

THE ROLE OF ACTIVATED METHODOLOGIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NARRATIVE CAPACITY OF THE PRESCHOOLS LARGES

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Abstract: *In order to determine the influence of the activating methodologies in the development of narrative capacities in pre-school children, an attempt was made to outline an explicit and activating orientation in the structuring of activities towards the development of narrative capacities within the personal development activities. We have dealt with methodological development issues in this context the narrative capacities of pre-schoolers through self-created stories. We started from two questions: How can the didactic approach be conceived to foster the development of narrative capacity? and What is the impact of activating methodologies on developing the ability to create stories? We trained the children into an explicit program of self-development, a personal development program (ADP), demonstrating positive influence for the development of this capacity. As far as the results of the research are concerned, it is desirable to develop and continuously redefine and renew the activating methodologies used by the pre-schoolers.*

Keywords: *activating methodology; narrative capacities; self-created stories;*

1. Introduction:

In order to determine the influence of activating methodologies on the development of narrative capacities in pre-school children, an explicit orientation has been outlined in the structuring of activities towards the development of narrative capacities in the personal development activities.

The premise of approaching the methodical aspects from this activist perspective lies in the desire to use the unlimited resources of the child, his creative potential, and the exteriorization of the perception of the surrounding reality through the self-narrative, in a context that enables all children from the group. For this purpose, personal development activities are a time when all the children of the group can be activated in turn, in the context of the story, for example, possibly over several days, in which each preschool explains an opinion or exposes story.

The research allows us to contradict in a concrete manner the premises of an activating methodology (Norel, Bota, 2012, p. 26) regarding the use of self-created stories for the development of narrative capacities. This concept we understand as stimulating children's activism that we have outlined on two main coordinates: understanding one's own person and expressing one's own person. The way I structured the activities in which I used stories / stories about myself has three dimensions: imagining, explaining the imagined and telling the imagined ones.

The shaping of the didactic approach of ADP through the use of activating methodologies actively involves pre-schooling in situations involving the exteriorization of the inner world contained in thoughts, desires, dreams, experiences. These situations require the reconstitution of experiences by telling them to systemize and resist the perception of

the surrounding world and their own place in this external context, or to suppose the reinventing of reality, possibly the conquest of other worlds. Also, these situations involve the active and varied use of language in a context different from that involved in the Language and Communication Domain activities; it is a relaxed context, conceived as a moment of conversation between good friends, without rebelling, of course, from a correct expression.

We present in the following activities in the sphere of personal development activities as we have identified in the Italian literature.

„*Il tempo del cerchio*” (activity in circle) is the fundamental activity of psycho-emotional education, it is a moment of obedience, of respect, it is time for the group that meets to discuss (Vallario, 2009, p. 110). "For pre-schoolers, this moment is fundamental because it fosters knowledge and cooperation between children, children and educators, and the creation of that complicity based on mutual respect, in which each satisfies both the need for belonging and the need for individuality." (Vallario, 2009, p. 111). Speaking from the perspective of a learning / knowledge that children conquer and not transmitted, the author considers a type of learning where children are accustomed to listening and listening, speaking, asking, confronting their own perspectives with others. This way of living? the group as a community (vivono il group a community), allows the teacher to observe a group that is investigating, discussing a theme reveals (mettono in gioco) the emotions and things he believes in defending his beliefs, building hypotheses, and set up confrontations (setting confronts). This opens the way of the multitude of opinions and allows the mind to host the doubt. From this perspective, the author considers it important to give children systematic and regular (a systematic form of ritual) a space to speak (space) that enables them to formulate, express and listen to thoughts. The three-year-old children he worked with called this moment "the circle to speak the words" (cerchio per parlare le parole). This way of structuring the work provided information about the children's potential for reflection, self-awareness, the ability to ask questions or formulate hypotheses. Planned activity in this manner does not have a predictable course and requires a constant capacity from the educator (di mettersi in discussione) to open talks, to adjust the approach / meaning of the discussion (di aggiustare il tiro), to be in contact with variables that do not lead in the intended direction.

In his approach called "Freinet community classroom to conversational didactics," Vallario mentions that it is the duty of the teacher to observe in circle activities to stimulate and support conversation among children by listening to them words and emotions, and by actively asking questions to search for meaning for words spoken, spoken and heard. The author outlines the role of help questions as follows:

What the? defines the subject of the conversation;

Where? localized events;

How? determines how to present what has happened;

When? establishes a temporal sequence between events;

Why? reveals the causal relationship between events. "(Vallario, 2009, p. 111).

In the subject of research, we refer to activating methodologies and narrative capacities.

