ACTION RESEARCH TRIALS (ARTS) – EVALUATION REPORT

LATVIA

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CONTENTS

1. OVERVIEW ART

Table 1

General characteristics of the improvisation workshops and their participants

ENABLES Partner:	**The Institute of Lifelong Learning and Culture VITAE, Latvia**
Focus of ARTS:	Improvisation/drama for promoting students' distributed leadership skills
Timeframe of ARTs:	From 5 January 2021 to 15 June 2021 in three stages: 1) Preparatory stage for getting ready for improvisation workshops and research (from December 2020 to 14 January 2021); 2) The trial of the method of improvisation /drama with two groups of students from different secondary schools of Latvia using Zoom and YouTube (on 15 January and 23 March 2021); 3) Analysis of the live observations and students' reflections shared in the end of the improvisation workshops (from 15 January to 10 April 2021).
Number of Participants	Nine project team members and 35 secondary school students
Description of participants	Reflections were received from 33 students (four male and 29 female students of grade 10 (five students), grade 11 (19 students) and grade 12 (nine students)). The information about the opportunity of participating in the improvisation workshops was provided to the students by the project team. Those students who participated at the 15 January improvisation workshop already had some prior experience in carrying out leadership related activities and they coped with the tasks more smoothly compared to the 23 March group. As for the project team, Anna Šteina was the facilitator who delivered the improvisation workshops both times; six colleagues were responsible for the live observation sessions, two - for the IT technical support.
Duration rate of ARTs	Each improvisation workshop lasted three hours (from 12:00 to 15:00 Latvian time).
Type of Outputs:	1. The agenda of the improvisation workshops (see Table 2). 2. Five observation sheets (see Tables 3-7) elaborated to assess the students' work and behaviour and make comments on them in different phases of the improvisation workshops. 3. Eight observation sets filled in with the analysis conducted by the observers in a live mode and their assessments of the students' work and

behaviour in joint activities and while performing specific tasks in small groups. Each observer was linked to one small group of four or five students. The groups were formed randomly before the improvisation workshops; also, each group's formal leader was chosen randomly without any prior discussions. In the very beginning of the improvisation workshops each small group was informed who their formal leader was.

4. 13 video-recordings of both improvisation workshops' different activities which were realised either by all the students together or by small groups.

5. A Google Form questionnaire (see Table 9) elaborated for collecting students' reflections on their experiences gained during the improvisation workshops related to different aspects of distributed leadership (see the questionnaire in Latvian https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSei3BKwO5YqleYj3_RBLxktC-Wmcw8Yz_qOghxjueHG9LuqDg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0).

6. Google Drive answer sheet with the 33 students' reflections arranged in the end of the improvisation sessions. Two students did not participate in the reflection session.

7. Tables and diagrams (see Tables 8, 10-21, Figures 1-5) of the analysis conducted based on the observers' comments and assessments including the students' reflections.

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD

The distributed leadership promoting approach using improvisation which was elaborated and tried by the Latvian team is based on the integration of the matters of:

1) distributed leadership as a process of sharing legal, ownership or moral authority among individuals in the society or in the institution, collaborating and creating new joint values for the sake of community development and is an essential fundamental for living and acting in the democratic society (see the definition in literature analysis by Rolands Ozols);

2) arts-based and embodied practices for distributed leadership development as an individual's or a group's development process through bringing in new dimensions for thinking, feeling and behaving in real life situations using different cultural forms and ways of expression in order to obtain a set of skills needed for distributed leadership;

3) improvisation as drama therapy method for promoting self-confidence, initiative, active position, fantasy, flexible thinking and acting; using one's voice, facial expressions and body; talking about feelings freely; creating emotions; willing and being able to work with others; being able to take the lead and follow others; and being able to ask questions for clarification (Hogeschool van

Arnhem en Nijmegen (HAAN), Studienkurs Observation und Indizierung. 2007-2008).

Acting is no longer just a concept related to the theatre or the actor's work. Today, almost everyone faces the need to speak in front of a larger or smaller audience. Speaking in public imposes responsibility, it's like an exam. "Will my speech be interesting, fascinating, clear and understandable?"- this might be a question which worries almost everybody. Therefore, the improvisation method implies:

- the introduction of basic theoretical principles of structuring speech and expressing oneself;
- techniques of controlling breathing for relaxing and overcoming stress and fear;
- getting acquainted with the "Four Elements" (Fire, Land, Water and Air) elaborated by Helmert Wounderberg, the Danish playwright, director and lecturer, and practice them for better understanding of oneself and other people, expressing emotions and understanding emotions and body language;
- working together sharing responsibility, taking initiative, following the leader and when needed also taking the lead;
- working very actively, listening to each other, making joint decisions within a short period of time, creating new ideas and presenting them;
- introducing various elements of acting that are used not only in the stage work, but also help to perform in front of an audience or even to solve problems and overcome various challenges promoting also different elements of distributed leadership.

Research methods

Data collection methods:

1) Observation of students' performance related to distributed leadership skills during improvisation workshops; quantitative data;
2) Students' reflections on what they experienced and acquired in the improvisation workshops; both quantitative and qualitative data.

Data analysis methods

1) Mathematical analysis of the quantitative assessments given by observers and students' answers to closed- ended questions during their reflections;
2) Qualitative content analysis of the students' reflection texts.

The research question: How does improvisation impact distributed leadership skills?

3. Description of the ART

a. Preparation and recruitment process

The preparation, recruitment and realisation of the improvisation workshops were carried out as follows:

1. Elaboration of its content and the draft of the action plan (Anna Šteina, 5-10 December 2021).
2. Discussion of each activity and identification of distributed leadership elements that could be promoted owing to these activities (Anna Šteina, Karine Oganisjana, 8 January 2021).
3. Based on this analysis, elaboration of observation sheets offering as assessment criteria the previously identified distributed leadership elements. The assessment was designed in a 5-point system; 1 – not observed and 5 – observed distinctly (Karine Oganisjana, 11-12 January 2021).
4. A last day discussion and finalization of the agenda and observation sheets; speaking over a number of organisational, tactical and technical issues related to our work in the online mode using the Zoom platform and a YouTube channel (14 January 2021). Specification of everybody's responsibilities during the workshop (Anna Šteina the creator of the workshop and facilitator), Roland Ozols (addressing all the participants and explaining the goal and objectives of the project and workshop), Karine Oganisjana, Daiga Barančane and Agnis Timermanis (the observers); Jurita Kuola (IT support); and Normunds Boroviks (YouTube streaming).
5. The recruitment of the students was a challenging task because of the lack of the enthusiasm of students to participate in an online improvisation workshop; this task was realised by Linda Loce who had to solve various organisational questions.
6. The number of the students who participated in the 15 January workshop was 15; accordingly, they were divided into three small groups. As for the 23 March improvisation workshop, the number of the students was 20. Therefore, they worked in five small groups. That is why, the observation and assessment in the second improvisation workshop were performed by five observers (Daiga Barančane, Agnis Timermanis, Ineta Lāce-Sējāne, Linda Loce and Anna Šteina).

b. General context of the ART event

Using improvisation as means for promoting students' distributed leadership skills requires their active integrative engagement into bodily actions, mind activities, speaking out their ideas and feelings experienced, creating and managing emotions, collaborating with others in decision making and problem solving, leading and when needed also giving space to others to lead processes and express themselves. If all this might be realisable in face-to-face improvisation workshops, the COVID-19 pandemic reality in which we are living now, made our task very complicated. In the beginning we hoped to wait for more favourable conditions and opportunities for going to schools and working with students directly, but the worsening situation caused by the lockdown in Latvia made us think and find some alternative digital solutions. As it was our first trial, we had to plan the work very precisely discussing all the details and agreeing on all the tactical issues. In the beginning of the workshop, the students were informed that we were conducting research within the Erasmus+ project ENABLES on the impact of improvisation on distributed leadership. Rolands Ozols explained to them that to collect data and analyse them, we needed also

to make video-recordings of the workshop, but these materials would be used only for the purpose of research but not for sharing with others or exhibiting in mass media. As there were not any objections, the entire workshop was video recorded. That enhances our confidence that we could watch any episode when needed to refresh our perception of the students' work and behaviour. With the critical view of the processes, which we could observe in our monitor screens, it should be mentioned that such improvisation sessions have certain limitations compared with the live workshops, as the students' movements were restricted due to their efforts to make themselves be seen by others using their web cameras. But there were also exercises when they could move freely in their rooms and it was not necessary to show themselves. Another challenging aspect was "embodied collaboration" in small groups being separated from each other. However, a new type of people's co-thinking, co-feeling, co-living, co-learning, co-acting, co-creating and co-leading was observed in the virtual environment which witnesses that people are gradually getting adapted to the new digital reality.

c. Implementation

Both workshops (on 15 January and 23 March) were organised using:
- the Zoom platform for interacting with students and giving them the space for collaboration in Zoom Break-out rooms;
- a YouTube channel for delivering a lecture on different theoretical aspects of improvisation and demonstrating how they look in bodily movements, gestures and speech.

