

# **EVALUATING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN SOCIAL INTERACTION**





# EVALUATING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN SOCIAL INTERACTION

## I. Evaluation grid of basic, intermediate and advanced levels of communication skills

## II. Description and examples of communication skills

De l'art et d'autre, Paris, France  
Museum of Fine Arts of Budapest, Hungary  
Linköpings universitet, Sweden

Asta Cekaite  
Karin Domeij  
Augustin Lefebvre  
Krisztina Macsay  
Julia Nyikos  
Szilvia Zaray

2022

COOBA  | learning to COmmunicate  
and cOllaborate through  
Bodily expression and Art

 MUSEUM OF  
FINE ARTS, BUDAPEST

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



 LINKÖPING  
UNIVERSITY



# Contents

<b>I. Evaluation grid of basic, intermediate and advanced levels of communication skills.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Who is this grid for?	
How to use the communication skills assessment grid?	
Transferability	
<b>1. Collaborative competence.....</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1 Collaborative competence at the basic level	
1.2 Collaborative competence at the intermediate level	
1.3 Collaborative competence at the advanced level	
<b>2. Argumentation skills.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Intermediate argumentation skills	
2.2 Advanced argumentation skills	
<b>3. Multimodal communication competence.....</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1 Multimodal communication competence at the basic level	
3.2 Multimodal communication competence at the intermediate level	
3.3 Multimodal communication competence at the advanced level	
<b>4. Conflict management competence.....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.0 Lack of conflict management skills	
4.1 Conflict management skills at the basic level	
4.2 Intermediate level of conflict management competence	
4.3 Advanced level of conflict management skills	
<b>5. Leadership competence.....</b>	<b>14</b>
5.1 Leadership competence at the basic level	
5.2 Leadership competence at the intermediate level	
5.3 Conflict leadership competence at the advanced level	
<b>II. Description and examples of communication skills .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Introduction	
Competences observed in social interaction	
Observing communication skills in cultural mediation situations	
<b>1. COLLABORATION SKILLS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Example of collaboration skills at the beginner level</i>	
<i>Examples of collaboration skills at the intermediate level</i>	
<i>Example of advanced level of collaboration skills</i>	
<b>2. ARGUMENTATION SKILLS.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Example of intermediate level of argumentation competence</i>	
<i>Example of argumentation skills at the intermediate level</i>	
<i>Example of argumentation skills at the advanced level</i>	



**3. MULTIMODAL COMMUNICATION.....26**

*Example of a basic level of multimodal communication*

*The situation: silent cooperation through gestures and gaze orientations*

**4. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT.....33**

*Example of conflict management skills*

*Example of the advanced level of conflict management skills*

**5. LEADERSHIP SKILLS.....38**

*Example of leadership at the basic level*

*Example of leadership at the intermediate level*

*Example of advanced level of leadership skills*





# I. Evaluation grid of basic, intermediate and advanced levels of communication skills

## Who is this grid for?

This grid is aimed at professionals and volunteers in the field of education, training or cultural mediation working with adolescents and young adults. This grid will enable them to assess skills of their audience during mediation or training activities and to improve their training proposals. This grid is also intended for researchers or trainers who are conducting research on the development of soft skills in social interaction. Finally, this grid can be used as a training tool for adolescents or young adults who will develop their awareness of soft skills by observing their peers or by self-assessment. The grid can be used in two ways.

## How to use the communication skills assessment grid?

### Two ways to use the grid

We propose two ways to use this grid. The first way can be described as a spontaneous approach which consists of reading the grid in detail before the activity that you wish to evaluate and then looking at the examples provided in the second part of the document. After reading the grid, we recommend discussing in a small group various criteria that will then be observed.

Having in mind the questions referring to the five competences in the grid, the evaluators then observe the whole activity and possibly take notes. After observing the activity, the evaluators review different questions in the grid and answer them according to their observations. Group discussions can follow to share observations and set goals for training or improving problem points.

The second way of using the grid is a data session which is a method derived from research in conversation analysis. According to this approach, the observation phase of the activity is reinforced by a video recording. No specific technique is required for making the recording, except for capturing the whole activity with all participants so that it is possible to observe how they accomplished their shared task. Two cameras may be used for achieving good quality recording. The questions in the grid can then be answered when viewing the video data. The group of evaluators that may include young people in training watches chosen extracts from the video and looks for the answers to the questions in the grid. This search for answers based on the observation of the recorded behaviours will allow evaluators to establish a good understanding the competence level of each participant. Examples of such analysis are provided in the second part of the document entitled "Description and examples of communication skills."

### Transferability

This grid is based on the analysis of activities recorded in the context of COOBA, and it can be used in other contexts where teaching/training/learning is evaluated. The idea behind our approach is that the best way for evaluating teaching/learning is through understanding how it is accomplished in the social interactions between teachers/trainers and learners.



## 1. Collaborative competence

### 1.1 Collaborative competence at the basic level

Is the participant able to:

1.1.1- give minimal responses to the speaker to show that he/she is listening to and following the progress of the speech?

Explanation: for example by saying 'yes' (or any other affirmative term, or continuator of the same type)

Example from our corpus see extract 1.1

### 1.2 Collaborative competence at the intermediate level

Is the participant able to:

1.2.1- take the floor to synthesise what has just been said by the prior speaker in order to advance the activity?

Explanation: this can be a more abstract reformulation of what was said previously by the speaker. This reformulation allows the activity to progress, for example to agree on a conclusion, or to start a new theme.

Example taken from the corpus: extract 1.2

1.2.2- take the floor to continue and/or clarify what another participant has said previously?

Explanation: this can be a turn of speech in which the participant continues or completes the turn of speech of the previous speaker by adding semantic elements relevant to the completion of the activity.

Example from the corpus: extracts 1.3, 2.1

### 1.3 Collaborative competence at the advanced level

Is the participant able to:

1.3.1- ask simple questions to encourage the other person to develop his/her point?

Explanation: this may be a question that leads the speaker to continue talking, or to open a new topic related to the previous one.

Example taken from the corpus: extract 1.4

1.3.2- ask simple questions to better understand what the other person is saying?





Explanation: this can be a question that will lead the speaker to clarify what he/she has just said. The objective of this question is to allow for better understanding among the participants.

Example taken from the corpus: extract 1.4

## 2. Argumentation skills

### 2.1 Intermediate argumentation skills

Is the participant able to:

2.1.1- initiate simple, activity-relevant turns of talk, even if they are incomplete contributions?

Explanation: it is very likely that at this level at least one question is required so that the participant can provide necessary clarifications about what he/she has just said or proposed. This type of turn of talk is often brief.

Example from the corpus: 2.1

2.1.2- produce turns of talk relevant to the development of the activity, in response to questions?

Explanation: these are not questions that initiate or structure the activity as in an interview, but rather questions that provide resources to complete a task in progress, or guide the participant in that task.

Example of the corpus: 2.2

### 2.2 Advanced argumentation skills

Is the participant able to:

2.2.1- mention and/or build a common base of references to contextualise his/her own or other participants' arguments?

Explanation: for the participant, it is a question for creating a base for shared references on which each person in the group can rely for producing own arguments and justifications, or possibly contesting those of others. By building this type of common base, the participants give themselves a resource for evaluating their arguments and affirming their rationality.

Example of the corpus: 2.3

2.2.2- to ask the other person questions concerning the resolution of a practical problem within the activity, even if he/she can propose a solution to this problem?



Explanation: the question here is whether the participant inquires conversation partners about their proposals as a premise for announcing his/her own solution. If no proposal is made in response, the participant's proposal may have a higher value in retrospect.

Example from the corpus: 2.3

2.2.3- take into account the opinion of the other participants when proposing a conclusion to the activity or choosing a way forward?

Explanation: being able to consider all available points of view when proposing a conclusion is a way for ensuring shared agreement.

Example of the corpus 2.3

### **3. Multimodal communication competence**

#### **3.1 Multimodal communication competence at the basic level**

Is the participant able to:

3.1.1- individually generate minimal body movements to contribute to an activity to which other participants are not accustomed?

Examples from the corpus: extracts 3.1 and 3.2

3.1.2- synchronise with another partner through simple body movements for contributing to a new task or body performance?

