented is within the capabilities of the child, of structuring lessons around the child's existing interests, of building lessons on the principle of moving gradually from the known and familiar to the new, and of providing physical properties as an aid to catching the child's attention (Jennings, 1975; Wethered, 1973; Bolton, 1979). Again, the links with behaviourism are clear.

On the other hand, because drama is primarily an interactive group activity, the extent of individual participation, and the way in which children participate, may be shaped as much by the responses of individual members within the group as by the teacher's instruction, while interactions between group members may be as important in shaping the progression of the lesson as child/teacher interactions. Less capable pupils may mimic the responses of the more capable and follow the example set by more dominant or active children within the group. In

this way pupils may learn from each other as well as from the teacher. Conversely, the absence of particular group members on any occasion may also negatively or positively affect the extent and amount of participation engaged in by the group as a whole. Thus, although the initial task of providing a stimulus which will encourage attention and participation may be left to the teacher, there may well be occasions when the maintenance of participation and interest is the result not of teacher direction as such but of the social interactions which are occurring between group members. The flexibility with which the teacher can incorporate novel elements introduced by children within the general framework of the lesson without negating the aims of the lesson may, therefore, require to be greater than that which is demanded within a behaviour modification programme which is set within a one-to-one context of teacher directed activity in which external distractions and stimuli are reduced as far as possible, and in which verbal instructions are restricted to the minimum necessary for the introduction of a specific item of information.

The teacher may also have to exercise a considerable degree of skill in knowing when and how to intervene at any point in this process in order to ensure -

- a. that the lesson does progress towards the area of learning aimed at;
- b. that children are not, as a result, discouraged from contributing their own ideas;
- c. the dynamics of the group do not consistently operate against the interests of individual members within a group.

She may have to find ways of channelling the energies of hyperkinetic, destructive or dominant children into the progression of the lesson, while, at the same time, trying to ensure that more passive and less able children are given the help and encouragement they may require in order to understand and participate in the lesson. These skills, unlike the more precise teaching strategies applicable to the presentation of behaviourist programmes, may be difficult to communicate and describe, and, because they are situation-dependent, it may take longer to learn how to apply them in practice.

It would appear, therefore, that at least some of the characteristics which have led to the high adoption rate of behaviourist programmes - for example, the ease with which techniques may be communicated and

acquired, or the precision of targeted outcomes and the attendant simplicity of monitoring and assessing progress - may be those which are least characteristic of the drama process. Indeed, this may go some way towards explaining why teachers interviewed in the present project had experienced some difficulty in grasping the educational point in the drama work to which they were exposed within college of education courses, and may indicate an additional reason why teachers perceive themselves to lack skill. It may simply be that, because at least some of the skills required in the drama lesson are both situation-dependant and somewhat intangible, these skills cannot be communicated quickly and may require to be acquired over a fairly long period by demonstration, discussion and practice. If this were the case, it would also explain why those specialist who have been in in-situ contact with teachers over a period of time appear to have made positive impact on the adoption of drama within particular schools. It would also provide a justification for basing the present project, over a prolonged period, within the context of actual classroom practice.

Having said this, it does appear that some of the learning principles on which behaviourist programmes are based, could provide an input into the drama lesson without adversely affecting the drama process, while some of the techniques which teachers have learned as a result of using behaviourist programmes may be directly transferrable to the planning and presentation of a lesson in drama. For example, the skill acquired in assessing the needs and capabilities of individual children could be put to good effect in determining appropriate content and procedures for the drama lesson for a particular group of children; the practice which has been obtained in recording and monitoring progress may - even in the less precisely defined drama situation - enable teachers to look more critically at the effects of a lesson; while the ability to break down complex tasks into more manageable units may be a plus factor in determining the pace at which lessons may proceed in order to obtain maximum retention and recall. Moreover, an analysis of where these existing teaching skills fit within the process of drama may facilitate communication and discussion of the skills required, without recourse, initially, to a discussion of the extent to which such skills are dependent on the more emotive issues of talent and personality.

Nevertheless, the point remains that many of the objections which have been levelled at the behaviourist approach do tend to be based on the failure of teachers to carry these out without an attendant

decrease in other areas such as active, exploratory behaviour or curiosity. And, although some of the characteristics of drama are those which appear, naturally, to lend themselves to an increase in such behaviours, it has been argued that these characteristics in the drama process may place heavy demands on the skill and ingenuity of the teacher. Thus, while it has been recognised that these skills may be acquired over a period of time, it must also be conceded that, if the teacher fails to acquire such skills, the advantages of drama - its spontaneity, its capacity to generate positive affect, or its ability to reinforce and motivate - may be correspondingly reduced, and the lesson may degenerate into chaotic, purposeless activity. It would appear, therefore, that, while much may be done to establish criteria by which drama lessons may be made more effective or more applicable to the special learning needs of mentally handicapped children, the skill of the teacher may, as in behaviour modification programmes, be an important factor in determining the extent of effectiveness achieved in practice.

Summary

To sum up, therefore, the preceding analysis suggests that -

- a. since drama may be a less efficient means of introducing, teaching or assessing very specific items of information, it may be preferable to introduce these by other means, and, within the drama lesson to concentrate on the use of imitative techniques and the provision of contextual and gestural cues as an aid towards generalising information which has already been introduced by more precise, instructional methods. The acting-out process may, itself, facilitate this generalisation, and, from the arguments presented in the previous chapters, it would appear that this may hold good regardless of whether the lesson is structured towards the development of skill in the use of the process or towards effecting learning through the use of the process;

- b. in the planning of a lesson it should be possible to take account of the existing capabilities and interests of pupils, and to choose content or properties for use in the lesson which will be likely to prove rewarding to the children involved. Similarly, by structuring the activities towards areas in which the child already has some degree of competence, or which he naturally enjoys doing, it ought to be possible to build into the lesson opportunities for him to experience social

approval and to have the satisfaction of demonstrating this competence. Existing areas of competence may thus form the basis for lessons which seek to extend the competence gradually to less familiar situations;

c. it ought to be possible to break down the lesson into component parts which are capable of being taught sequentially, and to provide opportunities for repetition to the point of mastery;

d. the skill of the teacher would appear to be an important factor. Existing abilities in assessment and observation, and in the presentation of imitative techniques may be directly transferred to the development of skill in planning and presenting drama. Additional skills such as knowing when and how to intervene, and how to maintain a level of positive affect within the lesson, may require to be learned. This may take some time, and, in some cases, existing reinforcement practices may hinder this learning.

In the first part of this chapter there has been an attempt to indicate some of the skills the teacher may require to possess in teaching drama, and to isolate a number of the teaching strategies and learning principles, drawn from behaviourist theory, which may be incorporated into the drama lesson and which may be appropriate and effective means of overcoming learning difficulties and ensuring that the child does learn from the lessons. In the introduction to this chapter, however, two other approaches towards helping mentally handicapped children overcome learning difficulties were identified. It was suggested that these are currently less popular than behaviourism within Scottish special schools, but that they do form the basis of much current practice and theory in drama. Let us, therefore, examine each of these in order to establish whether the criteria outlined in the preceding analysis may be added to or modified by the practices implicit in these other approaches.

Cognitive/Movement/Developmental Approaches

The relationship which exists between motor ability and cognition has led to a number of intervention programmes based on the theory that training in movement ought to produce corresponding changes in the ability to perceive and understand such concepts as cause and effect, the self as an agent distinct from and acting upon the environment, the concept of object permanence, and other related cognitive structures (Piaget, 1972;

Robertson, 1982; Uzgiris & Hunt, 1975; Vogel, 1975) For example, as early as the mid-nineteenth century Itard and Seguin were emphasising the importance of a planned and structured programme of motor training in the education of severely mentally handicapped children (Itard, 1962; Ball, 1971). More recent workers in the Doman-Delcato Institute in America have adopted a similar approach (Doman, 1974). Although there is some controversy over some of the patterning and imprinting techniques used in their programme, considerable success has been claimed for their approach to development through the retraining of reflex patterns and early movement sequences. Kephart (1960) takes a similar approach and suggests that, at the earliest stages, the child's information processing strategy is largely motor in nature. If motor patterns are inadequately developed the child will be unable to perceive and understand the world around him in any meaningful way. He therefore suggests that a programme of motor training may compensate for reduced functioning and allow the reformulation of neural connections so that, in the later stages of development, the motor component will become automatic and subservient to the child's evolving perceptual and conceptual capacity.

Barnes (1978) has developed a programme of specific language intervention based on this approach. A vocabulary of 250 words has been identified. These words relate to parts of the body, to actions which can be performed, to concrete items such as balls, sticks or hoops which may be used in these actions, and to more abstract concepts such as 'under, what, who, where, etc'. Material is presented in the form of line drawings of stickmen in various positions and the aim of the programme is to build up experiences of bodily postures, to make physical imitation easier, to encourage lateral distinction and to help the child master the perceptual difficulties involved in synchronising speech with action. Within the present project a number of psychologists were using this approach with individual children, and claimed a degree of success for the methods advocated.

Yon (1978) has a similar approach. His programme, however, does not use pictorial representation as stimulus for movement. "Communication Therapy", as practised by Yon, is centred on words supplemented by art and music, the whole being interpreted through movement. Again, considerable success has been claimed for the work he has carried out in England, and his methods have created interest among some physical

education specialists, from a Scottish college of physical education, who are currently conducting research into the movement abilities of mentally handicapped children, and whose programme of movement activities is currently being used and assessed by teachers in a number of schools throughout Scotland (Murdoch et al, 1978).

The Relationship with Drama

Since one of the tools necessary to translate imagined situations and characters into enactment is the use of the body, considerable emphasis has been placed on the use of movement and mimed responses within a drama lesson (Way, 1967; Hodgson, 1973; Barrault, 1961; Laban, 1950). A number of the leading drama specialists who have pioneered work in drama with mentally handicapped children, see the establishing of movement activities as a necessary first stage in the presentation of drama (Byron, 1979; Sherbourne, 1975/71; Jennings, 1979; Wethered, 1975; Nitsun et al, 1974).

Byron, for example, notes that two of his aims in working with severely mentally handicapped pupils were -

- "1. feeding in specific experiences of parts of the body to increase body awareness;
2. giving experience, through movement, of basic physical concepts such as slow/fast, up/down, big/small."

(Byron, 1979; p. 3)

He points to the need for teacher direction and structure in the work, and a videorecording of him at work shows that these experiences were introduced by his demonstrating the concepts and, in the initial stages at least, encouraging pupils to copy his patterns of behaviour.

Like Byron, Sherbourne also places emphasis on the ability of movement work to develop not only self-awareness, but also awareness of others and a sense of trust in others. She suggests that it is possible

"for the adult to 'feed in' to the child the sense of his weight, and by the way in which she does this, if she has a feeling of concern and affection for the child, she will also 'feed in' a sense of his value One can help the child to experience stability in standing by showing him how to plant his feet wide enough apart to give him a broad base how to bend his knees slightly so that he has muscular control."

(Sherbourne, 1975; p.11)

Again, a filmed demonstration of her work shows Sherbourne initiating movements for pupils to copy, directing these movements and introducing

variations on the basis of pupils' responses. She suggests, however, that the way in which pupils respond may be as much determined by the way activities are presented as by the activities themselves and she lays stress on the affective dimension inherent in the building up of a relationship of mutual trust, confidence and enjoyment in the development of movement and drama. Although work may take place within a group setting she advocates a one-to-one adult/child ratio when working with profoundly handicapped pupils and suggests that the role of the adult in this situation is -

"to find ways of helping the mentally handicapped child to experience a sense of security through bodily experience, or physical activities, in which people can develop confidence in each other and within themselves; that is, to trust each other These activities are presented in the form of play. They should be easy and fun to do. Although some of them may look like gymnastic exercises they are in fact carefully thought out bodily experiences which are only beneficial if they are properly experienced, and are of little value if they are performed as a skill. The learning or experiencing must be spontaneous and unconscious In describing what could be called a 'technique' or a 'method' I am anxious that this should not be applied in a technical way. In describing the content of the play, I am aware that the activities can be presented as 'exercises' or as 'techniques', and the spirit, the fun, the creative potential of the play can be lost."

(p.13)

She also suggests that the more profoundly handicapped a child is, the more he will need the individual support of a caring adult in the development of these movement experiences.

Jennings (1979) suggests that drama and movement sessions can be used -

"to combat institutionalised responses such as stereotyped movement - head-banging, rocking, flicking"

and she says that -

"I have found that if movement is shared it can lose its compulsiveness and the child can then be encouraged to broaden its repertoire of movements."