The improvisation was embedded into practice in the following sequence of activities:

A. Freeing the students' minds and bodies to increase their readiness for improvisation

1. Understanding of the workshop's main goal.
2. Enhancing awareness of one's own body, introducing and characterising oneself using not only words but also gestures.
3. Acquiring the theoretical basis of "Speech: Body - Voice - Diction - Imagination - Image".
4. Discussing and testing the basic principles of improvisation (that is what arises spontaneously on the spot answering the questions What? Where? How?)
5. Learning the basics of creative imagination and guided fantasy, using relaxation with slow, calm breath (alpha rhythm) and changing that for daily active state (beta rhythm).

B. Understanding and trying improvisation

6. Analysing and understanding the Waunderbergs' "Four Elements":
   - ***Fire*** (Admiral) - one acts according to the situation, talks a lot about it, wants to be in the spotlight. As a result, the work is often not completed, but remains at the level of speaking. The leading part of the body is the chest.

- *Land* (farmer) - one does what he has to do, and he does it in a right way, solving crisis situations, keeping his promises and then returning to his usual work. The leading parts of the body are the hips and legs.
- *Water* (poet) - one acts like a poet; a drowning girl might inspire him to a new poem, but he will not think that he should and could save her. He is busy with himself and his emotions. The leading part of the body is the abdomen.
- *Air* (scientist / philosopher) - one thinks, thinks, thinks and thinks. He is not a doer. For example, if he sees a drowning girl, the thought how to save her would come to mind but while he is thinking about how to do that, it would already be too late. The leading part of the body is the head.

7. Guided sequential testing or embodiment of these four elements by the students; each of them moves in his/her room, paying attention to the bodily sensations, feelings and thoughts embodied in each of the elements.
8. Reflection on experience gained in this process.
9. Embodying the elements moving independently in the room (the process is not controlled, everyone changes elements/images at will).
10. Individual voluntary short presentation of two elements (images) to the other participants of the workshop.
11. Creating a 3-minute improvisation working in small groups of four students; each participant has to embed one element (image).
12. Presentation of the improvisation created. After each presentation, the "spectators" decides which element (image) each participant gets into giving instant feedback on what is seen from the side.

C. Speech and Image

13. Working in small groups of four. Each group is given a speech title. Taking into account the basic principles of the speech discussed in the beginning, the participants prepare a 3-minute speech in which all group members must be involved using the elements (images).
14. Speech presentation. After each presentation, each of the participants is given one positive feedback on what he/she did well in the improvisation.
15. Summarisation of what has been acquired.

To get an insight into the duration of the activities, the participants of the workshops and the cases of observation, see Table 2 below.

Table 2

The agenda of the improvisation workshop

Time	Activity	Students involved	Observation
9:00 - 9:20	**Introduction** Workshop structure, agenda, basic principles of cooperation, technical issues	All the students together	**No**
9:20 – 9:35	**Getting acquainted** Body awareness and self-contact introducing and characterising themselves using the first letters of their names	All the students together	**No**

Time	Activity	Students involved	Observation
9:35 – 10:10	**Theory** 1. Speech 2. Body - Voice - Diction - Imagination - Image	All the students together	**No**
10:10 – 10:20	**Break** Preparing for work in the room.		
10:20 – 10:35	**Practical part** Body - Imagination – Image (the basic principles of improvisation	All the students together	**No**
10:35 – 10:45	**Relaxation** Alpha and Beta rhythms. Guided fantasy - relaxation.	All the students together	**No**
10:45 – 11:00	**Body warming** 1. "Getting rid of chains". 2. The leading part of the body. Movement in the room.	Individually	**No**
11:00 – 11:15	**"The Four Elements" (Waunderbergs)** Introducing and demonstrating each element (Fire, Land, Water and Air).	All the students together	**No**
11:15 – 11:40	**Guided sequential embodiment of the four elements** by the students moving in their rooms.	Individually	**No**
11:40– 11:50	**Reflection** Sharing first experiences	All the students together	**No**
11:50 – 12:05	**Embodying the elements by the students moving independently in their rooms** The process is not controlled, everyone changes the elements at will	Individually	**No**
12:05 – 12:20	**Individual short presentations of two elements or images** (voluntary participation principle)	Individually/ All the students together	**Yes**
12:20 – 12:45	**Improvisation.** Working in small groups for creating a 3-minute improvisation with the embedding of one of the four elements by each participant	In small groups	**Yes**
12:45 – 13:10	**Improvisation presentation.** After each presentation, the "spectators" decide which element (image) each participant got into.	In small groups/ All the students together	**Yes**
13:10 – 13:50	**Lunch break**		
13:50– 14:15	**Speech – Image** Each group is to create a 3-minute speech with the name given by the facilitator using the elements	In small groups	**Yes**
14:15 – 14:40	**Speech presentation** After each presentation, each participant is given one positive feedback on what he/she did well.	All the students / Small groups	**Yes**
14:40- 15:00	**Finalisation**	All the students together	**No**
15:00 – 16:00	**Electronic reflections**	Individually	**No**

d. Methods used for securing results

There were a number of measures undertaken to secure the results:
- before coming to the improvisation workshop, the students were instructed on its main topic either by their schoolteachers or by Linda Loce so that they were at least aware of what was expected there;
- the project team paid serious attention to the organisation and realisation of the improvisation workshops analysing and discussing their different aspects – content, agenda, research opportunities and methods for data collections, technical provision, etc.
- the workshop atmosphere was friendly and open so that the students could feel free and accepted by others;
- the first data collection process – observation was integrated in the workshop's five activities; that provided the external view of how distributed leadership elements were manifested in the course of improvisation; meanwhile the second data collection method – students' reflections provided their internal view of the workshop's effect. This combination enhances the validity and reliability of the findings.

4. FINDINGS

a. Impact of art-based method on Leadership development

The impact of improvisation on the distributed leadership was analysed based on the observations of the students' work and behaviour, on the one hand and, on the students' reflections, on the other hand.

Observations

Five observation sheets (see Tables from 3 to 7) were created and used in the five activities mentioned with "Yes" in the agenda (see Table 2). The four distributed leadership assessment criteria (see column 4 of Tables 3 – 7) were formulated matching the analysis of literature on distributed leadership to the content and character of the improvisation activities planned for the appropriate phase.

Table 3

Observation sheet No 1

Time	Activity content	Students involved	Assessment criterion	Assessment	Comments
12:05 – 12:20 **15 min.**	**Individual short presentations of two elements or images** (voluntary participation principle)	Individually/ All the students together	Acceptance of challenges	In a 5-point system (1- not observed, 5- observed distinctly)	

Table 4

Observation sheet No 2

Time	Activity content	Students involved	Assessment criterion	Assessment	Comments
12:20 – 12:45 25 min.	**Improvisation.** Working in small groups for creating a 3-minute improvisation with the embedding of one of the four elements by each participant	In small groups	• Sharing responsibility • Working together • Coming to an agreement	In a 5-point system (1- not observed, 5- observed distinctly)	

Table 5

Observation sheet No 3

Time	Activity content	Students involved	Assessment criterion	Assessment	Comments
12:45 – 13:10 25 min.	**Improvisation presentation.** After each presentation, the "spectators" decide which element (image) each participant got into.	In small groups/ All the students together	Working together	In a 5-point system (1- not observed, 5- observed distinctly)	

Table 6

Observation sheet No 4

Time	Activity content	Students involved	Assessment criterion	Assessment	Comments
13:50– 14:15 25 min.	**Speech – Image** Each group is to create a 3-minute speech with the name given by the facilitator using the elements	In small groups	• Sharing responsibility • Working together • Coming to an agreement	In a 5-point system (1- not observed, 5- observed distinctly)	

Table 7

Observation sheet No 5

Time	Activity content	Students involved	Assessment criteria	Assessment	Comments
14:15 – 14:40 **25 min.**	**Speech presentation** After each presentation, each of the participants is given one positive feedback on what he/she did well.	All the students / Small groups	• Sharing responsibility • Working together	In a 5-point system (1- not observed, 5- observed distinctly)	

The observers used the following distributed leadership assessment criteria:
1. *Acceptance of challenges;* it shows to which extent the students are ready to try new ideas and participate in new unexpected activities.
2. *Sharing responsibility;* it shows to which extent the formal leader shares responsibility with the other group mates and accepts initiative from others allowing, offering and promoting the involvement of other colleagues in the creative process.
3. *Working together*; it shows to which extent the formal leader and other group mates manage to work together soundly to perform the task seeing and hearing each other, listening actively, everyone having equal and similar roles in working together.
4. *Coming to an agreement*; it shows how successfully the formal leader and the other group mates are able to come to an agreement within limited time to complete the task given by the facilitator.

