



Teachers Reflections on the Importance of Creative Dramatics in Their Elementary Classrooms
by Margaret Jacobson Coxwell

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University

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Abstract:

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the importance of creative dramatics in the pedagogy of ten elementary teachers.

The researcher used the qualitative method of idiographic analysis, in which each of the teachers' responses were analyzed. In addition, nomothetic analysis was applied to the data in which the responses of all of the teachers were compared.

Results showed that nine of the ten teachers made use of creative dramatics in their classrooms in spite of the fact that only two of the nine had creative dramatics training in their undergraduate studies.

The researcher concluded that the teachers' use of creative dramatics was not dependent upon their having had training in the subject. The teachers who made use of creative dramatics did so because they saw that drama activities had benefit for their students. This research study indicated that teachers' years of experience as educators encouraged them to seek inventive pedagogical strategies which included activities in creative dramatics.

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by

Margaret Jacobson Coxwell

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
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This thesis has been read by each member of the graduate committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the importance of creative dramatics in the pedagogy of ten elementary teachers.

The researcher used the qualitative method of idiographic analysis, in which each of the teachers' responses were analyzed. In addition, nomothetic analysis was applied to the data in which the responses of all of the teachers were compared.

Results showed that nine of the ten teachers made use of creative dramatics in their classrooms in spite of the fact that only two of the nine had creative dramatics training in their undergraduate studies.

The researcher concluded that the teachers' use of creative dramatics was not dependent upon their having had training in the subject. The teachers who made use of creative dramatics did so because they saw that drama activities had benefit for their students. This research study indicated that teachers' years of experience as educators encouraged them to seek inventive pedagogical strategies which included activities in creative dramatics.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the course of my teaching career, I have worked with elementary students in a number of different settings in a variety of situations. From my earliest days as a teacher, I experimented with creative dramatics with children of various ages and came to believe that drama experiences, along with other experiences in the arts, have an important place in the education of elementary students.

Because I had little formal training in creative dramatics, I learned about the methods to use through personal research and experimentation. As I searched the literature, it became apparent to me that people who are experts in the field of creative dramatics differ in the methodology they recommend and even disagree about the way creative dramatics should be defined. However, several commonalities stood out: Creative dramatics involves process as opposed to performance; children benefit in numerous ways from the inclusion of creative dramatics in school experiences; and teachers who have little or no training in creative dramatics are not likely to use it as a pedagogical strategy.

As I continued to work with creative dramatics in the classroom, I became interested in ascertaining the views of other elementary teachers concerning the use of creative dramatics with children to see if various patterns exist. Curiosity about these views became the impetus for my study.

Significance of the Study

The arts serve as tools to express feelings, to respond to particular situations and to enhance learning in all aspects of the general curriculum. In addition, they assist in the development of cognition and emphasize the development of abilities in divergent . . . rather than convergent . . . thinking (List, 1982, p. 1).

Each art form, whether music, visual arts, or drama, represents a different symbolic system human beings use expressively to communicate with and to others. Drama in education is a way of learning and knowing symbolically different from most other ways of learning. For example, students can actually create the characteristics of characters and feel an author's intent through dramatization. The authenticity of drama creates new knowledge, presents different associations, and brings latent connections into active use to make sense of the world (Heathcote, cited in "Learning, Knowing, and Language in Drama," 1983).

Creative dramatics, first defined by Winifred Ward in the 1920s (Shuman, 1978), has been a part of elementary curricula throughout the United States and Great Britain to varying degrees since that time. Monetary cutbacks in education throughout the country have decreased spending in many areas, most significantly in the area of the arts (McCaslin, 1984). Huntsman (1982) stated that drama, in particular, is often regarded as an educational frill, not essential to the education of children.

Importance of Creative Dramatics in Education

The etymology of the word "drama" involves the root meaning "to do or live through" (Kelly, 1976, p. 7). This implies action on the part of participants. Drama contains an all-encompassing human component which integrates the activities in which people are engaged and helps them identify with others and their unique situations. Drama helps children find "the blood of things," the human element (Yaffe, 1989, p. 31). Drama tells a story, teaches concepts, and promotes the development of the whole person (O'Farrell, 1982).

Heathcote, who teaches courses in drama in England, stated,

Dramatization makes it possible to isolate an event or to compare one event with another, to look at events that have happened to other people in other places and times, perhaps, or to look at one's own experience after the event within the

safety of knowing that just at this moment it is not really happening. (quoted in Ross, 1988, p. 41)

Kukla (1988) asserted that in the process of creative dramatics children can take risks, be inventive, explore situations, and test solutions to problems with safety in ways not usually extant in the classroom. The hands-on involvement of students and student empowerment make the use of drama in the classroom a viable option (Yaffe, 1989).

Juliebo (1990) stated that the intrinsic value of drama lies in the thinking involved during the process of the work. "The use of drama in the classroom provides concrete opportunities to explore higher-level thinking abilities" (Gangi, 1990, p. 16). Yaffe, an Arts-in-Education consultant with extensive experience training teachers in drama, went on to say, "The fact is, drama is an extraordinarily versatile teaching tool, applicable to quite diverse student populations and needs" (p. 30). Creative dramatics helps students find meaning in their experiences.

Ross (1988) suggested that creative dramatics can help address the problem of the lack of attention given to the development of children's imaginations in the school setting. Within the school curriculum drama has been often perceived as only another subject rather than as an important part of the educational experiences offered. The

growth and impact of creative dramatics have been diminished by the constraints of time and of resources.

Wolfe (1978) said educators must try to humanize the curriculum in schools so that students will learn to live happily, productively, and peacefully in today's society. "Drama in education seeks to deepen children's understanding of themselves, others and the world they live in as they build an improvised drama through a process of group interaction and self-exploration" (Kukla, 1987, p. 73).

Woodruff (1982) stated that the creative dramatic process is able to provide a valid testing ground for young children in their exploration of social mores. Through the act of playing drama provides, children can explore and seek to understand the real world in situations that are free from natural consequences (Wolf, 1993).

Miller and Mason (1983) stated that creative dramatics develops the whole child without diminishing the uniqueness of the individual and that drama can improve student self-concept and attitudes toward school work. "The theatre is the only art form that deals with human behavior in a totally recognizable way" (Brizendine & Thomas, 1982, p. 5).

Social skills can be further developed in children by using drama as a means of attaining higher levels of moral decision making. Children move from an egocentric view of the world to one of cooperation. Benninga and Crum (1982)

suggested that students gain this cooperative perspective through involvement in the acting out of hypothetical dilemmas.

Courtney (1989), author of over 30 books on creative drama, asserted that children in all cultures can identify with the drama process in numerous ways. One can see children demonstrate the transformational power of dramatic acts in which they change from who they are into whom they wish to be. Creative dramatics can be a means of helping children build empathy for others. In addition, drama can help children see others' points of view.

During the process of dramatic activity children can learn about the content and conventions of the theatre, cultural learnings, ethics, and socialization skills. McCaslin (1984), author of Creative Drama in the Classroom and teacher of educational theatre at New York University School of Education, saw the following as valuable outcomes of creative dramatic work: developing imaginative and independent thinking skills, developing cooperation within groups of children, building social awareness, allowing a healthy release of emotion, building better habits of speech, and experiencing good literature. Nixon (1979) agreed that drama is an essential part of education where teachers can provide opportunities for children to create and implement their own ideas. These ideas served as a guide for this study by forming a basis for interviewing

teachers concerning their use of creative dramatics in elementary classrooms.

Teacher Preparation in Creative Dramatics

O'Farrell (1982), chair of the Arts Faculty of Education at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, author of numerous articles concerning creative dramatics, and co-author of a textbook on secondary school dramatic arts, suggested that practitioners of creative dramatics need to understand the diverse uses of drama so that they may present a united front in the battle to preserve and encourage the use of drama in education. Too often, however, according to Stewig (1986b), elementary classroom teachers come to the task of creative dramatics with enthusiasm but with a lack of knowledge of dramatic processes and techniques. His observations are based on his experience teaching language arts, language acquisition, and creative drama at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and his research in creative dramatics, which has resulted in his many articles and several books on the subject. Drama benefits not only students but teachers as well by giving them a chance to acknowledge differing kinds of logic, a chance to reflect on how to struggle with new ideas, a chance to value the gifts of all students, and the chance to meet familiar ideas in new ways (Johnson & O'Neill, 1984).

Duke (1974) in his book, Creative Dramatics and English Teaching, advocated for the inclusion of creative dramatics courses at the college level. He suggested an outline for such a course. Elements recommended for study in a creative dramatics course included philosophy of creative dramatics; history of the theatre, with emphasis on relating child drama to the mainstreams of dramatic art; purposes of creative dramatics; values of creative dramatics for children; drama in the school curriculum; techniques in creative movement, dramatic play, story drama, role playing, and evaluative measures; and peripheral issues in creative dramatics, such as organizing classroom space for drama activities and education of parents concerning creative dramatics.

If, indeed, as Rosenberg, Castellano, Chrein, and Pinciotti (1982) suggested, teachers need to devote more energy to discovering the way creative dramatics works, to finding effective teaching techniques, and to ascertaining which factors influence relationships within the field of creative dramatics, it would seem that specific training in creative drama should be an essential component of elementary teacher education.

Questions Studied

According to Yaffe (1989), in order to use creative dramatics in the classroom, "What one needs is a sense of

adventure, a willingness to try something new, and staff development that is truly about development" (p. 31). If the claims of experts concerning the benefits of creative dramatics for children were true, and if indeed all that one needed to teach drama was good staff development, a question arose concerning the extent to which creative dramatics is in use in elementary classrooms. I became interested in knowing to what extent creative dramatics is actually considered important enough to be a regular component of the school day and what kind of training is available to teachers in the use of creative dramatics in the classroom. These ideas served as motivation for the following questions which were studied:

1. How do the elementary teachers who were interviewed define the use of creative dramatics?
2. In what ways do the interviewed elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms?
3. Do these elementary teachers view creative dramatics as an important aspect of their students' education?
4. What kinds of training are necessary for teachers to effectively use creative dramatics in the classroom? How have teachers obtained information about the use of drama processes with their students?

5. What are teachers' perceptions concerning the success or failure of students to learn through the use of creative dramatics?

6. What types of teaching strategies are used in the teaching of creative dramatics in elementary classrooms?

7. Are there any courses offered in creative dramatics on the college level at any of the four-year institutions of higher education in the state of Montana? If so, in what form are the courses offered, who teaches them, and are they a required portion of the elementary education curriculum? Are the courses offered at the undergraduate or graduate levels?

8. What advantages do college language arts professors in the state of Montana assign to the inclusion of creative dramatics in elementary education and in teacher education?

Purpose and Aims of the Study

Geoghegan (1994) wrote, "The arts are the 'minority' subjects in American education, and they suffer all the indignities of the downtrodden--low status, neglect, poverty, and powerlessness" (p. 456). Arts educators have the ability and the capacity to work toward a holistic approach to education. "The arts, properly taught, are basic to individual development since they, more than any

subject, awaken all the senses--the pores of learning"
(p. 458).

Creative dramatics has been in use in many classrooms in the United States since the beginning of the twentieth century (Kardash & Wright, 1987). Advocates for creative dramatics in the classroom claim that dramatic activities influence children's development and academic achievement. Creative dramatics, however, has two serious handicaps (Durland, 1975). These limitations are the lack of understanding of the possibilities that drama can bring to the classroom and the lack of training in the knowledge of how to obtain the desired artistic results. "One is not expected to teach reading without a thorough knowledge of method; there is a method of attack in producing creative plays that are artistically satisfactory" (p. 14).

Fowler (1988) suggested that "in general, classroom teachers are ill-prepared to teach the arts" (p. 57). Many prospective elementary teachers enter college well-versed in other areas but are almost totally ignorant of the arts and their importance. "One of the main reasons that the arts remain peripheral is that they exist outside the framework of what the elementary teacher is required to teach and is truly held accountable for" (p. 55). Most state departments of public instruction assign responsibility for the teaching of the arts to classroom

teachers, but seldom account for their education in these areas (p. 57).

Nelson (1988) agreed that "classroom teachers have not received training in drama and have therefore hesitated to use it" (p. 22). From the mid-nineteenth century to today, according to Martin and Ross (1988), the idea has been almost universally sanctioned that in formal school systems the arts should be taught by teachers trained and certified in arts specialties. But, as McCaslin (1984) claimed, budget cuts and lack of well-prepared teachers are often given as reasons for eliminating the arts or curtailing established programs. Many teachers, because they have little experience in the arts, are not comfortable with their inclusion in their classrooms.

Goodridge (1971) claimed that the success of creative dramatics depends primarily upon the interest and experience of teachers and their relationship with the classes they teach. Where drama classes are offered, they are often taught by teachers whose training was not in drama (Huntsman, 1982). Teacher training in the techniques of creative drama should be an important part of elementary teacher education (Gray & Mager, 1973; Kelly, 1976).

The purpose of this research was to find out whether or not creative dramatics was used by some currently practicing elementary teachers. In addition, I was interested in knowing the extent to which teachers had

training in creative dramatics and if the inclusion or lack of such education would indicate that creative dramatics should or should not be included in elementary teacher education. The above brief review of information gives an overview of past opinion about this topic. The most recent literature pointed to a continuing need for more teacher education in the arts than has been included in the past.

The aims of this research were:

1. To analyze the ways some elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms.
2. To discover ideas and perceptions that practicing elementary teachers have about creative dramatics.
3. To collect current perceptions of professors of language arts and of elementary teachers concerning the use of creative dramatics in the classroom and how they coincide with each other and with past findings.
4. To conclude, based on the findings of the research, whether the inclusion of a creative dramatics component in teacher education in Montana would provide a viable means for encouraging a more pervasive use of creative dramatics in elementary schools.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions were used throughout the study. These terms represent commonly used ideas in the field of creative dramatics, in qualitative research, and

in educational theory. In some cases more than one definition is given for a particular term as a means of furthering the understanding of the topic.

Aesthetics--those emotions which have freed themselves from association with practical interests (Vygotsky, 1971).

Children's drama--all forms of theatre by and for children (Goldberg, 1974).

Children's theatre--formal productions for children's audiences, whether acted by professionals or by amateurs, by children or adults (McCaslin, 1984).

Choral reading--oral reading of poetry that makes use of various voice combinations including sound effects, crowd noises, movement, etc. (McCauley & McCauley, 1992).

Creative behavior--the exhibition of fluency (ability to produce many ideas), flexibility (ability to produce different categories of ideas), and elaboration (ability to embellish ideas so they are more interesting) (Brizendine & Thomas, 1982).

Creative dramatics--a way of learning, a means of self-expression, a therapeutic technique, a social activity, and an art form, the most completely personal, most highly socialized art form human beings have (McCaslin, 1984); a process-related discipline in which participants recreate historical or dramatic happenings (Piggins, 1984); activities in which children, with the

guidance of a leader, spontaneously generate drama (Snyder-Greco, 1983).

Developmental drama--the study of developmental patterns in human enactment (McCaslin, 1984); concentration on developing imagination by a holistic view of the power of drama (O'Farrell, 1982).

Drama--a way of learning in a positive, joyful, and fulfilling way (Kukla, 1987); the act of crossing into the world of a story (Paul, 1991); "a real person in a mess" (Heathcote, cited in Shuman, 1978, p. xi).

Drama therapy--a dramatic technique used to help people solve problems (McCaslin, 1984).

Dramatic literacy--the ability to use drama as a way of gaining a better understanding of one's self and of one's place in the world (Collins, 1985).

Dramatic play--free play of very young children in which they explore the world, imitating the actions and traits of those around them (McCaslin, 1984).

Educational drama--anything which involves persons in active role-taking situations in which attitudes are the main concern, in which process takes precedence over product (Shuman, 1978).

Grounded theory--theory developed through inductive analysis of data; the theory emerges from many pieces of evidence that have been collected and which are interconnected (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Improvisational drama--drama without a script.

Informal classroom drama--an unrehearsed process in which students use their voices and bodies to interpret a piece of literature (Stewig, 1986a); an activity in which students invent and enact dramatic situations for themselves rather than for an audience (Forum, 1983).

Participation theatre--theatrical production in which the audience becomes vocally and physically involved (McCaslin, 1984).

Playmaking--makes use of a story to create a play with a beginning, and middle, and an end (McCaslin, 1984).

Qualitative research--methodology involving descriptive rather than empirical evidence to support results; the concern of qualitative research is with process rather than with outcomes or products (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

Readers' theatre--oral presentation of drama, poetry or prose, by two or more readers (Wolf, 1993).

Reconstructed theory--systematically organized generalizations based on data (Wright, 1984).

Role play--assuming of a role for the particular value it may have to the participant rather than for the development of an art (McCaslin, 1984); students pretend to be other people in other places (Kukla, 1987).

Sequence drama--progression of sequences beginning with interpretive movement, simple characterization, and

plot development leading the child to create a drama with other children.

Story-drama--a process of allowing children to search into the deep meanings of a story and begin to build drama from it (Kukla, 1987); transforming a literary source into an improvised play (O'Farrell, 1982).

Story-theatre--brings about a human experience of deep reality as children work with text to develop drama (San Jose, 1988).

Syncretism--the attempted union of differing or opposing principles.

Theory-in-use--generalizations devised to analyze or predict the nature of behavior of a specified set of phenomena (Wright, 1984).

Warm-up--non-story improvisations designed to build concentration and help students eventually to change into characters (Miller & Mason, 1983).

Zone of proximal development--the distance between the actual developmental level determined by individual problem solving and the potential developmental level as determined by problem solving under adult or peer guidance (Adey & Shayer, 1994).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

History of the Creative Dramatics Movement

Human beings have recognized the educational value of drama for over two thousand years, ever since Aristotle observed that audience members found themselves learning or inferring information as they watched plays in Grecian amphitheatres (O'Farrell, 1982). Modern educational drama, which emphasizes the process of spontaneous improvisation, is a little more than 80 years old and developed almost simultaneously in the United States and Great Britain as well as in certain parts of Europe (O'Farrell, 1982).

Creative dramatics in the United States developed out of the educational philosophies and experiments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These ideas were inspired by the notions of Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi who had lived a century earlier. While Pestalozzi himself did not use drama in his teaching, he placed importance on using the senses and language thus encouraging children to observe and to discuss what they learned (O'Farrell, 1982; Popovich, 1967).

According to Popovich (1967), Edward Sheldon, the head of the Normal School and Superintendent of the Public Schools of Oswego, New York in the late 1800s, was the first educator to emphasize creativity through the use of spontaneous activities which included drama in American classrooms. Sheldon adapted the elementary curriculum to the needs of the children by incorporating students' ideas and encouraging them to enact them. This idea has become a central tenet in the use of creative dramatics in the latter part of the twentieth century (O'Farrell, 1982).