(p. 8)

Like Sherbourne, Jennings suggests that ways must be found of making movement and drama work accessible to even the most profoundly mentally handicapped pupils, and she believes that no child, however, disabled, should be excluded from participation.

Whether such movement techniques ought to be called 'drama', however, may be open to debate. Many of the techniques described

in the work of the preceding writers neither involve the participants in a shift in the conventions of behaviour towards each other by agreeing to take different roles, nor do they make a different, imagined use of the environment, its artefacts and the time/space continuum which is present in reality. Since these are some of the elements which the Schools Council's definition of drama suggests must be present in any instance of drama, one could argue that such non-representational movement sequences belong more in the domain of physical education than drama. On the other hand, the theory underlying the provision of such activities is that training in movement play may be a necessary preliminary to the development of more imaginative play sequences and that the use of such techniques within the drama lesson is a first stage in the development of drama work. This view is supported to some extent by those research projects which indicate that mentally handicapped children may require considerable training of this kind in order to develop the perceptual and motor control which allows experimentation and movement, and that mastery of the elements involved in the repetition of learned movement sequences will facilitate the emergence of the internal visualisations involved in the symbolisation of images (Jeffree and McConkey, 1974; Wing, 1980).

Mime, however, is a recognised non-verbal aspect of drama which does include a representational element and which also makes use of a similar range of movement experiences to those described above. For the moment, therefore, let us accept that training in non-representational movement may have a preparatory function in the development of drama - although engaging in such non-representational movement may not itself constitute an experience of drama - and that the teaching skills involved in the presentation of such movement work may be similar to those involved in the teaching of similar movements within a lesson on mime. If this point is conceded, what are the implications of the approaches outlined above for the criteria which, in the earlier part of this chapter, were suggested as a possible structure for the drama lesson? And what are the additional teaching skills required in the presentation of mime and movement?

Teaching Skills

The filmed and videorecorded evidence of the work of these specialists indicate that, although the theoretical underpinning of their work

may be based on developmental learning principles, and although their overall aims for movement work centre around a general increase in cognitive development and self-awareness rather than on the development of specific skills and techniques in movement, the teaching strategies they actually employ in presenting and structuring lessons are broadly similar to those discussed in the earlier analysis. First, there is an emphasis on the use of imitative techniques, and on a degree of teacher direction to ensure that the work progresses and that all pupils can be involved. Secondly, and particularly in the work of Sherbourne, there is an emphasis on enjoyment as a motivator, and on the development of positive affect within lessons. Thirdly, there is recognition of the need for the teacher to be able to react flexibly to the contributions and novel responses introduced by children.

In addition to these there is a strong emphasis on the need to work on an individual basis within a group context when working with more profoundly handicapped pupils, and there is the underlying assumption that teachers will have sufficient knowledge of the principles of movement to be able to devise and plan a series of lessons which will, in fact, contribute to cognitive development. Since teachers are expected to provide a model for the movement work of children, the other obvious but implicit assumption is that teachers will, themselves, be able to move in ways appropriate to the programme.

There are, therefore, no additional criteria for the structure of lessons, other than the need to include movement not only as an essential element of drama work, but also as a means of realising aims for the cognitive development of pupils. And it is not unreasonable to assume that many of the teachers who are experienced in assessing and working with mentally handicapped pupils will have some understanding of the cognitive development progressions children are expected to exhibit as they mature.

Practical Problems

The inclusion of movement within the drama lesson does, however, raise a number of practical issues. First, the teacher may have to find sufficient space for this work to be carried out, and this raises the practical question of where the work should be attempted, or of how teachers may find space within the classroom for such work. The teacher

may have to decide whether her teaching aims will be better served by carrying out the work in the hall (assuming one is available) or in the classroom, and she may have to give some consideration to the practical implications of choosing either, and to the preparation involved in making either available or ready for the work. Are children accustomed to working in the more open space afforded by the hall? If not, how does she ensure that they are not either overawed or overexcited by the space available? If she is working with a low adult/child ratio, what kind of control mechanisms must she build into the lesson in order to avoid either situation hampering the work? A number of devices have been suggested in the literature - for example, the use of music as a means of guiding and controlling the tempo of the work, the use of drums or tambours as both stimulus and control, the use of highly contrasted movements which, by justaposing fast/slow, light/heavy, crouched/upright etc, provide their own controls. Again, however, the teacher must be aware of how to introduce and use such devices effectively if they are to achieve their function.

If, on the other hand, the teacher decides to take the work within the classroom, she may be restricted to some extent in the range of movements possible and children may be denied the opportunity to experience some of the faster, more energetic and space covering movements. Since some children - particularly a number of Down's children - incline naturally to lethargic, heavy or slow movements, practice in the more vigorous range of movements may be important for their motor development, quite apart from its effect on cognition (Benda, 1969; Firth et al, 1974).

Many of these practical difficulties may be considerably minimised if there is, as suggested, a high adult/child ratio in the work. Within some schools teachers may be able to ensure (a) that the space they need is available; (b) that a high adult/child ratio can be achieved, or (c) that they receive co-operation from other staff members who will take the remainder of the group while individual children are taken out of the classroom and worked with on an individual basis. Within schools in which staff ratios are low, however, or where children are already being worked with on an individual basis in carrying out specific programmes of instruction geared to their needs in other areas, teachers may find such conditions difficult to meet and may have to adapt their teaching to take account of environmental conditions which limit the space or number of adults available.

The justification for setting such work within a group context is based on the fact that, as drama is an interactive social activity, it ought to take place within a social context. The practical problems involved in doing so may apply less markedly when working with those pupils who have developed some degree of personal autonomy in motor development and who can imitate the actions of another without physical assistance. Thus, whether the work is carried out in a group or on an individual basis may be as much a matter of practicality as pedagogy, and the extent of the teacher's own skill in movement and in teaching movement may also be a factor which influences her decision.

The movement skills demanded of the teachers in the programme suggested by the preceeding workers may not exceed the average adult's capacity. The activities are based on fairly natural, ordinary movements, or on principles outlined by Laban - for example, the use of contrasting pace, effort and weight in movement, and the ability to move in ways which allows the body not only to contact the floor (earthing it), but also to make use of the space surrounding the body in all directions and to interact with the movements of others (Laban, 1963).

To say that such movements are likely to be within the physical capabilities of teachers, however, is not necessarily to imply that teachers will be prepared to carry these movements out in the somewhat exaggerated and uninhibited way demonstrated in the work of specialists, and regarded by them as an important element in establishing movement work. For example, Sherbourne is explicit about the need for exaggeration in the early stages. She suggests that -

"The teacher needs to be very bodily aware himself to teach this aspect of movement well. In the beginning the movement will be large, exaggerated, and sometimes a caricature. As the class gains greater skill, movement can become more refined, more economic, more subtle, more telling."

(Sherbourne, 1971; p.29)

Teachers who are already using music and movement activities with their classes may already be well equipped to present this kind of stimulus. But, from the earlier analysis of the reasons why teachers neglect drama, it does appear that many Scottish teachers may suffer from a degree of inhibition in moving or speaking in ways that are not 'natural' to their normal patterns of movement and speech. Thus, the extent to which teachers were prepared to engage in such movement work and to learn the movement skills involved, was a facet which appeared to require investigation within this study.

Summary

In the second part of this chapter there has been an attempt to show that, although cognitive/movement based approaches to the practice of drama stem from a different ideological perspective from those which are based on behaviourism, there are, in practice, many areas of commonality between them. Both employ imitative techniques in which the teacher acts as demonstrator or model for the responses of pupils. Both use reinforcement to ensure the success of learning. Both use exaggeration as a means of catching and holding attention in the initial stages of learning. Staff who have mastered the techniques described in the first section of this chapter, therefore, may not require to learn many more teaching skills in order to present movement work. The obvious exception to this general statement is, of course, the need for teachers to become knowledgeable about movement theory in order to be able to identify the kinds of actions which pupils of given ages may or may not be able to attempt; and in order to identify the aims which might be attributed to the use of a given set of movement activities.

It was argued that, with some effort, staff ought to be able to master these theoretical principles, and that at least some of the principles will already be known by staff who have undergone a recognised course of training in special education. It was also argued, however, that the use of movement based approaches means that staff not only require a knowledge of movement theory, but that, in practice, they require to be able to use and demonstrate the movements they are teaching, and to do so with a degree of disinhibition and exaggeration which may not come naturally to the school teacher. The reasons for this were explored fully in Chapter 3 of this thesis, where it was argued that the nature of previous training, the Scottish bias against 'exhibitionism', the low status of non-academic subjects and the fairly authoritarian, sedentary and one-way education in schools may have left students ill-equipped to engage in drama at their own level and to enjoy doing so. It may be, therefore, that, while movement approaches may be appropriate to the needs of pupils, they may accord less well with the existing abilities of staff.

There may, moreover, be a number of practical problems to overcome in the use of movement work. It has been argued, for example, that, thought requires to be given to the ratio of adults to children in the work; to whether the work should be carried out within a hall or a

classroom; to how to ensure that control mechanisms are built into the lesson in order that children are able to participate without disruption. For all of these reasons, movement based work may be more difficult for staff than work which is based on the principles described earlier. And it was argued that the extent to which staff were prepared to accept and adopt this form of work would require investigation within the practical experiments carried out in the project.

The extent to which staff were prepared to carry out this work is discussed in some detail in Chapters 9 and 10 where the findings from the practical work carried out are reported and discussed. In these chapters it will be argued that the disinclination of staff to engage in movement work of an exaggerated nature was marked within all schools, but particularly so within schools for the more profoundly handicapped child. And it will be suggested that this may constitute a real barrier to the adoption of drama by such staff since movement work of an exaggerated kind did appear to be well suited to achieving a response from the more profoundly handicapped children. It will be noted, however, that the use of simpler and less exaggerated movement techniques did achieve a response from severely mentally handicapped pupils and that such activities have been incorporated into the materials for use with such children. In the context of the present chapter, it must be noted that the exaggeration advocated by the drama specialist, and the inhibition suffered by the non-specialist teacher, do appear to constitute two different perspectives on general classroom conduct. For the former, exaggeration is viewed as a natural feature of teaching in special education. For the latter, it represents a skill which may require to be learned, and the learning of which may not be easy since it contravenes attitudes and practices which have been acquired over a lifetime.

The Work of Dorothy Heathcote

So far in this chapter there has been an emphasis on the work of those who adopt behaviourist principles or who have taken a strongly movement-based approach to the teaching of drama. Dorothy Heathcote, to whom a number of references have already been made in earlier sections of this thesis, does not take a predominantly movement based approach to drama, although she does use non-verbal activities as and when she considers these to be appropriate.

Like Sherbourne, Heathcote is explicit about what she regards as the need for exaggeration in all forms of drama work with mentally handicapped children. She suggests that, because such children will need a greater than average stimulus in order to activate their perceptions, to keep their attention and to maintain their arousal, there is a corresponding need for

"all our signals to them to be larger than life. We must work at high energy and low pace, and we must exaggerate in order to be truthful."

(Heathcote, conference lecture, 1982)

Heathcote's view of exaggeration is somewhat different from that adopted by Sherbourne, in terms of the practices she adopts, and these differences will be discussed a little later in this section. Like Sherbourne, however, Heathcote does take a strongly cognitive approach to the teaching of drama, her main concern in any drama lesson being with 'learning experiences'. Heathcote was one of the first to pioneer work in drama with handicapped people, and her work has had a seminal influence not only within Britain, but in America and elsewhere. Heathcote's definition of drama is almost the same as that adopted by the Schools Council Project Team, which is hardly surprising since at least one of the co-ordinators of the project was one of her pupils. Moreover, her particular teaching method has been adopted and advocated by many college of education lecturers in Scotland, and, again some of these have, in fact, been trained by her in the use of her particular method of approach.

Heathcote's Aims

Heathcote aims to involve pupils in the development of a role, to enable them to exercise personal power in resolving conflicts, meeting challenges or developing ideas in the dramatic situation, and to encourage the use of verbal and non-verbal communication within the lesson. For the pupils, involvement in the lesson may provide 'peak experiences' which will be sufficiently stimulating for them to want to communicate their part in the experience and to reflect upon the issues involved after the event. While Sherbourne equates enjoyment with 'fun', Heathcote sees enjoyment in the lesson occurring at the deeper level of involvement and self-satisfaction. Her criteria for work with handicapped people do not differ greatly from those which she employs in lessons with non-handicapped groups, but they do differ

in a number of important respects from those suggested so far in the present chapter.

Heathcote is concerned, in the planning of lessons, with three things -

- a. the teacher as facilitator;
- b. the participants in the work;
- c. the learning area.

