Kreisau-Initiative e.V.

Perspective: Inclusion

Language and communication in international inclusive education

Kreisau-Initiative

Perspective: Inclusion

Language and communication in international inclusive education
Methods, guidelines, impulses

Perspective: Inclusion
Language and communication in international inclusive education
Methods, guidelines, impulses

This publication reflects the views of the authors. The content and the opinions of the publications do not necessarily represent the positions of the publisher, the European Commission and Erasmus + Youth in Action. The aforementioned parties cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information herein.

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

dpjw
pnwm

Deutsch-Polnisches Jugendwerk
Polsko-Niemiecka Współpraca Młodzieży

Project partners:
Kreisau-Initiative e.V. I Krzyżowa' Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe I Brücke I Most Stiftung
Kulturanima I Designbar Consulting I Zespół Szkół Specjalnych Oława

Kreisau-Initiative

krzyżowa
kreisau

Brücke|Most-Stiftung
Nadace Brücke|Most

designbar
Consulting

Table of contents

Foreword

This publication is the result of two years of the Strategic Partnership between Polish and German organisations. Perspective: Inclusion explores key aspects of language and communication in international inclusive non-formal education.

The Partnership brought together six organisations, three from Germany: the Kreisau-Initiative (project promoter), the Brücke/Most Foundation, and designbar Consulting, and three from Poland: the Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe, Special School Complex in Oława, and Kulturanima.

Many people contributed to the production of this publication, including Kreisau-Initiative project co-ordinator Elżbieta Kosek and partner organisation representatives: Agnieszka Ćwieląg, Dominik Mosiczuk, Magdalena Sankowska, Paulina Fidala, Christian Papadopoulos and Aristoula Papadopoulou.

The contributors examine the key aspects of international meetings, providing examples and presenting a wealth of methods and guidelines for non-formal education designed to support the communication process when working with inclusive groups. The second part describes a selection of innovative educational approaches and best practices aimed to facilitate mutual contact and communication within such groups.

This publication is intended for: professionals working in the area of non-formal education with young people; teachers; special educators; and all those interested in the role of language in shaping social reality, and in promoting barrier-free communication in their practice.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the whole team for the enormous effort they put in and congratulate them for the result. Many thanks also go to the authors who contributed their texts for agreeing to share their experience and best practices for inclusive activities in a variety of communication spaces, the translators, and all those who helped edit and proof-read the texts, including, most of all, the Kreisau-Initiative team. I would also like to thank the sponsors who made this valuable publication possible: the European Union's Erasmus+ programme, which supported the Strategic Partnership and the publication of Perspective: Inclusion, and the Polish–German Youth Office, who offered us a grant to part-fund the publication.

I believe that the methods, guidelines and impulses contained in Perspective: Inclusion will help intensify and enrich the efforts in the field of international inclusive education.

Nina Lüders

Executive Director
Kreisau-Initiative e.V.

Preface

Since the ratification of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD March 26th 2009) by the Federal Republic of Germany, German education and auxiliary systems are on the way toward implementing the postulated right to inclusive education as per Article 24. The CRPD demands and requires a paradigm shift in relation to the sense of how one deals with people with disabilities. Inclusion enables all people to participate equally in life, and aims for the recognition of individual differences that are situationally- though not personally-related and occur due to social origin, through capabilities, ethnicity or disability etc. Inclusion demands a change of attitude regarding the perception of the diversity of people and their differences, while however not dissolving them. For formal and non-formal education, this means the dismantling of barriers to learning and participation.

Discourse about education and learning processes has in previous years resulted in the development of learning and education in – what were by and large – homogeneous learning groups into an inclusive educational approach that demands different forms of transformation. That means that inclusive education in formal and non-formal fields recognises the diversity of the learners, supports and welcomes them (i.e. an inclusive praxis). Inclusive education is not a purely methodical model – rather, along with the path to high quality education for all learners, it is also the societal model of participation (i.e. an inclusive culture and an inclusive structure). In this respect, inclusive education fosters social justice and helps to hinder exclusion. Inclusive education should be understood as a process that has the diverse learning needs of (young) people involved in it at its core, and enables a strengthened participation in learning processes, culture and community. This process must be borne by the vision to include all (young) people.

Since its inception, the support of inclusion (and equality of chances) is a central concern of European youth support via Erasmus+ YOUTH and its precursor programmes. Two pillars of EU activities in youth education have always been the targeted support of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, in particular through the financial support of inclusive projects. Concerning this, the EU programme YOUTH IN ACTION (2007-2013) has been proved to be a success story. As many young people as possible should profit from European non-formal learning, especially those who have fewer opportunities to participate within the formats of international youth education. With the 'Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the Field of Youth'[1], passed in 2015, the European Union set diversity alongside inclusion for the first time to be an operational principle for European youth education and justified the broadening as follows: The focus of the previous Strategy of inclusion was the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities in Youth in Action projects and in society in general. […] Where inclusion of everyone ensures that all young people can take part, the focus on diversity ensures that everybody can take part on their own terms, recognising the value of differences in norms, beliefs, attitudes and life experience. Erasmus+ youth projects are ideal tools for inclusion and at the same time these projects train young people (and youth workers/leaders) to manage diversity in a positive and respectful way.

In order for inclusion and diversity-conscious youth education to add something to the creation of an inclusive society, an inclusive vision together with concrete implementation steps must occur within the agreement of the partners involved in international youth education. The European Inclusion

---

and Diversity Strategy depicts different general conditions that aid the concrete improvement of inclusive and diverse learning and educational projects. Among other conditions, the following concrete requirements are stated: the dismantling of existing barriers, the targeted fostering of inclusive engaged actors, the support of organisations in their development of inclusive projects, a networked and cross-sectoral collaboration of inclusive organisations, as well as the recognition and valuation of inclusive learning experiences. Every structural or concrete inclusive act in non-formal youth education projects should lead to the flourishing of positive outcomes for young people with fewer opportunities. Structurally speaking, inclusion and an awareness of diversity will in the context of non-formal youth education be lively and sustainable when youth organisations, project promoters and managers, as well as political decision-makers and other actors work structurally with one another

The 'Perspective: Inclusion' Strategic Partnership completed and presented here by the Kreisau-Initiative, supports the path of inclusive youth education consistently followed by this organisation over many years. With the components of language and communication, central elements of international youth education are inclusively established within the framework of the Strategic Partnership. The assorted learning and educational elements open learning spaces for an inclusive togetherness and invite people to meet, be that with very different social origins, learning experiences and with or without disabilities. Strategically and methodically speaking, fostering young people's skills through empowerment stands in the foreground. Strengthening this approach within the framework of the Strategic Partnership has turned out exemplarily well with the Kreisau-Initiative and should motivate many, many organisations supporting youth education to decide to work with an inclusive and diversity-aware work approach as well.

Christof Kriege
German National Agency for the Erasmus+ Programme

About the Project *Perspective: Inclusion*

Elżbieta Kosek, Programme Manager for Inclusion at Kreisau-Initiative e.V.

Language and communication are key aspects of international non-formal education and have a major impact on the success or failure of international meetings. When planning international education programmes, we often ask ourselves what language we should use. One option, of course, is to choose a shared language, which in most cases is English, but those who don't speak it may experience exclusion. An alternative is to use language mediators to enable all participants to understand what is communicated. Also, mediators become the 'voice' of the participants, facilitating free expression and active participation in the programme.

Which of these options is more suitable depends largely on the objective of the event. It is preferable to use language mediators, but when three or more languages are involved, the translation process can be tiring for participants, testing their patience. International adult education programmes, where language mediation is used, often include lively and very discussions about language and communication. One such discussion provided the spark for the *Perspective: Inclusion Strategic Partnership.*

Acquiring language skills is an important goal of international meetings. Learning the language of the exchange partner helps bring participants together and supports the development of intercultural sensitivity and mutual curiosity. To establish mutual contact and get to know others you need communication. In order to support language learning and communication, international non-formal education has developed a rich palette of methods, with Language Animation foremost among them. Yet most of these methods tend to focus on the active use of verbal and written language.

But what if we work with participants with varying level of linguistic and communicative skills? What if they don't speak or use some other mode of communication? This question was the starting point for the project Perspective: Inclusion.

Inclusive education is still in its initial phase. There are few materials and collections of methods, especially those addressing the role of language and communication, which can be used by professionals active in the field of inclusive education. In Poland, inclusive approaches in education, which are also of significant social importance, are still rare. At the same time, inclusion and diversity are increasingly important for a growing number of grant donors, and many organisers are interested in launching inclusive programmes. As this important trend continues, the existing barriers that prevent access to international meetings will be gradually dismantled, opening the events to new target groups. Non-formal education, in particular, is an excellent testing ground for experimenting, in a safe setting, with concepts for inclusion, both in education and a social dimension. Here, too, everyone involved can gain important experience and knowledge. However, in order to work effectively with inclusive groups – that is, groups that are linguistically, culturally and socially diverse, we need methods, guidelines and a well of inspiration – the kind of impulses that can be found in this two-part publication. We are of course aware that we cannot exhaust the subject here, so we limit ourselves to seeking answers to the question how to facilitate contact and communication in inclusive groups where knowledge of a common (foreign) language is not and should not be a prerequisite.

The first part of the publication is a lexicon describing 13 key aspects of international meetings that have a strong impact on the communication process. Each of them is addressed from the perspective

of inclusion. In creating the entries, we have drawn on our experiences and knowledge resulting from many years of involvement in international inclusive projects. The principles of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), a method that figures prominently in both parts of the publication, helped us modify the presented approaches. AAC involves multiple modes of communication including sign language, Braille, and communication with electronic tools. Alternative communication was a valuable inspiration, as reflected in the methods and guidelines described in the publication.

The second part of Perspective: Inclusion brings together a collection of good practices. Through the efforts of our organisations, we had the opportunity to meet many interesting people with a record of outstanding achievements who support inclusion, diversity and communication in multiple ways through their innovative educational approaches. We invited some of these people to join the project and share their insights and experience to inspire education professionals in their own efforts. The creation of the texts in this part were a process that also involved us. With so many important and interesting aspects of the concepts explored, it was often a great challenge to just focus on the role of language and communication. Working together, we managed to stick to this focus and to illuminate the themes from a variety of perspectives, mostly from the perspective of inclusion.

We hope that the impulses you will find in this publication will help enrich your work, making a valuable contribution to the further development of innovative concepts in education, as well as helping increase participation of underrepresented groups in non-formal education.

After two years of work focused around the issues of language and inclusion, we want to stress that language shapes reality! How we talk to each other and about ourselves, how much space we give ourselves, and how well we listen to each other, can help change the current perspectives and build mutual understanding, which is sorely needed in the face of the current developments around the world.

Thank you for your interest in our publication.
Our project team wishes you great satisfaction in testing and further developing the presented methods. And we look forward to your valuable feedback.

Notes on the language and terminology used in Perspective: Inclusion

Inclusion

The term inclusion is used in this publication in its broad sense: every person, regardless of their attributes, can contribute to social life without having to take special measures to adopt to it. In this sense, inclusion assumes that all people should become involved in social life. At the core of this assumption are the recognition of diversity as 'the norm' and the acceptance of differences. In this way, this perspective is not limited to people with disabilities.

That being said, the issue of disability is the main reference point for this publication, since the needs and abilities of people with disabilities are key in the process of developing and modifying the proposed methods.

People with learning difficulties

The term 'person with learning difficulties' is used in place of the commonly used, but externally imposed, phrases 'mentally defective', 'mental impairment', and 'mental retardation'. First used by the organization People First, the new term goes beyond the deficit-oriented medical category, drawing on a social understanding of disability.

Non-formal education

We don't always explicitly address specific educational formulas or meetings, because we want to retain the universality of the presented methods, but the main focus of this publication is on the practice of non-formal education. We keep in mind its fundamental principles: voluntary participation, holistic approach, focus on the process, availability to any interested person (ideally) and provision of an organised process that includes educational goals. Understood as such, non-formal education should also: involve experience and action; place the learner's needs at the centre of learning; develop life skills; prepare participants for active citizenship; and, finally, include both individual and group education.

Intercultural dimension

With our roots and sources of our professional competence in the field of international non-formal education, this perspective is also present in the guidelines and methods described here. We are happy that Perspective: Inclusion is available in three languages, Polish, English and German. We hope this will help strength international collaboration in the field of inclusive education, bring examples of good practice to professionals across Europe, and popularise concepts for inclusion in education.

Barrier-free communication as a prerequisite for learning experiences for everyone

Aristoula Papadopoulou & Christian Papadopoulos

INTRODUCTION

In order to enable learning opportunities for everyone, the removal of barriers is of central importance. These barriers can arise in terms of mobility, accessibility, usability, communication and access to information. However, prejudices and negative attitudes towards people frequently build barriers that hinder equal participation.[1]

Whoever organises and implements (international) educational activities is required to work towards reducing communicative barriers, in order to enable the participation of people from different groups This does not just mean to be simply open to all people from different groups because of one's good intentions and personal motivation to put into practise such desire. In fact, the aim is the actualisation of the human rights' principles of inclusion, participation and accessibility, also for people with disabilities as well as other disadvantaged people. This relates to the practical implementation of anti-discrimination policies in learning settings.

Anti-discrimination in learning settings

'Anti-discrimination policies are directed towards breaking down existing disadvantages that different societal groups face on a structural level, in order to […] achieve participation for all […] groups'.[2] Diversity-conscious (international) youth work is guided by the stance of anti-discrimination that has the aim of the participation of all groups within children's aid and youth welfare offers, as well as within other societal resources. That which should be achieved is the enabling and support of the involvement and active participation of previously disadvantaged and under-represented groups.[3]

A non-discriminatory stance can also be found in the concept of inclusion. Inclusion within (international) youth work can relate to barrier-free communication and aims that it will be effectively attractive and accessible for everyone. This means therefore the consistent conception and planning of programmes that fully meet the participants' needs, in order that they can be utilised by, to give a few examples, wheelchair-users, people without a school leaving qualification and foreign language skills and with religious requirements. 'Superficial deficits can be confronted here with their related capabilities and clearly be seen as strengths; coexistence can develop to togetherness and "being different" can be experienced as normality'.[4]

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The above named convention (CRPD) offers international guidance regarding freedom from barriers, and participation. This stipulates the removal of all barriers by which persons of disabilities are discriminated against and which hinder inclusion and equal participation. Therefore, existing prejudices, negative attitudes together with a lack of awareness about discrimination that people with disabilities are confronted with in their daily life are cited as decisive barriers. At the same time,

1   IJAB Fachstelle für internationale Jugendarbeit der BR Deutschland [International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany] (ed.), *Es ist normal, verschieden zu sein. Inklusion und Empowerment in der Internationalen Jugendarbeit – Arbeitshilfen für die FachkräfteQualifizierung*, Bonn 2013.
2   Drücker A., *Antidiskrimierung/Positive Maßnahmen* [In:] Drücker A., Sinoplu A., Totter E., Reindlmeier K. (ed.), *Diversitätsbewusste (internationale) Jugendarbeit. Eine Handreichung*, Köln 2014, p. 12. Available online at: www2.transfer-ev.de/uploads/handreichnung_dive.pdf (last checked on 19.02.2017).
3   Ibidem.
4   Totter E., *Inklusion*, [in:] Drücker A., Sinoplu A., Totter E., Reindlmeier K. (ed.), op.cit., p. 18.

the CRPD emphasises the meaning of barriers in the physical environment as well as in the realms of mobility, communication and access to information.

The CRPD does not orientate itself on a medically-shaped picture of disabilities any more. The medical model focusses itself upon the individual deficits of people with disabilities and comprehends disability not as an expression of human diversity, rather as a deviation from 'normal' human existence[5] that should be eliminated or at least alleviated by means of medical or therapeutic resources.[6] Whereas the CRPD derives from a social or human rights-based understanding of disability.[7] It defines disability to be an interaction between bodily impairments and the barriers in the environment that hinder people from equally participating.

This understanding is also important for the implementation of inclusion and participation in the work of international education. It is not the case that people with disabilities – and that can be extended to other disadvantaged groups – have to fit in with the offers and their requirements, rather that the programmes have to develop so that they are open, accessible and attractive for everyone. Furthermore, inclusive educational programmes should not be seen as a therapeutic programme for participants who are disadvantaged in different ways, rather they should likewise enable the same learning experiences for all.

INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED PERSONS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DURING INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL OFFERS

The self-image international educational work has the objective of enabling learning experiences for everyone. It is still the case that people with disabilities as well as those who are disadvantaged due to social, educational, economic, geographical and cultural factors, are only seldom included. Educational offers are frequently not designed in such a way that everyone can and will want to participate in them. This does not just go against one's own self-image, it also limits participation rights that arises out of human rights. For example, the CRPD requires the providers of educational offers, when they are publically supported, to design their offers in a barrier-free and inclusive way. Fundamentally speaking, the realisation of the right to education for everyone is at stake.[8]

The human right to education

Inclusive educational concepts are means of implementing one's own aspiration as well as of complying with the right to participation. These realise the right to education that correlates with structural aspects as well as the form and content of learning, along with didactic aspects. In so doing, it is related to the availability of educational offers and an access free from discrimination, for example for girls and women, people with a migration background or with disabilities. With regards to the form and content of learning, the point is whether or not they will be generally accepted. Didactic concepts must be shaped to avoid the exclusion of for example, children with disabilities.[9]

5 Degener T., *Die UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention – ein neues Verständnis von Behinderung*, [in:] Diehl E., Degener T. (ed.), *Handbuch Behindertenrechtskonvention. Teilhabe als Menschenrecht - Inklusion als gesellschaftliche Aufgabe*, Bonn 2015, p. 55-74.

6 Sierck U., Mürner C., *Der lange Weg zur Selbstbestimmung. Ein historischer Abriss*, [in:] Diehl E., Degener T. (ed.), op.cit., p. 25-37.

7 Degener T., *op. cit.*

8 UNESCO, *Final Report of the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality*, Salamanca 1994, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001107/110753eo.pdf (last checked on 16.02.2017)/ Platte A., *Inklusive Bildung: Leitidee von der Kindertageseinrichtung bis zur Hochschule*, [in:] Diehl E., Degener T. (ed.), op. cit., p. 55-74.

9 In more detail: Tomaševski K., *Human rights obligations: making education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable,* Right to Education Primers No. 3., 2011. Available online at: www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/Tomasevski_Primer%203.pdf (last checked on 19.02.2017).

The Index for Inclusion

Certainly, the best known inclusive educational concept is the Index for Inclusion by Mel Ainscow and Tony Booth. For the school sector, it formulates the aspiration of developing special pedagogy to be in line with inclusive pedagogy. Inclusive pedagogy is not just aimed at children and young people with disabilities, rather it wishes to do justice to everybody in their individuality.

The index aims towards the goal of a just society free of discrimination. It is grounded in values of equality, participation, community, respect for diversity, sustainability and non-violence. It is based upon a very well developed understanding of justice and non-discrimination. It offers methodical information as to how one can design inclusive processes. The core of the index are indicators that are catalogued in the form of questionnaires to make them more practicable. However, the authors emphasise that not all indicators fit in with all institutions and recommend one not to implement everything at once.[10] Even if the index concerns itself the area of school education, its value orientation is similar to the aspirations that international youth work or other open educational offers demand of themselves.[11] Numerous links for the praxis of these educational offers are to be found in the index, especially in relation to organisational development and the creation of participation.

Barrier-free communication for equal participation

Communications enables people to get into contact with each other and be able to interact with them. Verbal as well as non-verbal barriers can occur in the contact and interaction between people from different countries and with different possibilities of communication. In order to enable the participation of different target groups, it is important to eliminate communication barriers as well as developing and using barrier-free communication.

Communication that is shaped to be barrier-free includes all forms of communication. It takes all languages into account. This also includes sign languages, which are, as with spoken languages, different according to country and region. Barrier-free communication also includes the usage of braille and other adapted text depictions, speech-to-text reporting, reading aloud, Easy-to-Read (ETR) and all other alternative forms of communication. According to the CRPD, these should be taken into account in all areas and enable equal participation for everyone.

Attention paid towards barrier-free communication is paramount when inclusive (international) educational offers are implemented in different formats. Without it, one of the most important aims of international meetings, namely of bringing people into contact with each other and being sensitised towards one another, is not possible. Through barrier-free communication, international educational offers will also become accessible for those who were previously excluded due to language and communication barriers. In this way, mutual understanding will be facilitated and the reliability of interaction will be improved. The involvement of groups who were frequently previously excluded from the planning onwards, ensures that impediments and the individual situation of the people will be paid attention to.[12] Needs that should be taken into account depend upon the individual requirements of the participants.

Barrier-free communication is beneficial not just for participants and teamers who through an impediment are used to communicate differently, but also for all of those who are involved. Mutual

---

10 Ainscow, M., Booth, T., *Index for inclusion. Developing learning and participation in schools*, Bristol 2011.

11 cf.: Drücker A., Sinoplu A., Totter E., Reindlmeier K. (Hg.), op.cit., / Thimmel A., *Internationale Jugendarbeit*, [in:] *Enzyklopädie Erziehungswissenschaft Online*, 2011, p. 1–23. / Hackert S., Teffel M., Wunderer D., *Jugendbegegnungen sind für alle da. Das „Kreisauer Konzept" zur Integration benachteiligter junger Menschen in den internationalen Jugendaustausch*, [in:] IJAB Fachstelle für internationale Jugendarbeit der BR Deutschland (ed.), *Forum Jugendarbeit International 2008 – 2010*, Bonn 2010, p. 13-19. / Asbrand, B., *Globales Lernen und das Scheitern der großen Theorie. Warum wir heute neue Konzepte brauchen*, [in:] Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik 25 (3), 2002, p. 13-19.

12 cf. IJAB, *op. cit.*

understanding among them can be eased despite the already existing language barriers, when engagement with ETR or other alternative forms of communication (e.g. through the usage of certain gestures, pictograms or text announcements) is managed.[13]

Barrier-free communication will not always sufficiently cover all needs for inclusion and participation for everyone. Occasionally, adjustments will be necessary for individual people.

The manner in which individual support to communication is done depends upon how the conditions on-site can be structured and who is doing the supporting. Communication assistants[14] can be a group participant, such as a friend of the assistance-user, as well as being people externally assigned to an individual or group. The actual challenge is that the people with needs for assistance do not partly or wholly fall out of the group's communicative relations.[15]

Important foundations will be created, taking into account barrier-free communication and when required individual adaptations, for the equal participation of all people. Barrier-free participation makes it necessary to design communication in order that nobody will be excluded and prevented from co-determination for reason of their origin, educational background, financial possibilities, gender or disability.[16] Barrier-free participation also takes into account that people can be discriminated in multiple respects[17] and attempts to set aside the corresponding barriers. The right to participation can also not be withheld from people who, for example, alongside a disability, belong to a specific religion or ethnic group, or are disadvantaged due to another characteristic of difference.[18]

CONCLUSION

In practise, the start of the implementation of barrier-free communication will frequently face struggles with initial difficulties. It increases organisational and didactic effort during its first 'walking steps', as well as the necessity to intensively confront one's own prejudices and concerns. However, the effort, concerns and prejudices become reduced with growing experience. (International) educational offers need to face these initial challenges when the goal is to be open to people in all their diversity. The foundations for inclusion as a process of change will only be laid through barrier-free communication and didactics.

From the practise of international educational offers, such as those of international youth work (IYW), the first concepts towards the implementation of inclusion and barrier-free participation were developed, that can be generally applied to non-formal educational work. For example, the self-image as well as the concrete work of IYW includes numerous points of reference to inclusive educational concepts that always have individual and intersectional perspectives. Many points of reference to diversity-conscious perspectives can be found within the approach of intersectionality. Intersections can be disclosed, contradictions and their connected power relations can be included therein. Through that, the division of people into 'us' and 'them' can become sensitised, while the existing differences and various affiliations are taken into account. 'This is especially relevant in settings like international youth work that is defined through a certain collection of differences'.[19]

13 Ibidem.

14 Communication assistants are experienced in the use of sign language and speech-to-text-reporting, ETR and other alternative forms of communication. During barrier-free communication, they assume similar tasks as those of language meditors.

15 cf. IJAB, *op. cit.*

16 Düber M., Rohrmann A., Windisch M. (ed.), *Barrierefreie Partizipation. Entwicklungen, Herausforderungen und Lösungsansätze auf dem Weg zu einer neuen Kultur der Beteiligung*. Weinheim, Basel 2015.

17 Intersectionality describes the overlap of the different dimensions of discrimination (cf. Walgenbach K., *Intersektionalität - Eine Einführung*, 2012. Available online at: www.portal-intersektionalitaet.de/theoriebildung/schluesseltexte, last checked on 28.01.2017).

18 Hirschberg M., *Die überaus fähige Lehrkraft. Zur Wirkungsweise von Ableism in der Subjektivierung von Lehrkräften*, [in:] *Zeitschrift für Inklusion (2),* 2015. Available online at: http://www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/274/257 (last checked on 19.02.2017).

19 Reindlmeier K., *Intersektionalität*, [in:] Drücker A., Sinoplu A., Totter E., Reindlmeier K. (ed.), *op.cit.,* p. 13.

Even if organisations in the area of international educational work have developed a good inclusive praxis built upon their previous positive experiences, the task of public funding bodies remains as addressees of the UN human rights' agreements, especially that of the CRPD which clearly aims towards participation and inclusion, to establish corresponding guidelines and structural conditions that enable adequate provisions as well as barrier-free arrangements, communication and the didactic of the offers.

Bridges Not Walls[1]

Agniszka Ćwieląg, Dominik Mosiczuk. Magdalena Sankowska

Interpersonal communication

Interpersonal communication is a field that has engaged the efforts of linguists as well as philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, ethnologists and educators for many decades. Many definitions of the concept have been proposed, reflecting different perspectives and encompassing a variety of phenomena. The term communication is derived from the Latin word *communico*, which means 'make common, connect, inform, and expose oneself to', and *communio,* meaning 'commonality, sense of connection'[2]. The term's etymology includes a meaning that refers to the sense of community and intimacy with another human being. In essence, the process of communication always involves encounter and dialogue which provide an important context for the processes of encoding and decoding meanings that arise during social interactions, on the one hand allowing one to build a self-image in relation to other people, on the other, shaping interpersonal relations in the wider social and cultural context.

Communication, understood as above, explored by the authors of this publication, includes very special encounters – ones involving people or groups of people with varying degrees of ability and disability, coming from diverse cultural or social backgrounds.

Following Paul Watzlavik's idea, we hold that 'one cannot not communicate: every form of communication (even non-verbal) is a form of behaviour. Just as it is impossible not to behave, it is impossible not to communicate).[3] This means that we are constantly sending messages (more or less consciously) through different channels: speech, body language (gestures, facial expression, etc.) but also non-verbal sounds, drawings, etc. In this sense, communication is a form of self-expression – it includes messages that we send to others to describe our emotions/feelings, thoughts, needs and observations. It is therefore expressive – it is a means of externalising what is inside[4]. We encode information based on our experiences of socialisation, personal needs or the context of our everyday experience. We assume that the message that we communicate will be correctly decoded by the recipient(s). This is the way this process is described in the model of *communication as information transfer*[5] – people convey a clear message to their interlocutors. In this sense communication has an instrumental role – it serves a certain purpose.

As communication is a form of interpersonal interaction, we expect a response, or feedback from the recipient, which tells us whether our message has been 'correctly' decoded. This is possible if the recipient can receive the form of signal chosen by the sender and/or interpret it in the right situational, cultural and social context. In this case, communication operates in two directions and aims at mutual understanding *(interactive communication model)*. John Stewart[6], however, argues that communication is more than that. According to him, it affects who we are, 'builds a person' by constantly changing (negotiating) our identity. Therefore, there is a connection between how a person speaks and listens and who they are. This approach to communication is explored in the *transactional model* which holds that it is the contact between the participants during interaction and

1 Title from John Stewart's *Bridges Not Walls: A Book about Interpersonal Communication*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2012.

2 Dobek-Ostrowska, in Rzeźnicka-Krupa J., *Komunikacja, Edukacja, Społeczeństwo. O dyskursie dzieci z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, Kraków, 2007.

3 Watzlawick P., *Die Axiome von Paul Watzlawick*, www.paulwatzlawick.de/axiome.html (last accessed on 19.02.2017).

4 Stewart J., *Bridges Not Walls: A Book about Interpersonal Communication*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2012.

5 Morreale S.P., Spitzberg B.H., Barge J.K., *Human Communication: Motivation, Knowledge and Skills*, Belmont 2007.

6 *op. cit.*

the way their identities are defined and how they change during communication that are essential. The participants are at the same time senders and recipients of messages. So even when the recipient listens closely and takes on board someone else's message, they send non-verbal messages through sight, sounds, gestures and nods. The transactional model makes reference to different areas of meaning: the values, attitudes, beliefs and ideas that a person has developed in their lifetime. This means that we enter into communication equipped with varying areas of personal meaning that may or may not overlap. Where there is no overlap of meaning between people, communication can create it, so mutual understanding becomes possible. It can be assumed that this is the goal of almost every interpersonal interaction, especially in the context of international inclusive groups where the attitudes, beliefs, values and abilities of individuals are highly diverse. Also useful here is the *model of communication as community*, which can be viewed as an overarching approach. In it, the role of communication is to co-ordinate the actions of group members to make it possible to attain common goals[7]. In this context, it is important to address the questions of how to create or increase the area of shared meaning when working with these groups and whether the way participants communicate with one another enables them to achieve their desired goals. These issues are addressed by the authors of this publication.

Language and verbal communication

In the early twentieth century, one of the founders of linguistics argued that *language is like a sheet of paper; sounds are one side of it, concepts and ideas are the other. You cannot hold one side of it without holding the other, you cannot cut one side without cutting the other.*[8] It is best to think about them in tandem. Likewise, it is impossible to separate the verbal and non-verbal side in the process of interpersonal communication.

Language has been described as a system of symbols organised according to certain rules; another approach sees it as activity – speech acts that arise through the use of words. Stewart also refers to an approach that views language as a soup in which people swim *like pieces of carrot or potato*[9]. This means that each person is born in a world of language that surrounds them throughout their life. In this sense language is a part of who we are and how we perceive our reality. A two-way process is at work here: what people see and feel is influenced by language and at the same time influences language3[10]. In this context it is important to draw attention to the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes, such as those related to a culture or disability, and how stereotypes in turn affect language and communication with regard to members of the groups they refer to.

Language therefore plays an active role in creating our social world. It is the agent, creator and producer: it creates, shapes and constructs our social life.

Language fulfils four key functions:

- it directs our attention to certain aspects of events or situations, and provides information that help us understand them;

- it creates opportunities and limitations – the language we use can oblige us to perform certain actions and prevent others;

7   Morreale S.P., Spitzberg B.H., Barge J.K., *op.cit.*
8   Ferdinand de Saussure, in Stewart J., *op.cit.*
9   Ibidem
10 See also social constructivism in Morreale S.P., Spitzberg B.H., Barge J.K., *op.cit.*

- it defines identity by creating beliefs about who we are and how we should act, which in turn affects how we communicate. This connection is particularly evident in the context of non-exclusive language, gender-sensitive communication, communication with people with disabilities, and – negatively – in all forms of hate speech;

- it facilitates interaction. How language is used helps or hinders the ability to interact and function within a group.

Given that language creates a sense of identity, it is important to take into consideration that the words we use may perpetuate harmful stereotypes and degrading attitudes towards certain groups. It is therefore important to reduce bias in the language and to support both non-exclusive thinking and respectful, non-exclusive language. These are key goals of international inclusive meetings.

Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is involved in all human behaviours, attitudes and objects other than words that convey messages and have a shared social meaning. It includes physical appearance, body movements, gestures, facial expressions, facial expression, touch, and the ways of using time and space in communication. However, it does not encompass gestures that stand for words, such as in sign language, or words written or transmitted electronically.

Non-verbal communication usually accompanies verbal communication but is not a language. It is continuous, whereas language is discontinuous (we do not speak all the time). Even when we listen, we send non-verbal messages, often through multiple channels at the same time: through clothes, facial expression, eyes, body movements, gestures. Non-verbal messages are often more ambiguous than verbal ones. This is due to the number of transmission channels and the associated multiplicity of possible interpretations. In addition, the importance of non-verbal messages varies depending on the cultural context. Non-verbal messages are often sent at a lower level of consciousness than verbal ones, and are often used to convey the emotions and messages that are key to the development of interpersonal relationships. Words are used to express thoughts. In order to express feelings, we touch, smile, come closer. To be able to communicate competently, we need to be aware of the fact that non-verbal messages are often sent and received unconsciously. Explaining the meaning of non-verbal signals as precisely as possible is key when dealing with ambiguity in communication.

Communication in inclusive groups

Given the aforesaid aspects of communication, i.e. the fact that language creates social reality and that an important goal of every meeting is to seek agreement/consensus (which is only possible through effective communication), it is clear how important it is to support this process when working with groups, especially diverse ones such as international and inclusive groups. Developing a mutual communication system to avoid the frustration that may result from misunderstanding others or being misunderstood or from not getting a chance to understand or express oneself will help avoid the development of prejudices and fears, and then their duplication in the participants' own environment. It will also boost curiosity and motivation to engage with a context different from everyday life and explore the new and unknown.

The role of leaders of international inclusive meetings is to foster communication that opens up new avenues of thinking about oneself and others, as well as suggesting and strengthening various forms of, and equality of, self-expression, which in turn can facilitate collaboration, help reach common goals and ensure that participants can function well in a given, also newly forming,

community. Therefore, the overarching goal is to support and develop: **motivation** to get to know and effectively communicate with others; **curiosity** about the group and what's happening at the meeting, and willingness to find out more about them; and the **ability** to express oneself, communicate and decode messages.

LEXICON

Introduction to the Lexicon

This lexicon includes 13 entries addressing different stages and key aspects of typical (international) inclusiv meetings. The common thread in the topics covered is their influence on the process of communication with and among meeting participants. The selection of entries was based on many years of the authors' experience in the field of inclusion, and was driven by the desire to present some aspects of youth exchanges, sometimes from a completely new perspective. When writing the entries, the authors sought to support diverse forms of communication and the need to help remove barriers that may emerge in the process.

The authors present subjective opinions and guidelines, and are aware that this publication cannot exhaust the subject. Our main goal is to inspire readers to reflect and be creative in their own work in inclusive non-formal education.

Each entry has a similar structure and consists of three parts: an introduction to the problem in the context of inclusive meetings; guidelines on how to conduct the proposed activities and how to modify them to suit the needs of different individuals; and examples of methods and tools designed to stimulate barrier-free communication. These methods largely belong to a familiar repertoire, but the authors focus in particular on presenting their alternative forms which can enable active involvement of all participants, regardless of their ability, etc.

The lexicon brings together a range of interesting and inspiring methods, most of which are included in the clearly-presented list in the pages that follow.