The stories and self-created stories represented the context in which the development of narrative capacities was targeted and they were an integral part of the activating methodology targeted in the research.

The research problem was formulated in the form of two questions:

- How can the didactic approach be conceived to foster the development of narrative capacity?
- What is the impact of activating methodologies on developing the ability to create stories?

Methodology used in research:

We illustrate the methodological framework of the research in the following table:

The research approach			
General objectives	Hypotheses	Methods of research	Research Tools
<i>O1 Elaboration of tools needed for research to assess the narrative capacities of preschoolers</i>	<i>I1 Engaging children in an explicit exercise program to build stories positively influences the development of this ability</i>	Conducting teaching activities	Conceiving observation grids
<i>O2 Apply initial and final evaluation tests to determine: the level of use of verbal structures and the creativity of the oral language, as well as the weight of self-references in stories</i>		Observation	Observation grid
<i>O3 The progressive introduction of self-created stories within the ADP stages</i>	<i>I2 If we use activating methodologies to capitalize on self-esteem at all stages of ADP, then pre-schoolers will invent stories about synet</i>	Running Activities	Observation
<i>O4 Determining the presence of self-references in creating stories from the post-experimental stage</i>		Investigate	Interview
<i>O5 Determining the narrative ability level following the explicit self-creation program</i>		Observation	Observation grid

The results of the research aimed to outline in a personal manner the concept of activating methodologies and to put into practice the use of the self-created stories in the context of this concept as well as a continuous redefinition and renewal of the activating methodologies used by the 5-6-yearpre-schoolers, to conceive the whole pedagogical approach as a wonderful story.

The activating methodologies we refer to are those learning situations in which pre-school children are actively involved in self-discovery by narrating their own personality issues, but also by uncovering the members of their group by hearing their stories about them themselves. These situations of active learning imply the sharing of experiences and experiences with all their emotional and situational baggage, with positive valences in the life of the members of the group of pre-schoolers. I make this statement because I think, from the perspective of the child, that finding out from the story of your colleague how he thinks, what he wants, what preferences he has, what his feelings do, you get it differently in your heart. Otherwise, in the sense that you pass by the daily complaints (my colleague does not play nicely with me, his behaviour is more fierce, etc.) and instead of reacting through hysterical crying or blows, as it happens in general among the children, What is it that dissatisfies you and discussing what can be done. We plan to mobilize the energies of pre-schoolers to learn how to live in the gardens, enjoying each other, knowing more than a nominal level and thinking that the self-created stories have a significant contribution in this direction.

The way in which the context of the act of narration is conceived (to speak of) engages a whole set of activating methodology that results in the intersection of the means, processes and techniques used.

- ❖ The main method used was the story, which ranged from a progressive line, from simple narrations, to narratives about various aspects proposed, to stories. If they included fantastic elements, they turned into stories. The self-created stories represented the apology of the experimental stage, the whole proposed approach being oriented towards an exploration of one's own person from different perspectives: how is the passing of years on our face and what accomplishments happen (the activity of my time line) every moment of his birth (activity as I came to the world), such as family life (activity beyond the windows of the cottage).
- ❖ The children were motivated in the narrative or story activities proposed in the final and final stages, by the presence of an impatient character to listen to them, a character who was initially a guest, but who later became a friend of the entire experimental lot; it is the FIFI puppet who is an ax (character from the cartoon Fifi and popcorn, unknown to this generation of children). FIFI has been a source of inspiration for children in a world of story, a world where many children, plants and animals have come to life for their children. The various teaching materials used also constituted a motor that triggered or sustained interest in storytelling or stories (worn out slippers, cordless mittens from the propeller's personal collection, various boxes, etc.).
- ❖ In the activation methodologies used in the research, the subject-book, respectively, the slip, object-symbol used in an inventory of stories carried out in the final evaluation stage, used to write the story of some roads. Seated in a library can be later borrowed, and comic stories can be reinvented by each reader separately. Speaking drawings are also part of all the activation methodologies used in the initial evaluation stage. They are graphic representations of imagined dreams or stories, and they have a special wealth in the high school preschool who will use them at the moment when they will tell their dream or narrate their invented story. The Miniature Story Theater is a way of concretizing the stories at a minute, a scene for the two characters chosen as props and around which a story of about one minute was invented.



This whole set of methods, detailed in the above lines, is the personal manner in which we translated this concept of activating methodologies (Norel, Bota, 2012, p.26).

2. Description of the research:

In order to achieve the objectives, we have used the observation method. The observation as a research method consists in the intentional pursuit and systematic recording of the different behavioural manifestations of the subjects of the research, as well as the situational context of manifestation of that behaviour.