In Chicago, during the first half of the twentieth century, the Francis W. Parker School was a pioneer as it successfully implemented precepts of educational philosophy propounded by Pestalozzi and Sheldon. The school used improvisational drama to promote oral expression and to acquaint children with world literature (O'Farrell, 1982; Popovich, 1967). When Flora Cooke became head of the Parker School she continued emphasizing projects which correlated with other subjects using drama techniques. John Merrill, another instructor in the Parker School, experimented with theories that became the bases of creative dramatics (Popovich, 1967). Merrill coauthored a book with Martha Fleming called Play-making and Plays between 1925 and 1930.

In 1896 John Dewey established his Laboratory School at the University of Chicago. He and his associates

undertook experimental work in child-centered education and advocated spontaneous activities for children in which drama was used frequently (O'Farrell, 1982; Popovich, 1967).

The "ultimate birthplace" of educational drama in the United States, according to O'Farrell (1982), was in and near Chicago. Around 1930 William Wirt instituted a number of educational initiatives in the schools of Gary, Indiana. Wirt organized schools according to three fundamental principles: Schools should provide opportunity for work, study, and supervised play for children; school facilities should be used to maximum efficiency; and children should be exposed to a varied and enriched curriculum (Popovich, 1967, pp. 119-120). His program for the schools emphasized the value of dramatic acting in the improvement of oral communication.

In the second quarter of the twentieth century Winifred Ward, working in Evanston, Illinois and at Northwestern University, made significant inroads in the development of creative dramatics (Popovich, 1967). It was Ward, in fact, who coined the term "creative dramatics" as the title for her first book published in 1930 (O'Farrell, 1982; Popovich, 1967). Ward's approach was to develop a method of story dramatization by using storytelling as a basis for her initial work. Ward established training programs in creative dramatics at Northwestern University

in the 1920s and 1930s and, in 1949, founded The Children's Theatre Conference which became the national organization for educational drama in the United States (O'Farrell, 1982; Shuman, 1978). Among Ward's many contributions to creative dramatics was the development of theory and methodology for including drama in education.

By 1955 the educational importance of creative dramatics grew to the point in which over 92 colleges or universities were offering at least one course devoted to the subject (Popovich, 1967, pp. 122-123).

One cannot do justice in recounting the history of creative dramatics without including the significant contributions of the work of educators from Great Britain. As in the United States, British educators were influenced to experiment in drama for education by the principles of Pestalozzi and the progressive education movement of Dewey (O'Farrell, 1982). Caldwell Cook, who pioneered methodology in the use of improvisational drama for teaching content and other subjects in Perse School, Cambridge, wrote The Play Way which was published in 1917 (O'Farrell, 1982). Cook's focus was on learning by doing, on spontaneity rather than on forced effort. His purpose was to foster an appreciation of literature in dramatic form in order to enable people to make informed decisions about social and economic problems.

Peter Slade, a post-World War II figure in British educational drama, summarized his observations about the significance of improvisational drama in his 1954 book called Child Drama (O'Farrell, 1982; Watkins, 1981). Slade believed that teachers should facilitate appropriate modes of dramatization at each stage in children's development.

In addition to the work of Slade, other educators contributed to the explosion of interest in the use of drama as an educative medium in Great Britain in the 1950s and 1960s (Watkins, 1981). Brian Way, who was the Director of the Theatre Center in London, taught inservice courses and worked with student teachers in developmental drama. Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton evolved their own approach to drama in education in which students were encouraged to use their own strengths and to build on their own experiences (Watkins, 1981). Heathcote, a teacher at Durham University who posited drama as a learning model, suggested that teachers be open to any dramatic method which would suit the needs of the group, even to the extension of improvisational drama into formal theatrical productions. This position runs contrary to most definitions of creative or educational drama in which process is emphasized over product.

O'Farrell (1982) suggested that the three most significant legacies left to educators in drama are those of Winifred Ward (drama that tells a story), Caldwell Cook

(drama which teaches concepts), and Peter Slade (drama which promotes the development of the total person) (p. 5). The concepts of these people overlap in many areas and are indicative of the diversity of current practice in creative dramatics.

Currently, most teachers of creative dramatics follow an eclectic approach, using ideas and methods that correspond with the needs of their students. The three approaches which form the legacies indicated above seem to be the ones most used. Story drama, developmental drama, and drama as a learning tool form the basis of most current practice (O'Farrell, 1982). O'Farrell noted that the resulting diversity in drama instruction means that teachers often defeat their own purposes when attempting to describe the educational value of drama for children (p. 7). It would seem that the value in understanding the historical underpinnings of creative dramatics comes from practitioners' being able to look at their own work objectively to determine their dominant philosophy and its relationship to other ideas.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The "Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 through 8" (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1991) suggested that all educators have a belief system

whether explicit or implicit about how children learn and what they should be learning. "Theories are useful because they help teachers understand why they do what they do and explain why something happens" (p. 24). Cunningham (1992b) stated, "Holding a theoretical perspective means making a personal commitment to it, while recognizing the potential validity of other positions" (p. 157). The nature of learning should inform the practice of teaching.

Curriculum theory addresses questions about which knowledge is most important. "We cannot justify the content of what we teach solely on how children learn because the 'how' is more concerned with method" (p. 27).

Carter (1982) posited that once formulated, theory provides an extensive basis for experimental studies and further descriptive work and that any theoretical base has to be constantly validated and refined. Theory provides a basis for the rationale and design of later intervention and for descriptive studies (p. 26). A carefully developed rationale which is firmly based on theory is important in any study.

The dominant theoretical framework for this study comes from the ideas of Dewey (1934) as outlined in Art as Experience and from the constructivist theories of Vygotsky (1962, 1971).

Dewey: A Theory of Art in Education

Dewey (1934) stated that it is the task of the theorist to restore continuity between forms of art and everyday events that are universally recognized to constitute experience (p. 4). Theory is concerned with understanding and developing insight into phenomena.

"Theories which isolate art and its appreciation by placing them in a realm of their own disconnected from other modes of experiencing, are not inherent in the subject-matter but arise because of specifiable extraneous conditions" (p. 10) which are located in institutions and in habits of life. Dewey believed that all artistic endeavor needs to be a part of the normal process of living.

A philosophy of art is meaningless unless it makes people aware of art in relation to other ways of experiencing things. Artistic effort involves the interaction of human beings with their surroundings (Dewey, 1934, p. 15). Creative dramatics in concert with other aspects of the elementary school involve such interaction.

Theory can be based only on an understanding of the central role of energy within and without and of that interaction of energies which institutes opposition in company with accumulation, conservation, suspense, and interval, and cooperative movement toward fulfillment in an ordered, or rhythmical experience. (pp. 169-170)

Dewey's ideas both of theory and of art in education support the major strands of this study. One of the purposes of this research was to contribute to theory

concerned with understanding the phenomenon of creative dramatics in elementary education. Dewey's ideas about art involving the interaction of human beings with their environment sustain the tenets of creative dramatics as a component of performing arts.

Vygotsky: Constructivism

Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), a Russian psychologist, suggested the necessity of studying the relationship between the intellect and the affective domain. He suggested that children's intellectual growth is contingent upon the mastery of the social means of thought, which is language. The process of language creation is analogous to the process of concept formation in the intellectual development of the child (1962, p. 75). The phases of concept formation, according to Vygotsky, include (a) syncretic imaging, which involves the union of opposing principles, (b) development of complexes, which are the bonding of various ideas, and (c) abstracting, which comprises the singling out of certain concepts and seeing them apart from the whole concrete experience in which they are located (1962, p. 76).

Vygotsky defined aesthetics as emotions which are free from association with practical interests (1971, p. 247). Artistic experiences enhance rather than detract from students' perceptions of reality. Vygotsky stated that the

act of artistic creation cannot be taught, but the educator can work cooperatively with the student in bringing it about (1971, pp. 256-267). He went on to state that "for the child there exists a psychological kinship between art and play" (p. 257). Adey and Shayer (1994) suggested that Vygotsky integrated aspects of social psychology with aspects of individual and cognitive psychology.

Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" is the distance between the actual developmental level determined individually and the potential developmental level determined by another person, teacher, or peer. In reference to Vygotsky's ideas Adey and Shayer (1994) suggested that an individual may develop extra intellectual power when involved in mediation through social interaction (p. 119). The role of the teacher is to organize the tasks for students in such a way that they will discover the problems inherent in the tasks. Later, the whole group shares insights and difficulties which cooperative groups have encountered. Since the ability of students to make competent decisions about their own learning varies, the teacher must be able to give varying amounts of guidance to them as the need arises (Winn, 1992, p. 180). These ideas, which constitute the essence of constructivist theory, would seem to fit easily hand-in-glove with the underlying framework for the use of creative dramatics with children.

Cunningham (1992a) stated, "Vygotsky's views are basic to the constructivist position" (p. 40). The constructivist theory sees the role of the teacher changing from the traditional view of authority figure who presents information to students to one of a partner in learning. Constructivists do not focus on giving ideas to the learner; instead, they attempt to develop the skills of the student to construct their own ideas in response to different situations (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992, p. 4). For students, reality is the desired outcome of the constructive process.

Merrill (1992) cited six basic assumptions of constructivism:

1. Knowledge is constructed from experience.
2. Learning is a personal interpretation of the world, not a reality shared with others.
3. Learning is an active rather than a passive experience.
4. Meaning is negotiated through collaborative work with others and from many differing perspectives.
5. Learning should occur in real-world settings.
6. Testing should be integrated into the learning process, not be seen as a separate activity (pp. 102-103).

Fosnot (1992) suggested that a constructivist approach to teaching identifies the strategies that will facilitate the construction of concepts and determines when these

strategies are needed. Understanding is not mastered, but it can always be increased through exposure to new experiences. Creative dramatics incorporates methodology which complements the constructivist view.

Related Theoretical Ideas

Creativity was defined by Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) as "constructive, productive behavior that can be seen in action or accomplishment" (p. 74) and "a way of thinking, not a specific skill" (p. 371). These authors went on to say,

The process of creation involves incorporating the self into the activity; the very act of creation provides understanding of the process that others go through in facing their own experiences. To live cooperatively as well-adjusted human beings and to contribute creatively to such a society become most important objectives for education (p. 18).

It may be difficult for children to learn to think creatively, according to Lowenfeld and Brittain, since they often look to others for a model to follow. "There is a risk involved in setting out on new and uncharted paths" (p. 379).

Osborne (1985) spoke of aesthetic education as an involvement in the expansion of our perceptual powers and cultivation of sensibilities which belong to direct understanding of the world in which we live (p. 84). The field of aesthetics, of the arts in general, and of drama in particular, is involved with the whole of life and of

experience. Aesthetic appreciation can be taught by example but cannot be either taught or learned by rote. It must be experienced because aesthetic thinking is non-verbal thinking.

Goldberg (1974) stated that on a theoretical level education involves four kinds of exposure to art: appreciation, performance, analysis, and sociological awareness (p. 344). Creative dramatics on a theoretical level involves a process for testing, evaluating, revising, and integrating ideas and may stimulate a confident and abundant flow of ideas (Moore & Caldwell, 1990).

Wright (1984) asserted that a number of theorists suggest that teachers of creative dramatics develop a clear, individual style based on taxonomies of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. Analysis of current practice should lead to development of further theory of instruction for drama leaders (Wright, 1984, pp. 18, 22).

Rosenberg et al. (1982) suggested that often practitioners fail to develop a grounded approach to creative dramatics or to understand its theoretical and practical relationship to both theatre and to child development (p. 16). The researcher is able to stand outside the experience of creative dramatics and observe the participant, the leader, and the drama itself in addition to noting the interactions of all three. This

research stance aids in the formulation of new theory concerning the use of drama with children.

Bolton (1979) posited the notion that creative dramatics has the ability to elevate dramatic play to a level of symbolism that makes the work an artistic form (p. 74). One of the goals of drama education is to develop in each student a personal shift in value and in theoretical constructs.

Summary

Theoretical frameworks that support creative dramatics in the elementary school include the theory that art and everyday life are related and should not be isolated one from the other (Dewey, 1934) and constructivist theory which basically states that students construct their own learning with guidance from adults and peers (Vygotsky, 1962, 1971). This study sought to ascertain if there is a relationship between the use of a form of art, creative dramatics, the teaching of creative dramatics, and the training of teachers in creative dramatics. The intent was to contribute to a grounded theory concerning a basis for inclusion of creative dramatics in teacher education. The discovery of the interaction between the affective and the cognitive can contribute further to the use of creative dramatics in elementary education.

Creative Dramatics in Elementary Education

Teachers often have difficulty helping themselves and their students to see the connection among the various disciplines in schooling. This has resulted in a fragmentation of learning (Kronish & Abelmann, 1989). The arts can assist educators in finding integration across subject areas. Kronish and Abelmann contended that instruction in the arts should be developmental and sequential from elementary through secondary school with each year building on the teachings and learnings from previous experiences (p. 9). By studying the arts people may acquire a cultural record of the past and present in order to help put themselves and their value systems in proper perspective (pp. 5-6).

The Teaching of Creative Dramatics

Moore and Caldwell (1990) suggested that creative dramatics is a resource which is available to every classroom teacher. It has the potential to act as a simple, effective strategy for increasing students' motivation to learn. Goldberg (1974) concurred with this in asserting that in addition to creative dramatics' effect on children's motivation, it can also develop psychological values, encourage problem-solving competencies, help children acquire positive self-concepts, and teach them to accept differences in others (p. 15). Incidental benefits

of creative dramatics for children, according to Goldberg, include making school time relevant to everyday life, giving opportunity for socialization with others, providing enjoyable school experiences, allowing experiences with the spoken language during drama activities and in the discussions which follow, and motivating writing and other types of creative work (p. 87). Courtney (1988b) agreed that creative dramatics promotes social learning. The nature of dramatic play encourages a "wondering frame-of-mind" and leads to self-expression and new understanding, as well as cooperative interaction with others (Townsend, 1987, p. 15).

According to Wright (1984), the creative dramatics teacher needs to formulate a theory of instruction which involves developing appropriate drama activities for the group, facilitating individual and group involvement in those activities, and guiding individual understanding of the drama which is created from the activities. Whether teachers use a sequential program of dramatic activities or some other format, they must be well-versed in drama processes. This involves teachers acquiring the skill to choose appropriate situations in which to involve students in creative dramatics. Bolton (1979) was not optimistic about this possibility when he stated, "Given the present stage of teacher-training in drama and a general lack of understanding of education for values . . . many teachers

stand little chance of ever reaching this kind of goal" (p. 90).

Wright (1984) suggested four variables having an impact on elementary school drama lessons: the children's cognitive and social developmental level, the social and cultural context of the region, the culture of the school, and the teacher's role in the project (p. 21). Teachers of creative dramatics have an opportunity to involve children in the process of metacognition (thinking about thinking) and thus gain a measure of control over their own means of thought (Townsend, 1987, pp. 16-17).

The teaching of creative dramatics in the elementary school involves external action with actual context and make-believe context that evidences particularized internal action (Bolton, 1979). "In play and in drama there is obvious learning potential in terms of skills and objective knowledge, but the deepest kind of change that can take place is at the level of subjective meaning" (p. 31).

Characteristics which give an activity a dramatic orientation as opposed to mere play include (a) cooperative work, (b) congruency, which implies a compatibility between feeling and understanding, (c) ascendancy of group over personal levels of subjectivity, (d) and a feeling quality that goes beyond the emotion of daily living (Bolton, 1979, pp. 36-37).

Stages and Types of Drama

Bolton (1979) posited four stages toward change in understanding, which he saw as the goal of creative dramatics: (a) artificial drama, in which children feel but do not necessarily understand the drama experience; (b) reinforcement, where students can draw only on prior knowledge in order to create the knowledge; (c) clarification, in which drama reinforces concepts; and (d) modification, when the drama is at a level of experiential feeling in which understanding can take place (pp. 44-46). These four stages evolve into four types of dramatic activity. Type A, exercise, is characterized by a sense of purpose, repeatability, and well-defined rules. Type B, dramatic playing, is the opposite of Type A in that its mode is existential in nature and has fewer well-described features. Type C, theatre, emphasizes communication of a product to an audience. Type D, drama for understanding, combines the goals of children and teacher with purposeful dramatic play (pp. 52, 62). Those advocates who teach drama to children do not want children to escape from who they are, but to see themselves from new perspectives. Learning in drama develops growth in personal knowledge which coincides with Bolton's stated goal of drama as shift in value or in understanding.

Creative Dramatics in Language Arts

According to much of the literature, the most obvious place for drama in the elementary school is in the area of language arts. Interviewed in 1983 by Language Arts, Dorothy Heathcote asserted that through drama children can use and explore many different levels or styles of language from informal to formal ("Learning, Knowing, and Languageing in Drama," p. 701). Vawter and Vancil (1980) stated that creative dramatics can aid reading instruction in which the emphasis can be on having children act out stories. When children are self-directed through a drama process they find good reasons to read (Vawter & Vancil, 1980, p. 322).

Although apprehensive about initiating dramatic activities in her elementary class, McCormack (1992) found numerous possibilities for teaching reading and writing through the use of plays. By being allowed to make all of the decisions in the play performing process, students learned from each other about all aspects of play production from characterization, to ad libbing, to listening for cues (p. 472).

Juliebo (1990) affirmed the idea that students will use drama to generate ideas for written work. Drama activities will help them develop appropriate language use, develop questioning strategies and role playing skills, and develop respect for the rights and ideas of others.

Benninga and Crum (1982) suggested using children's literature in drama for the development of social understanding. Such activities may take place during the time already set aside for reading instruction and not only expose children to good literature but provide opportunity for interaction between the language arts and social studies (p. 147). Creative dramatics can aid in developing creative comprehension in which children view a whole story, examine the interrelationships of characters and events, and interpret characters' actions (Martin, Cramond, & Safter, 1982, p. 569).

Creative Dramatics in the Content Areas

Creative dramatics has the potential to be incorporated into many subjects other than the language arts. Hoyt (1992) proposed possibilities for the integration of the expressive arts into all subject areas. Objectives for integration of drama and content areas, according to Cottrell (1987), are (a) to implement holistic learning in which the whole being of the child--mind, body, and feelings--is involved in the process; (b) to provide experiential learning that draws on both sides of the brain; (c) to accommodate the preferred learning styles of children who learn best experientially; and (d) to provide interesting and useful content for dramatic work (p. 141).