The entries are arranged according to thematic considerations, not alphabetically. As the described topics are interrelated, the entries cross-reference to other entries. The electronic version of the lexicon uses hyperlinks, with the names of related entries shown in the margins.

Some lexicon entries are closely related to the topics discussed in the second part of *Perspective: Inclusion*, which contains examples of good practices. References to these examples, marked with ✐ , are provided in the margin and include titles of relevant texts.

In addition to the guidelines included in the lexicon entries, we recommend that you always observe the following general guidelines when implementing the suggested methods and activities:

- Remember that barrier-free communication, understood as effective access to information and participants' ability to express their own needs and opinions, is essential to participation. Inclusive activities should respect and support the diversity and equality of different forms of communication.

- The opportunities and needs of the group and its participants should be well understood. Adjust your planned programme and methods for age, fitness, skills, personality, cultural identity, etc.

- When preparing and implementing the methods and activities, remember that they can be affected by motor limitations, vision, acoustic perception, etc. Likewise, the attitude of participants to personal distance and physical contact may be relevant and should be taken into account. If in doubt, ask participants if they feel comfortable about the proposed form of contact and, if necessary, give up the method or activity.

- When using the methods, ensure there is enough space to move, especially if the group includes wheelchair users. Other important factors include lighting, the visibility of visuals and sign language

interpretation, and proper acoustics. For instance, reverberation and loud sounds can cause discomfort in hearing aid users. Good acoustics are also essential to effective language mediation.

- Encourage participants to discover and use different means of communication during the meeting (e.g. images, gestures, sign language, internet translators, etc.). Leaders should be aware of the availability of such strategies, and employ them when using language animation or in other activities. Frequently used means and forms of communication can be utilised when introducing tasks. Such positive examples stimulate creativity and initiative as well as increasing participants' ability to act.

- Actively seek creative solutions to overcome difficulties and don't be afraid to try new ideas. Experience is essential to learning and personal development.

Read on and be inspired!

Agnieszka Ćwieląg, Paulina Fidala, Elżbieta Kosek, Dominik Mosiczuk, Magdalena Sankowska

Lists of methods

This list provides an overview of the methods presented in the lexicon. You will find the methods under every key word in the subsection "examples". Many suggestions, methodological impulses, ideas for evaluation and group distribution, etc. are integrated into the texts themselves, and are therefore not listed separately here. Inspiring methods can also found in the second part of this publication. These are also not listed here.

Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication
- **Group contract**
  Key words: agree on communication rules, improve communication
- **Communication glossary**
  Key words: support communication skills, provide communication support
- **Language lesson**
  Key words: participation, interaction, arouse curiosity

Intercultural communication
- **Café international**
  Key words: interaction, different forms of communication, icebreaker
- **Journey into the world of gestures**
  Key words: diversity in communication, body language
- **Baranga: an intercultural dice game**
  Key words: dealing with differences, dealing with insecurities

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ACC)
- **Partner interview**
  Key words: alternative forms of communication, getting to know each other, interaction

Body language
- **Circles of emotions**
  Key words: facial expressions, emotions
- **"I see you"**
  Key words: eye contact, non-verbal communication, movement
- **A seducer**
  Key words: eye contact, non-verbal communication, movement
- **Name and gesture**
  Key words: learning names, communication through gestures
- **Images of words and sculptures**
  Key words: associative work, figure, communication through the body
- **Complete the image**
  Key words: body work, associative work, improvisation
- **Live "Memory"**
  Key words: presenting through body and gestures, interaction, interpreting body language
- **Movement in space**
  Key words: possibilities of the body, body expression, movement, interaction
- **Mirror**
  Key words: movement, body expression, imitation, interaction
- **Forest of sounds**
  Key words: communication through sound, listening, trust

- **Leading and following**

  Key words: trust, body contact, non-verbal communication
- **Massage**

  Key words: body contact, interaction, relaxation

Sound
- **Signalling program items**

  Key words: sounds as signals, orientation through sounds
- **Dividing participants into groups**

  Key words: animal sounds, icebreaker, energizer, interaction
- **Evaluation**

  Key words: movement, expression

Visualisation
- **Visual Facilitation:** an extension

  Key words: visualize own ideas, participation in group processes
- **Partner interview**

  Key words: non-verbal communication, finding forms to communicate
- **Communications-Shirts**

  Key words: creativity, communication support

Space design
- **Parking space**

  Key words: making content/ questions visible, expressing needs
- **Post office**

  Key words: supporting communication, anonymous communication

Moderation
- **Silent discussion**

  Key words: non-verbal getting to know each other, first contact, visual self-presentation

Getting to know
- **Self-portrait**

  Key words: getting to know each other, visual self-presentation, interaction
- **Identity molecules**

  Key words: affiliation, mutuality, identity
- **Diaries**

  Key words: learning process, sustainability, evaluation
- **Wanted**

  Key words: getting to know each other more deeply, interaction, self-presentation
- **Mandala of Diversity**

  Key words: diversity, identity, group affiliation
- **The living mandala**

  Key words: diversity, identity, group affiliation
- **Bingo**

  Key words: getting to know each other, affiliation, interaction, icebreaker
- **Four Corners**

  Key words: getting to know each other, visual classification, differences / similarities
- **All those, who ...**

Key words: getting to know each other, diversity, affiliation, movement

- **Posters for different groups**

  Key words: self-presentation, creativity

Ritual

- **Name and gesture**

  Key words: getting to know each other, remembering names, communication through gestures

Language animation

- **Name and gesture**

  Key words: communication support, creativity

- **ie geht's?/How are you?/Jak się masz?**

  Key words: getting to know, interaction, movement, energizer

- **Memory**

  Key words: learning words, interaction, fun

Evaluation

- **Evaluation of the day's programme**

  Key words: movement, anonymous feedback, participation

- **Thermometer**

  Key words: picture of participants' mood, anonymous feedback, participation

- **Pie**

  Key words: picture of participants' mood, anonymous feedback, participation

- **Suitcase, rubbish bin and washing machine**

  Key words: anonymous feedback, valuation in the categories good/medium/bad

- **Written questionnaires:**

  Key words: detailed feedback, detailed evaluation, comparability

- **Complete the sentence:**

  Key words: verbal feedback, group process

Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication

Theory

The distinctive feature of international meetings is that their participants communicate in a variety of languages. Inclusive meetings for people with disabilities can additionally feature other forms of communication, such as sign languages or other **AAC** systems.

Augmentative and alternative communication

An important task of the team of an (international) inclusive meeting is to make group members aware of the variety of existing forms of communication, stimulate their curiosity about these forms of communication and openness to exploring them, as well as to create the right conditions in which to practise them (through exercises). This leads to expanding opportunities for communication and interaction, and, as a result, for **getting to know** one another, making communication an important aspect of the meeting. Experiencing success in using new, various forms of communication, and thus increasing the chances of understanding others, helps build self-confidence and mutual acceptance. It is also an important part of development, not only at the interpersonal but also cognitive level.

Getting to know

It is often the case that the languages spoken by the team of meeting leaders become dominant languages in multilingual groups and serve as the starting point in language animation or moderation. In addition, the dominance of speech in a group where some members use AAC can also upset the balance of different forms of communication. Finally, in multilingual meetings, imbalance occurs when the members of one of the groups can speak their partners' language, which can automatically become the leading language of the programme. The task of leaders is to try to limit the occurrence of such situations and to ensure that none of the languages or forms of communication are privileged over others.

Becoming aware of the existence of alternative forms of communication and their equality, particularly in a world dominated by verbal communication, can transform the consciousness and development of people with no previous experience of such forms. It can also boost the self-esteem of AAC users and make them stronger, helping them feel full members of society.

Guidelines

- Moderation should involve the use of complementary forms of communication. Spoken language can be **visualised** through gestures, images, symbols or photos, or complemented by a text written in all languages used at the meeting. Don't forget about the users of AAC systems, such as the deaf (sign language) or the blind people (Braille).

Visualisation

- The order of languages used in **language mediation** and moderation should, as far as possible, vary, so as not to privilege any of the groups present at the meeting. The group that receives

Language mediation

information first has more time to prepare for the task, and may become impatient, distracted or bored when the same information is conveyed in other languages. Any changes in the order of languages, however, should be previously announced and explained (and, if necessary, visualised). This is particularly important with groups or individuals whose comfort, commitment and cognitive ability are strongly affected by the presence or lack of the right structure and predictability. Leaders should always monitor the group closely to select a strategy that suits the current situation.

- The use of parallel forms of communication requires not only time and patience from all parties but also knowledge and tact to communicate in a way that doesn't exclude anyone or amplify unfair opinions about anyone's communication skills, but – just the opposite – shows that the various forms of communication reflect social diversity. In this context, it is useful to follow our **language etiquette** guidelines.

„On Admiration and Compassion"

Examples

Methods designed to raise the awareness of diverse forms of communication and to support their equal standing

Group contract

It is common practice that a new group works out a contract setting out rules of collaboration among its members. During an inclusive meeting you can collect proposals from the group concerning mutual communication. Creating such a contract will boost the status of communication. A set of rules will help demonstrate the importance of communication, raise awareness of its various forms, and stress the equality of participants irrespective of what form of communication they utilise. The rules can seek to ensure that each participant has the chance to express themselves as well as requiring participants to be ready to learn simple phrases in a method of communication they are unfamiliar with.

As with any contract, it is important to keep in mind that rules should be worked out and accepted by group members rather than imposed. Only then will the contract be respected in tense situations (which involve conflict), serving as a reference and helping to maintain order.

As the process is complex, it is best to split it into two stages. First, proposed rules should be collected in small groups (e.g. the groups that arrived at the meeting) and then discussed and adopted on the forum.

Participants will feel more comfortable and secure in small groups. Ideally, the members of each group should know and trust one another, stimulate one another's commitment, and come from a similar cultural, social and institutional background. But even if participants don't know one another, a small group tends to encourage greater focus, commitment and openness, making it easier for everyone to express their opinions. This mode of work will help identify shared needs and values and then present them to participants from other groups in the second stage of the work. In addition, the two-stage process will enable leaders to better understand the diverse needs of individuals and their proposals.

Communication glossary

It is recommended to utilise tried and tested aids, e.g. the symbols or pictures with captions used by non-speaking individuals (as an equivalent for simple words and phrases), which are collected in books or arranged on language boards. Such tools can be used to make simple glossaries for all participants, including the different forms and methods of communication utilised in the group. For example, the phrase 'How are you?' can be expressed through a picture, a caption in several languages, or in Braille (you can use a pin to make holes in a piece of paper; the paper must be thick so that the holes can be read with the fingers).

Glossaries can take the form of binders which are updated and carried by participants, or of a board displayed in an accessible place in a common room. Select symbols and descriptions that are familiar and clear to all users.

Language lesson

You can devote each day (of a longer or regular meeting) or a single thematic block to presenting and studying simple phrases from a chosen form or method of communication used by one or more group members. It is important to create the right conditions and situations to enable these people to act in the capacity of experts and 'teachers'. It is sufficient that one person (e.g. a deaf or blind individual, other AAC user or a speaker of a spoken language) briefly explains and demonstrates e.g. how they typically greet a person, and the other participants repeat the greeting and learn it. This will inspire mutual curiosity not only about who the person is but also how they communicate with others.

In addition, as an exercise, pairs of participants can create glossaries (see above), show pictograms to each other, record words and listen to them, etc. We encourage any activity that promotes real direct interaction, gives equal standing to different forms of communication and fosters appreciation of their users, challenging the frequent perception of e.g. sign language and other alternative systems as lesser forms of communication.

Another efficient way to offer exposure to and learn other languages and forms of communication is to use **language animation** games.

An important aspect of all the above methods is the focus on participants, who are offered the opportunity to communicate directly, to the extent of their ability, about themselves and about the forms of communication they prefer. As the variety of communication forms is a value in itself, it is important that it becomes the territory of exploration, discovery and experience, inspiring participants to broaden their communication skills. In this way, everyone, no matter which forms of communication they prefer, not only develops an awareness of the variety of existing means of communication (using them in a more intentional way, e.g. through specific **gestures**, **body movements** or **sounds**), but also gets better at reading other people's messages.

Intercultural communication

Theory

Communication is a process that occurs between the sender and the recipient. In exchanging information, the sender and recipient use various types of messages: spoken or written words, gestures, movements, images, symbols, etc. Intercultural communication is a process 'between people who come from different countries, ethnic or national groups, representing different cultural norms and values, and behaving in ways typical of their cultures.'[1] The intercultural differences that derive from these various systems of norms and values are evident not only in behavioural patterns but also in the communication styles preferred by different cultural groups. Those who organise and conduct international meetings should be aware of factors that may interfere with intercultural communication, such as:

- downplaying or even denying intercultural and interpersonal differences, and assuming that everyone can communicate with anyone else without the need to reflect on the process or adapt to a particular situation;

- language differences, not only in the context of foreign languages but also dialects, and interpretations and meanings of words and expressions;

- differences in non-verbal communication – varying interpretations of non-verbal messages which have no universal meaning (e.g. shaking one's head, looking someone in the eye);

- different conversational patterns: how communication should proceed, who is allowed to take part in it, should it be partnership-based or hierarchical;

- stereotypes and prejudices that impose ready-made interpretative patterns often mistakenly seen as facilitating interpretation but in fact preventing people from seeing others in an objective light, of the messages they send and their intentions (e.g. equating disability with being dependent on assistance, seeing someone as less worthy before checking their competence);

- differences in the systems of values and the associated value judgments that may lead to misinterpretation and adopting a negative attitude before engaging in communication;

- emotions (often anxiety) that create or increase communication barriers and introduce stereotypes as a misunderstood lifeline in the process.

Guidelines

Take into consideration using intercultural education and **language animation** methods in planning   Language Animation
international meetings, especially if they are attended by people from different ethnic or cultural

---

1   D. Cieślikowska, www.rownosc.info/dictionary/komunikacja-miedzykulturowa (last accessed on 19.02.2017)

backgrounds. The aim of such methods is to make participants more sensitive and attentive, to draw their attention to potential differences and to get them to accept these differences. It is also important that everyone is aware of their own communication patterns and habits. This will gradually eliminate insecurity and anxiety associated not only with communication but also with engaging with others, relationship building, working together and interacting in free time. The first stage of intercultural communication is almost always accompanied by insecurity and anxiety, which make it harder to receive and interpret messages. When introducing methods designed to support communication, make sure they are adapted to the needs and individual characteristics of the people involved in the (planned) communication process.

Examples

Café international

Participants pair up and decide who will be the greeter and who will be the greeted. After each scene is completed, they switch roles. The leader asks the greeter to greet the other person in a way appropriate to the situation, e.g. two friends in a bus, mother and child, father and child, worker and employer, clergyman and layman, teacher and student, police officer and driver, lovers in a park, strangers in the street, two Spanish friends from Barcelona, Japanese and Turkish businessmen.

After the game is over, leaders talk to participants about who greeted whom and how. Participants can describe how they felt when enacting the scenarios. When carrying out evaluation, it is worth asking whether participants have always known how they should greet each other and how they knew that.

The team of leaders should choose examples in an informed manner, adapting them to the group's needs. In conclusion, you can talk about customary greetings in the cultures of the participants.

Journey into the world of gestures

Participants split into small, international groups and are asked to think of the maximum number of gestures that look the same in different cultures but have different meaning (e.g. the thumbs-up sign in Poland, France and the US is used by hitch-hikers and to signify that something is okay, while in Greece and Iran the gesture is vulgar; shaking one's head in most countries means 'no', whereas in Bulgaria, Turkey, Iran and parts of India it means 'yes'.)[2]

When the time is up, each groups presents their examples to the other groups. If the game is staged as a competition, the group that has collected the largest number examples can be awarded a prize. Recommendation: The method should be modified to suit the group's needs, e.g. by offering a specific example before the game or by working with the whole group from the start. The leading team should prepare a few examples, present them to the group and discuss their meaning. It is also useful to provide aids or give participants access to the internet so they can search for information needed to understand the gestures.

---

2   http://www.focus.pl/czlowiek/gesty-wiata-sprawd-znaczenie-mowy-ciaa-przed-wakacjami-11468 (last accessed on 19.02.2017)

Baranga[3]: an intercultural dice game

Set up dice gaming tables in a large room. The tables should be appropriately spaced out. Divide participants into small groups of 4–5 players and ask them to sit at designated tables. After taking their seats, participants are not allowed to talk to one another (this rule is the most important one!)

Each table is assigned a number, a copy of the **game rules**, a dice, a piece of paper and a pen for keeping the score.

Game rules

Participants shouldn't know that the rules of the game at each table vary slightly from those used at other tables.

The members of each group should get familiarised with their rules and then give their copy of the rules back to the leaders. When everyone has understood the rules (this process should be facilitated by leaders), the test round can begin. When everything is clear, a dice tournament starts at each table. Each group plays five rounds. The points scored by each player are added up. The person with the highest score wins.

After each tournament, which consists of 5 rounds and is played in small groups, the person with the highest score moves to one table up (e.g. from table 1 to table 2). The person with the lowest score moves to one table down (e.g. from table 4 to table 3).

This can be repeated three to four times. It is important to keep in mind that participants are not allowed to speak to one another neither during the game nor when switching tables. Speaking is only allowed during the last round.

When conducting out evaluation, the following questions may be helpful:

- How did you find the exercise? What happened? What surprised you?

- What did you feel when you joined a new table? How did you behave? What would you like to happen at that moment?

- How did you feel when you stayed at your table? How did you and your friends handle the situation when people joined your table?

- What rules did you follow? How did you introduce them in the game? How did you make decisions about rules when you weren't allowed to talk? How the situation changed when you were finally allowed to speak?

This exercise can serve as an introduction to intercultural communication. It can be useful to answer the following questions:

- Which of the experiences you had can occur when a group of people from different cultures meet for the first time?

- What strategies can support such meetings and consensus in them?

Recommendation: Depending on the target group, each table may include an observer who doesn't take part in the game but supports the group if necessary.

---
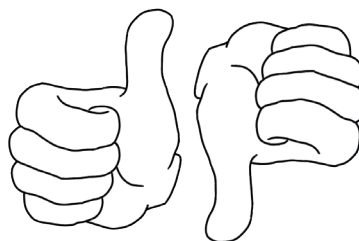
3 Winkelmann, Ann-Sophie (2014), 'More than Culture: Diversitätsbewusste Bildung in der internationalen Jugendarbeit' in *Jugend für Europa*, Bonn, p. 57. Download: http://www.vervielfaeltigungen.de/resources/more_than_culture.pdf

Baranga - examples for rules

Other rules can be added.

·· **1** ··

In this game it is not allowed to speak! Read the rules carefully. When you really understand them, give the paper back to the trainers. Then the game can begin.

The person with the darkest hair at the table begins.
After 5 rounds the game ends. Everybody throws the dice after each other (clockwise).
After each throw the points (dice eyes) are written down.
At the end, the points of each person are counted.

Rules:
With a 6 you can roll the dice again and write down both points!
With a 5 the next person has to skip the round!
With a 3 you can write down 10 points!

·· **2** ··

In this game it is not allowed to speak! Read the rules carefully. When you really understand them, give the paper back to the trainers. Then the game can begin.

The person with the brightest hair at the table begins.
After 5 rounds the game ends. Everybody throws the dice after each other (clockwise).
After each throw the points (dice eyes) are written down.
At the end, the points of each person are counted.

Rules:
With a 3 you can roll the dice again and write down both points!
With a 4 the next person has to skip a round!
With a 2 you can write down 10 points!

·· **3** ··

In this game it is not allowed to speak! Read the rules carefully. When you really understand them, give the paper back to the trainers. Then the game can begin.

The person with the shortest hair at the table begins.
After 5 rounds the game ends. Everybody throws the dice after each other (clockwise).
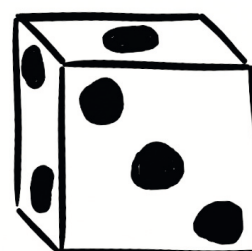After each throw the points (dice eyes) are written down.
At the end, the points of each person are counted

Rules:
With a 5 you can roll the dice again and write down both scores!
With a 1 the next person has to skip a round!
With a 6 you can write down 10 points!

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Theory

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a set of communication means which people with different types of speech disorders can use to communicate with the outside world. The name includes two terms: 'augmentative' and 'alternative'. According to Stephen von Tetzchner and Harald Martinsen, augmentative communication is 'complementary or augmentative communication. The word 'augmentative' stresses the fact that an intervention that uses alternative means of communication has a twofold purpose: to strengthen and complement speech and to provide a substitute means of communication when a person does not start to speak.'[1] It is used when speech does not fulfill its linguistic role and must be assisted by other forms of communication, including cases when speech develops too slowly, is limited or very unclear.

Alternative communication is utilised when speech is completely lacking or very limited. This is called 'the process of assimilating surrogate means to provide a substitute for speech'.[2]

Augmentative and alternative communication can also be used to support communication in international inclusive groups.

The elements used to support communication among participants at inclusive meetings and their contact with the external environment can include: photos, pictures, pictograms, gestures.

These elements are:

- **symbolic** – they replace a fragment of complex reality with a conventional sign which is a part of it, e.g. a pictogram of a spoon can signify meal time;

- **iconic** – they literally translate reality into a pictogram, i.e. symbols are created that accurately reflect reality, e.g. a pictogram of a spoon indicates that someone wants a spoon, a picture of a car means that someone has arrived by car;

- **systemic**, which means that the elements used are ordered according to certain rules and logical standards for creating new signs (time of day, time of week, me/you, cold/warm).

Examples of using AAC elements include the labeling of the meeting environment (i.e. specific objects/places marked with an image/signature) or presenting a **day plan** using images/visual symbols. The symbols should be actively used by both leaders and meeting participants. In addition, jointly agreed **gestures** may be introduced in place of verbal messages.

Visualisation

Ritual

---

1   S. von Tetzchner, H. Martinsen, *Introduction to augmentative and alternative communication*, London, 2000.
2   W. Loebl, 'Szkic rozwoju wspomagającej i alternatywnej komunikacji w Polsce' in J. Błeszyński (ed.), *Alternatywne i wspomagające metody komunikacji*, IMPULS, Kraków, 2006, p. 21.

Guidelines

**Guidelines for using augmentative and alternative communication
when working with inclusive groups**

AAC signs (photos, gestures, pictures, pictograms) should be used consistently. It is recommended to make sure that each sign used in augmentative and alternative communication is understood in the same way by all participants of the meeting and fully accepted by them. The leader of the inclusive meeting plays a key role in making that happen.

Augmentative and alternative communication has its limitations. A group of participants whose disabilities very in terms of type and extent of disability, e.g. a group that includes participants with significant physical disabilities and blind people (which, of course, is the idea of inclusion), might be a challenge. In this situation, communication by pictograms and pictures alone will not be possible, and it will be necessary to adapt the scope of AAC to the needs of the visually impaired, e.g. by using communication assistance in the form of spatial-tactile signs. When working with people with upper limbs disability, it is important to remember that gestures should not be made above the mid-body line, otherwise they will not be able to use this method.

The groups attending inclusive meetings often come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, so the signs and symbols may be differently understood by different participants. That's why, when implementing AAC, it is so important to make sure that the symbols and images are understood in the same way by all participants of the meeting.

It is important to be creative, imaginative, and flexible in transforming and adapting the chosen methods to the group's needs.

Examples

Interviews conducted in pairs
The leaders prepare a number of questions to help participants learn more about one another. Here are some examples:

- Do you like animals? What animals do you like?

- Do you prefer the sea or the mountains?

- Have you got any brothers or sisters?

- What do you like doing best?

- Printed or handwritten communication sheets should be hung (or spread out) in the meeting room, with different answers to the questions. At the start of the game, participants move freely about the room. On cue, they pair up. In each round, one question is read aloud, and the pairs get two minutes to exchange information and get to know each other. Participants can reply verbally, by

making a drawing, by showing their answer with their hands or legs and/or by using the aforesaid sheets. Depending on the ability of the group, you can differentiate the length of the interview, and pose simple or more complex questions (e.g. related to the topic of the meeting). After the time elapses, the game ends on cue. In the next round, participants split into different pairs and answer the next question. The number of rounds is up to the leaders.

- The communication sheets used for interviews can be created together with participants in creative workshops. Pictures for the sheets can be cut out from newspapers, painted or drawn from a template.

Comunication table: I like / I don´t like
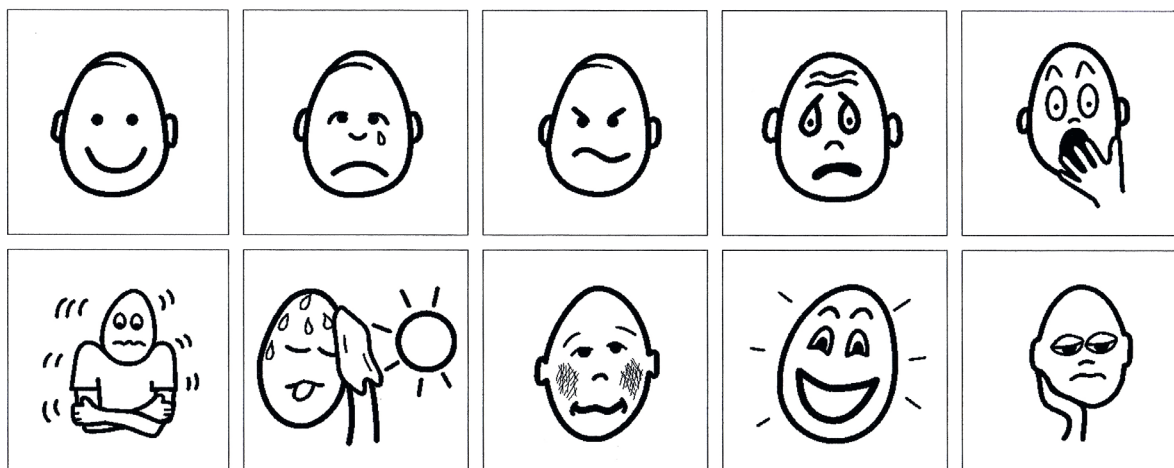
Comunication table: emotions

Body language

Theory

This concept is narrower than non-verbal communication, although the two phrases are often used synonymously. All motor, sensorimotor or psychomotor activities may be referred to as body language[1]. Body language may emphasise and strengthen information conveyed verbally, change or cancel the meaning of such information, or function independently from the verbal message, when a person consciously uses facial expressions and gestures. It may also be an intended action or movement, leaving aside mimicking gestures, as happens in dance.

It is impossible not to communicate. Even if we do not say words, we reveal our feelings and attitudes. Body motion communication, called kinesics, is to a great extent learned. Gestures are passed down from generation to generation, without any particular training. Some gestures function only in certain peer groups, other are typical for regions or cultures, and some are universal. Particular cultures are joined by the similarity of body language rather than the similarity of verbal language. Differences in body language may therefore lead to misunderstandings[2].

When cultural differences in a group are big, it is worth creating a common system of gestures and movements and ascribing them specific meanings that are understandable to everyone.

The importance of body language also increases in the case of people with serious intellectual disabilities, who generally communicate outside the verbal sphere. However, physical or intellectual disability may also be related to limitations concerning self-expression via the body, e.g. making certain movements or gestures, facial expressions, etc. When making initial contact with a group including both those with disabilities and able-bodied people, the group leader's awareness, intuition and gentleness are very important. It is important to create conditions which eliminate the possible fear of contact without crossing private boundaries or breaching limits relating to closeness and touch.

Depending on the kind of disability, various aspects of non-verbal communication, including body language, become significant. In the case of blind people, sound and touch fulfill a much more significant function. For people with autism, it is difficult both to make and maintain eye contact and to interpret this kind of message, which in turn makes it impossible for them to accurately recognize the emotional states of others. Moreover, their own emotional expression acquired through mimicry is much less developed. On the other hand, people with Downs syndrome find it easy to make contact with others through touch and closeness.

For people running inclusive meetings, being aware of their own body language and using it in a way which supports verbal messages in order to make them understandable for everyone (including the needs of particular individuals) is essential. On the other hand, while working with such

---

1   Rebel G., *The Body Language*, Madrid 1995.
2   P., Davis, M., McKay M., Fanning, P., *Messages. The Communication Skills Book*, Oakland, CA 1995.

groups, leaders should consciously introduce the elements of non-verbal communication, which help participants communicate with one another. At the same time, this familiarizes participants with previously unknown, alternative means of communication, and encourages them to make use of them.

The following forms of non-verbal communication may be referred to as body language:

Facial expression

The face is the most expressive part of the human body. According to Knapp and Hall[3], communicating the emotions is the most important function of the human face and facial expression. Additionally, the face reflects our changing reactions to the words or actions of other people. It may also communicate the attitude or approach represented by a given person, constitute a commentary about the conveyed message, or provide emphasis. For people with motor limitations, especially those concerning the upper and lower limbs, the face may become the main channel for communicating their needs, emotions, and information.

Eye movement

Exchanging looks and keeping sustained eye contact are important both to conveying messages and building and maintaining relations with the interlocutor (making contact, breaking contact, changing the quality of the contact, attracting the interlocutor's attention, etc.).

Gestures and body movements

Movements of arms and hands which occur during the conversation help to communicate in many ways: they replace verbal signals; help regulate the course of a conversation; hold the interlocutor's attention; make the utterance expressive; and strengthen the conveyed information. Messages may be conveyed not only with the aid of hands and gestures but also with the participation of leg and head movements.

In the case of international inclusive meetings, it is worth applying gestures that are used by the participants, e.g. using gestures belonging to the system of communication that they are familiar with, and teaching those gestures to other people in the group (see **'Augmentative and Alternative Communication'** and **'Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication'**). At this point, it is important to distinguish between learned gestures applied consciously and with specific contextual and cultural meanings, gestures applied by people using alternative means of communication, and natural gestures accompanying and regulating verbal communication.

Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen[4] classify gestures according to the following five categories:

- **Emblems:** used to replace and repeat words, these have strong cultural connotations (e.g. an 'OK' sign – thumb up, putting the index finger close to mouth as a request to be silent). These are most often used in situations when it is difficult to communicate verbally due to different barriers (e.g. a big distance, noise). Commands and orders are also expressed with the aid of these gestures;

- **Illustrators:** these illustrate, complement, accentuate and strengthen words. However, they usually do not have their verbal counterparts (a movement or gesture emphasizing the meaning

---

3   Knapp M.L., Hall J.A., *Non-verbal Communication in Human Interaction*, Boston 2014.
4   Ekman P., Friesen W.V., Ellsworth P., *Emotion in the human face*, New York 1972.

of the uttered word, e.g. 'sooo long'). Enriching a message with such a gesture helps to ensure the clearness of the conveyed content. These gestures become particularly useful in situations where there are some interruptions (e.g. buzz, noise) or when the verbal message is complex;

- **Regulators:** these are often unconscious non-verbal behaviors expressing the approach towards a conversation. They monitor or control the words of another person, influencing the course of a communication process or regulate the interaction, e.g. its duration (making eye contact while beginning the conversation, raising hand when starting to talk, nodding during the conversation);

- **Adaptors:** these are non-verbal signals revealing the level of fear, self-confidence or truthfulness. They help to 'adapt' to a (generally difficult) situation and involve body movements reflecting the level of comfort/discomfort, autistic gestures referring to the person him/herself (drumming, tapping fingers, biting nails, rubbing the forehead when nervous) and manipulative gestures referring to objects (playing with an object, e.g. a pen or a highlighter during class)[5];

- **Affect displays:** sent by the body, often unintentional. These reflect the kind and strength of experienced emotions and psychological states. They replace words while expressing feelings and emotions and involve mimic expressions (e.g. disgust), changes in skin color (e.g. becoming red when nervous), vision behaviors (avoiding eye contact, which may suggest that a person is shy; persistent staring as a sign of anger), body position (e.g. indecisiveness), and pace of body movements (informing about the strength of the experienced emotions).

Posture and body expression

The way of sitting, standing or walking; open vs. closed posture; bent or straight back; relaxed vs. tense body. Posture may communicate the status (leader-participant), degree of self-confidence, and emotional state (e.g. bent back representing sadness; upright posture representing a good mood, with self-confidence and openness greater than in the case of a bent-over posture). Bending forward during a conversation suggests that a person is open and interested. Conversely, bending backwards means that a person is defensive and not interested. Posture thus conveys important information about the attitudes and emotional states of the participants. A group leader may in turn consciously use various postures to express certain messages. It is worth paying attention to the fact that while posture reveals a specific message, preserving or changing a given posture also influences a person's attitude or mood.

Sound and voice[6]

The way in which words and sounds are conveyed (even if the person to whom they are directed does not understand the verbal message) can be an important source of information. Voice gives words a proper emotional weight. Sound elements with significant influence include, among others: intonation, accentuation, tone of voice, rhythm and fluency of speaking, height and strength of voice (see **'Sound'**).

Sound

Apart from vocal diversification, non-verbal messages are also communicated by a lowered voice, silence, or short breaks (they may emphasize the significance of a given remark; give time for thinking; avoid interruptions such as um, you know, etc.)[7].

---

5   Leathers D.G., *Successful non-verbal communication. Principles and applications*, New York 2016.
6   Sound, touch and space are considered non-verbal elements of communication in its broader sense (they go beyond body language). Howver, due to their significance in communication with groups, they are included in the desrciption of this entry.
7   Morreale S.P., Spitzberg B.H., Barge J.K., *Human Communication: Motivation, Knowledge and Skills*, Belmont 2007.

Touch

Touch allows us to draw conclusions about relations. The most important part of the body here is the hands, e.g. through putting pressure on our own body or that of another person. Touch most frequently occurs in greetings (see **'Ritual'**), when saying goodbye, when showing support, etc. By introducing touch as a form of communication during international and intercultural meetings, it is important to pay attention to customs and cultural codes and to make the group aware of these issues beforehand.

Communication involving touch is particularly relevant when working with blind people. Touch also has a significant function in communication through movement and dance.

Interpersonal space and distance

These specify how people move and how they use space in the process of communication. The way in which interpersonal space is used depends on cultural factors, the kind of acquaintance, and closeness or intimacy between members of the group. The greater the closeness, the smaller the space may get. Hall[8] distinguishes personal, social and public spheres. The more personal and close the relation is, the smaller the distance during the interaction becomes. Conscious work with space and distance is to a great extent related to the way in which the space is arranged, and it should be adjusted to context (see **'Space design'**). The task of those leading the meeting also involves helping participants become aware of their personal space and its boundaries. This is a very important part of the process of developing self-awareness and, as a consequence, developing the skill of communicating needs and protecting personal space. Both working with space and experimenting with distance in interpersonal relations are important elements in dance and movement. By retaining creativity and strengthening personal expression, they become interesting issues for international and inclusive groups.

