



Co-funded by
the European Union

TIDES - Theatre Interventions Develop Entrepreneur Skills

Curricula

Description of exercises for inspiration

Introduction

The main objective of the TIDES project is to improve the employability of young artists and theatre professionals, and the quality of youth work through a sequence of three trainings, which provide applicable skills and theatre tools for working together with young people.

During the three training courses the trainers of the project offered exercises from their professional experience working with different groups. They proposed simple and more complex exercises coming from Community Theatre, Drama and Theatre in Education and Immersive Theatre.

Below there are presented some of those exercises listed by these three methodologies in order to help the participants and also other young artists to try themselves out as trainers/facilitators. Important is to underline that presented exercises are only some examples from the whole sequence tested in the TIDES project with the participants. The trainers' team have chosen some exercises in order to provide inspiration for the young artists to start to compose their own training sessions and as a long-term goal - to find their own authentic language.

At the beginning of the document there are proposed warming-up exercises, which are welcome to be modified by the user - as they also have many variations and purposes to use.

To see the wider picture behind these methodologies at the end of this document some bibliography is listed - important references for the trainers, who lead the training.

Warming-up exercises

1. Exercise title: Name + gesture

Time: approx. 8 min.

Goal of the exercise: The aim of this exercise is to get the names of the people participating in the workshop and to introduce body work.

Description of the exercise: Invite the participants to stand in a circle and one by one to introduce each person to introduce him/herself in an unusual way: say your name modulating your voice - quietly, loudly, high, low, singing, etc. The second element of the introduction is a gesture: when saying your name add a gesture related to how you feel today/what energy they have. One by one, each person introduces themselves this way: saying their name in an unusual way and showing the gesture at the same time. Each time the group repeats the name heard and the gesture shown.

2. Title of the exercise: Warming up with still images

Estimated time: 15 minutes

Goal of the exercise: The aim of the exercise is to warm up the body and to see the participants' level of energy.

Description:

Invite the participants into a circle. Tell them that you are curious about the energy they came today, so you would like them to show this with their bodies. Tell them that on your clap they should get into a position that shows how they are feeling today, now, or starting today's session.

Now ask the participants that on your next clap, make a sound that can enrich their statues. Now for your next clap let them create another statue that expresses the opposite emotion, energy, state that they have just shown. In your last clap now ask the participants to show this sculpture with twice bigger intensity. After this last sculpture, tell the participants to relax the position.

3. Title of the exercise: Show me, how I feel

Estimated time: 10 minutes

Goal of the exercise: To map the participants' mood and what happened with them before the session

Description:

Invite the participants to stand in a circle. Tell them that in this activity they could express in which mood they start the day's session. The first person who feels like starting to choose another person in the circle, looks into the eyes of that person and tells him/her three or four sentences about how he/she feels today. The task of the person to whom he or she addresses his or her speech is to show that with his or her body in the heard information (or part of it) in a form of a sill image. The task of the people on the right and left of the person who shows the sill image is to join him or her, either highlighting the content of the proposed still image or showing another part of the statement with their bodies (e.g. if the statement e.g. contains fatigue and excitement, the first person can show excitement and the second one can show fatigue).

In this way let all of the participants speak about his/her day by choosing somebody to make a statue of it.

4. Title of the exercise: Short talks in pairs

Estimated time: 15 minutes

Goal of the exercise: To make the participants get to know each other

Description of the exercise:

Invite the participants to create pairs. In these established pairs, they will hold a short conversation on a given topic for two minutes. Each person in the pair will have one minute to speak. Your task is to measure the time and tell the participants when to switch the roles. After the two minutes is over, ask the participants to find a new partner for the next topic for the conversation. Here are some questions for inspiration.

Questions in pairs

- 3 basic questions - talking (2 minutes) zs
 - What would your ideal holiday look like?
 - What is your superpower / unique skill?
 - How do you like to start a morning? (if you can decide)

- 2 weird questions - talking (2 minutes) n
 - What would you like to dress up for a carnival?
 - With whom you would like to eat dinner together? (it can be any person, living, dead, historical, famous)

You may propose different questions connected with a concrete topic you would like to move to in the next parts - f.e. if the topic is work than you can propose:

- the funniest day at work

- the best day at work
- an incident at work I will never forget
- situation at work when I helped somebody

A. Exercises inspired by Community theatre

About the methodology:

Community theater refers to theatrical performances, productions, and activities that involve members of a particular community, typically amateur or non-professional individuals who have a shared passion for theatre and the performing arts. It encompasses a wide range of theatrical experiences, including plays, musicals, improv shows, workshops, and other performances organized and performed by members of the local community.