Some examples of integrating drama in content areas which were suggested by Stewig (1983) include exploring rhythmic patterns in music and in math and studying explorers in history through spontaneous drama.

Kase-Polisini and Spector (1992) stated that creative dramatics has the possibility of being integrated with science in the elementary classroom. These authors suggested numerous similarities between science and drama. Both subject areas involve action and problem solving. Science and creative dramatics facilitators encourage learning through discovery. Through the use of open-ended questions, teachers of both disciplines help students construct knowledge built on prior learnings (p. 18). Creative dramatics can help students discover scientific concepts that explain the world around them (Brizendine & Thomas, 1982; Monroe, 1990).

Drama can provide a doorway to the past (Nelson, 1988). In social studies creative dramatics has the ability to help students to focus attention on historical events, to understand human reactions, and to retain important concepts (Brizendine & Thomas, 1982). Along with traditional activities in social studies, such as textbook reading or paper and pencil assignments, Birdsong (1989) saw the opportunity for using multicultural experiences in plays dealing with a variety of issues such as race relations or cultural diversity.

Other Uses for Creative Dramatics

Creative dramatics can be used as a helping technique in elementary classrooms (Kenny, 1987). Since drama often brings a release from tension for participants, it may be useful in both diagnosis and therapy for children with emotional disorders. In addition to having a sound base of understanding in drama, the practitioner of drama therapy must be well-versed in therapeutic techniques (p. 35).

Another place creative drama has in the elementary school is in providing opportunities for children of diverse intellectual abilities to work and play together. "The arts provide a common meeting ground for students of differing intellectual abilities" (Haeny, 1989, p. 35). When special education and gifted teachers work together to plan dramatic activities, students have the chance to develop friendships among both groups.

Summary

To summarize, the literature offered ample evidence that creative dramatics has an important place in the elementary curriculum. Nelson (1988) stated, "Drama provides the medium through which practice and extension of language can occur within a meaningful context" (p. 22). Opportunities in creative dramatics exist for experience and growth in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains and can even affect test scores positively (Grunko

& Hilsenrad, 1990, p. 11). Creative dramatics offers a dimension of knowing that can help children learn much information in many curricular and personal areas (Bolton, 1979).

Teaching Processes Used in Creative Dramatics

Petrilli (1986, p. 12) suggested three questions teachers ask about using creative dramatics in the classroom:

1. How do I do this with a classroom full of children?
2. Where do I find the time and space?
3. What do I do if the children are uncooperative?

There is no one best way for teachers to proceed with creative dramatics. Through experience and patience teachers will find what works best in a given situation. Teachers should be open, non-judgmental, non-critical, and supportive of students' efforts. Improvisation is the primary technique suggested, preceded and followed by discussions that lead children into the activity and help them evaluate their experience (Petrilli, 1986).

Vawter and Vancil (1980) asserted that the teacher has to believe in children's ability to direct themselves and has to trust that students will solve problems and work

with each other with a minimum of intercession of the teacher. Fowler (1988) said that teachers of drama should have expertise in both creative dramatics and in teaching as a prerequisite to excellence (p. 60). "Anyone who stands in front of a classroom day after day knows a great deal about performance" (Yaffe, 1989, p. 32).

Collins (1985) stated that people come to know the world through the use of various symbolic systems, such as language, mathematics, science, the visual arts, or drama. Each system provides students with a different aspect of the world. "The truly educated person may be described as one who has mastered the widest range of symbol systems possible" (p. 3). To become literate in any symbol system, regardless of what it might be, has significant cognitive benefits. Collins went on to say that creative dramatics provides students with ideas about the world and about themselves just as reading and writing provide a means of exploring the world (p. 4). Collins said, "It is only by being given frequent opportunities to observe, and participate in, dramatic activity that children can develop a dramatic sense" (p. 4). What is important is that children have an opportunity to explore the world through dramatic experiences, not that all children become experts at dramatic processes.

Sequence of Creative Dramatics

Many authors advocated a sequential program of creative dramatics in the elementary classroom (Cottrell, 1987; Gangi, 1990; List, 1982; Piggins, 1984; Stewig, 1983). While each author may propose a slightly different way of organizing the activities, generally the sequence includes the following:

- imaginative thinking and problem solving
- movement activities
- pantomime
- spatial awareness of self and of others
- sensory awareness and recall
- verbalization--imitative sound, moods, feelings
- choral reading
- readers' theatre
- characterization
- acting out analogies
- story drama
- plot development
- play reading
- play performance

The value of a program of creative dramatics for children, according to Cottrell (1987), is that it has the ability to engage children in holistic education which involves all facets of what it means to be a whole person: mind, body, emotions, challenges, and the cognitive, physical, affective, social, and aesthetic needs (p. 9).

The Role of the Teacher

Shoop (1986) asserted that the teacher of creative dramatics must train students using instructional procedures which lead them from what they know to what they do not know. Teachers have a responsibility to create a

dramatic climate in the classroom by encouraging and supporting students, establishing trust, fostering mutual respect, serving as a role-model, and engaging in active listening (Cottrell, 1987, pp. 16-19). Cottrell further suggested that the drama teacher has numerous jobs which include helping students develop appropriate attitudes, stating objectives for dramatic work, organizing and managing drama activities, developing audience skills, coaching the activities, role-playing, using effective questioning strategies, and employing competent story telling (pp. 20-36).

Group Process in Creative Dramatics

McClure, Miller, and Russo (1992) listed five stages of which teachers should be aware in dealing with group processes in creative drama: "forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning" (p. 268). These authors suggested that drama can be an effective means of helping children deal with conflicts that arise when they work in groups. Some strategies for resolving conflict in which creative dramatics may play a role include the use of fantasy, role playing, physical movement, and direct expression of conflicted feelings. Conflict in drama is good, according to McClure et al., and can provide a medium for expression of feelings that might be lost in an attempt to verbalize them.

The rest of this section deals with some specific ways in which the processes of creative dramatics may be of use in the elementary classroom.

Pantomime

Mountain (1986) stated that pantomime can be of help in teaching children who have difficulties in learning to read. Pantomime can help children develop their powers of creativity and to use "body-English" for projecting ideas (p. 6). This drama activity can help students by allowing them to release their creativity and by improving their self-image.

Choral Reading

According to McCauley and McCauley (1992), choral reading never fails to excite children's interest in reading. Students benefit by gaining an appreciation for literature, improving diction, increasing interest in literature and in reading, improving self-confidence, increasing fluency of reading, and expanding vocabulary (p. 527). McCauley and McCauley suggested the following steps in developing a choral reading activity:

- Introduce the poem.
- Read the poem to the class.
- Give the poem to the children and read it to them as they read along.
- Read the poem with the children.
- Assign solos and group lines.
- Practice the work.
- Perform the poem for others. (p. 531)

The authors stated that "cognitive aspects cannot be separated from the affective aspects of learning" (p. 532). Choral reading provides a way for the whole class to engage in a reading/dramatic activity regardless of the variation in proficiency of reading among class members.

Story Drama

According to Verriour (1990), the chief storyteller in the classroom is the teacher. As students travel through the school system they have less and less opportunity for initiating their own storytelling. Verriour asserted that storytelling and story drama fulfill a role in allowing children to internalize and verbalize personal experiences, construct meaning, and communicate feelings. As part of improvised drama, story drama involves students in the sharing of personal stories and requires them to work together to create a new story based on the ideas of everyone in the group. San Jose (1988) suggested that story drama helps children relate the literature they study to other stories.

"Story drama is virtually nonfail, even from the first" (San Jose, 1988, p. 32). The children may meet in groups to solve the problems posed in a story and take on the roles of different characters in a story. At each stage of the drama children have the opportunity to share new insights.

Verriour (1990) stated that at the onset the teacher is in control of what is happening even though the students make individual choices. As the story drama progresses children learn to work cooperatively to find other stories which are inside the first story (pp. 146-147).

Story drama can be combined with other drama process such as pantomime or readers' theatre and as children become more experienced in the process, they can make more of the decisions as to how to proceed (San Jose, 1988).

Other Creative Drama Activities

Manna (1984) stated that "play reading can encourage children to become aware of the connection between print and spoken language" (p. 712). Manna attested to the value of this process by suggesting that children are stimulated to pay close attention to details and helped to develop language skills which are basic to interpretive reading.

Paul (1991) advised creative drama teachers to have children devise play productions which include music and dance. Drama provides a multi-disciplinary, multi-sensory approach to language arts that facilitates the learning process and the ability to express ideas (p. 310).

Way (1981) said that when young children attend a play that is well-done, they participate with "mind, heart, and spirit" (p. 2). Children's vocal and physical reactions form the basis of audience participation in children's

theatre and help the children feel that they are part of the play. This brings more meaning to the experience and provides opportunity for creative responses.

Past Research in Creative Dramatics

As previously stated, creative dramatics has been in use in numerous classrooms throughout the United States since the beginning of the twentieth century. Numerous claims were made concerning the effects of creative dramatics on personality development and academic achievement, but it was not until the mid 1960s that any experimental research was done to substantiate these claims (Kardash & Wright, 1987, p. 11).

Kardash and Wright conducted a meta-analysis (a statistical analysis of summary findings) of a number of empirical studies, covering nearly 20 years, which investigated the effects of various creative dramatics programs with elementary students. The results of this analysis demonstrated that creative dramatics activities have a moderate, positive effect on elementary students' achievement in a variety of areas such as oral language skills, self-esteem, and moral reasoning skills, plus a beneficial effect on the development of dramatic skills (p. 17).

Skeptics concerned with claims about the value of creative dramatics note a scarcity of empirical evidence to

support assertions for the benefit of drama activities for students (Massey & Kolziol, 1978). Massey and Kolziol suggested that prior to 1978 research in creative dramatics contained far too few concrete descriptions of actual procedures, but the research laid a foundation of support for the positive impact of creative dramatics on language development.

Vitz (1983) stated, "Research in drama is characterized by being a one-time only event, such as a doctoral degree dissertation" (p. 23). Education systems concerned with accountability need research to add credence to the claims of the benefits of creative dramatics. If creative dramatics is to be proven important in education it is essential to compare the effectiveness of different methods and teaching styles and to ascertain which are more productive (p. 24). Making a case for further research in drama, Vitz said, "A closer, more objective examination of the process and outcomes of teaching drama can only serve to improve the art while increasing its stature in the eyes of the educational community" (p. 24).

A variety of research endeavors characterizes scholarly inquiry in the area of creative dramatics. Some areas of study include the effect of creative dramatics on language development in children and elementary principals' ideas about the use of creative dramatics in their schools.

These topics and others are discussed in the following sections.

Stewig's Research

Stewig, long active in the field of creative dramatics, conducted a number of research studies. A discussion of some of his work follows.

Stewig (1984) surveyed 346 teachers concerning whether or not they used creative dramatics in their classrooms and what, if any, benefit they felt it had for their students. Seventy-five percent felt that creative dramatics was important for children, but only 25% actually used the process in their classrooms. Another study showed that of 319 teachers 70% spent less than 5% of their language arts time on creative dramatics (p. 27).

In recounting another study, Stewig and Vail (1985) stated that despite the advocates of creative dramatics, experiences in this area are not a regular part of most curricula. Teachers seemed enthusiastic about drama but allowed little time for its inclusion in their classrooms. Stewig and Vail said, "If research documentation were available, more teachers might include creative drama as part of their curricula" (p. 261). Their study involved seventh graders in Racine, Wisconsin and replicated two other studies in which Stewig was involved. After being given a pretest, 32 students in an experimental group were

exposed to 20 lessons integrating creative drama with language arts. The pretest involved having each student recount a familiar fairy tale for taping. Forty students in a control group were also pretested, but drama was not included as part of their language arts experience. At the close of the study all students involved were tested again in the same manner as before. There was no difference between the control and experimental groups in the actual number of words produced in telling a story; the growth was significant for each group. The length of sentences grew more in the control group than in the drama group. There was equal language diversity between the two groups. The overall results showed that the group exposed to creative drama performed no worse than did the control group (p. 264). The researchers suggested that the drama group might have performed better had the teachers had adequate training. Stewig and Vail concluded, "Time can be taken from the regular language arts program and given to drama without adverse effect in the development of students' oral language" (p. 264).

Stewig (1986a) asserted that since principals of schools are frequently seen as the most important factor in determining the nature of instructional programs, if they were to support a particular educational idea, teachers would be more likely to implement it (p. 15). In this study, Stewig sought to interview principals from eight

different school systems, including 19 public and one private school. Stewig wished to ascertain their knowledge of and interest in creative dramatics as an instructional program. Nearly half of the principals felt that teachers' lack of training in the field of drama may play a role in whether or not it is included as a regular part of the school day (p. 17). Stewig found that principals often did not see informal drama as helpful in improving their school's measurable performance, although they did see creative dramatics as valuable in other ways.

Schools seldom measure creativity or self-expression, partly because it is difficult to find reliable tests. Stewig (1986a) asserted that if tests of that sort were administered, creative dramatics would stand a better chance of becoming an essential part of the educational life of children (p. 18). "Inclusion of such activities . . . is really a matter of making the educational experience equitable for all students" (p. 18).

A final example of a research project Stewig (1986b) conducted involved factors influencing how much or how little classroom teachers used creative dramatics with their students. One significant factor was the type of preparation teachers have for conducting drama activities. Stewig stated that in some undergraduate programs every elementary major must complete a drama course as a requirement for graduation. In other teacher education

programs drama courses are optional. One consistently required class in elementary education programs is a methods course in language arts. Stewig stated that for many future teachers any information they receive concerning creative dramatics is learned in this course (p. 20). For this study, he surveyed 21 college language arts texts and found that the most information devoted to creative dramatics in a textbook was 11%; the least amount was .1% of one of the books. These percentages translated into 63 of 561 pages for the former, and 2.5 of 427 pages for the latter (p. 20). Stewig found the topics most covered in language arts texts were puppets, creative dramatics, pantomime, dramatics, and dramatic activities (p. 21). Stewig stated that the survey of the texts did not answer the question of the quality of the material presented, but it seemed clear from this survey that most classroom teachers learn about creative dramatics in a language arts course rather than in a specialized course.

Language Arts Research

The most common link in research on creative dramatics is with language arts. In a reading comprehension research project, DuPont (1992) determined that using creative dramatics as an instructional strategy to enhance reading comprehension warrants recognition and continued investigation.

Wagner (1988) reviewed 48 studies which showed that training in drama produces positive effects on oral language, reading, and writing. Wagner (1988) stated, "Research on drama has not reflected the tilt in both oral language and literacy research toward qualitative and hypothesis-generating studies" (p. 52).

In research involving the Developmental Drama Scale, Wilkinson (1983) concluded, through the use of the scale, that students who participate in creative dramatics can ascertain how the process may affect them, what the end results may be, and what the implications of any changes due to drama activities have for their lives (p. 18).

In a study designed to investigate the effectiveness of creative dramatics in stimulating growth in oral language for children who are learning English as a second language, Vitz (1984) concluded that one must be careful in interpreting the results. The research suggested that drama can have a positive effect on language growth in English as a second language students, but there is a need for additional research in a number of areas concerning this effect (p. 26).

Snyder-Greco (1983) stated, "Many educators look to creative drama as a way to promote children's use of language in a variety of interactive situations, and thereby expand their functional language skills" (p. 9).

Snyder-Greco (1983) conducted research in order to determine the effects of a creative dramatics program upon specific language functions of primary age children who were identified as being language-disordered. The results showed no significant differences between the experimental and the control groups in language used for self-direction, but the experimental group made gains in language function directly related to the creative aspects of drama (projective language) and in the number of words spoken (p. 9 & 12). Snyder-Greco (1983) concluded that the flexible nature of drama makes it an approach that can be adapted to any curricular objective (p. 13).

Summary

Research in creative dramatics seems to have focused on determining the benefits of the process for elementary students in the area of language arts. Research studies that have been conducted with teachers or principals have concentrated on empirical research approaches.

Generally speaking, research showed that students benefit from the inclusion of creative dramatics as part of the regular school program especially in the area of language arts. Research has also shown that teachers, on the whole, seem to view creative dramatics as a positive educational element for children, but many of them lack

knowledge of possible processes to use with creative
dramatics in the classroom.

Kardash and Wright (1987) called for more research in
a number of areas concerning creative dramatics including
studies to determine whether all classroom teachers can be
equally effective and whether effects of teaching are
tempered by teachers' years of classroom experience.

Rosenberg et al. (1982) stated that researchers must devote
more work in ascertaining the way in which creative
dramatics works and to finding effective instructional
techniques for practitioners to employ.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Perhaps the most important thing the contemporary researcher must remember is that we cannot produce an absolute answer to a question or find only one rule for action. (Courtney, 1987, quoted in Klein, 1989, p. 10)

Design of an Ethnographic Study

I chose to conduct a qualitative, ethnographic study because creative dramatics involves the affective domain and because the research questions I posed are not appropriate for empirical research. Carter (1982) stated, "The field of children's theatre is one which does not lend itself readily to research of a tight, quantitative character" (p. 30).

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) described the characteristics of qualitative research as follows: Qualitative research has a natural setting as the source of data, with the researcher as the key instrument, and qualitative research is descriptive. Data are in the form of language rather than statistics. Qualitative research is concerned with the process of a phenomenon rather than the product. For example, the examination of teaching practice involves qualitative research, whereas evaluating test scores

involves quantitative research. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze data inductively. Inductive analysis seeks to find relationships among the various data which are collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In this study, I examined the classroom culture of ten elementary teachers and sought to discover ways in which the teachers' educational backgrounds influenced their use or lack of use of creative dramatics. I was also interested in ascertaining the ways in which teachers applied creative dramatics to their unique educational settings.

Ethnography, one of many qualitative approaches, seeks to describe culture or aspects of culture. Culture is comprised of the things human beings do, what they know, and what they make and use. By interviewing teachers about their backgrounds in and use of creative dramatics, I hoped to contribute to a grounded theory concerning the importance or lack of importance of including creative dramatics in the culture of elementary teacher education.

Grounded theory appears from the bottom up, rather than from the top down, and from numerous bits of interconnected evidence which are gathered together, analyzed, and presented in a coherent manner. Grounded theory, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), is derived from data and then illustrated by characteristic examples of data. Glaser and Strauss went on to say that in

discovering theory the researcher generates conceptual categories, or units of meaning, from evidence. Then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept. "Grounded theory can be presented either as a well-codified set of propositions or in a running theoretical discussion using conceptual categories and their properties" (p. 31).

I searched for the flow of the study as the data were being collected. After I spent time with some of the subjects, I began to see meaning emerging as I analyzed the data. As the study progressed, analysis became more focused and more directed. While I began the process with some questions in mind, I found new questions as time went by. These emerged in the form of probing questions during the interviews. Some of these questions are listed at the end of the interview questions in Appendix A.