Ritual

Space design

Guidelines

Through the conscious application of body language, leaders of inclusive and intercultural groups may not only strengthen a verbal message and its clearness but also influence the quality of their contact with the group, as well as the atmosphere and energy of the meeting.
It is worth paying attention to the following aspects:

- **Mimicking face and eye movements:** constant eye contact with members of the group is important – it builds relations within the group and at the same time enables leaders to monitor participants' moods and attitudes, their degree of involvement in the issue in question, and whether they understand the conveyed messages. A smile automatically introduces a positive atmosphere, suggesting that the leader has a positive approach towards the group.

- **Gestures and body movements:** in inclusive groups, it is important to introduce clear gestures at the beginning and to apply them throughout the meeting, making sure that they are understood and that everybody is able to perform them. The aim should be to apply the same gestures/movements

8   Hall E.T., *Proxemics, Current Anthropology*, 9, s. 83, [after:] Leathers D.G., *Successful non-verbal communication. Principles and applications*, New York 2016.

42

in the same context, which may lead to the creation of rituals. For example, gestures: 'OK' (thumb up), 'so so' (left/ right movement of the palm) and 'wrong' (thumb down) may both support the conveyed message and understanding of the **game 'How Are You?'**. These can also be used to check the responses of participants without using verbal communication. However, it is important to find alternative ways in the case of participants with motor limitations.

- **Posture and involvement:** the person running the meeting should be aware that posture reflects their attitude and involvement, e.g. an upright posture will be associated with a good mood. Positive postures towards others are expressed in conversation by leaning towards the interlocutor (however, it is important to keep the message coherent, which means combining the positive posture with a smile, keeping eye contact, etc.).

- **Voice and sound:** appropriate use and modulation of the voice not only convey the emotional approach to the spoken content but also maintain the appropriate dynamics of the communication, while holding the participants' attention. Even if the participants do not understand the verbal message, they can understand whether the message is an invitation, an order or a reprimand from the appropriate intonation by the person running the meeting. It is worth encouraging participants to use voice and sound to convey emotions and mood, especially when the groups are international or include members who experience difficulties with verbal communication. When working with the group, it is important to define and introduce sounds that signify specific messages, e.g. asking for attention; ending and beginning the exercise.

- Exercises requiring close physical contact should only be introduced when the group is fully integrated. When the need for such contact arises, it is important that participants can specify how they would like to be touched, as well as how and where they do not want to be touched. When physical contact or touch are difficult for participants, objects serving as a kind of intermediary can be introduced, e.g. use a ball for massage; bamboo sticks for contact between dancers, etc.

- Exercises involving touch or the requirement to specify spatial boundaries (private sphere) may be practiced during physical, theatre or dance classes.

Examples of methods

Face
Circle of emotions
An exercise inspired by methods from improvisational theatre. Participants are standing in a circle. The group leader starts the game by showing the person standing on his/her left or right side a certain emotion – e.g. sadness – with the aid of mimic/ facial expression. The person receiving the emotion intensifies it by expressing the same emotion in his/her own way. They then change it to a different emotion, which is passed on to another participant. In this exercise, participants may use sounds as well as expressions. In subsequent stages, other parts of the body may also be used.

Eye movement

I can see you. Exchanging places.

Participants stand in a circle, allowing them to see each other. When two people make eye contact, they exchange places. In a different version of this exercise, one person is standing in the middle of a circle. He/she tries to find a place for himself/herself, while other pairs swap places. If they cannot do it quickly enough, they remain in the middle and the game continues. Exchanging places takes place simultaneously, which increases the game's dynamics.

Seducer

Participants work in pairs. The pairs are standing in a circle. One person from the circle does not have a partner. This person is a 'seducer' who tries to pick somebody up by winking at him/her. The 'seduced' person should move in the direction of the seducer while his/her partner tries to prevent it by holding onto the person's shoulders (until that time, the partner keeps his/her hands together behind his/her back). In this exercise, it is important to make eye contact and to react quickly.

Gestures and body movements

Name and gesture

Participants introduce themselves by saying their name and making a gesture, which represents their mood at a given moment, a characteristic, or something that the person likes doing. Participants repeat both the name and the movement/ gesture. This exercise is particularly useful at the beginning of a meeting, and when repeated regularly it may become a ritual (compare: Ritual).

Images of words and sculptures

This exercise is derived from Augusto Boal's **image theatre**. The exercise may be an introduction to a theatre work devoted to a certain issue, such as discrimination. It also may be used as creative brainstorming in which participants use their bodies to search for associations with the given issue, e.g. inclusion. The exercise engages participants physically and develops their ability to use the body to express specific meanings, in addition to improving their abilities to decode the non-verbal messages and body language of others. The participants stand in a circle with their faces directed outwards and their eyes closed. The leader introduces the issue and the participants represent it with the aid of a motionless image created with their own bodies. When they hear the signal, they turn around simultaneously and show each other their images. The leader asks other participants to interpret the images (compare with a description of the exercise in the text 'Theatre of the Oppressed').

Theatre of the Oppressed

Complete the image

Two people are standing in front of each other holding hands. They freeze in this position. The leader asks the other participants to interpret the image. Then, one person from the pair moves away, leaving an incomplete image. The person who is left alone does not change his/her position. Another person from the group completes the image by adding his/her own position, creating a new image and a different story. The exercise may be done in pairs, threes or groups of four or more. The exercise may be used as an introduction to working with specific issues and self-created images. Through the application of dynamisation techniques, it may become a starting point for developing a short play.

Live 'Memory'

Participants work in pairs. One person does not have a partner and plays 'Memory'. The pairs decide upon a figure to be created by each person individually using only their body (it is important to make the figures identical). Then, partners separate and stand in different places. The task of the player is to identify the biggest number of similar figures (pairs). The player points at the selected person, he/she presents the figure, and the 'searcher' tries to find the second part of the pair. To introduce an element of competition, two or more people may play 'live memory' at the same time. The person who finds the most pairs is the winner.

Posture and body expression

Movement in space

Participants move at their own pace, in different directions, filling the whole available space. They make eye contact with people they pass, greeting each other in a way introduced by the leader. As a warm up, participants may move at a different pace, from 1 to 5 (3 is a natural pace, 1 is very slow, and 5 is very fast). After some time, the leader may ask the participants to observe the way in which a selected person is moving and to imitate his/her way of walking, posture, pace and rhythm. The exercise can be repeated by imitating a number of other people. In the next stage, the leader asks participants to make postures and to move in ways that express different types of emotions or moods, e.g. joy, gloom, sadness, pride, and anger. The exercise may also refer to issues of high/ low status, power, and associated relations (e.g. high status: a straight, proud posture, broad shoulders, etc.). It is important that participants express it with their whole bodies: shoulders, feet, the way of looking at the people they pass. The course of this exercise is similar in the case of a person with low status. Here, participants also pay attention to posture and the expression of feelings. In the next stage, participants work in pairs with people with a different status. They move together, playing their roles, experiencing them in their own bodies and interacting with each other. Observing the quality of these relations (distance, pace, position in space) is important here. The exercise needs to be contemplated, evaluated, and discussed with the leader.

Mirror

Participants work in pairs. One person moves to the music in an arbitrary way, making movements using their whole body. The other person – the 'reflection'– imitates their partner's moves. Objects (e.g. a brush) can be used to make this exercise easier. One person – in this case 'the artist' – paints a picture with a brush and the partner imitates his/her movements using a brush and their whole body. In the next stage, the participants may join together to paint an arbitrary painting or a painting referring to the issue introduced by the leader, e.g. a forest, a house, a person's name, etc.

Sound and voice

Forest of sounds

Participants work in pairs and together they decide about the sound that will be used when they communicate with each other. Then, one person from the pair closes his/her eyes and another

person, using the specified sound, leads his/her partner around the space, signaling when to stop, go back, change direction, etc. In a different version of this exercise, the participants stand in a circle. Each person individually decides on a sound that he/she will make continuously. When all participants have their sounds, they close their eyes and listen to the sounds made by their neighbors, trying to remember them. In the next stage, the leader moves each person to a different place (the participants still have their eyes closed and they are making their continuous sounds). The task of the participants is to come back to their own place and recreate the initial circle, which means finding their neighbors by listening to the sounds being made.

Touch
Leading and following
Participants work in pairs. They have only one point of contact with each other – the touch of their index fingers. One person from the pair closes his/her eyes, the other leads him/her, conveying information only through this single point. Initially, these movement can be gentle and slow. When the partner feels safe, however, the level of difficulty can be increased, e.g. by changing levels, pace, directions. In the next stage, a change of roles takes place. In the final stage, pairs may move (or dance) without deciding who is leading and being led. In a different version of this exercise, the leader can use their palm on the partner's back. Pairs may also be switched, to enable the participants to experience following different leaders. It is important to ensure that the person being led keeps their eyes closed, to avoid knowing who is leading them at a given moment.

Massage
When working with groups, various forms of massage can be used, either to help people relax and release the tension or to help make them active and energized (depending on the need at a given moment). This is also a safe way of making people familiar with various forms of touch. While this may be difficult for participants initially, some objects – e.g. a ball – make the contact easier.

Interpersonal space
Working with personal and interpersonal space is an important element of dance pedagogy. Initially, an exercise in which participants imagine that they are in the middle of a soap bubble or a balloon may be used. The edges of the balloon determine the personal space of each participant. The leader encourages participants to move (or dance) with this image in mind and remembering that the balloon occupies a certain space. (i.e. to be avoided when passing) .The exercise can be performed in pairs, with participants dancing together. When the group leader gives a signal, the distance between the partners changes. This may be as short as an outstretched arm, or as wide as partners standing at opposite sides of the room. After some time, the leader may signal for the distance to be very small, with physical contact (the balloon or the soap bubble is broken). It is important to ensure that the partners maintain eye contact, regardless of the distance. The leader may support this by introducing various kinds of encounters and encouraging participants to observe chances in the distance between balloons changes, e.g. contact between a mother and her child, best friends, passers-by in the street, people standing very close to each other in a crowded bus, etc. The exercise may be used as an introduction to a conversation about personal space, participants' feelings when this space is violated, and the ways in which they can communicate their boundaries to others.

Sound

Theory

In its simplest definition, sound is 'any auditory sensation'. It encompasses the human voice as well as the sounds of musical instruments, activities, animals and equipment. The side effect of sound is vibration stimulation which is felt by both hearing and deaf people.

As sounds can enhance communication or complement its different forms, it is important to use them consciously in inclusive meetings.

Changing the duration, volume or tone of sounds can affect the expressiveness of the message. Sounds can have a specific emotional charge, allowing us to better express our moods, sensations and expectations.

The elements of sound (and music) such as rhythm, intensity and tempo make it perceptible to deaf people (dynamic and rhythmic hearing).

Research confirms that music affects the somatic nervous system – it can induce goose bumps, increase pulse, or even bring listeners to tears. These effects are possible due to bone conduction, so sound and music can be effective in working with deaf people[1].

Sound can be used as a communication enhancer. This is particularly true for meetings where the linguistic diversity of participants or difficulties in verbal contact pose an extra challenge. During such meetings verbal messages can be amplified by the simultaneous use of a different type of sound, such as sound produced by music instruments, which may be used to say 'hello' or 'thank you' or in place of 'yes' or 'no'.

Sounds can also help us orient ourselves in time and space, conveying some simple message (e.g. signals announcing breaks, meals, or defining the boundaries of the playing field). By introducing sound to group work, we make participants more aware of **alternative forms of communication.**

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Guidelines

- Sound can be used in a variety of situations during a meeting, such as greeting, bonding, dividing participants into groups, evaluation, etc.

- Always use the same sounds to designate the same message.

- Sounds, especially their pitch, volume and duration, should be adapted to the individual needs and abilities of participants.

- When working with people who have difficulty making sounds

---
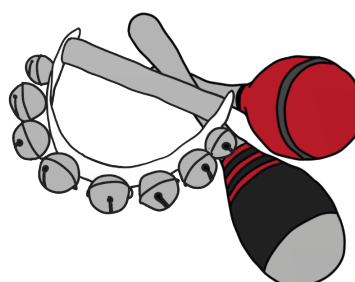
1   Wierszyłowski J., *Psychologia Muzyki*, Warszawa 1981.

due to speech system dysfunctions or limited motor function, it is recommended to provide them with the widest possible range of instruments and objects so they can produce the desired sound. For example, if someone can't hit the drum, you can give them a whistle or attach a band with bells to their ankle, which will make sound with a slight movement of the foot. It is important to be creative in finding alternative ways of producing sound by using different body parts or even a wheelchair.

Examples

Examples of how to use sounds in inclusive meetings

Signalling programme items
A single clap can mean a request for silence, a bell sound can mean the beginning or end of a break, a tambourine strike can usher in playtime, a specific tune can announce a meeting in a circle, etc.

Dividing participants into groups – animal noises
Before the work starts, leaders should select the animals that will be assigned to each group. The number of species depends on the number of groups needed. For international meetings, select animals whose noises sound similar in each language ('meow' for a cat, 'moo' for a cow, 'sss' for a snake, etc.).

Leaders should prepare pictures of animals. The number of pictures should correspond to the number of participants. Each person picks one picture and, on cue, starts making the noise of the animal shown in it. Participants move around imitating the noise of the animal, find people who make similar noises and join them forming groups.

- This way of using sound not only helps to divide participants into groups, but is also fun. It can be used in a warm-up/energiser.

- If participants include blind people, you can make cards with animal names written in Braille. You will find a tip how to do this under the entry **variety and equality of communication forms.**

- As some participants may have difficulty making or hearing some sounds, in addition to making animal noises, they can mimic the animal's movements or show its picture.

Evaluation
Sounds can be a helpful tool to express emotions and opinions, giving leaders basic feedback. For example, if you want to find out whether a group is happy with the programme or any of the programme items, choose two instruments, one to express approval (e.g. triangle), the other to signal disapproval (e.g. drum) (read more about **evaluation**)
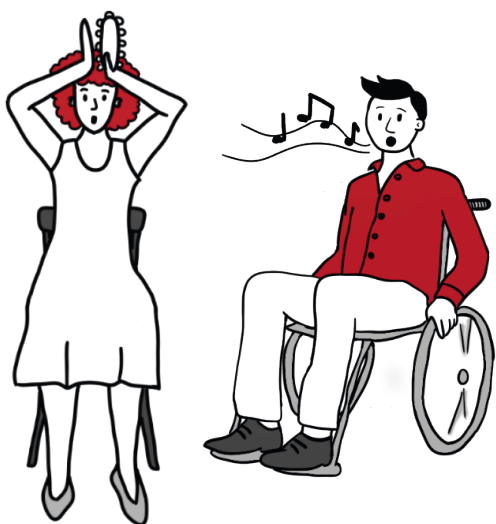
Visualisation

Theory

Visualisation is used to present complex abstract contexts in simple graphic form. Text and verbal messages combined with symbols and drawings are easier to understand. Research in the field of biology of learning processes shows that the ability to memorise information can increase if the information is presented through different channels and then – consciously or unconsciously – received and absorbed through different senses. The theory of learning styles is also applicable here. For the auditory person it is important to listen and talk while the visual person needs exposure to visual content. Both theories have their critics, but they leave no doubt that visual perception can facilitate learning and understanding. When a message is broadcast simultaneously through different channels, participants are more likely to easily absorb it, which will positively affect their involvement.

There are various types of visualisation. The simplest ones, like a visual presentation of the day programme or a set of symbols for a game, can be prepared before the meeting. Other types are used during work activities. Graphic recording[1] enables recording verbal content using images, symbols and single words, creating a graphic record of a discussion or process. The role of the graphic recorder is to capture the discussion or process, but they are not directly involved in the events. Another technique, visual facilitation[2], is a visual accompaniment to group processes, visualising, in real time, the emerging arguments and key statements. Graphic recording often takes place in the background, away from the participants' view, whereas visual facilitation combines elements of **facilitation** and graphic recording – its outcomes are always on display, and participants can directly refer to them. In this way, the verbal and visual content of the meeting are in dialogue.

Moderation

An important argument in favour of using this type of techniques is that they enable us record the effects of group work. As the recordings are then prominently displayed in the **meeting space**, participants have them in sight at all times and can assimilate their content more easily.

Space design

The use of visualisation in working with international inclusive groups brings many benefits. Content conveyed in written form, in multiple languages at once, loses its impact due to its low level of absorption, or becomes completely expendable. Information about the day programme, tasks, etc. can be represented by images, symbols or colours to make it clear to all participants, without having to provide extensive notes and captions in all the languages of the meeting. When the programme is presented, such clear images and symbols can replace most descriptions, e.g. an illustration depicting a cook can signify meals; a mask can stand for a theatre workshop. Colours can also be helpful. It is recommended that the different items in a visual version of the programme should shown on the right background (e.g. white for meals, orange for workshops, green for optional courses).

---

1   Gadsby T., *What Is Graphic Recording?* (2012). Online video (in English): www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiIgcoc7Wqg (last accessed on 19.02.2017).
2   Haussmann M., *What Is Visual Facilitating?* (2011). Online video (in English): www.youtube.com/watch?v=otop614EEjA (last accessed on 19.2.2017).

Visualisations can be made using a variety of materials and equipment including: flipcharts, posters, cork boards, moderation cards, as well as magnetic boards (which can also be marked with highlighters) and multimedia screenings. It is important, however, to focus on one means at a time, as using several means at the same time can confuse and frustrate participants.

·········· 💡 ··········

Guidelines

- Less is more! – especially when working with inclusive groups. Use simple, clear forms and diagrams rather than complex, perfect illustrations. If possible, employ the images and pictograms used in the group by **AAC** users. When introducing a graphic element, it is necessary to explain its meaning to make it clear to everyone.

  Augmentative and Alternative Communication

- The aim of visualisation is to capture the gist, so it shouldn't be overloaded with details. It should include key aspects, key points and data. It is also important to ensure it has a clear structure, e.g. by using dividing lines, connecting lines, colours and frames. If the group includes people with intellectual disability, visualisations should contain as few superfluous details as possible.

- Visualised content should be easy for everyone to see and easy to recognise from a distance. For this reason, it is important to ensure that all images, symbols and captions are appropriately sized. Visualisations should not be obscured by any objects or the person making them.

- When using colours, remember about their meaning. Red is typically a warning colour and may indicate rules and items that require special attention. Orange, the colour of action, can mean a workshop. Green, which symbolises calm and quiet, can correspond to the evening programme. Here, too, the rule of thumb is 'less is more': the number of colours used to create graphic elements should be limited to two or three.

- When working with visually impaired people, it is helpful to use black and white pictures/drawings which are easier to read and decode.

- When giving participants the task of making images on their own, take into account their motor function so that no one is excluded from the task. If necessary, ensure support of assistants or provide additional material (such as stencils, magazines and newspapers for clippings, etc.).

·········· 🧭 ··········

Examples

Visual facilitation: more information

As mentioned before, visual facilitation is a graphic form that accompanies group processes and conversations. Participants can also contribute to the process. Instead of assigning the whole task

to the moderator, group members, using moderation cards or during a special painting action, can translate their ideas, feelings and arguments into graphic form. Depending on the group, it is useful to provide stencils, photos, printed symbols and images. The outcome is a visual representation of the group process (a kind of jigsaw puzzle) or a diagram, created in a process involving all participants.

Interview with a partner

Communication through visualisation can be practised by inviting participants to converse with (or interview) a partner. The leader sets the topic of the 'conversation'. The task of the participants is to convey relevant information to their partner without using words (even if verbal communication is possible), by means of symbols, drawings, colours or pre-prepared photos or pictures. The leader suggests several different topics that can be 'discussed' with the same partner or with different partners, one at a time. This method works well for international groups that do not share a common language. Participants are often amazed at how much can be communicated.

Communication T-shirts

This idea originated in the tourism industry[3]. As communication is sometimes a major challenge when travelling abroad, a special t-shirt design has been created, with pictograms representing key phrases that tourists need to know. So if you don't know the word for a bus in a foreign language, just point to the bus symbol printed on your t-shirt.

This idea can also be employed in working with international inclusive groups. First, collect phrases that are relevant for the meeting or an activity. Then match appropriate pictograms with these expressions (such as 'food', 'sleep', 'nature', 'go walking'). Finally, produce prints on t-shirts (e.g. in arts workshops). To ensure uniform, coherent appearance, it is best to use stencils to transfer each pictogram to the cloth. Alternatively, one simple solution is to use potato stamps or other similar techniques. Not only will the self-made t-shirts be fun during communication, but they will also make a nice souvenir for each participant.

---

3   Example of a communication t-shirt: www.national-geographic.pl/galeria/te-koszulki-pozwalaja-porozumiec-sie-w-kazdym-miejscu-na-swiecie/b-788653 (last accessed on 16 February 2017).

Space design

Theory

The manner in which spaces are designed during meetings can have a big influence on learning behaviour, mood, motivation and the well-being of a group. The impact that comes from 'stimulating and dynamically designed learning spaces…'[1] is described within many progressive pedagogical concepts. For example, in light of the Montessori as well as Reggio Emilia approaches, the space is considered as an 'educator' that can favour or impede development processes. Therefore, rooms and learning environments should be designed in such a way that 'independent, self-guided learning and the activity oriented, independent appropriation of skills'[2] can be made possible.

During the beginning of international meetings, participants commonly do not yet know what they should expect. With the help of seminar space design, for example through friendly welcome-posters, uncertainty can be reduced and a positive atmosphere can be communicated. Such an influence of space design can be used during the entire meeting.

For example, the positioning of the chairs conveys to the group how one should work, i.e. frontal, on topic tables or in a seminar circle. The space atmosphere can be influenced through changes to seating arrangement or room decorations. Rows of chairs and an improvised popcorn stand at the entrance create a cinema atmosphere, while colourful cloths and requisites can get people in the mood for a circus workshop. A chair circle is most frequently used. This form of seating

creates free space and minimises the distance between the participants and leadership team. All people involved in the meeting, including language mediators and teamers, will be equal members of the group. The starting position is the same for everyone and the sense of community will be strengthened. At the same time, this will also enable all involved people to be able to see each other, whereby the conditions of verbal and non-verbal communication will be improved. This is especially important when one is using sign language.

Relevant places should be understandably marked, in order that the participants can feel assured, to get to know the new environment in a simple manner and in order to orientate themselves. In doing so, it is important that all means are adjusted to the target group, e.g. not only by using words but also pictures and photos. If needed, one can use braille, colour coding or coloured lines providing additional orientation. In that respect, it is also important that the markings are clearly visible for all the participants.

---

1   Klein-Landeck M., *Freie Arbeit bei Maria Montessori und Peter Petersen*, Berlin 2009, p. 213.
2   Hammerer R., *Lernen als räumliche Erfahrung*, [in:] *„Montessori Österreich"*, nr 23, Zeszyt 1. Available online at: http://daten.schule.at/dl/Hammerer,_Franz__Renner,_Clara_Lernen_als_raeumliche_Erfah_.pdf (last checked on 19.02.2017).

Guidelines

- In order to support communication between the participants, posters that arise out of **Language Animations** or as the results of other methods, should be visible for further days of the meeting. They can be put in places that appear to be especially helpful and are accessible to everyone.

Language animation

- A poster with food descriptions can, for logical reasons, be hung in the dining room. Notices with names of the objects that are important for the workshops, would be more suitable in seminar and workshop rooms.

- Should the 'portraits' method be used or should there be photos of the participants, these can be deployed in the form of a photo gallery – in a place accessible to everyone so that the orientation of the group as well as the process of **getting to know one another** is supported.

Getting to know

- Generally speaking, posters made during group work as well as pictures and photos of participants create a familiar atmosphere that in turn has a positive influence on the group process.

Further elements that support communication among the participants as well as between the participants and the team can be taken into account regarding space design. For instance, a 'parking space' poster could be used as an invitation to the participants, to 'park' their important themes (thoughts, ideas) there. The team members should then take up the messages placed there, and try to integrate them in the programme or discuss them with the group.

A symbolic 'post office' can be organised in order to offer the participants support in personal communication. For space design this means that 'letterboxes', for example in the form of envelopes, are placed in an area which is well visible and accessible. The 'letterboxes' can also be designed by the participants to give away more about their owners. The 'letterboxes' can be emptied daily or on the final day. A message board can also fulfil a similar function, albeit in a less anonymous manner.

It is recommended that such communication aids must be explained when they are introduced. It is worth reminding the participants again and again about the communication aids or inspiring them to use such aids, for example by leaving a message to the group on a board.
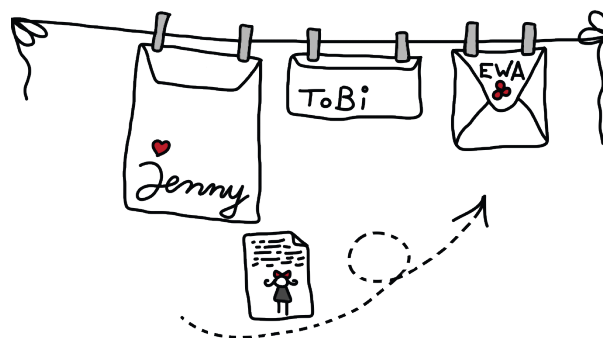
Moderation

Theory

Moderation is a way of working with a group that encourages involvement and facilitates progress towards common goals. It takes into consideration the diversity of participants, providing everyone with equal access to information and ability to influence the course of events and decisions. Moderation also supports creativity, giving participants the space to express themselves and their own interests.

Each group has its distinctive dynamics. This concept refers to the entire process of development of a (typically small) group, observed over the span of the group's life. It encompasses phenomena such as role differentiation, the emergence of hierarchies and conflicts and the changing interactions between participants (first described by American researcher Bruce Tuckman).

It can be assumed that these phenomena are more intense in inclusive groups, which are more heterogeneous by nature. In such groups, the role of the moderator is more important, as he/she, being aware of the existence of said group mechanisms, should foster an atmosphere of mutual trust as well as supporting group processes to achieve synergy and a sense of togetherness with participants. In this sense, the role of moderator goes beyond that of presenter (whose only role is to communicate specific content and who does not take into account group dynamics) or facilitator (who helps make group work more effective, too, but distances himself/herself from the subject of the meeting). Skillful moderation is therefore a part of and prerequisite for successful group communication.

The key functions of moderation are to:

- support the group process and proper use of its positive aspects, e.g. the ability of each participant to present themselves and define their position in the group, and later on, to express positive and negative feelings;

- make sure participants are genuinely involved, especially by stimulating their participation in discussions and in co-creating the programme, as opposed to accepting the role of merely passive recipients of content prepared and delivered by the leading team (at youth meetings the participants should come first and their voice should be most heard);

- make sure that the diversity of participants – their experiences and opinions – is reflected in discussions and group work; everyone should be respected regardless of their cultural and social background, education, ability, etc. (e.g. adopt tasks and instructions to the needs of participants, and foster **variety and equality of forms of communication**).

Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication

- involve less active, shy participants (e.g. by friendly encouragement, properly framed questions, alternative tasks);

- break down communication barriers (cultural, perceptual, ones that stem from stereotypes, emotional states, health, the environment, etc.);

- support the constructive process of the meeting, including management of potential conflicts (by eliminating aggressive comments, strengthening dialogue and evoking shared principles which are included e.g. in the **group contract**). In this context it is worth recalling that the word 'modernise' originally meant 'to ease' or 'to restrain'.

Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication / method: group contract

Guidelines

When moderating (international) inclusive meetings, it is recommended to:

- Use the techniques of presentation (e.g. **visualisation**), discussion and group work that are adapted to the audience, available time and programme item (but remember to remain flexible).

Visualisation

- Use complementary means of communication or collecting information: verbal statements should be combined with gestures, sounds and visuals. The idea is to keep things balanced and ensure effective communication.

- Use language that does not exclude anyone. Language shapes reality, so moderators should ensure that the quality of communication and the standard of speech are high, choosing words and expressions in keeping with the rules of linguistic etiquette, including **concerning people with disabilities**.

"On Admiration and Compassion"

- Use language that is understandable to the audience (appropriate to their age, education, experience, cognitive ability, etc.), avoid jargon, explain difficult words, or, ideally, make information **easy to read and understand**.

Easy-to-read-
-and-understand

- Use simple and clear messages, emphasise key information (with tone of voice, rate of speech, visually, etc.) or repeat it and, when appropriate, ask 'Is that clear?'. This applies particularly to task and game instructions. Before a task/game commences, the moderator should make sure that everyone has fully understood the rules.

- Speak clearly, avoid long phrases and excessive information.

- Make conscious use of **body language** to confirm and reinforce the verbal message.

Body language

- Use proper intonation to improve message clarity (intonation is used, for example, to distinguish a question from a statement) and expresses emotion.

- Be credible when showing your emotions: participants won't be convinced if the leader shows no enthusiasm when he/she invites them to join a game; a moderator who asks for involvement without conviction will not make group members willing to join in.

- Speak at the right speed, making sure that your listeners, including any **language mediators** whose role is to translate what you say, are comfortable;
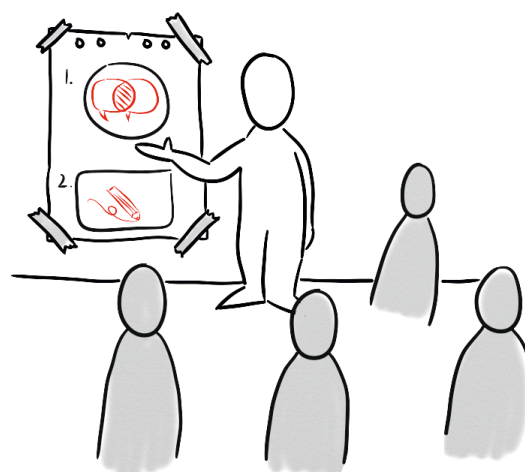
Language mediation

remind the group to wait patiently until the message is conveyed in each of the languages used during the meeting.

- Speak on your own behalf (**use 'I' language**) and avoid generalising opinions. However, when you translate someone else's opinions into another language, adapt your translation to the cognitive abilities of your listeners; some people with intellectual disabilities may find it hard to grasp that the mediator does not express their own views, but translates someone else's words. Therefore, unlike in classic interpreting, it is recommended that language mediators should avoid using the first person singular (assuming the role of the speaker and remaining 'invisible'), but should use indirect speech, e.g. saying the name of the person whose opinion they are translating (e.g. 'Peter said he thinks pepperoni pizza is the best'). This is particularly important if the moderator doubles as language mediator.

Experiential learning method and nonviolent communication

- When working with multilingual groups, remember to face and look towards the audience, whether they speak the moderator's language or not. This is a sign of respect for all participants, helps keep them focused and builds a connection with the group.

- Make sure your audience can clearly see and hear you. For example, you should not make notes on the flipchart while speaking, standing with your back to the group.

- Ask questions that will get participants' more involved and are likely to elicit the required type of answer (see examples in method descriptions),

- Ensure that each participant has equal voting rights, and eliminate negative behaviours such as hijacking the discussion by one person or group, or showing impatience or disrespect to people who have difficulty communicating. At the beginning of the meeting, it may be helpful to create a group contract laying down the rules for communication.

- Actively listen to participants, showing genuine interest (e.g. by nodding, asking questions to obtain explanation, paraphrasing).

- Closely observe the group to see the signals they're sending (many of them non-verbal), especially the ones that express negative emotions (boredom, fatigue, impatience, confusion, etc.).

Examples

Examples of methods designed to support moderation:

Questions for participants
The choice of questions can affect the effectiveness of moderation and thus communication. Questions can have a number of different functions:

Open-ended questions (Who? What? Where? How? etc.) stimulate the thought process, invite longer responses and can produce more than one version of the answer.

Hypothetical questions (What if? etc.) encourage reflection, stimulate creativity, allow a different perspective on the subject. However, they can be more difficult for people with intellectual disabilities.

Closed-ended questions restrict responses to 'yes' and 'no', may speed up the decision-making process.

Questions that grant the initiative to the answerer (e.g. 'What do you think about it?', 'How do you propose to do that?') strengthen participation and boost participants' self-worth, ideas, needs and opinions.

Visual moderation

Verbal moderation can be made more effective by visuals and non-verbal elements as well as by proper use of aids (flipchart, cork board, moderating cards), **space** or techniques (e.g. graphic recording). Research confirms that recipient can better understand and remember things that they can hear and see at the same time. This is an important phenomenon, especially in the case of inclusive groups. In addition, visual moderation facilitates orientation in the programme/process and enables revising it.

Space design

Moderationsplan

Jede Moderation sollte sorgfältig durchdacht und geplant sein. Eine Hilfe für den*die Moderator*in können vorher vorbereitete kleine Karten (sogenannte Moderationskarten) sein, auf die verschiedene inhaltliche und organisatorische Informationen geschrieben werden, wie z.B.: weitere Programm-punkte, die für sie vorgegebene Zeit oder eine Materialliste für einzelne Spiele und Übungen.

Moderation plan

Each use of moderation should be well thought out and planned. The moderator may find their work easier if they use pre-prepared small cards (moderator cards), which include various details, such as specific programme items, the time allocated for them, or a list of aids needed for each game or exercise.

Silent discussion

This is a modified version of the method called Metaplan or Quiet Discussion. It allows to grant the initiative to participants while at the same time performing important moderation functions, such as: supporting genuine participation; reflecting the group's diversity; creating a platform for participants to express their needs, expectations and opinions; giving and receiving feedback or involving less active participants in the work. The method is an ideal choice to be used at the beginning of the meeting, but its elements can be used later on as a form of evaluation.

In a separate room or in a separated space, places should be prepared where participants will be encouraged to take part in different interactions. Examples:

Who am I? – In the shorter version, a photo of each participant is taken (with instant cameras or to be printed), described (e.g. name, city or country of origin), and hung on the wall or using a string, creating a portrait gallery. In the longer version, each participant can create an individual or group poster with basic information about themselves (text can be complemented or even replaced with collages).

My expectations (hopes) and fears – with masking tape, mark four sections on the wall or the board (at a height that everyone can reach). Participants receive sticky notes in two colours – green

notes for 'expectations' and red ones for 'fears'. Then each person uses short phrases or simple symbols to express their hopes for the meeting and fears about it (one hope/expectation per note). Participants can use any number of notes. Then all the notes are attached in the two bottom sections – expectations in the one on the left, fears in the one on the right. As the meeting progresses, participants should be encouraged to indicate which of their expectations/fears have been fulfilled by attaching relevant notes in the two top sections (left and right respectively).

What can I share? – at the next station, participants are asked to note down/symbolically depict their passions, attributes and talents on pieces of paper or sticky notes. This celebrates the group's diversity and the fact that everyone can make a valuable contribution to the meeting.

What are my experiences and skills? – depending on the context/subject of the meeting, draw or mark with masking tape one or more horizontal axis and then label their ends: the beginning of each scale corresponds to 'not at all/very little/poorly' with the end meaning 'very much/very well'. Each axis should be assigned a category (e.g. 'experience of taking part in meetings with young people from other countries', 'I have taken part in theatre/music/circus projects before, etc ...', 'I can communicate in a foreign language'). Participants are encouraged to mark their own relevant experience/skills on each axis (e.g. with their initials or a coloured dot). It is worth checking during the meeting whether participants have developed these experiences and skills.

