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METHODICAL PRECONDITION FOR CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING OF ROMA SCENARIOS: AGITA METHODOLOGY for the FORUM ROMANUM workshop

VICO EQUENSE 10-15 October 2016

The workshop for Forum Romanum was planned and prepared focusing on the whole project and all its partners and participants, based on a careful evaluation of what could be most effective to achieve the goals and objectives in the time available and in connection with the project's main issue, the multiple professional specifics and background of the partners, the participation of the roma adults, the communication difficulties and the expectations of all. SITUATION and CONTEXT are the starting point for an intervention methodology to be constructed as following explained.

WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHERE? WHEN? WHY? FOR WHOM? (Participants*Issue*Objectives*Time*Difficulties*Variables*Communication)

These are seven crucial questions necessary to start a work itinerary in any kind of group (children, youngsters, adults, aged, mental or physical emarginated, borderline, citizens etc.).

PATH < > EXPERIENCE in FIRST PERSON always referring to SITUATION and CONTEXT

We divide the action in two phases, keeping the united vision of person (head, heart, lap), no matter from what country, no matter which culture or profession, capability or aspiration. Keeping in mind situation pedagogy, suggesting the best expressive propositions for the context (social, psychophysical, cultural), of the group and of any individual in the group.

In order to preserve the high quality of the work, expressive freedom and research, it's important to know that games, exercises and techniques must not become "recipes" to be replicated without meditating or taking care of the here and the now. Same care must be taking for the dramaturgy, in case of willing to communicate towards others (some audience) and to give some form to the concepts born in the process.



- A) PROPRAEDEUTIC > Expressiveness (in game, internal within the group)
B) CONSTRUCTION > Communication (staging, external to the group)

There is not a strict separation between in game and staging: the two dimensions can complement each other. It can be necessary to let improvisation flow in both phases, or simulation or stereotypes deconstruction, relaxing, playing etc. to find more effective and more group-concerning solutions.

A - PROPRAEDEUTIC

This phase consists of activities and propositions to be made to the group, in the group and for the group, it is basically an “internal” phase. A variety of inputs can be used all inspired by the arts (theatre, dance, music, painting, visual art, material craft, etc.).

Each facilitator must elaborate his own personal style coming from his background and employ it in a flexible and intelligent way in the very context in which operates (school, extra school, prison, hospital, psychiatric hospital, or any kind of cultural, sport, meeting community).

OBJECTIVES

- Personal and interpersonal knowledge (supporting ones, who find it difficult to relate, helping to overwhelm embarrassment and shyness to create a trustful mood etc.);
- Training to self and mutual listening, socialization;
- Stereotypes deconstruction;
- Expressive potential discovering;
- Shared communication code achievement;
- Skills achievement;
- Achieved skills awareness;

B – CONSTRUCTION

This phase concerns with the group's will and pleasure to open up to external relationship with the rising need to communicate to someone else. The dramaturgic choice corresponds with the situation pedagogy that keeps fulfilling its purpose, and it's considered more interesting and functional, but always emerging from that specific context.



With the word drama we include all the functions and meanings gained through the years (writing, text, interpretation, staging, etc.) as well as all the show and entertaining styles made up by all civilizations that are now world's common assets.

In the B phase we move more specifically to elaborate an artistic product or a play. The goals are related to the experience of doing and the show's "making of", including all the aspects of the event or performance (with care therefore, to music, scenography, costumes, space and relationship with audience, etc.). One of the most interesting aspects of this drama work is the achieving of a choral action that becomes a GIFT to the COMMUNITY.

Two examples of field experience

1) Exercise: sharing the ball

Description: two people take a ball from one place to another in the work space. The ball can be touched only with one hand. One by one, the other participants take the place of the two beginners. Everyone must take part in the ball's path before reaching the given destination.

Goals: Gaze sharing through the mediation of the object; sharing the responsibility.

Skills: ability of relating, activate proximity dynamics; adjust physical attitude to the partner's and action's requirement.