Some exercises presented in TIDES project:

1. Title: Machines

Estimated time: 25 minutes

Goal of the exercise: To map the participants' level of , to break the ice between the participants, to warm-up the work in groups

Description of the exercise: To start this activity you need to divide participants into groups of 3 or 4 people. For this you can use the post-its or bricks in different colours and invite each person to grab one -the participants who have the same colour are in one group.

Ask the groups to create, using their own bodies, a common statue. In the first few rounds propose simple geometric shapes: circle, triangle, star. Give the groups 10 seconds for preparation then on your clap ask each group to show their statue. Then propose something more complex, like an animal: elephant, rabbit. Here you can give more time - but not too much, like 20 seconds. Then you can propose some kitchen equipment (eg. cooker, microwave, fridge or coffee machine). At this stage apart from the movement each group can add sound to the movement. In the next step invite participants to create two bigger groups. The challenge for each group is to create a machine, which doesn't really exist, but for sure would resolve some important issues:

- first group is constructing a machine to produce a success - interpreted and presented as they wish

- the second is building a machine to produce self-confidence - also in the way they perceive this feature

As a trainer, remind the groups to include every person into this activity, with a specific role for each one.

The last step of this exercise is the common challenge - to create a machine for a good working atmosphere. This prototype of the machine should include every single person, connected in some kind of cooperation. It can be also enriched by adding some sounds and movements

After finishing this multistage exercise it's a good idea to summarize it with the group, asking at least about:

- How did you feel about this experience?
- What helped you to cooperate?
- Did anything make it difficult for you?

2. Title: Funny improvisations

Estimated time: 20 minutes

Goal of the exercise: To introduce for the participants working in roles

Description:

Ask the participants to work in pairs. Now tell them that you will read out the descriptions of the different situations and invite them to take on the roles of the people in these descriptions and play the situation with each other.

Read the first situation and ask the participants to divide themselves into the two roles of the situations. Then on your clap ask the participants to start to improvise. Let the participants play for a while and then stop the improvisations and read the next situation.

Situations for inspiration, that are connected to work environment:

- The director who wants to give a raise and the employee who doesn't want to because he thinks it's too much
- The employee has a birthday and at his/her company and a colleague gives him/her as a present a small hamster
- The employee goes to an excel training and ends up in a workshop: bathing in the sounds of tibetan bowls and gongs

The situations you propose may also be connected to a topic you would like to work on during the session.

3.Title: Creating scenes

Estimated time for this part: 30 min

Goal of the exercise: To work on a concrete topic with a group, to work on the level of joy and playfulness

Description:

Prepare the first two sentences of a two-character scene (one sentence per character). Briefly describe the circumstances of the scene: where, when and who the two characters are. Introduce the participants in such a way that they jointly define one or two character traits of the characters. Introduce the beginning of the scene with the two sentences you have defined. Then ask the participants to work in pairs to work out the scene: they should work out its continuation and its conclusion, but it is important that they do not change the aspects you have given them. Rehearse the scene twice and then watch the scenes together.

Proposition for a scene, connected the topic of “home”:

The circumstances: a reality TV show, where the goal is to change the main character’s home and create for him/her an ideal home.

The two characters are: the presenter and the person who applied for the show. The scene starts at the moment, when the presenter invites the main character for his/her new home.

The sentences:

Main character: I can't wait to see it

Presenter: Let me introduce your new home.

Questions after watching the scenes:

What kind of endings were presented in the scenes?

What kind of houses could we see? What made them a “dream” home?

4.Title: Image theatre - Boundaries and interculturality

Estimated time for this part: 90 minutes

Goal of the exercise: Explore the main values, principles and experiences of the group in a multicultural situation. Explore oppressive situations regarding interculturality. Introduce simple image theatre exercises that can help devising a forum play.