Examples from the corpus: extracts 3.1 and 3.2

Explanation: In these two cases, the observation of the skill takes place in a situation that is new, or unusual, for the participants. These may be activities of physical expression, sport, cultural mediation, etc., in which the participants have little or no experience. The ability described in 3.1.1 shows that the participant is nevertheless able to make a relevant, albeit brief, contribution to the activity. The ability described in 3.1.2 demonstrates that the participant is able to engage in a minimal form of cooperation with partners.

#### **3.2 Multimodal communication competence at the intermediate level**

Is the participant able to:

3.2.1- coordinate body movements with one or more partners?

Example from the corpus: excerpts 3.3



Explanation: The difference from the basic level of synchronisation is that in this case the participant uses body movements to enter into an action/reaction relationship with one or more partners. This relationship involves, among other things, performing movements that are different from those of the partner. Because of the coordination involved, the body interaction may last longer than simple synchronisation.

### 3.3 Multimodal communication competence at the advanced level

Is the participant able to:

3.3.1 - mobilise available resources to produce relevant contributions, including an activity that he/she has no experience with?

Example from the corpus: extracts 3.4

Explanation: Each activity may require participants to use some resources and forego others. In this case, an advanced multimodal communication skill will be recognisable by the fact that the participant contributes to the progress of the activity while fitting into the constraints it poses (see the example in extract 3.4).

3.3.2 - interpret multimodal actions (talks, gestures, gaze, manipulation of objects, etc.) to understand what their partner is doing?

Example from the corpus: extracts 3.4

Explanation: advanced multimodal communication competence involves being able to interpret actions of other participants in the shared activity (see example in extract 3.4).

3.3.3 - respond with multimodal actions in order to advance the shared activity towards its goals?

Example from the corpus: extracts 3.4

Explanation: advanced competence in multimodal communication implies being able to respond to or coordinate with the actions of other participants in the activity (see example in extract 3.4).

## 4. Conflict management competence

### 4.0 Lack of conflict management skills

4.0.1 Does the participant make contributions to the activity that may generate conflict by using aggressive or hurtful talk towards another participant (i.e. word choice, volume, etc.)?

Explanation: This description refers to the lack of conflict management skills, for example, when at a given moment, an individual appears to have no awareness of the consequences that his/her actions can have on the other participants.



## 4.1 Conflict management skills at the basic level

Is the participant, including instructor/trainer/teacher, able to:

4.1.1- formulate clear, unambiguous instructions?

Example from the corpus: extracts 4.1

Explanation: when a trainer is not able to formulate unambiguous instructions, participants may ask questions or engage in lines of action that are not relevant. In both cases, tensions may emerge due to the mismatch between the trainer's expectations and participants' actions. The ability to formulate clear instructions is, therefore, a part of conflict management insofar as it helps to prevent conflicts from emerging.

4.1.2- respond to participants' questions without displaying negative or hurtful judgement in his/her response (especially after instructions have been given)?

Explanation: A question asked after instructions can sometimes be interpreted as questioning the relevance of the instructions. In this case the instructor may become defensive and, instead of answering the question, engage in questioning the relevance of the question, or denigrate it. Conflict may emerge in this type of situations.

Example from the corpus: extract 4.1

4.1.3- address the participant who asked the question in a personalised manner, while avoiding displaying to the whole group commentaries that could be hurtful?

Explanation: if from the trainer's point of view, the participant's question is irrelevant and could hinder the progress of the activity, the trainer can answer the participant in such a way that does not stigmatise him/her or the question.

Example from the corpus: extract 4.1

Is the participant able to:

4.1.4- not respond in an aggressive tone or refrain from responding if he/she receives an aggressive or dismissive response to the initial question?

Explanation: Refraining from responding to a belittling or aggressive message can be a basic way of preventing conflict, provided that such aggressive messages are not repeated.

Example from the corpus: extract 4.1

## 4.2 Intermediate level of conflict management competence

Is the participant able to:

- identify themes and interpretations that could generate conflict?



- avoid engaging in a topic of conversation that could generate conflict?
- redirect the conversation towards consensual themes?
- resist being destabilised by an argument that is opposed to one's own?
- avoid dwelling on one type of argument?
- change register, argument, or conversation topic to avoid confrontation?

Example from our corpus see extract 4.2

### 4.3 Advanced level of conflict management skills

Is the participant able to:

- oppose the arguments of other participants while ensuring that this opposition will not be interpreted as a source of conflict? (with smiling, with a positive and calm attitude)

Explanation: This component of the conflict management skill consists of the speaker being able to formulate an opposing opinion, to formulate a disagreement while showing that this disagreement does not call into question the nature of his/her relationship with the other members of the group. In this case, the participant may use linguistic elements to soften their stance, or bodily elements such as facial expressions to show that their stance is not a source of conflict. This component of conflict management competence, therefore, involves anticipation, in this case the anticipation that disagreement can be a source of conflict.

Example from the corpus: extract 4.3

- take into account the others' point of view when contributing to the activity?

Explanation: This component of the conflict management competence is based on the participant's ability to anticipate possible causes of conflict when formulating his/her contribution to the activity. Even when formulating a disagreement, taking into account the point of view of the others implies being careful not to say anything that is hurtful to the conversation partners.

Example from the corpus: extract 4.3

- to admit that he/she was wrong or made a mistake?

Explanation: This component of the conflict management competence allows a participant to avoid creating a conflict situation in case of disagreement based on a mistake on his/her part.

Example from the corpus: extract 4.3

- to find possible points of agreement between different views?



- to anticipate what the other person will or might say, in order to avoid sources of conflict, or to propose counter-arguments in advance?

## 5. Leadership competence

### 5.1 Leadership competence at the basic level

Is the participant able to:

5.1.1 - ask a question or take an initiative that enables him/her to move the group activity forward (in a situation where the participant acts in response to an instruction offered by, for example, a trainer)?

Explanation: from the point of view of the organisation of social interaction, the basic element of leadership competence is the ability of a participant to take initiatives that will advance the activity of the group. This component can be mobilised by a participant even when he/she is not identified as the main leader of the activity or group. He/she then becomes a temporary leader. This is particularly the case when a participant carries out a task in response to an instruction and takes an initiative to increase the quality or relevance of his or her contribution.

Example from the corpus: extract 5.1

### 5.2 Leadership competence at the intermediate level

Is the participant able to:

5.2.1- lead a group through a physical space, such as museum or library, while drawing attention of group members to relevant elements of the space for advancing the ongoing activity (in response to an instruction).

Explanation: The space in question could be, for example, a museum hall or a cultural space such as a media library. The intermediate level of leadership competence is justified because the participant takes leadership in an activity according to given instructions. The same action performed in a spontaneous activity can be interpreted as an evidence of the advanced level of leadership.

5.2.2- direct the focus of attention of group members, for example by offering descriptions for guiding their attention and enabling them to construct a certain type of perception or interpretation (in response to an instruction).

Example from the corpus: extract 5.2, 5.3

### 5.3 Conflict leadership competence at the advanced level

Is the participant able to:



5.3.1- lead other group members in carrying out a routine group activity without causing conflict?

5.3.2- lead other group members through different steps of a routine group activity and gain their support?

Explanation: The routine aspect of the activity refers to the function that the participant may have in a group of people within an association or profession. This could be, for example, a trainer who leads on different stages of a group activity. The advanced leadership skills can be recognized when the group accomplishes the tasks proposed by the trainer without conflict, with enthusiasm, and with adherence to the underlying values of the activity (e.g. relevance of the objectives and the means to achieve them).

5.3.3 propose actions, perceptions, and interpretations that the group members agree with for accomplishing the activity?

Explanation: taking initiatives and getting group members to accept the proposed directions demonstrates that the leader presents convincing arguments, which means that the interpretation of the world underlying the argument is accepted by the group members. Thus, the advanced leadership competence is connected to the advanced argumentation competence (see competence 2.3.1)



## II. Description and examples of communication skills

### Introduction

#### Competences observed in social interaction

There are many definitions and approaches to the notion of competence. The aim here is not to provide a complete overview. We will simply retain the idea that a competence refers to a know-how or knowing how to act in social interaction.

Based on the observation of social interactions recorded in cultural mediation situations, we have established a grid for evaluating communication skills. We defined five competences: 1. collaboration, 2. argumentation, 3. multimodal communication, 4. conflict management, and 5. leadership.