2.1. Stages in the research

The experiment has three stages: the experimental stage, the experimental stage and the final stage (post-experimental). In the preparatory stage the conditions under which the experiment will be conducted are investigated. For the initial assessment of the narrative

capacity we designed and carried out activities-samples that supposed the narrative act under different aspects, from explaining some images to the storytelling of invented stories.

After the initial assessment of the narrative capacity carried out during the observational stage and the recording of the results of both groups, experimental and control, in the observation grids, we outlined the activities to be applied to the experimental group in the experimental-applicative stage. As far as the final stage is concerned, it was the moment when the ability to narrate and narrative of invented stories was evaluated. By comparing the results from the end of the research with the initial results, we can highlight progress from one stage to the next.

In the table below, we present the evidence for the final and final stages as well as three of the total activities carried out in the experimental phase. The three activities selected from the total of the experimental stage complete the vertical and horizontal vision of the proposed research approach.

	The research approach					
	STATISTICAL STAGE		EXPERIMENTAL STAGE		STAGE FINAL	
	The type of activity	ACTIVITY	The type of activity	ACTIVITY	The type of activity	ACTIVITY
Sample 1	<i>Ora</i> + <i>practically</i>	<i>I deconstruct, stick, explain – collage (choose images)</i>	<i>Ora</i> + <i>practically</i>	<i>I stick, I explain about myself – collective collage (my time line)</i>	<i>Oral</i> + <i>graph</i>	<i>Explain about me (home - kindergarten)</i>
Sample 2	<i>Oral</i> + <i>graph</i>	<i>I draw, explain (dream - desire)</i>	<i>Oral</i> + <i>Sensory</i>	<i>Look, I explain about myself (how I came to the world)</i>	<i>Oral</i> + <i>graph</i>	<i>I draw, explain II (stories on the go)</i>
Sample 3	<i>Oral</i> + <i>graph</i>	<i>I create, I say (invented and drawn story)</i>	<i>Oral</i> + <i>Sensory</i>	<i>I create, I say II (beyond the windows of the cottage...)</i>	<i>Oral</i> + <i>Sensorial</i>	<i>I create, I say III (story at minute, invented and played)</i>

It can be noticed that at each stage there is a progressive vertically graduating of the applied samples in the sense that it was started from activities that required the selection and explanation of some images (sample 1), then it was then taken to illustrate (sample 2) some explanations about: a dream in the initial stage, an event in the experimental stage, and the road of a slipper in the final stage ending at the end of each stage in inventing stories with or without a given theme (sample 3). If in the final and final stages the applied evidence did not fully assume the self-referral, all the activities of the experimental stage assumed self-narrative in different contexts and stages of the personal development activities (presence, nature calendar, group sharing).

The activities have also been horizontally correlated, with common defining points between the stages. So:

→ *Sample 1* consisted of the first two stages in the collage construction completed with explanation of the results of these activities. In the initial stage after the collage, the images

were explained and their choice was motivated, and in the experimental stage the collective collage was followed by the individual presentation of the personal pictures and the age phases illustrated in these pictures. In the final stage, feelings and preferences related to home and kindergarten were expressed.

→ *Sample 2* assumed in the final and final stages a graphic illustration of the proposed aspects of the discussion and an illustration of a motric-sensorial nature in the experimental stage.

→ *Sample 3*. We have foreseen a common activity at all stages (I create, I will tell), but the way of realization was different. In the case of sample 3, the original intention was to invent and draw stories about what we want, and the characters are invented by us or are chosen from known stories, and other stories will be invented for the chosen characters from familiar stories. In the experimental stage it was wanted to tell stories imaginable beyond the windows of the house, the characters being members of the family symbolized by the Shelly, Barbie and Ken puppets, the "window" being made of cardboard. In the final stage, the characters are chosen by the children in the boxes with characters made available (they contain marionettes of felt or metal, which have been removed from the string and which depict beings or animals, insects or plants, as well as various accessories: hats, hearts etc). We mention that the stories specific to the third test at each stage become stories in the context in which they display elements not specific to the real.

We also mention that the tests applied in the final and final stages were carried out in the context of the afternoon personal development activities. As far as the experimental stage is concerned, the story activities included in the experiment took place during the morning meeting, especially in the stage of the presence, timing and moment of group sharing, this moment being transformed into a storytelling time; the practical activities in which the elements that formed the basis for narratives and stories were prepared in the afternoon ADP.

2.2. *In the experimental phase*, children are trained in an explicit program of exercising the ability to create self-reported self-development programs (ADP).

At the stages of the morning meeting during ADP, the activation of pre-school children was constantly targeted by asking for short personal messages as follows:

Presence - how do you think of those absent, what do you think about those absent?