Flow of the activity and steps:

Introduction:

1. standing in a circle, following one by one, each participant tells their surname and connects a gesture to it, everybody else repeats the sound, the gesture and the quality (we embody something from each other, playback theater exercise)

2. we play introduce-call in the circle based on the gestures, without the names: I do my gesture, and then I do somebody else's, this person continues, does their own and then somebody else's
3. Visual statistics/scales in a diagonal:
 - a. how many foreign speaking people do you know - (know means that you have talked to them more than 20 sentences)? (less than 20 - more than 100)
 - b. how comfortable do you feel to understand others in English (not at all - completely)
 - c. how comfortable do you feel to express yourself in English (not at all - completely)
 - d. how comfortable do you feel to understand others only by body language without words (not at all - completely)
 - e. how comfortable do you feel to express yourself only by body language without words (not at all - completely)
 - f. which is the distance that you still feel comfortable about with another person you don't know - stand as close to the wall
 - g. which is the distance that you still feel comfortable about with another person whom you have already talked to once - stand as close to the wall
 - h. which is the distance that you still feel comfortable about with another person whom you know from work/study situations - stand as close to the wall
 - i. which is the distance that you still feel comfortable about with a good friend - stand as close to the wall
4. Reflection about the previous in pairs. How can we understand and respect boundaries in an intercultural context? In which context/spaces do you feel safe to create (indoor/outdoor)? In which outfit do you feel safe to create?
5. Creating a poster about 'Respecting boundaries in a multicultural context' based on participants' answers.

Moving to the Forum:

1. Practicing conceptual creation

1-2-3 exercise: counting in pairs from 1 to 3, and repeating, then replacing:

- a. 1- a gesture that represents power
- b. 2- a gesture that represents action
- c. 3- a gesture that represents support

Arriving to a small choreography in each pair. Then pairs can be mixed and the cycle can be repeated.

2. Practicing sculpturing

Continuing to work in pairs. One of the pair creates a sculpture of the other for 'power'. The sculptors close their eyes, meanwhile the facilitators rearrange the "sculptures" in the room.

Sculptors go look for their sculptures with closed eyes, and when they find their original partners, they also copy the body positions and stay there together until all group members are settled with their partners.

3. Exploring oppression with group images, without words:

1. Split the group into sub-groups of 4-5 people.

2. 'Now you go to the sub-groups and - in silence - think about a personal situation where you were the protagonist or witness.

This situation should be an oppressive situation where an intercultural disrespect was present or the situation was linked to this in some way. **Try to figure out an image that can summarize the situation. The first person who has a clear image in their mind starts to act as a sculptor, as in the exercise before. At the end, observe your sculpture and if satisfied, clap your hands and the image is released**'. Each person can try to sculpt, but not a must.

5. Monitor each group and check if there is any problem. When everyone is ready, invite all the sub-groups to gather.

6. Invite the first group to show their own images, one by one, until the end. During each presentation, briefly ask the audience questions such as: 'What do you see? What could that be? What element of the intercultural dimension is present here?' in order to stimulate reflection and interpretations and have everyone's attention.

7. Invite the public to quickly replace the most oppressed person in the image. When you clap your hands, the person being replaced goes back to the audience.

8. Repeat the scheme once more, but ask the spectators to join the person who is most oppressed, instead of replacing them.

9. Write on a flip-chart or a big piece of paper all the situations evoked by the images in the audience.

- a. arriving from one state to another
- b. what can we change (one move) - outside
- c. what can we change (one move) - inside
- d. how is the ideal hierarchy situation - how would power be best distributed - fictive image - how many steps are necessary?

10. Choose one image in each group - that is the simplest for the oppression dynamics - and develop it to be a short scene

11. Forum analysis:

- is it likely to happen in your reality? (scales)
- is there oppression? Where is it in space? How far are they from each other?
- Who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed? why?
- where do they learn these behaviours?
- is there a dominant narrative of society at present?
- is there another strategy a character could try to change the power dynamics?

B. Exercises inspired by Drama and theatre in education

About the methodology:

Drama in education is a participatory approach where a story is used for exploration of a dilemma situation. The most important characters and events of the story are introduced by the facilitator, and details are elaborated through creative forms by the participants. Creative forms can include scenes, still images, musical exercises, thought tracking, set design, montages and any kind of art that builds the story and its main contrasting forces. The activity takes rather 60-90 minutes to exploit its full potential, including reflective tasks at the end.