The importance of the teacher lies in the fact that it is her values and attitudes which will determine the aims for the lesson, it is her ability - or lack of it - which will determine the structure of the lesson and the way in which the teacher relates to and interacts with pupils in the development of the lesson, and it is her confidence and authority which will determine the extent of freedom pupils can exercise within the lesson. The importance of pupils' maturity and developmental stage is also stressed. Assessment is important because it is necessary to know 'where they are' in order to 'take them further' in an appropriate direction. The learning area is important because it provides a resource which may be used in the development of a learning experience, and the type of learning environment available may determine the content of the lesson.

For Heathcote, the story line is important only in that the theme chosen should be one which is 'epic' enough to provide a real challenge and to be one stage removed from the actual situation in which participants find themselves. It is not, however, the plot which is important but the opportunities which it provides for creating a situation in which pupils can experience involvement in the dramatic situation. How the learning area is set up, the artefacts it contains, the space available etc, may all affect the degree of difficulty or ease with which pupils can be motivated to become involved in the acting out process. For example, if pupils are acting out a situation in which they are confined within a small space, a corner of a crowded classroom may create a better atmosphere of verisimilitude than a large empty hall and may ensure that less time is spent in getting into the 'feel' of the drama.

Heathcote suggests that in planning for drama with mentally handicapped pupils who have a limited capacity for abstract thought, there must be, in the learning area, something tangible to which pupils can respond in reality - something which clearly needs to be done; something bizarre which arouses attention; someone who demands a response. She makes considerable use of the 'person in role', employing the help

of at least one other adult to be 'the sleeping giant' who will not go away and whom pupils cannot ignore and whom they must therefore try to deal with using whatever personal resources they have available to them; 'the enormous dog', which may or may not be friendly and about whom a decision must be taken, etc. She also places considerable reliance on the strategic use of the 'teacher in role'. By taking an important role within the drama she exercises authority and control from within the dramatic situation, rather than as an outsider or teacher figure. By doing this, she can also provide information which will help pupils in their decision-making, can provide conflict against which the group may become cohesive, and can provide guidance in the development of the group's ideas or in the trying out of solutions or ideas offered by individual group members.

Heathcote's Methods

Heathcote does not believe in providing a direct model for pupils to copy. In her role within the drama, however, she may introduce a degree of sibilance, or some other feature, into her speech in order to establish the way a particular tribe, for example, might speak. Similarly, she might exaggerate the movement properties appropriate to her role. She does not, however, invite children to copy her and makes no reference to the prosodic, linguistic or physical features she has incorporated into her role. The decision to copy or not comes from pupils and depends on their involvement, or rapport with her.

It has already been noted that, in her work, reinforcement and motivation are based on the satisfaction and confidence which arises out of successfully meeting and resolving challenges. Thus, expressions of social approval have little place in her work, except in so far as she can introduce these in the context of her role. In accepting suggestions in her role as group leader in the drama, she might praise a suggestion made, adopt it, or invite the group to try it out. It is the suggestion or idea which she approves or praises, however, and there is no direct praise of the person who made the suggestion - although, of course, this is implicit. Conversely, there is no censure attached to those who do not contribute, or who contribute inappropriately, although, again, their lack of contribution may be commented on as part of the dramatic action. Thus her criteria for reinforcement and her refusal to utilise direct imitative techniques are not only different

from the criteria already outlined but are more demanding of the teacher's ability to create and maintain a role while, at the same time, sustaining children in the roles they have adopted.

Heathcote does, however, see the necessity for a strong stimulus in order to attract and maintain attention, and it has already been noted that this stimulus is closely allied to the preparation of the learning area. Her approach requires a degree of pre-planning to ensure that the appropriate space, artefacts and conditions for the lesson are available. Again, as in the movement-based approaches, this may create practical difficulties for teachers who have limited access to space and additional adult help.

That such difficulties can be overcome, however, if teachers are committed to the practice of drama, is demonstrated in the work of Heavey, a firm exponent of Heathcote's methods, a drama specialist, and headteacher of a school for severely mentally handicapped children in Yorkshire (Heavey, 1979; 1980). He has used this method in a number of whole-school drama projects. In one of these, involving King Neptune, he persuaded a local flying club to land a helicopter in the school playground as part of the dramatic action. His aim was to make the learning environment sufficiently stimulating as to involve even the most seriously handicapped pupils in his school in the imaginative action. In this situation, the provision of drama not only varied the learning environment, but changed it almost out of recognition! That he was successful in achieving his aims is not in doubt, but it is doubtful how many Scottish teachers, or headteachers there are, who would be prepared to adopt such an approach at the present time. For those with no prior commitment to drama such 'preparation' may be regarded as 'disruption' and, as such, may be less well accepted than drama techniques which are less extreme.

Finally, it has been noted that Heathcote does not regard drama as recreative, or as fun, but as serving a serious educational purpose. This purpose is not behavioural - although it may be achieved as a result of certain behaviours occurring. The purpose is concerned with internal factors and centres around the development of skills in thinking, in decision making, in problem solving, and in the symbolic process of acting.

Criticism of Heathcote's Approach

The main criticism of Heathcote's approach would appear to centre

around the fact that she uncompromisingly regards 'challenge' as an essential element in any drama lesson. Allen, for example, while he pays tribute to Heathcote's work nevertheless makes the point that -

"she herself possesses a very powerful personality. She is also very intelligent and combines these qualities with considerable moral integrity. She is also something of an actress. It is these qualities which enable her to get astonishing results But there are children who cannot stand the physical proximity as well as the emotional challenge and who will try to retire behind their own defences."

(Allen, 1979; p.107/8)

He argues that, since not all teachers will share the abilities demonstrated by Heathcote herself, it may be not only certain children, but a number of teachers also, who will find this 'challenge' more in the nature of a threat. And the information presented in earlier chapters of this thesis, does show that some of those interviewed in the present project had been somewhat overawed by Heathcote's skill and personality and felt that they lacked the ability to tackle such an approach.

Summary

To sum up, therefore, the criteria advocated by Heathcote are, in some cases, totally at variance with the criteria outlined in the earlier part of this chapter. The most notable areas of divergence are -

- a. the emphasis placed on internal processes, rather than overt behaviours;
- b. the refusal to employ direct imitative techniques;
- c. the need for the teacher to adopt and maintain a role within the dramatic situation;
- d. the emphasis placed on the preparation of the learning area as a teaching resource;
- e. the need to choose subject matter which is one step removed from actual experience, and which is epic enough to provide a challenge which will involve even the most seriously handicapped child in the process of decision making, problem solving and acting out.

In other cases, the criteria she outlines differ in degree, rather than in principle, from the criteria suggested earlier. The main differences here centre on -

- a. the more extreme nature of the stimulus used to attract and maintain attention and to ensure involvement;
- b. the more subtle forms of reinforcement operating within the lesson;

c. the affect characteristics of personal self-satisfaction, and the provision of 'peak' emotional experiences, rather than simple enjoyment;

d. the much greater emphasis placed on the skill and commitment of the teacher.

In common with the other methods discussed, however, Heathcote's method does require -

a. an assessment of pupils' existing capabilities in determining subject matter, content and aims;

b. the provision of a lesson structure which seeks to extend these capabilities by moving from the use of the real, the tangible, to more abstract principles;

c. a willingness to accept, make use of, and attempt to incorporate the spontaneous contribution of children within the general framework and aims of the lesson.

Again, since Heathcote's methods have been widely proselytised, it appeared necessary to attempt to discover whether, and to what extent, general staff would be prepared to acquire the teaching skills necessary for this form of work; and, if they were prepared to do so, to examine not only the extent to which such staff could achieve the kinds of results documented in accounts of Heathcote's work, but also the extent to which the aims inherent in her methods accorded with the teaching aims and priorities of staff in Scottish special schools.

Again, the findings on this point have been incorporated into Chapters 9 and 10. It will be argued that, on the whole, Heathcote's methods, though admired by staff, were not ones which staff felt confident of being able to tackle. They felt they lacked both the personality and the skill which would enable them to use this form of work effectively. In some cases, too, staff were not prepared to tolerate the disruption to the normal classroom routine which a 'learning experience' of the kind advocated by Heathcote entails. Other staff felt that they would welcome the experience for their pupils, but were not, themselves, talented or uninhibited enough to acquire the necessary skills to present this form of work. It did appear, however, that staff would accept a modified form of the Heathcote method. They would, for example, take on and act out a role in a fairly prescribed situation such as that found in dramatisation of stories where the

children were clear of the story ending and had practised some of the elements of the story before the teacher adopted a role in relation to it. The details of these findings, and the elements of them which influenced the choice of materials in the project, will be discussed later in the thesis. In the present context it may be enough to note that, although the methods advocated by Heathcote may be difficult to acquire, they are ones which, with commitment and experience, the non-specialist could, conceivably, acquire as a result of training over a period of time.

The final category of methodology to be examined, however, is that which has grown up around psychoanalytic and humanist theories of human growth, interaction and development. Here it will be argued that the drama methods which draw on these theories are ones which require an even greater degree of specialist skill, and an input of psychological knowledge which is unlikely to be acquired without specialist training. For this reason it was considered to be inappropriate to include a practical investigation of these methods within the present project. The theoretical and practical arguments underlying this assumption are, however, relevant in the present context since the learning principles and the aims on which such methods are based underpin much of the drama theory which is prevalent in the current literature.

Humanist/Psychoanalytic Approaches

Such approaches to learning stress the relationship between sound emotional and social development and cognitive capacity. They suggest that a child who is socially disadvantaged or emotionally disturbed will be prevented also from realising his full cognitive potential. Conversely, a lack of cognitive ability may, in itself, give rise to a number of social or emotional problems which can result in frustration, trauma and lasting psychological damage.

The social and emotional difficulties of mentally handicapped children have been well documented (Tansley, 1960; Chazan, 1964/65/80; Evans, 1956; Lovell, 1968; Goldstein and Seigle, 1958; Weihs, 1971; Boswell and Wingrove, 1974). Some handicapping conditions give rise to hyperkinetic, withdrawn or aggressive behaviours which can lead to problems of social isolation and rejection, and it has been suggested

that self-devaluation and a tendency to frustration are virtually inevitable concomitants to severe mental handicap (Goldstein and Seigle, 1958). Chazan (1980) has shown that the incidence of emotional disturbance among mentally handicapped children is considerably higher than that found among children in general, and that symptoms such as depression, hostility towards others, inhibition and emotional tension, may depress their interest in the environment and make it difficult for them to profit from normal interactions with events and people in their environment. Research by Hall (1977) on institutionalised mentally handicapped children suggests that lack of social contact and normal stimulation in the environment can depress not only their capacity to learn, but also their motivation to attempt to do so, and may give rise to compulsive or obsessive behaviours such as rocking, head-banging, and finger-flicking. Compulsive and ritualistic behaviours of this kind may represent either an escape and withdrawal from an environment which is too stimulating to children with reduced perceptual ability, or else a means of deriving kinaesthetic sensation and comfort. Hall observed, however, that when such children were presented with close physical contact, allied with more, rather than less, perceptual stimulation in the environment, they showed consistent gains in both cognitive and emotional development.

Hall took an essentially humanist approach to the problems of emotional and social adjustment by emphasising the role of close physical attachment in the development process. This is emphasised in humanist philosophies generally, and writers in the humanist tradition have also laid stress on the need for close and consistent interpersonal relationships in the learning environment of mentally handicapped children, and on the social and personal factors inherent in and created by learning and teaching interactions (Ainsworth 1969; Bowlby, 1973; Elkind, 1979; Kellmer-Pringle, 1975). In such approaches, too, the value of play as both therapy, and as a tool in the acquisition of learning, is stressed.

Psychoanalytic approaches also stress the value of play, but, in this case, play therapy is aimed towards removing some of the emotional blocks which may be contributing to poor cognitive functioning. In the play therapy which has grown out of psychoanalytic theory, the adult takes his cue from the recurrent themes which crop up in the child's play. Such themes will provide an indication of the blocks

which may be hampering the child's development, of his wishes and fears, and of his relationships with parents and siblings. Thus the adult will help children build on these themes in their play, encourage them to act out, in play, the fantasies which may be disturbing them, and seek to discover and eradicate the cause of trauma (Axeline, 1973; Freud, 1955; Erikson, 1943; Klein, 1955).

As indicated earlier, neither of these approaches tends to be as widely used within the public sector of the Scottish special school system as behaviourist techniques. Some speech therapists and psychologists do make use of humanist approaches, and in subnormality hospitals, play therapy and other humanist approaches such as encounter techniques and psychodrama, are used. In the Steiner private schools, these approaches predominate (Gross, 1978).