What else do I want to say? – the last station is a poster called Parking Lot, where participants can leave ('park') their comments and ideas about what else should happen outside of the planned programme. The poster can be used throughout the meeting. The questions or topics added to the poster will give the moderator an idea about the participants' needs he/she should take into consideration.

This method can be time-consuming, but it offers a variety of attractive ways to share valuable information, without having to say a word (hence its name, 'silent discussion') and, above all, it stimulates participants to be active. It is also a good idea to encourage everyone to find out what others have written, so that everyone can learn more about the group.

Language mediation

Theory

'Language mediation [...] is the target-, group-, sense- and situation-related transmission of the content of written and spoken language from one language to another'.[1]

Language mediation plays an important role in international meetings: it enables the communication between participants during the formal and informal times of the project. Language mediation can be used for the transfer of content in spoken and written language as well as in sign languages. Through language mediation, no participant will be excluded from communication on account of (a) possible (lack of) language skills. Everybody can take part in discussions, get involved in tasks and methods, without that they will withdraw or limit themselves due to language barriers.

The language mediators have an important task in the communication processes within a group. They have power to influence and direct them. Therefore, good language skills are not enough for language mediation. Rather, strong language and (inter-) cultural sensitivity is needed. Only then can 'messages' be understood in their relevant societal and cultural contexts and language misunderstandings can be avoided.

The art of language mediation lies within the fact that one conveys what is essential from the statements without changing the intention of the speaker. Language mediation must therefore be adapted to the target group. This is related to the choice of words (e.g. **plain language**) as well as the means (e. g. **pictures, gestures**) that simplify and support communication or just make it possible.

Easy to Read

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

The language mediators should be part of the group. They build a basis of trust with the participants and help them reduce the barriers to communication and also to intrapersonal relations. Given that inclusive international groups are characterised by diversity and do not only speak different languages but also use different forms of communication, the language mediator must be able to be flexible with regards to the capabilities and needs of the participants. It can therefore be necessary/ helpful at times to illustrate complex connections through pictures from daily life or support information through gestures. It is especially important that the language mediator can be seen by all people. This will make it easier for some participants to orientate themselves according to the events.

Language mediators are the 'mouthpiece' of the group. However, they can also be a bridge between teamers and participants. Through their role they can more intensively notice the mood of the group or more quickly notice needs and problems that would not always be mentioned in the plenum.

At the same time language mediators are part of the project team, therefore they contribute via their active participation towards the overall process. Their task is however different to that of the teamers. A concrete consultation in terms of the responsibilities is needed for a good collaboration in the run-up to the international meeting. The chief task of language mediators is not the content, rather the communication.

1   Rössler A., *Die sechste Fertigkeit? Zum didaktischen Potenzial von Sprachmittlungsaufgaben im Französischunterricht,* [in:] *Zeitschrift für Romanische Sprachen und ihre Didaktik* 2,1. Berlin 2008, p. 53-77.

Guidelines

- The person who is the language mediator can sometimes also be a teamer, what, as a result, may bring positive as well as negative consequences. Information imparted through language mediation is then with certainty appropriate to the intention of the team. At the same time however, the person who holds a double role is required to have a high degree of concentration. The simultaneous responsibility for moderation and language mediation can be a large burden. If resources allow it, different people should take these roles.

- Language mediation can result in the paying of less attention by the participants to the development of their own communication strategies of getting into conversation with each other. In this way they can be totally dependent on the support of the language mediator. It is therefore recommended that one motivates the group to find their own ways to communicate. In order to support such processes, common dictionaries can be composed, important vocabulary can be collected on a poster or conveyed through **language animation**. The provision of means of communication, such as pictures, photos, writing utensils etc. is also sensible. At the same time however, it is important that the participants are given space to develop their own ways of communication, in which the language mediator does not always immediately step in, rather only in moments when it's possible to support their attempt at independence.

Language Animation

- Language mediation as a form of communication should always be introduced and explained at the start of international inclusive meetings, in order to make a quick orientation for the participants possible. At the same time, it is useful to point out that engagement with a task are always begun when instructions have been translated to all languages, so that all group members have the same chance for participation. It is often the case that those who have understood the work assignment want to start the implementation of the task. This kind of situation can cause a chaos and result in other language groups feeling disadvantaged.

- During inclusive multinational projects all present languages should be mediated. When there are four or even more languages, this can take a lot of energy and be sometimes tiring. Nonetheless, language is frequently a feature of identity and belonging – especially at the beginning. In order to avoid **disparity** through language dominance, the consistent mediation of all languages as well as a conscious choice in favour of multilingualism are a very important part of international (inclusive) meetings. Such an approach strengthens respect for diversity. It is recommended however that one talks in small sections, so that other language groups do not have to wait too long and will become inattentive. It is also positive when the moderated languages and/or the order in which they are moderated are changed. However, this should not be used with inclusive groups that have a high need for structure, so as not to impede the thematic process.
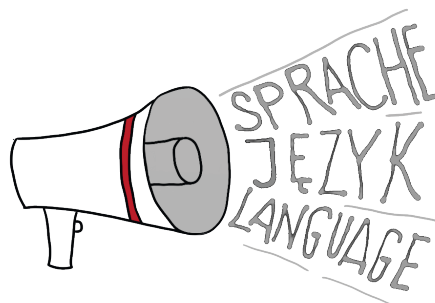
Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication

Getting to know

Theory

For a genuine meeting to take place, its participants must get to know themselves and one another. The getting-to-know process is stimulated by new situations, experiences, challenges, relationships and newly acquired knowledge and skills, particularly in unusual circumstances such as (international) inclusive meetings.

The getting-to-know process involves two levels – personal (e.g. becoming aware of one's own skills and the courage to initiate an interaction with a stranger) and interpersonal or external (getting to know other people and things that seem to be inaccessible or incomprehensible). Its success hinges on finding effective forms of communication, which, in the context of inclusive meetings, especially multinational ones, are often ones that many participants have no previous experience of (such as sign language, Braille writing, other AAC methods or verbal communication, often in several different languages).

The first stage of a meeting, the integration phase, is very important in the getting-to-know process, and largely determines its success. It is crucial to create the right conditions and choose the right methods to facilitate interaction, integration, and consequently the process of getting to know.

Guidelines

- The getting-to-know process is initiated when participants first come into contact, but it should be guided and strengthened throughout the meeting. At the same time the proposed methods – including their level of complexity and the aspects they address – should be adapted to suit the stage of group development but also the purpose of the meeting and the time available.

- The degree of intimacy and depth of the topics covered in the getting-to-know process depends on the group's size, composition and familiarity level. If groups are small and the **space** properly arranged, it is possible to address more personal topics.   Space Design

- A well-managed getting-to-know process is fed by a gradual accumulation of information and experience, which are combined and used as the basis for next steps, deepening the next stages of the process. In the long run, it can help participants discover their new potential and enable their parents, carers and peers to see a different side to them.

- Reflection is an important element that facilitates the getting-to-know process. Making it happen in an inclusive group might be a great challenge, but it is worth trying, no matter what emotions it gives rise to. Don't be afraid of situations in which participants become aware of the difficulties they experience in interpersonal situations, limited acceptance by others, their own needs, or the limits of their own tolerance. Inclusion is inextricably linked with diversity, its realisation and acceptance. The role of supervisors is to create the right conditions for such (self-)reflection.

- The importance of free time should be recognised. If participants are encouraged to interact and learn some simple methods (e.g. **language animation**) designed to facilitate interaction, they will be able to make better use of their free time and will feel more confident to engage with one another. A significant part of the getting-to-know process occurs in informal situations.

  Language animation

- When teaching **diverse forms of communication**, it is crucial to involve experts – people who use these forms of communication on a daily basis. For example, a speaking person and a deaf person can teach each other how to greet people in their respective languages.

  Variety and Equality of Forms of Communication

Methods designed to facilitate the process of getting to know oneself (personal level)
Self-portrait

In this exercise, participants are asked to create self-portraits that include as much information about themselves as possible. Each participant is given a sheet of paper corresponding to their height. The first step is to draw the outline of their body. This can be done in several ways:

- Participants pair up. One person lies down on the sheet of paper while their partner traces the outline of their body on paper. Then they swap roles.

- Hang the sheet of paper on the wall and light it so that the shadow of the person standing in front of it can be clearly seen. The person leading the activity or someone from the group draws the outlines of all participants one by one. This option is more accessible to people in wheelchairs.

- Each participant draws the shape of their body, choosing its size and proportions. Note what is and what is not represented in the drawings. For example, a drawing by a wheelchair user might not include a wheelchair. Depending on the situation, time available, needs, etc., this observation may later become the focus of reflection and group discussion.

In the next step, each participant fills out the outline of their body with various pieces of personal information inside different body parts (e.g. dreams, thoughts and knowledge inside the head; feelings, emotions and likes inside the heart; favourite foods inside the stomach; manual skills inside the hands), and information on their environment (family, school, home, etc.) outside of the outline of the body.

To make the task easier, leaders of the activity can prepare a model with examples of self-portraits and provide additional resources (symbols, templates, newspapers). Make sure that the model is clear to everybody and that it doesn't limit the group's creativity. This solution, however, entails the risk of participants reproducing the information included in the model.

The completed self-portraits, signed by their authors, should be affixed to the walls where everyone can see them.

In addition to this exercise, a brief presentation of the pictures can take place in pairs or small groups.

The self-portraits can be elaborated throughout the meeting. If they are, participants can add new details every day, e.g. in the morning section. Person(s) leading the activity remind participants of the previous day's programme, asking them to reflect on what they have learned, what new knowledge and skills they gained, which traits they discovered. New information can also be added to portraits of other group members, e.g. when a participant discovers a positive trait of another person. If teamers notice new skills or strengths in individual group members, they are encouraged to add them to the self-portraits. Positive feedback from other people can improve participants' self-esteem.

Identity molecules

The aim of the exercise is to make participants realise who they are and which social groups they identify with, and consequently, to understand that each person can have many identities. The importance of these identities depends on various factors. It changes depending on the context, group, someone's current role, etc. For example, the ethnic or cultural background is more important in international meetings than in homogeneous groups.

Participants are asked to think of answers to the questions 'Who am I?', 'Which social groups do I identify with?', and then to write the names of these social groups on separate pieces of paper. To make the task easier, supervisors can give examples, e.g. by displaying them on a flipchart (athlete, woman, musician, only child, person with a disability, etc.), or prepare photos (pictures) that depict different social groups. The latter option will help reduce potential language problems (including the inability to read or write).

The cards are laid out and participants are asked to gather around the table/the given space and to group the cards based on similarities.

Then the person leading the activity reads out selected categories, each time asking those who identify with them to raise their hand or call out. They can also provide examples of other groups that haven't been mentioned in participants' responses, but may be important in the context.

- When summing up the exercise, person(s) leading the activity can ask the following questions:

- Did you find any of the categories/groups surprising?

- Are there any groups that everyone or nobody identifies with? Why?

- How did you feel when you raised your hand as the only person and how when more people raised their hands?

- Were you surprised by someone raising their hand to identify with a category?

Diaries

To facilitate self-discovery, it can be helpful for participants to keep personal diaries (with written entries or with pictures, e.g. collages) to record the details of the meeting and the things participants have learned or experienced. It is advisable to reserve a time of day for completing the diaries and to start with sessions in small groups (preferably the same groups the participants arrived with). When speaking to a group of people, participants know and trust, they will find it easier to examine their impressions and record them in a diary entry. This form of self-reflection is also an excellent way to involve participants in **evaluation**, thus strengthening their participation. The observations recorded Evaluation

in the diaries (to the degree the participants agree to share them – their right to privacy needs to be respected) may offer valuable feedback for group leaders and team members.

Methods that facilitate the process of getting to know one another (interpersonal level)

Wanted!

Each participant pairs up with someone they don't know (preferably a foreigner if it's an international meeting) and is asked to create their partner's profile using a handout form with a list of questions (covering a number of categories). Before the activity, the person that is leading it, needs to prepare visual aids (pictures, photos) that correspond to various interests, appearance characteristics or character traits (several copies of each picture). The aids are laid out on the tables or on the floor. Each pair is asked to match the pictures to the categories in the handout (favourite sport, favourite dish, etc.). Each participant selects pictures that best correspond to their partner's answers. Participants can also draw or note down characteristics and interests that are not represented in the pictures. Optionally, in addition to pictures, you can also lay out multilingual cards depicting various characteristics. The groups that cannot complete the profiles on their own can use aids as inspiration. How the aids are used is up to participants.

Finally, participants present their partner's profile to the whole group. Throughout the meeting, the profiles can be extended, e.g. by adding photos.

Mandala of Diversity

All participants collaborate to create a picture representing the entire group – a mandala of diversity.

Person leading the activity explains the meaning of the word 'mandala' and of the different pre-prepared images that correspond to the different fields of the mandala, e.g.

- Food: What is your favourite food?

- Landscapes: Where do you prefer spending your time outdoors?

- Bike: What is your favourite sport?

- Eyes: What colour are your eyes?

- Animals: What is your favourite animal?

- Colour palette: What is your favourite colour?

- Children: How many brothers and sisters have you got?

- 'Smiley': What do you enjoy doing? What's your hobby?
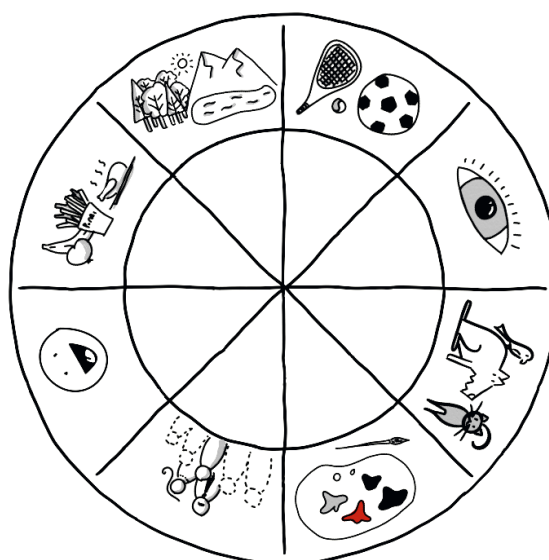
You can enlarge the list and/or change the categories to suit the group and its needs. Participants are then asked to individually complete the required information. They create (or select from the aids) the right pictures for each part of the mandala. The pictures can be painted, cut out, etc., or colours can be used (e.g. a green sheet of paper can represent green eyes). Participants then stick their picture/icon to an area of the mandala, and write their name next to it. The completed mandala represents the group's diversity.

In conclusion, participants are asked to have a close look at the mandala, paying attention to the characteristics they share with different group members. The mandala should be hung in a conspicuous place in the seminar room and remain there throughout the meeting.

The living mandala

The group forms a circle. The person leading the activity calls out different categories, starting with the words 'Hello ...', e.g. 'Hello to all of you with green eyes.' All those to whom the statement applies step inside the circle together and greet one another. This can be repeated any number of times, using different characteristics and categories.

Bingo

The aim of the exercise is to engage with individuals in the group and elicit new information. Participants are given pre-prepared sheets/tables with e.g. 9 /3x3/ or 12 /3x4/ fields. Each field describes a situation or a trait (e.g. 'My birthday is in November', 'I'm an optimist'). The statements should be in each of the languages spoken during the meeting. For the participants who have difficulty reading, the descriptions should be visual and understandable, e.g. in the form of pictograms. Participants are asked to find people who match the descriptions or have certain traits. If they find such a person, the person writes his/her name where appropriate (the person may also dab a finger in washable ink and make a fingerprint). What's important, a different person should be matched to each description. Participants who have collected signatures/fingerprints for each category say the word 'Bingo!' out loud.

In conclusion, you can read out loud all the descriptions or the most interesting ones from the bingo sheet. Participants who match a description are asked to raise their hand or stand up. This is also how participants can learn about their shared interests and how groups can be formed (e.g. ski lovers). The statements on the bingo sheet should be tailored to the subject of the meeting and the profile of its participants.

Four Corners

The person leading the activity prepares a number of sets of categories, each composed of four elements, which may be of interest/appropriate for the group, e.g. different sports, music genres, colours, etc. He/She writes or speaks the names of the items in each set or shows the items (e.g. red, blue, yellow and black) and assigns them to different 'corners' of the room. Participants are asked to go to the 'corner' that corresponds to their likes/interests.

The groups can be given a few minutes to check who has chosen their corner, and – if the topic is right – to speak about the category for a moment. In this way, participants can quickly find out what they share with the other members of their group, and thus open up the possibility of engaging in further contact and using their common interests and skills in their free time.

All those, who …

This exercise, like Four Corners, helps participants to get to know those members of their group with whom they share similar interests or experiences. Participants sit in a circle. The circle lacks a seat for one person who stands in the middle of the circle and says, 'All those, who ...' (e.g. '... likes hip-hop',

'... plays football', etc.). The participants with these likes/interests switch seats. While they are doing this, the person in the middle tries to find a seat for themselves. The person who has remained in the middle says, 'All those, who ...' (they complete the phrase by themselves). It is important that the characteristic describes also the person who says the above sentence.

Those who have difficulty switching seats due to limited mobility can stand up or raise their hand or call out. If participants include wheelchair users, it is recommended not to use seats, but to mark places on the floor, e.g. with masking tape, and have the other participants play the game in a standing position

Posters for different groups
Making posters is a method that can be used to facilitate the getting-to-know process, and thus the communication process. By using newspaper clippings, photos, pieces of maps, drawings, various symbols and captions, participants can represent their country, city, school, or typical day. The posters can be briefly discussed and then – after adding the names and photos of group members (e.g. Polaroids) – they can be hung up in the room and remain there throughout the meeting. The posters will make it easier for participants to engage in contact and check the names of their new friends or where they are from.

Ritual

Theory

A ritual is an established routine, a set of actions that are repeated regularly and make up the customs of a group. Rituals foster bonding, community feeling and a sense security, as well as providing a point of reference. They can also serve communicative and informative functions.

In this sense it is helpful to use rituals in international inclusion meetings.

In the first moments of inclusion meetings, participants often experience feelings of confusion, insecurity and stress. This is because a new situation requires them to step out of their comfort zones, find their bearings in an often unfamiliar space and find themselves in a new group constellation (language-wise, culture-wise and among people with various levels of (dis)ability). These and related processes occur at emotional, cognitive and interpersonal levels.

Developing a group ritual or rituals fosters bonding by accelerating the processes of identifying with a group and finding one's place in it, and by promoting teamwork.

A ritual is also a celebration of 'being together' which should be at the core of every meeting, whatever its purpose or character.

Rituals are predictable and fixed interactions where participants know how to behave. Drawing on ready-made patterns of behavior provides a sense of order and security. This encourages participants to take an active role and can have a positive impact on their overall performance throughout the meeting.

Therefore, rituals have multiple functions that in the context of inclusion meetings serve the overriding goal of: helping participants' engage with one another, convey basic information and communicate.

Guidelines

- Rituals can take verbal or/and nonverbal form, offering the freedom of using movement, words, gestures, sounds and props. It is a good practice to adapt rituals to the abilities and preferences of participants.

- Rituals can have simple or extended form. Even a customary greeting, if properly used, can become a ritual. Enriching or modifying the basic form by adding new details strengthens its impact (e.g. cognitive or educational value).

- As only a repeated set of actions can become the custom of a group, it is important to fix a time for conducting a ritual on a consistent basis, even if it is carried out only in its simple (basic) form.

- Participation in a ritual should be voluntary. If a group resists a proposal, the proposal should be modified to suit the needs and abilities of participants.

- When creating a ritual, it is useful to take heed of the **cultural context**. While cultural diversity provides a stimulus in the process of experiencing, learning and group bonding, it can also create challenges, e.g. when personal space is invaded in interpersonal interaction or in response to touch or greetings used in other cultures.

Intercultural comunication

Examples

Name and gesture

To create the simplest greeting ritual, you can use first names and their extensions in the form of gestures, movements or sounds. Participants take turns introducing themselves. Each person says their name and chooses an extension that describes them in some way (e.g. personality trait, characteristic or preference). Then the group repeats the name and the chosen gesture/movement/ sound. Everyone is greeted in this way. To become a ritual, the greeting should be used at the beginning of each day or meeting. It is also important that participants do not change their initially chosen ways of introducing themselves.

This type of ritual gives each participant a chance to be noticed and to be recognised in their individuality, which increases self-esteem and acceptance of others.

A greeting ritual can include additional elements. The variant described above is the basis, but it can be extended in the ways listed below:

- The group sits in a circle. The ritual uses a familiar tune (e.g. the canon 'Brother John', the song 'We Will Rock You') or a beat created by participants' clapping their hands, stomping their feet or patting their hands on their knees. Each person says their name, and then the group repeats it to the same beat. Everyone is greeted, one by one.

- In addition to the first name, one can add a greeting in the participant's language (e.g. 'hello', 'witaj', 'ahoy'). It is important, however, that the words are in synch with the beat/tune.

- The greeting can also be accompanied by a pre-determined gesture, movement or **sound** (see above). If no gestures are used (e.g. because participants have physical limitations), it is useful to pass around a prop (e.g. a ball), especially in large groups. It will make it easier for participants to follow the sequence and to focus their attention on the person who is being greeted.

Sound

It is a good idea to use different variants that correspond to a group's abilities, but don't add too many items at once.

In a different version of the ritual, the supervisor invites participants to move freely around the room. It is important not to move around in a circle but in a number of different directions, filling in all available space. At the same time, participants are encouraged to notice the persons they pass and engage in eye contact. In the next stages, the supervisor may propose other forms of interaction and greeting, such as: a handshake and saying one's name; patting someone's shoulder; greeting someone, accompanied by expressing different emotions (e.g. joy, surprise); a greeting typical of other cultures (e.g. Japan, Spain).

Language animation

Theory

In its primary form, the aim of language animation is to support learning words and sentences in a foreign language. Language animation enables participants of an international meeting to gain exposure to their partners' language and then use their newly gained language skills during the programme, which improves communication and helps build relationships.

Before international meetings, participants are often apprehensive about the approaching interactions and have doubts about their communication skills. Language animation helps to assuage these fears. Starting with the single word 'Hi!', you can gradually build on participants' communication skills by teaching them sentences such as 'Hi, how are you?'. Repeating new words and phrases allows learners to develop **rituals** and consolidate the newly gained knowledge as well as encouraging curiosity and willingness to learn. Language animation methods used in a deliberate way have other functions as well. Many can be used as energisers or bonding games to support group processes.

Ritual

The traditional methods of language animation focus primarily on verbal communication through spoken and written words. To be used in international inclusive meetings, these methods need to be modified. If the level of participants' skills calls for it, non-verbal communication and alternative forms of communication often become far more important. In such cases words and utterances can be complemented, and sometimes completely replaced, with sounds, sign language, gestures or images. Also, other **alternative and augmentative communication** methods can be used.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Guidelines

- When planning and using language animation methods, various forms of verbal and non-verbal communication (such as **sound**, **facial expressions**, **gestures and tactile sensations**) can be employed to provide diverse ways of access to information and to allow all group members to participate. It is important not to overstimulate participants.

Sound

Body language

- Language animation exercises should also be supported with **visualisation**, which can be used when explaining the method, or to visually document the words and phrases that have been studied. Visualisations – often in the form of posters or images – should be prominently displayed in the seminar room (see guidelines for **space design**). This will help consolidate the newly acquired material and encourage learners to use it.

Visualisation

Space design

- Language animation methods support gradual language learning. Depending on the time available and how intensive the classes are, language animation methods can be extended based on previously studied material by gradually introducing new words and thus improving communication skills. The gradual extension of language animation methods is particularly recommended for inclusive

groups, e.g. by using only images at first, then gestures, and finally words, or by combining images, gestures and words from the start.

Examples

Glossaries/Communication books

Before or during the meeting, leaders can create small glossaries/communication books with phrases that are important and useful for participants and the programme itself. These can be handy, self-made notebooks or large posters, placed in a prominent place in the seminar room.

Using such glossaries at international inclusive meetings where participants speak multiple languages and/or have varying communication skills, helps them find their feet in the group as well as in the new situation and, most importantly, supports communication. Depending on the communication skills of group members, glossaries can be transformed into communication books by adding pictograms, photos and other graphic elements. Non-speaking participants tend to use their own aids. If some meeting participants do, it is recommended to include these images and symbols in the communication books. The communication books – whether notebooks used by individual participants or posters displayed in the workshop room – can be constantly updated by participants. Allocate some time in the meeting programme to do this. If posters are used, take photos of them and give participants printouts of the photos at the end of the project.

Wie geht's?/How are you?/Jak się masz?[1]

Before the exercise, it is useful to make a poster in selected languages with the following questions and answers, and then present it to the group:

'Hi! How are you?'
'Good.'/'So so.'/'Bad.'

Ideally, the languages spoken by the group members should be used. Participants can help in the preparation of the game by saying the required words in their languages or writing them down on the posters. In the classic variant of this method, participants (except one person) sit in a circle. If the group includes wheelchair users, it is recommended to mark spots for each participant on the floor (e.g. with masking tape) and play the game standing so that the chairs won't come in the way. Note: the number of chairs/spots in the circle must be one fewer than the number of players.

Description of the game:

One of the participants is standing in the middle. He or she wants to take one of the seats/spots in the circle. To achieve this, they ask someone sitting/standing in the circle 'How are you?'. The person answers choosing from three possible answers, which determines what happens next.

If they answer 'Good', nothing happens. The person in the middle needs to ask some else.

If the answer is 'So so', the people sitting next to the responding person (to his or her right and left) must switch their seats/spots. When the answer is 'Bad', all participants must switch seats/spots. When the answer is 'So so' or 'Bad', the person in the middle of the circle tries to take one of the

---

1   See www.dija.de/toolbox-interkulturelles-lernen/methodenbox-interkulturell/?no_cache=1&tx_fedijamethoden_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=53 (last accessed on 19.02.2017).

freed seats/spots. The person who is left without a seat/spot, remains in the middle and continues asking the question.

Method guidelines:

- Before the game starts, the words used in the game should be practised and revised by the group until everyone feels confident about using them

- The game can be first played using only one language and then more languages can be added that are relevant to the group.To better remember foreign language phrases, each player should ask questions and respond in languages other than their native tongue. This variant of the game can be used in groups whose level of language competence is sufficient.

- Each response should always include gestures (e.g. thumbs up, sideways or down) or sign language. This ensures that everyone knows the answer, even if the room has poor acoustics. The game can also be played by the deaf/hard of hearing and people with verbal communication difficulties. Pictures, such as images depicting facial expressions (corners of the mouth curved upwards, downwards or straight), can be helpful. Instead of asking the question 'How are you?', players can make eye contact or nod towards the person they want to address.

Memogra[2]

The object of Memogra is to find two identical or matching cards. At the start of the game, all cards are spread on the table, face down. Players take turns turning over two cards at a time. If one of them finds two matching cards, they are allowed to turn over two more cards. Each player retains the pairs they have found, scoring a point for each pair. If the two cards do not match, they are placed face down again, and the next player takes a turn. The game continues until all cards are paired up. It is best played in small, mixed language groups of 4 to 8 players.

Participants can use ready-made cards or make their own cards in small teams. The motifs on the cards can be adapted to the subject of the meeting or to specific points of the programme, e.g. cooking- or sports-related cards. When making cards, each group comes up with the concepts and associations that they want to introduce into the game.

Each team is given a set of square cards (made of cardboard or thick paper) and other materials needed to prepare the game.

The cards can be paired in various ways. The difficulty level should be adapted to the group's level:

- Card 1: an image + Card 2: the name of the object shown on Card 1 (in different languages)

- Card 1: an image and the word that describes it in different languages + Card 2: the word associated with the image (in different languages)

- Card 1: an image + Card 2: an image (in this variant of the game it is helpful to have language mediators who will prompt the names of motifs depicted in the images in different languages)

- Other combinations are possible, e.g. opposites (the sea and the mountains), concepts that complement each other (plate and food), etc.

- A Living Memogra can also be used. For more about this method, see its description in body language.

---

2   Memogra is a Polish-German card game based on the principles of Memory. It uses cards with pictures and words in Polish and German. The game can be ordered from the German-Polish Youth Office website: www.pnwm.org/publikacje/jezyk/pc/Publication/pa/show/publication/memogra (last accessed on 19.02.2017).
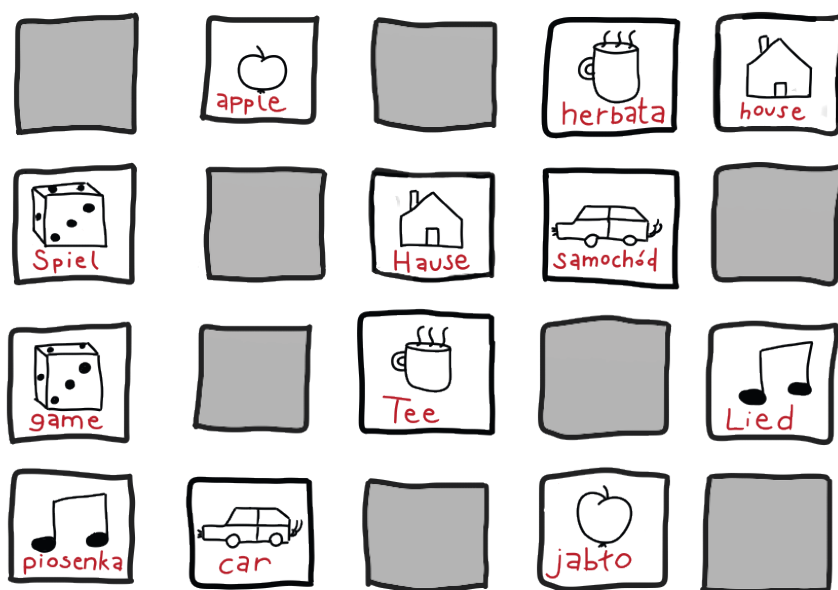
Before the game starts, group members should have a good look at all pairs of cards. Then they turn the cards face down, mix them up and start playing. Groups can also exchange their sets of cards and play with the cards made by another team.

Method guidelines:

- The cards should be big enough to be comfortable to grasp. The images and descriptions should be clear. To prepare the cards, it is recommended to use thick cardboard at least 8 cm x 8 cm.

- If the group has already used images or if its members use pictograms and symbols for communication, it is useful to use these images and symbols in making Memogra cards.

- If participants speak several different languages, the number of languages in a group should not exceed three. Otherwise the descriptions on the playing cards would be in too many languages, which could be distracting for players.

- All cards should have the same reverse sides. To make the game simpler, you can use one colour for the reverse sides of number 1 cards and another for number 2 cards.

- If the task is too difficult for the group, the cards can be made by leaders.

Evaluation

Theory

Evaluation is typically used to assess the quality of international (inclusive) meetings and their value for participants, assistants and organisers, and to encourage reflection on the extent to which the objectives of a meeting have been accomplished, what has been achieved and what has not (and why). Evaluation can take different forms, depending on its purpose, circumstances, who is being evaluated and by whom. The feedback garnered in the process is crucial to better understand, improve and develop our efforts.

Due to the communication barriers that may occur during such meetings (e.g. linguistic diversity, speech disorders), evaluation is often neglected or overlooked. However, giving each participant the opportunity to express their opinion is at the core of inclusion and participation and in tune with everyone's right to have and share information.

To yield the expected results, evaluation should be carried out systematically. If it is, evaluation becomes an important part of communication between leaders and the group, and among participants themselves. Therefore, it should become a permanent part of inclusive meetings – from the moment they are planned (prospective assessment), to implementation (formative evaluation – current, forming assessment), to final assessment (conclusive or summative evaluation).

Formative evaluation, which is performed during the meeting, allows to adjust the work to changing circumstances and participants' expectations. It is extremely important when working with an inclusive group where we cannot predict all circumstances, possibilities or the difficulties that participants may have.

The aim of **conclusive evaluation** is to check the effectiveness of work after its completion. This type of evaluation is designed to assess whether the objectives have been achieved and what effects and changes have been produced.

The following guidelines and methods can be modified to suit a group's profile and the time and place of evaluation.

Guidelines

- When choosing the type and methods of evaluation, one should consider the needs of meeting participants. It is important that everyone has the opportunity to communicate and receive feedback in the manner that best serves them.

- Not every participant in an inclusive meeting can assess on their own the whole programme they have been part of. Sometimes they need help from leaders, who can remind them of different

events (e.g. using a programme **visualisation** displayed on the wall of the workshop room), present Visualisation
a photo slideshow or posters, etc.

- The evaluation process can be enhanced with other visual aids: postcards and pictures depicting emotional states, or emoticons expressing emotions or attitudes (smiling, sadness, confusion, indecision). For the easiest way to express emotions or opinions, use colour cards, with green meaning acceptance (positive feelings) and red standing for disagreement (negative feelings).

- Feedback can also be given using two different musical instruments, one meaning approval (e.g. triangle), the other – disapproval (e.g. drum). The way a sound is made can also carry meaning. For instance, a short, very loud sound can convey a different opinion than a long, quiet one. Optionally, participants can play a short musical phrase to express their attitude towards/satisfaction with/ opinion of the programme item.

- Evaluation can also involve the use of an object (a ball or a mascot) which, after being passed to someone, helps to focus the attention of other participants on that person, indicating it is their turn to express an opinion. The item can be passed around the circle by persons sitting next to each other or thrown to a randomly chosen person. Optionally, (if no participants have limited motor function), the object can be put on the floor in the middle of the circle. Those who want to speak reach for it or have it handed to them.

- If the leader decides to carry out a formative evaluation (regular assessment conducted throughout the meeting), it should be performed each day at the same time, e.g. during the morning circle, after the session (workshop), or at the end of the day. The evaluation will become a **ritual**, helping Ritual
participants to mentally prepare for it.

- Evaluation should be conducted on a voluntary basis and written evaluation should be anonymous as some participants may not want to share their thoughts or feelings with the rest of the group. It is a good idea to propose an alternative type of evaluation, e.g. in a smaller group using previously made visual or aural aids, or individually, informally, to avoid disrupting the communication process. Providing no alternatives may lead to withdrawal, frustration or confusion.

- During the programme, it is extremely helpful to hold regular evaluation meetings of the evaluation team with group assistants (if they are part of the event) and other people involved in the process. This allows for a regular exchange of insights with respect to the subject of the meeting, the group dynamics, the atmosphere and how particular participants, leaders and assistants are doing. The assistants, who usually know their charges better, can support the work of the leading team by contributing their comments. This improves internal communication, making it easier to avoid confusion or misunderstanding and to speak with one voice on the group's forum.

