



OUTPUT O2 – GUIDA

HOW TO ACHIEVE A THEATRICAL WORKSHOP FOCUSED ON HISTORIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

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Work group O2

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1. THE THEATRE WORKSHOP

1.1 General introduction

The description of a theatre workshop constantly brings with it problematic points. In fact, it is a question of providing a series of technical tools that, when appropriately placed in the right context, can lead to a correct development of an operational sequence... or is there more? Obviously, there is more and the risk is always that of wanting to be on the one hand too detailed to the point of slavishness, on the other too vague and therefore ineffective in the task of establishing a reference guide for an operator who wants get closer to this working mode.

One thing is certain: by its nature, the theatre laboratory cannot be completely represented in a mere modular structure - as a program can be, for example - since it is affected by innumerable variables, many of which are completely unpredictable. However, it is possible to establish the fundamental stages to perform a theatre workshop and describe a set of exercises rationally placed in the context of the work to be performed. The choice of the exercise to be carried out and the logical order of the exercises will obviously be left to the expertise of the operator who will make his choices based on the operating conditions, constraints and opportunities that the working group will make possible.

Having said this, our task, what we want to carry out in this specific chapter of the research, is to describe the set of tools necessary to run a laboratory capable of producing a theatrical event that is specifically designed to bring young people closer to history and cultural heritage – that is, something strongly connected to history. A theatrical event that is therefore not the ultimate goal of the work but a model to convey the research, energy and creative force of young people; to approach history and to know the cultural heritage in an active and participatory way and connecting it, through the spectacular restitution, with the community of people living and working in the territory. In fact, we are convinced that the direct and effective, constructive and even creative approach that theatrical practice imposes can be highly stimulating for the learning of a subject such as history which otherwise risks being perceived as a set of abstract notions placed on a line in time and thus become a material made up of mere notionism. We believe that seen in this way, history can come back to life and stir up passions. What we are trying to do is formalize a way to give young people the opportunity to fall in love with history.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE LABORATORY

The practice of the theatrical laboratory is quite developed in many artistic and educational contexts. In fact, since the seventies of the last century, thanks to the important experiments carried out by many masters and theatre pedagogists (among which it is necessary to remember at least the figure of Jerzy Grotowski - among the first to use the term “laboratory” in the theatrical field) this *modus operandi* has become the custom with which theatrical groups operate their research and their creations but also the way in which in general, in acting schools, the pedagogical work and learning of theatrical techniques is developed.

Therefore, as we said, there is a fairly consolidated way of proceeding in structuring a theatrical laboratory that takes into account some principles such as: the organization of time, the relationships between the participants (be they teachers or students) and the actions implemented.

The innovative specificity that characterizes this work lies in the choice to operate in this way for a specific didactic purpose, putting the technical apparatus with which one operates in the theatre at the service of the latter.

Of course, this specific finalization entailed the need to review some of those consolidated practices in order to adapt them to the intended purpose which is no longer in itself the acquisition of the theatrical technique but instead the work on history *through* the theatrical technique.

What changes is the point of view. In our approach the point of view is didactic, or historic-centered, and not theatre-centered. We start from the axiomatic assumption that theatre has to do with stories and that stories have to do with history.

2.1 Temporal articulation

In general, therefore, taking as a term of comparison the consolidated practice of the “standard” theatre laboratory, it can be considered that a laboratory that wants to effectively complete the aforementioned tasks can have a composition of at least 20 meetings with a total of 60 hours total work (3 hours per meeting). To this must be added a further preliminary module of another ten hours through which the analysis of the sources - oral, bibliographical, etc. - previously acquired, which will be the basis of all the work, will be carried out. The total of working hours in an optimal situation therefore rises to 70.

We could therefore further divide the purely theatrical structure into three parts of 20 hours each. The first 20 hours will be destined for: knowledge among the participants, the creation of a creatively fertile environment permeated with mutual trust and expressive freedom, the knowledge of one's physical and expressive limits, the exploration of the potential of one's own body and own psyche in relation to the other participants.

The second part, also of at least 20 hours and extremely important as regards our work, will instead consist in the exploration of the theme that will constitute the object of the final work. Here it will be a question of basing historical research and above all, of transforming this research into something that has theatrical validity, using, depending on the case, a methodology among those that will be proposed later. A third phase will instead consist in the preparation, in the definition and finally in the public restitution of what was previously elaborated.

This is probably the most traditional part of all the work but in our case, it becomes the way to lead the students to assimilate the cultural material elaborated in different directions, through work with themselves and their own body and through research on historical sources transformed into dramaturgy. Executing the laboratory skeleton in an extreme way, the proposed situation is the following;

Preliminary phase	10 hours	Source analysis	Research work in a group
First stage	20 hours	Precondition	Theatre / dramaturgy workshop
Second phase	20 hours	Processing	Theatre / dramaturgy workshop
Third phase	20 hours	Giving back	Stage set up / rehearsals / show

In reality, the schedule can take place with many variables depending on the contingent situations, thus diversifying from the situation outlined above which turns out to be rather simplistic. For example, instead of dividing the work into 30 meetings, one can think of carrying out a first and a third more intensive part, perhaps increasing the hours of the single session and therefore decreasing the total number of meetings for the same hours of work and instead expanding

the central part. All this can be defined on the basis of the given circumstances which can be very many (age of the participants, level and capacity of attention, organizational situations, etc...).

2.2 Number of participants

The theatre workshop is not a traditional learning environment. You do not sit and listen to lectures. Everything is done in constant movement, actively and with intense physical participation.