The most important concern for me in conducting qualitative research was to ascertain meaning from the teachers' reflections on creative dramatics through this approach. As I continued to work with the data, the categories began to merge, enabling me to go beyond haphazard, unsystematic stacking of information toward a clear, coherent analysis.

Location of the Study

Ten teachers from Gallatin County in the southwestern part of Montana participated in this study. One community in which four participants taught was the county seat, Bozeman, with a population of approximately 23,000. This university community included seven elementary schools, a middle school, and a four-year high school. In addition, a number of private schools existed. I invited three teachers to participate in the study who taught in Belgrade, a town located approximately nine miles from Bozeman. This community had 3400 people and boasted two kindergarten-third grade schools, an intermediate school which included fourth through sixth grade, a middle school, and a four-year high school.

The population of the entire county at the time of the study was about 50,000. Within the county were a number of K-8 rural schools. I asked three teachers from different rural schools to participate in this study.

My intent in conducting this study was to collect and analyze information about the training and teaching practices in creative drama of ten elementary classroom teachers in southwestern Montana. By choosing a sample of teachers from different school districts, I hoped to obtain knowledge which would aid in contributing to the previously

mentioned grounded theory concerning inclusion of creative dramatics in elementary teacher education.

Description of Research Participants

Participants in this study were classroom teachers who instruct children from kindergarten through sixth grade. I sought help in locating interested teachers from administrators in local school districts and from other educators who made recommendations for teachers to interview.

As a peripheral component of the study, I asked professors and instructors of language arts and reading from the units of the state university system and from private state colleges to complete a questionnaire concerning course work in creative dramatics at the different institutions. The letter and questionnaire which were sent to these professors are located in Appendices C and D.

Procedure

As a research design for this study I chose modified analytic induction as described by Bogdan and Biklen (1992, pp. 69-71). This approach is often used in collecting and analyzing data as well as to develop and test theory. It is an appropriate method for use in open-ended interviewing.

Modified analytical induction required that initial meaningful concepts be developed after the first teacher was interviewed. Interviews generated units of meaning as they relate to creative dramatics usage and training. These units of meaning related to the first six research questions stated earlier. As each successive interview took place, I expanded and modified the concepts to fit each new case. The concepts became richer and more informed as I gathered new information. Throughout analysis, as units of meaning emerged and relationships evolved, the interrelationships with each other were intended to form an integrated framework for the contribution to grounded theory. As data arose that did not coincide with the general units of meaning that were developed, I made note of ideas which did not fit. My ultimate goal was to establish a relationship among all of the cases, finally arriving at a number of conclusions.

The main body of the research involved conducting one interview of approximately 30 to 45 minutes with each of ten classroom teachers who worked with students in grades kindergarten through six. The interview questions are listed in Appendix A. These questions were composed from the literature studied, specifically based on Ritch's (1983) research concerning elementary education majors' observations of practicing teachers' use of creative dramatics with children and on Stewig (1986b) who

interviewed elementary building principals about creative dramatics.

I included demographic information concerning the teachers interviewed for this study. These data consisted of the age of the teacher, level of education, place or places where college degrees were granted, number of years and grade levels taught, and gender. This information is summarized at the beginning of Chapter 4.

In the peripheral aspect of the study, I sent questionnaires to professors and other teachers of language arts and reading from the different units of the state university system and private colleges (see Appendices C and D). In the cover letter, I explained the nature of my research and delineated the information I sought concerning course work involving creative dramatics being offered at the various units. I asked the instructors to give their own views concerning the value, or lack of value, of creative dramatics instruction at the elementary school level. This data assisted in providing background justification for the study. I summarize the professors' responses at the close of Chapter 4.

Procedures for Recording and Analyzing Data

I tape recorded the interviews with the teachers. As I asked the questions, I made field notes about the interview setting and wrote down key words from each.

teacher's reflections. As soon as possible after the interviews, I transcribed the information which particularly and specifically pertained to this study.

I analyzed the recorded data in an ongoing manner. As a way of sorting the data, I developed coding categories. These units of meaning, based on the first six research questions posed, showed patterns within each interview and among the ten interviews conducted. As previously stated, I recorded and reported the data from the professor questionnaires as a supportive portion of the presentation of evidence at the close of the research.

In the fourth chapter of this study I include a descriptive account of the interviews, including idiographic and nomothetic analysis, and a summary of the professor questionnaires. According to Silva (1993), idiographic analysis deals with discovering patterns unique to each person. Nomothetic analysis, on the other hand, deals with detecting patterns which are found to be within a group of individuals. These two forms of analyses "converge and complement each other" (Silva, 1993, p. 50).

Chapter 5 relates the evidence gathered from this study to the review of literature from Chapter 2, along with conclusions, implications for educational practice, and recommendations for further research.

Rights of Human Subjects and Consent Process

The Human Subjects Committee at Montana State University was asked to review this study. Dr. Steven Guggenheim, chair of the committee, forwarded a letter to me stating that the study fell under the guidelines for work with human subjects.

I include a form requesting permission to use information from the taped interviews in Appendix B.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE

IntroductionThe Interview Process

Between October 21 and December 16, 1994 I interviewed ten teachers from Gallatin Valley, Montana, for this study. Nine of the interviews took place in the teachers' classrooms, and one was held in a conference room on the Montana State University campus.

I used a small voice-activated tape recorder which I placed on the table between the teacher and me. First, I obtained permission from the teacher to use his/her words. Then, I explained the general process of my asking questions and taking brief field notes as they answered. I showed them the notebook in which I was writing and explained that I would make more detailed transcriptions of their responses for analysis. As I asked the questions, I was careful not to indicate in any way my personal thoughts or biases concerning the use of creative dramatics with elementary students.

Within 24 hours of each interview, I listened to the tape and made transcriptions of responses and recorded

ideas which I considered to be especially salient. Before completing data analysis, I listened to each tape again and filled in any pertinent information that I might have missed the first time. Then, before sorting the data, I read through each interview and coded the teachers' remarks according to the following six categories based on the first six research questions discussed in Chapter 1:

1. How do the elementary teachers who are interviewed define the use of creative dramatics?

2. In what ways do the interviewed elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms?

3. Do these elementary teachers view creative dramatics as an important aspect of their students' education?

4. What kinds of training are necessary for teachers to effectively use creative dramatics in the classroom? How have teachers obtained information about the use of drama processes with their students?

5. What are the teachers' perceptions concerning the success or failure of students to learn through the use of creative dramatics?

6. What types of teaching strategies do the interviewed teachers use in the teaching of creative dramatics in elementary classrooms?

These questions related to teachers' ideas about creative dramatics and were reduced to one-word units of

meaning: definition, use, importance, training, epistemology, and pedagogy. Then, the data were sorted according to the units of meaning, as described in Chapter 3.

The first section in the reporting of interview material contains a brief overview of general information about the ten interviewees as a whole. Next, I provide a description of each of the research participants.

The third section involves idiographic analysis of each participant's responses based on the units of meaning described above. Idiographic analysis pertains to studying patterns of meaning that emerge within the individual interviews. This section presents the particularity of the teachers' responses and ideas.

The fourth section discusses nomothetic analysis in which all interviews are studied with an intent to finding overall patterns of meaning which are common to all participants. Any discrepancies among the responses and ideas of the teachers are also analyzed.

The final portion of the chapter relates information received from professors of language arts from institutions of higher learning in the state of Montana concerning creative dramatics education offered at those institutions. In addition, I include a comparison of the responses of the teachers and the professors as a conclusion to this chapter.

General Information about
the Interviewees

As stated in Chapter 3, of the ten interviewees, four taught in Bozeman, three in Belgrade, a smaller nearby community, and three served different rural schools in Gallatin County, Montana. Since I wished to include teachers in all grades, kindergarten through sixth, I based selection of teachers for the interviews on location of teaching position and grade level taught. I asked six people with whom I had acquaintance and four people who were suggested to me by teachers and principals. Prior to the interviews I had no direct knowledge that any of the teachers used creative dramatics in their classrooms.

Eight women and two men participated in the study. These people represented grade levels kindergarten through sixth grade. One representative from each of grades, K, 1, 3, 4, and 6 was included. Two teachers taught second grade, while three were fifth grade teachers. The sixth grade teacher additionally taught social studies to seventh and eighth graders in a departmentalized curriculum at a rural school.

The teachers ranged in age from 29 to 55. The number of years of teaching experience varied from 7 to 34. Nine of the teachers reported teaching experience at a number of different grade levels. One teacher's work had been entirely with one grade. Four teachers had taught college

students at various points in their careers. Three teachers taught music and one taught art in a variety of educational settings during their teaching experience; in addition to teaching in elementary classrooms as generalists.

Six of the teachers received their undergraduate degrees from institutions of higher learning in states other than Montana. Two teachers received their bachelor degrees from Montana State University and two others acquired their degrees from the University of Montana and the College of Great Falls. Nine of the ten teachers obtained educational degrees and one teacher earned a bachelor's degree in sociology. In addition to a bachelor's degree in education, one teacher had a second bachelor's degree in liberal arts.

Seven of the ten teachers had master's degrees, five of whom obtained this degree from Montana State University. Two teachers were currently enrolled in master's degree programs at Montana State. Of the seven respondents who had graduate degrees most were in education, but one teacher had a master of music degree in organ performance. One teacher had obtained fifth-year certification in the state of California. Another teacher had certification in school administration and as a remedial reading specialist.

Description of ParticipantsSusan

Susan taught first grade in Belgrade, a community located nine miles from Bozeman, Montana. Her experience included teaching first through third grade, college classes in math and in early childhood, and workshops for teachers in math and writing.

Susan told me she had thought a great deal about her use of creative dramatics with her students, and she had even made notes to herself to use in the interview. She made suggestions of things for me to do in subsequent interviews.

Susan made use of creative dramatics as an inherent part of the school day. She felt that it is of benefit to students. Susan said, "Kids all love to act out. And what's best about it is with the shyest kids. When they can become someone else, they let themselves go. [Creative dramatics] is integrated in everything that I do so it's definitely important."

Ron

Ron had a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in elementary curriculum and instruction. Before becoming an elementary teacher, he worked in a group home. He taught second grade in Bozeman. During the interview, Ron talked about a variety of experiences that

he provided for the children in his classroom. At one point he said that doing the interview was an enjoyable process for him.

Creative dramatics had an important place in Ron's classroom. He said, "It's not a very traditional approach. The novelty appeals to students."

Jane

Jane received her undergraduate degree in music education from an institution in Ohio and taught both music and general education in elementary schools. Her teaching included 16 years in Bozeman, where she taught fifth grade. Her classroom exhibited students' work as well as evidence of ongoing topics of study.

Jane described herself as a zealous advocate of the use of creative dramatics in the elementary school. She said, "Each teacher tries to approach the learning styles of the children. This [creative dramatics] does it all at one time."

Judy

Judy was a fifth grade teacher in Belgrade. During her years of teaching she taught in settings from Head Start through eighth grade and held an administrative position as head of language arts in a school district.

Judy was the only participant who had training in creative dramatics. She received this education at Kansas

State Teachers' College. She said, "I could never have taught and enjoyed it without the training. It really gave me poise, trying to learn how to give kids poise."

Lisa

Lisa received her undergraduate degree from a church-related institution in Montana. Her major was elementary education with a minor in music. At the time of the interview she taught third grade in Bozeman, but had experience in second and fourth grades and with a second/third combination class as well.

Lisa initially stated that she did not use creative dramatics activities, but as the interview progressed, she explained that she employed many types of drama-related exercises such as readers' theatre, choral reading, and story drama.

Lisa stated,

I try to adapt what I'm using [to story drama]. My purpose in doing that is to get the kids back into the story and give them another exposure to the story to increase comprehension or to increase fluency or to work on expression. It depends on my goals.

Valerie

Valerie attended educational institutions in California, Illinois, Washington, and Utah, receiving her bachelor's degree from a university in Illinois. She stated, "I guess you could say I enjoy school." Her years

of teaching included experience with junior high, high school, and junior college art, and third through fifth grade. She has a master's degree from Montana State University.

In her capacity as a fifth grade teacher in Bozeman, Valerie made use of creative dramatics in a variety of ways to enhance her students' educational opportunities. She said that creative dramatics helps children "to develop the part of the brain that is no longer used, to develop some of the forgotten reading skills that are starting to atrophy," and to develop the individual child.

Joanna

In Joanna's years as an educator, she taught all grades through eighth grade except first grade, in addition to college music classes. She graduated from a church-related college in Washington state. When I spoke with her, she taught second grade at a rural Gallatin Valley school.

Joanna made use of many types of creative dramatics activities. She said, "The main reason I use it is that I do the whole language approach. Creative dramatics provides reading with meaning. It makes learning more realistic--real-life type experiences."

Kristi

Kristi had two bachelor's degrees, one in elementary education and one in liberal arts. In her years of experience she taught kindergarten through second grade and half-time fifth grade. She was a teacher of kindergarten in a rural school. She described her approach to teaching as child-centered.

In her work with kindergarten children, Kristi made use of creative dramatics in a variety of ways. She stated,

I think it helps them free themselves so they're not so worried about what they're doing or what they look like in front of others. When you get up to communicate in front of other people as an adult, if you've had that practice while you were young, you're not going to be so nervous.

Jim

Jim, a fourth grade teacher in Belgrade, taught grades four through junior high during his years of teaching. He received his undergraduate degree and fifth year at one of the units of the University of California. In his classroom were various areas indicative of ongoing curricular projects.

While Jim produced plays from time to time, he explained that he did not make use of creative dramatics activities often in the classroom. He said he planned to have his class put on a play that year. He reported that he valued drama experiences as part of the curriculum. He

said, "You get small children involved [in drama] at an early age, it's an easier thing for them as they get older."

Sally

Sally taught a sixth grade homeroom and social studies to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade in a rural school in Gallatin Valley. She graduated from an institution in Illinois and was working on a master's degree. Her teaching experience included kindergarten, as well as grades two through eight.

Sally used many different types of creative dramatics exercises, with an emphasis on process activities rather than on plays. She explained that use of drama with students has great benefits for them. She stated,

I've never found any time that kids didn't enjoy it. They just get pulled in and involved and their faces light up. The kids that have trouble doing things get to feel real good about themselves. It's super for self-concept.

Idiographic Analysis

Definition

Idiographic analysis involves looking for patterns or units of meaning within each interview in order to understand each one separately. This section deals with the main emphases found in the responses of each interviewee. Again, the six patterns identified from the

questions undergirding this research on creative dramatics in elementary classrooms are definition, use, importance, training, epistemology, and pedagogy. Each participant's responses yielded evidence of these patterns. Each teacher provided individual perspectives about creative dramatics and its relevance to their teaching. Emphases varied among the teachers. Overall, teachers spoke most about the pedagogical strategies they used with drama activities. The importance of creative dramatics in the curriculum and the learning process with drama activities were mentioned frequently.

As each teacher's responses were recorded and analyzed, patterns of meaning emerged. Discussion of this analysis follows. In the analysis of the first interview I have included the first six research questions in italics and the six units of meaning which directly relate to those questions. Thereafter, in other analyses, I have stated only the individual units of meaning.

Analysis of Susan's Interview

How do the elementary teachers who are interviewed define the use of creative dramatics?

Definition. Susan's definition of creative dramatics included units of meaning that surfaced throughout the rest of her interview. She said,

I see it as speaking, being expressive with your voice. I see it as movement, being able to use

your body to express yourself and to work with others. And I see it also as using your imagination. Then I see all of it coming together in role playing or acting out stories.

Susan's responses are indicative of the patterns which emerged throughout her interview. These patterns relate to the use, importance, training, epistemology, and pedagogy Susan mentioned concerning creative dramatics in her first grade classroom.

In what ways do the interviewed elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms?

Use. Susan stated that because she did not teach creative dramatics as an isolated subject, it was difficult to say exactly how much time she spent on it. When she planned her lessons each week she made sure that she integrated creative dramatics activities. In addition, as she designed more long-term units or themes, Susan had drama as an integral part of these experiences.

Susan's use of creative dramatics was not dependent upon support or lack of support from her principal. While use of creative dramatics was not required, she stated that she had support for using it in the sense that the principal trusted her to design her own curriculum.

Concerning other teachers' use of creative dramatics, Susan suggested that many times teachers are restricted by school districts and by themselves. She said new teachers are very creative, but there is a stagnant time that comes

after a while when educators have used textbooks too long. "You lose track of your creative ability and just do cookbook teaching," Susan said. Often teachers think that they have to follow textbooks exactly, which does not leave opportunity for integration of drama activities into the school day.

Do these elementary teachers view creative dramatics as an important aspect of their students' education?

Importance. Susan considered creative dramatics to be very important because it helps children to be more creative. Creativity was a recurring theme in Susan's discussion of creative dramatics with children. Drama experiences help children to be able to visualize, which Susan said is important in understanding stories and in math problem solving. Creative dramatics helps children learn to sequence stories, to communicate with others, and to develop their imaginations, according to Susan. She said, "You do it because it helps them read, it helps them remember, and it helps them interpret."

One of the benefits of creative dramatics to children which Susan mentioned included helping information go into children's long-term memories. She suggested that the physical act of children getting up and acting out letters, sounds, and math concepts helps them recall these things.

Susan said creative drama is important as far as setting up certain behaviors in the classroom. Children learn how to use proper manners and how to share things with friends. Shy children benefit "when they can become someone else and can let themselves go."

Susan emphasized the significance she placed on using creative dramatics with her students by stating, "It's integrated into everything that I do, so it's definitely an important part. It's not something I do when I have time or something I do on Friday at the end of the day, or once a month."

What kinds of training are necessary for teachers to effectively use creative dramatics in the classroom? How have teachers obtained information about the use of drama processes with their students?

Training. Susan stated that while she had no specific class in using creative dramatics, she once took a workshop on integrated learning and worked on storytelling and some dramatic activities. She had no books on the subject, but she had stories that work well with drama activities. Susan said part of her ideas came from early childhood training and from education she had in teaching gifted children.

Susan suggested that after teachers have been in the field a while they realize that children benefit from doing these activities by making it easier for students to remember concepts. Susan posited that as school districts

move to a more integrated curriculum, teachers become more attune to the use of creative drama.

Susan would be interested in taking a general course in helping children to be creative rather than in taking a class in creative dramatics. She stated if there were a drama course offered, she would want to know how it would help her be a better teacher.

What are the teachers' perceptions concerning the success or failure of students to learn through the use of creative dramatics?

