



INTRODUCTION TO OUR TOOLKIT OF ANALYSIS



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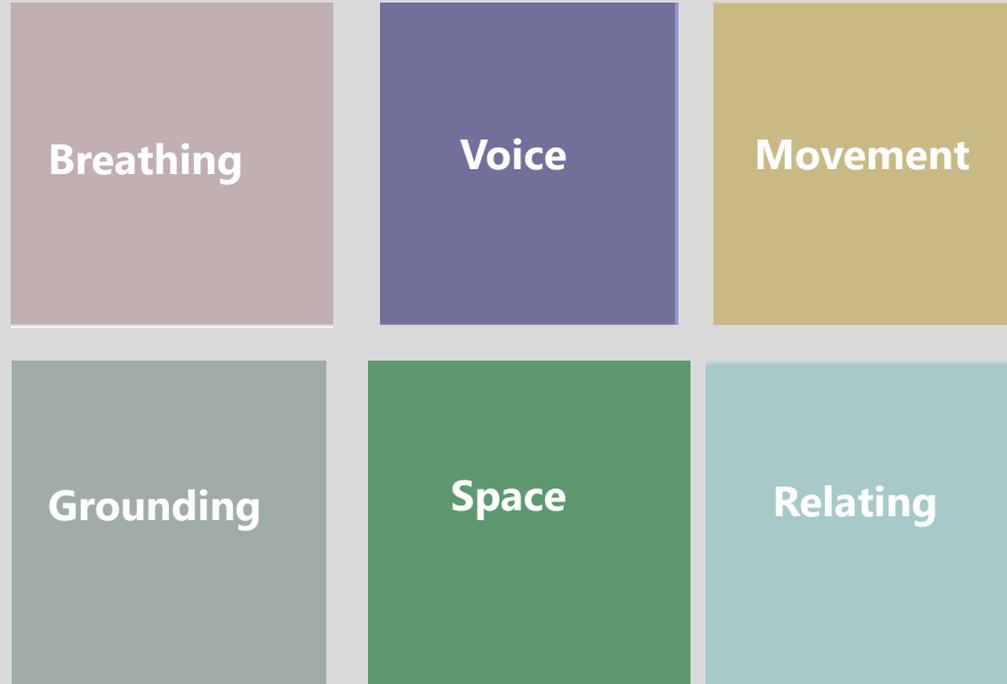
In this introduction you will find:

- ✓ A brief presentation of the structure of our toolkit
- ✓ Some explanation on the origin of our approach
- ✓ A guide on how use the video-based assessment tool: why and how to make video recordings during teaching sessions
- ✓ How to analyse what you see in a constructive rather than a judgmental way
- ✓ Some instructions on how to use our toolkit individually or in group settings



THE STRUCTURE OF OUR TOOLKIT

Our toolkit proposes six dimensions for exploring our vocal and physical behaviour during education activities we lead:



For each dimension, we propose:

- ✓ A short theoretical background to that particular dimension
- ✓ How this dimension is relevant in adult education
- ✓ Questions for self-assessment
- ✓ Activities for development

THE ORIGIN OF OUR APPROACH

To create the basis of our model, we used an adaptation of the Laban Bartenieff movement analysis system, proposed by our colleague Katharina Conradi (In Touch). We completed it with voice related components, proposed by our colleagues of VoiceLab. The initial model was then tested and adjusted in collaboration with adult educators.

The Laban-Bartenieff Movement System : a theoretical framework

As a point of departure we used the Laban Bartenieff movement analysis system (LBMS). This is a comprehensive system to observe, describe and understand the patterns of human movement. The system is applied in different fields for various purposes. LBMS offers an embodied theoretical framework describing the four basic components of movement: Body, Effort, Shape and Space, and the inter-relationships of these components. This rich system supports developing movement, vocabulary, optimizing efficiency, refining skills, and enhancing communication and expressiveness. With these movement parameters, one can also create, analyze, document, and integrate the complex nature of movement.

LBMS is based on the theories and practice of two legendary individuals: Rudolf von Laban and his protégée Irmgard Bartenieff. The interweaving of Laban's theories of Space Harmony with Bartenieff's "Fundamentals of Movement " explain the nature of our human design in mastering and coping with our environment. Laban & Bartenieff students, and today their students, carry on their work in ever broadening applications.

Testing and adjusting through pilot sessions in Amsterdam, Palermo, Paris and Wroclaw

Based on the LBMS system, completing it with the approach of VoiceLab for voice analysis we created a set of assessment tools and activities to share our work with educators, coming from a diversity of fields, who were interested in working on their presence. Through these test sessions we simplified the conceptual framework and the tools to make them more accessible and user friendly.