Examples

Examples of methods designed to facilitate evaluation in inclusive meetings:

Evaluation of the day's programme

Participants can express the level of satisfaction with each activity using emoticons or colour cards (green for 'good', orange for 'so-so', red for 'bad'), or digits from 1 to 5 (1 meaning 'I hated it' and 5 meaning 'I loved it') pasted or indicated on the day's programme, which should be a large, visually clear poster. To enable a better grasp of the programme, it is important to present it at the start of each day (along with its visual representation). This provides a clear picture of the structure of activities. The poster with the visual representation of the programme can then be used as a reference during evaluation – it should be prominently displayed at the right height (e.g. for wheelchair users) in a place accessible to everyone.

During ongoing/daily evaluation (especially if it uses only visuals), it is recommended to create a space for sharing reflections on the group's forum for those interested. This is particularly important if there have been negative opinions ('sad' emoticons, orange or red cards). If someone wants to remain anonymous, they can be offered the chance to speak in private with the leaders.

Thermometer

This method is designed to gauge the mood of the group. Draw one or more thermometers on a poster or whiteboard. Then ask each participant to write their initials on the thermometer's scale, or, to ensure anonymity, to draw a line or dot in the spot that best reflects their feelings about a specific subject, a part of the programme, a day or the whole meeting. Positive values mean satisfaction (the higher mark, the highest satisfaction), negative ones – dissatisfaction.

It is important to place the poster at a height that enables everyone to mark their score. If required, participants can be paired up and can help each other.

Pie (also known as pizza)

You need a large sheet of paper on which a circle or circles are drawn resembling a cake split up into pieces. Each piece corresponds to a different programme activity or category (e.g. trip, art workshop, group atmosphere, food, amount of free time). After completing a session or at the end of the meeting, each participant marks their scores in different parts of the 'pie'. They can use coloured dot stickers or highlighters. The closer the dots are to the centre, the higher the participant's score. After the whole group has marked their scores, volunteers can comment on their scores.

Suitcase, rubbish bin and washing machine

This method can be introduced at the very beginning of the meeting. Each participant draws a suitcase on a piece of paper, poster or in their personal diaries (see **getting to know**). You can also make one large poster for the entire group. Each day or after specific programme activities, each participant 'fills' it with objects (drawings, cut-outs or descriptions) that they 'want to take home': impressions, successful workshops, newly learned phrases in a foreign language or symbols from

the communicators of other participants (who use **alternative forms of communication** on a daily AAC
basis). During the final evaluation, the suitcases 'filled with objects' help participants to remember
what happened during the meeting and to specify their impressions.

To collect negative feedback, you can use a poster depicting a rubbish bin that will be regularly filled.
The best solution is to create a group bin for things that participants want to be 'thrown out'.

The third component can be a 'washing machine' in which the group will 'throw' (by typing opinions,
pasting or drawing symbols) all that should be 'washed' – that is, changed or improved. Here, too, it
is more useful to use one poster for the whole group.

This type of evaluation requires good scheduling and moderation from the leading team. The posters
- both the group poster and individual ones – should be displayed prominently in the seminar room to
enable participants to follow the evaluation process. If the work is done anonymously, e.g. in the diaries,
only the posters with the washing machine and with the basket should be displayed in the room.
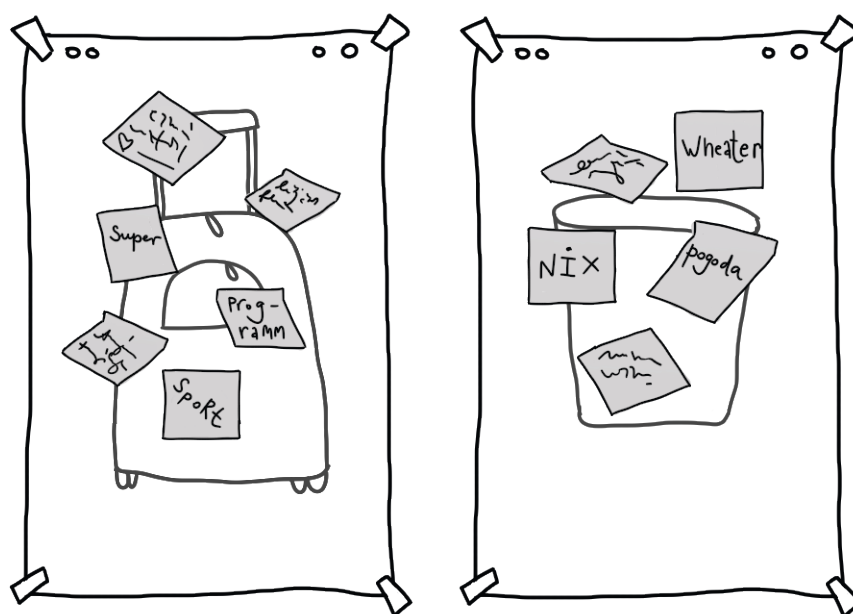
Written questionnaires

This is a traditional evaluation method, which is typically used at the end of the meeting (conclusive
evaluation). Its advantages include anonymity and potentially extensive, in-depth feedback.

On the minus side, some may find written questionnaires off-putting (as they bring to mind methods
used at schools) and problematic for the blind, non-writing persons and those with reading problems.

It may be helpful to make a questionnaire in the form of **easy-to-read text** and to use symbols for Easy-to-read-and-
answers (e.g. emoticons expressing the level of satisfaction with the programme on the scale of: -understand information
dejected, unhappy, undecided, happy, very happy).

Instead of a written questionnaire, you can offer multiple-choice answers using symbols that the
group is familiar with.

The questionnaire can be fully visual with the scores of different programme items shown on
'thermometers' or represented by emoticons. It is useful to make a large poster that clearly depicts
the evaluation method used and to present it to the group when explaining their task. Use the

symbols previously applied in the daily presentations of each day's programme to designate different programme items.

Complete the sentence

Participants may be asked to complete sentences such as:

- 'The hardest thing for me during the workshop was to ...'

- – 'What I liked most was ...'

- – 'I think the workshop was ...'

- – 'When I return home I will tell my friends about ...'

Non-verbal communicators should be provided with a variety of props, symbols or pictures that they can use when responding. To make this method more fun, use a large dice with a different question assigned to each number of dots. After each participant throws the dice, the questions come up randomly without the intervention of leaders.

SPACE FOR COMMUNICATION
EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Communication Spaces:
Examples of Good Practice

In this part of *Perspective: Inclusion* we present a selection of innovative approaches and practices of non-formal education as well as inspiring examples of proven methods designed to help implement the concept of inclusive education. In selecting and ordering the texts, we drew on our own experience in the field, including those concepts and aspects that impact communication in inclusive groups, facilitate contact between participants and help grow participation in a targeted manner.

The practitioners that share their knowledge and experience in this part of *Perspective: Inclusion* are primarily associated with our network of organisations. We have collaborated with many of them, also during inclusive meetings, when we could observe the effects of their work. The texts presented in the following pages are the fruit of a joint reflection of our project team and the practitioners, where the challenge was to focus on issues of language and communication without deviating from the subject or addressing many other aspects of each methodology.

The first five texts deal directly with the issue of language. Their aim is to encourage sensitive and responsible use of language and to present methods that facilitate understanding.

The articles that follow present a variety of pedagogical concepts designed to support communication, which have been proven in non-formal education, and especially inclusive education settings. The invited practitioners discuss their work methods and experiences in an attempt to inspire readers to adopt some of the methods in their own practice.

Similarly to the first part, this part of *Perspective: Inclusion* does not seek to exhaust the subject. We could address many more issues, but this would exceed the bounds of this publication.

We would like to thank all our contributors for their support of this publication, hoping to create new inspiring spaces for communication and, as a result, improve the quality of work in inclusive education.

On Admiration and Compassion

The image of people with disabilities in the media and society

Judyta Smykowski, Leidmedien.de

A truly experienced inclusion occurs during intercultural exchange projects that involve people of various nationalities, both non-disabled and with disabilities. Thanks to such encounters, the anxiety experienced before interaction, on both sides, decreases or doesn't develop at all. The meetings are also an important step in the process of questioning the habitual way of speaking about disability and its images in the language, as disability continues to evoke negative connotations in many languages.

When communicating, people often tend to fall back on generalisations without bothering to check the facts. Leidmedien.de, the website run by the Sozialhelden association in Berlin, has a mission to expose the stereotypical way of speaking about others and to offer a selection of alternative words and expressions to refer to people who are vulnerable to language discrimination.

In English we often come across the phrase 'confined to a wheelchair', which insinuates that the person is a helpless victim. The fact is that the wheelchair offers many people the freedom to move around. It is better to say that these people 'move around in a wheelchair' or 'use a wheelchair'. How these groups are seen is also reflected in how they are called. Using the word 'disabled' instead of 'person with a disability' affects how the person is perceived. The words 'disabled' or 'requiring care' reduce the person to one aspect of their individuality which overshadows their identity and the other constituting traits.

'Victim' means someone who is defenseless against someone else's power. It is true that the physical limitations of our body tend to be beyond our control. The limitations can also entail suffering, pain and dependency. However, living with a disability has many other aspects as well. It is a matter of perspective: most people with disabilities do not view themselves as victims of disability but as fully active people. Yet many texts have a bias towards 'disability disaster'.

'Suffering' from a disability

Authors who describe people as suffering from an illness or a disability might do so unreflexively. Such turns of phrase evoke a negative image of the world in which disability is associated with suffering. Similar images come to mind when some use the word 'despite' which links a person's action to their disability. Headlines such as 'Joyful Life despite Disability', 'Child's Dream despite Disability' or even 'Beautiful despite Disability' are a case in point.

Reducing a message to the dimension of disability or suffering can lead to difficulties in interpersonal contacts instead of helping to eliminate them. These fears can be dispelled by adopting new ways of doing things, most of all, by ensuring that communication is open on both sides.

Also, people with disabilities are admired for ordinary things like going to work or having friends. In this regard they are often thought of as being extremely brave or full of life. This, too, contributes to reinforcing the image of them as victims, which is evident in the compassion they are shown. We also read and hear sentences such as 'He suffers from brittle bone disease' or 'A Man Trapped in a Disabled Body'. Journalists tend to invest their accounts with an excessive emotional charge, which puts a distance between non-disabled people and people with disabilities.

„He is wheelchair bound"

(seen in a weekly newspaper)

Andi Weiland, Leidmedien

Openness as a way to reduce anxiety about mutual contact

To make the idea of inclusion real and to eliminate the fear of mutual contact, it is important that non-disabled people and people with disabilities meet up. If there are any doubts about how to behave when you come across a particular type of disability, the following rules should be followed:

- Deaf people should be addressed directly and not through a sign language interpreter, even if the conversation is through them. The same applies to those who are accompanied by an assistant.

- When we want to communicate with hearing impaired or spastic people, and the surroundings are noisy, it is recommended to find a quiet place.

- Adults with intellectual disabilities generally don't want to be addressed on a first name basis, which, unfortunately, is often the case. It is recommended to follow the generally accepted rules of etiquette and address these people as any other person in the same situation would be addressed.

- When talking to blind people, face them and speak. If a blind or visually impaired person is moving, e.g. walking up the stairs, don't grab them by the arm to help them without their consent. Otherwise they might get startled and lose their balance. You should first ask if they want help and make sure how you can help.

Observers should not assume that people with disabilities always need help – they are used to their condition and have worked out effective ways of coping in their everyday lives. Of course, there's nothing wrong with the desire to help, but you need to be able to accept a refusal.

Language creates consciousness as well as prejudice. Addressing the issue of language and its potential impact is an important contribution to the process of inclusion of disadvantaged people. As already mentioned, language also shapes reality. That is why, when communicating, it is important to consider the potential impact of our words. The language spoken by young people, e.g. in the school yard, often contains offensive words such as 'downie' or 'potato', which should not be left unchallenged and should be reflected upon every time they are heard. Adults should serve as a

model for young people. Explanations such as 'I didn't really mean it' or 'That's just something I said' shouldn't be accepted. Only by carefully choosing our words can we become aware of their strength and treat each other with respect.

Avoid	Use
confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound	wheelchair user
afflicted by, suffers from, victim of...	has [name of condition or impairment]
(the) handicapped, (the) disabled	disabled person/people, person with disability
cripple, invalid	disabled person
Invalid, heavily damaged	disabled
able-bodied	non-disabled
mentally handicapped, mentally defective, retarded, subnormal	with a learning disability (singular), with learning disabilities (plural)
mental patient, insane, mad	person with a mental health condition
the blind	people with visual impairments; blind people; blind and partially sighted people
deaf and dumb; deaf mute	deaf, person with a hearing impairment user of British Sign Language (BSL)
„an epileptic, diabetic, depressive, and so on	person with epilepsy, diabetes, depression or someone who has epilepsy, diabetes, depression
dwarf; midget	someone with restricted growth or short stature
spastic	person with cerebral palsy

Inclusive language: words to use and avoid when writing about disability

Avoid passive, victim words. Use language that respects disabled people as active individuals with control over their own lives.

Source:
Guidance: Inclusive language: words to use and avoid when writing about disability
Office for Disability Issues
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication/inclusive-language-words-to-use-and-avoid-when-writing-about-disability#words-to-use-and-avoid (15.02.2017)

Easy-to-read-and-understand information

A contribution to barrier-free communication in international non-formal education

Nadine Rüstow - AWO Berlin

Introduction

In international educational work, using easy-to-read-and-understand[1] information offers excellent opportunities to communicate without barriers, even if such information does not guarantee that all people with learning disabilities will understand it equally well. This is because reading and comprehension skills vary from person to person.

Following the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, international education organisations, too, have begun to examine whether their efforts are inclusive. In the process, it is important not to lose sight of anyone, and to make it possible for people with learning disabilities to participate in the projects on offer thanks to the use of easy-to-read-and-understand information. So, the focus of these organisations, in addition to the familiar, architectural barriers, has come to include questions about where and how participants are recruited, whether all of them have understood the announcements, invitations and other information, etc.

The legal 'enshrinement' of easy-to-read-and-understand information [in the UN convention – editor's note], a triumph of people with learning disabilities, is proof of their growing self-confidence and ability to represent their own interests. Adapting the standards of such information to the needs of more people can benefit the whole society.

What does it actually mean to use easy-to-read-and-understand information? It's not just a question of using simpler or childish language, but of presenting information in a way to help people with learning disabilities communicate with others on an equal footing in all areas of life, and to obtain information. The standards mostly apply to written language, which, to make text more accessible, uses pictures and pictograms in addition to words. Such information is made up of short sentences. If it is impossible to avoid subordinate clauses in any given case, they are optically separated, while the necessary foreign words and technical terms are explained. The word 'internationalism' would be explained as follows:

Internationalism is a difficult word.

It means a word. This word looks and sounds similar in different languages.

It has a similar meaning in these languages. For example 'pizza' or 'radio'.

Compound words should be spelled with a hyphen, e.g. 'co-operation' rather than 'cooperation'. But standards on how to frame simple information for reading and understanding also include recommendations for speech. Here, too, short sentences are recommended and, if possible,

---

1   Publisher's note: The term 'easy-to-read-and-understand' is a paraphrase of 'easy-to-read' (ETR). This extension of the phrase 'easy-to-read' (text) seems logical and necessary as standards for creating accessible information are applicable not only to written language. Relevant European standards have been developed by Inclusion Europe, and govern the choice of words, sentence structure, font type and size, and the use of photos and symbols.
See www.easy-to-read.eu/en/ (last accessed on 16 February 2017). 'Easy-to-read' is the equivalent of the German term *Leichte Sprache*.
'Plain language' is a similar concept, but it is not subject to such rigorous, elaborate standards and is more closely related to standard language. The two terms should not be confused as they are not synonymous. The same distinction is also found in other languages, including German *(Leichte Sprache vs Einfache Sprache)*.

subordinate clauses are discouraged. Difficult words should be explained, and speech should be slower but smooth. When working with groups, it is useful to use red cards with the caption 'Stop! Make it simple please'[2] to signal that something has not been understood.

The sections that follow, offer a rationale for using easy-to-read-and-understand information, and point to areas where it is used. The main focus is on the use of such messages in everyday life.

Easy-to-read-and-understand information on educational offerings as a prerequisite for barrier-free communication and interaction

Comprehension is a prerequisite for successful communication. It improves confidence and reduces anxiety. Many people with learning disabilities have experienced communication barriers. Some experts in the field of easy-to-read-and-understand information, who themselves had learning difficulties, recount how they learned to read at schools that used 'difficult language'. Many teachers spoke it. You may imagine what obstacles people with learning difficulties had to face, and how long they experienced exclusion. Attending school was tantamount to using books and educational aids written exclusively in 'difficult' language. This significantly reduced the motivation to read and damped the joy of learning written language. For a long time, real educational opportunities were only available in areas such as music, arts and movement. This limitation made it necessary to adopt to what was available on offer.

Social exclusion is not only associated with written language but also with speech. Communication in everyday situations, on the road, in public buildings, in politics, media and in simple relationships with others is limited. As the level of language is high, many people cannot keep up with the social debates they listen to or aren't able to take part in discussions in mixed groups. Yet people with disabilities want to lead their lives based on self-determination and equality. They want to be able to join discussions and activities. For this reason, people with learning disabilities demand easy-to-read-and-understand information.

Enlisting people with learning disabilities as learners and teachers helping implement the concept of using easy-to-read-and-understand information is an important part of equal communication and interaction. The engagement of these people as teachers and examiners is underlain by a new approach to the assignment of social role. Until now, people with learning disabilities have been looked after, in need, using social services or working in sheltered jobs. Rarely have they been seen as actors or peers.

Accepting these individuals as people who join in and become actively involved leads to a shift in their perception by those who learn and work with them and in their self-perception, which evolves towards seeing themselves as equal partners.

Challenges of adaptation to the needs of different groups

Expectations of the standards for easy-to-read-and-understand information are great. Their application should help many people understand texts and overcome the barriers in accessing information, including in written publications, and enable them to take part in the processes occurring in international groups. In effect, working in such groups can be stimulated with new impulses. Also, using easy-to-read-and-understand information means compliance with the UN Convention on the

---

2   Instead of the caption, which should be translated into each of the languages represented in the group, a clear, universal European ETR logo can be printed on the cards. The logo can be downloaded free of charge from Inclusion Europe's website: www.easy-to-read.eu/pl/european-logo (last accessed on 16 February 2017).

Rights of Persons with Disabilities, boosts one's own efforts towards greater openness to all people, and promotes human rights education. In the process, it is useful to draw on experiences from the fields of culture and education.

For the second time in its history, the German Historical Museum (DHM), Berlin, mounted an exhibition supplemented by texts that adhere to the standards of easy-to-read-and-understand information. Written by historians, the texts were consulted with people with learning disabilities with regards to their accessibility. The editing and proofreading process was repeated several times until all potentially incomprehensible parts were eliminated. The involvement of people with learning disabilities increased their motivation and interest in the museum offering. They were treated as experts who, like other people, could voice their opinion about the content and linguistic form of the texts.

Increasingly often, Polish cultural and educational institutions provide barrier-free information too. Two such examples are: an easy-to-read[3] guide for visitors to Poznań's Cathedral Island produced by Porta Posnania, and a guide for people with autism spectrum disorders[4] created by the Copernicus Science Center, Warsaw.

Using easy-to-read-and-understand information in international education

All people must have equal access to high-quality education to be able to develop their potential regardless of special learning needs, gender, and social and economic circumstances. Achieving this requires making changes in content, approaches, structures and strategies in the education system. The same applies to non-formal education. The required changes should follow a uniform vision which embraces all people. Aren't regular education systems responsible for enabling all learners to take advantage of their offering? Standards for making information easy to read and to understand can significantly contribute to ensuring the participation of people with learning disabilities in (international) education. They should encourage efforts to create clearer and more understandable teaching aids for schools and to include in discussions, efforts and decision-making those who have been excluded from equal participation by language barriers. The idea is to use such standards to increase the chances of participation of all people, whether they are participants of the meeting or members of the team of leaders. Only then will it be possible to learn together and from one another.

Tapping into this potential, people with learning disabilities can be enlisted to help plan educational programmes. They can contribute an awareness of the need to ensure that information is easy to read and understand, suggest practical exercises and check the comprehensibility of teaching aids. Working together to prepare specific interactions and forms of communication, e.g. by reading and reviewing texts to make them barrier-free, supports the sharing of knowledge. People with learning disabilities get a boost to their self-esteem as they take an active part in creating content and linguistic form[5]. Since they are actively involved in the planning phase, it is possible to create barrier-free teaching aids and enable equal participation in interactions and activities in mixed groups.

If this kind of preparation is impossible for financial and organizational reasons, one should, at the beginning of the meeting, determine the form of barrier-free communication based on standards for making information easy to read and understand. This will be more effective if the team of leaders

3   See www.bramapoznania.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Przewodnik-w-teke%CC%87cie-latwym-do-czytania.pdf (last accessed on 16 February 2017). The text is in Polish.

4   See www.kopernik.org.pl/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Przewodnik_dla_osob_ze_spektrum_autyzmu2.pdf (last accessed on 16 February 2017). The text is in Polish.

5   Völz C., Dworski A., *Kritik ohne Expert(inn)en. Menschen mit Lernschwierigkeiten werden von der Debatte Leichte Sprache ausgeschlossen*, [in:]*Teilhabe*, 3/2016, p. 129.

includes people with learning disabilities working on equal terms with other team members, providing a model to follow for all participants.

An increased acceptance of standards for easy-to-read-and-understand information and their legal embedding in public life, which are a success for people with learning disabilities, demonstrate the group's growing self-confidence and ability to represent its own interests. Adapting these standards to the needs of participants of international education programmes can benefit the development of inclusive society as well as helping bring together people who, due to language barriers, haven't had the chance to meet, and allow them to share experiences and learn together in a spirit of mutual respect.

Developing and Implementing AAC Strategies to Improve the Communication of People with Complex Communication Needs

Magdalena Grycman, PhD

Augmentative communication strategies help to shape and develop the identities of people whose speech disorders permanently or temporarily hinder, limit or prevent communication and the fulfilment of their life and social roles. Strategies designed to support communication as part of therapeutic and educational efforts improve the effectiveness of communication.

> **AAC strategy:** a process or planning an activity to use it to improve the communication of a person with complex communication needs, e.g. deciding the subject of a conversation before it starts and providing the communication partners who do not know the AAC user with index tables which include terms related to the conversation.

Augmentative communication needs to be continuously supported and developed. Therefore, the strategy used to implement it is so important and requires the involvement of specialists. The practised behaviours enable building a communication code used to transmit and receive information, and to combine multiple elements into a uniform and systematic set of AAC strategies. AAC users utilise these strategies in everyday communication in a variety of situations.

> **AAC user:** a person with complex communication needs who uses augmentative and alternative communication. The concept comes from computer science ('user'), a field that greatly influenced the development of the domain of AAC.

People with complex communication needs require positive experiences to develop motivation for attaining communicative competence. New skills help expand the space of influence on one's life. An organised environment and an organised behaviour of their partners teach AAC users to anticipate a sequence of interactions.

> **Communication partner:** any person involved in a communicative interaction who actively collaborates with the interlocutor, helping them to convey or understand a message. In AAC, to make the communication exchange more effective, the communication partner should know the relevant system and means of communication of the AAC user.

The communication environment of an AAC user is saturated with visual information that is durable and offers prolonged exposure. The set of generalised visual symbols is gradually expanded by introducing new ones, which the user recognises in different contexts. By enabling access to symbols and their processing and though behavioural modelling, AAC users learn to use embedded characters in a meaningful and interactive environment. Language texts are included in various types of AAC aids.

AAC communication aid: any technologically simple physical object (e.g. pictures, communication book) or technologically advanced one (e.g. VOCA, voice communication aid, communicator) that complements or replaces natural speech and/or writing, and facilitates understanding, used to develop or improve the communication skills of people with complex communication needs.

Communication board: a personal communication aid that contains vocabulary in the form of AAC symbols, allowing an AAC user to communicate with other people. The symbols are arranged on a single plane (unlike in communication books), on one, two, three or four pages folded into a concertina or other shape that the user is able to physically control – directly (direct selection) or indirectly (indirect selection) – and which they can access. The boards can be used individually or bound into a communication book. Words and/or phrases are typically presented in a grid format, in rows and columns arranged according to a specific organisation strategy (physical organisation of a glossary system) or a thematic or linguistic strategy (linguistic organisation of a glossary system). The number of symbols per page (from one to many) and their type (objects/thumbnails, photos, drawings, pictorial symbols, letters) depend on the user's age and their cognitive and physical abilities. The vocabulary changes to match the owner's age, ability, needs and interests. The board can have different shapes and can be made from a variety of materials, with fixed or movable symbols (attached with velcro or magnets).

As communication strategies are pursued, the content of each symbol is discovered gradually. The meaning of the symbols becomes ever more clear. In this way, the user learns the primal experience of working with language: using words, gestures and manual signs that they initially don't understand or appreciate. Amassing a functional vocabulary in such situations makes it easier for AAC users to recognise that it is possible to combine symbols into sequences and first sentences. If focused on a familiar and well-liked field, the approach helps foster conversational skills, offering the opportunity to engage in a more advanced conversation. The strategy is initially heavily structured, and interaction rules are repeated just as symbols are repeated in other contexts to improve the AAC user's orientation in their environment.

Initially, the AAC user learns to communicate with the people who are closest to them in order to learn to talk to strangers. He/She starts from using a single strategy and then utilises sets of strategies. At first, they communicate in a familiar and well-liked situational context and then move on to communicating in a number of different daily situations.

Experiential learning method and non-violent communication

Hilal Demir

Nonviolence is a powerful philosophy and strategy for social change that rejects the use of all forms of violence. It is a universal approach to struggle that breaks the cycle of violence and counter-violence, leaving open the possibility of conversion, change and transformation. A nonviolent approach is likely to produce a constructive outcome rather than a destructive one. It is a method of conflict resolution that aims to arrive at the truth of a given situation. Not only is it ethically 'correct' but it can also be considered a way of life.

If we look around, we see violence everywhere. We are raised in a violent culture, where violence is the most effective way to resolve conflicts. As a result, we nurture the cycle of violence – consciously or otherwise.

The fight for a better world that is free of violence is more coherent when conducted in a similarly nonviolent manner. As we were born into this violent culture, however, we need to acquire the ways of nonviolence - a third way to transform conflicts. One means to achieve this is to attend nonviolence training sessions and workshops where the principles of nonviolence can be practised and learned.

The history of nonviolence trainings dates back to the civil rights movement in the USA, and to Gandhi in India. Here, the focus was to prepare participants for nonviolent action, both physically and emotionally. Following this, many other movements adapted the training programs, including anti-nuclear movements, feminist movements etc. Here, the gender balance, inclusivity of newcomers or un-experienced activists, and resisting discriminatory behaviours before and during the action became as important as the nonviolent action itself. In the philosophy of nonviolence, means should be consistent with desired ends. To create a just and peaceful world, the process must be similarly just and peaceful. When preparing for an action, the way we work together should reflect our common visions and values, as a call to public conscience is the principal means by which nonviolent actions gain popular support.

Nonviolence training programs are based on Kolb's experiential learning theory. In 1984, David A. Kolb published an important book entitled Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development[1]. This book essentially exposed the principle that people learn through discovery and experience. The reason the theory is called 'experiential' is its intellectual origins are taken from the experiential work of Lewin, Piaget, Dewey, Freire and James, forming a unique perspective on learning and development.

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) provides a holistic model of the learning process and a multi-linear model of adult development, both of which are consistent with what we know about human learning, growth, and development. The term 'Experiential Learning emphasizes the central role that experience plays in the learning process, with 'experiential' differentiating ELT from both cognitive learning theories, which emphasize cognition over effect, and behavioral learning theories, which deny any role for subjective experience in the learning process[2].

---

1 Kolb, David A., *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall 1984.
2 Sternberg R. J., Zhang L. (ed.), *Perspectives on Thinking, Learning and Cognitive Styles*, New York 2010, p. 227.
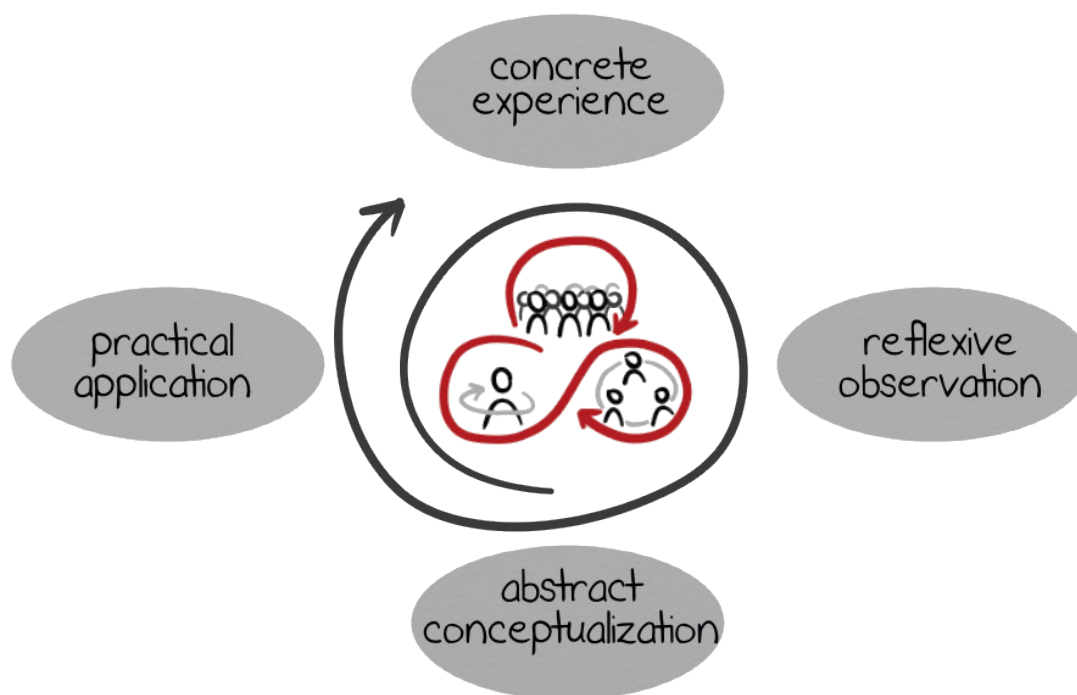
In the training sessions, physical and emotional exercises, games, and role-plays (from Aûgusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed) are used to experience the learning process via experimentation, conceptualization and doing. Nonviolence trainings can be organized around topics such as consensus decision making, discrimination, conflict resolution, nonviolent communication, power, nonviolent strategies for movement building, and many others, depending on the needs of the group.

An important aspect of nonviolence trainings is setting up an optimum environment for participants. This includes a balanced group dynamic, arranging the physical environment, taking participants' needs into consideration, and creating a safe, trust-filled space in which to express themselves and share, without fear. While working with international groups, participants' different cultural background and associated needs become increasingly important.

A nonviolence trainer sets the 'tone' of the session in first moments. The day is shaped by the way that it begins. For inclusivity in an international group, the first hours are very important. Participants are in an unusual environment, from different cultures, and with different learning habits. Trainers need to take all this into consideration when creating a 'comfortable' atmosphere in which participants can express themselves and be fully present. This safe space can be achieved via the following steps:

- setting the 'tone' : our main message to the participants is 'everybody is important and any level of experience is welcome in this training session/workshop'

- making a group agreement

- learning about others' expectations and personal backgrounds

- using team building exercises

I won't go through all the stages here, but I would like to examine two of these important steps in more detail: 'Making a group agreement' and 'Inclusion and nonviolent communication'.

Group agreement

I use this tool to help the group understand the needs of the other members. It is the first step for an individual to express his/her needs and listen to those of others'. In many groups, when people feel unsafe, the agreement list gets longer and longer. Participants try to cover everybody's needs. However, a long list can have the disadvantage of feeling like 'rules' or restrictions. The best way to complete the agreement, in my experience, is to make enough space for everybody to express their needs for working in a group, with the condition that not every single need must necessarily be included in the list. The agreement process is a space where participants get to hear each other and begin to make a connection.

In some circumstances, forming a group agreement can be very easy. However, my experience is that it can be difficult to follow the agreement or to intervene if there is a serious violation. Many times, if there is a such a violation, participants come to understand the significance of the group agreement and redraft the whole list to reflect this. Many times, if the trainer was initially successful in forming a group, these later crises help it to grow stronger. Participants who accept and respect each other, and who enjoy being together, tend to function better as a group.

Below is an example of a detailed group agreement (originally Turkish):

Group agreement example:

- Respect timing

- Beware of the 'time/person rule'

- Photos are ok

- Use 'I language'

- Take care not to shout

- Speak without interruption

- Active listening: 'listen to understand, not to pry'

- Do not diagnose and offer treatment

- Mobiles are in silent mode

- Avoid dual discussions

- Be constructive not destructive

- Respect space, time, trauma, dynamics

- Let´s not get offended and try to solve it here

- Let´s change our seats every now and then

- Hands up for permission to speak in the big group

- Personal/ private stories may not be shared outside of these four walls

The group in question was made up of very experienced activists and NGO workers, who hence tried to include all the critical points to avoid crisis. When all these 'big wishes' come together in a document it can begin to feel somewhat heavy, as was the case in the present example. A participant complained that she didn't feel comfortable speaking or acting due to her fear of violating the agreement or hurting someone's feelings. As trainers, we used this conflict as an opportunity to

create a stronger group dynamic and build trust for inclusivity. We expressed our awareness that many other people felt the same, and as a result participants began to share their thoughts on the agreement. During this session, everybody heard and expressed real personal needs and emotions, making the solution stage far easier than it might otherwise have been.

Nonviolent communication

One very strong and important way to transform conflicts non-violently is nonviolent communication (NVC). Based on a theory developed by Marshall Rosenberg, nonviolent communication is not only a way of communication but also a way of (nonviolent) life. The definition of NVC described in 'The Center for Nonviolent Communication[3]' webpage says:

> Nonviolent communication (NVC) is founded on language and communication skills that strengthen our ability to remain human, even under trying conditions. It contains nothing new; all that has been integrated into NVC has been known for centuries. The intent is to remind us about what we already know—about how we humans were meant to relate to one another—and to assist us in living in a way that concretely manifests this knowledge.

NVC guides us in reframing how we express ourselves and hear others. Instead of habitual, automatic reactions, our words become conscious responses based firmly on awareness of what we are perceiving, feeling, and wanting. We are led to express ourselves with honesty and clarity, while simultaneously paying others a respectful and empathic attention. In any exchange, we come to hear our own deeper needs and those of others. NVC trains us to observe carefully, and to be able to specify behaviours and conditions that are affecting us. We learn to identify and clearly articulate what we are concretely wanting in any given situation. The form is simple, yet powerfully transformative.

The language we use to express ourselves and our needs is at the core of nonviolent communication theory. By learning to observe others without judgemental thoughts, we can see the feelings behind the behaviours. If we understand the behaviours, we can see the needs behind these emotions. Using these, we can find a real, constructive way to deal with unwanted behaviours or conflicts.