Epistemology. Susan saw learning taking place in a variety of ways through drama, some of which were stated under her ideas about the importance of creative dramatics for children. In addition to children's learning to be creative, to visualize, to sequence, and to better use imaginations, Susan suggested that they learn to use their body to express themselves. Children learn through drama work when they are doing things for themselves and are experimenting with different activities. Children learn to speak to their classmates loudly enough to be heard, according to Susan. In addition, she said children need to learn to perform before an audience and to be a good audience as well.

What types of teaching strategies do the interviewed teachers use in the teaching of creative dramatics in elementary classrooms?

Pedagogy. As previously stated, Susan planned some creative dramatics activities for use with her students every week. These experiences included finger plays, puppet shows, role playing, storytelling, story drama, and acting out science concepts, such as weather cycles. Additionally, she often dressed up as various story or historical characters, such as Johnny Appleseed, and involved drama in various holidays.

Susan said improvisation, in other words, spontaneous activity, absorbed most of her teaching of creative dramatics. She said even in a performance one never knows just how first graders will behave. "They might just decide when they get up in front of somebody to do something else, or to freeze. A performance rarely turns out like you practiced it."

Analysis of Ron's Interview

Definition. When I asked Ron for his definition of creative dramatics, he said, "Life is drama and that creativity comes from within and assumes a personal investment." Much of what Ron had to say about creative dramatics related to the way in which children react to drama processes, in other words, to the way in which they invest themselves in those activities.

Use. Ron explained his use of creative dramatics as an effective way of involving children completely. Creative dramatics allows children to express themselves. Time spent in Ron's classroom on dramatic activities ranged from 15 minutes every other week to one to two hours when students were rehearsing a play. As his students worked with creative drama the emphasis was on process rather than product. Ron said most of the time he had no idea of where it was going himself.

Ron stated that creative dramatics integrates with other subjects. "I don't think that creative dramatics is really something that has a territory of its own in most elementary education settings."

While he had support from his principal for everything that he did in his classroom, this did not specifically extend to creative dramatics. Ron stated he was not certain if the principal was really aware of what he did in drama.

Importance. Creative dramatics is essential in the education of elementary students, according to Ron, although he said some people think it is a frill. Ron said he had a very strong bias for the use of creative dramatics. He suggested that he did not believe that school systems in general promoted the use of creative dramatics.

Ron suggested academics can be reinforced through the use of drama activities. These processes provide another angle that can reach all students' styles of learning.

He stated that creative dramatics has benefit for children and that the novelty of it has a large appeal. Creative dramatics involves the whole child, Ron said.

You can take a little kid who is struggling with emergent literacy, who has a real hard time with a full page of print, or with some vocabulary, but he acts it out and he is off and running and he is involved and is connected.

Drama activities help students become aware of the way in which people communicate. It involves the whole range of emotions. Ron stated creative dramatics can bring children to laughter or bring them to tears. In addition, it is a very personal, open-ended process that can tap into their imaginations.

Learning cooperation with others is another benefit of creative dramatics activities, according to Ron, but the teacher has to set up guidelines to foster cooperative behaviors. Students usually are excited to be doing drama activities, but it depends on the class. Some classes react better to drama than others.

Training. Ron had no background or training in the use of creative dramatics for his elementary classroom. He said he gets a lot of his ideas from the children. As he goes through the school day Ron looks for opportunities in

which creative dramatics might be used. Ron stated that he gets some ideas from the enrichment sections of teachers' manuals.

Ron said he would like to see a course in creative dramatics for undergraduate future teachers. He repeated that he was afraid that people think that drama activities are frills. If a course were offered or if help were available from the school district in creative dramatics, Ron would be interested in taking it.

Epistemology. During Ron's interview the main emphases he expressed concerning the learning that children gain from the use of creative dramatics were in the academic and social areas. Some of these are described above in the section on the importance of the use of drama. In all activities Ron encouraged the development of civilized behavior. He emphasized that creative dramatics provides another angle for teachers to use to help children learn.

Pedagogy. In the area of strategies Ron used for teaching creative dramatics, he stressed process over product. He stated, "I think there's a pretty good balance between improvisation or performance." To his way of thinking, the classroom is a place where there is time for everything.

Among the activities he encouraged with his students were pantomime, role-playing, and acting out songs and poetry. He said, "If you take the time to ask the kids probing questions, you come up with some really amazing, profound answers" as the children work through ways to dramatize a certain thing. Ron employed puppets in a number of drama activities.

While a good deal of Ron's creative dramatic activities involved work in language arts, he also used them in math and science work as well. In math problem solving students moved around the room to enact the solutions. In science, children did a play about dinosaurs. At the time of the interview, Ron's class was working on a play for presentation around Thanksgiving.

Ron stated that much of his planning for creative dramatics activities was spur of the moment, although he did plan the more complicated events in advance.

Analysis of Jane's Interview

Definition. Jane was a teacher who made use of creative dramatics throughout the school year in a variety of ways. She said, "I would define it as any demonstration of a story, poem, or feeling expressed through body language or voice." Jane emphasized the importance of children's learning to focus, to understand emotions, and

to remember information better through the use of drama activities.

Use. Jane used creative dramatics as a vehicle for learning things other than a play or other activity. She employed drama activities primarily because she felt children learn more easily when they are active and moving.

At least once a week Jane spent time on drama exercises with her students. She stated she is often in a quandary over lack of time and she would do more if time allowed.

Creative dramatics is "one of the ways to get the curriculum across to children," according to Jane. She said children gain in reading comprehension by learning to infer ideas and concepts from text.

Jane felt she had the support of her administrator in working with creative dramatics in her classroom. She said teachers had a good deal of autonomy within her school district. She also stated, "If creative dramatics were being fostered and supported by the administration as a viable technique to use, teachers might be more likely to do so."

Importance. Jane said creative dramatics is an important component in the classroom for helping children to become more introspective. When children act out a story or a play, they examine why characters act in a

certain way. Creative dramatics encourages children's development of creativity. Jane stated, "The creative part is the student's imprint on a role because it will never be played the same by any two people." Children also stimulate each other's creativity and give each other ideas.

According to Jane, children sharpen their social skills in the process of doing drama activities. They have to carry through on their roles and learn to compromise.

Creative dramatics is a good incentive for students to do well in other academic areas, Jane said. Sometimes she would tell her students that if they finished their work the class could go on to creative dramatics. "They would probably act all day if they could."

Jane saw creative dramatics as essential to the curriculum. She said children remember things better because drama is kinesthetic as well as verbal and they use all of their senses in the process.

Training. Jane had no training in the use of creative dramatics with elementary children. She said she had taken two Shakespearean classes in which the students acted, which was helpful. In order to get help with drama projects, Jane has asked people from Montana State University to come to her classroom to work with her students.

Jane stated that most of the time her ideas for drama come out of her own imagination and what she thinks will help children become more comfortable in their characters. Jane would be interested in taking a course in creative dramatics. She said, "I feel at a loss a lot of times as to what I should do vocally with the children. A course would be enormously helpful."

Epistemology. In the process of working with drama children generate their own self-esteem, according to Jane. Students learn from the activities and learn to give a message to other people.

There is a carryover to other subjects because creative dramatics helps children focus. Children are so interested in doing the activities that they attend more readily. "Even children who often don't attend to whatever you might be saying in another subject will attend to the drama," Jane stated. Jane saw children becoming empathetic to different characters and exhibiting a large range of emotion. "They learn that even if they don't understand something right at the moment, they will find out eventually. That's a good lesson to learn for all their subjects." Jane stated that every teacher tries to approach the learning styles of all students. Creative dramatics does it all at one time.

Pedagogy. Jane emphasized both process and product in her use of creative dramatics. Her class spent from January to mid-March working on an adaptation of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. This study involved the learning of the story, reading the play together, memorizing some parts, auditioning for roles, and rehearsals for performance. In addition, Jane taught the children about the era in which the play was written, the Renaissance. The students played games, learned calligraphy and Elizabethan etiquette, and illustrated scenes from the play. Students studied about explorers, food customs, and dress of the era. Jane also used the play as a means of teaching a variety of language arts skills such as metaphor and simile.

In Jane's class, students also worked on a poetry unit in which they devised props and performed the poetry for their parents. In math, students acted out problems. Jane chose children who were not strong in math to be the actors. She said this activity helped such children feel better about math. When she worked with certain science concepts she dressed up as a "mad scientist" to emphasize the ideas.

Jane said impromptu activities are very important because they allow children to experiment with body language and movement. "The most delicious, hilarious things can happen," Jane stated. She related an incident

in which students were performing puppet plays on the Revolutionary War. There were so many children in the puppet theatre that it began to shake. Although the audience was amused, the performers were very serious about what they were doing and everyone learned something from it.

Jane's final comment was, "The ways are legion to use creative dramatics."

Analysis of Judy's Interview

Definition. Judy used creative dramatics activities in her classroom in a variety of ways. She was the only interviewee who had an undergraduate course in creative dramatics and credited that experience for helping her with ideas for working in drama with children.

Judy said, "I see creative dramatics and acting in a play as two completely different things, even though I tie them together a lot." In creative dramatics, there is a scenario where children learn to feel emotions and see them in their minds, according to Judy. She said somehow children need to learn to make all five senses experience what is happening and need not to think about what they are supposed to do next.

Use. Judy made use of creative dramatics activities for the purpose of helping children to develop poise and ease in front of a group, which she said is something they will have to do until they get out of school. Judy suggested

that drama is both process and product. She used drama process to help students to become aware of their emotions.

Judy had the support of her principal for the drama work she did. She stated that the principal helped her find time to rehearse in the stage area in the school for a play the class was working on.

Judy said she formally works with drama activities a couple of times a month, but she considered that to be not enough time. She used to spend more time before things such as computers and technology were added to the curriculum.

Importance. Judy said creative dramatics is important for children because it is a good release for them. Judy stated, "I think it's important. It's not in the curriculum, which is fine. I do what I want to do with drama." She emphasized the fun and the joy that the children have in acting and helping an audience laugh or feel other emotions. She said children are always excited about taking part in drama activities.

Judy suggested that when children develop better self-esteem through such exercises they are more ready to do general academic work. But she also said, "If I were only trying to get them to perform well on an achievement test, I'd never do creative dramatics."

Training. Judy learned about the use of creative dramatics in language arts courses at a lab school in her undergraduate work and had taken two courses in the subject since that time. In the undergraduate course students were encouraged to act. The instructors treated the college students as if they were children and helped them become comfortable with drama activities. The college students were assigned groups of students with which to work in drama. At the time, the emphasis was on doing plays. Judy said she feels that creativity is being stressed more now in drama activities than it was then.

Although Judy had background in the use of creative dramatics, she would be interested in learning more about the subject. She said, "No matter how long I've taught, things are always changing. There is always something new and great ideas come up."

Epistemology. Children learn to be creative through the use of plays and other work in creative dramatics, according to Judy. She suggested that children who do not have a particular niche in school academically or in sports find a place in drama activities. She said, "I'm teaching children of children I used to teach and they remember this more than they remember how to do long division."

Judy had not noticed that creative dramatics activities was a motivation to do other subjects, but she

said often drama gives children a reason to come to school. It helps build self-esteem and confidence.

Pedagogy. In using creative dramatics in her classroom, Judy employed a variety of strategies. She started out the school year doing pantomimes and mirrors. These activities were designed to help the children loosen up. Mirrors involved pairs of children facing and imitating each other's actions. Another activity Judy used was called "the bubble." Children were asked to pretend that they had a bubble around themselves. When they were in the bubble no one could see or hear them so they were free to act spontaneously and emotionally.

Judy had a file of activities on which she relied for ideas for activities and she looked to her students for suggestions as well. As the year progressed, Judy used activities which tied into holidays and into the study of American history. She coordinated drama into the areas of language arts and social studies for the most part. Improvisation and performance were equally important in Judy's mind.

Analysis of Lisa's Interview

Definition. Lisa defined creative dramatics as "when you want to do an entire play, where you're doing setting, characterizations, costuming, memorizing lines, and then performing for an audience." She told of involving her

students in drama activities which related for the most part to language arts. Her main emphasis was on adapting material in use in the classroom to meet the needs of the students.

Use. Lisa stated that she does not use creative dramatics as she defined it in her classroom for a number of reasons. Her main reasons for not having students perform plays were "lack of organization, lack of vision."

In activities such as readers' theatre, Lisa had her class spend from one to two hours a month. While her principal did not necessarily encourage the use of creative dramatics activities, Lisa felt the principal would support anything her class would do.

Importance. Lisa suggested that children gain in confidence through the use of story drama. When children read for a purpose, the literature has more meaning to them when it is acted out. Children's self-esteem increases as well. Lisa said that through repetition, non-readers begin to recognize words in print and then see the patterns that evolve.

Children do not necessarily gain poise from performing before their own classmates, Lisa stated. When they can act for another class or a new audience poise may evolve.

Lisa saw creative dramatics as neither an essential nor an extraneous part of the curriculum. She said,

I see it as just another opportunity to get kids into text, into reading. It probably meets different needs. I don't know if I'd call it essential because it's not always going to be the right activity for each kid. I don't see it necessarily as an extra, because it's a viable technique to use.

Training. While Lisa had no formal training in the use of creative dramatics in elementary teacher education, she had experience in theatre as an actress. She stated she would be interested in taking a course in the subject depending upon who the instructor was. Lisa said such a course would help her to raise her level of awareness in ways she could use creative dramatics. In addition, she would expect to learn the process by which she could implement more drama activities in the classroom.

If help were offered through the school district, Lisa would want it in the form of direct help to teachers rather than someone coming into the classroom to work with the children in drama activities. Lisa would want to know how she could integrate drama in ways that she believed would fit best.

Epistemology. Lisa suggested that children learn to be better readers through drama activities. "When a child has to go back and review the story because they know they are going to have to perform it before an audience, they read it more carefully."

Lisa said while doing creative dramatics might contribute to children's self-confidence, it would not necessarily motivate them to learn in other areas. She stated that when she is well-organized, the children respond more positively. "How seriously they approach it, depends upon how seriously I approach it," Lisa said. While students never grumble or complain when they are doing dramatic activities, there doesn't seem to be a high level of enthusiasm either. If the class were to do a play, students might respond with more enthusiasm because they have done plays in previous school years.

Pedagogy. Among strategies in creative dramatics which Lisa employed are readers' theatre, choral readings, and puppet plays. All of these lie in the realm of the language arts. At the time of the interview, her class was working on a choral reading of a play for Thanksgiving. The emphasis on these activities is on both process and product, although Lisa seldom has her class perform for others. She said, "It's the process that leads to the product."

In story drama, Lisa adapted what she was already using in the classroom to meet her goals and the needs of the children. Her purpose was to get the children back into the story and give them another exposure to the story to increase comprehension or to increase fluency.

Analysis of Valerie's Interview

Definition. Valerie defined creative dramatics as "anything from narrowly limited, by just how you interpret a canned script, to the other limit having to fully create from scratch your own staging and your own dialogue and figuring out your own costuming." Most of Valerie's work with drama was in the areas of language arts and history.

Use. Valerie stated that she used creative dramatics to expand children's understanding of a piece of literature or to deepen their understanding of an event in history or of a political group and their ideas. She suggested that everyday children need to use their speaking skills, and drama activities help in that endeavor. In the early part of the school year Valerie said she didn't spend a lot of time on drama, but by the end of the year it might be as much as two hours a day.

Valerie had the support of her principal for using creative dramatics in her classroom. In addition, the principal asked all the teachers to write down what they were going to do in the area of creative dramatics for the school year. Teachers could plan activities on a small scale or a big extravaganza, but they needed to do something in drama.

Importance. Valerie said literature or history became more real for children through creative dramatics. She

said often children are spectators and they sit and watch television or they watch a spectator sport. They don't have very many opportunities to perform or to amuse each other.

Valerie said drama is important "to develop the part of the brain that is no longer used." Creative dramatics helps with some of the forgotten reading skills that are starting to atrophy. Valerie spoke of the development of the individual child through drama events. According to Valerie, creative dramatics increases honesty about reading and provides motivation for children to read.

In order for creative dramatics to have an effect on the development of self-esteem, it is first necessary for the teacher to establish a good rapport in the classroom from the beginning of the school year. In the fall children would be very stiff when working in drama situations. Valerie started with something that was low risk. As time went by, enthusiasm for drama increased. When she told the class that they were going to do a play, "I couldn't get the whole sentence out of my mouth before they started saying 'yea!' and 'good' and 'what is it?' even before I told them what area we were doing."

Valerie saw creative dramatics as important in the education of the whole child. She said all schools should be whole-child schools because children do not know if they are going to be good at acting or science, or whatever

realm, until they get the chance to try it all. Valerie stated, "Creative dramatics is an essential piece of the puzzle."

Training. While Valerie had no formal training in the use of creative dramatics, she had done many school plays and said she had learned as she went along. If she were to take a class in creative dramatics Valerie felt she would want to know more about how to stage plays and to work with scenery and lighting.

If help in drama were offered through the school district Valerie would like materials sent to the teachers. She stated, in her view, a consultant would not be of help since teachers need training so that they can go back to the classroom and do the activities in creative dramatics.

Epistemology. Children learn a great deal from the use of creative dramatics, according to Valerie. They have opportunities to interpret characters and interact one-on-one and in groups. Valerie said students' work ethic improves if they feel comfortable in school. If children find that they can be accepted in the drama activities, they have a better feeling toward doing everything.

Valerie said, "I believe that children need to be educated as a whole person and all parts of their brain need to be developed." Creative dramatics can help accomplish this.

Pedagogy. Valerie found that children need to get a good sense of the way in which they relate to each other, so she structured activities to accomplish this. At the beginning of the school year, Valerie did not use creative dramatics as much as later on. Children need to learn how to approach a book, how to approach a scene from history, and become more mature before they do drama activities that are more complicated, she said. By May, her classes usually put on a big performance, usually a Shakespearean play which has been rewritten for children.

Valerie used both process and product oriented activities with her students. She said many of these events are student-generated, non-rehearsed, one-time things. The process oriented activities were for the purpose of going more deeply into what the class was studying and were always connected to the curriculum.

In the past Valerie had been more directed toward performance activities, but she had become more comfortable with improvisation as time went by. She used pantomime and movement exploration especially when children were trying to portray a character in a novel. Improvisation worked well with vocabulary study as well, according to Valerie.

Valerie collaborated with other teachers to get ideas for drama work. Also, she sought ideas from children. In science and in math Valerie used drama activities to enhance concepts. Children planned presentations in

science to give before the class. In her planning, Valerie worked with the novels that the class was studying. Many times she could not plan specifically what would be done. She said she geared activities to the group and to the piece of literature.