From what has already been said, the links with drama are obvious. The acting out of wishes and fears could just as easily be termed drama as play therapy, while the interpersonal relationships suggested have already been hinted at in the work of Sherbourne, who lays such stress on the creation of a climate of mutual trust and affection in teaching drama. There are, however, two specific areas of drama practice which stem directly from humanist and psychoanalytic theory. One of these, psychodrama, is aimed directly at the psychologist, the psychiatrist or the therapist rather than the educationalist. Moreno, the foremost exponent of this form of drama, argues that it is necessary for the therapist himself to have undergone a course of therapy and training in the appropriate techniques before he can undertake such work with others. To this extent, therefore, psychodrama need not concern us in the present study in that it is a specialist technique, aimed at the specialist, and is not designed to be part of the drama teacher's repertoire of general educational techniques. It is worth mentioning, however, that this form of drama is one of the few aspects of drama which has been relatively well-researched and documented. And this research suggests that it is a useful means of helping those children who are autistic, or who have emotional or behavioural problems of some severity (Mcnaught et al, 1968; Moreno, 1959; Pessa, 1969; Nitsun et al, 1974). It may be, therefore, that while this form of drama is not applicable within the general teaching schemes of schools, it could be a valuable part of children's education if specialists were available to take it. Moreover, the studies above do show that this form of drama

not only helps the emotional well-being of disturbed mentally handicapped children but it does appear to have an effect also upon their ability to use language, and their willingness to engage in communication and social interaction. This aspect of drama, however, has not been investigated within the present project, for the reasons given above.

The other form of drama which stems from these approaches is drama therapy. This form of drama became popular in the sixties, and its popularity has grown within England and Wales. Organisations such as the British Association of Dramatherapists, Playspace, and Children in Touch, have been set up with the aim of encouraging the use of dramatherapy as a means of helping children or adults with a wide range of disabilities, including mental handicap. Dramatherapy uses some of the techniques devised in psychodrama, but it also uses many of the techniques and activities one might expect to find in educational drama. Because of the wide variety of methods and activities which have been advocated as being appropriate to dramatherapy, there has been a tendency in recent years for drama specialists to use the term dramatherapy to refer to any instance of drama which is aimed specifically at the social or emotional development of the group with which it is being used, or in any situation when the group in question is, in any way, disabled. Nichols (1974) suggests that -

"In drama therapy the experience of drama itself is emphasised. Dramatic exercises of one sort or another are set by the leader in the assumption that these hold therapeutic potential. For example, a reduction in social inhibition, an increase in social cohesiveness amongst the people involved, and acquisition of certain social skills may result from such work."

(Nichols, 1974; p.6)

If dramatherapy can achieve such outcomes, it would appear to be relevant to the needs of mentally handicapped children whose lack of social and emotional well being is impeding their mental development. Thus, there may well be a case for suggesting that this form of drama should be included in the curriculum for such pupils. On the other hand, it is by no means certain that the general class teacher is the person who should carry out this work. For example, Jennings, a dramatherapist, social anthropologist and author of the 'Journal of Dramatherapy', suggests that -

"it is only recently that there has been a breed of people that we can call dramatherapists; most of these have completed post-professional training at one of the established courses in the country. We also have an increasing number of teachers, nurses,

and other professionals, now eager to include dramatherapy techniques in their work However, let us not confuse the roles of these people and see them as inter-changeable these roles are not interchangeable but rather complementary, and we should be striving for even more skilled workers and resources, especially creative ones, for our work with the mentally handicapped."

(Jennings, 1979; p.7)

Jennings' argument is that the dramatherapist should initiate and control the work, but that the class teacher or other lay person may assist in the work alongside the therapist, or in practice sessions between her visits.

Jennings' argument for skilled personnel rests on the fact that she believes that -

"drama with no boundaries can be chaotic and destructive the guideline is that stimulation should not be out of context otherwise, of course a group will become over-excited We must tread with caution, otherwise we are going to totally disrupt the environment for the child but appropriate stimulus in conjunction with relaxation will provide the right balance."

(Ibid)

Prior (1976) also argues for specialist provision in this form of work because he suggests that, in working with the emotions, it is important to take account of behavioural characteristics also. Thus, for example, he suggests that in enabling a group to work through the more negative emotions - which may constitute problems for some of the group members - we may, in the process, be encouraging the emergence of violent or aggressive tendencies in children who have not previously exhibited such characteristics. For such children, the lesson could represent a learning experience which may be cathartic for the more violent or aggressive pupils, but which promotes in others the type of behaviour it was designed to diminish. There is also the danger that mock experiences of ritualistic anger, aggression or fear, may, among pupils who lack the ability to make clear distinctions between fantasy and reality, become real and potentially harmful. In unskilled hands the danger may be intensified.

The other argument against this form of work being carried out by the general teaching staff is the fact that most exponents are agreed that a one-to-one relationship between adult and child is desirable, or even necessary, in carrying out the work. Heatley (1977) for example, notes that a mentally handicapped child may suddenly lose concentration in the middle of an exercise. She cites the example of a child who, in

the middle of a 'trust' exercise, 'switched off' and simply allowed his partner to fall. Had the partner been another child, instead of the therapist, the consequences could have been serious. The other practical problems involved in ensuring a high adult/child ratio were discussed earlier in this chapter and it was concluded that in many schools a one-to-one ratio of child to adult may be desirable, but difficult to achieve in practice.

Finally, although many of the techniques which may be used in dramatherapy sound so simply that they could be used by those with little training or experience in drama, this simplicity is deceptive. For example, the use of masks is advocated as a means of 'freeing' the individual, or allowing him to express his own needs while being protected by the anonymity of the mask, or of helping him develop role-identification with the character of the mask. Johnstone(1979), one of the main exponents of this technique, however, cautions against its indiscriminate use. He is well aware of the powerful effect a simple device such as a mask may have on 'normal' children and adults. To use such a device safely and effectively with mentally handicapped pupils requires a thorough knowledge of psychology and sufficiently sharp powers of observation to detect and interpret small changes in physical movement which might indicate distress. Similar arguments may be put forward in respect of other techniques such as 'mirroring', in which one partner in a pair mirrors the actions of another, and in which control passes naturally from one to the other in the course of the activity; the use of 'gibberish' as a means of establishing emotional or social rapport which is not dependent on the use of language; or the use of 'selling' or 'bartering' exercises in which the participants are encouraged to explore the qualities which they value in themselves or others. All of these are powerful psychological devices which, in the right hands, may indeed help the mentally handicapped child. They do, however, appear to be the province of the specialist in drama, who has the knowledge and training to carry them out effectively, and who has, in addition, the knowledge of psychology to assess the effects of the work on pupils.

For these reasons, it was considered that the use of such techniques did not require to be investigated in a project which sought to investigate drama as it might be represented in the school curriculum and presented by the general teaching staff within schools.

At the same time, however, there is considerable support for the suggestion which was made earlier in this chapter - namely, that the experience of drama in itself may have a therapeutic effect on childrens' emotional development, and that a consequence of this may be to remove some of the emotional blocks which may be impeding cognitive development. The drama lessons which were tried out during the practical stages of this project were not aimed towards emotional development in that they did not make use of the recognised therapeutic techniques of the kind discussed earlier. Nevertheless, children were given the experience of drama, and it was postulated that such effects might occur as a result of this experience. Thus, those who took part in the initial research and development of materials did record and discuss any observed incident which appeared to indicate that work was having a therapeutic effect. These incidents were the subject of interest, rather than research, however, and the effects noted were considered to be by-products of the work rather than aims towards which lessons within the curricular materials should be directed. Therapeutic effects were, in fact, noted - especially among the older and more withdrawn pupils, who appeared to find in the stimulation of the drama lesson, a means of overcoming their passivity and lethargy. These did not appear to have a noticeable effect on pupils' behaviour outwith lessons, and did not, in the short term at least, appear to be accompanied by an observable increase in cognitive ability. The fact that such effects were noted within lessons, however, does suggest that this aspect of drama is one which requires investigation by further systematic research.

Summary and Hypotheses

In this chapter there has been an attempt to look at a number of learning principles and teaching strategies currently employed in the teaching of mentally handicapped children, and to examine the relationship which these may have with the learning principles and practices which are, or may be, employed in the teaching of drama to such pupils. From the analysis carried out it may be suggested that, while engaging in the imaginative, enactive social process which drama characterises, may represent a discrete educational experience, the teaching strategies and methods used in structuring the drama lesson may draw on learning principles similar to those which underlie many of the other programmes of instruction currently in use with mentally handicapped children.

The specific methodologies advocated by a number of pioneers in drama with mentally handicapped children have been compared in order - to highlight the areas of commonality or divergence between them. The particular choice of method adopted in any given case may well depend both on the teacher's expertise in drama and on her ideological commitment to a particular approach to cognitive development. Nevertheless, it has been argued that in all of the methods examined the skill of the teacher may be an important element in determining the extent to which any method will achieve the results aimed at. These aims will differ across methods, and the particular skills required of the teacher in any given method will differ both in degree and nature. Lessons which draw on skills in demonstration, may be less taxing of the teacher than those which call for a high degree of acting or movement skill, while the more advanced psychological techniques involved in the therapeutic use of drama may be less readily acquired than either of those. It has been argued, therefore, that, although therapeutic forms of drama may be useful in the education and/or treatment of mentally handicapped children, they do not represent an aspect of drama which the class teacher may incorporate easily within her general curricular scheme.

Hypotheses

From the analysis carried out, therefore, it has been tentatively postulated that -

1. lessons which seek to develop skills in the drama process, to establish and extend dramatic play, to provide opportunity for pupils to re-enact elements of past experience or to rehearse future possible experiences, to encourage bodily awareness and the expressive use of movement, or to encourage communication and co-operation, may all be structured around learning principles which stress teacher demonstration, imitation, repetitive practice, the provision of stimuli which will attract attention, the use of content which will draw on and extend existing knowledge and experience, enjoyment, and other concrete or social reinforcers which may be used both to ensure participation and as motivation for learning;

2. while it may be both possible and desirable to build into such lessons the possibility for pupils to make a personal contribution to the progress of the lesson, such lessons will be fairly heavily teacher-directed;

3. such teacher-direction may have advantages for both teachers and pupils. Teachers will know in advance the general progression expected within the lesson and this may create both confidence in the teacher and a feeling of security for pupils. For the least able pupils, such teacher-direction may be essential in order that they may participate in the work;

4. such teacher-direction may also stifle initiative in some pupils and allow the more able children less opportunity to 'think for themselves' or develop their own ideas. For the more able child this may be restricting;

5. lessons in which the teacher adopts a central role within the drama may enable teachers to exercise control within lessons without placing restrictions on the degree of autonomy pupils can exercise in contributing their own ideas;

6. the progression of such lessons is likely to be less predictable in advance and this will require more skill from the teacher, both in acting, and in maintaining the progression of the lesson;

7. this technique, coupled with a stronger environmental stimulus, may be particularly suitable within lessons which aim specifically towards the development of skill in problem solving, in co-operative group decision making, in providing opportunity for pupils to exercise personal responsibility for their conduct, and the development of communication skills;

8. some of the skills required to present drama are general teaching skills such as the ability to assess pupils' developmental levels, interests and capabilities; the ability to relate these to content and material; the ability to establish a rapport with pupils in the course of the lesson; and the ability to use the voice clearly and flexibly in giving instructions, demonstrations, suggestions or social reinforcement;

9. the more specific skills which teachers may require to learn are skills in movement; skills in acting out a role; the ability to react flexibly enough to incorporate novel contributions to the lesson and to be able to incorporate these within the general framework of the lesson without negating its aims; the ability to know when and how to intervene in order to maintain the progress of the lesson, to establish control, give reinforcement or reduce unproductive activity; a knowledge of the various methods possible and of the aims towards which each may be appropriately directed; and the ability to assess lessons in terms of their effectiveness as learning or teaching experiences.

Finally, since the earlier analysis of why Scottish teachers may neglect drama suggested that teachers may be resistant to acquiring some of these skills, it appeared that there would be a need, in the practical work carried out, to give particular attention to the views expressed by teachers in relation to the different methods tried in the classroom in order to determine -

- a. which aspects of drama teachers were willing and able to undertake given their existing levels of expertise;
- b. which skills they appeared to be willing and able to acquire during, or as a result of experimentation with different methods;
- c. how well the aims implied by the various methods accorded with the general teaching aims and environmental conditions within schools.