When working on nonviolent communication with groups, I often use an exercise that is designed to practise empathy by focusing first on our own feelings and needs, and then on those of others. I developed the exercise myself from material in Mediation and Mediator Self-Care: A Nonviolent Communication Approach[4]. The exercise works on our enemy images when we are in conflict. First, participants are asked to close their eyes and focus on themselves, their breathing, their body, and the environment.

The Enemy Image Process has three parts: empathy for self, empathy for other, and requests. The trainer leads the participants through their inner journey, step by step:

Think about a conflict you have been involved in, either now or in the past…

- Focus on your judgemental thoughts about yourself within this conflict

- Try to name the feelings associated with these thoughts

- What needs might underlie these feelings? Try to find them…

3   http://www.cnvc.org/ (last checked on: 19.02.2017).
4   Lasater, I., Kinyon, J., Stiles,J., *Mediation and Mediator Self-Care: A Nonviolent Communication Approach*, 2010. http://wordsthatwork.us/site/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/lasater.i.pdf (last checked 19.02.2017).

Next, we are turn our attention to the other party in the conflict.

- What was their reaction to the judgemental thought? What behaviour did it lead to?

- How were they feeling?

- What needs might underlie these feelings? Try to find them...

Now, think about what can be done to resolve this conflict. What questions should you ask? Try to construct your request...

Next, participants open their eyes and relax. If they want to, they can share their experience. This exercise changes participant's perspectives and feelings about the conflict, and helps them to think in a constructive way. Many times, it is easier to empathize with the other party than to have a conflict, as conflicts can be tiring and disturbing.

When we get used to doing this in our all relationships, we learn to focus on the situations rather than individuals, and we can resolve our conflicts constructively, enriching the trust and love that exists between people. Conflicts are part of our lives. Viewed correctly, they are opportunities to learn, change, and gain experience and knowledge of the world.

I also use a lot of role-plays drawn from real-life scenarios as a way for participants to practice nonviolent communication. In these role-plays, we observe how our usual behaviours and reactions are in conflict. This helps us to see ourselves, and to begin to notice the kind of behaviours that block our ability to communicate effectively.

'I language' and nonviolent communication
Observing others and ourselves without judgement begins with a neutral language. In nonviolence, 'I language' is the language that helps us to express our own thoughts and observations. As every individual has their own 'filter' that they use to understand the world around them, there is no 'right' or 'wrong' in these observations. For this reason, judgemental thoughts – imposing our own perceptions upon others – generally result in conflict or violence.

'I language' refers to a way of talking that is for ourselves rather than for others: if I only talk on my own behalf, I cannot judge others. This approach does not block communication; rather, it opens up a healthy base for resolving different needs. In groupwork, if all the participants understand the meaning of 'I language' there is less risk of conflict between the participants, and less fear of expression in group activities.

In international groups, it can sometimes be difficult to distinguish 'I language' from 'You language'. For participants to understand and practice 'I language', the trainer can give several short exercises either during the group agreement process or in a separate module if possible.

Using nonviolent communication as an approach for inclusivity in international group work:

- Participants' needs should be as visible as possible, via group agreements or other exercises;

- Always make space for experiencing, sharing and talking about emotions;

- Create a strong group dynamic at the start and assist the group in dealing with crises;

- Make sure you create a safe atmosphere for every single participant. If necessary, you can create a 'safe corner' for a more clearly defined space;

- Teach 'I language' for non-judgemental speaking and mutual understanding;

- Observe emotions and behaviours during exercises and try to identify the participants' needs. If there are strong unmet needs, try to make them visible and help the group to fulfil them.

Visualisation

Seeing something once is better than hearing about it a ten times

– German proverbt

László Roland Kiss

The Team had a meeting about how the accompaniment of Polish youngsters during their travel to Hungary could be organised. Several different aspects were considered: security, cost effectiveness, time, the organisation of the team, etc. When the discussion stagnated, someone from the group grabbed a pen and paper and drew two circles representing Poland and Hungary, a square for the bus, and a group of people portraying the youngsters. This was the moment when the discussion really got going. The drawing served as a common reference point, and the participants of the meeting were able to understand each other much better. With the correlations being depicted visually, there was no need for repetitive verbal explanations.

This story clearly shows how visualisation can aid group processes – in this instance, daily team meetings. And it is no coincidence that social education workers, youth workers and educational specialists of all kinds have come to realise that daily routines or evaluation processes should be supported by visualisation. With its highly versatile potential, visualisation is an important part of working with inclusive groups – a subject to which I will return.

A good starting point is the question of what visualisation actually is. It is certainly not art. It's not a question of whether the drawing is pretty or aesthetic. Rather, it's about whether the drawing is useful, practical, supportive, and most of all appropriate. Simply stated, visualisation is nothing more than a way of making processes and structures visible. This may include processes like evaluations or daily routines, as well as longer, multi-step games, decision making, planning procedures and structures such as room allocations, team compositions, models and organisational charts, etc. All of which are well known to youth workers.

Visualisation works in a similar way to languages. To communicate and understand each other you don't have to speak a foreign language perfectly. Rather, you need a certain amount of vocabulary and knowledge of specific rules. And it's the same with visualisation. You need a visual vocabulary - a collection of pictograms and icons – which you can learn to draw easily, plus knowledge of typical and often repetitive structures and processes. A comprehensive range of literature exists on the subject (see bibliography).

So how does visualisation support joint thinking? People think associatively. All ideas and thoughts can be configured into a network of words, pictures and emotions. We rely on situational schemes and scripts, which are activated by certain stimuli and which have a direct influence on our actions. Verbalisation enables us to talk about abstract, intangible constructs such as freedom or inclusion. At the same time, these abstract constructs and concepts leave some scope for interpretation. If, for example, we only hear something verbally, it is still possible that the other person pictures something entirely different in their heads, which can lead to misunderstandings. However, if we hear and see something simultaneously, the probability that the information is understood in the same way is far greater.

Another argument in favour of visualisation is based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence.[1] Humans are not only talking and thinking beings but also seeing, feeling, singing, dancing, interacting beings. Not one intelligence is formed, but multiple intelligences. And the more areas of intelligence are included, the deeper the learning experience.

Verbalisation requires knowledge of the same language at an equivalent, or at least similar level. However, this cannot always be guaranteed – for instance, in the context of an international inclusive youth exchange. In this case, there are participants who do not speak the working language as well as others, or disabled persons who are limited in their verbal expression. Once the most important processes and structures are visualised, however, an inclusive thinking space is opened up in which all participants can partake.

As with many things in life, correct implementation is the key to achieving positive results. We will therefore examine the following important aspects in more detail.

There are people who have a limited response to visual information (e.g. those with impaired vision or the blind people). Equally, people with learning difficulties may have problems in understanding and interpreting icons and pictograms. Graphic visualisations hence must have a simple design, with only few details and nothing too abstract. Areas of association between definitions and pictures should not be too wide. To depict a coffee break, for instance, an island with a sunbed – associated by many with breaks – may suffice. In this case, it should be noted that this does not function as a direct association, but rather a series of associations: Island → tranquillity → relaxation → coffee → coffee break.

To deliver the message even more easily and clearly, a cup of coffee could be drawn instead. This gives an even less complicated chain of interpretation: cup of coffee → coffee break. Visualisation must therefore be well conceived, serve its purpose, and/or have a function in the context of group work. Frequently, in the throes of initial excitement, everything is 'over-visualized'. The responsible person should keep in mind that the process of visualization can be just as demanding and exhausting as a long and boring presentation, especially when done simultaneously to moderation.

---

1   Gardner H., Hatch T., *Multiple Intelligence Go to School: Educational Implications of the Theory of Multiple Intelligence*, [in:] *Educational Researcher* V18., 1989, p. 4-9. Available online at: http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.3102/0013189X018008004 (last checked on 16.02.2017).

Cultural perspectives also play a role in visualisation, and should not be overlooked. The understanding and interpretation of icons, symbols and pictograms always contains a cultural association. A steaming cup is understood as coffee in Europe. In South Asia, on the other hand, where drinking coffee is less common, people eat hot soup for breakfast. The symbol of the steaming cup could hence be interpreted as an invitation to eat soup. Thus, before visualising something, we should first know the cultural backgrounds of the participants and their associations with important symbols.

The aim of the visualisation processes is prototypisation, not stereotypisation. Stereotypes are often untrue mental simplifications of complex characteristics or behavioral patterns of groups of people, which are shared by society. For example: 'all vegans ride bicycles', 'all men are strong'. Prototypes on the other hand are role models, patterns, or basic forms,[2] with the relevant, fundamental attributes of reality.

Through the use of prototypes, relevant connections are activated in the neural networks of our brain when visualizing. Associative ways of thinking lead to the retrieval of adequate previous knowledge, emotions and experiences, which are brought together in a meaningful context. As such, our ability to think, understand and learn becomes faster and easier. Prototypical pictures, icons or drawings also determine what we perceive and how we perceive it. To avoid an overly strong influence on the participants, drawings should hence remain as neutral as possible. In the context of international, cultural heterogeneous and inclusive groups, the symbols for a coffee break or evaluations can be prototyped. The depiction of people, however, should represent the full diversity of the group on a range of different levels including culture, age, gender, heritage, religion, and disabilities.

How can visualisation be learned?

As stated above, graphic visualisation is not art, and everybody can learn it. For example, by taking part in training sessions. At the same time, the literature recommended in this book can serve as inspiration and motivation for using visualisation techniques. I recommend that you give it a try – use a little drawing, a sketch, or mind maps from time to time. Add some pictures to the programme of the day, and notice the influence they have on the participants.

Again, visualisation works like a language. It is just not possible to learn visualisation in theory – you have to work at it, collect your own experiences, and discover your own style in the process.

Have fun!

---

2   www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prototype

The Theatre of the Oppressed – Rehearsal for the Future

Hjalmar Jorge Joffre-Eichhorn

> 'We are all actors: being a citizen is not living in society, it is transforming society!'
> (Augusto Boal)

Theatre of the Oppressed

First created during the era of military dictatorships in South America in the 1970ies and later further developed in exile in Europe, the Theatre of the Oppressed[1] (T.O.), as invented by the Brazilian theatre visionary Augusto Boal (1931-2009), seeks to be a popular, liberating and de-elitised theatre for, by and with the oppressed. Inspired by the emancipatory theories and practices of the great Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, T.O. is composed of six highly participatory, interactive and dialogue-promoting techniques[2], all of which are based on a humanist ethics of unconditional solidarity with the "Wretched of the Earth" (Frantz Fanon).

Concretely, T.O. is a participatory *theatre with communities* as opposed to the standard, top-down *theatre for communities*. This means that T.O. is not an educational, message-based theatre that aims to raise the audiences' awareness about any given issue but a theatre that privileges a pedagogical, problem-posing analysis of important societal problems from the perspective of those directly affected. In other words, in T.O. the spectators are no longer regarded as mere recipients of other people's knowledge but are themselves the carriers of intellectual capacities that allow them to participate in the exploration of possible solutions for the problems they face in their everyday lives.

Forum Theatre

The most widely used technique of the Theatre of the Oppressed is Forum Theatre (FT). In FT a short play depicting an unresolved situation of oppression is performed to an audience of people familiar with the issue. After watching the play once in order to understand what it is about, the play is performed a second time, with audience members (so-called spect-actors) being invited to enter the action, replace the protagonist (the main character confronting the oppression) and attempt to positively change the outcome on the stage and then take what they have learned during the forum and apply it in their real lives. These so-called interventions can be done verbally or non-verbally, including sign language or with translation in the case of international groups. In addition, in case the spect-actor cannot make it onto the stage for reasons of mobility, the intervention can be brought to him/her, i.e. the performers come from the stage into the audience. In other words, the most important thing in Forum Theatre is the dialogue with the audience and that this dialogue and trying out of ideas becomes a rehearsal for future action.

In short, FT provides a unique opportunity to identify, explore and try out different strategies for change in the safe space of the theatre, without fear of being judged, criticized or punished. It is theatre not as spectacle but as a means of expression and experimentation where all people have

---

1   According to Boal, in its most basic meaning the concept of oppression is understood as a process by which certain groups in society, because of cultural, social, political, racial and/or sexual reasons, are denied the right to dialogue or to exercise this right. An expanded definition and/or definition is provided by Dr. Leticia Nieto, who defines 'systematic oppression' as the historic, institutional and socially pervasive disempowerment of a social group by another. It is defined by societal (as opposed to personal) power, privilege and access to resources, education, employment opportunities and others.

2   Please see the so-called Tree of the Theatre of the Oppressed below.

the possibility and the right to be heard and exchange their perspectives in action. It is a constant search for authentic dialogue, in which, according to Augusto Boal, people analyze their past, in the context of the present in order to identify strategies to create a more just and democratic future.

FT can easily be adapted to local needs and circumstances and is generally facilitated by a single FT expert, called the Joker, working with a group of people who share a common oppression on a workshop level before, upon request, presenting the outcomes of the activities with a wider audience. Being an authentic community-based endeavor, the activities can take place anywhere and there is no need (though the option always exists) for traditional theatre prerequisites such as a stage, lighting, props and costumes. In fact, everything needed for the theatre actions can be found in the immediate surroundings, subsequently making FT a very cost-effective method. With regards to time, FT initiatives can last from a few hours to various months or even years, ideally being an integral and complementary part of larger transformation processes.

TREE OF THE THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

Legislative Theatre

Direct Actions

Invisible Theatre

Multiplication

Forum Theatre

Newspaper Theatre

Image Theatre

Rainbow of Desire

Games

Solidarity   Image   Sound   Word   Politics

Philosophy   History

Ethics   Economy

AESTHETICS OF THE OPPRESSED
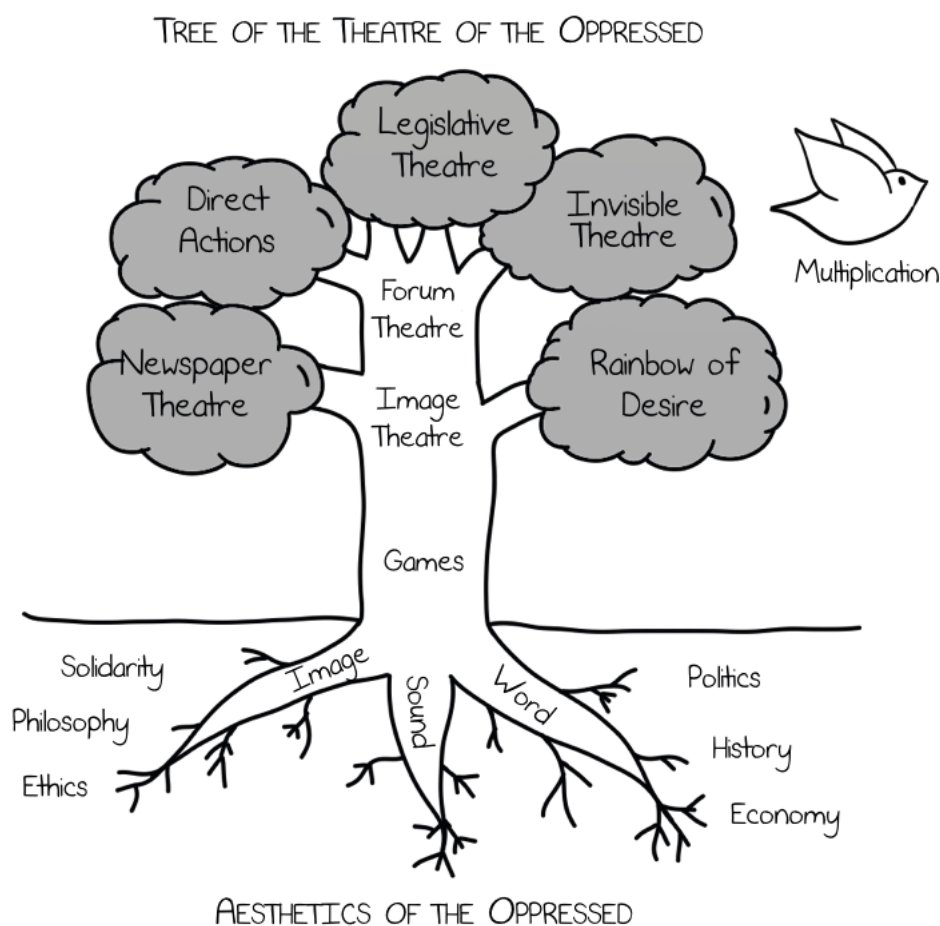
Notes from the Field

Legislative Theatre (LT), one of the six techniques that compose T.O., aims to democratise democracy by using Forum Theatre to involve marginalised communities in the making and application of laws and public policy. In the years between 2010 and 2012, the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization (AHRDO[3]) carried out the country's first LT initiative focusing on the protection and promotion of women's rights in Afghanistan. The project included the capacity building of female Forum Theatre facilitators ('Jokers'), all of whom had themselves been subjected

---

3   For more information about AHRDO's activities, please consult www.ahrdo.org

to systematic physical, emotional and psychological abuse and a denial of their most basic human rights. Afterwards, 10 Legislative Theatre workshops and almost 50 LT performances were carried out in 5 provinces of the country, reaching more than 5000 women from all walks of life, many of whom living in rural areas and without any formal education but with a great deal of personal experiences of gender oppression.

During one of these LT workshops, bringing together a group of 20 women for 6 days to theatrically explore different aspects of gender oppression with the aim to produce a Forum/Legislative Theatre play, one of the participants was extremely withdrawn throughout the entire process. She hardly took part in any of the activities and not once contributed to the various discussions during the week. Then, on the last day of the workshop, the play that had been developed was presented internally and those not in the play were invited to replace the female protagonist and try to transform the oppression on the stage. All of a sudden, to the surprise of everyone in the room, the woman who had been silent all week yelled 'stop', entered the stage, took the role of the female protagonist who was being abused by her husband and confronted him both verbally and by throwing her apron at him, telling him in clear words that she would never allow him to treat her like that again. Her intervention brought the workshop to a close and during the final circle, the woman spoke for more than 30 minutes, telling her story of years of oppression and how taking part in the T.O. workshop had allowed her to finally break the silence.

Later, during the public performances more than 400 women came on stage and intervened in the plays in order to try out their ideas for change. The ideas were recorded by a lawyer in the audience who then synthesized them into concrete suggestions for legislation. Later these were discussed and voted once more as part of five so-called legislative referenda that brought together workshop and performance participants, representatives of civil society as well as political and religious authorities. The final, collectively approved suggestions ended up in a comprehensive legal report that was presented inside the Afghan National Assembly and was later picked up by the Women Affairs Committee in order to inform the creation of new laws that protect and promote the rights of women in the country.

Benefits for Communication

The Theatre of the Oppressed in general and Forum Theatre in particular present a number of unique benefits that promote communication among people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences:

- **T.O. promotes External Dialogue:** T.O. is committed to overcoming the cultures of monologue and silence that have beset many societies for way too long. Therefore, the main principle of T.O is to help restore dialogue among human beings and to promote and respect the voices of all members of society. This happens through the constant involvement of all participants at every stage of the work. Whether through taking part in the different theatre games and exercises, the creation of a Forum Theatre play based on their own life experience or during the public performance, in which performers and audience engage in a conversation about possible alternatives for action, the method is always about promoting collective dialogue amongst the people.

- **T.O. promotes Internal Dialogue:** Apart from supporting conversations among people, T.O. also assists the engagement of inner dialogues, through techniques such as the Rainbow of Desire, inviting performers and spect-actors to use the method to observe themselves in action and to analyze so-called internalized oppressions, i.e. the thoughts and feelings (fears and desires) that shape our lives and at times prevent us from living happier existences.

- **T.O. promotes the Voices of the Excluded:** The emphasis of all T.O. techniques is to make audible the voices of those generally not often heard in the public realm. While nobody is explicitly excluded from partaking in a T.O. initiative, the main goal is to put the method at the service of the oppressed, based on the conviction that people are powerful and that once given the opportunity to show their power, they will do so.

- **T.O. promotes Multiple Forms of Expression:** T.O. aims to break with aesthetic illiteracy and at the same time support individuals and groups to discover and develop their preferred ways of communication. To this end, especially on a workshop level, the different activities offer the participants the opportunity to explore multiple forms of artistic expression including the word, the sound and the image. Whether through poetry, painting or music, the aim is to stimulate peoples' aesthetic neurons and promote new forms of emancipatory communication based on an organic fusion of thinking and feeling.

- **T.O. promotes Communication across Boundaries:** T.O. invites everyone involved to find their own ways of engaging with the activities. Nobody is excluded and so-called mistakes are celebrated for what they are: opportunities for learning. Besides, the method embraces diversity of languages, cultures, religions and/or physical and intellectual capacities, thereby promoting human relationships that transcend barriers and allow for looking at the world through multiple perspectives.

- **T.O. promotes Questions and Imagination:** While urgent answers and solutions to people's everyday problems are obviously needed, T.O. understands that formulating the right questions and stimulating people's capacity to imagine a different world are not to be underestimated and often come prior to the search for concrete solutions.

- **T.O. promotes Deep Listening:** The cornerstone of all T.O. techniques is listening. Giving previously silenced people the space in which to tell their stories, offer their points of view and try out their own ideas for change is in itself a form of transformation and empowerment.

- **T.O. promotes Cooperation and Horizontal Learning:** All activities are collaborative rather than competitive. People are encouraged to work together, play together and create together in a non-hierarchical way. Everyone can learn from each other. Multiple intelligences are promoted. The process of devising a Forum Theatre play in a collective manner is just as important as the final product, which is presented to the audience. T.O. is the method of the first person plural, the 'We'.

Sample Games and Exercises

After most theatre games or exercises played during a T.O. workshop, the Joker leads a brief exchange among the participants by asking questions about the symbolism of the game in connection with the theme of the workshop. This process aids the group in starting to express themselves about the topic while also gradually identifying crucial elements that may later be part of the Forum Theatre play or scene. For instance, the Joker could also ask questions such as:

- What thoughts and feelings did you have during the exercise?

- What insights did you have as a result of engaging with the game?

- What do you think this exercise was about?

- How does this game relate to … (the theme of the workshop)?

The following sample games and exercises have been done in multiple cultural contexts and with people from different walks of life, including people with different types of disabilities. However, it is important to emphasize that they may have to be adapted to respond to the needs of the specific group one works with. Besides, for international groups and/or groups with people who cannot communicate verbally, the presence of a translator/interpreter may be needed in order to facilitate the involvement of all participants.

Clap Exchange *(Duration app. 15-20 min.)*
The group stands in a circle. Facing to his/her right, the Joker sends a clap around the circle. The person on the right attempts to clap his/her hands at the same time and then passes the clap to the person next to him/her, all the way around the circle, again and again, faster and faster. Upon completion of the game, the group spends a few minutes reflecting about the game.

Trust Walking *(Duration app. 15-20 min.)*
This is a silent exercise. The participants divide into pairs. Person A is the guide and leads B, with his/her eyes closed, around the room. Every once in a while, A makes B touch an object present in the room. B takes time to really feel the object. After a while, the partners swap roles. Afterwards, the Joker asks the participants to share how they experienced the game.

Introduction to Image Theatre: *Image of the Word & Sculpting (Duration app. 15-45 min.)*
Image Theatre is one of the fundamental techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed. An image is a frozen picture, made by a workshop participant using their own and other participants' bodies. The tableau is like a living photograph of a moment of struggle in the participant's life. Images can also be made by groups of participants working together. Because the image is silent, it is also highly symbolic and can be interpreted in various ways[4].

Image of the Word
The group stands in a circle, facing outwards, their eyes closed. The Joker calls out a topic (e.g. Discrimination/Inclusion/Man/Woman, etc.), for which the participants should think of a frozen image they can make using their own bodies. At a signal from the Joker, all actors simultaneously turn around and show their images to the rest of the group. Next, the Joker asks the participants to make families of images, joining those images that are similar to their own. Then, the Joker proceeds to dynamise the images, family by family. First, the Joker asks the other participants to read the images. Then, at a signal from the Joker, the families make sounds and movements contained in the image. Again, the Jokers for comments by the other participants.

Sculpting
The Joker asks the participants to divide into pairs. Next, each pair decides who is going to be the sculptor and who is going to be the clay. Then, the Joker gives the group a topic (e.g. Human Rights/ Racism/Poverty, etc.) and the sculptors are asked to create an image by touching the clay and moving him/her into space or by mirroring and showing him/her the position s/he should take. Sculptors should be as detailed as possible and are responsible for all limbs and facial expressions. When touching, the sculptor should be very respectful. The image can be realistic, abstract, concrete

---

4   Diamond D., *Theatre for Living: The Art and Science of Community-based Dialogue*, Victoria 2007.

or symbolic. The Joker can bring together the images in a "Museum", asking the participants to interpret the images. The Joker may also dynamise the images, asking the participants to make movements, sounds and/or words their characters may say. During the making of the images, the Joker should ask for absolute silence.

Image of the Hour *(Duration app. 15-45 min.)*
This exercise invites the participant to reflect about their everyday lives. Stage 1: The Jokers asks them to walk around the workshop space. While the group moves around the space, the Joker calls out a time of the day, a certain occasion or a significant date (Friday 7am, New Year's Eve, The day the peace accords were signed). Stage 2: When the Jokers says *'Image'*, the actors must get into a frozen image of what they usually do at the time indicated. While frozen in shape, the Joker can prompt the participants to ask themselves whether they like what they are doing at the time, or whether they would rather do something else. The Joker can also ask the participants, without changing their own images, to take a look at other people's images. Stage 3: When saying *'Action'*, the actors bring their images to life, acting out with movements, sounds and words what they commonly do at that time of the day. Stage 4: The exercise ends with a reflection on individual participants' schedules and what they would like to change in their lives.

Blank Forum 'Sorry too late' *(Duration app. 30-60 min.)*
This is an excellent exercise to introduce the logic of Forum Theatre to a group. Three participants are sitting on chairs behind tables. Another participant plays the role of the protagonist, the main character of a Forum Theatre play/scene. The rest of the group is the audience. The protagonist, with or without words, urgently needs to resolve an (undefined) issue. S/he approaches the three people on chairs one after another, trying to convince them to help him/her. Unfortunately, all three refuse to do so and the protagonist is left defeated. The play ends. Next, the workshop facilitator (Joker) asks the audience what the protagonist could do differently to get what s/he wants and different audience members are invited to try out their ideas, taking the role of the protagonist. After each intervention, the Joker discusses the pros and cons of each new idea.

Literature & Links
With Theatre of the Oppressed and other interactive, community-based theatre methods fast gaining in acceptance, appreciation and therefore utilisation on all continents, there are a great variety of resources available in book form, audio-visually as well as online. Augusto Boal himself wrote a number of foundational books that are required reading for all (aspiring) Jokers interested in deepening their expertise. In addition, a number of other practitioners have also published important texts focusing on the theory and practice of the method. The list in the bibliography is limited to resources available in English, German and Polish, with Boal's books also being accessible in French, Spanish, Portuguese and many other languages.

Note: While reading texts and watching films about the Theatre of the Oppressed is indispensable for anyone interested in working with the methods, it is nonetheless important to stress the need for proper, regular training and, if possible, mentorship in the different techniques. These training workshops are frequently organized on all continents.

The Theatre Project 'Moment mal, bitte!' ('Just a moment, please!')

On the outer edges of thinking, or a slight shift in reality

Urszula Grzela

I am an actress. I've been in a wheelchair since a car accident. I have lived in Germany (Bavaria) for many years now. At first I didn't speak the language. In those early days, a flight of stairs seemed like an insurmountable barrier, a sky-grazing mountain. Every time I asked passers-by for help, instructed them and coordinated their efforts, I had to manage without words. Communication was limited to looks, touches and gestures. More often than not, there was some uncertainty involved. Mindful breathing helped. This extreme experience allowed me to meet the Other. And it was a great adventure in non-verbal communication, well outside my realm of experience.

It was in this context that the idea was born to create a theatre community whose common language would be direct contact and where interaction and work would be based on mutual respect. Mindfulness. Playing the game of 'let's imagine it's a better world'. This concept has been driven by a desire to make our theatre community a blueprint for the whole society. Of all theatre forms, performance proved to be best suited to achieve this goal, as it transcends the traditional limits of theatre, while making it possible to use its tools.

The theatre project *Moment mal, bitte!* is created by three groups of people: residents of the home for people with intellectual disabilities in the Malseneck Castle in Kraiburg am Inn; people with mental disorders attending a day centre in Waldkraiburg; and professional actors, musicians, educators and other people fascinated by the idea of a friendly society.

At first, I met with each of the three groups separately to identify their potential and communication abilities. The residents of the home for people with intellectual disabilities dazzled me with their slowed-down way of life. Some did not speak at all, others communicated using a dialect. I was amazed by their directness and the countless questions they asked in a dialect I couldn't fully understand. Mostly they sat. Their sluggishness made me think of lightness. They were extremely friendly and constantly sought to engage with others. I saw no indication of pretence. I myself could only be present. The people with mental disorders who attended the day centre were quick to act, brilliant, extremely sharp. Their blend of unpredictable ideas and ordinariness was disturbing. In contrast, the outsiders – the 'normal' world people – tended to hide behind disguise, but they contributed curiosity which provided an important impulse for collective action. A kind of communication laboratory was born. We were all curious about one another. A manifold uncertainty.

The uniqueness of our theatre community lies in its diversity. When we engage in collective action, the divide between the healthy and the ill/disabled disappears. We all become performers and accompany each other in such a way that it's not obvious who supports whom at any particular moment. Sometimes a passing touch or a whisper is enough to remind your partner of your presence. We pair up so as not to get lost. Ordinary coexistence. Years of work have led to the creation of a focused, tight-knit theatre group.

On the day of our first public performance, one of the performers, gripped by sudden fear, was unable to take part in an action we had been preparing for months. This unexpected setback made me realise

we needed to be flexible in creating variants and action collages – not to get attached to the adopted theatre solutions. Instead, we must open up to the present moment. I started a work system designed to help acquire the ability to engage, freely and truly, in relationships with partners and the external environment. With full confidence. Quietly.

We practice encounters in open spaces, parks, plazas and streets, in towns and cities. We create spatial situations through a continuity of fleeting actions, without words.

Constant coming and going. Showing up. Stopping. Looking. Listening. Waiting. Lasting. Noticing. Disappearing. These actions make up our vocabulary. We turn up unnoticed, stay for a moment and disappear. A shadow on the wall of the building. A smile.

Nadine Loës

Our costumes are a nod to the theatre tradition. They make us beautiful and visible. A tableau. A group of smartly dressed figures appear on the street like curious travellers taking in sights they see for the first time. They greet one another, tipping their hats or nodding, gently smiling. The gentlemen carry umbrellas. The ladies sport handbags. They look around. A barely noticeable white deer appears. A daydream. This script has been in development since we started our theatre work together here, in a town built after the last war in a forest, on the site of a destroyed munitions factory.

Our very first stay in this strange town showed us we could operate on the outer edges of thinking. The organisers of the local Culture Days wanted to schedule our performance in the context of disability, but we made our entry at the opening ceremony, making it impossible to pigeonhole our theatre in conventional terms.

The invited audience, dressed as smartly as we were, 'ran into' our group and stopped in their tracks, their curiosity piqued. The official part started later than scheduled. We also took part in the festival's closing ceremony, but this time we were invited as full members of society.

Moment mal, bitte! means 'just a moment, please!', which we prefer to read as 'I'm here just for a moment.'

And now it's time for a smile; one that lingers in the memory when we disappear down the alleys ...

To shout with joy

Diego Pileggi – Jubilo Foundation[1]

Jubilo is an international theatre group founded in 2011 in Wroclaw, Poland, with a core artistic team of actors and musicians from Italy and Poland. The starting point of Jubilo's work is artistic intervention as a means to counteract social exclusion. Within every community or society are marginalised people, whose borderline, sometimes invisible status is due to socio-economic exclusion, culture, race/ethnicity, or developmental disabilities. This marginalisation leads to the breakdown of human relations, conflicts, and ultimately the building of walls between different groups. Jubilo aims to break down these barriers through artistic encounters in which the platform of exchange is the theatrical language of body, voice and music.

Since its inception, Jubilo's work has been based on a direct and highly intuitive communication whose starting point is body work and relations with the other. These core principles are present in all of our pedagogical proposals and then tailored to the specific environment or group in question.

Methodology/Ensemble

Jubilo's work is deeply rooted in the branch of so-called *research theatre*. Elements including movement, music and song are the essential tools with which our artists build the working frame around a given group or context. Generally, but not necessarily, the musical aspect of the work is directly related to traditional music/songs gathered by the artists themselves in the course of their encounters with different people and cultures, mainly throughout Europe.

Significantly, Jubilo's work is both horizontal and universal. These characteristics have a strong influence upon the language and communicative processes opened when working with groups. Participants are invited to overcome their expressive fears and difficulties by opening a physical and vocal dialogue within the group that establishes a clear and intuitive external communication.

Jubilo's theatrical proposal is not dependant on socially-driven factors, as the principles used in the work remain the same and can be addressed to any group (i.e. people with disabilities, refugees, actors, prisoners etc). The main objective of the work is to delete the roles society gives us and to start relating to one another within the theatrical space as simple human beings, each with our own strengths and weaknesses.

Another specific characteristic of Jubilo's work is that the identity and work of the group are based on the concept of an ensemble. We act not merely as a group, but as a coordinated ensemble who actively support each other; where each member of the group shares the same responsibilities. One of our main questions and objectives is how to activate a personal process for each participant, and at the same time open relations within the group. Crucially, every proposal given by the leader must function in terms of both the ensemble and the individual. In this way, both a personal research and a learning process can be set in motion, developing and deepening both the long-term potential and the sense of personal discovery for each member of the group. To fully explore this phase, which is directly connected to the theme of communication, I will describe the moment when the leader must *communicate* the task to the participant(s).

---

1   www.jubiloproject.com

Jubilo Foundation

The leader's strategy is to begin with a basic version of the exercise. Little by little, according to the needs of the individuals in front of him/her, the exercise is then tailored to the possibilities and limitations of the participants. In this way, the dialogue that we open is based on specific interactions (listening and understanding) by which we can lead individuals towards their own personal limits. Upon reaching this limit, the leader – staying in close relation with the participant – can begin to extend it, guiding the participant towards an open, unknown space in which the body can discover new sensations and possibilities. Communication is a crucial element of this process. The growth of the participant is dependent on the ability and the possibility to build, together with the leader, an agile and open dialogue based on mutual trust.

This principle, which is fundamental to all Jubilo's work, is applied to all kinds of exercises, from soft acrobatics to working with the voice, in partnerships, or as part of the creative process.

Exercises designed to extend participants' capacity and to support their development form an important part of Jubilo's work, especially when the company works with people with physical or mental disabilities. In such projects, the working principles described above are developed and articulated in many different ways. One example of our extensive work in this field is our collaboration with the Ostoja Association.