Based on an empirical approach, i.e. based on the observation of social interaction, video-recorded and transcribed, a general principle for evaluating a competence is to analyse whether the contribution of a participant allows the group activity to progress, in a decisive way or, on the contrary, in an incomplete way. Does a participant's contribution to the activity enable the group to achieve its objectives, or does it create confusion or conflict?

A decisive way of moving the activity forward can lead to leadership. On the contrary, an incomplete way of moving the activity forward will lead to supportive practices or questioning by other participants.

The impact of a participant's contributions may vary according to the situations in which they are involved, hence the importance of situating any observation in a concrete situation.

The identification of the different levels of a competence is also necessarily contextual. It can happen that by changing context the level of an individual for the same competence is fluctuating. For example, an individual may argue very well with colleagues in a professional context but contribute very little to interactions in an associative setting.

However, it can be assumed that transfers are possible. Allowing an individual to understand that he/she can argue very well in an informal context (for example) can help him/her to find resources to argue better in a formal context, provided that certain parameters are changed (e.g. language level or gestures).

#### Observing communication skills in cultural mediation situations

The choice of anchoring the observation of these skills in cultural mediation situations is linked to the main objective of the COOBA project, i.e. to foster the development of communication skills through cultural mediation and body expression. Therefore, the grid that we present and the explanatory analyses that accompany it complete this objective by offering professional and volunteer trainers a qualitative evaluation tool to better adjust their use of the tools proposed by COOBA.

This grid makes it possible to observe a group in action by asking specific questions about the way in which its members act.





# 1. COLLABORATION SKILLS

## 1.1 Beginner level of collaboration skills

At the beginner level, collaboration skills in group activity involve abilities to listen and respond to the other's contributions. Collaboration also involves abilities to verbally and nonverbally (bodily) indicate interest and support for the others' contributions. At a basic level it means providing minimal responses and through gestures indicating one's understanding or the lack of it. Collaboration also involves adaptation and anticipation skills such as being able to listen carefully and adapt one's messages by responding with a contribution. It also involves being able to ask simple questions or use other ways, such as indicating one's understanding or lack of understanding in order to progress the activity. At this level, coordination of actions is conducted with a limited number of participants. One is able to guide others' actions with some descriptions of the next relevant action.

### *Example of collaboration skills at the beginner level*

#### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

This situation is from a workshop where participants have a task to interpret an image and support their interpretations. In a group task, collaboration skills on the beginner level involve the abilities to listen and respond to the other's contributions in a supportive, affiliative manner. Simple conversational support is associated with skills of minimal feedback: minimal responses, gaze, nods and through gestures. The participants build alignment and agreement and confirm each other's position through minimal means.

#### **Extract 1.1. Group activity during a workshop held in Sweden.**

Participants: Ann and Jan.

1 Jan intressant. Så om om vi ska tolka det så skulle jag säga att. Och det här är bara vad man tror då. Att hon i mitten äger stället. De här är inbjudna. Åtminstone den personen.

**1 Jan interesting. So if we were to interpret that, I would say. And this is just what I think. That she in the middle owns the place. These are invited. At least that person. (looks and gestures towards image)**

2 Ann ja.

**2 Ann yes.**

#### **Observations about the situation**

In this situation, M presents his interpretation of what is going on in the image that they work on (line 1). His explanation is long and elaborate. During M's talk, K is listening attentively and looks at the image and his gestures. When M finishes his interpretation, K produces a minimal feedback with a simple 'yes'.

#### **Observation of collaboration skills at the basic level**

K shows her basic collaboration skills by displaying her attention to M's actions: she listens and does not interrupt M. Collaboration is demonstrated with a minimal response to M's interpretation when K confirms and agrees with a simple 'yes'.



## 1.2 Intermediate level of collaboration skills

At the intermediate level, collaboration skills in group activity involve abilities to listen and respond to the other's contributions in affiliative ways. Collaboration also involves abilities to verbally and nonverbally (bodily) indicate interest and support for the others' contributions by using a variety of verbal resources, in addition to minimal responses that show support, and through gestures indicating one's understanding or the lack of it. At the intermediate level, coordination of actions is conducted with several participants. The evaluated participant is able to guide others' actions with clear descriptions of the next relevant action.

### *Examples of collaboration skills at the intermediate level*

#### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

This situation is from a workshop where participants have a task to interpret an image and justify their interpretations.

#### **Extract 1.2. Group activity during a workshop held in Sweden.**

Participants: Ann and Jan.

1 Jan: Hon får hjälp och han har extra kort med.

**1 Jan: She gets help and he has extra cards with him.**

2 Ann: Alltså det är ett riggat spel.

**2 Ann: So it's a rigged game.**

3 Jan: Det är ett riggat spel.

**3 Jan: It's a rigged game.**

#### **Observation of situation**

In this extract, Jan is explaining his interpretation of what is happening in the image they are discussing. When Jan finishes and rounds up his version (line 1), Ann summarises Jan's interpretation "so it's a rigged game" and Jan repeats Ann's talk telling almost exactly "it's a rigged game" (line 3).

#### **Observation of collaboration skills at the intermediate level**

Collaboration skills in this situation are assessed by looking at how 1) the participant, Ann, who has been listening attentively to Jan's explanation is able to summarise his argument in a rather abstract way, and in so doing, Ann collaboratively develops the progression of the activity. 2) Collaboration skills are also demonstrated by Jan who supports Ann's interpretation by using a verbatim repetition 'it's a rigged game' (line 3).

#### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

This situation is from a workshop where participants have a task to interpret an image and support their interpretations.



### Extract 1.3 Group activity during a workshop held in Sweden

Participants: Ann and Jan

1 Jan: Han känns snäll.

**1 Jan: It seems that he is kind.**

2 Ann: Och utnyttjad.

**2 Ann: And he is being taken advantage of.**

3 Jan: Utnyttjad. A precist.

**3 Jan: He is being taken advantage of. Yes, precisely.**

#### Observations about the situation

Jan continues interpreting the image and its characters. He describes one of them "it seems that he is kind" (line 1). Ann responds by adding her interpretation in line 2, "and he is being taken advantage of". Jan responds by repeating Ann's additional interpretation and he also confirms it strongly with "yes, precisely" (line 3).

#### Observation of collaboration skills at an intermediate level

In this situation, rather complex and advanced collaboration skills such as - being able to progress the task by developing and elaborating on the partner's contribution - are indicated by Ann's contribution in line 2, where she continues and adds relevant aspects to Jan's previous statement. Together they are able to produce a joint description: "he is kind and he is being taken advantage of". Also, collaboration skills are visible in Jan's final explicit confirmation and agreement "yes, precisely".

### 1.3 Advanced level of collaboration skills

At the advanced level, collaboration skills in group activity involve abilities to listen and respond to the other's contributions in affiliative and innovative ways. Collaboration also involves abilities to verbally and nonverbally (bodily) indicate interest toward, support for the others' contributions, and develop the other's contributions by using a variety of verbal resources. It also involves skills for showing appropriate emotional expression when supporting and developing the other's contribution, and abilities for suggesting new conversational themes.

The advanced level of collaboration involves being able to listen carefully in order to adapt messages and anticipate relevant thematic contributions. Anticipation implies being able to ask a variety of questions at the right time in order to move the activity forward.

Coordination of actions is carried out with all participants in the group. The participant is able to guide the actions of others by clearly and elaborately indicating relevant next actions. An advanced level of collaboration can lead to leadership.

#### *Example of advanced level of collaboration skills*

This situation comes from a workshop where participants have a task to interpret an image and support their interpretations.



### Extract 1.4. Group activity during a workshop held in Sweden

Participants: Ann and Jan.

1 Ann: Och den är lite mörk faktiskt även om det är en spelsituation.

1 Ann: **And it's a bit dark actually even if it's a gambling situation.**

2 Jan: Det är så här spelhåla.

2 Jan: **It's like a gambling hall.**

3 Ann: En lönnkrog. Tror du inte det?

3 Ann: **A hidden tavern. Don't you think so?**

4 Jan: Jo, fast för rika då.

4 Jan: **Yes, but for the rich.**

#### Observations about the situation

In this situation, Ann is producing her interpretation of the location in the image. She describes it as a gambling situation (line 1). Jan responds with a similar categorization: 'it's like a gambling place' (line 2) and then he continues with a more precise categorization 'a hidden tavern'. She then asks Jan 'don't you think so'. Upon receiving this question, Ann actively confirms it, and makes a slight modification 'but for the rich' (line 4).