Theatre in education is similar to Drama in education, however the introduced elements are created artistically beforehand by theatre professionals, and usually 3-5 actor-teachers are supporting the exploration of the question and the story.

Drama and Theatre in Education activities work through fictive situations where the individual meets real challenges and therefore real learning happens. Creators care about the age group and specificity of the participants and choose the characters, situations and main conflict of the story based on what can be interesting and useful to explore for them.

Exercises presented in TIDES project:

1.Title: Should I stay or should I go? – Julia's questions

Estimated time: 150 minutes

Goals: To explore a young artist's dilemmas about career choice. To explore the creative potential of the group. To explore the diversity of values and opinions in the group about how far one would go to realize their dream.

Description of the exercise:

The activity is dramaturgically structured:

1. Introduction to the context
2. Exploration of the main character's most important circumstances and qualities
3. Introduction to a life-changing situation
4. Exploration of feelings and influences in the new situation
5. Elaborating challenging consequences of the new situation
6. Exploration of possibilities and emotions about the challenges
7. A strong situation where a decision is necessary
8. Reflection about possible consequences of the decision.

1. Introduction to the context

The facilitator tells about Julia:

- lives in Tirana, Albania with her family
- is 22 years old art college student, talented in gymnastics
- some teachers supported her to keep practicing
- has a blind sister who is 13 years old
- after school hours works in a restaurant as a waitress
- has been training a lot recently for an important audition
- dreams a lot

2. Exploration of the main characters most important circumstances and qualities

The facilitator asks questions about details that participants imagine:

- What does her family home look like?
- What does her weekly schedule look like?
- What does she dream about?

Participants are invited to work in trios to create a still image about Julia's recent dream where she saw herself in 5 years time, in her best possible ideal future self.

The group watches and analyzes in brief all outcomes.

3. Introduction to a life changing situation

A facilitator takes a costume element and steps into the character of the mother of Julia, sits on a chair in an upset mood also reflected in her body position, and shares:

- Julia, her daughter yesterday ruined the family dinner,
- by claiming that she auditioned for a circus education programme in Lyon, France,
- where she was admitted for a 2 years programme,
- and she is determined to go.
- It is a concerning situation,
- because the family can not support her financially,
- indeed this artistic pathway is a very unstable pathway,
- and she should first study something useful such as hospitality,
- to create a stable basis for her future.

Participants can ask her questions and can also challenge her opinion in brief.

The actor-teacher kindly responds and helps the exploration of Julia's background, which is rather conservative, loving, understanding, and economically/intellectually poor.

The mother finishes with the sentence:

- She is talented, but... - and freezes in a position.

4. Exploration of feelings and influences in the new situation

A.

The facilitator invites a participant, who has an idea, to step into the role of Julia for a moment, and create a stable "body position of leaving home". The mother sits in one spot, and Julia is relating to her creating a kind of tension in the room.

The third element of this tension is represented by Lyon, where another participant can create a body position to demonstrate these dynamics in more depth.

The mother and “Lyon” say one-one sentences that are their main messages at this moment. The rest of the participants are invited to join “Julia’s homeland” or “Lyon” with new body positions and a main message.

“Julia’s homeland” can be coloured with different characters: father, sister, teacher, neighbor, friend, etc.

“Lyon” can be shown with different qualities: new international friends, art life, professional opportunities, cultural goods, etc.

B.

When the group has explored the tensions and forces around Julie, it’s time to explore what emotions and sensations she feels in this moment. Participants are invited to go close to Julia, say what emotion or sensation they are, and show this with a gesture. Eg. “I am Julia’s enthusiasm” (jumping and smiling by the side of Julia).

The participant who represented Julia all along this step may be invited to conclude what we already know about Julia and her situation.

5. Elaborating challenging consequences of the new situation

The facilitator tells that Julia went to Lyon and started her new life there. A couple of months passed. Participants are invited to work in trios to create the following scenes about her experiences:

- A. Julia arrived at the circus and watched a rehearsal, which impressed her. After the rehearsal she had a short interaction with the circus artists.
- B. Julia receives positive feedback after the first performance from someone important to her who was in the audience.
- C. After 5 weeks, Julia has a conflict with a colleague.
- D. Julia has been rehearsing a lot for a new performance in which she has a solo, but now she finds out that the director has decided to exclude this part.