As shown in Table 8, the first assessment criterion was used only once in the very first observation; the second assessment criterion- three times (in observations 2, 4 and 5); the third assessment criterion – four times (in observations 2, 3, 4 and 5) and the fourth assessment criterion – two times (observations 2 and 4).

Table 8

Analysis of the observation results

	Observation No (time)	Assessment criterion	Assessment mean
January 15 workshop	1. (12:05 – 12.20)	1. Acceptance of challenges	**2.90**
	2. (12:20 – 12:45)	2. Sharing responsibility	4.60
	4. (13:50 – 14:15)		3.43
	5. (14:15 – 14:40)		5.0
	Assessment mean on criterion 2		**4.34**
	2. (12:20 – 12:45)	3. Working together	4.1
	3. (12:45 – 13:10)		5
	4. (13:50 – 14:15)		3.6
	5. (14:15 – 14:40)		**5**
	Assessment mean on 3		**4.43**

	Observation No (time)	Assessment criterion	Assessment mean
	2. (12:20 – 12:45)	4. Coming to an agreement	4.5
	4. (13:50 – 14:15)		5
	Assessment mean on 4		**4.75**
March 23 workshop	1. (12:05 – 12.20)	1. Acceptance of challenges	**2.0**
	2. (12:20 – 12:45)	3. Sharing responsibility	2.0
	4. (13:50 – 14:15)		2.17
	5. (14:15 – 14:40)		3.0
	Assessment mean on 2		**2.39**
	2. (12:20 – 12:45)	3. Working together	2.44
	3. (12:45 – 13:10)		3.56
	4. (13:50 – 14:15)		2.85
	5. (14:15 – 14:40)		3.70
	Assessment mean on 3		**3.14**
	2. (12:20 – 12:45)	4. Coming to an agreement	3.70
	4. (13:50 – 14:15)		3.60
	Assessment mean on 4		**3.65**
Summarisation of the two workshops		1. Acceptance of challenges	**2.45**
		2. Sharing responsibility	**3.37**
		3. Working together	**3.79**
		4. Coming to an agreement	**4.2**

Table 8 was created based on the determination of the assessment means taken from the five observation sheets which were filled in during the corresponding improvisation workshop activities using as assessment criteria the distribution leadership elements (see Tables 3-7).

For the convenience of the comparative analysis, the assessment means using each of the four distributed leadership elements, have been depicted in Figure 1 not only for the January 15 and March 23 improvisation workshops, but also for the summarisation of the outcomes of both workshops.
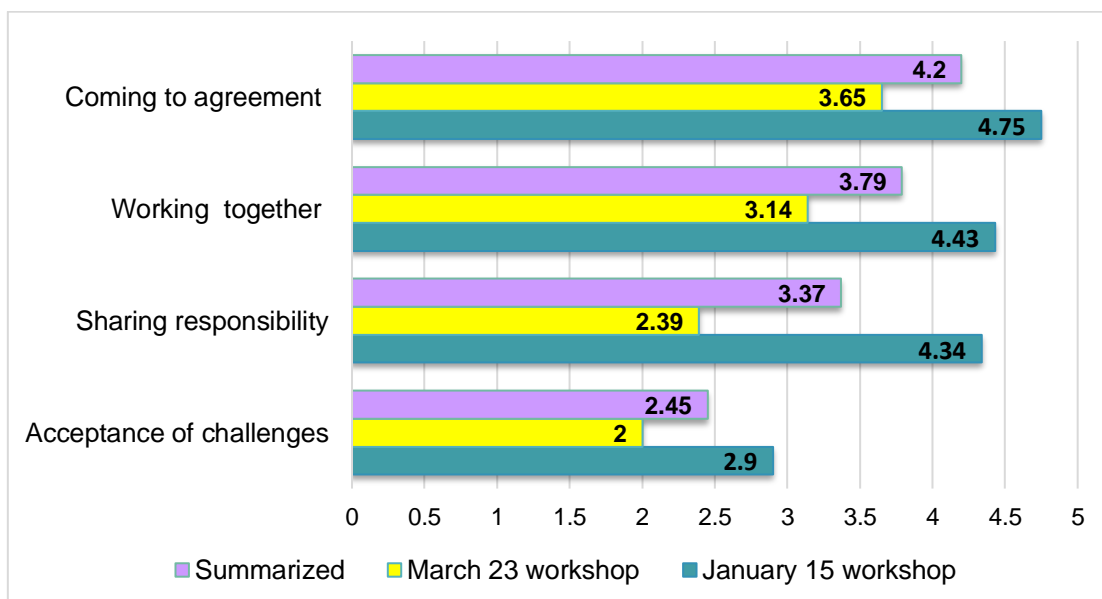

Figure 1. The assessment means of the distributed leadership elements demonstrated by the students during improvisation workshops

The diagram in Figure 1 shows that:

- the students who participated in the first workshop (on January 15) demonstrated higher level of distributed leadership skills than the students of the second workshop (on March 23); this can be explained by the fact that the students of the first workshop had already had the experience of participating in leadership projects while the second workshop's students had not;
- all the three profiles of the distributions of the assessment means (for Summarized, March 23 workshop and January 15 workshop) are very similar to each other. This shows, that despite the differences in students' groups, there were certain tendencies observed among the four distributed leadership elements – 1) most easily the formal leader and group members managed to come to an agreement for completing the work within limited time (mean $_{summarized}$ = 4.2); 2) as for working together to perform the task, the students were less successful (mean $_{summarized}$ = 3.79); 3) for formal leaders it was challenging to share responsibility with the other group mates and accept initiative from them (mean $_{summarized}$ = 3.37); 4) the most problematic was to cope with the challenge offered by the facilitator when the students had to take an initiative (mean$_{summarized}$ = 2.45); this could be explained by the fact that the task related to the individual short presentations of two elements was the first one and the students felt embarrassed or less confident to speak in front of the unknown audience in the new format. To get an insight into the qualitative aspects of these quantitative assessments, the observers' comments will be analysed in the subchapters "Lessons learned regarding facilitators" and "Lessons learned regarding participants".