#### Observations collaboration skills at the advanced level

Various collaboration skills are illustrated here. First, (line 2), we see Jan's collaboration by continuing Ann's previous interpretation that he makes more precise: Ann has said 'gambling situation'. Jan slightly modifies and continues by using a similar but more precise description: 'a gambling hall'.

Further collaboration skills are demonstrated when Ann makes an even more detailed description: 'a hidden tavern'. She then asks for the partner's opinions by asking directly: 'don't you think so?' This question directly invites collaboration and joint interpretation. Ann collaborates first in a minimal way by producing a minimal positive response 'yes'. He then develops previous suggestion about 'gambling hall', with a slight modification 'but for the rich'.

Collaboration skills are visible here in the participants' confirmation, elaboration, and modification of their partner's contributions.



## 2. ARGUMENTATION SKILLS

In general terms, argumentation competence refers to the ability of providing arguments, ideas or descriptions that are relevant to the group's activity. The basic level of this competence involves being able to confirm the arguments made by others. At an advanced level, this skill refers to the ability of formulating proposals that can guide the next actions of the group. At the advanced level, this competence is therefore connected to leadership. The basic level of argumentation competence includes the ability to minimally formulate arguments, to contribute to the activity, or to confirm arguments or ideas formulated by other participants.

### 2.1 Intermediate level of argumentation competence

Intermediate level of argumentation competence refers to the production of arguments, descriptions or ideas that are appropriate to the task but may, however, contain incomplete or ambiguous parts. These contributions may lead to negotiations, requests for clarification from other participants, or self-corrections by the speaker. To be effective in the activity, such contributions may require clarification or reformulation by other participants.

#### *Example of intermediate level of argumentation competence*

##### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

This excerpt was recorded during a cultural mediation activity at the Louvre with participant that rarely, if ever, visit museums. During this activity, the participants had to choose a painting according to a simple instruction (for example "the face that expresses the most astonishment"), and then explain their choice to the rest of the group. This situation allows to examine how participants mobilize their argumentation skills for explaining and justifying their choices. The excerpt shows how one of the participants explains his choice by selecting observable elements on the painting observed by the whole group. The excerpt also illustrates how a facilitator supports this participant by offering to make his or her description more explicit. The facilitator mobilizes his or her collaborative competence and facilitates discussion by supporting the participant, and offering clarifications.

##### **Extract 2.1. Louvre visit**

Participants: 4 visitors (YVE and three others) and 2 trainers (JUL, AUG)

- 1 JUL    donc euh le visage qui exprime le plus d'étonnement\  
**1        so uh the face that expresses the most astonishment**
- 2        (0.7)
- 3 YVE    la: la <personne> la femme qui est: (0.4) au milieu du:: du tableau/  
**3        the: the <person> the woman who is: (0.4) in the middle of the:: painting/**
- 4        (3.0)
- 5        eu:h
- 5        u:h**



6 AUG c'est celle qui a une robe  
**6 it is the one who has a dress**

7 YVE celle qui est en jaune\  
**7 the one in yellow**

8 AUG en jaune/  
**8 in yellow**

9 YVE celle qui est en jaune  
 9 the one in yellow

### Observations about the situation

Just before the excerpt begins, the participants have gathered after walking through the museum room. The activity leaders selects YVE to begin the presentation of his chosen painting. Line 1, JUL recalls the instruction of the activity and after a fairly long pause (line 2), YVE formulates an initial description of the painting he has chosen (line 3), on which he can observe the face that expresses the most astonishment.

### A problem of precision in YVE's turn

During this sequence, YVE maintains the glance towards the chosen painting; at the beginning of his turn, he also points with his index finger to this painting. Other participants can thus easily identify the referred painting that is located on a wall among other ten paintings. Moreover, the selected painting contains several characters. There are in fact four women in the center of the painting, and YVE's turn (line 3) does not contain sufficient information so that this identification can be done without ambiguity.

This ambiguity leads the facilitator AUG to make a clarification to define the character YVE is talking about (line 6). YVE provides an additional descriptive element (line 7) to help identify the character he is referring to. This element is repeated and validated by AUG (line 8) and YVE (line 9).

The pause following YVE's turn indicates that at this point none of the interlocutors have additional remarks to resolve the problem of identifying the character chosen by YVE, and that the group has been able to identify this character.

### Observation of argumentation competence at the intermediate level

So far we were thus able to observe how participants themselves identified the fact that, at this point, YVE was mobilizing argumentative competence at the intermediate level: his description did not allow to identify unambiguously the element of the painting to which he was referring. However, it offers enough elements to co-construct a relevant description with AUG's assistance. YVE's contribution allows the activity to progress in an incomplete way.

On the other hand, we saw how AUG mobilized **collaborative competence** by proposing to YVE to bring additional elements so that other members of the group can identify the element of the painting he was referring to. This excerpt thus shows how argumentation skills at the intermediate level leads other participants to mobilizing their collaborative skills, to co-constructing a relevant description, and furthering the activity.



## Example of argumentation skills at the intermediate level

### Presentation of the extract and situation

In this situation, two participants and a facilitator work on a joint task to interpret an image and explain depicted social relations and events. The participants are looking at the image and the facilitator is guiding their discussion. The extract demonstrates argumentation skills at the intermediate level, with one participant's argumentation resulting in requests for clarification and self-corrections.

### Extract 2.2. Group activity during a workshop in Sweden.

Participants: Facilitator Rebecka, participants Zina and Anna.

1 REB: Ser du på konflikt uppstå någonstans? Vad kan hända efter det här?

**1 REB: Do you see conflict occurring somewhere? What can happen after this?**

2 ZIN: mh

3 REB: För det var ju så ni tolkade att de såg lite missnöjda ut.

**3 REB: Because that was how you both interpreted that they looked a little dissatisfied.**

4 ANN: Jag tycker liksom att brudens mamma, om hon sitter där, hon håller i brudens hand och och så tittar hon på den här mannen i hatten som har de här papperna. och jag tycker att hon ser liksom lite ifrågasättande ut eller liksom.

**4 ANN: I kind of think that the bride's mother, if she's sitting there, she's holding the bride's hand and then she's looking at this man with the hat who has the papers. and I think she looks a little questioning or so. (gesture)**

5 REB: Mamman?

**5 REB: The mother?**

6 ANN: Ja mamman är inte helt nöjd här. Det är någonting som hon hon vill säga.

**6 ANN: Yes, the mother is not completely happy here. There is something she want to say.**

### Observations about the situation

In this situation, two group members and a facilitator are engaged in a dialogue. The facilitator is asking questions that require the participants to present their arguments and interpretations. These arguments need to be crafted so that they support the participants' position.

In line 1, the facilitator Rebecka asks several clarification questions: "Do you see conflict occurring somewhere? What can happen after this?". Zina does not provide her argument right away. Rather the facilitator asks another question that takes into account the participants' earlier interpretations "because that was how you interpreted that they looked a little dissatisfied". In response to this leading question, Anna formulates her argumentative interpretation where she supports it with multiple references to visual information that is provided in the image (lines 4, 6). The facilitator does not immediately grasp the referent - whom Anna she is talking about - and the facilitator asks for a clarification (line 5, 'mother?'). Anna then confirms the facilitator Rebecka's talk, and provides an extended argumentative explanation "Yes, the mother is not completely happy here. There is something she wants to say." (line 6).



## Observation of argumentation competence at the intermediate level

The extract shows argumentative skills at the intermediate level, namely participants make contributions that are appropriate to the task but need more elaboration and explanation.

When the facilitator asks several clarification questions (line 1), participants need more guidance and do not respond immediately. When the facilitator asks an additional clarification question (line 3) that synthesises information from various sources, including participants' previous argumentation, one participant is able to formulate a more precise interpretation (line 4).

However, the argumentation needs to be clarified additionally as the facilitator asks a further question (line 5). The participant then formulates a detailed explanation and argument that supports their position based on the visual information on the table.

The facilitator's requests for clarification assist the group members' participation and the situation provides a rich example of how one's argumentation at the intermediate level is collaboratively developed with the help of adequate instructions.