The group watches the scenes, and concludes what we know about Julia’s current situation.

6. Exploration of possibilities and emotions about the challenges

Julia travels home by train, and she talks to somebody who she trusts about her feelings. The group creates different versions to explore this moment.

7. A strong situation where a decision is necessary

The group is invited to devise a scene where Julia is with her family after Christmas Eve dinner. Her aunt and her mother act as allies to convince Julia about a position in the local lottery show where she could work.

In the following, the participants observe the different choices Julia can make at this moment, via a dynamic activity. When the possibilities are mapped via conversation (continue the circus programme in Lyon, stay in Tirana and join the lottery show, any other choice suggested by the participants), the different corners of the room are marked to represent different choices. The group members “take sides” based on what they think Julia should do. A participant, who is indecisive can step in Julia’s role and stand in the middle of the room. The others can form arguments about “their corners’ opinion” until Julia can make a decision, which the participant, - who is acting as Julia at this moment - marks by steps toward the corner that is more convincing to him/her.

The facilitator concludes the process and decision.

8. Reflection about possible consequences of the decision

The facilitator invites participants to each step in Julia’s role and imagine her in 1 year's time. Where is she? What does she do? How does she feel about it? The task of the participants is to make a last still/moving image about possible future self of Julia where their answers to these questions are visible.

When all versions are watched, the group may sit in a circle and reflect on the experience: How do you feel now? What is the most important question for you to know? Which was the strongest moment for you, and why? What engaged you the most? How do you close this session, what do you take away from this experience?

C. Exercises to develop Interactive theatre

About the methodology:

There exist myriad methods to characterize endeavors occurring within unconventional settings. These include terms like site-specific, site-responsive, promenade, and immersive. Our exercises consistently emerged in direct reaction to the architecture, arrangement, and ambiance of the venue.

Exercises presented in TIDES project:

1.Title: Experience/Reflection

Estimated time: 1 hour

Goals: to make the participants experience sensorial opportunities and then immediately analyze the different options.

Description of the exercise:

Experience: Divide the group into couples. Each individual takes the other one to show something visually pleasant. Acoustically pleasant. Haptically pleasant. Verbally pleasant.

Reflection: What is pleasant? What is multi sensoriality? How is it different from theatre?

2.Title: iNtime

Estimated time for this part: 20min.

Goals: to understand the importance of intimacy

Description of the exercise:

- 1) Choose a place
- 2) Bring someone in an intimate place
- 3) say something intimate
- 4) do something intimate
- 5) question: why is intimacy important in theatre?

Conclusion

In the TIDES project during the three training sessions exercises from three different theatre approaches were shown. The project team strongly believes that there are many ways for young artists to build up their professional path. It is important to underline that these exercises don't show the whole process lead in the TIDES project. The trainers of the project hope that the presented exercises stimulate the curiosity and desire of young artists to take up the approach and start to design their own authentic training material.

Resources:

Boal, Augusto (1992). Games for Actors and Non-Actors. New York and London: Routledge

Bolton, Gavin (1998). 'Acting in classroom drama – a critical analysis.' Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books

Barba, Eugenio (1991) Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology. London/New York: Routledge
—— Floating Islands (Hostelbro: Thomsens Bogtrykkeri, 1979)
—— The Paper Canoe (London: Routledge, 1995)

Bethlenfalvy, Ádám (2017). Living through extremes. An exploration of integrating a Bondian approach to theatre into 'living through' drama.
https://www.open-access.bcu.ac.uk/5698/1/Living%20Through%20Extremes_Bethlenfalvy_PhD_thesis_amendments.pdf

Greig, Noël (2008) *Young people, new theatre: a practical guide to an intercultural process*. London: Routledge

Haedicke, S. and Nellhaus, T. (eds)(2001) *Performing Democracy: international perspectives on Urban Community-Based Performance-* Michigan: University of Michigan Press

Hahlo, Richard and Peter Reynolds (2000). *Dramatic events : how to run a successful workshop*. London: Faber

Jackson, Tony (red.) (1993), *Learning through theatre*. London: Routledge

O'Neil, Cecily. and Lambert, A.(1982). *Drama structures. A practical handbook for teachers*, London: Hutchinson

Powell, Louise Burleigh (2010), *The community theatre in theory and practice*. Charleston, S.C: BiblioBazaar