In order to analyse whether there was progress in the students' distributed leadership skills in the course of the improvisation workshop, it was decided to track the assessments of those criteria which were used in more than one observation phases - Sharing responsibility (in three observations), Working together (in four observations) and Coming to an agreement (in two observations) using the assessment means from Table 8.
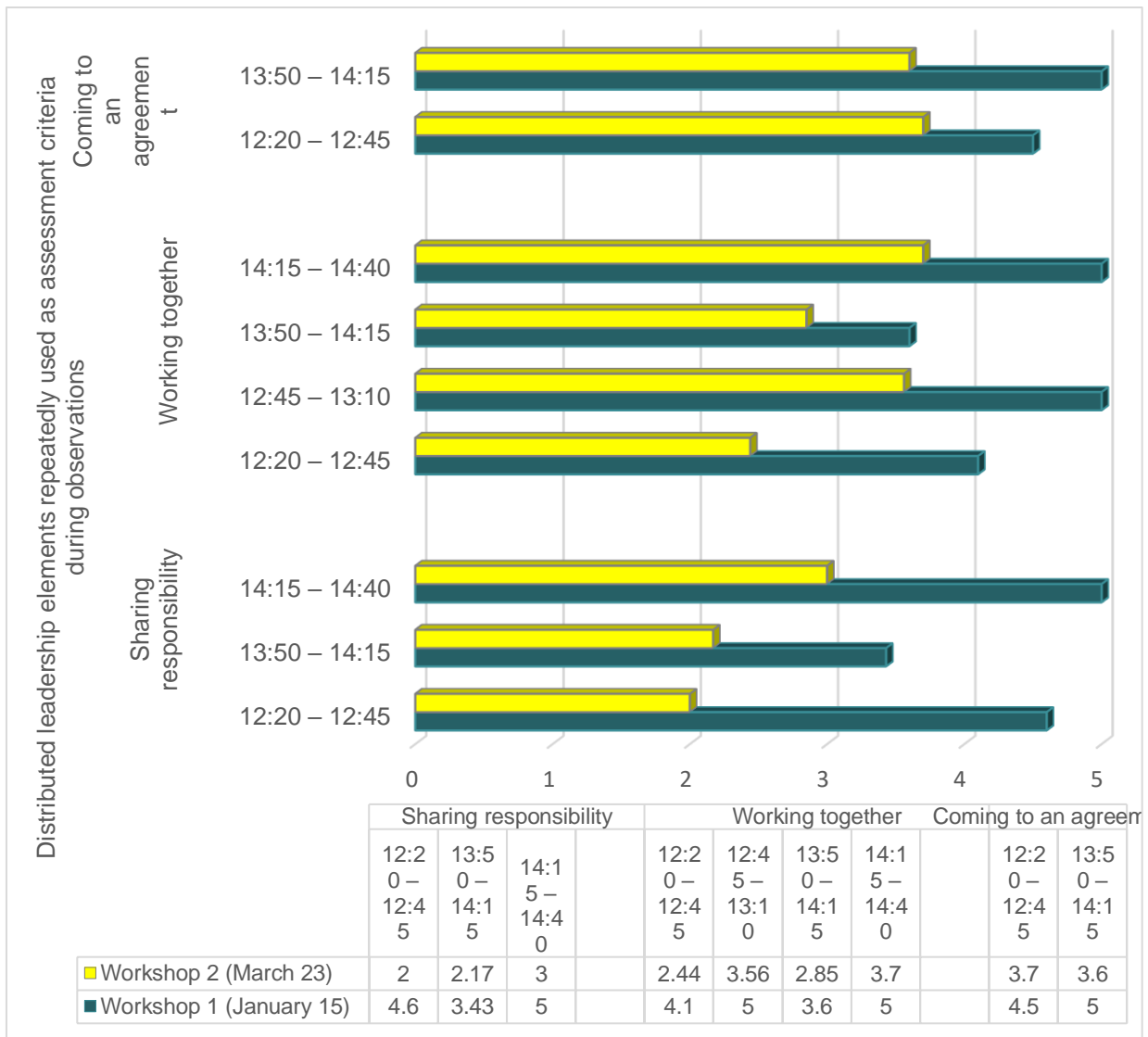
Figure 2. Timewise and criterion-wise grouping of the assessments of the students' work and behaviour using the same distributed leadership element as assessment criterion

	Sharing responsibility				Working together					Coming to an agreem
	12:20 – 12:45	13:50 – 14:15	14:15 – 14:40		12:20 – 12:45	12:45 – 13:10	13:50 – 14:15	14:15 – 14:40		12:20 – 12:45	13:50 – 14:15
Workshop 2 (March 23)	2	2.17	3		2.44	3.56	2.85	3.7		3.7	3.6
Workshop 1 (January 15)	4.6	3.43	5		4.1	5	3.6	5		4.5	5

To make the diagram in Figure 2, the data obtained from four observations (started from observation 2) were used, escaping the first observation, as the criterion "Acceptance of challenges" was used only in it, and no further progress could be followed related to that aspect of distributed leadership. As in observation 2 (12:20 – 12:45) the students had to prepare a 3-minute improvisation and present it in the following observation phase - 3 (12:45-13:10); similarly, they had to prepare a 3-minute speech in observation phase 4 (13:50 – 14:15) and present it in the next observation phase 5 (14:15 -14:50), any progress related to the distributed leadership elements in the students' work and behaviour could logically be expected to be detected in preparation-presentation comparison. Indeed, if the students improved distributed leadership related performance in the course of participating in improvisation, each next phase of doing the task compared to the previous phase (in our case presentation vs. preparation) ought to be done better, consequently, had to be assessed higher by the observers. Such a progress was observed across students' preparation-presentation activities related to the criterion 'Working together' in both workshops (see Figure 2). Preparation-presentation activities for the students related to the criterion 'Sharing responsibility' were offered when they had to prepare a 3-minute speech and present it. Also, in this regard there is the same

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tendency of improving the work and behaviour of both workshops' students (see Figure 2).

The distributed leadership assessment criterion 'Coming to an agreement' was used only in the two preparation phases escaping the phases of presentation as in the latter they had already to be ready to demonstrate what they had done in the preparation phase: it was not the due time for coming to any agreement. The first workshop's students (on January 15) demonstrated progress along both phases of preparation of the improvisation and the speech, while the second workshop's students who were less experienced, did not show any principal difference (see Figure 2).

Thus, the improvisation with the embedding of one of the four elements by each participant and the speech on a given theme which were tested in this case study had a positive impact on the students' distributed leadership skills.

This was an external assessment of the students' learning process.

The students' reflections

As stated above, in this case study the impact of improvisation (drama method) on the distributed leadership skills, was researched both using external assessment through observations of the students' work and behaviour in improvisation workshops, and internal analysis – reflections conducted by the students in the end of the workshops. The Latvian version of the reflection questions are available in the Google form (see https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSei3BKwO5YqleYj3_RBLxktC-Wmcw8Yz_qOghxjueHG9LuqDg/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0).

The reflection questions in English are given in Table 9 providing also some comments on why specifically these questions were asked.

Table 9

The reflection questions and statements

Info type	Statements or questions	Comments
Demographic information	Your code	Each student was assigned a code for emphasizing that their anonymity was going to be respected. In additions, it was easier to fix and comment students' work and behaviour during observations, including also data analysis.
	Your gender • male • female	To know gender was crucial to see whether there could be any principal differences between them.
	In which class do you study?	As the students were from grades 10 – 12, this question was important for identifying whether there are any principal differences between their distributed leadership skills depending on the grade they study in.
General information	Your favourite subjects at school	These pieces of information could be important to follow whether there are principal differences in distributed leadership skills and practicing improvisation among students who like or dislike subjects from the groups of natural, social and human sciences.
	Subjects you don't like very much	

Info type	Statements or questions	Comments
The main questions of the reflection	1. What did you manage to do well in the group work? (multiple answers possible): • to share responsibility for the joint work; • to collaborate with the group's formal leader; • to collaborate with the other group members; • to come to an agreement with the group members within limited time offered; • to take the lead in the group work; • to take initiative; • to show your emotions; • to think and act flexibly; • to improvise; • to feel your body; • to follow others; • to listen to the others and understand what they are saying; • to express your opinion in front of others. • Other. Please, comment on your answers. 2. Which of the following was challenging to do for you in today's workshop? (multiple answers possible) • to share responsibility for the joint work; • to collaborate with the group's formal leader; • to collaborate with the other group members; • to come to an agreement with the group members within limited time; • to take the lead in the group work; • to take initiative; • to show your emotions; • to think and act flexibly; • to improvise; • to feel your body; • to follow others; • to listen to the others and understand what they are saying;	This approach with offering multiple options of responses (Checkbox) was justified for a number of reasons; we aimed to: 1) get the students' feedback (as full as possible) about the effect of improvisation on them and the challenges faced; 2) provide the list of different elements of distributed leadership which potentially could be manifested within the improvisation workshops, thus making the students' reflection easier and fuller; 3) promote students' thinking process; 4) identify whether the students could judge about themselves more or less realistically, as we had their codes and the observation scripts with the observers' comments on their work and behaviour. The comparison of the students' self-assessments with the observers' assessments could spread light on many questions related to internal and external assessments; 5) help those students in expressing themselves, who have challenges in formulating ideas; 6) give also the space for expressing themselves to those students who want to speak out more about things which were not mentioned in the list; 7) cross-check the answers to questions 1 and 2 and see whether the students thought seriously while answering them or there are mutually excluding answers.