### 2.2 Argumentation skills at the advanced level

Argumentation skills at the advanced level refer to the production of arguments, ideas, proposals that advance the activity at hand and are accepted by other participants, possibly after a phase of negotiation and exchange of views. Advanced argumentation may involve being able to synthesise information from a variety of sources. Finally, advanced argumentation can lead to leadership, as the person who argues well will be able to make a decision that shapes the organisation of the next steps of the group activity.

### *Example of argumentation skills at the advanced level*

#### Presentation of the extract and situation

This excerpt shows the moment of an activity where participants had to agree on how to reproduce an image that they were going to see only briefly. They discuss how they are going to divide up the task of observing certain parts of the image to memorize it.

In this excerpt, ISA demonstrates an advanced level of argumentation. Indeed, her way of contributing to the activity allows her to formulate a way of doing the activity with her partner and thus to take leadership at this point in the activity.

The excerpt thus shows how the skills of argumentation and leadership are connected.

#### Extract 2.3. Workshop of art mediation in Paris

**Participants:** ISA: Isabelle; SEB: Sébastien

- 1 ISA D'accord donc on dit on a une feuille comme ça avec euh le dessin là  
 1 **Ok so let's say that we have a paper like that with uh the drawing**
- 2 qu'on a aperçu, (0.) tu regardes quoi?  
 2 **that we saw, (0.) what are you going to look at?**





3 SEB Je sais pas  
3 **I don't know**

4 ISA c'est pour ça que je te proposais de couper soit comme ça, soit on le fait comme ça  
4 **that's why I suggested you cut either like this, or we do it like this (gestures)**

### Observations about the situation

Isabelle implements her argumentation skill in two steps. In lines 1 and 2, Isabelle reminds Sebastian of the task they have to accomplish together, asking him if he has a solution to solve it. At this point, Sebastian categorizes himself as having no solutions to offer (line 3). These two turns provide a slot for Isabelle to propose her way of performing the task (line 4).

### Observation of skills an advanced level of argumentation skills

#### Constructing the relevance of the question

ISA constructs the relevance of her question (line 2) by first reminding SEB of the material constraints of the activity they have to perform: the format of the representation they are to observe and memorise.

An important method for the advanced level of argumentation is to ensure that interlocutors share the same reference base before making a decision. This is what ISA is doing here by first reminding SEB of the constraints of their activity before asking the question.

#### How does this situation demonstrate the implementation of argumentation skills by Isabelle?

Rather than directly proposing her way of doing things (which she formulates in line 4), Isabelle consults Sebastian on the solution he proposes to accomplish the task at hand. Sebastian's lack of proposal gives weight to Isabelle's proposal, which appears as the solution to a problem for which his partner has nothing to propose.

The fact that Isabelle begins by consulting Sebastian prior to formulating a strategy creates a very different situation than if she had given her proposal at the beginning of the sequence. Isabelle creates a situation that shows her caring about Sebastian's opinion and that her proposal is not imposed, but negotiated. This has an impact on her leadership at this moment.

#### Leadership

Thus, Isabelle takes leadership on the interaction at this moment, since she is the one who decides how to accomplish the task, but we see that her taking leadership is directly linked to the implementation of an argumentative strategy which consists of asking the other's opinion before proposing a solution.

This observation is congruent with research on group cohesion, which shows that leadership is more accepted the more the leader takes into account the point of view of other group members.



### 3. MULTIMODAL COMMUNICATION

It is common nowadays to consider non-verbal aspects of communication. Non-verbal communication refers to all messages that are produced and interpreted in the absence of linguistic resources. Research in conversation analysis, however, shows that it is arbitrary to separate verbal and non-verbal communication. In ordinary social interaction, participants spontaneously combine linguistic, gestural, and visual resources, as well as the manipulation of objects, etc. The notion of multimodal communication refers to this complex reality.

#### 3.1 Basic level of multimodal communication

When considering activities where partners have to coordinate actions with their bodies (such as dance, or some artistic mediation or body expression activities), the basic level of body communication consists of participants performing a single action and repeating it without coordination with another partner, or with a minimal coordination. In this case we will use the term synchronisation instead. A basic level of multimodal communication skills may also correspond to a low capacity to understand what other participants are doing based on the observation of their bodily behavior.

#### *Example of a basic level of multimodal communication*

##### Presentation of the extract and situation

The excerpts 3.1, 3.2, were recorded in the Museum of Fine Arts of Budapest, in a situation where participants had to choose characters from a painting in the museum room, and mime them in such a way that the other members of the group could guess which characters they were and from which painting.

##### Simple transcriptions of embodied interactions with screenshots

As the participants did not speak during their performance, we present some screenshots that allow us to understand the type of performance they accomplished.

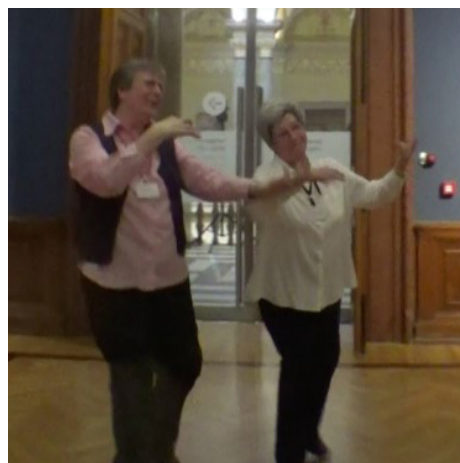
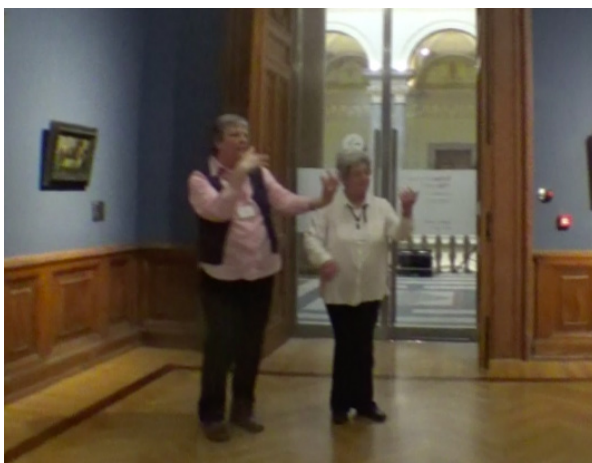
##### Extract 3.1 miming artworks in Budapes



Image 3.1.1 Two participants in the middle mime dance actions of the characters in a painting that the audience must identify. Both participants perform identical actions.



### Extract 3.2 miming artworks in Budapest



Images 3.2.1 and 3.2.2: Two participants mime the actions of playing music of the characters in a painting that the audience must identify. Both participants perform identical actions.

### Observations of body interactions in extracts 3.1 and 3.2

In the two excerpts above, participants perform body movements that mimic characters in paintings. What are the characteristics of these body movements?

These body movements are synchronised: both participants initiate and stop them at the same time. They are also spatially synchronised: the two participants remain next to each other, both in a fixed position (extract 3.1) and when walking (extract 3.2). On the other hand, there is no clear coordination, i.e. there is no response from one participant to the other (this will be the case in the next extract).

Participants accomplish identical movements which do not need to be repeated for very long: circular movement of the hips in one case and miming playing violin in the other case.

Interestingly, in both cases, participants organise their interaction in the complete absence of speech. It is, therefore, through their bodily actions that they organise their interaction.

Finally, it should be noted that in both cases, the participants laugh, which is a way of categorising their actions as fun. Laughing may also be a way of distancing themselves from what they are doing, a way of not taking themselves seriously, which may indicate the novelty of this type of interaction for them and the self-perception of their basic level of competence.

Why is this basic level of multimodal communication

Extracts 3.1 and 3.2 show the basic level of multimodal communication. At this level, participants make a relevant contribution to the activity that are identical, brief, synchronised and not coordinated.

### 3.2 Intermediate level of multimodal communication

In the case of the intermediate level of multimodal communication competence, participants are able to shift from synchronisation to coordination. They manage to interact through different actions, create a complementary relationship between their actions that are different, shifting in time and space.



### The situation

Similarly to the previous excerpts 3.1 and 3.2, excerpt 3.3 was recorded in the Museum of Fine Arts of Budapest, in a situation where the participants had to choose characters from a painting in the museum room, and mime them in such a way that other members of the group could guess which characters they represent, and from which painting.