This, in particular, is a laboratory whose activities oscillate between reading, writing and action. Therefore, for the work to be fruitful, there is a need for the setting to be cared for with particular attention. Among the most significant variables in this sense is the one linked to the number of participants.

We will of course limit ourselves in giving indications since also in this case much will be due to the imposed circumstances; however, we can affirm that in order for the work to work very well, the minimum number of participants can be ten people while the maximum number is around fifteen people.

Fifteen - in our opinion - is the optimal number. Fifteen is a number that represents a fair balance with which inattention can be controlled (which also often derives from waiting one's turn, for example in reading or writing), which allows excessive tiredness to not arise (compared to exercises that, if there few people, they become more tiring), and which allows the creation of a good general listening climate in which each of the participants can feel followed and valued to the fullest.

Up to twenty people it remains manageable but obviously the criticalities increase. It is really not advisable to go beyond the number of twenty because the risk of not being able to keep the reactivity of the participants high enough as well as their involvement on the emotional level is very high.

2.3 The processing space

A further preliminary indication must be made regarding the workspace. Also in this case, the difference with an educational action conducted in a traditional way is quite evident.

The advice in this case is to look for a space that is as de-structured as possible, full of possibilities but not organized. The ideal would be to have an empty space available, with no furniture except some very neutral and purely functional countertops and then objects with no initial connection between

them (chairs, small practicable structures, sheets, ropes, but also elementary percussive musical instruments such as tambourines). Why this suggestion?

The reason is that space is not indifferent. There are strongly connoted spaces (think for example of a school classroom or a gym) in which everything is a bearer of meaning and is there to direct the attention and action of the people who are at them in a specific direction.

A training or school classroom directs all the participant's attention in a central perspective, focusing the attention from where the source of knowledge (the teacher or trainer) comes from. A gym, to quote a space that would seem more neutral in appearance, carries with it meanings and orientations through its gymnastic equipment.

In short, the problem of a very distinctive space lies in the fact that the operator is forced to work in it, for or against (often against). A neutral space in which objects have no initial correlation is instead a place that gradually structures itself through the creative organization of the work that takes place within it.

2.4 About the stage space

The last indication that we would like to give, and which is also a methodological suggestion, concerns the space to be chosen for the scenic rendering of the work carried out. In the end, every performance occurs on the stage. This is the moment for which we have worked for a long time, an important moment since it seals all the long hours of elaboration and effort that have been spent in the laboratory. From the pedagogical point of view, this moment is also fundamental to definitively fix the work done.

Until we go on stage, everything remains susceptible to modification and change. Only by staging the circle is it closed and what has been done is fixed in a definitive form. Only those with theatre experience know what the strength of this moment is in the learning process. Such a force that what one does remains engraved, marked forever inside the person.

After all, the word “teach” literally means “to impress signs”. With the stage rehearsal, what is impressed undergoes a process of fixation capable of making the things learned irremovable over time. The space generally assigned to the scenic realization is that of the theatre - a versatile space designed technically to facilitate the reception of the shows that only needs to be suitably adjusted according to the type of staging to be performed.

In this particular case, however, the choice of unconventional spaces could

be a way to mark a further difference and indicate the particular consistency of the work carried out. Actually, theatrical activity did not always take place in the theatre itself. In fact, in history and modern times, theatrical events are often performed at fairs, in churchyards, in public squares; in short, in meeting spaces of a community, but also in buildings born with a different function (for example factories or places of worship).

In our particular case, since it is a theatrical representation that derives from the elaboration of a historical research that is carried out on one's own territory, it may be possible to physically have the place where the historical event took place physically available now.

In this case, if the conditions allow it, it would be optimal to make the show right in that place. Alternatively, it is possible to resort to a physical space that with its characteristics recalls by analogy the real places where a historical event occurred.

Our suggestion is to think, where possible, for the setting of the public restitution to be directly in a physical space other than the theatrical one, one which recalls by analogy or is actually the one where the historical events took place.

This choice regarding the location of the staging also allows us to search for a particular form of connection between history, environments and the living and operating community in the territory.

A clarifying example in this sense can be found in the show “Vajont” by the Italian actor Marco Paolini, whose debut took place in an open space created right next to the Vajont dam, in the Belluno Dolomites. In that significant location, the actor brought back to life the story of the terrible tragedy that took place in those places by telling it to that community gathered there and with the natural scenography of the gigantic dam looming behind him.

No scenography reconstructed in a theatrical space could ever have been able to convey so intensely the contrasting sensations evoked by that symbolic place, nor the sense of oppression aroused by this gigantic object placed in front of the smallness of human beings and their destiny.

3. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

The theatre workshop is a set of systematized actions in which exercises are the prevailing practice. The choice of the exercises to be carried out is made by the operator (teacher, educator, professional, etc.) who conducts the laboratory and requires the knowledge of each of them and then an idea of how to lead that will result in a program with which to design each work session.

Our choice in proposing the sequence of exercises for the execution of the “hi-story telling” program was to provide the conductor with a catalog as reasoned as possible and a vast enough range of exercises to be used as needed. Some exercises have the same purpose but can be chosen in a modular way by the conductor, according to the operational needs they identify.

If, for example, the operator realizes that the group needs a higher level of concentration, he can choose, among the warm-up exercises, the one that is more oriented in that direction.

The next time, however, if he realizes that the group needs more energy, he can choose a different exercise that provides what he deems necessary. It will be the operator who seeks a logical concatenation between the exercises in the different phases of the path so as to bring him to the final result. For our part, in the last paragraph we will try to describe a “typical” laboratory so that the operator can have a practical example.