Nature's calendar - what do you transmit to the rain? What message do you have for the sun? What does the wind whisper in? and so on

To pass to the moment of group sharing, generically speaking, we have composed the transition:

"Look now, right now
We'll get on the road.
I imagine, I'm still saying.
I can invent, I want to crawl
A world of stories
How do you not find another? "

The 10-15 minutes allocated to the storytelling time will be structured as time to tell at will, things of common interest to group members or will merge into the news of the day / news of the day / the message of the day. They were also the time at which reports were heard based on the materials made during AFP afternoon activities.

Example of sample applied at this stage:

Sample 1 – ACTIVITY: **Stick, explain about me** (my time line)

Scope:

- Strengthening the skill to create a story with your own means;
- Developing psychic processes: imagination, creative thinking;

- Developing the ability to nurture oneself.

Objectives

- To describe your personal photos;
- To tell about them at younger ages by selecting from parental information, memories or imaging different aspects of ages illustrated in photos.

Didactic task

- We create lines of personal time;
- We tell about ourselves when we were younger.

Methods and procedures: conversation, explanation, storytelling.

Teaching aids: Fifi mascot, pictures of children at different ages (0 years, 1/2 years, 5/6 years), double-adhesive tape, colored ribbons, extruded polystyrene panel, pocket needles.

Progress:

Every child will make up for Fifi, who wants to know her better, a line of her own time, using three personal photos and a ribbon on which the pictures will be glued with the double-adhesive tape fixed by ladies on her back. The order of the photos will be set to start from bottom to top, from the youngest, progressively to the highest. Ladies fix the ribbons with pictures on a panel that will form the basis for the discussion from the time of the story for the current week. This practical stage will be carried out during ADP during the afternoon, and the following days, at the moment of the group meeting of the morning meeting, the children will explain this journey of their life, and in a personal manner will make the passage of time in their lives. The preschool narrator answers any questions asked by colleagues. The color and pattern of the ribbon itself is a source of questions and answers for the little storytellers. Fifi will record these wonderful autobiographical stories in her book.

We mention that during the afternoon activities, the children, who during the morning narrated their time line, hear with the helmets the story *When I was little* by Mircea Sântimbreanu ("A Week with Stories and Stories by Mircea Sântimbreanu", the cd No. 2 of the CD BOXES AND ROMANIAN STORIES containing 6 CDs with selections from the radio show "Good night children" of the '61 -'71.

2.3. *In the final (post-experimental) stage*, besides observation grid observation, we used the interview-based survey method.

Sample 1 - ACTIVITY **Explain about me** (house-kindergarten)

Scope:

- Developing the capacity to express self-esteem.

Objectives

- To express verbally / denote experiences or activities loved by kindergarten and at home;
- To combine feelings / experiences with home and kindergarten concepts.

Teaching assignment

- Expressing feelings and preferences with reference to their own home and kindergarten.

Methods and procedures: cover, explanation, demonstration, interview.

Teaching aids: Fifi mascot, children's faces, house-nursery decoration.

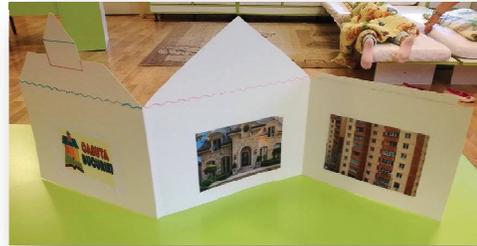
Progress:

In order to prepare the interviewing framework, a folded carton was prepared as a three-ply accordion; each picture was as follows: a photo of a house, a photo of a block, and the joy of the Kindergarten's Kindergarten. I also prepared white figures with the image of the children obtained from the cuts on the copy of a group photo, figurines to be coloured by the children after they were on the way from their home to the kindergarten. The children had to mention first of all where they live (house or block), to answer a few questions in which they were free to colour the figurine they represent. Before we started working with children, we demonstrated how to perform the task.

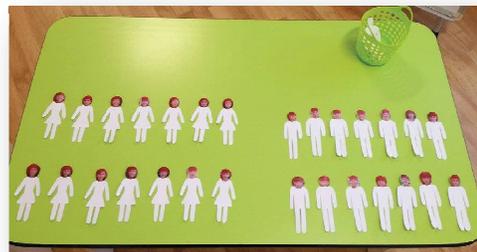
Questions asked:

- *Why do you like to come to kindergarten?*
- *How do you feel when you come to garden?*
- *Why do you like to stay at home?*
- *How do you feel when you go home?*
- *What is happening at home and gardening?*

CONTROL GROUP –before activity



EXPERIMENTAL GROUP – the results of the activity



An analysis of the temates and subtems was also performed for the control group and the experimental group. We could see that there were a variety of answers, although the questions were identical. Each preschool expressed his / her own opinion, which gives us the opportunity to remark that for the same topic of discussion there are different ways of reporting from the participants in the interview.