This chapter, therefore, has been concerned with methods of presenting drama and the underlying learning principles governing these. An examination of these could not be divorced from a consideration of the role of the teacher in this situation. But, with the exception of Heathcote's work, in discussion of which it is virtually impossible to separate methodology from content, little attention has been given to the particular activities which can comprise a lesson in drama. In the next chapter, therefore, there will be an attempt to suggest the range of activities commonly associated with educational drama and to analyse these in terms of the degree of difficulty they may present for pupils, or staff.

CHAPTER 8

An Analysis of the Levels of Difficulty Inherent in Certain Drama Activities, and a Consideration of the Specific Teaching Skills required in their Presentation

In the previous chapter consideration was given to the various teaching methods and learning principles currently in use in educational programmes for mentally handicapped pupils. The applicability of some of these methods and principles to the teaching of drama was examined, and comparisons were made between these and a number of the methods advocated or used by leading drama specialists. General consideration was given to the demands placed on the teacher's skills in the presentation of drama by the methods examined, and practical difficulties, relating both to teaching skills and to organisational practices within schools, were highlighted. On the basis of this analysis a number of possible criteria for the aims and presentation of drama were suggested.

Earlier in this thesis, however, it was argued that 'drama' is a broad general term, within which is subsumed a range of different activities. It was argued that the common element linking these diverse activities, and enabling them to be categorised under the general heading 'drama', is that all embody the principle of imaginative enactment. So far, with the exception of dramatic play which was identified as the first spontaneous example of the process of imaginative enactment, there has been little attempt to separate out the various activities involved in the drama process and to analyse what these activities imply in terms of pupils or teacher behaviours.

Even a superficial examination of the activities possible suggests that the levels of difficulty inherent in various activities may differ, not only in respect of the skills required by the participants, but also in terms of the specific teaching skills each may demand of the teacher. In this chapter, therefore, there will be an attempt to consider the activities commonly associated with educational drama, to relate these to the developmental levels and abilities likely to be found among mentally handicapped children, to suggest a model of the activities which may be appropriate to various levels of development, and to indicate the specific teaching skills which may be required in the presentation of these, to give a more comprehensive and detailed picture of what a drama lesson might comprise at various levels, and when aimed towards a specific area of development. This may be superimposed on the criteria

for lessons which have been identified in previous chapters.

Semantic difficulties in identifying activities

Earlier in this thesis it was argued that an immediate source of confusion in discussing, or reading about drama, is the fact that the terminology used by different specialists to refer to activities is not necessarily consistent. For example, one might expect that terms such as 'creative drama', 'informal drama', 'child drama', or even 'educational drama' would be generic terms, while the more specific terms such as 'improvisation', 'role-play', or 'mime' would refer to the activities one might use in these forms of drama. This is not always the case. Some writers do use precise terminology (Moreno, 1959; Heathcote, 1965; McGregor et al, 1977). Others use the general terms given above to refer both to any instance of drama which is paedio-centric and aimed at the growth of awareness, sensitivity and personal self-development in the participants, and also to the activities which might be used to develop these qualities (Slade, 1965; Way, 1967; Pemberton-Billings and Clegg, 1965). Such writers may describe the activities to be used, but the activities themselves may not be individually named, making it difficult to identify when a distinction is being made in the text between, for example, 'creative drama' as it refers to ways of thinking about drama, and 'creative drama' as meaning unscripted drama activities in which the participants develop their own dramatic action around a given theme or stimulus.

An additional source of confusion which was identified is the fact that the terms used to refer to individual activities are often inconsistent. It has already been noted, for example, that Heathcote uses the word 'dramatisation' to refer not to 'stories retold in action' but to a technique whereby stories are used simply as a means of establishing a setting and a context for the exploration and acting out of human problems and conflicts. The actual plot is of relatively minor importance (Heathcote, 1976; Wagner, 1980). Johnstone's description of 'improvisation', however, is virtually indistinguishable from Heathcote's description of dramatisation (Johnstone, 1979). Fitch, on the other hand, views dramatisation as nothing more than the stories retold in action which Heathcote eschews. Casciani takes a rather middle line between the two.

(Casciani and Watt, 1969). Similar semantic confusion surrounds the word 'mime'. This can be taken to refer to

anything from the highly stylised techniques seen in the work of Marceau and Barrault, to the mixture of dance and drama, inspired by Laban, and often referred to as 'dance-drama'; or it may simply mean acting without using words (Barrault, 1961; Laban, 1950; Bruford, 1960).

However, since the analysis of drama activities being presented in this chapter is primarily directed towards establishing why particular activities may be relevant to the needs and abilities of mentally handicapped children, and towards suggesting how, in practical terms, the teacher might present such activities within the classroom, it appeared to be relatively unproductive to dwell on the precise terminology which ought to be attributed to specific activities. Rather, an arbitrary decision was taken to examine the activities possible, using the term most commonly used in the literature to refer to each. Where different usages of a specific term imply considerable differentiation in the content and method, these have been given more detailed analysis. The terminology used here is the same terminology as that adopted in discussion of drama with the teachers who were involved in the practical research and development of materials.

The Activities Possible

The activities commonly identified as being applicable to drama in education have been examined using the following terms -

1. dramatic play;
2. role-play;
3. improvisation;
4. dramatisation (including the initial story-telling);
5. mime, movement and speech activities with an enactive and imaginative component in them;
5. puppetry.

Scripted drama, a study of texts, and the theatre arts, have been omitted from consideration as it was estimated that all imply a level of linguistic and cognitive ability which is likely to be in excess of that found among children with the more serious forms of mental handicap. Similarly, performance in the full theatrical sense, was judged to be too demanding for the majority of pupils, in that it requires disciplined and repetitive rehearsal of a learned sequence - either verbal or non-verbal - and may be too inflexible in structure for pupils who lack the ability to create and sustain a role and to act it out in a previously determined sequence of interactions. On the other hand, some pupils,

especially the older or more advanced pupils, may be capable of understanding the concept of showing their work by demonstrating it to others. Performance of this kind is not so much an exact repetition of elements previously rehearsed, but rather a working through on another occasion of situations with which they are already familiar. While this may be similar to previous enactments of the same situation, it need not necessarily be so. Children need not remember the same lines and movements used previously, and even the development of the plot may differ from that acted out on previous occasions. The only aspect of performance considered in this analysis, therefore, is this form of shared demonstration, rather than performance in terms of a rehearsed and polished staged production.

An Examination of the Activities Identified

Dramatic Play, Role-Play and Improvisation

All of these may be regarded as instances of unscripted drama, where the actions and words of the enactment are those supplied by the participants themselves, either spontaneously or as a result of prompting or modelling by the adult in control. Each of the three emphasises a slightly different aspect of role behaviour, and each may require a somewhat different level of skill from pupils. Dramatic play and role-play are both capable of being conducted in a one-to-one adult/child situation. Improvisation is generally regarded as an activity which is more appropriate to a larger group, as the progression of the work stems from the interactions of the participants involved.

Dramatic Play

As dramatic play has already been given some detailed consideration, it may be sufficient to note in the present context that dramatic play is primarily concerned with the acting out of events and situations. In spontaneous dramatic play, and in the dramatic play which is engineered as part of the therapeutic application of drama, the roles adopted spontaneously by the child in his play, and the way in which these roles are enacted, may provide useful diagnostic information on the child's emotional or mental health. But in the dramatic play which occurs as part of a drama lesson, the emphasis is likely to be placed on what characters did in specific situations rather than on how they felt in these situations. The roles adopted by children will be those suggested by the action of the play, or at the teachers instigation. And

it is perfectly possible for children to engage in dramatic play without taking a role other than themselves. In this situation they will not be acting as another person, but acting towards the environment in an imaginative way. For example, in a dramatic play sequence involving the making of a snowman, children may act towards the empty space before them as if it were a snowman, but they need not adopt role behaviour which is different from the role behaviour they might employ if the space actually did contain a snowman which they were helping to build. Another example of this non-role taking dramatic play is that suggested in a previous chapter, where it was argued that the teacher may invite suggestions from individual children within a group to carry out the actions suggested by a particular child.

The linguistically impaired or developmentally young child may be better equipped to indicate, by action or words, what might be done in a particular situation. This suggests that dramatic play may be a relatively less demanding activity for such children than role-play which, it will be argued, is more concerned with character than action, and with feelings rather than events. Moreover, although dramatic play may involve dialogue between the participants in the play, it need not do so. Actions and gestures may be as acceptable as words in interpreting a dramatic play situation. Again, this suggests that this form of dramatic activity may be particularly well suited to the linguistically impaired child.

In the preparation of dramatic play, the teacher may well introduce an element of discussion with pupils who are capable of engaging in this, but, as argued in an earlier chapter, this discussion is likely to be relatively short and to be aimed at eliciting suggestions as to what will happen next, and suggestions given by pupils are accepted and acted upon quickly. Since suggestions can generally be acted upon by the whole group, or by both individuals within a teacher/child dyad, pupils with lower levels of comprehension may be capable of participating in the activity by imitating the actions of the more able pupils within a group, or by copying the model provided by the teacher, without necessarily understanding the significance of the actions being carried out. And it was argued earlier in the thesis that since imitation may be a key factor in the development of cognition, this practice in imitation may eventually lead to cognitive development and a resultant ability to understand the imaginative elements within a dramatic play situation.

The lesson which is structured around the behaviourist principles discussed earlier may be particularly appropriate to the presentation of dramatic play with the developmentally young child since this type of lesson lends itself to the kind of imitative techniques, verbal prompts, and modelled demonstration which children may require in order to carry out a series of actions in an imaginary context. Social reinforcement may be appropriate within such a lesson, and the use of concrete stimulus materials such as play objects, music, or percussion instruments, may be appropriate as both reinforcement and attention-getting devices. Since the use of such objects may also stimulate perception, this provides a further argument for the use of this form of dramatic activity with children at the lower levels of development. Thus, dramatic play within the drama lesson may be appropriate both for those children who have some comprehension of the principle of imaginative enactment, and as a stimulus for those whose development has not yet reached this level, but who are capable of imitating the actions of another, and of responding to environmental stimuli.

The skills required of the teacher in the presentation of lessons which are structured around behaviourist principles were discussed in the previous chapter, and it was suggested that this form of presentation may be relatively less demanding than certain others. An additional point which may be added in the present context is, that because children may all be acting in unison in carrying out a sequence of actions within a dramatic play situation, and because such activities may be carried out within a fairly confined space, the problems of group management may be correspondingly reduced. The teacher will be able to be in close physical proximity to all the pupils, and ought, therefore, to be able to provide both physical prompts to the less able and the measure of gentle restraint which may be necessary to curb over-exuberance among the less disciplined pupils.

Role Play

Role play is an extension of dramatic play. In role play the events and situations to be enacted will be important, but in the enactment each of the participants will take an individual role which is not that of his life role. In this situation the way the characters

feel may be the primary influence on how they act. And the acting out of these feelings may be as important as the events and situations being portrayed. For example, in the snowman situation described earlier, children would not simply be building a snowman as themselves, but would be doing so as, perhaps, a group of competitors trying to build the biggest/best/most unusual snowman in the world. Where all the pupils were engaged on the same corporate task, the roles involved would be less well defined, and the feelings common ones of attempting to work together to achieve a given goal. On the other hand, children might well adopt very defined roles in this situation - the bully/the timid one who doesn't like the cold/the one who keeps trying to help but gets in the way of the others/the leader/the peacemaker, etc. In their portrayal, the children will not only try to act in a way which is appropriate to their role, but may also try to show how each individually feels about the task on which they are all engaged.

In role play, as in dramatic play, non-verbal children may be able to participate by acting out in movement and gesture their roles and feelings. Role play is, however, more demanding of the child's cognitive and imaginative ability. In order to sustain a role the child must have some appreciation of what it means to adopt a role other than himself. Because children will be taking individual roles, there will be less possibility for the teacher to provide a model for the pupils to follow. Children will, therefore, require to have sufficient understanding of the situation and the roles involved in the play as to be able to act independently and appropriately without relying totally on an adult model. Some of the less able children may be able to rely on the lead given by the more able, and may simply copy their actions. Such children could not, however, be said to be involved in role play, and, like those who imitate without understanding in dramatic play, those who imitate in role play may have little appreciation of the reasons for the actions they are copying. But in copying the actions of another child within the play, the children have, at the very least, to choose to copy that particular child, and the choice involved in doing so may be a more advanced cognitive act than the simply imitative response made to the teacher's prompting in dramatic play.

Thus, in order fully to engage in role play, the child will require to be conscious of himself as a separate entity acting upon an environ-

ment, will require to have some appreciation of the way others behave, and may require a degree of imagination in excess of that required for dramatic play. Children will require to have sufficient understanding of language as to be able to appreciate the role and the situation being presented, but, in acting these out the child need not display a high level of linguistic expression.