### Extract 3.3 miming artworks in Budapest



In these four images, the participants mime different actions. Their characters interact by approaching each other, looking at each other, making mimicry or body movements.

### Observations of the body interactions in extract 3.3

Extract 3.3 shows a more complex multimodal collaboration than in extracts 3.1 and 3.2. The body movements are varied, which leaves room for an interaction between the characters. Because of this, multimodal communication is also longer in time. Participants can perform various trajectories, which they choose themselves. During these trajectories, they can pass by each other and interact by moving closer, looking at each other and by making facial expressions.





### Observation of multimodal communication competence

In this case, not only do participants mobilise their body movements to create a personal performance in order to mimic the character in a painting, but they also mobilise their bodies to create an interaction with other characters.

This interaction consists of participants bringing their bodies together and looking at each other. It has mainly an expressive function, i.e. it is aimed at the audience who is observing the scene, but it is not aimed at achieving a more complex objective as will be the case in the following extract. The competence here is intermediate because although it involves coordination between partners, it is not mobilised for the accomplishment of a complex task.

### 3.3 Advanced level of multimodal communication

At the advanced level, multimodal communication competence enables tasks to be accomplished by using simultaneously different resources: verbal, visual, gestural, object manipulation, body movement, etc. In everyday life or in professional life, participants combine these different resources to achieve their goals spontaneously. In order to make the role of the body in communication visible, we conducted an experiment for the COOBA project in which participants had to achieve a goal without speaking. The observation of this activity allows us to define the advanced level of multimodal communication competence.

#### *The situation: silent cooperation through gestures and gaze orientations*

Extract 3.4 shows the sequence of an exercise in which each participant has a coloured dot on their foreheads, without knowing which colour it is. Without speaking, they have to find the other members of the group who have the same colour on their foreheads. The extract shows how the participants move towards each other, observe each other and gesture to decide who goes with whom. The specificity of the exercise is that each person needs two others to identify their own colour by comparison.

#### **Extract 3.4: Finding one's group by interpreting body actions of other participants**

Extract 3.4 shows how participants make visible through body movements, gestures, and gaze advanced multimodal communication skills. They establish connections through their gestures, body orientations, gaze orientations.



1. F gazes toward A and starts walking toward her



2. A gazes toward F





3. *F* gazes at *H* smiling



4. *F* turns twd *H*; *A* gazes twd *H*



5. *F* turns gaze twd *A*



6. *A* nods twd *H*



7. *A* gazes twd *F* with with a questioning gesture (right hand over mouth)  
7. *H* gazes twd *A*



8. *H* gazes and points twd *A* and  
8. *F* gazes twd *A*







9. *H* gazes and points twd *F*



10. *H* points twd *A* and *F* (twice)  
10. *F* gazes twd *H*



11. *A* initiates a pointing gesture



12. *A* points twd her front, *F* points twd *H*



13. *F* points twds *A*



14. *A* points towards *H*



15. *H* points towards *A* and *F*



### **Observation of the body interaction**

The sequence involves three participants, A on the left of the images, F in the middle and H on the right. At the beginning of the clip, F walks towards A and looks at her, then turns her gaze towards H, then her whole body. By this double action of walking towards her future partners while looking at them, F creates a space in which the three can interact. We can see that A looks alternately at F and at H as well (images 1 - 5). In image 6, A nods her head confirming her involvement in their shared activity. In image 7 A mimes a question by putting a hand over his mouth. In image 8, it is H who establishes a link between A and F with a finger gesture. From a series of pointing gestures towards each other, the three participants establish that they have the same coloured dots on their foreheads.

### **Observation of the advanced level of multimodal communication**

What the above observations show is that each of the participants was able not only to produce body movements to coordinate with the other two, but also to interpret the body actions of the other two in order to organise their own body actions and, step by step, accomplish their task, i.e. to identify the participants wearing the same tag. Although this was the first time the participants completed this task, they managed to achieve their goal without exchanging words.

Multimodal communication competence at the advanced level, therefore, corresponds to the ability to produce appropriate contributions for accomplishing an activity by making use of available resources. It also includes the ability to interpret what others are doing during the task.





## 4. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

From an interactional perspective, conflict management competence is about how conflicts are anticipated or resolved if they occur in a social interaction. Understanding conflict in a social interaction involves understanding the situation, the activity taking place, and the different social categories of the participants, which may involve hierarchical links and raise identity issues.

### 4.1 Basic level of conflict management skills

A complete lack of conflict management skills involves making contributions that will cause conflict. This level also implies the inability to anticipate a conflict or to produce contributions to the interaction that will sustain the conflict. The basic level involves understanding other participants' perspectives and causes of the conflict, but not necessarily being able to solve it. At this level, participants can show in their ways of talking and behaving that they are willing to avoid the conflict, even if their contributions may appear awkward.

### *Example of conflict management skills*

#### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

The extract was recorded during a workshop with a group and a facilitator. A conflict emerges during the formulation of instructions by the facilitator, when one of the participants asks a question about the nature of the instructions which the facilitator refuses to answer.

#### **Extract 4.1 art mediation activity recorded in Budapest**

The activity takes place in English. VAN is the facilitator and JAN is a participant.

1 VAN:           Open your eyes without speaking and here is the instruction without speaking. I would like you to find your group (0.) mh/

2 JAN: With the same color?

3                   (0.)

4 VAN:           WITHOUT SPEAKING ((*high voice volume and large gestures that J's made a mistake*))

5 JAN: Ah ok?

#### **Observations about the situation**

In line 1, the facilitator issues a simple directive to the group to open their eyes without speaking and to 'without speaking' find one's own group. The facilitator presents instructions that are simple and not very detailed (line 1), specifying briefly how the task has to be completed (line 1) - namely, without speaking - but there are no guidelines concerning what criteria apply when forming a group.

Jan responds with a question "with the same color"? that requests a clarification of the task. The facilitator does not answer the participant's question and does not clarify the instruction (line 4) but in an exaggerated



loud volume and large gestures repeats 'without speaking'. Her talk categorizes Jan's question as a problem. The loud volume and facilitator's exaggerated gestures can be interpreted as emotionally charged open criticism of the participant Jan.

In line 5, Jan rather silently admits her mistake. She markedly closes her mouth, showing "without words", as requested by Van. She then engages in the task and starts looking for other group members. Her immediate acquiescence deflates a potential conflict escalation.

### Observation of conflict management skills

The extract shows both the beginner level and intermediate level of conflict management skills. The situation involves a minor conflict that has a potential to evolve into a greater conflict. The beginner level conflict management skills are shown in the facilitator's actions that include first unclear instructions, a refusal to provide an explanation of the participant's request for more information, and the facilitator's blunt correction of the participant's question. Such contributions show minimal level of conflict management skills because the correction is made public for all group members; it is very loud and could escalate the conflict if Jan would have responded with a similar emotionally charged action as the instructor's correction.

Jan's contribution indicates the intermediate level of conflict management skills because it deflates the conflict. Jan's response indicates her polite acceptance, and she follows the facilitator's instructions. In such a way, the conflict escalation is avoided.

### 4.2 Intermediate level of conflict management skills

At this level, participants have a good understanding of the situation and what should or should not be done in order to avoid conflict. However, even if the participants are able to foresee what should be done, conflicts can nevertheless emerge. In this case, the participants have resources to apologize or to negotiate propositions and solutions that will avoid conflict. They are also able to understand their partner's viewpoint and to take them into account in order to find an acceptable solution.



Note that a participant is more likely to generate conflict the more he or she takes the lead in the activity. Indeed, engaging in an activity can lead to differences in opinions about how to accomplish it in the best manner, and potentially to conflict. Again, the best way to avoid conflict is to be able to take into account all participants' views.

### **Martial arts insight into conflict management**

The image below is taken from an activity in which participants had to simulate a physical/body conflict situation by making contact and pushing towards each other. This activity is an opportunity to observe and reflect on the different aspects of conflict resolution from the perspective of Japanese martial arts.

#### **Extract 4.2 Drawing on martial arts for conflict management**

##### **Observation of the situation**

The two participants are pushing each other; they are, therefore, in opposition, which is the central characteristic of conflict. In an oppositional situation, forces moving towards each other can cancel each other out and produce a status quo. In the case of verbal opposition, both opponents may persist in repeating their arguments without listening to those of the other.