3.1 General outline of the execution of the lessons

As previously mentioned, the theatrical laboratory has a consolidated performance method. This, of course, does not mean that it is impossible to look for other ways that deviate from what has already been experienced - on the contrary - it only means that if an act of research is possible it can be done but starting from what is now consolidated, perhaps denying it, but certainly not ignoring it.

The theatrical laboratory puts the whole person at the centre of the action and the training. Far from being just a mechanical act, it is training of the actor as a person and takes place through a creative process that involves the person integrally.

Having made this premise, the exercises that will be described later will be included in a general scheme which, as a matter of practice, should be replicated at each meeting / lesson. The scheme is as follows:

Phase	Content	Motivation
Welcome	Relaxation, meeting and greeting	Initial rite that allows you to prepare yourself for what will happen in the laboratory
Lesson of the day	Theoretical or practical presentation of the topic of work	Body of work in which we act creatively
Closure	Small representation to summarize the subject matter	Final rite with verbalization of the experience and awareness

Each meeting / lesson must follow this simple procedure. Naturally, each block can be filled with the exercises that will be described later according to the needs that the educator will identify as the needs of the group.

3.2 Preliminary phase

In the preliminary phase of the laboratory, the group decides together, under the supervision and guidance of the operator, the subject that will be the basis of the historical research work and subsequently of the entire laboratory.

In this phase, therefore, there is the analysis of the sources – the selection of the textual or iconographic material. Above all, there will be the elaboration of the conceptual maps that will be constant reference for the whole subsequent development of the work.

3.3 Preconditioning

The section that we call “preconditioning” contains the part of the path most linked to the technical elements of the theatre. The precondition for carrying out a coherent theatrical journey is that the participants discover their expressive potential and learn the technical fundamentals that will help them hone their skills on stage. In this section and in the following sections, a series of exercises will be listed that the operator will choose to apply from time to time according to the needs that they perceive as indispensable at that precise

moment.

During the execution phase there will obviously also be moments dedicated to dramaturgical development but in this first period these moments will be secondary to the acquisition of pure theatrical technique. The exercises listed here will be described in a very precise way in the didactic cards.

3.4 Processing

Perhaps the most important part of the Hi-Story Telling workshop is concentrated in this section. The theatrical exercises are focused on the development of the dramaturgy according to the roles assigned or to be assigned and on the installation of the fundamental scenic elements.

The laboratory is practical and takes advantage of what has been learned in the previous phase more destined to the technical fundamentals to develop the product and shape what will be the future show.

3.5 Return

This is the final section of the workshop aimed at arriving at the scenic act by giving back to the public what was elaborated during the course of the laboratory.

4. THE LABORATORY AND ITS PHASES (EXERCISE BOOK)

In this section we will describe the phases of the Hi-Story Telling workshop. The exercises related to the individual phases, collected by type, are contained in cards that must be appropriately selected by the educators on the basis of what they will identify as the group's need or needs relating to the activity carried out at that time of the workshop.

They will be appropriately placed in the general scheme of work by the operator. Hi-Storytelling is a path of theatrical writing but also of training in the theatre and therefore the phases and exercises configure a complete theatrical path that emphasizes the creative act of creating and representing a text.

The operator will be able to use the proposed exercises whenever they are ready to tackle the laboratory by giving greater weight to the literary aspect, therefore to textual writing, or to the body aspect that proceeds from improvisation on the theme up to the condensation of the text on paper.

4.1 Welcome phase

It is a phase that must always be present in every moment of the laboratory. The proposed exercises are in fact necessary to prepare the student to learn.

The welcome phase consists of a series of physical relaxation and psychic concentration exercises based primarily on breathing. In this phase, in addition to body relaxation, it is also advisable to proceed with a vocal warm-up and work on the harmony of the group.

Both are preparatory to the success of the subsequent phases. In the first part of the Hi Storytelling workshop, the welcome phase can be more extended in terms of time. In the following workshops and phases, even though it is always present, it can be resized at will, following the operator's intuitions, to give more space to the creative exercises and the more constructive phases of the laboratory.

Breathing

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Relax the body and prepare the participant's psychophysical state to learn

<i>Materials</i>	A yoga mat for each participant (in case the surface is not hot)
<i>Description</i>	Standing, circle time. Participants close their eyes and breathe slowly. The leader guides them by speaking very slowly and focusing attention on the diaphragm. During the exercise, breathing should be slow and deep, closed eyes help to focus only on the breath. You can use background music or perform the exercise in complete silence.
<i>Duration</i>	5 minutes

Breathing 2

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Relax the body and prepare the psychophysical state of the participant to learn - properly feel the diaphragm and its action
<i>Materials</i>	A yoga mat for each participant (in case the surface is not hot)
<i>Description</i>	Standing, circle time. Participants are eyes closed and breathe slowly. The leader guides them by speaking very slowly and focusing attention on the diaphragm. A deep inhalation is performed followed by a stop of the diaphragm which rests downwards. You are in apnea for a few moments and then suddenly relax the diaphragm, suddenly removing all the air. The sequence is repeated several times.
<i>Duration</i>	5 minutes

