Dissertation thesis concept: Key Moments in Drama Therapy Process

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Abstract:

Dissertation thesis concept shows some crucial and significant moments in the process of writing this thesis. Focus is mainly selected for assessment in drama therapy. The theme of assessment is partially included in the theme of dissertation which is the Key Moments in Drama Therapy Process. This theme is considerably new and this theme reflect author´s clinical drama therapy practice and also scholarship at NYU – Drama Therapy department. In the concept of dissertation author writing about discovering theme of the Key Moments and th aim of author is connect this theme with theoretical background in literature. As a research method author chose Grounded Theory because this qualitative approach is reflecting the need of mapping theme of thesis.

Discovering theme of the Key Moments

Theme of dissertation thesis coming from the clinical drama therapy practice. Based on the experience and work in therapeutic community Mandala. Author of the thesis is focusing in special phenomena which is displayed during drama therapy work. Author of this paper is working with group of people in Psychiatric Hospital Kroměříž. Clients of hospital which are membership of the drama therapy group are usually people with substance abuse addiction on meth.

People with substance abusing are very specific in the way of using body and embodiment. Embodiment describe Johnson as Drama therapy approaches vary significant in the degree to which clients are asked to actively move their bodies during session(Johnson, Pendzik, Snow, p. 43). We should mention embodiment as one of the **Core processes** developed and searched by Jones. Jones (1996) describe embodiment as a material which brings members of group to drama therapy and during the session drama therapist using this material for transforming and embodying in the body of clients. This embodied material is way how to work with unconscious material of clients. Using a drug substances occurs in the body of clients to shifting their perceiving of reality and body. This reality and body shifting is viewed by Dempsey (in Brook, 2009) as form of coping strategies which addicted people developed by using a drug. People with addiction by using of drugs are learning to cope with their emotions. Johnson writes that an addict seeks out substance because he/she is unable to endure being alone. Further, the addict does not have the resources to provide him/herself with the tools to help him/her with suffering. Lacking sufficient coping mechanism, he/she begins to search outside him/herself for something to quell the painful feelings and relieve discomfort. He/she turns externally to a substance to fill what is missing internally (Johnson, 1999; Brook, 2009).

Theme of key moments is based on the experience with specific moments which happened during different drama therapy sessions. These moments are significant and specific and drama therapist can notice that “something happened”. Author of desertion thesis noticed these moments and he discussed that with other drama therapist and co-therapists. Based on the analyzing recording of the drama therapy session author confirmed these moments. First step in the research was naming these moments as key moments. Naming is very important because if we are talking about something and we are not able to name that we are losing focus.

Theoretical support of dissertation

**Key moments** which are author researching are very specific moments. These moments relate to assessment in drama therapy. As we will deeply understand of process during drama therapy sessions we will be able to assess what is happening “here and now” and react on this situation in the best way. Courtney write that drama therapy is an all-inclusive field, overlapping with many fields, such as psychiatry, psychology, sociology, social anthropology, and others. A drama therapist who works mainly from drama and psychology is liable to have different criteria (and thus different form of assessment) from one who works largely from drama and sociology (Courtney, 1981; Pendzik, 2003). There is another point that the drama therapist need time and training for developing ability to diagnostic clients.

Pendzik write that It took some time until practitioners began to develop a genuine drama therapy language with which assess their work, and it is mostly in the last decade that this process began to bear fruits. Although various drama therapy-based assessment methods are currently in use (Pendzik, 2003, p. 91). These assessment methods are deeply connected with drama therapy approach. We have currently tree main drama therapy approaches and with each of them is connected person.

For the first one we would like to mention Robert J. Landy. Landy´s Role Theory is based on the role sorting system. Landy writes that **Role Theory** is “an indirect dramatic approach that depends upon the safety of role and story to contain strong emotion” (Landy, 2008, p. 125). Role theory begin with the concept of role and as Landy (2008) say this concept of role is derived from theatrical system. This role or roles are usually associated with character in theater. Landy derived role system from Western theatre concepts as we know them from history and presence as well. Role which Landy took by researching are sorted to system of spheres and they are mainly based on archetypal background. Assessment via this role theory and role method is specific. Pendzik about assessment in role method write that based on his role method, Landy (1996) devised a form of assessment that considers seven aspects of client´s role functioning: (a) ability to invoke and name roles, (b) number of roles, (c) ability to attribute to role, (d) ability to delineate alternative qualities or sub-roles, (e) ability to perceive the function of role as role, (f) style and aesthetic distance present in role-playing, and (g) ability to relate the fictional role to everyday life (Landy, 1997; Pendzik, 2003, p. 92)