We are working in the propaedeutic so far (A phase), but this can include already a dramatic development (B phase), if the facilitator poses some questions like: Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you carrying and why (are you saving something)? What's the relationship between each member and the object (my safe place, my family, my identity etc.)?

The answers to those questions can build new interpersonal connections, new space discovery and generate words (text), sounds (songs, music) that can be shared in the action to create!

(NB. Instead of the ball you can use a box, a chair, a shirt, and any object can become anything else an emotion, a person etc... surrounded by a whole context that can be created, a dramatic situation that can be suggested to the group).

2) Theatrical Game

There's a prologue for this game, explained by the facilitator: ask if dance was originally profane and became sacred, or vice versa from sacred dance the profane



was born. Anthropologists assume that amongst the ancient people, dance wasn't pure fun expression. It had, beyond the realistic goal, a magical and summoning purpose: a supernatural force takes place in dance, a force that can be addressed on the side of the community.

Skills and goal: the ritual of meeting takes place in the dance of names, symbols, actions and drama, where names transform themselves to reach another self.

1. Description: participants stand in a circle, one at a time goes to the center and "throws" his name associated to a gesture, to be repeated by the whole group. Everybody learns this way, step by step, all the other's names and gestures. This will take in the end to an amount of moves as the number of the participants, a real score.

The group can work on this still shapeless score (phase A), and develop the action with a dramatic purpose (phase B).

2. The group is split in two-half with the task to give the score a meaning in a shared context and action to be developed together in a given time of 15 minutes.

3. Sharing the creations: the two groups watch each other and comment about what has been created.

4. Integration: the two groups join together again, participating and feeding the two creations to get to one single performance.

In the context of the BLENDED-MOBILITY within the FORUM ROMANUM ERASMUS+ project, the expert AGITA' s facilitators focused on some concepts that arise almost automatically when facing someone else from us, to draw the guidelines of a shareable work methodology. They focused on those words and concepts that can become starting point in a path that leads to exchange and collaboration between roma and non-roma people:

**JUDGMENT
PREJUDICE
SEPARATION
EXCLUSION**

Integration requires reciprocal knowing; building common experience, starting from the same situation, especially in an expressive lab aimed to overcome some systematic modality in facing the problem of meeting between different cultures, stories and personal perception. Disassemble first, the convention or vision of the theme, trying to aim at the interpersonal relationship and to balance the propaedeutic phase to bind it to the proposition of the scenarios to be created and dramatized together.



In the introductory and warming-up phase, it's possible to aggregate the individuals to the group by way of action, game and creativity, in order to promote the doing – observing – meditating – creating dimension.

In this perspective the first step consists of NAMING THE WORLD, that means: overcoming the linguistic obstacle, working on language as agreed convention, encourage the creation of common rules, a simple language, rudimentary, early and original that allows each individual to express beyond his mother-tongue. That means also search for new sounds, exploring expressive voice potential (tone, pitch, acoustics, etc.) and ponder about signified and signifier.

The second step concerns MOVEMENT – SPACE – BODIES, to encourage interest towards the potential of corporeal reality in its entirety. Starting from the structure of the physical “self” and training on creative inputs, expressive techniques and theatre games.

This way participants make experience personal skills to move, make sounds, use their voice, their sight and body parts, according to the partners, to activate new possibilities of free expression, to build harmonic and rhythmic action sequences, to deconstruct usual physical postures, to search new signifiers of movement and intention.

The work is based on reciprocal look, starting from the tiny and little, and grow step by step, working constantly on observation, sharing the experience within the group, until all is convinced with the idea for the “return” phase. According to the number of participants, it can be necessary to split them into smaller independent groups so that each of the individuals gets enough space.

Last but not least is the RETURN phase, that doesn't take place in a theatre, it's not an exhibition, it's not staging, it's more an exchange, research of active communication between people, exercise of different point of views on the chosen theme that takes all to find its creative multiplicity.