Breathing 3

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Relax the body and prepare the psychophysical state of the participant to learn - properly feel the diaphragm and its action, control the dynamics of the diaphragm
<i>Materials</i>	A yoga mat for each participant (in case the surface is not hot)
<i>Description</i>	Standing, circle time. Participants have their eyes closed and breathe slowly. The leader guides them by speaking very slowly and focusing attention on the diaphragm. A deep inhalation is performed followed by a stop of the diaphragm which rests downwards. You stay in apnea for a few moments and then relax the diaphragm but, unlike the previous exercise, by relaxing slowly in order to produce a long and constant breath that must be

	audible. The sequence is repeated several times.
<i>Duration</i>	5 minutes

Breathing / Phonation

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Properly hear the diaphragm and its action, control the dynamics of the diaphragm, make sounds
<i>Materials</i>	A yoga mat for each participant (in case the surface is not hot)
<i>Description</i>	Standing, circle time. Participants have their eyes closed and breathe slowly. A deep inhalation is performed followed by a stop of the diaphragm which rests downwards. Using the same dynamics of the previous exercise (slow relaxation and controlled air release) the vowel “a” is vocalized. During this vocalization, attention must be paid to the correct positioning of the palate which must be high in order to produce an amplified sound without forcing the throat. The sequence is repeated several times.
<i>Duration</i>	5 minutes

Breathing / Phonation 2

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Properly hear the diaphragm and its action, control the dynamics of the diaphragm, make sounds
<i>Materials</i>	A yoga mat for each participant (in case the surface is not hot)
<i>Description</i>	Standing, circle time. Participants have eyes closed and breathe slowly. A deep inhalation is performed followed by a stop of the diaphragm which rests downwards. Using the same dynamics of the previous exercise (slow relaxation and controlled air release), the vowels “a”, “e”, “i”, “o”, “u” are vocalized in sequence. During this vocalization, attention must be paid to the correct positioning of the palate which must be high in order to produce an amplified sound without forcing the throat. The sequence is repeated several times.
<i>Duration</i>	5 minutes

Relaxation

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
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<i>Purpose</i>	Relax the body and prepare the participant's psychophysical state to learn
<i>Materials</i>	A yoga mat for each participant (in case the surface is not hot)
<i>Description</i>	The participants lie down on the ground on their stomachs, their arms alongside the body, occupying the operating space in a homogeneous way. The leader guides the relaxation by speaking very slowly and focusing the attention and perceptions of the participants first on the feet and their heaviness and adhesion to the ground, then on the legs, pelvis, trunk and arms, up to the hands, then on the head. During the exercise, breathing should be slow and deep, eyes closed. You can use background music or perform the exercise in complete silence.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes

Standing relaxation

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Relax the body and prepare the participant's psychophysical state to learn
<i>Description</i>	The participants stand in a circle. The legs are slightly apart and the feet parallel. The eyes are closed. The arms are relaxed along the body. The leader guides the relaxation by speaking very slowly and focusing the attention and perceptions of the participants first on the shoulders and arms, then inviting the participants to make small swings with the body forwards and backwards and to the right and left. During the exercise, breathing should be slow and deep, eyes closed. It is possible to use ambient music or perform the exercise in complete silence inviting participants to focus on the audible sounds coming from the room and from the surrounding external space.
<i>Duration</i>	5 to 7 minutes

Clap hands

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	To increase the energy and cohesion of the group
<i>Description</i>	The participants are arranged in a circle. The handler starts the game by sending a signal consisting of a clap with the

	hands (striking a blow with the right hand on the left) to another participant. The signal is repeated by the participant in the direction of the conductor and immediately afterwards sent to another participant, who repeats it and then sends it back to another and so on.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes
<i>Variants</i>	The exercise can be varied by adding to the sending of the clap with the hand the simultaneous sending of a vocal sound (no noises such as clicking tongues, whistles, etc.) the dynamics in general does not change.

The names

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Get to know the members of the group, familiarize yourself with the names
<i>Description</i>	The participants are arranged in a circle. The operator starts by throwing a ball (or other throwable object) to a participant. Upon receiving the ball, he pronounces his name aloud, once done he throws the ball to another participant who repeats the same thing. So on until everyone has had a turn
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes
<i>Variants</i>	An important variant will be described in the next tab

Names and qualities

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	Familiarize yourself with the members of the group, familiarize yourself with the names
<i>Pre-requisites</i>	Knowledge of the names of the participants
<i>Description</i>	The participants are arranged in a circle. The operator starts by throwing a ball (or other throwable object) to a participant. This time it is whoever throws the ball to say the name of the recipient by adding a positive quality of that person. The recipient, once he receives the ball, does the same thing with another participant and so on until everyone has had a turn.
<i>Duration</i>	From 5 to maximum 10 minutes

Gesture in the centre

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	To accentuate the group's energy and ability to listen
<i>Description</i>	The participants are arranged in a circle. Everyone is silent and must have maximum concentration. One of the participants, at random, inhales, then throws his hand with energy towards the centre of the circle, accompanied by a powerful sound of breath, pronouncing a: "Ha!". At that very moment all the others must be able to reproduce that sound and that movement at the same time. We proceed until all the participants have intervened with the gesture and the sound.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	It can be verified that someone in the group makes preparatory gestures purposely by "phoning" his intention to leave with the gesture and thus helping the group in some way, or, on the contrary, someone else performs the gesture and voice suddenly trying to catch the rest of the group unprepared. The conductor must be careful to bring everything back to a mutual listening plane.

Gesture in the centre

<i>Keywords</i>	Welcome phase
<i>Purpose</i>	To accentuate the group's concentration and listening skills, the exercise can also be useful for knowing the numbering in the host language.
<i>Description</i>	The participants are arranged in a circle. Everyone is silent and must have maximum concentration. One of the participants, at random, starts the game by saying the number one, then, again at random, another participant will pronounce the number two, then another one the three and so on until the number thirty is reached. However, if two participants pronounce a number at the same time, the game stops and starts again from number one.
<i>Duration</i>	From 5 to maximum 10 minutes.
<i>Variants</i>	First variant (for very large groups) We start but, instead of arriving at number 30, each participant, once the number has been said, sits down until the participants run out. If two leave together, we all get up and start over from one.