Another approach is **Developmental Transformation** or **DvT** as mostly authors write. This specific approach is based on improvisation and their base is in theatrical environment of Jerzy Grotowski. As Jones writes Developmental Transformationis a form of drama psychotherapy that is based on an understanding of the process and dynamics of free play. The essence of Developmental Transformation is the transformation of embodied encounters in the playspace (Johnson, 2009, p. 89). Four very important components of DvT Johnson (2009) describe as: *transformation, embodiment, encounter, and playspace*. I would like describe playspace because it is very specific component especially for DvT. Playspace is a mutual agreement among the participants that everything that goes on between them is representation of real or imagined being (Johnson, 2009, p. 96). Assessment in DvT is presented via the **DRPT-1** and **DRPT-2** test. This test Johnson (2012) which include social roles varied in four domains: *nurturance, control, sexuality, and competence.* These domain Johnson choose based on the work of psychologist R.D. Mann. Johnson took this domain as important social domain for constructing diagnostic tests. Pendzik offer other point in assessment in DvT. She compare role theory and DvT and write that Johnson (1988) offers a different approach to the use of role as an assessment method. His Role-Playing Test is based on pre-established series of role and scene improvisation that the individual is requested to perform. The data is then analyzed according to several criteria: role repertoire, patterns of thematic content, role-playing style, space, tasks and role structuring, complexity of interactions between characters, and degree and form affect (Johnson, 1988; Pendzik, 2003, p. 92).

Third main approach in drama therapy assessment is the **6-Key Model** of Susana Pendzik. This specific approach used in assessment in drama therapy is in some way inspired or related with BASIC Ph. Pendzik refer to Mooli Lahad and BASIC Ph that Mooli Lahad |(1992) uses story making as an assessment method. The model was initially conceived as a means to assess the way in which people cope with stress. However, it is also applicable to any therapeutic situation. According to Lahad, people´s coping mechanism can be condensed into six categories of experience, represented by the acronym BASIC Ph: (a) beliefs and values, (b) affect and emotions, (c) social, (d) imagination, (e) cognition, and (f) physical (Lahad, 1992; Pendzik, 2003, p. 92). Method of Lahad was very important for Pendzik´s developing assessment method. There are also another important steps as a comparing *dramatic reality* with Stanislavski´s defining and discovering how to describe, answer and making visible theme of dramatic reality. Pendzik in her work defined this term for long time and based on the research and clinical practitioning of drama therapy particularly solved problem. Based on the research and long period as a drama therapist Pendzik constructed her 6-Key Model which divided to six specific domain:

1. Key – The passage between ordinary reality and dramatic reality
2. Key – The quality and style of dramatic reality
3. Key – The characters and roles that populate it
4. Key – The plot, themes, conflicts, and other contents
5. Key – The response to dramatic reality from the outside
6. Key – Metarereality-or the unmamifested subtext

(Pendzik, 2012; Johnson, Pendzik, Snow, 2012, p. 199)

Researching of the Key Moments in drama therapy process

Research and author of dissertation thesis chose as a methodology Grounded theory. As Jensen writes Grounded Theory originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967, 2001), the grounded theory tradition is based on the goal of developing theory from the “ground” up. That is, you start from concrete data and then work up to more abstract ideas. The aim of this approach is to limit the imposition of prior assumptions (whether personal, professional or theoretical) on the data (Jensen, Laurie, 2016, p. 243). Ravitch and Carl summarized two basic and most important aims of grounded theory to:

* The goal is to generate theories from the data
* Employs inductive processes that stay close to the data through a constant comparison method

(Ravitch, Carl, 2016, p. 97)

Researcher will use the interviews with clinical drama therapists for as a source of the data. Another source which researcher will use are recordings from drama therapy community in Kroměříž. In the list below are named drama therapists for interview:

1. Maria Hodemarska
2. Robert J. Landy
3. Lenka Šilarová
4. Jana Šilarová
5. Ivana Lištiaková
6. Viktor Dočkal
7. Suzanne Pendzik
8. Nisha Sanjani
9. Diana Feldam (enACT)

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