Info type	Statements or questions	Comments
	• to express your opinion in front of others. • Other. Please, comment on your answers.	
	3. How did you overcome these challenges?	This meant metacognitive analysis conducted by the students for 1) getting insight into their thinking process related to their working in group; 2) promoting also their ability to express themselves.
	4. Who / What helped you with the group work? How?	The answers to these questions imply the students' understanding of the roles they themselves and their group members played in the joint work and their understanding of the character of their interactions with the other group members. Also, it would be valuable to see how honestly students think about themselves and others.
	5. Did you help anyone in the group work? How?	
	6. Who / What disturbed you in today's workshop? How?	
	7. Did you disturb anyone in the group work? Why do you think so?	
	8. How did your group organise and realise the problem solving?	This question was important for enhancing our awareness of the students' analytical thinking process.
	9. How will you use what you learned in today's workshop in different life situations?	This question is for finding out the students' awareness of the potential use of what they acquired during the workshop.
	10. What did you like / dislike about working with the improvisation method? Why?	This question is meant for getting information of the emotional and cognitive aspects of the students' evaluation of the workshop.
The words of gratitude	11. Thank you very much for your work and time!	Their response could add emotional feedback on their attitude towards all they had participated in.

The demographic characteristics of the participants in the two improvisation workshops are given in Table 10.

Table 10

The demographic characteristics of the students who participated in the January 15 and March 23 improvisation workshops

Demographic characteristics		Number of students
Gender	Male	4
	Female	29
Class	10	5
	11	19
	12	9
Workshop participants	January 15, 2021	15
	March 23, 2021	20
	Total	35
Reflections given	January 15, 2021	15
	March 23, 2021	18

As mentioned above and seen in Table 10, out of 35 students who participated in the two workshops, two students did not give their feedbacks. Therefore, the further analysis is based on them.

The school subjects liked and disliked by the students

The outcomes of the analysis of the subjects liked and disliked by the students are shown accordingly in Tables 11 and 12.

The school subjects liked by the students

Subject groups	Subjects	Number of the students who like	Total likes mentioned by the students	Percentual distribution
Humanity	Literature	10	20	30.30 %
	English	5		
	History	2		
	Latvian	3		
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	Mathematics	8	17	25.76 %
	Biology	3		
	Geography	2		
	Physics	2		
	Chemistry	1		
	Informatics	1		
Social sciences	Sports	16	**22**	**33.34 %**
	Psychology	2		
	Social sciences	2		
	Culturology	1		
	Social presentation skills	1		
Art	Music	5	7	10.60 %
	Visual art	2		

The school subjects disliked by the students

Subject groups	Subjects	Number of the students who do not like	Total dislikes mentioned by the students	Percentual distribution
Humanity	Literature	4	17	24.64 %
	Russian	5		
	English	1		
	History	4		
	Latvian	3		
STEM (Science, Technology,	Mathematics	14	**49**	**71.01 %**
	Biology	2		
	Geography	0		

Subject groups	Subjects	Number of the students who do not like	Total dislikes mentioned by the students	Percentual distribution
Engineering and Mathematics)	Physics	13		
	Chemistry	15		
	Programming	2		
	Technical graphics	2		
	Drawing	1		
Social sciences	Sports	1	2	2.9 %
	Psychology	0		
	Social sciences	0		
	Culturology	0		
	Social presentation skills	0		
	Economics	1		
Art	Music	1	1	1.45 %
	Visual art	0		

The comparative analysis of Tables 11 and 12 shows that the subject which is liked almost by half of the students is Sports (n=16), while Chemistry (n=15), Mathematics (n=14) and Physics (n=13) are least liked subjects. Totally, STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) are least liked (70.15%), while Social science group subjects are most liked (33.34%) and least disliked (2.99%). The Humanity group subjects look similarly liked (30.30%) and disliked (25.37%) by the students.

This general analysis of the students' likes and dislikes of the study subjects has brought to the idea of comparing the subjects liked and not liked by the two workshops' students separately to identify whether there could be any tendency between the more successful and less successful distributed leadership related behaviour and study subjects liked and disliked (knowing that workshop 1 students were more successful than the students of workshop 2). Our previous four-year-long research conducted within an ESF project "Support to education research" (2011-2014) in five Latvian schools showed that both teachers and students like those themes and activities that they manage to do well (Oganisjana, 2015). So, using this logic, a supposition could be put forward for the further testing whether students' successful manifestation of distributed leadership elements during the improvisation workshops could be dependent on the number of subjects they like more, that means they know well.

Table 13

Comparative analysis of the subjects liked by the workshop 1 (January 15, 2021) and workshop 2 (March 23, 2021) students

Subject groups	Subjects	Number of the workshop 1 students who like	Study subject group-wise likes mentioned	Total likes mentioned by the workshop 1 students	The average number of subjects mentioned as liked by one workshop 1 student	Number of the workshop 2 students who like	Study subject group-wise likes mentioned	Total likes mentioned by the workshop 2 students	The average number of subjects mentioned as liked by one workshop 2 student
Humanity	Literature	8	14			2	6		
	English	1				4			
	History	2				0			
	Latvian	3				0			
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	Mathematics	5	10			3	7		
	Biology	2				1			
	Geography	2				0			
	Physics	1				1			
	Chemistry	0				1			
	Informatics	0		33	2.2	1		31	1.7
Social sciences	Sports	5	10			11	12		
	Psychology	2				0			
	Social sciences	2				0			
	Culturology	0				1			
	Social presentation skills	1				0			
Art	Music	1	1			4	6		
	Visual art	0				2			

The average number of subjects mentioned as liked by one student of each workshop was counted dividing the entire number of the subjects by the number of students who participated in each workshop. For workshop 1 the mean is 33:15 = 2.2 and for workshop 2 - it is 31:18 = 1.7. This mean symbolizes an averaged characteristic of the group as a distributed leadership actor. The more subjects the students like, the more subjects they master well. The more subjects they master well, the more developed their thinking and the more multiple their acting are. The more developed the students' thinking and the more multiple their acting are, the higher their distributed leadership behaviour might be. In the same way the average number of subjects mentioned as disliked was determined (see Table 14); that shows very close numbers of subjects disliked by one student of workshop 1 (mean = 1.8) and workshop 2 (mean = 1.89).

Table 14

Comparative analysis of the subjects disliked by the workshop 1 (January 15, 2021) and the workshop 2 (March 23, 2021) students

Subject groups	Subjects	Number of the workshop 1 students who dislike	Study subject group-wise dislikes mentioned	Total dislikes mentioned by the workshop 1 students	The average number of subjects mentioned as disliked by one workshop 1 student	Number of the workshop 2 students who dislike	Study subject group-wise dislikes mentioned	Total dislikes mentioned by the workshop 2 students	The average number of subjects mentioned as disliked by one workshop 2 student
Humanity	Literature	0				4			
	English	1	5			0	7		
	History	3				1			
	Latvian	1				2			
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	Mathematics	4				10			
	Biology	1				1			
	Geography	0	21			0	25		
	Physics	9		27	1.8	4		34	1.89
	Chemistry	7				8			
	Programming	0				2			
Social sciences	Sports	0				1			
	Psychology	0				0			
	Social sciences	0	0			0	1		
	Culturology	0				0			
	Social presentation skills	0				0			
Art	Music	0	0			1	1		
	Visual art	0				0			

Thus, the difference of the means $\Delta_{liked} = 2.2 - 1.7 = 0.5$ shows that workshop 1 students averagely like more study subjects than workshop 2 students. So, their more successful performance could partly be conditioned by their higher level of development. As for the difference of the means for the study subjects not liked, $\Delta_{disliked} = 1.8 - 1.89 = - 0.09$. Though its absolute value is not so high, still workshop 1 students disliked fewer study subjects than the students of group 2.

However, this was just a logical judgement. Deep statistical analysis of such correlation should be conducted with bigger number of participants with a broader quantitative data base.