<i>Variant 2</i>	(When the group has reached a condition of high concentration) same situation as the first variant but instead of the number you say your name.
<i>Observations</i>	Usually we witness the search by the members of the group of strategies to try to facilitate the game, for example by counting very quickly or “phoning” the intention to say the number and so on. The conductor must be careful to bring everything back to a mutual listening plane.

4.2 “Lesson” Phase, Preconditioning Section – Awareness of the body and voice

This stage of work is used to properly train the student in theatrical work. A preconditioning, in fact, for a good work on stage is the awareness on the part of the actor of his own potential and of his physical and vocal limits.

The exercises proposed in this phase will therefore serve to explore, know and control the body on stage. They will therefore be centered both on the exploration of the voice and phonation and on the control of the body, on the relationship of the body with space and on the use of the imagination.

The resonators of the voice

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	Discovery of the resonant cavities of the voice
<i>Description</i>	In an upright position, begin a slow swing of the body, imagining a rope going through the body and starting from the ceiling. Begin to vocalize with the vowel “o”, first looking for the central resonator and then gradually moving the sound on the nose resonator and then on the chest resonator (always passing through the central resonator). Run slowly and at medium volume.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes

Secret phrases

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	To explore the parts of the face involved in phonation
<i>Description</i>	The host gives each one a short secret phrase. Some members of the group will have entrusted the same secret phrases (for

	example the phrase “A” will be assigned to two components at random, the phrase “B” to other two members, the phrase “C” to other two members, etc ...). At the start everyone begins to whisper their own sentences walking in space. Secret phrases must be said intimately enough for you to have difficulty understanding them. The task of the participants is to identify the partner with the same secret phrase. Once identified, you are placed in pairs. One of the two companions pronounces the sentence moving only his lips and the other whispers it following the lip movements of his partner. Then we exchange.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes

The look

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	Discovery of the body, space and the other.
<i>Description</i>	<p>You sit freely in the space (the conduction is external and verbal). The exercise begins with careful and silent observation of your body, as if it were the first time you see it. Look everywhere moving, so that you can see as far behind your back as possible.</p> <p>Slowly (at the command of the handler) the upright position is gained. One begins to understand the surrounding space in the gaze. One can begin to move slowly in this space by exploring it carefully. One notices the presence of others. The encounter with others takes place through the gaze. We choose with our eyes and we explore the body of the other from afar and with great attention.</p> <p>As if you were caressing it with your eyes. We let ourselves be caressed by the other's gaze. We approach slowly and we begin a movement that becomes more and more synchronous. The movement becomes a kind of dance for two. The space is filled with dancing couples.</p>
<i>Duration</i>	About 20 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	Explain that seeing is not looking.

The copy of the statue

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
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<i>Purpose</i>	Observation and control of the body
<i>Description</i>	The working group is seated. Only one participant begins the work who, arriving in the centre of the room, will assume any position as if they were a statue. Subsequently a partner will approach and take the same position as him while the first will return to his seat. One by one everyone will copy the statue. At the end, the starting position will be compared with that of the last participant to highlight the differences. The exercise can be repeated several times.
<i>Duration</i>	At least 25 min

Sensitive imagination

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	Use of creativity, exploration
<i>Description</i>	In a circle, possibly with background music, the conductor first goes to the centre and pretends to be holding a ball. Play with the ball as it gradually transforms and becomes shapeless material and then is passed on to another member of the group. In the hands of the different people, the ball transforms and takes on different consistencies, solid, liquid, gaseous, cold, hot and so on. Everyone can imagine a different shape and modify it during the exercise and then pass it on to the partner.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	The exercise should not be explained but only acted upon and will proceed by intuition and mime.

Feel the physical bubble

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	To explore the relationship with the other, awareness of one's own and others' space.
<i>Description</i>	In pairs. Each pair is positioned about ten paces from each other. At the signal of the handler the couple begins to slowly approach each other. You will have to stop when you have the sensation of invading your partner's "bubble". The vital and intimate space that surrounds us.
<i>Duration</i>	At the conductor's discretion
<i>Variations 1</i>	Like the basic exercise but only one of the two companions

	moves towards the other who remains stationary looking him in the eye. We stop to perceive the discomfort of the partner.
<i>Variations 2</i>	During free movement in space, care is taken not to invade the personal space of others by listening to one's own space.
<i>Variations 3</i>	In two front rows. At the start, one row begins to run towards the other that is stationary. You get stuck only for not making your partner's bubble "burst".
<i>Observations</i>	Initially there may be a feeling of discomfort on the part of some participants. The operator will have to help understand the situation by grasping the physical and energetic elements that are communicated during the action.

The raft

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	Awareness of space and the action through it.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise should be done in silence and with a good degree of concentration. It consists of walking in space, occupying it evenly without colliding with others. While walking your hands and arms are stretched out at your sides, relaxed. The eyes look straight ahead and not at the ground. The exercise is commonly called "raft" to make it clear with a clear image that people must occupy the space in its entirety. In fact, if everyone is gathered in a corner in a raft, it overturns. There are many variations of this important exercise, some of which will be described in the following sheets.
<i>Duration</i>	From a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	Usually, especially in the first work sessions, we witness the fact that the participants begin to walk in a circle following each other. The operator will have to break this habit and force the participants to have greater autonomy and awareness of space.