It is possible, however, that one of the two opponents will win over each other. In the case of a verbal confrontation, social or hierarchical status may influence the outcome of the conflict. A new situation emerges where one participant becomes the dominant one and the other the dominated.

Reversals can still take place, and the dominant/dominated relationship can be reversed. A conflict situation is therefore also characterised by a high degree of uncertainty about how the relationship between the opposing participants will develop.

##### **Analysis of elements of conflict management competence**

A central tenet of conflict resolution from the martial arts perspective is the ability to maintain integrity. From a bodily perspective, this means being able to maintain one's balance and verticality in the face of an offensive movement or thrust. From the perspective of verbal interaction, this translates into the ability of not to being thrown off balance by the opponent's arguments or actions.

Managing conflict well also implies the ability to move, to be flexible, and adaptable. In the case of a physical attack, the ability to move or absorb means that the attack is not received head-on but is allowed to pass. In the case of a verbal interaction, mobility can mean changing perspective, tone or theme so that the other's arguments become untethered.

Finally, martial arts teach control over the time of the interaction, and in particular, the ability to anticipate the next movement through a fine observation of the situation. In the case of a verbal interaction, it is a question of being able to anticipate different words that may generate opposition, or on the contrary, to support the interaction and the activity.



### 4.3 Advanced level of conflict management skills

The advanced level of conflict management mainly involves being able to anticipate and therefore avoid conflict. This level of competence implies having a clear understanding of the social situation in which the group is interacting, a fine-tuned understanding of participants, their beliefs, their goals, and their ways of behaving. Based on this social and psychological knowledge, it is possible to determine which action will be relevant or not.

However, conflicts may arise between other group members despite all the precautions taken. In this case, an advanced level of conflict management skills will enable participant to suggest a solution. In this way, the advanced level of conflict management can lead to leadership, as the participant will have resources to facilitate group cohesion.

#### ***Example of the advanced level of conflict management skills***

In the case we are going to observe, the participants have the resources to apologise or to negotiate proposals, solutions that will help to avoid the conflict. They are also able to understand their partner's point of view and to take it into account in order to find an acceptable solution.

#### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

In this extract, a group of participants are engaged in an activity where they have to analyse and present an interpretation of the situation that is depicted in a painting. They have to provide support for their interpretation by referring to bodily characteristics and actions of the characters in the painting.

#### **Extract. 4.3. Group work during a cultural mediation workshop in Sweden.**

Participants Zina, Anna and Mina.

1. ZIN: Det här blicken. Och för att han står där och titta på hur de håller i varann. ((takes Mina's arm))  
**This look. And because he's standing there watching how they hold each other. ((takes Mina's arm))**
2. ANN: Det är liksom lite frånvänt.  
**It's kind of a bit out of place.**
3. MIN: mh
4. ZIN: Det känns att det är någonting på gång där.  
**It feels like there's something going on there.**
5. ANN: mh
6. ANN: Brudgummen är lite röd i ansiktet så jag nu. ((laughter))  
**The groom is a little red in the face, I saw it now. ((laughter))**
7. MIN: Jag tolkar inte så.  
**I do not interpret it like this.**



8. MIN: Jag tolkar. Det är inte så Zina. ((laughing voice))  
**I interpret. It's not so Zina. ((laughing voice))**

9. All participants laugh for considerable time

10. ANN: Ok berätta! Hur är det?  
**OK tell me! How is it?**

11. ZIN: Du är alltid positiv. Jag tycker att-  
 You're always positive. I think that-

12. MIN: Nej jag tycker att hon kanske ((gestures, 'dreaming' facial expression)) daydreaming. Hon drömmar 'jag vill också vara 'brud' jag vill också va så. Medan han är lite så hur man säga frånvänt.  
**No, I think she might ((gestures, 'dreaming' facial expression)) daydreaming. She dreams' I also want to be 'bride' I also want to be like this. While he is a bit, like, how to say turned away.**

13. ANN: mh

### Observations about the situation

In lines 1-3, all participants provide their own and confirm each other's interpretations. Zina is the driving force in formulating her argument and explaining her position, namely, that 'it feels like there's something going on there'. She indicates that some collusive actions take place between the characters in the painting. She gets repeated support from Anna (in lines 2, 5-6) and they build a successful alliance by collaboratively supporting this interpretative version. At this moment, the third participant, Mina, openly and bluntly objects, telling 'I do not interpret it like this' (line 7). Her disagreement can potentially result in a conflict but she is smiling when making her objection. In response, all participants laugh together for some time. Anna then asks for a clarification (line 10, Ok, tell me. How is it?). Zina makes a positive endorsement of Mina. She characterises her as 'always positive' (line 11). Mina responds to Anna's request for clarification and explains why she disagrees (line 12).

### Observation of the advanced level of conflict management skills

In this extract, we can see various ways to manage conflict. A conflict can potentially arise when one of the participants, Mina, somewhat bluntly, but also while smiling, objects the other participants' collaborative interpretation. In this situation, one could expect that the conflict escalates if the participants do not employ rather sophisticated ways of responding by mitigating the disagreement. Mina herself shows considerable conflict management skills because she smiles and expresses positive emotions. Her positive emotional expressions allow her to mitigate the disagreement. Anna also shows her advanced conflict management skills because she inquires the partner's viewpoint. Zina's compliment to Mina, and Mina's extended explanation of her opinion also constitute conflict management skills. The participants are able to negotiate solutions that help avoiding conflict. The participants also show their understanding of other's viewpoints, take them into account for finding an acceptable solution.



## 5. LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership refers to the competence that allows a participant to take the initiative for accomplishing an activity, and at a more advanced level, for directing the activity of a group, proposing ways to accomplish the tasks of the activity, and also creating cohesion within the group. Finally, leadership competence implies being able to resolve conflicts that may arise within a group, or at a more advanced level, to prevent them from arising.

### 5.1 Basic level of leadership skills

The basic level of leadership skills involves being able to listen to others' arguments and understand basic arguments when communicating. It also involves skills of being able to express one's own opinions orally and in simple writing. Leadership at the basic level requires skills in participating in a debate by providing basic arguments and relying on basic narrative skills. This also involves some abilities in decision making that take into account at least one of the participant's perspectives.

Being able to lead an activity also requires managing stressful, competitive and unknown situations. At the basic level it involves responding to stressful situations by recognizing the group's collaboration difficulties and temporarily stopping an activity if participants display being under pressure.

### *Example of leadership at the basic level*

In the following extract we present a component of leadership competence which consists of a participant being able to take an initiative that will move the activity forward. This could be an introduction of a new topic to be discussed among participants, an introduction of a clarification, or a formulation of a new subtask relevant to the ongoing activity.

### **Presentation of the extract and situation**

This excerpt begins at a point where YVE has just identified a character in a painting in response to the instruction to find the face in the museum room that expresses most astonishment. A pause closes the sequence where YVE has identified for other members of the group the character he has chosen from the painting. We will be interested in how YVE restarts the activity, moving it forward by elaborating with a question the next relevant task for him to accomplish, taking the leadership position at that moment. Leadership competence here refers to the ability to take the initiative to move the activity forward.

### **Extract 5.1. Visit to the Louvre.**

Participants: 4 visitors (YVE and three others) and 2 facilitators (JUL, AUG)

10 (2.8)

11 YVE euh pourquoi?

**11 uh why?**

12 AUG oui

**12 yes**



- 13 (2.6)  
 14 AUG qu'est ce [qui a fait que t'as choisi eu:h  
**14 what [made you choose u:h**
- 15 YVE [bah:  
**15 [uh:**
- 16 YVE bah parce que les: c'est interrogatif par rapport euh: (à) l'enfant/  
**16 because the: it's interrogative in relation to uh: (to) the child/**
- 17 (0.9)
- 18 qui est euh:: (0.5) qui est au: par terre/  
**18 which is uh:: (0.5) which is on: the floor/**
- 19 (3.0) ((continues to look towards the canvas))

### Observations about the situation

The pause in line 10 indicates that no participant has a contribution that can move the activity forward. On the other hand, since YVE has already identified a character, the activity could end there. However, in line 11, YVE formulates a question that he addresses both to the group and to himself. By asking "why", he makes this question relevant for advancing the activity around the explanation of the reason for his choice. He then describes the observable relationship between two characters in the painting that justifies his choice.