1. The students' reflections on what they managed to do well in the improvisation workshops

To analyse students' perception and awareness of which distributed leadership elements they managed to do well in the improvisation workshops, their responses to the

corresponding checkbox question were grouped under each option and their frequencies were counted to make the diagram shown in Figure 3.
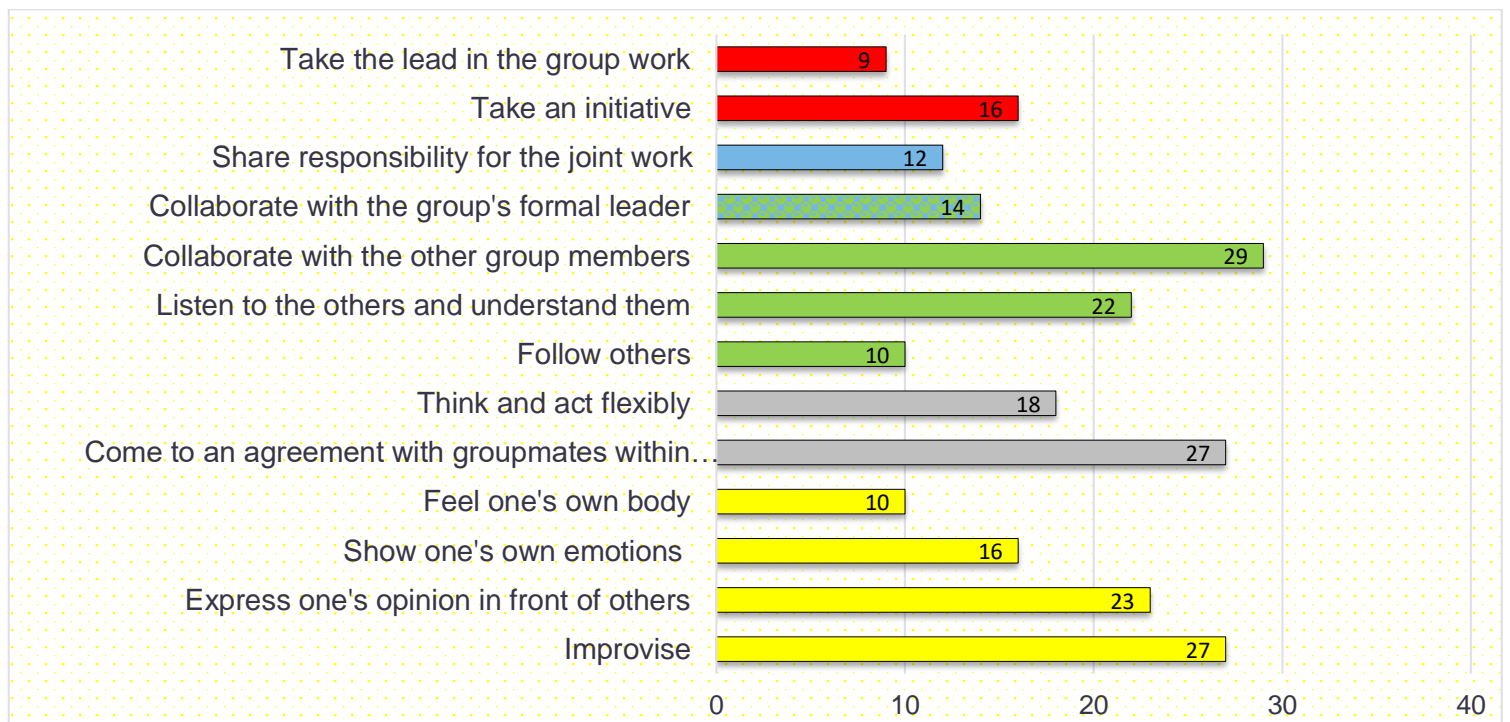

Figure 3. What in students' opinion they managed to do well working in their small groups

The different colouring used in the diagram is conditioned by the connection of the category groups to the distributed leadership aspects which were used as assessment criteria in the observations:
- taking the lead in the group work (n=9) and taking an initiative (n=16) are more related to the acceptance of challenges (coloured in red);
- sharing responsibility for the joint work (n=12) and collaborating with the group's formal leader (n=14) are close to the assessment criterion 'Sharing responsibility' (coloured in blue);
- collaborating with the group's formal leader (n=14), collaborating with the other group members (n=29), listening to the others and understanding them (n=22) and following others (n=10) together make the content of the assessment criterion 'Working together' (coloured in green);
As collaborating with the group's formal leader is connected to both criteria – 'Sharing responsibility' and 'Working together', it is coloured both in blue and green;
- thinking and act flexibly (n=18) and coming to an agreement with groupmates within limited time (n=27) are obviously linked to the criterion 'Coming to an agreement' (coloured in grey);
- feeling one's own body (n=10), showing one's own emotions (n=16), expressing one's opinion in front of others (n=23), and improvising (n=27) (coloured in yellow) also are important leadership characteristics which were not to be assessed by the observers as it could make the assessment process very complicated. Therefore, that was done by the students themselves.

As the methodology used for the assessment of the four aspects of students' distributed leadership skills in the observation sessions is different from the one used for the analysis of the students' reflections because of the differences of their nature, their results cannot be compared with each other. They only complement each other. However, also the reflection showed that the categories 'taking the lead in the group work' and 'taking an initiative' (the total frequency n=25) related to the 'acceptance of challenges' had smaller total frequency than the frequencies of other category groups. Also, the students' reflections (similar to the case of observations) revealed high frequency of the categories 'Coming to an agreement with groupmates within limited time' (n=27).

While the observation was meant for the external assessment based on more objective analysis of what was seen from aside, heard and understood by others, the reflection implied internal self-analysis based on what was perceived, felt, experienced and concluded by the students themselves. As one observation session did not exceed 25 minutes, the number of distributed leadership criteria could not be more than three, otherwise the assessment process conducted by the observers would be blurred, not focused and very complicated for the realisation.

Only three students gave additional textual responses on "Other" things which they managed to do well in the improvisation workshop – to understand her classmates, understand what takes place at the lessons of drama and work in group as for that student it had always been preferrable to do things alone.

2. The students' reflections on what challenges they faced in the improvisation workshop

The analysis of the students' responses to the corresponding checkbox question has revealed that most challenging were those activities which were mainly related to the students' intrapersonal dimension (charts coloured in red) vs. to the interpersonal dimension (coloured in blue) in Figure 4.
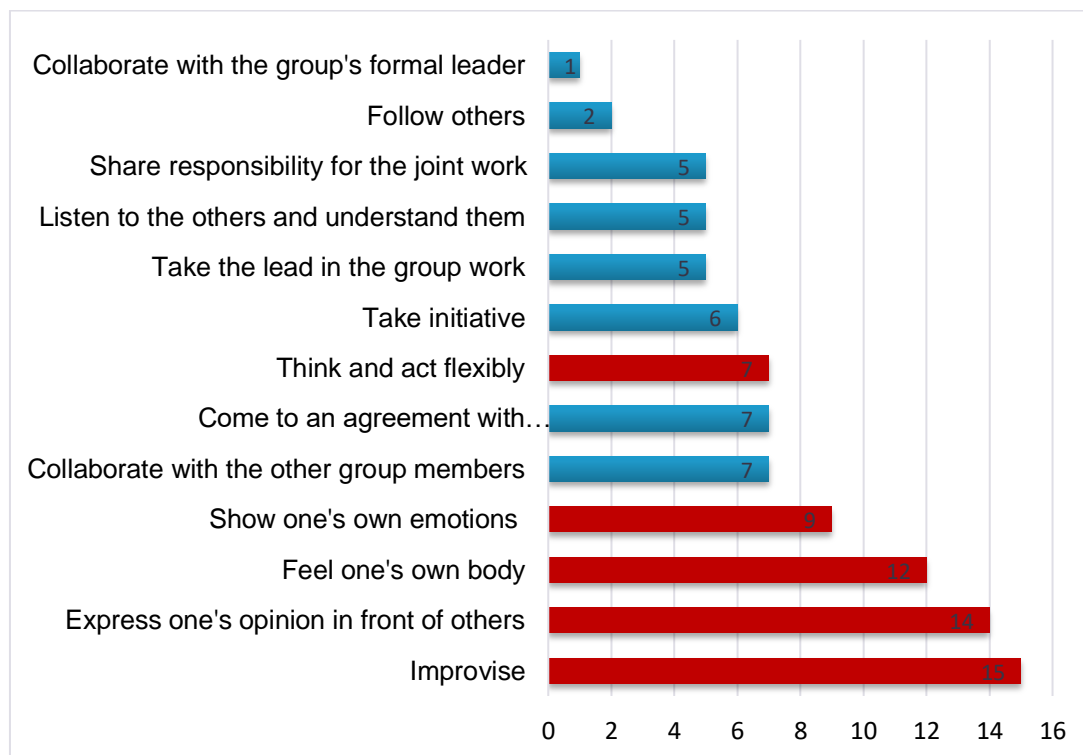

Figure 4. The challenges faced by the students in the improvisation workshops

Almost half of the students (n=15) found it difficult to improvise as it was an entirely new experience, which demanded expressing their opinions in front of others (n=14), feeling their body (n=12), showing their emotions (n=9) (see Fig. 4). The challenges related to different aspects of interaction among students were emphasized from two to three times less frequently which can be explained by the students' having more experience in working in groups as it is trained at school in various formats.

When offered to share other challenges faced, majority of the students wrote that they did not have any; only two students admitted that it was hard for them to come out of their comfort zones which caused them shock and panic when they had to speak in public.