The raft, suddenly

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body and voice awareness
<i>Purpose</i>	Awareness of space and the action through it.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is a variant of the previous raft exercise. It must be done in silence and with a good degree of concentration. The whole group of participants is gathered on one side of

	the room. At a signal from the conductor all must, in a maximum of ten seconds, distribute themselves evenly in the room, stopping at one point. Subsequently, at a new signal from the conductor, the group will begin to walk in the manner of the raft.
<i>Duration</i>	About 5÷7 minutes

4.3 “Lesson” Phase, Preconditioning Section – Body movement on stage

In this phase of the work the attention is predisposed towards the preparation of the body on stage. This is an important phase as we begin to work by setting the body and voice in the most effective ways for an optimal performance on the stage.

What is explored in this phase is the quality of the movement, the different ways in which this can lead to expressing oneself on the stage.

Invisible threads

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body movement on stage
<i>Purpose</i>	Awareness of space and action through it, eye contact.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is a variant of the raft. It should be done in silence and with a good degree of concentration. It starts like the traditional raft but with the condition that the first person who makes eye contact must no longer be lost from sight. The gaze should always be on them while walking. The space is thus filled with invisible threads that connect the whole group of participants.
<i>Duration</i>	About 5÷7 minutes

Walking “as if”

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body movement on stage
<i>Purpose</i>	Awareness of space and the action through it.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is a variant of the raft. It should be done in silence and with a good degree of concentration. It starts like the traditional raft but during the walk the conductor will stimulate the participants' imagination and their

	physical responses by modifying the physical characteristics of the space and making them walk, for example, as if they were in the water, on the moon, on a glowing surface, uphill or downhill, and so on.
<i>Duration</i>	About 7÷10 minutes

Greetings

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - body movement on stage
<i>Purpose</i>	Awareness of space and the action through it.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is a variant of the raft. It starts like the traditional raft but during the walk the approaching participants stop for a moment and greet each other.
<i>Duration</i>	About 10÷15 minutes
<i>Variants</i>	In place of a regular greeting, at a later time the participants can make themselves requests at will, for example asking where the railway station is, or if it is hot or cold, or how much something costs.

4.4 “Lesson” Phase, Preconditioning Section – Expressing emotions

After preparing the body, the laboratory shifts its attention to the emotional world. To tell the truth even the exercises in the previous phases were not entirely without impact on emotion but in this phase the exercises are specifically designed to approach the emotional world. Again, the watchword for the actor is control.

The mirror

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - express emotions
<i>Purpose</i>	Empathy and deep relationship with the other
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is to be performed in pairs. The participants are arranged facing each other. They look into each other's eyes. In this position, in silence, one of the two, at random, begins to make small movements with their arms first and then with the rest of the body. The partner follows them by copying the movements as if it were a mirror. As the exercise continues, the movements can become more complicated.

<i>Duration</i>	About 10÷15 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	The exercise must be approached slowly. It is noted that some couples tend to do it right away with great speed as if to show that they are capable of doing it. The conductor must be attentive and clarify that it is not a competition but to be as faithful as possible and participate in the movement of the other.

The Mental Image

<i>Keywords</i>	Preconditioning exercise - express emotions
<i>Purpose</i>	To develop the capacity for mentalization. Get used to describing details.
<i>Description</i>	The conductor invites the participants to think of a familiar place (it does not matter if it is open or closed, it could be for example your home or your parents' house or a park or a place where you have been). The task is to take a mental picture of this place. The conductor invites the participants to imagine entering this place and performing a limited series of actions. The beginning of the exercise is exclusively mental, then the conductor will invite the participants to move by reproducing the mental actions performed in the place.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20÷25 minutes

4.5 “Lesson” Phase, Elaboration Section – Exercises on the path that goes from the pen to the body

We enter this phase in the more specific section of the Hi-Story Telling workshop, that is, in the part where writing and body meet. We are in the phase in which the dramaturgy has to be created. There are at least two ways for a dramaturgy to arise from previous historical research.

We have identified this first way as “the way that goes from the pen to the body”. That is, in this case, first there will be the writing and then the approach of the body to the written page. This is the most traditional way and the one that is perceived as the most “natural”. The exercises we propose will allow you to develop a written text from pre-existing bases (documents, sources, concept maps, etc.)

Overlapping arguments

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	To accustom the mind to the flow of thought.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is performed in pairs, facing each other. Each participant thinks of a simple, even banal, argument. His task will be, at the signal of the conductor, to support his argument against the other who, however, at the same time will do the same thing. The exercise is difficult as it involves focusing the thought carefully, not allowing oneself to be distracted or influenced by the other. The argument to be presented can be very simple and must be presented aloud and in the mother tongue. Pairs can be changed at the discretion of the conductor. Each change of pair will consist of a change of argument by both participants.
<i>Duration</i>	About 15÷20 minutes

Stream of words

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	To accustom the mind to the flow of thought.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is performed following the previous one (overlapping arguments). At the end of the exercise of the overlapping arguments, the conductor will invite the participants to line up and, one after the other, to reach the centre of the room, presenting to everyone the argument used in the previous exercise, alone and without interruption. trying to make it last as long as possible. In the event that, as a result of repeated changes of pairs, more arguments are ready, once the first has been shared, the participant returns to the line and at the end of the round he starts again saying the other and so on.
<i>Duration</i>	About 15 to 20 minutes depends on the number of arguments prepared

Powerful words

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Elementary dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart

<i>Description</i>	The exercise can be performed following the previous ones (overlapping arguments, flow of thought) or in isolation. The conductor proposes to the participants to choose three words. If the exercise is performed after those described above, the choice will take place from the words expressed in the arguments. If instead it is performed in isolation the choice will be more random. In any case, the words must be chosen from among those that have a certain degree of importance for the participant, or in reference to a theme that the group has chosen to explore. The conductor proposes to build a short story of a few lines in which the three words must necessarily appear.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20 to 30 minutes

Story through an object

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart, objects requested by the conductor
<i>Description</i>	The leader proposes to the participants to bring with them to class an object of everyday life that is somehow significant. The object must therefore be chosen on an emotional basis. The exercise takes place in three stages. In the first moment, the conductor invites the participants to explore the potential of the chosen object by improvising with it starting from new functions that can be assigned to it. After a certain period, participants are invited to choose a limited number of functions. At this point there is a second phase which consists in thinking and writing a short story where the object appears with the functions identified previously. The last phase consists in a public restitution to the group that will be able to make notes and add meanings to what is presented.
<i>Duration</i>	About 30 minutes

Tell your story

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart
<i>Description</i>	The conductor proposes to the participants to tell each one

	an episode of their own life. Possibly the episode will have to be funny, or positive. Alternatively, the choice can also be made to have a traditional story told. While the participant tells the story the others take notes. When everyone has told something, we decide together which of these stories will be chosen to be the basis of a work of writing and staged. Once the choice has been made, the notes made by the listeners are read for a first version of the story.
<i>Duration</i>	30 to 40 minutes

Situation listing

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is related to the previous one. Once the story has been chosen and recorded with the listeners' notes, we proceed to isolate the situations that are at the basis of the story itself. Each situation will be written on the flip chart and will form the basis of writing a single scene. In this phase it is possible to reduce particular situations to a single general situation or vice versa - to divide a general situation into many details.
<i>Duration</i>	From 30 to 40 minutes

List of characters

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is related to the previous one. This time we proceed to isolate the characters who appear in previously isolated situations. At this time it is possible to merge two or more characters into a single character (for example characters with similar characteristics) or divide a character into two or more than two depending on the modifications made previously (or if in this way a certain type of behavior). At the end of the exercise, you must have a list of characters attributable to the situations identified in the previous exercise.
<i>Duration</i>	From 30 to 40 minutes

Interrogation of the characters

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is related to the previous ones. Taking into consideration the list of identified characters and their position in the situation described, the group, coordinated by the conductor, proceeds to give them a third-degree interrogation, starting from those identified as main characters and working up to the secondary ones. The group asks from time to time for information on the character and his story, on possible relationships with other characters, on his way of thinking and operating. All the indications that will emerge will be written on the flip chart and summarized by the conductor. At the end of the work you will have to have a complete and logical characterization of the characters moving on the stage.
<i>Duration</i>	About 40 minutes

Writing of the single scenes

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.
<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart, notebooks.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is related to the previous ones. Every single identified scene is pointed out and written in extended form. The writing work is continuously assisted by the language teacher who corrects the individual sentences while introducing the necessary grammar rules. You don't have to think about a job of great complexity. Every single scene can also be very simple and essential. Details and new interactions between characters are added at this stage. The wealth of linguistic forms that can be explored at this point is decidedly vast. Dialogues, if necessary, are sketched.
<i>Duration</i>	About 40 minutes

Writing dialogues

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from pen to body
<i>Purpose</i>	Dramaturgical construction.

<i>Materials</i>	Flipchart, notebooks.
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is related to the previous ones. In this last phase the dialogues or narrative parts are specified and written in their entirety. As in the previous phase, the intervention of the language teacher alongside the conductor will be fundamental. In this case one should not think about the creation of particularly complex texts. On the contrary, a simple and fast language will favor the possibility of learning the language of the participants in the laboratory. However, useful dialogic forms can be explored and will be easily learned. If the work is carried out within the necessary timing, the learning of the host language will be extremely favored by the playful and non-formal situation.
<i>Duration</i>	About 40 minutes

4.6 “Lesson” Phase, Elaboration Section – Exercises on “the way from the body to the pen”

This is an alternative way to the previous one to tackle the stage of dramaturgical construction of the Hi-Story Telling workshop. The path that we have called “from the body to the pen” foresees that the writing on paper of the dramaturgy is preceded by a “physical” writing.

That is, the approach to the text is overturned and includes a series of physical improvisations that produce the material from which the writing is then obtained.

Fantastic item

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
<i>Purpose</i>	To stimulate creativity and develop the ability to invent
<i>Materials</i>	Objects of various kinds small and light enough to be thrown
<i>Description</i>	The exercise is to be performed in a circle. The handler throws any object (for example a roll of scotch tape) to a participant. The participant takes the object and must perform actions using the object in a different way from what would be its normal and daily use, changing its purpose, meaning and function (for example, in the case of the roll of scotch tape it can be used as if it were a magnifying glass, etc.). Once the action has been completed, the object is thrown to another

	participant who will do the same and so on for at least two turns of the entire circle. Each object, in its new function, must be named in the host language.
<i>Duration</i>	About 15 minutes
<i>Remarks</i>	Nobody can replicate the function of the object. Everyone must strive to find a new way of use and a new meaning.