Ostoja Association – dialogue

Since 2015, Jubilo has been working in collaboration with the Wroclaw-based association, Ostoja (Refuge). The project was initiated with the aim of building a theatre group consisting of people with various physical and mental disabilities. A stable work group has since been established following several months of regular workshops. Jubilo artists began the process by introducing partnership elements and physical exercises, gradually examining the group's collective physicality and possibility. At the same time, the group were developing a physical vocabulary – a language – which could serve as a reference point for future participants, especially during performance, montage or

improvisation. As each of the participants presented different physical and intellectual capacities and challenges, the leaders had to focus extensively on reaching out to each individual without neglecting the group dynamics. During the sessions, a physical proposal or an exercise would always arrive before any verbal explanation, with the latter only added if necessary.

We recognised the importance of developing a highly personal dialogue with the participants. This dialogue made up of jokes, small games and personal elements became a platform that helped enrich the leaders' proposal and at the same time put participants at ease. It allowed us to establish a landscape of personal trust and freedom, creating a space where participants are free to propose and to take decisions without fear of judgement and to express themselves in the most open and spontaneous manner.

Conclusions

Jubilo works across a range of context and environments, of which the collaboration with the Ostoja Association is a specific example. Our approach is always adapted to the conditions and objectives of a particular group, with the aim of fully supporting the processes of both the individual and the group in question. Within this frame, communication is the hidden tool that allows us to establish group/individual dynamics and activate the work on a deeper level.

Over the years, our methodology has developed in order to enhance and fulfil the overriding aim of establishing a constructive dialogue and forging bonds in places and with people who, for different reasons, have been isolated, forgotten, and cast aside by society. With every project we hope to build a horizontal platform of expression where anyone, in any condition, has the right, power and strength to say: 'Here I am, this is me'. Our goal is to construct a place that is free of judgement in which to share our stories and our worlds. A space that is at once both imaginative and concrete, which overcomes boundaries, borders and differences. As only theatre can.

The pictures and object theatre
Communication support: a theatre-pedagogical approach to inclusion

Meike Kluge

Spoken language and communication

Spoken language and communication have a fundamental importance for human beings. They fulfill a primary need for information acquisition, exchange of behaviors, feelings and thoughts. The ability to speak/communicate enables the expression of an individual personality, social interaction, and the creation of individual and societal development processes. Communication takes place not only on the level of spoken language but also within the framework of human expressions – for example, through bodily gestures, emotions, breathing and voice, eyes expressions and eye movement.

'You cannot not communicate' (P.Watzlawik[1])

Depending on the severity of the disability and/or speech disorder, specific encounters like 'basal communication', 'AAC and Facilitated communication' as well as/or 'ETR' can be deployed.

Because theatre pedagogy is an entirely communicative discipline, involving multiple forms of expression, it is natural environment in which to carry out inclusive work. My personal academic interest lies in the role of objects, and the play or interaction with them, as an intermediary between the individual and exterior worlds. Even if there are initial difficulties with conceptual formation, perceptions can be intensified to stimulate interaction – for example, via glove puppetry. A colleague of mine told me about an autistic boy who was still in kindergarten. He had never demonstrated any direct interactive contact with either people or objects. After nine months of ritualized, steady glove puppetry, however, he suddenly started to refer to the figures and put them in motion. Through this imitation/mimesis, a whole other communicative space opened up for him. He accepted the figures as playmates and was thereby able to gain a better emotional and practical understanding of the world.

The exploratory play is a pillar of theatre pedagogy and the basic of every development. It takes time, space and patience to build trust and relationships. Objects can be used in such way that they do not overstress, and hence provide support for transition. For me personally, as a theatre pedagogue, it is important to recognise individual borders and to use objects supportively to allow communication and creative play to develop.

Body work in theatre pedagogy is a so-called 'basal communication'. Simplified exercises drawn from dance pedagogy and pantomime can be included. For Augmentative and Alternative Communication, I extend this reference to pictures, figures and objects, which use their own kind of language. To give instructions for such an activity, I have to think about accessible information (ETR – Easy-to-Read and Understand), so that communication process is supported by distinctness, clarity, simplicity and creative repetition.

---

1 Watzlawick P., Beavin J.H., Jackson D.D., *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, New York 1967, p. 51.

The language of theatre

Because theatre exists via aesthetic forms of expressions and their perception, it is – as play with body, space, voice-sound, time-rhythm, emotions, meanings and all senses – a language! It is communication with colours, forms, bodies, materials, movements and words. With its multifaceted stimulation of senses and meanings, theatre is the art of communicating with oneself, the other cast members, and the audience. The actors, with their instrument/body, via movement, voice and language, but also through their interaction with objects, recount a story – one that takes the viewer of a journey through human experience, encompassing worlds both familiar and foreign. A human being is a centre, or reference point, for theatre. Theatre opens an uncommon, dialogic space between the actor and the audience. Here, the actor (human) can reflect on the nature of their self and their environment. A comprehensive type of communication takes place within the theatre, where different approaches to the world and both portrayed and rendered fleetingly available. The theatre can also highlight and examine different perspectives. Via the substance, the discourse with the world, and the artistic process, a transfigured and individualised expression develops, which in turn is internalised and individualised by the viewer.[2]

Choral movement theatre in combination with materials

For many speaking and non-speaking people with special needs, expression via body language is a necessity. In this way, supported by music, they are able to move more freely and express themselves. Choral movement theatre allows for intense contact and encounters within the group. The basis for a differentiated theatre play can be obtained via dance, pedagogic, and pantomimic exercises drawn from the rhythmic and geometric spheres. Assisted by materials, such as fabric, sticks or paper, emotions or natural phenomena (dancing with cloth), fights (sticks) or architectonical atmospheric moving sets (paper) can be depicted. The participation of everybody in the group process, and the strengthening of self-esteem, is a fundamental aspect of this choral approach. Inhibition levels are much lower when materials are used. The fabric's heaviness translates to lightness; the stick gives support for corporeal insecurities; and paper offers a convenient veil to cover any shyness and fear. Thus, inhibiting factors linked to communication such as isolation, immobility or heaviness are dismantled and transformed. The fear of the unknown is able to be overcome within the group. Additionally, the use of voice and sound is possible, which contributes in turn, regardless of the spoken theatre/verbal language, to the atmospheric construction. In the dynamics of more intense movements and restraint, elements of tranquility, silence and sound can be integrated dramatically. Improvisations of a limited scope stimulate collective creativity and lead to expressive group scenes. Scenes jointly developed in this context can later on become part of a performance. The wealth of aesthetic experience conveyed by such a direct medium of expression has real significance for every dimension of identity development.

Shadow play with people

This is a field-tested theatre pedagogic approach in the field of special education and inclusion.[3] Story-telling and movement theater, as well as mask theatre (see below), can achieve a high expressive impact, especially in inclusive collaborations with speaking and non-speaking people. The audience is presented with a medium that allows individuals to speak on an equal footing. A strong form of

---

2 Taube G., *Kunst und Kreativität von Anfang an – Erfahrungen und Bedingungen*, [in:] Droste dan G. (ed.), *Theater von Anfang an! Bildung, Kunst und frühe Kindheit*, Bielefeld 2009, p. 39.
3 Kluge M., Anatevka. *Theaterpädagogischer Projektbericht*, Heidelberg 2011.

expression can be created with minimal gestures, or in the use of still images. This kind of project can be developed and performed in a short timeframe, depending on the topic or genre (e.g. fairy-tale, musical, etc.), with the performance based either on an existing play or created for the occasion. However, it is advisable to allow more time in curative education work. An increased timeframe enables substantial adaption via multiple repetitions, new habit patterns, and creative immersion in the theatrical process.

The W-questions: Who am I portraying with my character? Where am I, in which scene? When do I hold something in my hand, and what for? Where do I come from? Where am I heading to? Whom am I acting with and how? – these questions require certain cognitive abilities, which are challenging for some people with special needs. Therefore, it is helpful to practice as soon as possible on stage with unfamiliar items such as head coverings, props, and objects.

Mask theatre

There are a wide range of masks available (for example, half-, face-, large and whole masks). It is important that every actor creates their own mask[4]. The alternation of artistic and expressive creativity in the implementation of inclusive projects is an important support for communication. The artistic material can be worked on in, for instance, 'inclusive duos', providing direct opportunities for interaction. Expressive play is about body work, the joy of movement, team-building and experimentation. It is also about telling stories. As such, this work can 'satisfy the fundamental need for individual self-determined expression, the need for communication in a heterogenic group and the diversity of personal experiences in an artistic frame'.[5] The mask gives a shelter that provides an opportunity to openly display a new identity, and at the same time equalise the disparities between pupils from regular and special needs schools, respectively. The equality of individuals is highlighted by the mask, whose originality is the source of its own unique language. There is no wrong way to design masks, as they do not need to be realistic. Rather, it is the art of imperfection. Nonverbal scenes and encounters, even those that come about by accident, can be put together in a collage.

Object theatre

Sensual and physical elements are at the forefront of object theatre, facilitating immediate non-conceptual/ intellectual comprehension and production. Creative activities are kept simple, and elements are being picked up and repeated. For instance, a triangle can be painted, danced, torn apart, or folded up and used as a hat. Out of this, further situations may evolve, building visual compositions from associative play.

It is practical to let the set take shape as a story during the play using dance and pencils. 'The spectator is thus asked to produce a sensible connection beyond language. Meanings, maybe even stories emerge through his imagination, even from abstract forms of expression'.[6] We are now in the area of collages, which consist of associative fragments and new contextualisation. Moving pictures, installations or artistic figures can result from this. Improvisation and choreography are robust theater pedagogic methods that in frequent use. The object provides communication support to the person with special needs, with its apperceptive, concrete presence allowing for freer self-expression and the opportunity to discard obstructive movement patterns and habits. By referring to the object,

4   Hüttenhofer K., Schlünzen W., *Masken-Schatten-Projektionen*, Hamburg 2009, p. 40.
5   Braun E., [in:] *Theaterarbeit mit Menschen mit Behinderung*, BuT Reader 26. Bundestagung Theaterpädagogik, Hamburg, p. 103.
6   Lengers B., *Bildnerische Strategien im Theater und in der Theaterpädagogik heute*, [in:] Gesellschaft für Theaterpädagogik e.V (ed.), *Theaterpädagogik zwischen den Künsten*, Zeitschrift für Theaterpädagogik Korrespondenz, Heft 54, 25. Jahrgang, Uckerland 2009, p. 5.

they can also focus their attention on 'new territories'. Thus, action-orientated development and learning is possible in a playful way. Objects can be made and invented by participants. In our last project, we discovered the malleability of aluminum foil, and used it to make birds, moons, and other objects for the shadow play. Similarly, a wide range of forms can be constructed from handkerchiefs, fabrics and packing paper. The non-verbalism of things is always understood in object theatre as a communication offer

Conclusion

The intermediary quality of objects is a fruitful theater pedagogic approach for inclusive encounters. As opposed to the spoken theatre, a different, original form of communication and expression develops, which provides support in accepting the surrounding world. In doing so, the dominance of conceptual language in our society is set aside, making way for the appreciation of other qualities of people with disabilities. Objects and individuals can express themselves via a diverse, non-verbal language, and in so doing conquer their own communication space.

Meike Kluge

An idea for an exercise during an inclusive meeting

An object is perceptible via multiple senses. This concept can provide an initial approach to theatre pedagogic exercises by which participants can get closer to objects. In this case, the communication takes place via the object itself.

The first step – 'finding objects' – can take place at a lot of different situations: together in nature; at junk yards and flea markets; or objects can be brought from home. This stage establishes the early relations between the actors and the object. Motivation to continue comes from diversity and the joy of discovery.

The second step – 'choosing the objects for the play' – can, for example, be implemented by G. Molnar's[7] 'object lottery' (explained below) and a combination of other elements.

With this exercise, we arrive at step three – 'establishing a relationship with our objects and improvisations'.

'Object lottery'

Make a space for all collected objects by either drawing a square on the floor or making one out of rope. The square should be approximately three by three meters. All objects are placed inside the square, in no particular order. The amount of objects should be double the number of participants, plus one extra object.

All participants observe the square containing the objects. Participants choose one object and one color, but keep the choice to themselves. Next, they are asked individually and in order, if they see their selected object and remember the color. Help can be give here if necessary.

Next, one person is thrown a small ball. This person now plays a game with the group called 'I see something you don't see and it is...' The person with the ball names the color of his/her chosen object. All other participants try to guess which object it is. This object then gets eliminated from the circle. If another participant also chose this particular object, he/she has to (mentally) pick another object. The game continues until there are one more objects than players left in the square, which indicates that every participant has had a turn.

For the second round, participants turn around and close their eyes. With the help of the game supervisor, each participant blindly picks an object (alternatively, the person leading the game gives each player one object). The participants examine their object by touch and feel. All the objects are then put back into the square. One by one, the players tell the others something about their object – for example, using gestures and movements or sounds. The other participants guess again, and the correctly guessed objects are eliminated from the square. The last object in the square is the winner, and is placed on a pre-prepared winners' rostrum.

As an extension to this game, the rest of the objects can be returned to the square. The participants (mentally) choose one and draw it on a piece of paper. The drawings should be concealed during this process. Next, the players attempt to guess the drawn objects. The object that appears in most drawings awarded second prize and a position on the rostrum.

The winning objects are placed in the middle. Whoever has an idea can come to the middle. These ideas could be conversations between the objects and may include, for example, sounds in a fantasy language or words. The objects could also dance together or interact in other ways. The player in the middle shows the others his/her ideas. As an extension, two participants could play with the objects together.

This is where the creative process of telling a story via improvisation, repetition, slowing of actions and perceptive attitudes begins. The speed of thoughts is slows down, and an image script is able to develop. Participants are invited to proceed by moving at their own pace and in their won direction. For people with disabilities, one of the most important factors for the conquest and development an expressive voice is time. With patience and professional support, the necessary timeframe and stamina to initiative the artistic process can be implemented and explored[8].

---

7   Molnar G., *Objekttheater. Aufzeichnungen, Zitate, Übungen*, Berlin 2011, p. 36.

8   The full article is available in German: Kluge M., Verzauberung-Entzauberung. *Das Bilder- & Objekttheater. Ein kommunikationsunterstützender theaterpäda-gogischer Ansatz für die Inklusion von sprechenden & nicht sprechenden Menschen mit besonderem Förderbedarf !?*, Theaterpädagogische Akademie der Theaterwerkstatt Heidelberg, 2014. Available online at: http://www.theaterwerkstatt-heidelberg.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/AA_BF10_1__Kluge__M_Objekttheater.pdf (last checked on 16.02.2017).

Every body talks

DanceAbility – the art of a shared togetherness

Anne Chérel, Maja Hehlen and Tonja Rausch - www.danceability.de

> 'Cultures as such cannot converse with each other. Therefore they need to meet people and get into conversation with each other' (Roman Herzog)

DanceAbility, founded in 1987 by Alito Alessi Eugene from Oregon/USA, is a methodology about the research of movement and dance for everyone. It enables people in any composition to explore their own movement language together, regardless of their bodily or cognitive prerequisites, origin, age or sex; and to experience themselves in relation to each other and to the community. In this way, people with varying movement possibilities can discover through dance a shared basis of artistic expression.

An important axiom of Paul Watzlawick's theory of communication – 'One cannot not communicate' - may be familiar to all of us. It illustrates very well the DanceAbility method's central point. The language and physicality of each individual dancer find their significance in a setting which is free from judgments: right or wrong, good or bad – equally and valuably for ALL people, who meet here.

The vision is that through dance and movement and regardless of their different backgrounds, people experience and share the feeling of togetherness. Proficient dancers encounter people who perhaps cannot move independently or seemingly have no language. People will meet who due to the most diverse reasons have previously not been able to communicate with each other. Perhaps they do not speak the same language and/or cannot hear, they cannot make themselves verbally understood to each other, yes, perhaps they do not even understand the non-verbal signals that are being used.

> 'One of the useful elements of an encounter with a new idea is, what perspective does it provide? For those of us with no practical information about people with disabilities, the perspective from DanceAbility is radical. It causes us to re-examine the disabled people. This is no small matter, because without experience we are a mass of prejudices and igno-rance'. Steve Paxton, founder of Contact Improvisation[1]

Greeting. First exchange of information. Physical contact. Are we all here? The hustle and bustle in the group transforms eventually into a circle, a clear start of every DanceAbility context, be that a workshop, training or performance. Quiet comes, a still pivotal moment that enables one to read the surroundings, to catch a look, to observe and to give room for concentration. It is a first moment that establishes togetherness and enables content to be transmitted – everyone is included, also those who cannot or do not want to communicate verbally, or do it in a different way – be that with tools or by means of translation. This moment of stillness can only emerge out of itself and cannot be artificially created. A symbolism that exists like a guideline through all workshops, trainings and performances. The foundation of the shared togetherness is that each person is accepted exactly the way he or she is.

At the beginning while standing in a circle, each participant has an opportunity to introduce themselves and say something that they consider important for all the others to know, so that a

---

1   www.jointforcesdance.com/people.php

shared dance is pleasant for everybody. This may be related to ones' personal sensitivities but also to technical information such as means of locomotion, aids or communication. The room should be described in order that blind people can orient themselves. What should one note about my wheelchair? Can the guide dog be stroked? The deaf participant always needs an interpreter in her view, the wheelchair-user needs his assistant within reach and the professional dancer cannot burden his right shoulder, he is wearing a bandage on it…

A warm-up follows, a guided, essential next step that enables everyone to awaken their attention, to become aware of themselves, slowly coming into movement, sitting or lying. First for themselves, then steadily in contact with others, near or far via gaze and attention. Exploring the room, observing that which is interesting, getting in touch with oneself and the group. Verbal instruction and then a possible music recording are useful aids in this context. Watching and (self)-observing are the important keys to enabling the collection of necessary information, to orientate oneself to others and be inspired by them, to follow one's own needs without losing concentration on the group.

> '[…] Dancing also means for me communication without words. I step in contact with others onto a level in which I am not disadvantaged. I can make movements with my wheelchair that a walker cannot make without a wheelchair and vice versa. There is no scale that I have to measure myself against, because everyone dances in their own personal way that nobody can do any better as them self. It makes me sometimes a bit proud that I can also do something that perhaps amazes others […]' - Katharina J., DanceAbility Performer, Ensemble BewegGrund Trier.

The improvisational exercises that follow the warm-up are imparted equally to everyone and are clearly demonstrated in order that all can understand them. These exercises 'play' on the movement level with the basic themes such as: Action – Reaction, Leading and Following, Interpretation of a Movement, Numbering of Small Groups, Contact and Weight-Sharing. However, movements are not prescribed, rather they occur due to one's own requirement for movement, one's own decision. Whatever may mean a big/small or round/square movement is always individual and based upon one's own possibilities towards movement, they constantly remain relative to that which is possible for the individual in that particular moment. Contact and communication from in pairs and sub-groups to the whole group happens through the different guided exercises. A moment of movement arises in which all of those involved – in a duet, trio or quartet, communicate on equal terms. In doing so, every movement counts: be that leading or following with eyes, head or the left foot, or be that an answer to a movement with splits. Concentration, observation and the enjoyment of dancing are central. Some dancers may for the first time consciously make their own decisions, self-determine how they act, where otherwise decisions have been made about them. In this context of personal expression, limits are playfully fathomed out, wholly without pressure or valuation. The shared dance that occurs creates belonging for all of those participating.

> 'Dancing is having fun together with others, however it requires of me to overcome my own limits'- Katharina J.

In the sense of symmetrical communication, DanceAbility works with that which is available. It uses the large common denominator of a group. The DanceAbility method does not have a therapeutic claim. It is a sound, elaborated basis for artistic creation and demands in its symmetrical approach

the acceptance of everyone and the dissolution of deficient attitudes towards others, strangers and the unknown. The person does not adjust to the structure, rather the structure adjusts according to the person. The method invites everyone to participate and the co-designing of a shared whole. It is against exclusion and discrimination. Should a participant distance them self from the group, one supports one another in this decision by calmly maintaining their personal space, sitting close to them or inviting them personally to dance. DanceAbility is not just about dance, rather about attitude. Yet this dance remains in focus, while appreciating people there, where they are.

DanceAbility confronts the problem of isolation that we have created in our society. DanceAbility does not accept violence against oneself or others. DanceAbility works with that which is possible for everyone in a group in the given moment. DanceAbility continually conveys the same information to everyone. The principle is that all learning is mutual. All participants learn from one another and teach each other equally. Everyone has a voice. DanceAbility creates the possibility for everyone to speak as an equal.

> 'Dancing is something very personal to me. It brings my feelings outside without intention. When I dance, I completely forget my daily life […]' - Katharina J.

Ensemble BewegGrund Trier

Dance and Movement as a Timeless Language

✎ *Marta Grabowska*

Dance is a timeless language, understood by everyone, regardless of age, background and religion. Yet it is also very individual and unique. These two qualities combined offer the extraordinary chance to bring different people and worlds together in a shared space of communication, understanding, fun and creativity.

By taking an active part in dance, dance movement therapy or body work sessions, participants explore the possibilities of their own bodies as tools to express feelings, emotions and ideas through gestures, facial expressions and moves. This extraverbal language can be understood by everyone. Body language accounts for more than 50 percent of the information in interactions with other people. One body shows, expresses without words, the other can answer or react nonverbally. Take cuddling. Not only does it trigger oxytocin release in our bodies, but it also conveys emotional information about intimacy and relationships.

If the language of our bodies is clear, communication with others will be hampered by fewer disruptions, misconceptions and uncertainties. Nonverbal communication is not more limited or less satisfying than communicating with words. It is just a different information channel. It's good to be able to make use of all channels, as they entail a wide range of additional experiences.

Dance as a celebration of diversity

In my many years of practice as a movement therapist – dance therapist and teacher of contact improvisation (a form of contemporary dance) – I have often run workshops for multi-generational groups. This beautiful and satisfying job opens up a whole spectrum of possible communication activities. The resources, qualities and diverse potential of people of different ages working together become the source of mutual inspiration. Let me illustrate it with some examples.

- The spontaneity and abandon of dancing children quickly rubs off on other people, including seniors over 60. This adds plenty of joy and ease to being together, an integral part of which is communication.

- The expressivity and courage of young people inspires seniors to overcome their own limitations or inhibiting beliefs such as 'it is not appropriate at this age' or 'it is not possible at my age'.

- Young people notice the creativity of seniors and the fact that they have something interesting to say. This inspires a mutual interest and, consequently, communication.

What inclusive groups, i.e. multi-generational and intercultural groups that include people with disabilities, have in common is diversity. If handled well by the leader, this aspect fosters curiosity and a desire to learn and experience new things. This in turn increases openness to mutual communication and strengthens the courage to express oneself.

Through movement, dance and music, we can show our world to others and invite them in. When curiosity about other people and what they want to say is aroused, communication becomes easier and smoother.

This topic is explored in an exercise called Dance Your World, where a person invents a very short sequence of moves (which reflects their emotions, memories or a characteristic national dance or set of movements) set to music from their country or region, one they listened to in their youth, etc. The

118

other group members imitate their moves until everyone can perform them smoothly. The exercise can be concluded with a brief talk and reflection on how the group felt doing the sequence, what kind of sensations they felt in their bodies, and, if applicable, what helped them better understand the dancer? The person who presented and taught their dance to other participants can be asked about how they felt showing themselves to others, how they felt watching others 'entering their world' and dancing with them, how they communicated with her group, what helped them, what bothered?

The fear of diversity and the fear of the other often stem from ignorance, from misconceptions and having no chance to clarify them and, above all, from insufficient opportunities to experience true inclusion.

In my experience it is possible to change a perspective on reality through dance and working with the body so that evaluation and comparison give way to curiosity and openness. Every 'difference' is unique. This is palpably revealed in dance and spontaneous movement. One can stress it in various ways, for example by reminding participants to watch other people's moves with curiosity. They may find inspiration. They may like something and feel they want to include it in their dance or to experiment with a move taken from someone else. This sort of exploration and experiencing with the body can help create new spaces and opportunities at cognitive, intellectual and emotional levels. It may inspire a new idea about oneself or others, challenge an old belief ('I'm afraid of people' becomes 'I'll dance closer to these people') or reveal a deeply hidden emotion ('I'm happy around other people').

Dance as a learning space
Dancing by its nature encourages learning from others through imitation, give-and-take and inspiration. All these processes support communication. They appear very quickly when working with dance and movement, with no pressure involved and no distinction between the student and the master. Everyone is a master, both for themselves and for other people, influencing their development, facilitating it with presence, participation and attention.

The exercise I often use in this context is called Enchanted Mirror. Participants pair up with people of different ages/nationalities/groups in each pair. Person A dances to music while Person B is asked to mirror their moves. Importantly, at the beginning of the exercise, Person B symbolically draws a mirror in the air and enters it. Person A stand about 50 cm (2 ft) away from Person B. On cue, the dancer starts to move, facing the 'mirror'. It is important that Person A is aware that they are being imitated. Person B tries to imitate their partner's moves as closely as possible (but does not strive for perfect imitation). You can use two to four different songs for this exercise. At the end of it, Person B 'steps out of the mirror' and performs a dance dedicated to their partner including the moves they can remember. Then the partners switch roles. Finally, they share how they felt in both roles.

In groups including people with disabilities, the self-presentation should not centre around limitations (disability) but on the unique perspective of these people, e.g. the blind/visually impaired have enhanced perception of external physical stimuli. This uniqueness opens them to sensations to which people with no such limitations pay hardly any attention. Here are some exercises that can help participants enter a 'different world':

- dancing in silence, the dancer may move in synch with body sensations (rhythmic breathing, heartbeat, the feeling of blood coursing through their veins), etc.;

- dancing on the spot, with eyes closed, moving around on one's own, dancing with someone who makes sure the dancer is safe by protecting their space;

- spontaneous movement and dancing, inspired by sound vibrations of various instruments such as drums;

- movement and dancing to different types of natural sounds or everyday noises, such as gentle sounds of a stream, the wind or waves, street noise, the noise of glass breaking;

In movement activities the focus is on the body – the feeling, experiencing – rather than on analysis, thinking, judgment or comparison. The mind is utilised to support mindfulness, e.g. through visualisations, mental images, metaphors, stories or fairy tales. Initially, this involves the development of mindfulness towards one's body. At the same time it teaches mindfulness towards other people and the surrounding world, which helps break through the masks of illusion and distortion to see oneself, others and the environment. This opens up channels for real communication. All our experiences, including unconscious ones, are recorded in the body. Through connecting with the body, body awareness and being in the body, we open the door to access them.

One simple exercise is a dance of emotions performed to suitable music. The exercise can include an additional component in which participants make drawings of the emotions expressed in the dance. Participants split into pairs. One person dances and the other makes a drawing of their dance. The drawing should not be an exact reflection of the moves, but an intuitive improvisation.

Dance as play

Play is key to the process of dance movement therapy. During playtime, the differences in age, skin colour or 'ability' disappear. Play entails spontaneity and ease in expressing oneself, thus helping engage with others. Positive emotions and voluntary participation help build a bridge of trust, enable participants to let go of control and show themselves for what they are, without limitations, shame and insecurity.

Props are an important part of the process. They offer inspiration and impulse for change, support sensations and help communicate and express oneself. Props can also strengthen integration, cohesion and a sense of belonging. Some examples include:

- a pair of participants dancing with one scarf;

- group members swinging a person wrapped in a blanket;

- massaging the partner's back with a massage ball;

- a group dancing with scarves.

Dancing, movement and work with the body can transform the work space into a platform for joyful experimentation, happy self-discovery, relations with others, and communicating with the world no matter who you are. The possibilities are unlimited. Just invite your body to embark on this adventure. I certainly INVITE YOU. Enjoy!

Circus Pedagogy in Group Work:
Developing Communication, Openness and Collaboration

Mirosław Urban

Think of a circus. What words and images come to your mind? I bet you've thought of clowns, juggling, acrobats, animals or a big tent. And what is pedagogy? As one definition has it, it is a cluster of research fields concerned with upbringing/education and the essence, objectives, content, methods, means and forms of organisation of educational processes. It might seem there is little chance that the circus and pedagogy can co-exist, let alone create a new value. And yet if we dare to combine them in the right and wise way, we can craft one of the most effective methods for personal development and group work.

What is circus pedagogy?

Circus pedagogy uses methods and elements from the realm of the circus as a pedagogical means in working with children, young people or adults. It combines the development of artistic skills and circus physical activities with pedagogical content and goals. Notably, the chief objective is not the effect (circus skills such as juggling, monocycle riding, acrobatics, walking on stilts, poi spinning, flowerstick, diabolo, etc.), but the experience of what happens when we work to acquire these skills. The process encompasses: (positive or negative) beliefs about one's ability to develop new skills, the attitude to challenges, working with positive emotions and feelings (happiness, joy, satisfaction) and negative ones (irritation, frustration, anger), learning to view errors and failures as something natural to learning, finding solutions to emerging problems, the ability to set, consistently pursue and attain goals.

Circus pedagogy tools

The tools of circus pedagogy include circus props (we omit e.g. acrobatics now) such as scarves, balls, hoops, clubs, spinning plates, diabolos, flowersticks, poi, stilts, monocycles and all the exercises we do to learn how to use a prop. In my discussion of the methods of circus pedagogy, for the purposes of this paper, I will primarily focus on learning to juggle (with juggling scarves and balls).

Circus pedagogy as a form of group work

The methods of circus pedagogy can be used:

- as one of many tools in workshops on various subjects (such as integration, communication, team building, assuming group roles, including the role of leader, speaking on the group's forum);

- as the main tool of the meeting when juggling is studied throughout the day and is the primary means of transferring knowledge, developing new skills, building a new attitude or acquiring other behavioural patterns related to the current topic (e.g. stepping out of the comfort zone, motivation, openness to learning, feedback);

- at different points in the meeting (getting to know, teaching names, as an icebreaker or energiser, when introducing a topic, when concluding the meeting) – typically, exercises with a prompt are used rather than learning to juggle.

Supporting communication

Let's suppose you want to use the tools of circus pedagogy to facilitate getting to know one another and to strengthen communication among participants during the meeting. What can you do to achieve this? Some helpful exercises are described below.

Introducing oneself

'I am like …'

For this exercise you need a large number of balls of different sizes, weights, colours and textures. Each participant chooses one ball and then says their name, explaining their choice of the ball. Someone who has picked a green tennis ball may say, 'My name is Piotrek. I've chosen this ball, because it's green, which makes me think of being eco-friendly. I try to respect the world and I enjoy spending time outdoors close to nature,' or, 'This ball is soft, which means you can hug it. I like hugging.' In addition to verbal introduction, you can propose any other 'technique' of introducing oneself, e.g. by using movement, drawing, sculpture made of other participants, etc.

How much will I manage to tell you? *(scarves for each participant)*

Two people stand facing each other. Each holds one scarf in their hand. One person throws their scarf up and talks about themselves until the scarf falls and is caught by them or their partner. Then the second person does the same. Each pair has three to five rounds to say as much as possible about themselves. Scarves fall slowly, which makes the exercise also suitable for people with limited movement, but it needs to be adapted to the abilities of individual participants.

Remembering names

Be ready! *(juggling scarf)*

Participants stand in a circle. The leader stands in the middle, holding a scarf in his/ her hand. He/she throws it up saying the name of one person in the group, who is supposed to catch the scarf before it drops to the ground (the leader takes that person's place in the circle). When someone catches the scarf, he/she says the name of someone else in the group, throws the scarf up, and the person tries to catch it before the scarf falls to the ground. Repeat the exercise for the chosen number of rounds. If the group includes people with limited movement abilities, the method should be modified accordingly.

Energiser, team work

Group juggling *(5–10 balls)*

Participants stand in a circle. Each places their left (or right) hand on their head. The leader throws the ball to a randomly chosen person (preferably the one opposite them). The person catches the ball, removes their hand from their head (which means they have already been chosen) and throws the ball to

Mirosław Urban

another person (who repeats the same actions). For people who may have difficulty raising their hands, alternatives should be offered, such as hands folded behind the back, a coloured scarf tied to the wrist, etc. The game continues until the leader is the last person to catch the ball. It is important that each person gets the ball just once and that everyone remembers who they got the ball from and who they threw it to. Then another round starts, in which the ball is thrown in the same order, to the same persons. After some time (2–3 rounds), when the members of the group feel comfortable and remember the order, the leader adds one more ball (the order of throwing remains the same). In the next rounds, the leader adds new balls. You can throw 5 to 10 balls according to the same pattern. In other variants, you can add a ball that differs in colour, texture or size, which will be thrown in reverse order (backwards). The next possible steps include passing the ball to each person in the circle in one direction and/or passing another object (such as a cup of water) in the opposite direction. In a more demanding variant, participants can throw balls in the same order as before while moving around the available space, breaking the circle.

Collaboration

Juggling in pairs *(three scarves or balls for each pair)*
Participants stand side by side in pairs (one person's arm touching the other person's arm, hand behind the back, they hold their props in the other hand). Each pair's task is to learn to juggle with three scarves (or balls). To be successful, the partners must collaborate focusing on the timing and direction of their throws. One participant holds two props, the other one. The person with two objects starts juggling. Then the participants switch roles or change their partner to practise the skill with other people.

What's this for? *(scarves, balls or other prompts)*
Participants form groups of 3–4 people. Each group is given scarves, balls or other props. The participants are asked to note down 10 uses for the chosen props. For example, a scarf can be used as: a table cloth, a handkerchief, a headscarf, a winter scarf, handcuffs, a bracelet, a skirt, etc. If participants have difficulty writing or communicating, the group work can be facilitated by a language mediator or leader. Alternatively, the leader may prepare pictures for participants to choose from.

Then participants write down 10 more uses for the props. The exercise is repeated in rounds until a total of approximately 30–40 uses are collected.

Feedback

Let's talk about it *(scarves, balls)*
The group break up into pairs. They practise juggling balls or scarves in pairs so that one person watches their partner's practising, observing their actions. The observer then provides feedback to their partner. They can mention the positive aspects of their partner's juggling, point out their mistakes and difficulties, suggest how they can improve. Then partners switch roles.

Meeting/Workshop summary

What I take home. Participants sit in a circle. The leader throws the ball to a randomly chosen person and asks them to sum up the meeting. What did they like? What was important? What do they remember? Once the person's given their answers, they throw the ball to another person who

offers their summary of the meeting, and so on. At the end of the game, the ball returns to the leader who sums up the meeting.

Proposal for different groups

From my many years of experience as a practitioner, I know that the methods of circus pedagogy work well with a variety of topics and groups. I have used them in activities with pre-school-age children, primary, mid- and secondary school students, university students, third-age university students, school and university teachers, company employees, managers and directors. I have also used these methods in my work with socially excluded people who live in children's homes, are beneficiaries of socio-therapy centres, as well as people who do not work, persons with disabilities (e.g. in schools or integration classes) and residents of correctional facilities or prisons. The work took place indoors, outdoors, onboard trains and ships. Using the right exercises and tools, it has been always possible to achieve the goals, which included transferring new information, skills and support to participants.