For the teacher, too, role play may be more demanding. It is unlikely that the teacher will be able to structure lessons so readily around behaviourist principles. Concrete stimulus materials may still be used, and social reinforcement may be applied to pupils in the course of the activity. The use of imitative or modelling techniques will be less appropriate, and the teacher is more likely to establish the roles involved by discussion with pupils, rather than by demonstrating the roles. Similarly, the feelings of the characters are more likely to be suggested by the teacher in words rather than in action. If the teacher does not herself take a role in the dramatic action, her function is likely to be that of 'director' - intervening where necessary in order to ensure that the play progresses, calling children together as a group to discuss further developments in the play or to recap on the events established thus far, and moving around the room helping individual children or giving them praise as appropriate without stopping the flow of their individual work. The skills required in this situation may be considerably more situation-dependent than those involved in simple dramatic play since pupils are more in control of events and are acting independently in the play. Because of this the play may be less predictable in advance, and it may be less easy to plan ahead against possible contingencies which might disrupt the lesson or change the progression of the lesson from that envisaged by the teacher in her planning. The ability to react flexibly to unforeseen situations may, therefore, require to be greater in the presentation of role play than in the presentation of dramatic play.

Another possible approach to the presentation of role play is a modified form of the 'person-in-role' approach adopted by Heathcote, and described earlier. The teacher may find it easier to direct and control the work by adopting a role within it, and she may be in a better position to influence the progression of the work. She may, however, require to choose a role which will enable her to move around and interact with all of the pupils, to provide help for less able pupils, and to restrain the possibly disruptive child. Thus the situation

chosen will require to be one in which there is a pivotal character around whom the dramatic action of the other characters can revolve. As argued earlier, the advantage of adopting such a role lies in the fact that the teacher has more authority and control but may exercise this without stopping the dramatic action to give instruction, praise or help. The disadvantage is the degree of acting skill required of the teacher, who will not only have to adopt and sustain a role herself but will require to sustain children in the roles they have adopted as part of the dramatic action. Again, this is more demanding of the teacher than the play which is presented as a more straightforward teaching exercise in group management. It may, however, be considerably easier for the teacher to adopt a role in individual work with a single child, since the problems of group management described above will not be relevant.

Improvisation

Improvisation is an extension of role play which is demanding both in terms of the social interactions which it necessitates, and in the verbal interchanges which take place within these social interactions. Almost by definition, improvisation is linked to dialogue. It is, therefore, an activity which would appear to require a higher level of linguistic development than either of the preceding. The greater emphasis on the use of language occurs both in the context of the dramatic action and in the discussion necessary to plan the events, the situations and the roles which pupils will enact. This discussion will not only determine what happens next in the action but why this particular course of action appears to be justified. In improvisation there may be frequent breaks in the action in order to plan the next stage and recap on the progress of previous stages.

As in role play, the teacher may choose either to act as the director of proceedings or to take a role within the work. As in role play also, in improvisation the course of action agreed upon in discussion may not necessarily work out in exactly the same way in practice. If one child introduces a novel element into the work, and if other children react to this, this may change the whole direction of the work.

Of the three, improvisation probably demands most sensitivity on the part of the teacher in knowing when and how to intervene. The noise level generated by improvisation is likely to be higher than that in either dramatic play or role play, and, because children are taking individual roles, improvisation may present a more overtly chaotic

appearance than either of the other forms of play. It may be experience, rather than training, which will enable the teacher to detect the difference in quality of sound and movement which is presented by a group who, although appearing to be chaotic are nevertheless involved in the play and engaged on productive work, and the quality of movement and sound generated by pupils who are either running out of ideas, arguing among themselves, becoming bored by the activity, or are simply fooling around. Often, a classroom group is divided into smaller, sub-groups, each working on one aspect of the same theme, or each developing their own interpretation of the theme. As all of the pupils within a group may be involved in different activities in different parts of the room or hall as part of the dramatic action, there is the physical difficulty of overseeing the entire group at one time - especially if the numbers involved are fairly large.

A practical example of improvisation might be a scene within a busy airport. Some children will be passengers, checking their luggage or tickets, having a snack or talking among themselves. Others may be the airport officials going about their business, and again talking to each other or passengers. One pupil might be making announcements on flight schedules, while another group might be preparing the interior or engine of the plane off take-off, amid appropriate noises. And simply the business of regulating their own behaviour in such a situation places considerably more demands on pupils - even those who elect to say little - quite apart from the demands made by others who attempt to interact with them.

Because of the level of skill required of the teacher in this situation many drama specialists prefer either to adopt a central role or to use music as a means of control. When the music stops the pupils 'freeze' in position, without talking. This enables the teacher to feed in additional information, to call the group together for discussion, or to suggest ways in which pupils might become more productive in their activity. The choice of music will also exert an influence on the way pupils tackle the activity - lively music generally leading to more noisy situations and active movement, slow sustained music encouraging a more solemn or gentler form of activity. With shy pupils who are reticent about speaking in case their dialogue is overheard by the entire group, the music can also provide a 'cover' to possible embarrassment. With really able pupils, changes in the tempo or style of the music may act as a non-verbal signal to pupils that the next development

in the plot they have decided on is about to occur. It is doubtful, however, how many mentally handicapped pupils would have the cognitive capacity to respond in this way. And improvisation is only really likely to be appropriate to those mentally handicapped pupils who have become skilled in the use of the drama process through regular exposure to other forms of drama, or to those pupils who have a higher than average degree of linguistic competence and imaginative ability, and who are capable of a high level of self-regulation in their behaviour.

Dramatisation

Dramatisation may be described, literally, as the acting out of a story. From the literature it was possible to identify four major forms of dramatisation. Since all of these are different, and since all call for different skills, each will be considered separately before making general comment on dramatisation. The four forms identified are -

1. the narrative approach;
2. the 'person-in-role' approach;
3. the open-ended story approach;
4. the sequential approach.

The Narrative Approach

This is probably the simplest form of dramatisation both to present and to participate in. Basically, this form of work is simply a re-telling of the story, or parts of the story, in action. Having told the story once in order to familiarise pupils with the characters and events, the adult goes through episodes from the story again, expanding and elaborating on these and encouraging children to act out in unison with her the incidents which she describes. Children are not given individual parts and do not have to sustain a role in any depth. Rather, they are given practice in trying out a variety of roles in response to the spoken commentary and demonstration of the adult.

Like dramatic play, this form of work is concerned with the events that occur and there is less attempt to establish the characters at anything other than a superficial level. Quite literally, the adult talks the children through the various events in the story and encourages them to perform the actions, speak the words, or make appropriate sounds as she does so. The commentary of the adult

as she demonstrates the actions in the story may be a means of encouraging participation among those children who do not yet fully understand all the niceties of the plot but who can imitate the actions or sounds involved. Because children are not required to sustain individual roles, but can act out each role in turn, this form of dramatisation lends itself also to working on a one-to-one ratio with individual children.

If parts of the story are too complex for pupils to act out, these may be excluded from the dramatisation. Instead, less complex episodes in the story may be expanded and elaborated on. Similarly, single lines in the story can be built up into sequences which are virtually indistinguishable from dramatic play. For example, a phrase like 'he posted the letter' may, in the acting out, be expanded to include many of the elements which might in reality be part of such a situation. In the telling of the story this phrase might occur as a single, throwaway line, and the plot will not be held up by lengthy explanations of what is involved in posting a letter. In the dramatisation, this can be expanded so that all of the children act out looking for the hole in the post-box, checking the times of delivery, making sure their letters are stamped, sealed and addressed, and, finally dropping the letters into the post-box to the accompaniment of an onomatopoeic word like 'plop'. Or the teacher might take the action one stage further back and include the initial writing of the letter, buying a stamp, or having difficulty in finding a pen that works, as part of the sequence developed. When used in this way, the story itself becomes more of a stimulus to action rather than 'a plot', and the story may never be acted out in its sequential entirety.

There is, however, a logical sequence in the actions which are carried out, and this may help pupils establish a concept of cause and effect. Moreover, because pupils have heard the story and know what happens in it, they may be able to draw on the story for ideas, rather than relying entirely on the teacher's commentary. This aspect may be most helpful when children are recreating actual episodes from the story - for example, putting on the clothing the characters wore, carrying out their actions, or making the action sounds heard.

Because pupils are acting out the parts in unison, there is no need to choose a story which has the potential to give every child an individual part. If, as this analysis of this form of dramatisation suggests, this activity is suitable for pupils who are at fairly low

levels of linguistic or imaginative ability, this is a plus factor. Because the stories chosen for this form of work may be very simple, with only one or two central characters, and a single incident as development of the plot, they are likely to be within the level of understanding of most of the pupils, and may be simplified even further by the use of familiar, explanatory language, supported by facial expression, sound and gesture in the telling.

The demands made of the teacher in this situation are very similar to those involved in the presentation of dramatic play. The behaviourist approach may be appropriate - the story can be broken down into small teaching units, concrete props and visual aids may be used to support the telling of the story, parts of the story may be repeated and elaborated on as an aid to understanding, and the teacher provides a model, in words and actions, for the pupils to copy. Reinforcement may be provided by the enjoyment inherent in the story itself, and additional social reinforcement can be built into the presentation of the various sequences by praising pupils' efforts, or by deliberately consolidating upon these aspects which pupils appeared to find most enjoyable in the acting out. The only additional skills required of the teacher in this situation are the ability to choose a story which is appropriate to the pupil's level of development and which has potential for acting out in this way, and the ability to present the story with the appropriate degree of facial, gestural and vocal expression necessary to give it 'life'.

The Adult as Person-in-Role

Again, this is a dramatisation technique which can be used both in group and in individual work. In this method the adult is not simply the narrator or presenter, demonstrating and guiding the events in unison with the pupils. In this method, the adult adopts a central role in the dramatisation and directs the activity of the children as part of this role. This technique has already been described in detail in discussing the work of Heathcote, who is probably the foremost exponent of this form of dramatisation (see p 207). This form of dramatisation is very similar to role play, but may be relatively less demanding of pupils than role-play in that their roles have been defined for them by the story, and the way they act has also been signposted for them by the plot development in the story. As argued earlier, however, this form of work is demanding of the skill

of the teacher in acting out, in sustaining pupils, and in the presentation which may be involved to ensure both that the environment is suitable and that appropriate artefacts are available for the enactment of the story.

The Open-Ended Story

This is a considerably more demanding form of dramatisation than is either of the preceding. It is perhaps best suited to those children who have had a good deal of practice in other forms of drama, and who have well developed imaginations. This is essentially a group activity, and it allows a great deal of scope for pupils to contribute their own ideas and suggest the direction of the work.

As its name implies, this form of dramatisation is introduced in the form of a story which is unfinished. The pupils themselves decide how the story will develop or end. This will be decided partly in prior discussion and partly in the acting out itself. As in improvisation and role-play, the agreed upon course of action may not be fully realised in practice. With this type of work it may be possible to enable pupils to 'discover' an ending if the story chosen is one in which a fairly obvious possibility for the ending of the story is heralded in the earlier plot development. Stories which could have a variety of possible endings provide more of a real challenge, but may necessitate a higher level of cognitive ability on the part of the pupils.

In the acting out, pupils take individual parts, each child deciding for himself who he wishes to be and what his role in the action will be. Some of the characters adopted by pupils will be the named characters who have appeared in the earlier part of the story, and whose personal characteristics will have been indicated as part of the story. Some children may, however, choose to adopt characters other than those mentioned in the story. For example, the adult may have told a story about a group of spacemen who have landed to explore a strange new planet. In the story she may have described something of the terrain, the animals, the climate, etc, and mention will have been made of essential characters like the captain, the doctor, the unpleasant crew member etc. This feeds in the sort of information which pupils may elect to make use of in their later dramatisation. The story itself might stop at the point where these characters, accompanied

by an unspecified number of crewmen, return to the ship after a foray on land, only to discover that the ship has disappeared. It is now up to the children to decide who is going to be the named characters, who the other characters will be, and what the next development in the action will be - eg. search the ship/radio back to earth/search the planet for life/are some children taking the parts of planet-dwellers, etc?