Also, on both groups, analyses were performed on the type (the example is only for the experimental group):

Experimental group – Non-verbal analysis

Due to the fact that the interview took place in a game environment, the attention of each respondent was captured during the five questions, to which the pre-schoolers responded, with the smile on the lips upon receiving the figure with their own face. After offering the answers, a modest reward rewarded the efforts of pre-schoolers, namely to colour the body of their own figurine, dressing it for the way home from the kindergarten.

Experimental group – Answering accuracy analysis

NR. CRT.	INITIAL	QUESTION 1	QUESTION 2	QUESTION 3	QUESTION 4	QUESTION 5
1.	A. T.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
2.	M. S.	to the point	to the point	detailed response	to the point	to the point
3.	R. P.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
4.	N. E.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
5.	M. V.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
6.	M. L.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
7.	D. A.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
8.	B. B.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
9.	Ş. M.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
10.	T. V.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
11.	M. C.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
12.	N. S.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	did not answer
13.	A. R.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
14.	A. N.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
15.	A. F.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
16.	A. D.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
17.	B. C.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
18.	I. T.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point

This analysis illustrates the participants' involvement and gives an overview of the answers provided in this interview. Of the total of 18 interviewees, one alone did not answer one of the five questions. The responses were on the subject of what the participant implied, but also the fact that the questions were accessible for this age group.

Experimental group – Analysis of spreading

Nr. crt.	Initial	question 1	question 2	question 3	question 4	question 5
1.	A. T.	x	x	x	x	x

Nr. crt.	Initial	question 1	question 2	question 3	question 4	question 5
2.	M. S.	x	x	x	x	x
3.	R. P.	x	x	x	x	x
4.	N. E.	x	x	x	x	-
5.	M. V.	x	x	x	x	x
6.	M. L.	x	x	x	x	x
7.	D. A.	x	x	x	x	x
8.	B. B.	x	x	x	x	x
9.	Ş. M.	x	x	x	x	x
10.	T. V.	x	x	x	x	x
11.	M. C.	x	x	x	x	x
12.	N. S.	x	x	x	x	x
13.	A. R.	x	x	x	x	x
14.	A. N.	x	x	x	x	x
15.	A. F.	x	x	x	x	x
16.	A. D.	x	x	x	x	x
17.	B. C.	x	x	x	x	x
18.	I. T.	x	x	x	x	x

This analysis allows us to observe the participants' activity. Thus, we can say that all the participants have been involved in this interview. In one case the answer to a question is missing, while the remaining 17 participants answered all the questions.

Experimental group – Analysis of responses with emotional involvement

Of the total of five questions, four involve the emotional side, two directly: "What do you feel when (...)" and two indirect "Why do you like (...)"? Pre-schoolers are aware that they are loved by ladies or colleagues, and that they also have feelings of love for those with whom they spend classes in kindergarten. Children enjoy the joy of meeting with their colleagues, although for some of them it is a happiness "to go home and not to the ground" because the parents are waiting for their parents to whom they wish all day or the pet pets they feel attached.

Experimental group – Conversational analysis

Open questions gave free expression. Preschoolers were not in any way encouraged to provide answers, which resulted in missing answers. However, poetic responses have been highlighted: at home "everything is like a funny story", "my little house is like kindergarten, it's beautiful and good", "ladies love our children as our parents love". This kind of responses show a particular sensitivity, despite the young subjects' age.

We can say that the increasing score achieved by the pre-schoolers of the experimental group is due to the explicit intervention program on the development of narrative capacities, developed in this group during the experimental phase.

As a confirmation of the advanced assumptions at the onset of the research, we also present the central table of the evolution of the elements observed in the children's stories in the experimental group.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	Initial stage	Final stage sample2 papucel	Final stage sample 3 story at a minute
Place	55%	96%	85%
Formulas	22%	41%	63%
Intrigue	59%	-	93%
Happenings /	-	70%	93%

Action verbs			
Characters	Reale 48%	<u>Other characters</u>	<u>Other characters</u>
	From the stories 26%	48% reale	59%
	Fantastic 26%	7% fantastic	
	Negatives 7%		
Name for characters	-	-	37%

The phrase "other characters" designates those characters entered in the story in addition to those on the props (Slipper Sample 2 and Sample 2 Sample 3)..

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