Transformations

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
<i>Purpose</i>	To stimulate creativity and develop the ability to invent
<i>Materials</i>	Objects of various kinds scattered around the room
<i>Description</i>	This is an evolution of the previous exercise. In this version there will be numerous objects scattered around the room. In a first phase, each of the participants will practice taking objects and creatively changing their function and use. In a second phase, the conductor will ask the participants to choose a single object among the many available with which they have just practiced and use only that object in at least three different ways. These three different uses will have to form the basis of a micro-history without words. The object, in the various functions, must be named, before the execution of the mimic history, in the host language.
<i>Duration</i>	About 15 to 20 minutes
<i>Remarks</i>	As in the previous version no one can replicate the function of the object. Everyone must strive to find a new way of use and a new meaning.

One word one body

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
<i>Purpose</i>	Non-verbal exploration of a theme
<i>Description</i>	The group is standing in the room, the participants are arranged occupying the space in a homogeneous way (as they would be after stopping the raft exercise). One of the participants says a word. It can be a verb or a name of a thing, the important thing is that the word is expressed without too many second thoughts. After 5 seconds of time the conductor gives a signal (for example a clap of the hands) and all the participants immediately physically represent that word. with

	a fixed shape but which contains dynamism as happens in statues.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20 to 25 minutes

Living pictures

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
<i>Purpose</i>	Non-verbal exploration of a theme. Beginning of body dramaturgy construction
<i>Description</i>	It is an exercise derived from the theatre of the image (theatre of the oppressed). The participants are all gathered in one side of the room. One of them, at random, detaches himself from the group and, positioning himself in the centre of the room, assumes a physical posture. He composes a figure. After a short period of observation the others begin, one after the other, to add themselves to the figure with new figures that interact with that of the companion, completing it and generating a living picture where each one adds a part of meaning to the whole.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20 to 25 minutes
<i>Variants</i>	If the group of participants is large, it is possible to divide it into two. One of the two groups will have the task of creating the living picture, the other will observe it and at the end try to describe the sensations felt in looking at the composition and if possible, derive from it a story.

Bas-reliefs

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
<i>Purpose</i>	Non-verbal exploration of a theme. Beginning of body dramaturgy construction.
<i>Description</i>	This is an important variant of the previous exercise (the living pictures). The participants are all gathered in one side of the room (or divided into two groups if numerous). The leader, or one of the participants, says a word. One participant, at random, detaches himself from the group and quickly positions himself in adherence to the opposite wall, assuming a physical posture derived from the word he has heard. Through the figure it expresses the meaning of the word. After a short period of observation, the others begin, one after

	the other, to join the figure by quickly crossing the room and adhering to the wall and to the companion, adding new figures that complete the bas-relief.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20, 25 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	Unlike the previous exercise, in this one there is a greater need for physical contact. This point can be problematic if the work is done, as is the case with some migrant groups, with participants from cultures where physical contact is uncomfortable. It is up to the handler to understand whether the group can overcome this type of obstacle or whether the exercise should be modified by limiting the demand for physical contact.

Space themed compositions

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
<i>Purpose</i>	Non-verbal exploration of a theme. Beginning of body dramaturgy construction.
<i>Description</i>	It is an exercise that represents a combination of the two previously described (the living pictures and the bas-reliefs). The leader, or one of the participants, says a word. A participant, at random, detaches himself from the group and quickly positions himself in the space assuming a physical posture derived from the word he has heard. Through the figure it expresses the meaning of the word. After a short period of observation the others begin, one after the other, to add themselves to the figure, completing the composition. As in the bas-reliefs, it is good that the figures find points of physical contact.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20 to 25 minutes
<i>Observations</i>	Like the previous exercise, in this one too there is a need for physical contact. This point can be problematic if the work is done, as is the case with some migrant groups, with participants from cultures where physical contact is uncomfortable. It is up to the handler to understand whether the group can overcome this type of obstacle or whether the exercise should be modified by limiting the demand for physical contact.

The rhythmic machines

<i>Keywords</i>	Processing - from body to pen
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<i>Purpose</i>	Non-verbal exploration of a theme. Beginning of body dramaturgy construction.
<i>Description</i>	This is like the precedents of a collaborative exercise. The group is divided into subgroups. One subgroup works at a time. The conductor invites one of the participants of a subgroup to position himself in the centre of the room and perform a rhythmic gesture that must be repeated incessantly. A sound must be associated with the gesture. After a few moments of study, one after the other, all the participants of the subgroup that is at work at that moment will approach and add their gesture and their sound in a complementary way to the previous one. The result will be the construction of some kind of unlikely machine. Finally, the machine is given a name. So on for all created subgroups.
<i>Duration</i>	About 20 to 25 minutes
<i>Variants</i>	The rhythmic machine built previously can be gradually animated by adding a particular mood (for example anger, or sweetness). The mood will change the action of the machine quite unpredictably and funny.

4.7 “Closing” Phase

The closing phase is a simple ritual in which the work done during the lesson is summed up. The advice is to make it constant with each lesson. The welcoming and closing phases should be constant formulas that each participant knows, even if commensurate in time and space according to needs.

Verbalization

<i>Keywords</i>	Closure
<i>Purpose</i>	To elaborate in words the experience lived during the lesson.
<i>Description</i>	The students are invited, one by one, to verbally present what they have experienced during the lesson just carried out. The question that must be answered is: “what are you taking home today?”. While one student speaks, the others are silent and listening. Interrupting must never be allowed. Everyone is free to express what they have experienced without being contradicted.
<i>Duration</i>	About 10, minutes

Fast repetition

<i>Keywords</i>	Closure
<i>Purpose</i>	To define exactly on a physical level what was done in class.
<i>Description</i>	Students are invited to go through all the exercises proposed during the work session very quickly. The exercises will be re-performed in an extremely reduced form, almost to make a physical list.
<i>Duration</i>	About 15 minutes