In this form of work the role of the adult is more that of guide or 'facilitator' than that of narrator or demonstrator, and whether the adult adopts a role or not is largely a matter of personal preference. It is, however, rather less usual for the adult to take a sustained role in this form of work. From time to time she may do so in order to help less able pupils 'discover' a possible solution. Obviously, if children cannot themselves provide any suggestions, or if they cannot agree among themselves on what to try out, the adult will feed in extra information and help pupils organise their ideas. These suggestions will only be fed in where necessary, however, as the main aim in this form of work is to encourage pupils to think for themselves and develop more organised corporate activity. The teacher will, however, encourage pupils to try out a variety of the ideas suggested in order to 'see what happens' in practice. In general, the more able the group, the less necessary will it be for the adult to intervene during the discussion stage, although she may, in recapping on the events, suggest additional ways in which the scene might have been tackled, thus providing additional information which may be drawn on in subsequent dramatisations.

Obviously, this form of work calls for a fair degree of self control on the part of the pupils, the ability to interact with each other in planning and executing ideas, a considerable amount of linguistic ability, and a degree of imagination. The more pupils lack these abilities, the more difficult it is likely to be to introduce this form of work with any degree of success. There is evidence in the literature to suggest that this form of work can be tackled by mentally handicapped pupils under the guidance of a trained drama specialist (Byron, 1978; Heavey, 1975; Hudson, 1978). These accounts do not indicate the degree of handicap among pupils, nor whether the non-specialist might tackle this work. It is possible that pupils might be helped to engage in this work if it were made simple enough - for example, by having the ending very obvious, by choosing a story in

which all characters do virtually the same kinds of things in sequence etc. Since this form of work is very similar to improvisation, the skills required of the teacher are likely to be synonymous with those required for the presentation of improvisation.

Sequential Dramatisation

In this, as in the previous form of work, the teacher's role is that of a guide or leader, helping pupils organise and present their own work. In this form of the work the adult is highly unlikely to take a role, other than that, perhaps, of the narrator who helps link various episodes in the story and keeps a thread of continuity between them.

This is the form of dramatisation which appears to be best known among non-specialist teaching staff. Even more so than the narrative form, this form of work is a story re-told in action. The story is first told, then discussed, after which children are given out the individual parts which occur in the story. The storyline is then acted out sequentially as it appears in the initial telling. Generally, all those episodes which are essential to the development and resolution of the plot can be acted out within a single lesson. Children may then repeat this in order to arrive at a polished form of dramatisation - which may, or may not be shown to others.

This form of sequential dramatisation is fairly demanding of pupils' cognitive abilities in that they have to remember who they are in the story, they have to anticipate their appearance in the action and be ready to act out their part at the right point in the story, and with the appropriate dialogue and actions.

The sequential ordering of the story also means that some children may, unless the teacher is skillful in organising tasks for them to do in role before they are due to 'appear' in the action, have to stand around with nothing to do until it is their turn to speak or act. Even with non-handicapped pupils this is a potentially disruptive situation. With hyperactive or difficult mentally handicapped children it is potentially more so.

In this form of work there is also the temptation to give the 'best' parts to those pupils who have the best acting or linguistic ability. Those pupils may be fully involved in the acting. In order to ensure the same degree of involvement for other pupils, the teacher will require either to choose a story with a great many

characters in it - which could be confusing for the handicapped child - or to exercise some ingenuity in devising parts which other children may take within the sequence of the story.

The teacher may, therefore, have to exercise skill in the planning of such a lesson and will have to be aware throughout the execution of such a lesson of which pupils may need prompting to take their parts, which will need overseeing from a behavioural point of view and which can be safely left to regulate their own activity. There is very little opportunity for pupils to introduce novel elements into this work, making the progression of the lesson a predictable one for the teacher (assuming pupils do not become either bored or disruptive as a result of non-involvement). The predictability of the progression in this work may be a source of security for the less experienced teacher who is unsure of her ability to cope with unforeseen events in a flexible way. Off-set against this must be the fact that there is a higher potential in this form of work for pupils to be uninvolved, potentially disruptive, and, consequently, more difficult to control.

General Points on Dramatisation

There are a number of general points which are applicable to all forms of dramatisation. First, all dramatisation involves the selection of suitable material, planning as to how the material will be executed in practice, and determining which form of dramatisation is likely to be most appropriate both to the abilities of the pupils, the skill the teacher perceives herself to possess, and to the teaching aims the teacher wishes to achieve. Secondly, no one method of dramatisation is intrinsically better than another, merely, perhaps, more appropriate on any given occasion. Thirdly, there may well be occasions when a combination of methods would appear to be more appropriate than a single method. For example, a story which had been introduced and worked upon by the narrative method, might well be tried sequentially as a follow-up if pupils appeared to be sufficiently sure of the characters and events as a result of the earlier work. Similarly, a single story might be capable of incorporating both the narrative and adult-in-role approaches in the dramatisation of different parts of the story.

In planning a lesson based on dramatic action, the story itself may suggest which method to use. Simple stories in which there are only a few characters, a simple familiar setting, one main plot point, an

emphasis on sound and movement rather than speech, or possibly the repetition of a line of dialogue or a rhyme within the story, may be most appropriate to the narrative and sequential approaches. If the story has a strong central character, a setting which is not too diversified, an element of dilemma or conflict, then the person-in-role approach may be indicated. Where the development of the plot has an obvious break-point in it, this may suggest the possibility for using the open-ended approach by stopping the story at that point.

The aims of the teacher may also be better served by one method rather than another. For example, if the aim were to develop children's early communication skills, the teacher might opt for the narrative or adult-in-role approaches. The former offers possibilities for introducing experimentation with babble, with gesture and repetitive language - all of which were identified as being potentially useful in the development of early communication skills. The latter provides the children with a strong lead from the adult who can feed in information which they may need in order to respond verbally or gesturally. The open-ended and person-in-role approaches offer strong possibilities for challenging pupils to become more self-regulating in their behaviour and may help them both develop their problem-solving abilities, and allow an outlet for creative imagination. The sequential approach may be indicated in pupils who show a strong desire to impose a structure on their work, or if the teacher feels pupils would benefit from this structured approach in their ability to appreciate the logical sequencing of events and situations.

The relative position of each method in terms of levels of difficulty for pupils and teacher are summarised in the model in Figures 1 & 2

Figure 1

Degree of Pupil Difficulty		OPEN ENDED SEQUENTIAL
	NARRATIVE	PERSON IN ROLE
EASY	Degree of teaching skill	

Figure 2 shows how the activities discussed earlier compare when plotted on a similar matrix

Degree of Pupil Difficulty		IMPROVISATION
	DRAMATIC PLAY	ROLE-PLAY
EASY	Degree of Teaching Skill	

Puppetry

Puppetry may be as sophisticated and demanding or as simple and undemanding as the needs and the capabilities of the participants dictate. The high level of co-ordination necessary to operate the more advanced forms of puppets such as marionettes or shadow puppets make these relatively advanced cognitive activities, unlikely to be within the scope of the majority of severely mentally handicapped children. Even the effective use of a glove puppet can be a fairly sophisticated activity, involving, as it does, the close co-ordination of hands and voice. The manipulation of rod or stick puppets requires a much smaller degree of precise manual manipulation, enabling more concentration to be placed on the vocal accompaniment. Such puppets may also be used with a musical or taped backing, thus reducing further the degree of concentration required. For the withdrawn or shy child the use of such puppets may encourage the child who has language ability but is reticent in the use of language to 'speak through the puppet' in situations where he might not otherwise do so. The puppet in this situation may serve the dual purpose of diverting the child's attention away from his own shyness and towards the antics of the puppet, and of allowing the child to speak more freely than if confronted with a situation in which his linguistic ability, rather than the antic of the puppets, is the focus of direct attention by others. When rod or stick puppets are used in this way they become free of the constraints of co-ordination and become a stimulus which may well be within the capabilities of the handicapped child who has some linguistic ability.

Similarly the teacher herself may operate a furry glove or papier mache puppet as a visual aid within a story or dramatic play situation. The Peabody Language Development Kit, for example, has been devised around the use of puppets by the teacher as an aid in the development of communication skills. Some teachers are using this kit, and indicate that the puppets do appear to serve as both attention-getting devices and as reinforcement to pupils in lessons. The teaching skills required to present any form of puppetry tend to centre on the adult's ability to manipulate the puppet with some degree of skill, and to use vocal patterns which are appropriate to the puppet in question. Neither of these skills are high level ones, making puppetry a relatively easy form of drama for teachers to introduce in either an individual or group situation.

For the hyperactive child, or the child with a short attention span, it may be possible to catch and hold their attention as the adult makes simple paper bag or sock puppets. Being quick and easy to make, these can be ready for use within a very short time, and being cheap and disposable, may provide an individual child with something to take home as a focus for communication about the lesson in the home.

Mime, Movement and Speech

It has already been noted that mime may be either a highly stylised activity, or may simply be interpreted as acting without words. The highly stylised mime techniques demand a high degree of controlled, expressive movement and are unlikely to be within the capabilities of children whose handicaps do not allow them to exercise the degree of flexibility in movement and intense concentration demanded by these.

If, however, mime is simply regarded as acting without words then mime is perhaps one of the most common activities to which the handicapped child will be exposed. For example, in carrying out the actions in a sequence of dramatic play the child will, in effect, be miming. Similarly, the child may act out the role or events in a dramatisation without the use of words. While within an improvisation sequence, there may well be many times within the activity when the child is miming, to the accompaniment of a musical stimulus, occupational or other actions relating to the theme of the improvised drama.

Thus, while mime is undoubtedly an activity which may be studied as an individual activity, it is also an activity which pervades other dramatic activities and, for this reason, will take on the degree of difficulty imposed by the structure of these other activities - although the actual mime sequence itself may be relatively simple in terms of the movements it demands. Certainly, for children with poor linguistic ability, mime would appear to offer a means of engaging in dramatic activity which is not dependent on their ability to use and process language. For the teacher, the level of skill demanded may also depend less on the mime itself and more on the context of the activity in which the mime is being presented. And, since movement with an imaginative and enactive component may be described as mime, this may hold true for movement work also.

Similarly, the use of simple rhymes and jingles, songs, sounds or poems may be an element within drama at any level. But the use of these materials is less an activity in its own right as a stimulus to activity. And again it may be argued that such activities can be subsumed within the enactive techniques already described, while the level of skill demanded of the teacher will be those consistent with the enactive situation which follows the presentation of the sound stimulus.

Finally, it was argued in an earlier chapter that the use of non-representational movement and sound activities may well provide perceptual stimulation which will enable the child, who is not yet at the stage of symbolic understanding, to make the cognitive connections required subsequently to engage in that form of work. Thus, in the hierarchy of drama activities, it may be suggested that these forms of work, while not in themselves drama, may be appropriate as an early form of pre-drama training.

Hierarchy of activities

From the brief analysis of drama activities presented, it can be seen that, with the exception of adult-in-role techniques in both role-play and dramatisation, those activities which are relatively simple for pupils are also those which tend to be least demanding of the skills of the teacher. Similarly, activities like improvisation, which are demanding of pupils also make considerable situation-dependent demands on the teacher's sensitivity, flexibility and general skills in group management.

Mime, movement and speech activities, and puppetry, being capable of appearing either as a stimulus to action, as activities in themselves, or as a part of some other activity, are less easily categorised. The simplest forms of these activities do appear to lend themselves to behaviourist techniques and one might assume, therefore, that they would be relatively easy for teachers to present using their existing skills. In the course of the practical work carried out this did appear to hold true for such activities when they were presented to children who had some symbolic understanding, some comprehension of verbally presented material, and no very severe emotional or behaviour problems. It appeared to be less true when the work was being presented to more profoundly handicapped, or more disturbed pupils. This is dealt with in some detail in a subsequent chapter of the thesis.

But, in examining the levels of difficulty inherent in these activities it is necessary to make the point that the presentation of these activities to pupils with the more profound forms of handicap does appear to necessitate a more exaggerated and uninhibited form of presentation than is the case in working with less profoundly handicapped pupils. The degree of exaggeration required in the former case appears to make considerably higher demands on the teacher's skills in voice and movement, making these activities more difficult to present to this type of child.

For the moment, however, let us assume - in examining the hierarchy of activities - that the pupils to whom the material is to be presented are those severely mentally handicapped pupils, between the ages of four and seventeen who present no severe behavioural or emotional problems. While the youngest of these pupils may very well be at the transition stage between sensori-motor and more symbolic understanding, few of the severely mentally handicapped children of these ages are likely to have no capacity for symbolic understanding and no understanding of verbally presented material.

If we make these assumptions it is possible to regard the activities analysed as representing a continuum which begins with the simplest, individually presented movement, speech and play activities, with very little imaginative content, and ends with the most demanding of group movement and speech techniques - improvisation around a given theme. And, whereas the simple movement and speech techniques may be aimed at the early development of physical, linguistic and imaginative play abilities, the most advanced techniques demand that pupils already have these abilities well developed. The aim for these more advanced activities, therefore, are likely to lie more in the areas of the development of problem-solving ability, the development and sustaining of an imaginative idea, and in learning not only how to interact with others in the course of the activity, but also how different people may react within different situations. In learning this last item, pupils may also be learning how they themselves may react to different people, events or social situations.