### Observations of leadership at the basic level

This extract shows a form of leadership insofar as YVE takes the initiative to add an extension to his contribution to the activity and make this contribution more precise and adequate to the expectation of justifying his choice. This is an extension that YVE proposes on his own initiative to the instruction previously formulated by one of the facilitators. By providing a relevant contribution for continuing the activity, YVE can be considered as taking the lead. At the same time, this initiative is part of an activity already initiated by another. To this extent, it can be said that this is only a minimal level of leadership.

## 5.2 Intermediate level of leadership skills

The intermediate level of leadership skills involves being able to listen to and understand arguments developed by the other, and make various arguments when communicating. It also involves skills of being able to express one's own opinions orally and in simple writing that could require revisions. Leadership at the intermediate level requires skills in participating in a debate by giving arguments and relying on some narrative skills. Leadership involves abilities in decision making that take into account multiple participants' perspectives.

Being able to lead an activity also requires managing stressful, competitive and unknown situations. At the intermediate level this involves responding to stressful situations by recognizing group's collaboration difficulties, by stopping activity and re-centering debate while being under pressure.



### **Example of leadership at the intermediate level**

The following extract shows the intermediate level of leadership competence in an art mediation activity in the same group as in extract 5.1. The participant, JPA, who has no more experience in visiting museums than YVE, takes the initiative to carry out the activity in response to the invitation of the facilitators JUL and AUG. In extract 5.2, JPA leads the group to the painting he has chosen while defining the criteria he has developed to make his choice. In extract 5.3, JPA takes the initiative to extend his description based on the observations he has made during his visit to the museum.

#### **Extract. 5-2. Recorded during a cultural mediation activity at the Louvre, Paris**

1 JPA ouais/ moi euh pour moi celui-là qu'ch préfère/ euh c'est

**1 yeah/ i uh for me the one i prefer/ uh it's**

2 euh c(el)ui là là haut

**2 uh that one there over there**

**3** (0.8)

4 AUG [on va le voir/

**4 we go and see it/**

5 JUL [celui là/ d'accord

**5 that one/ ok**

(0.6)

6 JUL donc eu:h l'architecture d'immeuble (0.5) la plus

**6 so uh the architecture of building the most**

7 intéressante

**7 interesting**

8 JPA parce que:

**8 because**

**9** (1.8)

**((the group walks until the painting chosen by JPA))**

10 JPA j'trouve que c'était l'immeuble qui était le plus dur à

**10 i find that it was the building the more difficult to**

11 faire (1.1) les tours euh: c'est plus difficile si c'est

**11 do the towers uh: it's more difficult if it's**

12 rond que si c'est carré/ (0.4) (il me semblait?) voilà/

**12 circular than if it's square (it seemed to me?) that's it**





### Extract 5.3 The participant shows appropriation of the works in the museum room

(0.7) j'trouve l'architecture là haut#1 plus jolie parce que y a des colonnes/#2 là#3 (0.8)



les colonnes j'trouve ça plus#4 beau même mais c'est peut-être moins dur/ (0.7)

### Translation of Extract 5.3

JPA I find the architecture up there more beautiful because there are columns (Images 2, 3) the columns I find more (Image 4) beautiful but it's less difficult (to draw)(0.7)

### Observations about extracts 5.2 and 5.3

In extract 5.2, in response to the facilitators' invitation, JPA points to the painting he has chosen, the one that shows the most interesting architecture (see JUL's reminder of the instruction, line 6) and then walks towards this painting, followed by the group (line 9). He then explains the reason for his choice, namely, the fact that round architectural elements are more difficult to represent than square ones. JPA is attracted by the technical aspect of these representations.

In extract 5.3, JPA returns to the way he has chosen this painting by comparing it to two other paintings that he points at one after another (see images above). By explaining the reasons for his choice through comparison (i.e. the columns are prettier but less difficult to draw), he produces additional arguments to justify himself, i.e. rationalizes his choice (extract 5.2). At the same time he directs the attention of the participants towards elements to be observed on the different canvases.

### Intermediate level leadership competence

How do JPA's contributions relate to leadership competence? In the first case (Extract 5.2), JPA takes the initiative to direct the group in the museum room to the selected painting, while formulating observation criteria that the group members can use to observe the painting. In the second case (Extract 5.3), JPA directs the group's attention to two other paintings while proposing his observation criteria. JPA implements his leadership competence not only by directing the group members in the museum room, but also by providing them with observation criteria to guide their visual perceptions of the paintings displayed in the room.



Note that this leadership is made possible by the fact that JPA is able to mobilise knowledge that he has just constructed by observing the paintings in the room. This appropriation of the works in the room is itself made possible by a type of instruction, which is a part of the informal approach to cultural mediation.

### 5.3 Advanced level of leadership skills

The advanced level of leadership skills involves being able to listen to, read and take into account others' complex arguments when communicating. It also involves skills of expressing opinions underpinned by multiple complex arguments orally and in writing. Leadership at the advanced level requires skills in participating in a debate, giving well-structured arguments, and relying on complex narrative skills. Leadership involves complex abilities in decision making that takes into account multiple participants' perspectives.

Being able to lead an activity at the advanced level also requires managing stressful, competitive and unknown situations by remaining calm, polite, and efficient under pressure. One is able to efficiently assign and share tasks and react promptly to collaboration difficulties by re-centering debate in order to avoid conflict.

#### *Example of advanced level of leadership skills*

The advanced level of leadership skills involves being able to listen to, read and take into account others' complex arguments when communicating. Leadership involves complex abilities in decision making that take into account multiple participants' perspectives.

#### Presentation of the extract and situation

In this extract, two participants are involved in a joint task of interpreting a painting and supporting their interpretations of the characters' gazes and bodily actions. This situation exemplifies advanced leadership skills in decision making that takes into account multiple participants' perspectives.

#### **Extract 5.4. Group activity during a workshop recorded in Sweden**

Participants: ANN and JAN.

1 ANN: Jag tror faktiskt att vi är ganska överens om den här bilden eller? Eller har du något annat som du känner. (paus) Det är lite svårt att se faktiskt.

**1 ANN: I actually think we pretty much agree on this picture, don't we? Or do you have something else that you would like to-. (pause) It's a little hard to see actually.**

2 JAN: Jag upplever ju att det är mörka ögonen är på den sidan. Så att han tittar inte mot kvinnorna utan bort på något sätt. Men de som fuskar skulle kunna vara i maskopi. Men jag upplever att han tittar bort och försöker få dem att inte ägga märke till att han fuskar. Och de. Jag tycker att hon tittar åt tjänarinan håll.

**2 JAN: I think that the dark eyes are on that side (points). So that he does not look at the women but he looks away in some way. (pause) But those who cheat could be in agreement with each other. But I feel that he is looking away and trying to get them not to notice that he is cheating. And they. I think she's looking in the maid's direction.**

3 ANN: Mh det tycker jag också.

**3 ANN: Mh I think so too.**



### **Observations about the situation**

In this situation, in line 1 Ann summarises her evaluation that they, both participants as a team, have finished their interpretation of a specific image and that they agree with each other. She also asks for confirmation from Jan "I actually think we pretty much agree on this picture don't we?" and asks another question "Or do you have something else that you would like to-." (line 1). Jan responds by adding and explaining his position and interpretation (line 2). He expands his interpretation and talks for a considerable time (line 2). Ann finishes this topic when she confirms Jan's interpretation and gives her extended approval 'mh I think so too.' (line 3).

### **Observation of leadership skills at the advanced level**

This extract demonstrates the advanced level of leadership skills in various ways. First of all, we can see that both Ann and Jan show their shared leadership at the advanced level by listening and taking into account complex arguments that they produce when addressing each other (lines 1-3). Both Ann and Jan listen attentively to each other's long explanations and descriptions. For instance, after Jan's explanation is provided without interruption, Ann confirms it and solidifies the group's shared opinion. Similarly, in line 1, Ann's actions indicate her advanced leadership skills, in that she both formulates their joint position, and invites the other participant's confirmation. In such a way she actively takes into account the participant's perspectives, using them as a ground for decision making. She structures the activity's development and indicates clearly and politely that they need to take a next step in the activity.