Analysis of Joanna's Interview

Definition. Joanna defined creative dramatics as "anytime children are expressing themselves in a spoken way with movement." Joanna used creative dramatics on a daily basis and coordinated it with all areas of the curriculum

Use. The main reason Joanna used creative dramatics in her classroom was that it tied in with the whole language approach to reading with meaning. She said learning is more realistic and drama provides real-life experiences for children.

In Joanna's classroom creative dramatics was done intensely for about one week a month when she had her class did major productions. In addition, on a daily basis, she had the class start the day with a song and a poem.

Joanna had the support of her principal for her creative dramatics activities. She said, "Basically, his philosophy is that we are professionals and we can do what we want. He trusts us to do whatever is appropriate and necessary for the children to learn."

Importance. Joanna said creative dramatics gives students an opportunity to express themselves and to be more involved in the process of learning. She stated that the activities help with developing social skills especially when students are doing role-playing. Creative dramatics does not help children develop self-control, Joanna said. "With the class I had last year, I couldn't do creative dramatics because they lost control. They just could not handle it." Creative dramatics is a free, fun experience and children get a little wild sometimes, she stated.

Children love drama situations and are excited to participate in them, according to Joanna. The first time children do a play, they are a bit nervous, but they can't wait to get started once they know the class is going to do one.

Joanna said children often blossom through drama. Shy children benefit, especially. Joanna had students give several performances of each play. With each successive performance, she could see confidence building in the way the children held their heads. By the third performance, children were more outgoing.

For Joanna, creative dramatics is an essential component of her classroom. In many classrooms, children "are still sitting in the desks and doing a lot of paper work and that's sad."

Training. Joanna had no specific training in creative dramatics in her undergraduate schooling. She said college students were introduced to choral reading in a language methods class and she had experience in music classes putting on a fall production. Joanna took a course through the drama department of her college, but it was geared toward teaching the students how to act, not toward teaching them how to do drama with children.

Joanna was not interested in taking a class in creative dramatics, but was open to new ideas in the subject. In a workshop she took recently which incorporated music with language experiences she gained some information. She suggested that it would be valuable for pre-service educators to have background in drama activities.

Epistemology. Joanna said creative dramatics gave students a purpose for learning new things. She saw improvement in students' overall self-esteem, which she felt might carry over into other areas of the curriculum. Joanna said,

The only real correlation I saw was one student who kept saying, "I can't read. I can't read." He wouldn't even try to read his part. By the end of the experience, after he'd heard his part over and over by other students, he knew it by memory, and now he feels like he can read. He's willing to try reading other things.

Pedagogy. Joanna made use of a variety of strategies in providing creative dramatics opportunities for her students. Among these were choral reading, plays, readers' theatre, role-playing, and pantomiming. Her students acted out math story problems. In science, the children acted out themes, such as a dinosaur play. In social studies, the class works drama into activities concerned with communities and Native Americans.

Most of these activities were process oriented. Even when her students did plays, she had them evaluate the performance to see how the process went. Children performed plays at least three times, in part because of lack of space for the audience, and in part because of the building of confidence with each successive performance.

Joanna sought ideas from other teachers and from theme idea books for drama activities. In her planning, she solicited children's ideas. She wanted to have the children actively involved. Children planned the scenery and helped choose roles for classmates. Joanna expressed the importance of making drama activities a group effort.

While Joanna used improvisational activities frequently, she placed more importance on play performances. She said improvisational things take up only one or two minutes and plays are more involved.

Analysis of Kristi's Interview

Definition. Kristi made frequent use of drama activities with her students for the most part in the area of language arts. She defined creative dramatics as "acting out either a story or a scenario." Kristi said creative dramatics does not always have to be written out, but can be created by the children. Throughout the interview, Kristi emphasized the importance of creative dramatics in developing creativity and self-control in children.

Use. Kristi said she employed creative dramatics in the classroom because she liked the children to get up in front of others and perform. Furthermore, she wanted students to learn to be an audience. Kristi stated that drama makes books come alive and if children act them out, the books become more real. She suggested that children love to do drama activities and that children of kindergarten age are not inhibited.

Kristi said she had children do drama exercises three to four days a week for 30 minutes each day. While she had not asked her principal specifically about using creative dramatics in the classroom, Kristi said the principal was a supportive person, so she assumed support of drama.

Importance. Kristi stated that creative dramatics helps children become free so they are not so concerned

about being in front of others. If people have had practice in communicating before others as children, they will not be so nervous as adults.

Drama activities provide an alternative activity and allow children to be creative and express themselves. Children learn to be self-controlled. Kristi stated that the more children do drama activities, the more controlled they are. She said,

There has to be (self-control) because they can't just get up and do anything they want. They have to learn what is expected of them. Even with the freedom, there have to be boundaries, otherwise they'll just be crazy.

Children learn to visualize and imagine things through creative dramatics. When they act out stories, they have few props. Things to do have to be planned in their minds.

Kristi said if creative dramatics were really an essential component of the curriculum she would do it every day. "But without it, I think my classroom would be less fun. An extra, to me, is something I can live without." Thus, Kristi viewed drama activities somewhere between essential and extraneous.

Training. In Kristi's undergraduate education training there was no specific class in creative dramatics. In language arts methods class she learned that book reports could be acted out and there was a little drama presented in a physical education methods course. When she

was working on a second degree in liberal arts she enrolled in a drama class as an elective. The course included a variety of drama and movement activities.

Kristi would be interested in taking a graduate class in creative dramatics if it fit into her master's degree program. If help were available from the school district, she would take advantage of it.

Epistemology. Children learn to cooperate through drama activities, Kristi said. "They have to work it out together because one person can't get up and do the whole thing. They have to figure out how to help each other."

A teacher can find who the leaders are in a class and also who the shy ones are. Children learn their parts by rote and make up other ones as they go along.

Pedagogy. Kristi's class acted out poems and songs almost daily. She encouraged the children to make up the actions on the first day of the week, and then they followed through by using the same ones for the rest of the week.

Kristi read stories to the children and had them act them out saying the speaking parts. When the story had been read a number of times, the children learned the lines and added some of their own.

During an independent work time called "plan, do, review" Kristi's students often planned puppet plays. She

provides materials designed to encourage them to make their own puppets and make up their own plays.

When Kristi planned dramatic activities, she used some books which described some movement activities, but most of the time she made up the events herself. She planned the activities around the books she read to the children. She used basically the same ones every year, adding new ones from time to time. Kristi said most of the drama activities revolved around the literature she used in the classroom. In math or science Kristi used drama on occasion.

Activities in drama constituted half improvisation and half performance in Kristi's class. She said, "When I direct it, it's performance; but with puppets, it's improvisation."

Analysis of Jim's Interview

Definition. Jim defined creative dramatics as "anything that children can act out that is academically oriented; anything that is related to whatever they're studying." He also stated that creative dramatics involves the expression of the children to bring out their creativity.

Use. Jim stated that he did not employ creative dramatics strategies in his classroom. He said one of the

drawbacks to it is the time involved in doing it. He explained that sometimes it takes away from other subjects.

While Jim sometimes had his students act out stories spontaneously, he did not think of that as creative dramatics. He said, "I've always thought [of creative dramatics] as something with a script and the kids would do it."

Jim said his principal would totally back any dramatic activities he would do.

Importance. Jim suggested that creative dramatics would be beneficial to all students. He said drama brings the shyness out of children and lets them express themselves in different ways. "It's a way of releasing the inner self."

Children would have to learn to be cooperative through drama activities, according to Jim, because of all of the different parts working together in a play. "You would find out quickly as to the ones who were [cooperative] and the ones who weren't." Jim stated that a teacher has to see children in different modes, and creative dramatics would be a totally different environment and atmosphere than what usually exists in a regular classroom.

Jim said some children would gain in motivation and self-esteem. But, he also stated that he did not think it

would help all children, because they all learn in different ways.

For Jim, creative dramatics would be an extra teaching tool, rather than an essential component of the curriculum. He said it might possibly be essential with certain students as a medium for self-expression. Jim said the earlier children were involved in drama the easier it would be for most of them.

Training. Jim had no training in creative dramatics during college days and would not be interested in taking a graduate course in the subject. He stated that if there were help available from the school district in the form of a person to help with drama, he would make use of the person as a resource. He would want a drama person to come into his classroom and work with the children to help him have a better idea of how to go about using drama with the students.

Epistemology. In the past, Jim did plays with his students. He suggested that children react and relate better to "light" plays than to serious plays. "Everything I have ever done has been pretty light. Maybe older kids are better at handling heavier plays."

Pedagogy. In the past when Jim used plays in his classroom, he often made things up himself. He

collaborated with other classroom teachers to put on productions. Jim also had a book of plays which he tied to whatever the class happened to be studying at the time. His emphasis was on performance rather than on improvisation.

When Jim did a play, he was sure to involve all of the students in some way, whether in acting, in props, or as stage hands. He held his rehearsals in his classroom and asked children to voice their opinions and ideas about how the play should go.

Jim said in his view creative dramatics could be coordinated with social studies very easily. "It could probably be done with any of the academics." He suggested that math might be the hardest subject to relate to drama.

Analysis of Sally's Interview

Definition. Sally said creative dramatics is "when children assume parts or characters or actions that are outside of themselves." Her main emphasis was on improvisational types of drama activities.

Use. Sally made use of drama activities in a number of different ways, including a subject called "law-related education" which introduces children to a variety of legal issues which affect American citizens. Most of what Sally did with drama was very simple, she said. Her reasons for using creative dramatics included, "It's fun. It's

interesting. It gets everybody involved. It's a good setup to pull kids into the activities. I like to do it."

Sally said she spent about an hour a week over an entire school year on creative dramatics, but she stated, "If you clocked me, I spend more than that. I'll bet I do more things than I realize."

Sally had the support of her principal for the drama work that she did with her students. She said, "We're a small rural school and I just do what I want to do."

Importance. Sally considered creative dramatics to be important in enabling children, especially those who are shy, to speak out and to participate in situations where they would not be inhibited. She suggested that drama helps children to understand feelings and emotions. "It gives children a chance to explore language, the use of words, and the rhythm of words."

According to Sally, creative dramatics aids in developing good self-concept, self-control, cooperation, and creative imagination. She said her students have always enjoyed working in drama. She could teach the same thing without doing drama activities, but she did not think it would be as effective, or as interesting, or that the children would enjoy it as much or probably learn as much. Sally stated, "I think it's important, because I like to have lots of things happening. I think learning should be

fun and this makes learning fun, more interesting, and more challenging for the kids."

Training. Sally had no training in creative dramatics, but said that she was sure she had gained information from various workshops throughout her career. She didn't remember any courses in the subject offered when she was an undergraduate. She said a course in creative dramatics would be fun and she would make use of any help offered to her by her school district.

Epistemology. Sally suggested that creative dramatics is especially good for content area instruction and learning. It helps children learn, especially when there are activities in which they can move. "It gives them an awareness of their bodies and their bodies in space, and what they're doing with them."

Sally was interested in what children learn from doing drama activities. She emphasized skills of getting up in front of the classroom, learning content, and picking up emotions from the readings.

Pedagogy. In addition to employing creative dramatics with law-related education, Sally used it in literature and in poetry. In social studies, students read plays for different periods of history. When Sally's class did a

Native American unit, she included drama events. She said, "I kind of infuse it all over."

Sally was more interested in process rather than product in her use of creative dramatics. She gathered materials from many resources: magazines, classes in graduate school, teachers' manuals, workshops, and teachers' conventions. Her planning process involved student input.

Sally didn't have her students do many performances. She said,

I would have a hard time justifying taking enough time to do a big play that would take all semester to practice. I think you reach a point, and it's a fine line, when you have to decide where you've passed over, where you can justify taking curriculum time out.

Sally suggested that perhaps an after-school drama group would be desirable for students who were interested in doing large productions.

Nomothetic Analysis

For this study, nomothetic analysis involved examining all of the interviews to see what patterns existed among them. As I looked at the interviews for commonalities, the units of meaning derived from the first six research questions continued to emerge. The participants in this study expressed many similar ideas about creative dramatics concerning definition, use, importance, training,

epistemology, and pedagogy. I examined each of these patterns for analogous ideas. At the same time, I looked for concepts from the interviews that were discrepant, or anomalous, in contrast to those which were most frequently discussed.

Generally speaking, the teachers who were interviewed shared many notions about creative dramatics and its importance for use in elementary classrooms. Ideas emerged which differed from the majority view. These concepts were important to note as well.

Definition

In defining creative dramatics, most of the teachers included ideas which involved improvisational types of activities. Overall, they stressed process over product. They spoke of children acting out stories which they create, spoken expression, movement, and the involvement of the emotions.

Two teachers defined creative dramatics as putting on a complete play. One teacher placed creative dramatics on a continuum from doing a full-blown scripted play directed by the teacher to drama created by the children. Another teacher included academically oriented activities in the definition of drama. One teacher defined the subject as doing a play but included a number of traditionally improvisational dramatic activities in her curriculum.

Use

Over half of the teachers said that one of the best uses of creative dramatics is in integrating it with other subjects. They varied in the time spent on creative dramatics from none to 15 minutes a week to two hours a day depending on what was going on in their academic program at a particular time.

Reasons for using creative dramatics strategies consisted of deepening understanding of information, involving children completely in the process, helping children develop poise, and providing real-life experiences for children through drama.

Use of creative dramatics was not dependent on support or lack of support from teachers' principals. Most administrators allowed the teachers to be autonomous in their classrooms, thus their support of creative dramatics was of a passive nature for the most part. One particular principal actively encouraged the use of creative dramatics in all of the classes in the school by asking teachers to include drama activities during the school year.

Four teachers suggested that lack of time was a factor in their use, or lack of use, of creative dramatics. A drawback to creative dramatics was the time it could take from mandated curricular subjects, according to two of these interviewees.

Importance

Overall, seven teachers viewed creative dramatics as essential to the elementary school curriculum, while three saw it as non-essential.

The three areas in which teachers saw creative dramatics as most important were developing children's social skills, increasing children's self-esteem and self-confidence, and helping children to be more creative.

Less mentioned areas of importance were encouraging children to communicate with others, involving the whole child, and using creative dramatics as an emotional outlet for children.

Four ideas mentioned by a few teachers concerning the importance of creative dramatics were helping children to visualize or imagine more effectively, increasing children's abilities to remember, aiding children to become higher level thinkers, and employing a teaching strategy that reaches all of children's learning styles.

All but one of the teachers said children are excited and eager to participate in creative dramatics activities. Some teachers credited the excitement generated by students' being involved in drama situations for helping children to be more enthusiastic about school in general.

Training

Nine of the teachers interviewed had no training in creative dramatics in their undergraduate teacher education programs, although one of the nine had a course in a liberal arts curriculum as a post-baccalaureate study. One teacher had been involved in a required undergraduate creative dramatics class which included practicing the teaching of activities with children. Two teachers had taken a workshop in drama. Most of them indicated that an undergraduate course would be helpful to preservice educators.

When asked if the teachers would be interested in taking a class in creative dramatics, seven said yes and three said no. Nine teachers indicated that they would not be interested in a district-sponsored workshop on the subject, but six teachers said they would avail themselves of help for their classrooms in drama if it were offered by their school districts.

During the interviews I asked the teachers in what ways they obtained ideas and inspiration to do dramatic projects. Most of them said their ideas came from their own imaginations. As they planned their themes, units, or weekly work, many made a concerted effort to include an improvisational activity, acting out poetry, a story, or a song, or other type of dramatic situation. Several teachers said they solicited ideas from children. Some

found ideas for drama in teachers' manuals, playbooks, or themebooks.

Epistemology

All of the participants said children are able to learn from drama activities regardless of the extent to which the teachers themselves used creative dramatics in their classrooms. Few definitive patterns emerged in this regard except in the area of communication. Five teachers said children develop poise and learn to speak clearly so that they may be heard by an audience. Two teachers suggested the importance of creative dramatics is in helping children learn to be creative. Two others said children learn to use the body for self-expression. Two participants stated that children learn to become more adept in social skills.

Areas of knowledge affected positively by creative dramatics which were mentioned by teachers included learning to sequence, to experiment, to focus, to become better readers, to interpret characters, to develop a work ethic, to find a purpose for learning new things, and to use a new strategy for learning in content areas.

Pedagogy

The two most commonly appearing general pedagogical strategies used by the teachers interviewed were integrating creative dramatics with content area subjects

and providing a balance between improvisation and performance, between process and product.

In the area of content subject integration, teachers used creative dramatics in math, science, and social studies as well as in language arts. Improvisational activities included acting out vocabulary, stories, poems, and songs, doing pantomimes, role playing, demonstrating math problem solving, making up puppet shows, and creating finger plays. Performance activities included doing Shakespearean and other plays, skits, choral readings, readers' theatre, and storytelling. Most of the teachers who effected performance exercises said they sought input from the children on the way in which the activities should be carried out. Even in performance children were often encouraged to examine the process of carrying out a play or other drama work.

Summary

The teachers who were interviewed for this study suggested overall that creative dramatics is an important process/product-oriented activity for elementary-aged children. It brings to children experiences that excite them and benefit them in numerous ways, according to most of the teachers. Many of the teachers said the greatest benefits to children are in helping them find new ways to learn, to communicate, to express emotions, and to develop

social skills. Clearly, the teachers used creative dramatics because of these benefits. All but one of the teachers suggested that creative dramatics can be integrated throughout the whole curriculum.

While most of the interviewees had no training in creative dramatics, they developed ideas and activities by themselves and by seeking help from other resources. Most of the teachers were interested in learning more about the subject, in various ways, and felt that undergraduate training would be of help to all teachers.

Analysis of the Professor Questionnaires

The last two research questions of interest to me, as stated in the first chapter, numbers 7 and 8, involved the teaching of creative dramatics at the college level. These questions were stated as follows.

7. Are there any courses offered in creative dramatics on the college level at any of the institutions of higher education in the state of Montana? If so, in what form are the courses offered, who teaches them, and are they a required portion of the elementary education curriculum? Are the courses offered at the undergraduate or graduate levels?

8. What advantages do college language arts professors in the state of Montana assign to the inclusion

of creative dramatics in elementary education and in teacher education?

Using these questions and the teacher interview questions I had generated as a basis, I formulated a questionnaire to be sent to the four-year institutions of higher learning in Montana. The format of the questionnaire is found in Appendix D.

In November of 1994, I sent questionnaires to professors of reading and language arts in all of the four-year institutions of higher learning in Montana which have elementary teacher education programs. The public institutions included were Montana State University, Bozeman; Montana State University, Billings; Montana State University, Northern; The University of Montana, Missoula; and The University of Montana, Western. Three private colleges were included in the study as well: Rocky Mountain College in Billings; Carroll College in Helena; and The College of Great Falls.

