

Empathy in dialogue

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Important issues of workshop/lesson:

raising awareness about danger of prejudice and discrimination, contemporary social issues, human rights education, refugees and migration

Context

Today's talking about migrants, immigrants and refugees in the current situation is very difficult. On the one hand we are witnesses of the suffering of people fleeing war who try to find shelter for themselves and their children, on the other hand there is fear of the Other. Very often these are the concerns related with the stereotypical thinking about refugees for example as terrorists. In the Polish media there is lack of honest debate about the situation of refugees. In several ways some people and institutions spread the hate speech. For example, the metaphors of war (invasion, expansion) are the elements that will further stigmatize this group of people. Often politicians ask whether to accept refugees, instead of asking how we can integrate them with the local community. Despite some improvements, there are still a lot of barriers that make it difficult or even impossible for foreigners to find a job.

During lessons students will reflect on hate speech in Europe and nationalism and extreme movements that spread hatred towards others. The important part of lesson will be placed on social inclusion. We will invite students/young people to work based on own identity and a in small groups using simulation exercises related to "bystander effect". During this activity the teacher will build up a friendly space of discussion, so that various ideas can be shared.

Key question:

what can I do today to not discriminate against anyone?

The main objectives of the exercises:

- to sensitize young people to the problems of discrimination against minority groups and attempt excitation activity aimed at preventing discrimination,
- to draw attention to the dangers of hate speech, xenophobia and racism,
- to interest to students on issues of human rights and an attempt to understand the need to protect the rights of every person,
- shaping the attitudes of openness with respect to colleagues with different views of life.

Methods of teaching: analysis of the sources, brainstorming.

Forms of work: individual and small groups.

Teaching tools and materials:

multimedia projector, laptop, printed Breivik's speech, coloured markers / pens, paper sheets

Psychogeography: exercises will be held in a circle and several smaller groups. With this arrangement spatial gives a clear message that we are equal status and pay attention to interpersonal relationships.

Activity plans for the double class block (90 minutes: 2 x 45 minutes)

Before the lessons students should watch the movie "Utøya: July 22"- a 2018 Norwegian drama film directed by Erik Poppe and written by Anna Bache-Wiig and Rajendram Eliassen . After that talk about it. This will be a very good starting point for next activities. Students receive questions that will help them prepare for a discussion about the movie:

- a) what happened?
- b) how did people behave?
- c) remind some words/sentences important for you
- d) who is responsible for this crime/tragedy?
- e) how to protect people in society?
- f) how to prevent against crime against humanity?
- g) who is "victim", "perpetration" and "bystander"?

The structure of lesson/workshop

- I. Introduction to the workshop: aims and participants' expectations.
- II. Getting to know each other by using the exercise "paper identity".
- III. Tasks based on Breivik's speech in the court.
- IV. Simulation exercise related "bystander effect". V. "Paper identity" - awareness exercises, part 2.
- VI. Feedback of workshop/lesson.

II. "Paper identity" - awareness exercises, part 1.

Sit down with your students together in a circle and then give them clean sheets of paper to write their name or other nickname on them by means of which they would like to communicate with other people in the class; in addition, they must write down three things they like to do the most; then one by one presents his own sheet of paper and reads the words: name / nickname and three things he/she likes to do; there is a moment of break after each favourite thing and those students who like it similarly get up; it happens in this way with every information read by student; after completing this action, each participant takes own filled the sheet of paper and according the instruction of the teacher: he/she crushes, deforms his/her piece of paper; then ask students to bring the paper back to his previous state, to smooth him; after this exercise talk with the students about their feelings in the moment of creasing the paper and then after trying to restore its original state.

Commentary to the exercise: despite the effort put in bringing the sheets to the original state, bends, dents, dirty marks remained; even the passing of time will not make the creases straighten; the same happens with a man who experiences any kind of discrimination in his/her life - various forms of violence such as beating, calling, ridiculing, spreading gossip or indirect - marking, isolating, excluding from community, persuading others to hostile behaviours; teasing can affect everyone, regardless of their appearance, gender, ability, fitness or health; often we can not accept otherness and diversity;

symbolically our different names and interests, our identities, have been trampled underfoot, destroyed, deformed; in the end of lesson/workshop ask students: how did they feel when deforming and destroying themselves, their names, identities.