Similarly, we can regard the teaching skills required in the presentation of these various activities also as lying on a continuum in which the simplest level will be the presentation of early movement, speech and play activities by methods which are not dissimilar from those required in the stimulus/response pattern of behaviourist

programmes. At an intermediate level there are the adult-in-role techniques which demand a degree of acting ability from the adult, but are not unduly difficult to control or manage. While the most difficult activities for the teacher may be those activities in which pupils have the highest degree of freedom to contribute their own ideas of to control the progression of the lesson, as these require not only the skills in group management to ensure that all pupils are involved and working productively, but also the more situation-dependent skills discussed earlier.

If we take the analysis of activities presented in this chapter, and place it along side the criteria for methods, lesson content and aims discussed in the previous chapter, it is possible to arrive at a broad, general overview of what drama may entail at the various stages of development, and when used for various purposes. The tables which follow represent an attempt to provide such a general overview and to show the main criteria arrived at on the basis of the arguments presented in this section of the thesis. These criteria represent a hypothesis of what may be expected to occur in practice in terms of appropriate methods, materials, aims and activities.

In Part 3 we go on to examine how these criteria were reflected in the practical work carried out within a small sample of schools. There will be an attempt to show which of the proposed aims, methods, activities and content were adopted within the curriculum materials developed in the project, to indicate the practical constraints which mitigated against the adoption of some of the aspects which have been proposed in the theoretical model built up in this section of the thesis, and to show the additional aspects which were incorporated into the materials as a result of staff's practical input to the collaborative research and development process.

TABLE 3

SECTION 1 - Learning about the Drama Process

<u>General Aim</u>	The Development of skill in the use of the drama process.
<u>Goal A</u>	Encouraging the development of dramatic play within lessons.
Possible Outcome	The emergence of spontaneous imaginative play out-with lessons.
Elements in Lesson	Basing lessons on - a. child's existing interests and experience; subject matter limited to familiar situations or people and events within the environment; b. use of real objects as stimulus to perception and attention, and as reinforcement; c. element of reciprocal imitation in work; d. work presented in small segments, organised sequentially, and with opportunity for recall and repetition built in.
Possible Teaching Method	a. lesson structured around behaviourist learning principles of trial and error, reinforcement, modelling, maintenance of high affect, etc; b. use of exaggerated movement, gesture and facial expression; c. slow pace; d. flexible use of voice.
Possible Activities	1. Movement and speech activities with little imaginative element. 2. Use of puppets, music, speech rhymes or percussion as tactile, auditory or visual stimuli. 3. Singing games, action rhymes, finger play. 4. Simple representational mime activities.
<u>Goal B</u>	Extending the range of scope of dramatic play by guiding and structuring it within the lesson.
Possible Outcomes	More purposeful spontaneous dramatic play, showing evidence of increase in amount of play, more diversity in themes of play.
Elements in Lesson	a. use of material with known and familiar elements; again linked to real experiences of environment; b. acting-out episodes organised sequentially to show cause and effect: c. .../

TABLE 3 (cont.)

Elements in Lesson (Cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. subject matter with strong linear progression to demonstrate this; d. strong element of teacher direction, demonstration and modelling in guiding progression of work.
Possible Teaching Method	<p>As for Goal A, plus -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. verbal commentary on work as it progresses; b. adult acting in unison with pupils as each new element in lesson is introduced.
Possible Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residual use of activities for Goal A. 2. Simple dramatic play. 3. Dramatisation of stories by narrative method. 4. Puppets used by pupils in play. 5. Use of music, percussion, sound and movement as part of dramatic action. 6. Representational and occupational mime.
<u>Goal C</u>	Encouraging pupils to take some autonomy within lessons and to extend the direction of the work without total dependence on adult direction.
Possible Outcomes	More purposeful and organised episodes of spontaneous dramatic play between individuals who act out either one or a series of linked play episodes.
Elements in Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. use of material which allows pupils to take on and sustain individual roles and to interact with others in role; b. use of material in which pupils work together, interacting as individual members of a group situation; c. increased encouragement to pupils to provide novel input into work; d. reacting flexibly to pupils' suggestions in order to incorporate novel elements; e. sensitivity as to when and how to intervene in pupils' work in order to enable it to progress in an appropriate direction; in order to allow the less able to participate; in order to prevent the more dominant from preventing the more passive making a contribution; in order to contain or control possible disruption. f. provision of material which has possibility for either obvious linear, or less obvious lateral progression, depending on age and ability of group.

TABLE 3 (cont.)

Possible Teaching Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. adult as group leader - less emphasis on demonstration, more emphasis on discussion; b. adult provides dramatic stimulus and introduces the activity, thereafter her function is as guide, helping or advising where necessary; c. use of adult in role methods. d. use of adult as narrator to dramatic action; e. use of music as stimulus, and control for dramatic action.
Possible Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Imaginative movement sequences to music stimulus. 2. Whole group or small group improvisation using both mime and dialogue. 3. Puppetry presented by and developed by pupils. 4. Dramatisation by adult in role method. 5. Dramatisation by open-ended method. 6. More complex role-play situations, involving both mime and speech.

TABLE 4

SECTION 2A - Learning through the Use of the Drama Process

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

<u>General Aim</u>	The Development of Skills in Communication
<u>Goal A (1)</u>	Enabling the child to understand the communication of others.
Possible Outcomes	More attention to, and comprehension of, presented material.
Elements in Lesson	As for Goal A - Section 1, plus - a. strong pairing of sound and movement in the presentation of the lesson; b. use of same, limited vocabulary range in a variety of different contextual settings; c. use of real objects which are reinforcing to the child and which have 'noise-making' properties which will stimulate the child's perception of auditory stimuli.
Possible Teaching Methods	As for Goal A - Section 1
Activities	As for Goal A - Section 1
<u>Goal B (1)</u>	Enabling the child to realise that he can communicate by gesture.
Possible Outcomes	Increased use of purposeful gesture in lieu of speech. Possible use of speech, or vocal sounds.
Elements of Lesson	As for Goal A - Section 1 and As for Goal A (1) - Section 2A , plus - a. strongly exaggerated demonstration of movement and gesture, possibly molding child's hands or body in order to encourage imitation; b. accepting any small response made by pupils and building on this by exaggerated reciprocal imitation.
Possible Teaching Methods	As for Goal A - Section 1 - with strong emphasis on the use of movement.
Possible Activities	As for Goal A - Section 1

TABLE 4 (cont.)

<u>Goal C (1)</u>	Enabling child to make pleasurable associations with the making of vocal sounds and providing practice in babble.
Possible Outcomes	Increased out-put of vocally produced sounds. Increased attention to the sounds made by others or to sounds occurring naturally within the environment. Possible increase in speech.
Elements in Lesson	As for Goal A (1) - Section 2A; and Goal B - Section 1, plus - Use of subject matter with a strong element of repetitive sound, rhythmic sound, onomatopoeic sound. Vocal imitation of sounds occurring in the environment.
Possible Teaching Methods	As for Goal A - Section 1. Possible use of methods from Goal B - Section 1
Possible Activities	As for Goal A - Section 1 and As for Goal B - Section 1, plus - 1. Dramatisation of narrative method of stories with very strong sound emphasis; 2. More emphasis on the use of percussion, music rhythmic speech rhymes and action games with sound accompaniment.
<u>Goal D (1)</u>	Extending the range of the child's existing speech by the provision of a topic for communication.
Possible Outcomes	Increased 'language flow'; more expressive speech and gesture.
Elements in Lesson	Depending on child's existing speech and imaginative development, any of the elements from Goals C (1) - Section 2A.
Possible Teaching Methods	As for Goals B and C - Section 1, plus - Use of limited discussion linked to direct action.
Possible Activities	Choice of any from - Goals B and C - Section 1 Goal C (1) - Section 2A With very able pupils - consider Goal D - Section 1

TABLE 5

SECTION 2B - Learning Through the Use of the Drama Process

SOCIAL SKILLS I

<u>General Aim</u>	The development of Social Skills
For Younger Pupils - up to age 12 years (approximately)	
<u>Goal A (2)</u>	Helping pupils to take more interest in and learn more about the wider social environment, and enabling them to learn appropriate behaviours for supervised social situations within and out-with the home.
Possible Outcomes	Less fear of and more interest in social situations outwith the home; Taking a more active interest in the people, events and situations within their environment.
Elements in Lesson	As for Goals B and C - Section 1 plus - Deliberate choice of subject matter which allows opportunity to enact and rehearse real social situations - eg. a visit to the shops, the doctor, the dentist, etc. Where possible, pairing and enactment with real outings and real experience.
Possible Teaching Methods	As for Goals B and C - Section 1. With very able pupils, or pupils well versed in drama - consider Goal D - Section 1.
Possible Activities	As for Goals B and C - Section 1. Consider Goal D - Section 1.
For Younger Pupils - up to age 12 years (approximately)	
<u>Goal B (2)</u>	Encouraging more interactive and co-operative play behaviours - See Goal D - Section 1.

TABLE 5 (cont.)

SOCIAL SKILLS II

For Older Pupils - age 12 years and over	
<u>Goal C (2)</u>	Providing practice in social situations, roles and skills which may be required in unsupervised situations within or outwith the home.
Possible Outcomes	Improved ability to behave appropriately within such situations.
Elements in Lesson	Provision of opportunity for enactment and rehearsal of social situations. Linking these to real experience where possible.
Possible Teaching Methods	Use of person-in-role techniques. Use of real objects as stimulus for enactment - eg. telephone, money, maps etc. Use of the hypothetical 'what if' to extend possible options within a given situation. Considerable use of discussion to reinforce, recapitulate on, or extend ideas introduced in dramatization.
Possible Activities	Adult-in-role dramatisation based on real social situations. Role-play between pupils or between pupil and adult based on real social situations. Open-ended dramatisation allowing social roles and relationships to be explored within a more imaginative context. Small group or pair improvisation based on social themes within either real or imagined context.
For Older Pupils - aged 12 years and over	
<u>Goal D (2)</u>	To introduce pupils to more abstract concepts such as freedom of choice, personal value, self-image and the projection of self, self-assertion and autonomy of decision making and action.
Possible Outcomes	These will depend on the specific item chosen from above but should lead generally to more independence and autonomy in action, choice and decision making.
Elements in Lesson	Use of subject matter which will exemplify the topic chosen - eg. decision making based on selection of clothing appropriate to the weather/ personal taste/the social situation etc. Considerable use of discussion both before and after the enactment in order to consider the reasons behind a particular course of action. .../

TABLE 5 (cont.)

<p>Elements in Lesson (Cont.)</p>	<p><u>Note:</u> Pairing of drama work with real experience may mean taking note of the environment in which the person will be operating and making a value judgment on which aspects of social behaviour will be necessary for the person's life style, or taking a decision to include aspects such as the above irrespective of the person's environment but with knowledge that certain elements - eg. self-assertion - may be less well tolerated in certain environments than in others.</p>
<p>Possible Teaching Methods</p>	<p>As for Goal C (2) - Section 2B</p>

IMAGINATION

<u>General Aim</u>	The provision of situations which will encourage the use of imagination, provide opportunity for practice in the use of the imagination, and may help develop the imagination
Goals	Depending on the child's existing age and abilities, the goals aimed at will be virtually synonymous with those in Sections 1 or 2B, as the development of imagination is included within these aims.
Possible Outcomes	These will depend on the specific goals chosen.
Elements in Lesson	<p>Again, these will depend on the goals chosen, but imaginative ability may be enhanced in more general terms within any lesson by -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. deliberate juxtaposition of play with real objects and pretend play based on the same experience; b. providing artefacts which may be used symbolically within the lesson or as a stimulus - eg. dressing up clothes, properties for acting out, etc. c. by preparing the environment carefully it may be possible to include within it appropriate artefacts which pupils may be able to 'discover' and use in their drama activity. d. by preparing the environment to make it more in keeping with the imagined situation - this preparation may be simple - eg. the way desks, etc, are arranged/choosing large or small space for the work - or it may be complex - eg. a whole school, or whole class project in which classroom or school is 'transformed' to be more like the imagined setting. e. the use of the hypothetical 'what if' to encourage more lateral and imaginative responses.
Teaching Methods and Activities	Again, these will depend on the particular goals chosen, but adult-in-role and open-ended dramatisation techniques may be particularly useful.