The purpose of this part of the study was to discover which courses in creative dramatics, if any, were offered at these institutions and to ascertain professors' opinions about the efficacy of using creative dramatics in elementary classrooms. A cover letter explaining this study, which is shown in Appendix C, was sent along with each questionnaire.

Sixteen questionnaires were sent out. Prior to sending them, I had found that some of the institutions had several professors of reading and language arts. Thus, I sent a questionnaire to each professor of reading and language arts at those particular colleges. Seven questionnaires were returned. These were representative of seven of the eight institutions surveyed.

I restate in italics the questions posed on the questionnaire in the next section of this chapter. After each question is stated, I present the responses of the professors and the comments each made.

At the close of this discussion, I compare the professors' responses with those of the teachers I interviewed in the areas of importance of creative dramatics for elementary students, use and pedagogy, and training in creative dramatics for teachers.

Professors' Responses

Question #1: Is there a course in creative drama currently being offered for elementary education majors at your institution? If so, how many semester/quarter credits is the course? Who teaches the course?

Three of the responding institutions offered undergraduate courses in creative dramatics. In two instances the courses were taught by drama professors. In the other case, the course was taught by the reading and language arts professor.

The three courses were electives, but in one of these instances, the course was required for students working on an early childhood endorsement. One course was entitled "Creative Dramatics," another was called "Drama Activities for Children," and the third was named "Methods of Teaching Elementary and Secondary Drama." At the institution where "Methods of Teaching Elementary and Secondary Drama" was taught, an alternate course called "Drama for Children" was offered, both classes not being offered in the same year.

Question #2: Briefly describe the content of the course.

The course called "Creative Dramatics" provided an introduction to creative drama in the elementary classroom. It included puppetry, maskmaking, movement, rhythm, storytelling, pantomime, improvisation, and poetry.

The drama professor who taught "Dramatic Activities for Children" sent a syllabus of the course with the completed questionnaire. The purpose of the course was for students to learn creative approaches to teaching children prekindergarten through eighth grade. Activities for the class included pantomime, improvisational drama, story drama, and acting out poetry.

"Methods of Teaching Elementary and Secondary Drama" was a study of approaches for the incorporation of dramatic activities into elementary and secondary school curricula,

including ideas for equipping and operating an educational theatre plant, according to the professor.

"Drama for Children" taught techniques of teaching drama to children by using drama activities to enhance learning. These strategies were geared for classroom, playground, and home.

Question #3: Is creative drama offered as a portion of reading and/or language arts methods courses? What drama activities are emphasized?

Four professors responded in the affirmative to this question. The drama activities included in reading/language arts methods classes were storytelling in three of the classes, making and using puppets, song and dance, readers' theatre, poetry mini-dramas, and finger plays and simple movement activities to accompany simple rhymes and verses.

Question #4: Do you personally advocate the inclusion of creative drama in elementary school programs as beneficial to children? Briefly describe the benefits.

All seven of the respondents advocated the inclusion of creative dramatics in the elementary school curriculum. The professors described the benefits to children in ways similar to those stated by the teachers I interviewed. The following is a list of these benefits, according to the responding professors.

- Creative dramatics enhances self-control.
- Drama honors self-esteem.
- Drama activities encourage creativity.
- Drama promotes reading.
- Children experience joy in drama.

Children express emotions and deal with situations in a play-like atmosphere. Oral language practice helps develop public speaking abilities. Children develop a sense of self and a sense of audience. The varied verbal and nonverbal responses express emotion or interpretation. Creative dramatics offers an alternate form of expression that differs from more traditional ones. Drama activities help develop basic skills. They promote physical and mental health and help to clarify values. Drama strengthens a child's ability to think. Creative dramatics helps develop self-expression. Drama is supportive of diverse learning styles and risk-taking behaviors. Drama activities embellish the learning process.

Question #5: If a course or part of a course is not currently devoted to creative drama at your institution, would you recommend that it be added to the elementary education curriculum? If not, why not? If yes, what form would the course take? (Seminar, full course, part of a course?)

Five of the responding professors recommended that a course in creative dramatics be offered. One professor suggested that it be included as part of language arts methodology. Another professor said a one credit, required seminar in creative dramatics should be included in elementary teacher education. However, since there are a number of constraints on adding new courses, drama should be made a major strand of language arts methods. At the institution where creative dramatics is a required course for early childhood majors, the course may be taken as an elective by those working toward a reading endorsement.

One professor stated, "If I were king of the world," a full course in creative dramatics would be required for elementary majors. This course would encompass theory, experience and theatre activities.

Question #6: Please add any other comments concerning the value, or lack of value, of creative dramatics, as you see it, for either elementary school children, or for students enrolled in elementary education programs.

Most of the responding professors made concluding comments concerning their views about creative dramatics. In at least one institution, creative dramatics was at one time required for all elementary majors, but was removed as a requirement some years ago. One professor stated that if students in elementary education courses do not have creative dramatics in the college program, oftentimes their future students will not experience creative dramatics.

Another professor said the Office of Public Instruction in Montana requires some dramatics to be included in the elementary curriculum through fine arts education. According to section 10.58.508.6a.iv of the Montana Teacher Education Program Standards (Board of Public Education, 1989), prospective elementary teachers shall have a program of instruction which includes helping students develop an understanding and appreciation of "related fine arts areas of dance, film, music, literature, theater and the applied arts and their relationship to visual arts" (p. 18).

Creative dramatics ought to be an important component of language arts education in general and for elementary students in particular, according to a professor. This professor said it is critical for preservice teachers to have the training in drama as well. The professor went on to state that if teachers do not have creative drama in the teacher education program, they are unlikely to use it in their elementary classrooms as teachers.

A respondent agreed with the above statement, saying it is important for preservice teachers to have many experiences with creative dramatics so they will use those ideas in the classroom. There is a growing need for all of the arts in our schools, as population and learning needs in our information society become more diverse, according to one of the professors.

Summary

As a whole, the group of professors who responded to the questionnaire suggested that creative dramatics is important to elementary school students for a variety of reasons. They saw many benefits to drama's inclusion in the elementary curriculum. Most agreed that creative dramatics should be a required component in elementary teacher education, either as a full course, or as an important element of language arts methods courses. Some suggested that children would have no exposure to creative

dramatics if their teachers had no specific training in the subject.

Comparison of Teachers' and Professors' Responses

Teachers and professors alike advocated the use of creative dramatics in elementary education. Common elements emerged as I compared the responses. These emergent areas were importance, use and pedagogy, and ideas about training teachers in creative dramatics.

Importance

In advocating the use of creative dramatics in elementary education, the professors who responded to the questionnaire suggested that creative dramatics has numerous benefits to children. These are listed in full earlier in this chapter. Some of these benefits included the development of self-esteem, the enhancement of social skills, the encouragement of creativity, the promotion of reading improvement, the expression of emotions, the cultivation of oral speaking skills, and the strengthening of ability to use higher level thinking competencies. As I interviewed the teachers involved in this study, many of them suggested the aforementioned benefits of creative dramatics as significant reasons for their including drama techniques in their classrooms.

Use and Pedagogy

The creative dramatics courses offered by three institutions of higher learning in Montana included activities such as puppetry, movement, story drama, poetry, pantomime, and improvisations. Creative dramatics activities incorporated into language arts/reading methods classes encompassed the above exercises, but also included readers' theatre, storytelling, and finger plays. The teachers I interviewed included many of these activities as part of their ongoing creative dramatics pedagogy.

While most of the teachers incorporated creative dramatics into content area pedagogy, professors did not mention this as a viable way of including drama into educational settings.

Training

Five of the professors who responded to the questionnaire suggested that there would be value in offering an undergraduate course in creative dramatics in teacher education curricula. The other two respondents took a more pragmatic view, saying that including creative dramatics in language arts or reading methods classes or requiring a one credit seminar in drama would be more viable options, due to the budgetary constraints under which most colleges and universities operate.

Teachers agreed with professors that creative dramatics training for undergraduate elementary majors is desirable. While two professors suggested that if teachers do not have opportunity to learn creative dramatic strategies, they will not use drama in the classroom, most of the teachers who were interviewed contradicted their assumption. These teachers, for the most part, were committed to using creative dramatics for its value to students' learning and social development. Therefore, they sought information about ways in which to use creative dramatics from numerous sources. While teachers did not actively seek further education in drama through courses, seven said they would take a class in creative dramatics should one be offered.

Teachers showed little interest in taking a district-sponsored workshops in drama. If they were offered help in the form of someone to give them ideas or to come into the classroom to demonstrate drama activities, such as an artist-in-residence or a fine arts consultant, six of the teachers stated that they would take advantage of such an offer.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FURTHER STUDYIntroduction

This study focused on a number of issues concerning the use of creative dramatics in some elementary schools. I interviewed ten teachers and queried professors from Montana about their views pertaining to the importance of creative dramatics and issues related to training in the subject.

I bring this study to completion with the discussion of a number of issues. First, I address the association of Dewey's and Vygotsky's theories about art and learning to the research data I collected. Second, I examine these research findings in connection with selected current and past literature on the subject of creative dramatics. Third, I discuss conclusions derived from the study. Next, I relate implications of the research results to educational practice. Finally, I make recommendations for further research in the use of creative dramatics.

Review of Supporting Theoretical Framework

The principal theoretical ideas that undergirded this study are those of Dewey and Vygotsky, which were discussed in detail in Chapter 2. A brief review of these concepts helps make a connection between theory and the research I conducted. Then I discuss each theoretical concept in more detail and relate it to what I learned from the study.

Dewey (1934) suggested that art and everyday life are interconnected and should not be separated in the school setting. Vygotsky (1962) proposed constructivist theory which says that students construct their own knowledge based on prior experience and the current influence of teachers and others.

Dewey: Creative Dramatics and Life

In discussing creative dramatics, the majority of teachers emphasized children's being involved in drama through integration with content area subjects. This process helps children see the relationship of the drama to real-life situations, not as an isolated subject. Some of the reasons teachers gave for using creative dramatics activities included providing real-life experiences for children.

The importance of creative dramatics to children, according to many teachers, was in developing children's social skills and in increasing their self-esteem and self-

confidence. Other areas of significance included allowing children to gain skill in communication with others. Involving the whole child was also mentioned as vital in the use of creative dramatics. Children can learn skills which they will use their entire lives, such as the development of poise when speaking in front of others and the learning of social skills of interaction and cooperation through creative drama.

Pedagogical strategies included helping children see the relationship between drama and other areas of study, which applies to everyday life situations. The interviewed teachers generally felt that drama is not an isolated subject and that it can enhance the lives of children in significant ways. This idea corresponds directly with Dewey's theory that art and life are intertwined. An interviewed teacher said, "Life is drama." I suggest that Dewey would have concurred.

Vygotsky: Creative Dramatics and Constructivism

Many of the interviewed teachers used improvisational types of activities in which the children were free, within some constraints, to create their own dramatic scenarios. Teachers attempted to involve children in the procedures of developing process and performance activities. Some teachers said some of the best ideas they had for using drama in the classroom came from the children. In fact, a

few teachers actively sought students' opinions about how activities should be conducted. These ideas coincide with Vygotsky's constructivist view. In drama children can have opportunities to construct their own learning.

A few teachers felt that it was important to help children gain higher level thinking skills through creative drama activities. This position also fits the constructivist picture. As children gain in the ability to think and reason, they are better able to construct their own learning.

Children can learn to interpret the information with which they come in contact through drama. Teachers suggested that children can find a purpose for learning and use new strategies for learning in all areas of the curriculum through drama.

In the area of performance, children were often encouraged to look at the process and find new ways to interpret or improvise their character's personalities or actions. Children learn in social ways as previous experience is tied to the current influence of adults and peers.

Creative dramatics is a viable constructivist strategy. I suggest that Vygotsky would agree.

The Findings in Relation to the Literature

The patterns, or units of meaning, that emerged in the course of analysis of data were found within the review of literature explicated earlier in this document. To review, these patterns involved creative dramatics in terms of definition, use, importance, training, epistemology, and pedagogy. The following section examines research data and compares and contrasts the literature in regard to each unit of meaning.

Definition

In defining creative dramatics, teachers generally stressed process over product. This was affirmed by Piggins (1984), Stewig (1986a), and Shuman (1978), who suggested that in creative dramatics process is more important than product. In Forum (1983) creative dramatics was defined as an activity which benefits the students and is not necessarily designed to please an audience.

Teachers spoke of informal, improvisational types of drama in which children act out situations with voice and movement as part of creative dramatics. Several authors, including Snyder-Greco (1983), stated the importance of this type of spontaneous drama.

Along with other definitions, teachers said drama includes expression of emotions. Shuman (1978) suggested

that in creative dramatics the attitudes and feelings of the participants are the main concern.

Use

Flora Cooke, as discussed in Popovich (1967), emphasized correlating creative dramatics with all subjects in school. This was a commonly held view by the teachers who were interviewed. Many of them used drama in math, science, and social studies, as well as in the language arts. Other authors who concurred with this notion were Hoyt (1992), Cottrell (1987), Kase-Polisini and Spector (1992), List (1982), and Stewig (1983).

Several teachers spoke of using creative dramatics in helping children to read with greater proficiency. This idea was confirmed by a number of authors, including Vawter and Vancil (1980), McCormack (1992), Benninga and Crum (1982), and Martin, Cramond, and Safter (1982). In addition, Brizendine and Thomas (1982) and Monroe (1990) suggested ways to use drama to teach science concepts, and Nelson (1988) said drama can enhance the teaching of history.

Two areas for use of creative dramatics not mentioned by the interviewees were in diagnosis and therapy for students with emotional disorders (Kenny, 1987) and in Haeny's (1989) suggestion that drama provides occasions for

children of different intellectual abilities to work together.

Importance

During the course of the interviews, a majority of teachers said they viewed creative dramatics as essential to elementary education, while others said it was non-essential. Huntsman (1982) stated that the most commonly held opinion among educators was that drama is a frill and is not a necessary component of the curriculum. Stewig and Vail's research in 1985 showed that while many teachers see the value of creative dramatics, they allow little time for its use. These ideas are contrary to what most of the teachers in this study exemplified.

Most teachers suggested three areas of importance: developing children's social skills, increasing self-esteem, and cultivating children's creativity. Many of the authors cited agreed with these opinions.

Kukla (1987) stated that creative dramatics can help children to learn to live and work in the world. Woodruff (1982), Benninga and Crum (1982), Courtney (1988b), and Wolfe (1978) concurred with this idea.

Goldberg (1974) spoke of creative dramatics as a means for enhancing children's self-esteem. Bolton (1979) suggested that creative dramatics helps children see themselves from new perspectives.

Ross (1988) said creative dramatics can be of help in developing children's creative imaginations. McCaslin (1984) and Nixon (1979) agreed that drama activities can help children create and carry out their own ideas.

Another idea concerning the importance of creative dramatics to children's education mentioned by the teachers in this study was in the development of communication skills. Popovich (1967) stated that this was a goal of drama in education from the 1930s when William Wirt implemented a program of drama in the schools of Gary, Indiana. Goldberg (1974) suggested that creative dramatics allows for experiences in spoken language. The research of Kardash and Wright (1987) revealed that drama activities have a moderate, positive effect on the development of oral language skills in elementary students. Heathcote (1983, cited in "Learning, Knowing, and Languaging in Drama") said creative dramatics allows children to explore different styles of oral language.

Creative dramatics involved the whole child, according to the teachers in this study. By "whole child" teachers suggested that a child's intellect, physical being, and emotions were involved in the creative dramatics process. O'Farrell (1982), Miller and Mason (1983), and Cottrell (1987) agreed with this assertion. In addition, teachers suggested that children are able to develop higher level

thinking skills through drama activities. Juliebo (1990) and Gangi (1990) concurred with this contention.

Nine of the ten teachers said children were enthusiastic about participating in creative dramatics activities. Some suggested that this excitement would help children to be more motivated to do well in school. List (1982) and Moore and Caldwell (1990) agreed with the potential for creative drama to motivate children to learn in other areas of the curriculum.

Three areas of importance mentioned by several teachers but not mentioned in the literature cited were (a) creative dramatics can help children increase their abilities to remember, (b) creative dramatics can help children better to visualize things, and (c) drama activities can reach all children's learning styles.

Training

Of the ten teachers interviewed, one had taken a required course in creative dramatics during undergraduate studies and another had enrolled in a course as an elective while working on a second bachelor's degree. Of the eight teachers who did not have a course in creative dramatics, seven made regular use of a variety of drama activities in their classrooms.

Fowler (1988), Nelson (1988), Durland (1975), and McCaslin (1984) suggested that teachers are not well-

prepared to use creative dramatics in the classroom, and thus are not likely to employ drama strategies in their pedagogy. This study showed that nine of the ten teachers made regular use of drama activities, despite the fact that seven of these educators had no training in the subject. Huntsman (1982) said it is often the case that drama is taught by teachers who have training in areas other than drama.

Stewig's (1986a) research suggested that principals generally assert that teachers who do not have creative dramatics training will not use creative dramatics as a regular component of their curriculum. Most of the teachers said undergraduate work in creative dramatics would be helpful. Gray and Mager (1973) and Kelly (1976) concurred with this idea.

Epistemology

All of the ten interviewed teachers said children can learn from creative dramatics, regardless of the extent to which the teachers themselves used drama in their classrooms. Five teachers said children learn to communicate more effectively through drama activities. According to Popovich (1967), one of the purposes historically of the inclusion of creative dramatics in schools has been for the improvement of oral communication. Vygotsky (1962) suggested that mastery of language, the

social means of thought, enhances children's intellectual growth. Wagner's (1988) research showed that creative dramatics has a positive effect on oral language development in children. Snyder-Greco (1983) agreed that drama helps children use language in a variety of ways.

Merrill (1992) said learning is active rather than passive. Two teachers explained that children use the body for self-expression in creative dramatics. Two participants stated that children gain in social skills through drama. Goldberg (1974) and Courtney (1988b) agreed with this assertion, stating that creative dramatics promotes social learning, as did Vygotsky (1962).

Bolton (1979) said children grow in personal knowledge through drama. O'Farrell (1982b) suggested that drama can be a learning tool. These statements coincide with teachers who stated that children can find purpose for learning new things and can find new strategies to learn.

One specific area of learning mentioned by an interviewed teacher was that creative dramatics helped children to develop a work ethic. This assertion did not appear in the literature cited.