3. The students' reflections on how they overcame the challenges faced in the improvisation workshops

The qualitative content analysis of the students' reflections showed that they overcame the challenges faced owing to 12 activities (see the second column of Table 15) which in the interpretation phase were organised into three groups of efforts: 1) the students' cognitive efforts (n=20); 2) the students' emotional efforts (n=15); and 3) external support from their groupmates (n=2) which (see Table 15).

Table 15

How the challenges were overcome by the students

The efforts made	Category developed	Frequency	Total frequency
Cognitive efforts	Overcoming the "I cannot do it" syndrome	4	20
	Just making oneself do things	4	
	Listening to the facilitator	3	
	Concentrating attention	3	
	Owing to purposefulness and interest	2	
	Understanding how things should be done	2	
	Trying to speak out	1	
	Taking initiative	1	
Emotional efforts	Controlling excitement	10	15
	Overcoming fear	3	
	Controlling breathing	2	
External support	Owing to the help from groupmates	2	2
	Very well	7	
	Did not overcome the challenges	2	
	No comments	4	

About two third of the students mentioned that they managed to cope with the difficulties owing to cognitive efforts of different characters including: the listening to the facilitator of the improvisation workshop very actively and attentively (n=3) to understand how things which had to be done before starting to undertake the activities (n=2); concentrating

attention on the tasks to accomplish them and not to stray away from the right path (n=3); mobilizing the will power to struggle the "I cannot do it" syndrome (n=4) and acquire self-confidence for making oneself do the things needed (n=4). Two students concluded that they coped with the challenges owing to their purposeful nature and great interest in the things they were doing at the workshops. One student emphasized that she took an initiative to overcome the challenges she faced.

Also, very important was the role of emotional efforts; about one third of the students wrote that they overcame the challenges faced through the controlling of their excitement (n=10). Some of the students even had to overcome fear (n=3) and use the technique of controlling breathing (n=2) newly learnt in the improvisation workshop.

Only two students of 33 stated that they overcame the challenges getting external support from their groupmates. So, the students linked their achievements mainly to their own nature and efforts. To understand this result till the end, we will come back to it having analysed the students' reflections on who helped them during the workshop.

The analysis of this reflection part showed that in the further research the question "How…?" should be substituted with "In what way …?" if we want to get feedback on the mechanisms which helped carry out things. Otherwise, there always will be probability of getting just emotional evaluation of realization of processes like "Well!" "Easily!" (n=7) which do not disclose their character remaining useless from the research point of view. Four students did not give any comments at all, but two stated that they had not overcome the challenges concluding that they had to develop more for being able to do similar things in the future when needed.

4. The students' reflections on who/what helped them in the group work

In the Latvian language the question "Kas?" means both "Who?" and "What?" at the same time. Therefore, the first part of the question "Kas Jums palīdzēja grupas darbā? Kā?" implied to get answers to two questions "Who/What helped you in the group work? How?" at once. The qualitative content analysis of the students' answer texts revealed four dimensions of help – 1) interpersonal (n=21), 2) personal (n=8), 3) organizational (n=3) and 4) educational (n=3) (see Table 16).

Table 16

Who and what helped the students in the group work

Dimension	Category developed	Frequency	
Interpersonal	Group mates' support and ideas	13	21
	Collaboration	5	
	Being listened to	3	
Personal	My communication skills	4	8
	I myself	2	
	My creativity, courage and self-confidence	2	
Organisational	Knowing my groupmates from the beginning	3	3
Educational	The things learnt in the workshop	3	3

Almost two third of the students admitted that they were helped by their groupmates (see the categories of the interpersonal dimension). They were listened to (n=3), helped by their groupmates who collaborated with them (n=5) and shared their ideas providing support and ideas (n=13). However, some students laid an accent on the personal dimension stating that they themselves helped themselves (n=2) with their own highly developed communication skills (n=4), and such personality traits as creativity for generating ideas, courage to share these ideas with and in front of others and self-confidence (n=2). As some students mentioned that the knowing of their groupmates played a very important role in their work and helped them to get self-confidence, despite the small frequency of that single category (n=3), it was decided to relate it to an organisational dimension. Indeed, if the organisation of the workshop had been different from the one realised (if the students had known absolutely no one from the very beginning), judging from the students' reflections, the effect could have been principally different. Also, the educational dimension consists of only one important category which shows that what was trained in the workshop (controlling one's breathing and acting according to the four elements) was applied in practice and helped the students throughout their work (n=3).

The analysis of the students' reflections on how they overcame the challenges faced (see Table 15) and who/what helped them (see Table 16) show that the students ascribe their success in overcoming the challenges more to their own cognitive (n=20) and emotional efforts (n=15) rather than to any external support (n=2) from their groupmates (see Table 15). On the other hand, when asked who/what helped them in the group work which was in the phases of preparation of the improvisation and the speech, it turned out that they got real support from their group mates (n=21) who collaborated with them, gave ideas and listened to them (see Table 16). This finding can be explained by:

a) the attribution error; perhaps the students over-emphasized their own role and under-emphasized their peers' role in the overcoming of the challenges;

b) perception of the meaning of the word "You" in the question "How did you overcome the challenges faced in the improvisation workshops?" relating that only to himself / herself but not to the group in which they acted. Therefore, in their reflections they concentrated mainly on their own efforts made;

c) the students' linking the understanding of challenges mainly to the phases of presentation when they had to act alone in front of the others.

5. The students' reflections on whether they helped anyone in the group work and how

Two distinct dimensions – "I" dimension (n=28) and "We" dimension (n=20) were revealed in the course of the qualitative content analysis (see Table 17).

Table 17

Whom and how the students helped in the group work

Dimension	Category	Frequency	
I	I shared my ideas	14	28
	I supported my groupmates emotionally to enhance their self-confidence	5	
	I motivated my groupmates to get involved in the processes	3	
	I helped in the organisation of the group work	3	
	I helped them to improve the quality of performance	3	
	I did not help anyone	3	
We	We helped each other	10	19
	We created together	7	
	We found compromises	2	
	No comments	5	

About half of the students expressed the thought that they had definite intellectual and creative input in the group work helping their groupmates with their ideas (n=14). Along with that, in the students' opinion they: supported their groupmates emotionally to encourage them to express their thoughts and speak them out freely (not to remain silent) enhancing their self-confidence (n=5); convinced their groupmates that they could and should get involved and motivated them to participate in the co-creation processes actively (n=3); helped the group to cope with some ingroup organisational issues like dividing the roles, managing time, etc. (n=3); did their best to improve the entire quality of the joint work through giving advice on how to do things better or how to speak more clearly (n=3). Three students wrote that they did not help anyone as there were not such situations when somebody needed their help.

The categories of the dimension "We" were spoken about by the students with very similar generalised formulations which made the development of the corresponding categories much easier compared with the categories of the dimension "I" (see Table 17). The students explained that they helped each other, thought of the characters, speeches, even created some specific sentences to improve the quality of their performance. So, in this stage of the reflection, the "We" concept emerges along with the "I" concept yet with the superiority of the latter.

Five students did not give any comments in this regard.

6. The students' reflections on who/what disturbed them in that day's activities

About one third of the students assured that they did not experience any disturbance from anybody or anything (n=12) and everything went smoothly and perfectly (see Table 18). However, four students pointed out some technical problems like poor internet connection, YouTube delays compared with the Zoom.

Table 18
What and who disturbed the students in their work during the improvisation workshop

Category	Frequency
Nothing	12
Technical problems	4
Work in the virtual format	3
Personal problems	3
Work with unknown people	2
Fatigue	2
Family members	2
Other	7
No comments	3

The work in the virtual format caused certain inconveniences for some students who would prefer to have the same improvisation workshop in the face-to-face mode, as it was difficult to get concentrated and communicate with people remotely via monitors (n=3) especially if you do not know some of them (n=2). Three students shared their personal problems – 1) shyness which did not let express oneself in full; 2) fear of what would happen next, what tasks would follow; 3) poor skills in working with others. Long-lasting work in front of the monitors causes a lot of tiredness both in adults and school children. Two students complained about fatigue, headache and bad state of health. In the online mode of work from home there always can be a risk of being disturbed by family members which was also mentioned by two students. A broad range of disturbances are included in the category "Other" (n=7) encompassing: the wonderful weather outside which seduced them to go for a walk, but they had to sit in front of the monitors; a dentist who interfered in the middle of one student's work with her group; one of the groupmates who did not try to get involved in the group work; some current thoughts and worries about school studies, etc.