III. Breivik's speeches

Divide students of students into four small groups (eg.5 people). Ask them to listen two parts of Breivik 's speech in court and write down those sentences/words that are examples of hate speech and are a manifestation of discrimination. Ask them to try to describe the type of discrimination.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVaVfyXbsbo>

Anders Behring Breivik closing statements to the court, part 1.

6:57 "multicultural experiment in Norway"

7:43 "cultural conservative NGOs and youth organization didn't receive any support"

19:20 "the problem is, that today we have ideals in Norway that are harmful for Norway, that will cause us great harm in our future"

10:48 ""the ideal is to have sex with as many strangers as possible"

11:00 "we focus on dissolving the nuclear family – with all problems it brings with it"

11:44 "now I'll get to the neglect of our duty towards our families and our nation"

11:57 "women should start having children in their 20-ies"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bvH1ZOG45o>

Anders Behring Breivik closing statements to the court, part 3.

2:23 "with proper aid of Norway's mass media, we let a belrusian asylant, probably with Tartar background, called Alexander Igaravitsj Rybak, represent Norway in the international finale. It is okay to let an asylum seeking person represent us, to show that we are tolerant. But, what happened next? A few years later it is another asylum seeker, Nyambura Mwangi, from Kenia, who wins a melody from his bongo. The Russian Eurovision commentators struggled to explain: what is Norway doing, why would they send an asylant as their ambassador not once, but twice within a short period of time? Is there a lack of Norwegians in Norway or are they suffering from cultural self-concept? (...) This is scorn a great provocation towards all Norwegians that are opponents of multiculturalism. What is wrong with Marxists and liberalists? The answer is simple: a great number of Norwegians – and here I refer to the Marxists and liberalists – suffer from cultural delusions, cultural self-contempt, and require immediate medication. The medicine for this sickness is called: "more nationalism" (...)

The UN supports the deconstruction of European countries because the UN is dominated by Marxists and liberalists" benches is not conducive to learning and developing creativity.

After listening to Breivik's speech, each group works on chosen sentences / words and assigns them sort of discrimination. Finally they come up with a concrete action to break down this form of discrimination. Then speaker of each group in front of others students report outcomes of work.

IV. Exercise “bystander effect”

One person in each group will kneel down and other people stood in a distance of approx. 2-3 meters from it. The workshop consists of four parts. During the first part of workshop "standing people" cut the hole in the one sheet of white paper and then watch through this a piece of paper on the kneeling person. They watch through the hole with one eye so that's why the sheet of paper obscured their faces. After that it will be time for talk the feelings associated with being a bystander. The second part consists of the watching of "kneeling person" without sheet of paper only face to face. In the third part, the participants approach closer to the people kneeling, put his/her hand on her/his shoulder and continue to watch her/him. During the first three parts of the workshop, participants do not talk each other's - they can only watch on the "kneeling person" and after the end of each section, participants talk about their feelings, impressions and experiences. In the fourth part, the participants come up to a person kneeling (together or sequentially) and perform some free action. Thanks to this activity the participants of my workshop will discover various acculturation strategies that can be helped in integrating migrants and minorities.

V. "Paper identity" - awareness exercises, part 2.

Ending this exercise which had started our lesson should strengthened the participants - for this purpose all sheets of "identity" paper will start their journey from hand to hand in order of the seated persons in the circle; the task of the students is to write positive information about each person on the unsaved page; in this way all participants will receive a summary of positive words about themselves through the eyes of other students - in a symbolic way, each young person will be restored to his and her dignity.

VI. Evaluation of classes

Participants return to a common circle and each of them ends activities using one of the following sentences:

- I learned / I found out that ...
- I was surprised ... / I'm starting to wonder ...

or another method , “the dynamic dialogue”:

standing in a circle ask the students which aspects of workshop were powerful and worth for them.

Any person can start a discussion - giving a step forward (breaking away from the common circle) and giving a statement in response to the person asked by the person leading. Other students show that they agree with this statement, moving towards the speaker or disagreeing with it, moving away.

Another people appear from the circle to express their opinions (not necessarily in relation to what has already been asked), and the rest of the group shifts by joining those with whom they agree. If a person does not agree with any of the positions presented, he/she may at any time step away from the group, take up free space and express his/her own view. In this case, other people express their support by joining him / her. Tell participants that the advantage, or even the requirement of this method, is the ability to change their mind. Participants can express an opinion and stand on one side, and in a moment change their mind, say the opposite and stand on the opposite side.



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