Pedagogy

One of the most commonly used pedagogical strategies by the interviewed teachers was the integration of creative dramatics with content area subjects. Social studies,

science, and math were the subjects most frequently mentioned for inclusion in drama activities. As mentioned in the section under use of creative dramatics, Hoyt (1992), Cottrell (1987), Kase-Polisini and Spector (1992), List (1982), and Stewig (1983) considered integration of content subjects with creative drama a viable pedagogical approach.

Teachers also used numerous improvisational types of activities such as acting out stories, role playing, and making up puppet shows. O'Farrell (1982) spoke of Caldwell Cook's emphasis on improvisational drama as a way of teaching content subjects. Watkins (1981) emphasized Dorothy Heathcote's ideas of extending improvisational drama into plays which could be performed.

Performance activities were included in creative dramatic pedagogy mentioned by the participants in the interviews. These events involved activities from complex Shakespeare plays to those as simple as readers' theatre and choral readings. Authors and researchers who included performance activities in a sequential creative dramatics program were Cottrell (1987), Stewig (1983), Gangi (1990), Piggins (1984), and List (1982).

Heathcote emphasized that teachers should be open to any dramatic method which would suit the needs of their students (in Watkins, 1981). This idea was affirmed by Wright (1984), who said teachers should develop a theory of

instruction which includes activities appropriate for their students. The teachers in this study who made regular use of creative dramatics in their classrooms employed a variety of strategies. They spoke frequently of the children in their classes and students' reactions to creative dramatics processes. These teachers appeared to concur with Heathcote's and Wright's ideas.

Conclusions

At the outset of this document I stated four aims to guide my research. These aims were:

1. To analyze the ways some elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms.
2. To discover ideas and perceptions that practicing elementary teachers have about creative dramatics.
3. To collect current perceptions of professors of language arts and of elementary teachers concerning the use of creative dramatics in the classroom and how they coincide with each other and with past findings.
4. To conclude, based on the findings of the research, whether the inclusion of a creative dramatics component in teacher education in Montana would provide a viable means for encouraging a more pervasive use of creative dramatics in elementary schools.

I was able to satisfy the first three of these aims and was able to give information from interviews and

professor questionnaires in support of the fourth aim. In drawing conclusions from the study, I restate these aims along with evidence from the teachers' and professors' responses to support my contentions.

Aim 1: Use of Creative Dramatics

My first aim was to analyze the ways some elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms. Through the teachers' responses concerning creative dramatics, I was able to find out information that I could not have discovered in any other way. The teachers shared examples of the ways in which they used creative dramatics and their reasons for doing so. Their responses are detailed in Chapter 4.

Typical of the strategies teachers used were pantomime, choral readings, story drama, readers' theatre, improvisational activities, skits, and longer, more involved plays for performance. Their emphasis tended to be on the process involved in doing drama, but some felt process and product merged in the performance of plays.

The teachers' use of creative dramatics was not dependent upon their having taken a course in the subject. This runs contrary to the ideas of Fowler (1988), Nelson (1988), Durland (1975), and McCaslin (1984), who posited that teachers who have no preparation in creative dramatics are unlikely to use such processes in their classrooms.

The findings of this research came as a surprise to me. In my experience, working with many teachers in different settings over my years of teaching, most of the educators I knew did not use drama activities with their students on a regular basis. The reasons for this varied: lack of training, many curricular demands, anxiety concerning drama processes, or not viewing creative dramatics as important. It was exciting to me to find that so many of the teachers I interviewed attributed much of the same value to creative dramatics for children that experts cited in the literature did.

Aim 2: Perceptions about
Creative Dramatics

The second aim of my study concerned discovering perceptions that elementary teachers have about creative dramatics. As can be readily seen from the discussion about the ways in which teachers use creative dramatics, those who used creative dramatics on a regular basis did so because of its benefit to children. Several teachers suggested that shy children learn to become less so during drama activities. A number of teachers said creative dramatics helps children learn to communicate in front of others. If they have this experience as children, they are less likely to be nervous in front of a group as adults, the teachers suggested.

The enthusiasm of the teachers who made regular use of creative dramatics was evident throughout the interviews. They recounted specific incidents in which creative dramatics had a positive effect on students.

From this evidence I conclude that the teachers who used creative dramatics in their classrooms sought creative ways of teaching that would be of educational and personal benefit to their students. The interviewed teachers overall saw creative dramatics as having benefit for their students in developing self-esteem and in creating more positive attitudes toward school in general. These were the primary reasons teachers used drama strategies in their classrooms. Goldberg (1974), List (1982), and Moore and Caldwell (1990) agreed with these reasons.

Aim 3: Perceptions of Professors

The third aim of my study was to collect current perceptions of professors of language arts in the state of Montana about the use of creative dramatics in elementary schools.

In summary, professors stated that creative dramatics encourages the development of self-control, self-esteem, and creativity. Children are able to experience joy and to express emotions through such activities. Drama helps develop basic skills and strengthens children's ability to

think. Creative dramatics helps develop self-expression and makes the learning process more interesting.

Teachers who made use of creative dramatics concurred with these assertions. Professors and teachers alike saw creative dramatics as a viable pedagogical strategy which has benefit to students.

Aim 4: Should Creative Dramatics
Be Included in Elementary
Teacher Education?

In the fourth aim of my study I suggested the hope that I might be able to make a case for the inclusion of creative dramatics in elementary teacher education based on my research. A number of authors cited in the literature concurred with my goal.

The use of creative dramatics among teachers involved in this research is not dependent upon a course which the teachers might have taken, but is dependent upon teachers valuing activities for their impact on the self-esteem and on the attitudes of students toward school. While the teachers who were interviewed and the professors who were queried agreed that such a course would be desirable, I cannot conclude that a creative dramatics course should be included based solely on the responses of the research participants.

Teachers who took part in this study saw that their choices of activities and the decisions they made were

strengthened by the creative process. In my view, these teachers exemplified the following statement made by Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987):

Youngsters need an opportunity to see teachers who admit they do not know, who are willing to accept the thoughts of others, who can enjoy life and like having others enjoy theirs, who have many ideas and the flexibility to allow children to have their own, and who accept every child as worthy. (p. 92)

Summary

The process of research has given me new insights into drama processes in the classroom and has clarified my understanding of creative dramatics. Conducting this research has helped me to see that the processes involved in creative dramatics use in classrooms are far more complex than I understood them to be as a teacher. It is a compliment to the teachers in this study that they sought resources for creative dramatics despite their lack of training. I am encouraged that these teachers were willing to invest so much of their own time and effort in order to provide experiences which they assert are of benefit to their students.

Creative Actions of Experienced Teachers

In the section on data analysis in Chapter 4, I recounted the suggestion of one of the interviewees concerning the way in which the creativity of new versus

experienced teachers might influence the way in which teachers use creative dramatics. That particular teacher said educators are creative when they start out in the profession, but after a while, they begin to rely more and more on textbooks. They use what the teacher called "cookbook teaching" rather than integrating innovative ideas into their teaching. All of the teachers in this study were experienced; yet, nine of the ten made regular use of creative dramatics in their classrooms. As recounted in Chapter 2, Kardash and Wright (1987) suggested the need for research concerning the effect of years of experience on teaching practice.

As reported earlier, the number of years of experience of the interviewed teachers ranged from 7 to 34. In a qualitative study of 28 teachers of varying experience, Copeland, Birmingham, DeMeulle, D'Emidio-Caston, and Natal (1994) found that as teachers gain in education and experience, they tend to focus on "learning as an interactive process of discovery and creative thinking" (p. 177). These authors asserted that experienced teachers tend to have an understanding of the importance of educational purposes and the link of these purposes to the actions in which teachers engage in the classroom.

In this study, the teachers who used creative dramatics appeared to make the link between purpose and action in reflecting on their use of drama activities with

children in their classrooms. The teachers seemed to have a clear sense of purpose for their use of creative dramatics.

Contribution to Grounded Theory

In Chapter 3 of this document I expressed the hope that through this research I might be able to make a contribution to the development of grounded theory for creative dramatics as a part of elementary teacher education. To reiterate, grounded theory is discovered from a comparative analysis of data. This type of analysis was conducted in this study.

While I am unable to accomplish this goal, there is a contribution which this research might make to grounded theory in the use of creative dramatics by elementary teachers. This contribution involves the assertion that as teachers gain in experience, they tend to seek opportunities to include a variety of activities in their classrooms which are aimed toward helping students integrate ideas and increase self-esteem. These activities, as evidenced in this study, include work in creative dramatics. There appears to be a relationship between the experience of the teachers in this study and the meaning they ascribe to their use of creative dramatics. To test and verify this assertion, further study of other elementary teachers is necessary.

Implications for Educational Practice

In 1994 the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations under the guidance of the National Committee for Standards in the Arts prepared National Standards for Arts Education. Included in the benefits of arts education listed in that document were the following contentions: The arts develop the whole child, build many types of literacy, develop imagination and communication skills, encourage higher level thinking, "cultivate the direct experience of the senses" (p. 6), have intrinsic and extrinsic value to students, and help students to develop self-esteem, cooperation, and self-motivation for success in their future lives. Earlier in this document I quoted Geoghegan (1994), who stated that the arts are basic to the individual development of children since they stir all the senses and thus encourage learning.

Standards for theatre arts from the document mentioned above, in grades kindergarten through four, included activities with an emphasis on improvisation. According to the standards, children should have opportunity to create and act in improvisations based on stories and based on their own imaginations, among other related activities. As children continue on to grades five through eight, standards suggest that they continue to perform improvisational

activities that have greater sophistication, as well as to become involved in scripted plays.

The research I conducted shows that creative dramatics was being used on a regular basis in the case of nine of the teachers interviewed. All of the teachers saw the benefits of using creative dramatics, many of which concur with the benefits outlined in the recently developed standards for arts education. Professors of elementary reading and language arts methods courses agreed with these assertions as well.

As this study drew to a close, I observed that there were a number of implications for educational practice based on the units of meaning derived from the responses of the teachers I interviewed. To reiterate, these units were definition, use, importance, training, epistemology, and pedagogy.

The definition that an individual teacher posed for creative dramatics did not necessarily apply to the use that teacher made of drama processes in his/her classroom. One teacher in the study defined creative dramatics specifically as doing plays, yet did many improvisational types of activities with students. Another teacher defined creative dramatics as anything children act out that is related to what they are studying in school, yet did plays on an intermittent basis.

Use of creative dramatics for teachers depended on a number of factors. Teachers tended to have autonomy in their classrooms; thus, they felt little constraint to use or not to use creative dramatics. Where teachers determined that creative dramatics was of observable benefit to students, they employed drama strategies.

The importance of creative dramatics was also related to teachers' perceptions concerning its value to children. Most of the teachers suggested that students gain in many ways through use of drama. Teachers who did not make much use of creative dramatics saw little value in the processes or felt that there were too many demands on their time during the school day.

The interviewed teachers, as a whole, viewed training in creative dramatics as beneficial for educators. Seven teachers were interested in taking a graduate course in the subject.

In the area of epistemology, teachers felt that children learn numerous things through the use of drama techniques. The main emphasis was on the development of communication skills in students through creative dramatics activities.

The most pervasive pedagogical strategies in drama used by the teachers who were interviewed were integration with content area subjects and balancing process and product activities.

I see a number of implications based on this study for the use of creative dramatics in elementary schools.

1. According to professors who responded to the questionnaire, it seems unlikely that more courses in creative dramatics will be offered in teacher education programs in colleges and universities of Montana in the near future, despite advocacy by a number of the respondents and despite the views of the experts cited in the literature who suggested that teachers would not use creative dramatics without training.

2. Teachers who consider creative dramatics as essential to the educational process may, by example, provide impetus for others to employ drama techniques in their classrooms. These educators spoke enthusiastically about the benefits of creative dramatics for children. They are the people who would best encourage others to try various creative dramatics techniques formally, through school district inservice, or informally, by conversing with others about what they are doing.

By advocating the inclusion of creative dramatics in all aspects of elementary schooling, teachers can encourage the overall development of creativity. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) said, "Making creativity an essential part of the curriculum is important, and every teacher would probably be more successful if arithmetic, social studies, or writing could be seen as a creative activity" (p. 90).

3. School principals discussed by participants in this study showed support for drama activities teachers used. One principal actively encouraged the use of creative dramatics.

In a study of 342 educators on teacher efficacy, Gaskey and Passaro (1994) discovered that "teachers' perceptions of their personal influence on student learning are not solely based on, or strongly related to, their perceptions of the influence of external environmental conditions" (p. 639). Thus, the action or lack of action on the part of principals concerning the use of creative drama may not be a factor in what teachers actually do in their classrooms.

Recommendations for Further Research

The research I conducted contributed to a clarification and understanding of how elementary teachers use creative dramatics in their classrooms. I recommend that further research of a qualitative nature be conducted among elementary teachers concerning the use and importance of creative dramatics. Comparisons of teachers with varying years of experience and differing educational attainments would help establish the need or lack of need for formal teacher education in drama. Studies which involve interviewing different teachers on a continuing basis about

their use of creative dramatics would help in this endeavor as well.

Another possibility for research might be to study all of the teachers within one particular school to ascertain what work is conducted in drama. Since teachers who work together participate in and contribute to the culture of the school, research could aid in understanding the reasons for use or lack of use of creative dramatics within that institution.

A study of first-year teachers from a number of locations could give information on the influence of undergraduate training in creative dramatics, or lack of such training, on the teachers' use of drama activities with their students.

Case study research using a class of students involved in creative dramatics over an entire school year would yield information about progress children might make in drama and the connection drama might have to other areas in which children might be involved.

A study concerning the influence of principals on the use of creative dramatics by teachers could act as a corollary to the study by Gaskey and Passaro (1994) which I mentioned above.

Creative dramatics lends itself to qualitative studies such as the research I conducted and ones I suggested. To some extent, previous research has established the benefits

creative dramatics can provide to students. Continued research could possibly establish and clarify the need for creative dramatics to be included in all phases of elementary education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWS
CONCERNING CREATIVE DRAMATICS IN
ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

1. Do you currently use any creative dramatics activities in your classroom? Why or why not?
2. How would you personally define creative dramatics?
3. About how much time per week (month) do you spend on creative dramatics in your classroom?
4. What kind of activities does creative dramatics involve? Are they process or product oriented?
5. What kind(s) of background or training do you have in creative dramatics?
6. Was creative dramatics offered as a course or part of a course in your elementary methods curriculum as an undergraduate?
7. Where do you seek help with ideas for activities in creative dramatics for your students?
8. Of what benefit do you believe creative drama is to children? (General academic, specific academic, i.e., language arts, personal, self-esteem, developing social skills, exhibiting poise, increased comprehension, ability to handle change, sensitivity toward peers, willingness to share, level of self-control, level of motivation, level of creative imagination, cooperation with teacher and peers, etc.)
9. Do you have the support of your administrator in doing creative dramatics activities with your students?
10. How do you plan the drama activities?
11. In what ways do you coordinate drama activities with other areas of the curriculum?
12. How do children react to the drama situations?
13. Do you see creative dramatics as an essential part of the curriculum for elementary students, or as an "extra"?
14. What kind of support do you have from parents for creative dramatics activities?

15. Which activities constitute the majority of your work with creative dramatics with children--improvisation or performance?
16. When you do drama activities, is lack of space a factor? What are some problems with space?
17. If a graduate course in creative dramatics were offered at MSU would you be interested in taking it?
18. If an optional inservice program were offered through the school district, would you choose to be a part of it?
19. If help were available from the school district would you be likely to make more use of creative drama in your classroom?

As the interviews progressed, I asked other questions which were related to the individual questions posed as a means of finding out more detailed information. Some of these questions were: Do you include creative dramatics activities in any of the content area subjects? In your experience, do teachers discuss creative dramatics as a viable strategy for use in the classroom? Are you aware that any other teachers make use of creative dramatics activities? Do you think more teachers would make use of creative dramatics if they had more education in the subject? Are children excited about the process of doing creative dramatics? If creative dramatics were included as part of the curriculum, would you see this as valuable? If the school district were to employ a fine arts coordinator, would you take advantage of help from such a person?

APPENDIX B
PERMISSION FOR USE FORM

PERMISSION FOR USE FORM

I grant to Margaret J. Coxwell permission to use words and ideas acquired during the interview with me for the purposes of research reporting, articles, and/or books.

Name _____
Signature _____
Date _____

_____ I would prefer use of a fictitious name.
_____ You may use my real name.

APPENDIX C
PROFESSOR LETTER

1611 West Koch #33
Bozeman, Montana 59715
September 5, 1994

Luv T. Act, Ed. D.
Professor of Reading/Language Arts
Podunk U.
Anycity, Montana

Dear Dr. Act,

I am in the process of conducting an ethnographic study on the use of creative dramatics in the elementary schools for my doctoral thesis. I will be interviewing teachers who have worked with drama in the classroom to ascertain the types of training they have had and will ask them a number of questions concerning their views on the value of creative dramatics for students. The purpose of the study will be to build a foundation for theory involving justification for inclusion of creative dramatics in undergraduate elementary education course work.

In addition, as part of the study, I am interested in knowing what place, if any, the study of creative dramatics has in the program in elementary education at Podunk U. I have enclosed a short questionnaire for you, the completion of which will help me ascertain the extent to which creative dramatics is taught at your institution. It will also help me know your feelings concerning the use of creative dramatics not only in the elementary education program, but also in elementary schools.

Your assistance in this endeavor will be greatly appreciated. Your comments and concerns will remain anonymous. If you would like to have a copy of the results of the study, please indicate this on the questionnaire. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Thank you, in advance, for your time in completing this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX D
PROFESSOR QUESTIONNAIRE

CREATIVE DRAMATICS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Is there a course in creative dramatics currently being offered for elementary education majors at your institution? If so, how many semester/quarter credits is the course? Who teaches the course?

Course Title: _____

Credits: _____

Instructor: _____

If the answer to the above question is **yes** go on to question 2. If the answer is **no** continue to question 3.

2. Briefly describe the content of the course. _____

3. Is creative dramatics offered as a portion of reading and/or language arts methods courses? What drama activities are emphasized?

4. Do you personally advocate the inclusion of creative dramatics in elementary school programs as beneficial to children? Briefly describe the benefits.

5. If a course or part of a course is not currently devoted to creative dramatics at your institution, would you recommend that it be added to the elementary education curriculum? If not, why not? If yes, in what form would the course be? (Seminar, full course, part of a course?)

6. Please add any other comments concerning the value, or lack of value, of creative dramatics, as you see it, for either elementary school children, or for students enrolled in elementary education programs.

 If you would like a brief report of the results of the study, please check here.

Thank you for your help.

Margaret J. Coxwell

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