Challenges

The term 'circus pedagogy' brings to mind good visual-motor co-ordination and breathtaking skills. But what about those who cannot throw, catch, and whose bodies refuse to obey? When working with them, we do not focus on learning to juggle, but on the simplest methods of getting familiar with various props, which reveal their magic through textures, colours, sounds, etc. We modify the exercises to engage all meeting participants. What's more, the participants with higher ability can share their new skills with others, e.g. during final shows where they can be part of duets or trios whose members perform tricks together. In Elementary School No. 32 in Lublin, Poland, a programme was run where teachers used circus pedagogy in working with an integration class. Several participants were spastic and practically couldn't learn how to spin circus plates, but the group members who could threw the plates onto sticks that the spastic people held in their hands. In another project a wheelchair user learned to balance on one wheel!

More than skills

The exercises and tools of circus pedagogy not only facilitate group work and learning diverse skills at meetings but also help build positive beliefs and attitudes related to learning new skills, non-judgmental support, invaluable communication and helpful feedback. Participants learn from mistakes, practise determination, and persistence in pursuit of goals. Such beliefs and attitudes make life far more interesting, effective and happy.

Bartek Żurawski

Turning defect into effect
Notes on the music-band *Na Górze*

Wojciech Retz

> 'I grew up with classical music, so rock music seems primitive to me. But thanks to this reduction the disabled members of Na Górze can navigate their way following clear rules. This simplification gives them creative freedom, allows natural expression. That's why the rock music played by this group is extremely rich.' - Prof PhDr Jana Pilátová, Academy of Performing Arts, Prague

Why do we play rock music, even punk rock, rather than relaxation music, which, as many instructors believe, is best, even designed, for people with different types of disabilities? We do it, because these people don't necessarily need to be calmed. Unless, of course, their instructor prefers peace and quiet to doing real work. I believe a much better solution is to find a form of expression that enables these people to tap into their emotions and potential tensions in a positive and creative way. Ideally, the expression should be linked with the interests of the people we want to work with.

2017 marks 23 years from the founding of *Na Górze*. If what we do together was imposed by me or done with the sole purpose of calming someone, we wouldn't have been able to put up with one another for so long. Playing music together gives us immense satisfaction. Disability is no longer an issue. The difference between the fully able and disabled band members becomes blurred. The people who come to our concerts often tell us that when we play they can see truth, honesty and naturalness in it, that we don't lie to ourselves or the audience. This enables us to establish a quick and enthusiastic connection between the performers on stage and the audience. The expressive power of our music helps. Rock music and punk offer a very intense and – as Jana Pilátová put it – primitive experience. That is why, perhaps, it reaches the emotions faster, more forcefully. The audience tend to dance at our concerts. But some people also admit to crying. To blend disability and a tremendous joie de vivre is something of a paradox. And yet it is this combination that creates a clear (!) and strong message coming from the stage. It is amazing that we manage to put across a message that is so clear and specific: it's possible to be positive about things despite the difficulties you face.

After arriving in a new city before a concert, setting up their instruments and doing a sound check with the technician, the band members, usually on their own initiative, approach the audience, greet people, try to talk to them. I like to watch this, especially the attempts made by our drummer, Robert. People tend to be a bit overwhelmed as they don't understand what Robert tries to say with his mix of jumbled sounds and gestures. When the show is about to begin, Robert enters the stage, sits behind his drums and starts playing with other musicians. His playing is great. He is precise. When a song has an accent agreed in rehearsals, he plays it, when the beat is meant to change, he changes it. He is very attentive. He is aware that it is his role to provide rhythmic support to the other musicians. If he plays badly, the whole composition will fall apart. But it doesn't, because Robert is a very good musician.

After an hour or so, when the show is over, there are spontaneous interactions with the audience. But this time it is the audience who approach us. The same people who couldn't understand Robert before the show say that when he started playing their eyes and ears opened. Their initial confusion,

even distance and skepticism have dissolved, because Robert's playing is bloody awesome *(please excuse me, Dear Readers, but this is rock'n'roll, so the audience express their emotions emphatically).*

In 1994, none of us would believe that Na Górze would be as good as they are now. We have never planned anything. At each point we were just happy that we could do something artistic together. We were aware, of

Marek Ciechowski

course, that from time to time someone made a mistake or we played out of synch. But each year, with consistent practice, we gained new musical skills. The enthusiasm that we've been able to spark in the audience has always been key. We love when people praise us. We always get back as much as we give to the audience. Every artist needs it. If they claim it isn't true, they're lying.

Rehearsals have always been harder than actual performances. How many times can you play the same song over and over again just to be as good as possible? At first, once we got an okay feel for a song, we took it to the stage and made a spontaneous decision whether we wanted to sing 2 or 3 verses (the lyrics of our songs are short, often made up of one repeated sentence, so we could easily make each song longer or shorter). We could do that, because we listened attentively to one another – we asked ourselves, 'Are we playing the song well or not'? Then, there was the audience. If we saw that their reaction was good, we made the songs longer (but we tried not to overdo it to avoid boring the audience). After some time, we felt a natural desire to develop and to fine-tune our songs, so we started to rehearse more often. Now we play about every week. Rehearsals, however, will never replace direct, live contact with people who come to an artistic meeting with us.

Within the band we communicate quite easily, in a traditional, verbal way. The intellectual disability of some of the musicians is not an issue. The only person who cannot express himself easily is Robert, the drummer. However, he understands everything we say. He makes up for his inability to articulate words properly with his self-developed skill of explaining what he means by using jumbled words and gestures. Fortunately, he is stubborn. When he sees that someone doesn't understand him, he tries to convey his meaning with gestures. It's like a never-ending game of charades. Robert is a pun master!

We've never claimed that *Na Górze* is a therapeutic group. In our work, therapy happens by itself, spontaneously, by the way. It results from the focus on creative work, an realisation of our shared passion. So instead of 'therapy' I prefer the word 'development'. Our development has been slow, which is probably a good thing. Luckily, no one ever required us to be perfect and to show it off – we grew at our own pace. Crucially, our development has not involved forcing anyone to do anything. It has been beautiful, because it has surprised even us.

And now for the conclusion 🙂

If you expect me to tell you 'how it's done', you're in for a disappointment. *Na Górze* brings together a bunch of unique personalities who, despite their defects (which include not only disabilities,

because the fully able band members have their share of defects as well), use their individual artistic abilities to engage in creative work together. In this way, they turn defect into effect. If you think of doing the exact same thing with a different group of people – just because they are people with disabilities – don't. It will be better to take them for a hike in the mountains or, better still, on a fishing trip! This will be less tiring for you and, most importantly, for them.

Everything we do should be adapted to people, not the other way round. If we want to communicate with someone – because they have contact difficulties, or, better, because they are interesting people – we should strive to find shared interests. In various fields. Then contact begins to open naturally as we pursue a shared passion – when you do something artistic together, the audience will applaud because you've done a good job, not because they pity you.

Create Your Own Image
Self-expression and external perception

Anja Pietsch, SocialVisions e.V.

Human beings have always used images to domesticate their surroundings and structure their world. Long before the advent of writing, people created drawings to immortailse events and experiences and thus communicated with others. In addition to merely representing reality, there were relatively early attempts to transpose both subjective observations and complex semantic contexts into diverse visual forms which are easy to decipher and understand. In light of all this, we can assume that image-making stems from the basic human need to absorb the world, to be aware of it, and at the same time to communicate with other people.

In Gesten. Versuch einer Phänomenologie [Gestures: Towards a Phenomenology][1], philosopher Vilém Flusser, describes the photographic gesture, which is the basis of photo-taking, as an act of cognition, both for the photographer and for the audience of their work. This concept is founded on the assumption that everything that we find familiar is also present in our imaginings and thinking. Flusser sees the photographic gesture as a complex system, a unity in which the photographer – through the camera lens – sees, records, interferes with and 'domesticates' the world while viewing themselves as part of it.

Despite its multi-layered and ambiguous nature, photography remains a very accessible medium for both photo subjects and photo viewers. Even if its understanding and perception always depends on the cultural background and individual biography, photography may be seen as a universal, if complex, language which is understood by everyone and which cuts through language barriers and overcomes cultural differences.

Nowadays, not only has photography become a ubiquitous and always available means of expression, but it is, more than ever, an important educational tool. The participatory photography method is gaining traction, particularly in the field of cultural education.

This method, whose practitioners include SocialVisions e.V., is based on approaches characteristic of both journalistic photography and international development efforts. Initiated by British organisation PhotoVoice, the method aims to support participants in their personal growth, strengthen them in entering into interactions with others and in actively engaging in decision-making. The photos created during the workshop give participants the opportunity to share their personal situation with the rest of the community. This form of communication enables a 'foreign body' to become a part of a community, its active member. Workshop participants document their own lives from their own perspective. They learn to see their personal experiences and problems in a social context. This methodology is strongly focused on the process and on generating solutions. Its main pillar is participation.

Photographs are evocative and can illuminate neglected topics or stories, and bring them back to the daylight. Photography itself is easy to learn, fun and accessible to people of all ages and cultures. The visual language of photography overcomes the barriers that can be posed by languages, cultures and literacy. At the same time, photographs offer many possibilities for interpretation. Therefore, they are open to different views and allow for multiple readings.

---

1   Flusser V., *Gesten. Versuch einer Phänomenologie*, Frankfurt/Main 1994.

> The characteristic of photography is that images are ambiguous, create space for multiple interpretations, and enable or even force us to confront different views, positions and perspectives.[2]

The recurring theme in conversations with participants of our workshops is that the aspect they find the most fascinating about photography is its openness; the fact that it can embrace a broad array of styles, angles and themes, and that all choices are legitimate, without defining what is 'good' or 'bad'. Jan Schmolling, deputy manager of the German Centre for Youth and Children's Films [Deutsches Kinder und Jugendfilmzentrum], describes photography as a purely formal means shaping consciousness with the potential to initiate a process of reflection on both the surroundings environment and the person themselves. The fact of making oneself into an object of observation supports self-expression, which in turn directly helps to build identity and contributes to personal development.

> By supporting self-expression and inviting others to perceive us [external perception – editor's note], photography encompasses the whole spectrum of communication potential in educational activities. When taking photos, we make an infinite number of decisions: how to frame the picture, what to capture, what to leave out. This infinite number of decision-making processes contributes to the development of our sense of self and our surroundings.[3]

Therefore, photography enables us to adopt an attitude towards society or our surroundings, to observe and perceive objects and thus to perceive, in a very personal way, and present a topic. This can be useful in working with vulnerable groups or sensitive topics, such as: displacement, loneliness, isolation, stigmatisation, discrimination or family issues – subjects that are often eschewed. In such cases, photography can serve as a communication tool that helps build bridges and see problems from a different perspective without having to address them directly or even speak any particular language.

In order for people to see themselves as members of society and to engage in its processes, they first need to accept this as part of their identity.

Social Visions

To become aware of one's own skills and ability to make changes, especially for members of stigmatised groups, is a challenge in itself. Those who are stigmatised and excluded often have an utterly negative perception of themselves. To participate in an active manner, people who are vulnerable to hurt must develop a positive self-image. Photography, through educational processes, can support the development

2   Schmolling J., *Fotografie in der Kulturellen Bildung*, [in:] Bockhorst H., Reinwand V.-I., Zacharias W., *Handbuch Kulturelle Bildung*, Munich 2012. Online version: www.kubionline.de/artikel/fotografie-kulturellen-bildung (last accessed on 5 February 2017).
3   Ibid.

of a positive identity, offering the opportunity to recognise how a person sees themselves, how they are seen by others, and how they want to be seen. Hence photography can become an important instrument to support the development of a positive self-image and hopeful prospects for the future.

The use of photography in education provides a whole range of impulses that can trigger self-development and offers the opportunity to express personal views and needs. In this way, the personal perspective can be confronted with the perspective of the general public. In this sense, taking photographs is always a thing we do for ourselves.

List of contributors
Project team (in alphabetical order):

Agnieszka Ćwieląg

Kulturanima

A psychology graduate, Agnieszka Ćwieląg also studied cinema studies at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (Czech Republic) and physical theatre at The London International School of Performing Arts (LISPA) in Berlin. From 2005-2008, she was the inclusive education program manager at the Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe. Since then, she has been involved with the Kreisau Initiative e.V. as freelanced trainer coordinating inclusive international youth projects and trainings for youth workers. She is co-author and editor of the methodical manual for inclusive youth work "Alle anders verschieden [trans.:"All equally different"] (BHP Publishing, 2013: http://bhpverlag.de/programm/2529/, available in German). Agnieszka collaborates with Studio Matejka - a physical theatre laboratory working under the auspices of the Grotowski Institute in Wroclaw. She is also a Detlef Kappert method Instructor of Dance Improvisation and Body Symbolism at the Institute of Dance and Movement Dynamics in Essen.

Paulina Fidala

Special School Complex in Oława – **www.zssolawa.szkolnastrona.pl**

A graduate of the Faculty of Special Education, Paulina Fidala has a master's degree in integrated primary school pedagogy from the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław. She works as a special education teacher in the field of education and rehabilitation of people with learning disabilities. Paulina has also undergone advanced training in augmentative and alternative communication (Makaton Level I-III, among others), as well as international inclusive dance and theatre pedagogy.

Dominik Mosiczuk

Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe – **www.krzyzowa.org.pl**

Dominik Mosiczuk is a freelance trainer, project coordinator and language mediator. From 2006 to 2009, he worked as a program manager for the Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe, and from 2009 to 2013 for the Kreisau-Initative in the field of inclusion. Since 2013, he has worked as a member of the German-Polish Youth Office and the Association of Creative Initiatives (Towarzystwo Inicjatyw Twórczych ę), a Polish NGO. Dominik has played a crucial role in the conceptual development and implementation of multiple inclusive projects for Kreisau/ Krzyżowa.

Elżbieta Kosek

Kreisau-Initiative e.V. – **www.kreisau.de**

Elżbieta Kosek has been project manager and responsible for the field of inclusion at the Kreisau-Initiative e.V. since 2013. She began her career as project coordinator at the Polish Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe in 2007. Since then, she has actively shaped numerous activities in inclusive non-formal education. In addition to inclusive international youth meetings, she regularly offers training sessions and workshops for youth workers and pedagogues focused on international inclusive educational approaches. Elżbieta is the author of various articles on the topic of international inclusive education, as well as the co-author of the methodical manual

for inclusive youth work "Alle anders verschieden" [trans.:"All equally different"] (German/Polish, BHP Publishing, 2013: http://bhpverlag.de/programm/2529/, available in German).

Christian Papadopoulos

Designbar Consulting – **www.designbar-consulting.com**

A sociology and political science graduate. Christian is a social participation consultant for people with disabilities and for inclusion, a disability activist, and a researcher in the field of disability studies. From 2005 to 2011, Christian worked with disabled young people on educational and professional mentoring projects. He is a disabled person himself.

Aristoula Papadopoulou

Designbar Consulting – **www.designbar-consulting.com**

A psychology graduate. Aristoula is a social participation consultant for people with disabilities and for inclusion, a peer counsellor, and a disability activist. She also counsels patients in coping with diseases at a rehabilitation clinic. Aristoula lives with a disability herself.

Magdalena Sankowska

Brücke I Most – Foundation – **www.bmst.eu**

Magdalena Sankowska is a program manager with a focus on intercultural learning and language animation. An expert in language mediation, she has a degree in German philology from the University of Wroclaw. Since 2013, she has led the Children and Youth World division of the Brücke/Most-Foundation in Dresden. Her work is focused on sustainable development, inclusion and political education.

Further contributors (in alphabetical order):

Anne Chérel

Diploma in Child Care and Education, DanceAbility Teacher

Anne Chérel completed a DanceAbility Teacher Training by Alito Alessi (Joint Forces Dance Company, DanceAbility International) during the 2010 ImpulsTanz festival 2010 in Vienna. Since 2002 she has worked on the development of the BewegGrund Trier Ensemble under the leadership of Maja Hehlen as a dancer, co-teacher, and member of the satellite-support team. Since 2010, Anne has gathered a range of national and international workshop experience. She has held the position of chair of DanceAbility e.V since 2013.

For further Information see: www.beweggrund.net / www.danceability.de

Hilal Demir

Hilal Demir is a political activist, trainer in non-violence education and sculptor. In 2002, she was elected to the War Resisters' International Council, and became an executive member in 2008. After moving to Spain, she continued her nonviolent activism on an international scale, as well as managing Turkey's first website on nonviolence. In 2014, she moved back to Turkey to found the country's first nonviolence center, and she currently works as a founding director at the Nonviolent Education and Research Center. Hilal continues to organise nonviolent training workshops at the Nonviolent Center for Turkish NGOs and activists, and has recently initiated the first nonviolent trainer network in Turkey. She also became part of Kurve Wustrow nonviolent trainers network, and has prepared a

Turkish-language handbook of nonviolent tools.

For further Information contact: www.siddetsizlikmerkezi.org / hilal@siddetsizlikmerkezi.org

Hjalmar Jorge Joffre-Eichhorn

Hjalmar Jorge Joffre-Eichhorn is a German-Bolivian theatre maker and activist who has been working with the Theatre of the Oppressed for the past 12 years. During this time, Hjalmar has carried out T.O. initiatives in several dozen countries on all five continents including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Myanmar, Northern Ireland, South Sudan, Timor Leste, Uganda, Ukraine, and Yemen. In 2013, he published ‚Wenn die Burka plötzlich fliegt", a German-language book about his experiences working with theatre in Afghanistan.

For further Information contat; communitybasedtheatre@posteo.de

Marta Grabowska

Marta Grabowska is a certified choreotherapist (dance therapist) and a member of the Polish Choreotherapy Association at the Polish Dance Theatre in Poznań. She is also a certified biodynamic breath and trauma release therapist (European Institute of Body Oriented Healing Arts), as well as a psychotherapist in system therapy convention (Wielkopolskie Towarzystwo Terapii Systemowej w Poznaniu). A contact improvisation teacher, Marta is co-founder and President of the Sensus Foundation Creative Development Center, where she co-creates and co-develops social and artistic projects for seniors.

Dr. Magdalena Grycman

Dr. Grycman has a PhD in psychology and MSc in neurologopedics. She is an expert in the field of augmentative and alternative communication, the founder and director of the Independent Public Center of Therapy and Rehabilitation for Children in Kwidzyn and she is also the senior advisor of the network of organisations supporting children with disabilities in alternative and augmentative communication methods (in the framework of an UNDP Umbrella project). A member of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication), she received funding from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in 2008 for her research work on communication strategies for non-speaking children and teenagers.

For further information see: http://bit.ly/2qKkCRp

Urszula Grzela

A graduate of the Krakow State Drama School in Krakow, Wrocław Department, Urszula Grzela is an actress and theatre practitioner whose focus is the exploration and absorption of theatre art through practical encounters. In Germany, as founder and leader of the theatre project “Moment mal, bitte!” (“One moment, please!”), she places theatre in a social context. In 2016, she received the Upper Bavaria medallion of merit. As actress (in a wheelchair) she is linked to the JLTB Theatre in Bavaria (Junges Landestheater Bayern).

For further information see: www.theater-moment-mal-bitte.de

Maja Hehlen

Maja Hehlen is a licenced DanceAbility Master Teacher, lic.-phil. psychologist and curative education teacher. In 1996, she participated in the first ever DanceAbility teacher workshop by Alito Alessi in Eugene, Oregon, and since then has offered several courses and workshops herself. Maja has organized

multiple DanceAbility projects in Germany and Switzerland. In 2000, she founded the BewegGrund Trier Ensemble. Based on the DanceAbility concept, the ensemble does professional level performance work.
For further Information see: www.beweggrund.net / www.danceability.de

László Roland Kiss

László Roland Kiss lives and works in Budapest, Hungary. He studied special education and also completed a second distance learning degree in psychology from Hagen University. Since 2006, he has worked in the field of political education, with a focus on support for volunteers, community debate, community service, service learning and social innovation. Since 2014, he has assisted different groups as a graphic recorder, as well as holding graphic visualization workshops.
For further Information contact: laszlo.roland.kiss@gmail.com

Meike Kluge

Born half a century ago in Munich, Meike Kluge studied eurhythmics at Alanus University, leading several tours in Germany, England and Switzerland. For the last 16 years, she has worked in the field of curative pedagogy as a movement therapist (HE/GB) specializing in theatre and dance. She graduated as a theatre pedagogue in 2014 in Heidelberg (TWHD), and has worked as a lecturer of curative pedagogic-intervention at Alanus University/ Campus Mannheim since 2015.
For further information see: http://www.theaterwerkstatt-heidelberg.de/uploadverzeichnisse/downloads/AA_BF10_1__Kluge__M_Objekttheater.pdf

Anja Pietsch

As one of the founders of SocialVisions, Anja Pietsch has hosted participative photo-workshops as a project leader and trainer since 2010. These workshops encourage participation in public life, art in public areas, intercultural exchange, and community building. Anja works as a photographer, journalist, and trainer in the Middle East, where she documents the refugee crisis for multiple media and humanitarian organizations.
For further information see: www.2016.socialvisions.net

Diego Pileggi

An Italian actor and director, Diego Pileggi obtained a master's degree in acting in 2009 from Manchester Metropolitan University in collaboration with Song of the Goat Theatre, following a degree in communication sciences from the Università degli Studi di Milano in 2007. Diego plays the clarinet and has a background in movement, dance theatre, and Kendo. Since 2011, Diego has worked as the co-founder and artistic leader of Jubilo, a theatrical project addressing groups marginalised by the society.
For further information see: www.jubiloproject.com

Tonja Rausch

Tonja Rausch is a licenced DanceAbility Teacher, pedagogue, and Gestalt therapist. After completing her training under Alito Alessi in 2016, she offers continuous courses and workshops in the DanceAbility method. Besides her other pedagogic activities, she works for DanceAbility Germany and for the BewegGrund Trier Ensemble, which is based on the DanceAbility approach.
For further information see: www.beweggrund.net / www.danceability.de

Wojciech Retz

Wojciech Retz is a pedagogue, cultural animator, and a therapist for children and adults with and without disabilities. Active in the fields of theatre, music, literature, animated movies and photography, he is the author of numerous projects and the coordinator of artistic-therapeutic activities for the "Na Górze" association. Wojciech is also the founder, lyricist and musician in a rock band of the same name, which has been together since 1994. In 2004 he was nominated for the Sztuka Młodym (Art for Youth), granted by the President of Poland, for creativity that benefits children and young people. For further information see: http://www.nagorze.org/

Nadine Rüstow

Since 2014, Nadine has been the coordinator in the AWO office for plain language and ETR in Berlin. She first learnt about this concept in 2008 during her internship at „Mensch zuerst - Netzwerk People First Deutschland e.V." - a self-advocacy organization in Kassel. Nadine studied rehabilitation pedagogy and occupational therapy, and worked for many years as part of an assisted living program for people with impairments.
For further information see: http://leichtesprache.awo.org/startseite

Judyta Smykowski

Judyta Smykowski studied online journalism at the University of Applied Sciences, Darmstadt, obtaining a master's degree in cultural journalism from the Akademie der Künste (Academy of Arts) in Berlin. She worked as an editor and consultant at Leidmedien.de – a project for the Berlin-based association, Berliner Sozialhelden e.V. that aims to sensitize journalists to stereotypes and prejudicial language relating to disabled people. Judyta is also a freelance journalist writing on the topics of inclusion, society and Poland, for "TAZ" – a well-known German newspaper.
For further information see: www.leidmedien.de

Mirosław Urban

Mirosław Urban is a psychologist and a trainer for self-development as well as a circus pedagogue, coach, juggler, and illusionist. He has written many books on the topics of personality development and his great passion: juggling. Mirosław Urban is the founder of Juggling Inspirations, a program that brings together psychological knowledge of personality development and the art of learning how to juggle. He has trained more than 3,000 employees of various companies and institutions in Poland and elsewhere in the art of juggling.
For further information see: www.pedagogikacyrku.edu.pl

Further literature

/All internet sources have been checked the last time: 19.02.2017/

Inclusion (general)

Ainscow M., Booth T., *Index for inclusion. Developing learning and participation in schools*, Bristol 2011

Ainscow M., Booth T., *Przewodnik po edukacji włączającej* (www.olimpiadyspecjalne.pl/sites/default/files/olimpiadyspecjalne/simple-page/attachments/2012edukacjawlaczajaca.pdf)

Diehl E., Degener T. (Hg.), *Handbuch Behindertenrechtskonvention. Teilhabe als Menschenrecht - Inklusion als gesellschaftliche Aufgabe*, Bonn 2015

Düber M., Rohrmann A., Windisch M. (Hg.), *Barrierefreie Partizipation. Entwicklungen, Herausforderungen und Lösungsansätze auf dem Weg zu einer neuen Kultur der Beteiligung*, Weinheim, Basel 2015

Konwencja o prawach osób niepełnosprawanych, [w:] Dziennik Ustaw RP, Warszawa 25.10.2012, poz. 1169

Leidmedien: www.leidenmedien.de

Mensch zuerst – Netzwerk People First Deutschland: www.peoplefirst.org/germany

People First: www.peoplefirst.org

Salto Youth Inclusion: www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/

Tomaševski K., *Human rights obligations: making education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable*, Right to Education Primers No 3, 2011 (www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/Tomasevski_Primer%203.pdf)

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilites (www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html)

Übereinkommen der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderungen vom 13. Dezember 2006. Zwischen Deutschland, Liechtenstein, Österreich und der Schweiz abgestimmte Übersetzung, [In:] BGBL Bundesgesetzblatt 2008 II, 1419-1457.

Youth work and youth encounters

Drücker A., Sinoplu A., Totter E., Reindlmeier K. (Hg.), *Diversitätsbewusste (internationale) Jugendarbeit. Eine Handreichung*, Köln 2014 (www2.transfer-ev.de/uploads/handreichnung_dive.pdf)

Hackert S., Teffel M., Wunderer D., *Jugendbegegnungen sind für alle da. Das „Kreisauer Konzept" zur Integration benachteiligter junger Menschen in den internationalen Jugendaustausch*, [In:] IJAB Fachstelle für internationale Jugendarbeit der BR Deutschland (Hg.), *Forum Jugendarbeit International 2008 – 2010*, Bonn 2010, S. 13-19

IJAB Fachstelle für internationale Jugendarbeit der BR Deutschland (Hg.), *Es ist normal, verschieden zu sein. Inklusion und Empowerment in der Internationalen Jugendarbeit-Arbeitshilfen für die Fachkräfte-Qualifizierung*, Bonn 2013

Kreisau-Initiative e.V. (Hg.), *Alle anders verschieden. Methoden zur Gestaltung inklusiver internationaler Jugendbegegnungen*, Berlin 2014 (www.bhpverlag.de/programm/2529)

Portmann R., *Die 50 besten Spiele zur Inklusion*, München 2013

Communication (general)

The Center for Nonviolent Communication: www.cnvc.org

Leu L., *Nonviolent Communication Companion Workbook: A Practical Guide for Individual, Group, or Classroom Study*, Encinitas 2003

Rosenberg M. B., *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, Encinitas 2003

Rzeźnicka-Kurpa J., *Komunikacja edukacja społeczeństwo O dyskursie dzieci z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*, Kraków 2007.

Stewart J., *Bridges Not Walls: A Book about Interpersonal Communication*, 11th edition, 2012

Stewart J., *Mosty zamiast murów. Podręcznik komunikacji interpersonalnej,* Warszawa 2007

Strangl W., *Kommunikation*, [in:] [werner stangl]s arbeitsblätter, Linz 2017 (http://arbeitsblaetter.stangl-taller.at/KOMMUNIKATION/)

Watzlawick P., Beavin J.H., Jackson D.D., *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, New York 1967

Communication-enhancing pedagogical approaches

Boal A., *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*

Boal A., *Gry dla aktorów i nieaktorów*

Boal A., *Theater der Unterdrückten. Übungen und Spiele für Schauspieler und Nicht-Schauspieler – Aktualisierte und erweiterte Ausgabe*, Frankfurt am Main 2013

Boal A., *Theatre of the Oppressed*

Boal A., *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy*

Clausen J., Hahn H., Runge M. (Hg.), *Das Kieztheater: Forum und Kommunikation für den Stadtteil*

England-based Theatre-of-the-Opressed-group working mainly around issues of disability: www.mind-the-gap.org.uk

International Theatre of the Oppressed: www.theatreoftheoppressed.org

Cicholska-Rochna M., *Warsztaty cyrkowe jako jedna z propozycji pedagogiki zabawy*, [w:] Kędzior-Niczyporuk E. (red.), *Pedagogika zabawy w edukacji kulturalnej*, Lublin 2006, str. 239-242

Gelb M. J., *More Balls Than Hands: Juggling Your Way to Success by Learning to Love Your Mistakes,* New York 2003.

DanceAbility e.V.: www.danceability.de

DanceAbility International: www.danceability.com

Franklin E. N., *Świadomość ciała. Wykorzystanie obrazów mentalnych w pedagogice ruchu,* Warszawa 2007

Halprin A., *Taniec jako sztuka uzdrawiania. Do zdrowia przez ruch i twórczą pracę z uczuciami*, Warszawa 2010

Kappert D., *Tańcząc z dziećmi*, Warszawa 2005

Kappert D., *Tanz mit Kindern*, Leipzig 2003

Kappert D., *Archetypen, Innere Bilder und Körpersymbolik*, Leipzig 1997

Pędzich Z., *Psychoterapia tańcem i ruchem*, Gdańsk 2014

Kluge M., *Verzauberung-Entzauberung. Das Bilder- & Objekttheater. Ein kommunikationsunterstützender theaterpädagogischer Ansatz für die Inklusion von sprechenden und nicht sprechenden Menschen mit besonderem Förderbedarf!?,* Heidelberg 2014 (www.theaterwerkstatt-heidelberg.de/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/AA_BF10_1__Kluge__M_Objekttheater.pdf)

Molnar G., *Objekttheater. Aufzeichnungen, Zitate, Übungen*, Berlin 2011

Wang C., Burris M. A., *Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment*, 1997 (http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/109019819702400309)

Easy to Read

Büro für Leichte Sprache – AWO Berlin: http://leichtesprache.awo.org/was-ist-leichte-sprache/

Inclusion Europe: www.easy-to-read.eu

Lebenshilfe für Menschen mit geistiger Behinderung Bremen e. V., *Leichte Sprache. Die Bilder*, Bremen 2013

PSOUU, *Informacja dla wszystkich. Europejskie standardy przygotowania tekstu łatwego do czytania I zrozumienia*, Warszawa 2012 (www.psoni.org.pl/nasze-publikacje)

Rüstow, N., *Leichte Sprache – Wie geht das? Methodische Ansätze für Texte bei erwachsenenpädagogischen Angeboten für Menschen mit Lernschwierigkeiten*, [In]: Erwachsenenbildung und Behinderung 22 (2011), Heft 2, S. 3-14.

Non-verbal communication

Leathers D. G., *Successful nonverbal communication: Principles and applications* (3rd ed.), Boston 1997

McKay M., Davis M., Fanning P., *Messages: The Communication Skills Book*, Oakland 2009

McKay M., Davis M., Fanning P., *Sztuka skutecznego porozumiewania się*, Gdańsk 2002

Molcho S., *Alles über Körpersprache. Sich selbst und andere besser verstehen*, 2002

Morreale S. P., Spitzberg B. H., Barge J. K., *Human Communication: Motivation, Knowledge, Skills*, Boston 2000

Rebel G., *Naturalna mowa ciała*, Wrocław 1998

Language animation

Bojanowska J., *Sprachanimation – Animacja Językowa*, Warszawa 2008

Bailly F., Offermann B., *Sprachanimation in deutsch-französischen Jugendbegegnungen* (www.dfjw.org/paedagogische-materialien)

Bund Deutscher PfanfinderInnen/Gwennili/Międzynarodowe Centrum Spotkań Młodzieży Klub Środowiskowy AZS (Hg.), *Sag was! Dis moi! Powiedz coś!*, Frankfurt, Quimper, Wrocław 2009 (www.dpjw.org/fileadmin/user_upload/publication/powiedz_cos_04_pop_02.pdf)

IJAB (Hg.), *Innovationsforum Jugend global: Sprachanimation – inklusiv gedacht*, Bonn 2015 (inkl. eines sehr umfangreichen Literaturverzeichnisses zum Thema Inklusion und Sprachanimation)
Projektfilm *Sprachanimation – inklusiv gedacht* (www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hIIzTYv0HM)

IJAB (ed.), *Language animation – the inclusive way*, Bonn 2015
(www.ijab.de/publikationen/detail/?tt_products[backPID]=705&tt_products[product]=178)

Memogra (DE-PL): www.dpjw.org/publikationen/sprache/pc/Publication/pa/show/publication/memogra

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Błeszyński J.J., *Alternatywne i wspomagające metody komunikacji*, Kraków 2008

Grycman, M., *Porozumiewanie się z dziećmi ze złożonymi zaburzeniami komunikacji*, Kwidzyn 2014

Tetzchner S., Martinsen H., *Einführung In Unterstützte Kommunikation*, Heidelberg 2000

Tetzchner S., Martinsen H., *Wprowadzenie do wspomagających i alternatywnych sposobów porozumiewania się*, Warszawa 2002

Visualisation

Agerbeck B., *The Graphic Facilitator's Guide*, 2012 (www.loosetooth.com/gfg)

Agerback B., *The Idea Sharpers. The Power of putting your thinking into your own hands*, 2016 (www.loosetooth.com/is/Idea_Shapers_Agerbeck_The_Objective_sample.pdf)

bikablo®, *Trainerwörterbuch der Bildsprache* (https://de.neuland.com/literatur/fachbuecher/)

Haussmann M., UZMO. *Denken mit dem Stift: visuell präsentieren, dokumentieren und erkunden*, München 2014

Pillars W., *Visual Note-Taking for Educators. A teacher's guide to student creativity*, New York 2016

This publication deals with the topic of language and communication
from the perspective of inclusive education.

The first part of the publication is a lexicon and methodical didactic handbook.
The authors examined the key aspects of international meetings, providing examples
and presenting a wealth of methods and guidelines for non-formal education
designed to support the communication process when working with inclusive
groups.

The second part describes a selection of innovative educational approaches
and best practices aimed to facilitate mutual contact and communication
within inclusive groups.

The publication 'Perspective: Inclusion' is primarily intended for professionals
working in the area of non-formal education and youth workers, as well as special
educators, teachers and all those interested in the role of language in shaping
social reality and promoting barrier-free communication in their practice.

'Perspective: Inclusion' is available in English, German and Polish.
Download it for free at:
www.kreisau.de/projekte/inklusion/publikation-perspektive-inklusion/

www.kreisau.de

Please think about the environment.
Print this publication only if you really need it. Earth says 'Thank you!'