



Project Number: 2017-1-LT01-KA201-035235

Theatre in Education – Off-Book Project

Typology of Final Feedback Expected and Final Debriefing with Users

Grosseto (IT)

21 May 2019

Minutes

Teatro Stabile di Grosseto organized a multiplier event dedicated to first and secondary school teachers of Grosseto area. 35 teacher participated on 21 of May.

The main event's objective consists of bringing teachers closer to the knowledge of the Off-book project, its objectives, its contents and its methodology.

Trough the event, Teatro Stabile di Grosseto helped secondary and primary school teachers to reinforce their capacity to identify divisions within the classrooms coming from the lack of dialogue and understanding among students with different backgrounds, cultures, attitudes and personal beliefs.

The main events' content was:

1) the deep analysis of the methodological approach to encourage the building of a new interaction between teachers and students putting the focus on the dialogue among individuals and not on the traditional vertical teaching methods, thus breaking up the still typical logic of traditional School education and dynamics within the class communities based on the overwhelming impact of personal opinions and judgments by individuals on other individuals.

2) To encourage dialogue, listening and comparing means fostering participatory inclusion, identified as a source of change of typical negative dynamics in schools, leading to early school leaving, bullying and social isolationism. Performing arts and theatre laboratories if conducted for purposes of aggregation and not for artistic performance can achieve integration rapidly and with a potentially long-lasting impact.

3) The modernization of media has radically transformed the way of relating, in particular between the younger age groups. What happened before in person, now it is mediated by a screen and the ability to weigh the words and concepts exchanged via the digital medium makes the relationship less "real" and "personal". On the contrary, a theatrical activity can only be done live and in direct relation ("Hic et Nunc" = "here and now"). But this is not enough, because such activities must be understood not as a simple imitation of the Professional theatre where a Director is pulling the strings of his/her actors. This logic, in fact, is absolutely counterproductive as it creates the final performance stress, scripts are memorized, young actors "de facto" detached from their own personality. Most importantly, the traditional method widens rather than solving the gap between students according to the roles assigned in the performance, between the person who is assigned the "part of the protagonist" and who instead is used for secondary parts. Unfortunately this practice is widespread in schools that tend to replicate the logic of the "theatre of the adults", such as 'role playing' (actors impersonating characters, putting aside their own characteristics, 'auditions' to identify the 'best' for a specific 'role' and therefore multiplying rather than reducing the 'judgemental' approach.

4) In OFF-BOOK perspective Theatrical Laboratories are an educational tool with the infinite potential to help students to show their personality. This approach aims at knocking down the fear of being judged, or of being considered "different", which is tightly linked to discrimination and hostile social environments. The largely present dichotomy "us-them" is particularly dangerous within the class group because it maintains



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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existing social exclusion and discriminatory attitudes, thus impairing the possibility for socially disadvantaged students to remain at school. The method applied in the Theatrical Laboratories aims at the deconstruction of existing discriminating behaviours in classrooms.

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The day was conducted by Alessandro Gatto, general manager, theatre director and senior trainer from "Teatro Stabile di Grosseto".

1) Presentation of Teachers' Guideline as they could be found on the OFF-book project portal:

- *Understanding Early School Leaving*

An overview of the current situation of early school leaving in Europe

- *Methodological and Pedagogical Aspects*

A definition of what experiential education is

- *Theatre as Experiential Learning Tool*

The role of theatre as a site for learning in a community context

2) Presentation of the Off Book National videos. National videos show the impact on both students and teachers through pictures of their texts, drawings, music and outputs of all kinds, as well as through their testimonies. This material, together with the testimonials of the professionals involved in the project, is the real wealth of the initiative that clearly demonstrates the possibility of real change through simple and concrete actions. Alessandro Gatto stressed the main issues coming from the video.

3) The same facilitator Alessandro Gatto, led the debriefing discussion with specific open-ended question to target the debriefing objectives and and to encourage reflection on specific scenario events and relevant individual and team behaviors preceding or resulting from these events.

Consistent with our findings in the literature, the debriefing component of the 21 May 2019 training session consisted of three distinct parts: the introduction, the debriefing process, and closure. The debriefing process was further conceptualized in terms of the following four phases:

- **Engagement.** The facilitator used an open-ended question (e.g., "How did it go?" or "What do you think happened?") to immediately engage the entire team in reflecting on their individual and team performance during the Theatre Laboratory.
- **Focus.** The facilitator quickly introduced and offered brief definitions of specific teamwork competencies we should word on during school Theatre Lab and asked participants to identify particular examples of corresponding behaviors from the training scenario.
- **Reflection and critique.** Participants were encouraged to reflect on the various competencies and how these could be used to enhance school group effectiveness.
- **Application to everyday practice.** The facilitator encouraged participants to identify skills or behaviors related to one or two teamwork competencies that they intended to improve in the actual environment to better use the OFF-book method