Three students did not comment on this question.

7. The students' reflections on whether they themselves disturbed anybody in the group work and why they think so

This part of the of the analysis was the simplest one as the students' answers were most homogeneous - 27 students (82 %) wrote that they hoped they had not disturbed anybody (see Figure 5). To prove their points of view, they brought different arguments such as: they tried not to interrupt anybody in the middle of the others' speech, they listened to the speaker very attentively; each of them expressed his / her thoughts equally, and no one was superior to anyone else; they respected and accepted initiatives taken by others, etc.
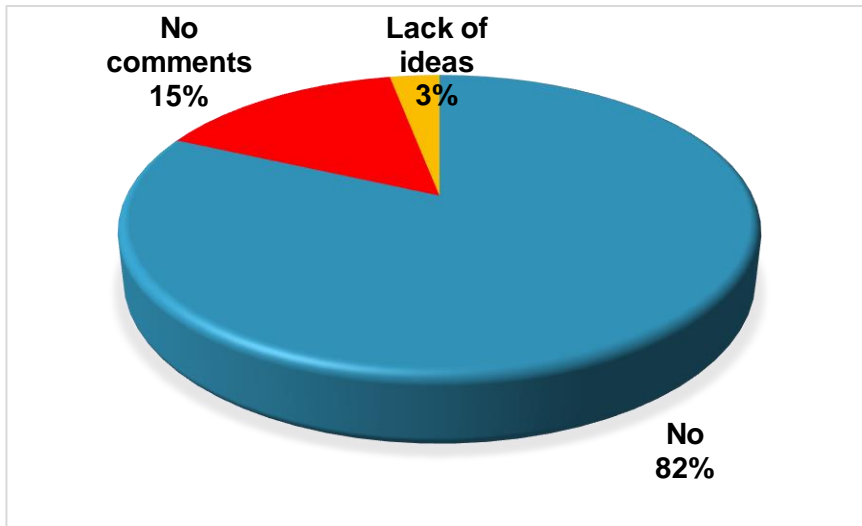
Figure 5. The students' reflections on whether they themselves disturbed anybody in the group work and why they think so

Five students (15 %) did not give feedback regarding to this question and one student (3 %) thought that he could have disturbed the group with the lack of ideas from his side.

8. *The students' reflections on how the group organised and implemented problem solving*

According to the students, first of all they had active discussions for speaking out different aspects of the problem to be solved (n=9), collecting ideas from all the group members (n=8) which afterwards were considered very quickly either for choosing the best idea or combining them or their parts to create the best idea (n=6) which could be possible in those conditions and within those time frames (see Table 19).

Table 19

How the students organised and implemented problem solving

Category	Frequency
Spoke and discussed all	9
Collected ideas from all the group members	8
Chose or created the best idea	6
Listened to each other	6
Collaborated	6
One of the groupmates took an initiative and the others followed	4
The group's formal leader found solutions	1
Applied the things learnt in the workshop	2
Other	6
No comments	2

Listening to each other (n=6) played a crucial role in the collaboration process (n=6), which could be started when either one of the group members took an initiative and offered some solutions and the other followed him / her (n=4) or the group's formal leader offered a way out (n=1). Two students wrote that they used the techniques and ideas learnt during the workshop to cope with the tasks. The category "Other" presents a set of logically not interconnected views of how the students organised and implemented the solution of problems evaluating that process emotionally like: there were not problems to be solved; they thought; in the beginning the things were done chaotically, then the students pulled themselves together to perform the task, etc. Two students did not give their feedbacks.

9. The students' reflections on how they will use what they gained in that day's workshop in different life situations

Speaking of how the things learnt in the improvisation workshops could be used in various life situations, the main accents were laid on the use of the three aspects trained in the workshop: 1) components of speech – intonation and emotions to be chosen appropriately to the audience (n=12); 2) the four elements for understanding other people and deciding how to work with them (n=13); and 3) the breathing controlling techniques (n=10) for achieving peace and relaxation in stressful situations and insomnia (see Table 20).

Table 20

How in different life situations
the students will use what they acquired in the improvisation workshop

Category	Frequency
They will use intonation and show emotions according to the audience they have to speak to	12
They will use the method of four elements for understanding other people and dealing with them correspondingly	13
They will use the method of controlling breathing and relaxation in stressful situations and insomnia	10
They will be more empathic and understanding of how people of different elements feel and act	4
They will use the knowledge acquired but do not know how	5
They will use all what was learnt on the stage	2
Other	5
No comments	3

Some students expressed the thought that they would become more emphatic (n=4) and will not criticize others for their emotions and way of speaking, because now they know that everyone has his / her own element. However, five students stated that they were

sure they would use the knowledge but right then they did not have any idea how. Two students who are involved in the theatre, concluded that they would use what they gained on the stage. As for the category "Other", it combines separate statements of the students assuring that the experience gained will be used for: better understanding of one's own self; improving collaboration skills owing to better understanding also of other people; making a good speech in examinations and when speaking in public; showing emotions and expressing one's standpoint; entertaining friends in a meaningful way offering them to improvise. Three students did not provide any feedbacks at all.

10. The students' reflections on what they liked and disliked when working with the improvisation method

Majority of the students (n=28) liked everything about the working with the improvisation method, as first of all it was an absolutely new and very interesting experience to them (n=8), which interests some of the students (n=5) who are fond of everything related to the stage, speech and performance (see Table 21).

Table 21

What the students liked and disliked in the improvisation workshop

Category	Frequency
I liked everything	28
It was a very interesting experience	8
Improvisation interests me	5
It was a new useful method with practical application and new opportunities	6
I felt comfortable, full of positive emotions and opened to others and expressed myself	6
I liked the good organisation of the workshop which helped understand all very well	3
Other	6
No comments	3

The students consider improvisation as a useful method which has a lot of practical applications (n=6) that help to: understand and accept people with their emotions and ways of thinking and acting; make a good speech in public; control one's breathing and relax when needed. In students' opinion, it might disclose new opportunities for them. Some students felt very satisfied that they acted within their comfort zone being full of positive emotions which helped then open to others, improvise with all their hearts and express themselves (n=6). The organisation of the workshop was evaluated to be very good which promoted the students' understanding of everything trained (n=3). This time the category "Other" (n=6) was made of very contradictory ideas of what the students

liked and disliked. One student said that she liked all except the exercises for controlling breathing as after that she felt sleepy and could not concentrate to perform the task; meanwhile another student wrote that she liked these exercises as they helped her calm down and overcome her fear and act even coming out of her comfort zone. Another student complained that he did not like to be made speak in public as he is an introvert, though perhaps it was not bad after all to come out of his comfort zone; another student, on the contrary, was very happy to be forced to get out of her comfort zone and try to overcome her fears. Thus, the same thing had opposite effect on some students. Three students did not share their opinions on what they liked or did not.

Conclusions

The improvisation method practiced showed that it could be an appropriate approach for gradual promotion of different aspects of students' distributed leadership skills. More successful are those students who like a larger scope of study subjects which indirectly indicates their high level of multiple development. In the course of the workshop the students improved such distributed leadership elements as: sharing responsibility with the group's formal leader and their groupmates; working together playing equal roles with the formal leader and taking an initiative in performing tasks; and coming to an agreement with the group's leader and the group within limited time. In students' opinions, they also managed to follow the others, think and act flexibly, listen to the others and understand them, express their own ideas in front of the others; all these are parts or different facets of the four distributed leadership aspects used as assessment criteria in observation sessions. Both the observations and the reflections showed that the most problematic was the acceptance of challenges when the students had to try new ideas and participate in new unexpected activities in new roles.

As for the challenges faced, they were of intrapersonal (improvising, expressing one's opinion in front of the others, showing one's emotions, thinking and acting flexibly) and interpersonal (collaborating with the groupmates, taking the lead, coming to an agreement, etc.) characters. On the whole, the students managed to cope with the challenges faced applying cognitive efforts (overcoming the "I cannot do it" syndrome, making themselves do things, concentrating attention, listening to the facilitator, etc.) and emotional efforts (controlling their excitement and breathing and overcoming their fears) as well as accepting support from their groupmates.

The majority of the students are aware of how what was gained in the improvisation workshop could be used in different life situations - intonation and emotions accordingly to the audience they have to speak to; the method of four elements for understanding other people and dealing with them correspondingly; the method of controlling breathing and relaxation in stressful situations and insomnia. There was also a point of view that what they gained would make them more empathic and understanding of how people of different elements feel and act.