WHY AND HOW TO CREATE VIDEO- BASED ASSESSMENT?

For many people seeing themselves on a video is a rather unpleasant, even alienating experience. Yet, video recordings are an exceptionally privileged window on perceiving how we are in front of a group from an external angle of view.

Why to film?

The key feature of our toolkit is to invite facilitators to explore their own practices, approaches and postures. Such an exploration requires a good mirror. Our best idea for a good mirror consists in the video recordings done in sessions delivered by the educator where they really see themselves in action.

Whenever such recordings are not possible, we can propose simulation activities to film during a workshop. For instance, participants are invited to present themselves to the others in public.

How to film?

Whenever the video is made in a real training setting it is important to inform and ask the consent of the learners. The key message is that the video will not be published and its sole purpose is to analyse the vocal and body repertoire that the trainer / educator uses during the training.

In terms of technical requirements, we propose to keep it simple. Contemporary smartphones have the necessary precision. We don't need a professional camera-man, a colleague can do the task. Make sure you hold the camera in a horizontal position.

What to film?

The best is to have a good sample from a training session, in which we can see different types of educator tasks: explanation in plenary, facilitation of discussion, giving or following up a task etc.

In total we only need a couple of minutes, but we recommend filming more so that the most interesting minutes can be selected.

We also recommend filming a couple of minutes where the full body of the educator can be seen and some minutes where the face is in close-up.

HOW TO VIEW THE VIDEOS?

What do you see when you look at the image on the right? Take note of the first things that come to your mind, if you can, even write them down!

And then, let's have a look at what you wrote down: how many elements are objective descriptions (what you can actually see)? How many are interpretations (what you assume)? How many are judgements (how we criticise)? If you don't have many objective descriptions, that's not a coincidence: we humans are not very good at objectively describing things.

During our test sessions it became clear that watching the videos of ourselves and others is a complicated task. Watching their own videos, participants were tempted immediately to identify what they did not like, making generalised assessments. When it came to watching the videos of others, to the contrary, they made it a point to evaluate positively the performance of the others. But the problem with such judgement-based evaluations is that they are not very informative, and often quite reductive. So before watching the videos, it is important that first we learn how to "see".



A MODEL TO “SEEING BETTER”

So, instead of jumping immediately to conclusion such as “he’s stressed” “he’s disorganised”, we propose the model of three steps that is based on the separation of:

- ✓ Objective description (what we see)
- ✓ Interpretation (what we think)
- ✓ Emotional reaction (how it makes us feel)

I see..

- A man lifting workbooks in both hands
- Eyes looking at the desk and mouth open
- Several notebooks places on the table
- Etc..

I think..

- He’s looking for a paper / notebook he can’t find
- He’s surprised that suddenly all his notebooks are empty, the texts disappeared!
- Etc...

I feel..

- Empathic: I also loose my objects..
- Annoyed: he reminds me of my husband!
- Etc..



We recommend using this same model when viewing one’s own videos or or the videos of others. This will help to bring precision to one’s observations, and even to identify how what we do impacts us and others.

HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT ALONE OR IN TRAININGS

We developed the assessment toolkit so that it could be used autonomously or collectively in trainings. Either way, the steps are in the same order, but for collective use we propose additional points.

Using the toolkit alone

Step 1:
Make the video recording during a teaching session you are leading. Select a couple of minutes that display a variety of gestures and talks.

Step 2:
Explore our framework model consisting of the 6 dimensions. Answer the reflection questions that are proposed before the viewing.

Step 3:
View your video first in its integrity. Note what are the first impressions that come to you (what do you see / what do you think / how you feel). Then go back to the 6 dimensions and answer the observation questions.
Give importance also to the question about what aspect of your behaviour you appreciate and what aspects you feel compelled to criticise and want to change.

Using the toolkit in trainings

The sequence of the proposed steps does not change, but we have some additional recommendations.

Step 1:
An alternative to sequences recorded in one's professional practice, we can film improvisation or presentation exercises during the training (see our "baseline" activity sheet).

Step 2: For a more playful, interactive introduction to our dimensions you can use the "intro to our categories" exercises.

Step 3: Even in a collective setting, give time to participants to watch their video first alone, and answer the observation questions. In a next step we recommend creating small groups of 3-4 people that can view together video extracts of their colleagues and offer open feedbacks (I see / I think / I feel) or feedback on the 6 dimensions.

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