

Adapted from:

PRACTICAL SOCIOMETRY – Directing Spectrograms and Locograms

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Directing Spectrograms and Locograms

Note: Before you start any *sociometric* activity, make sure the group knows the contact well including: confidentiality; safety; non-judgmental respect for the feelings and opinions of other group members; voluntary participation (members participate in the ways that best serve their learning and personal needs).

I. Definitions, purpose and goals:

1. *Spectrograms* measure a range or spectrum of opinion, feeling, like or dislike within the group about some particular thing or issue. They are constructed by placing two objects at a distance from one another, creating an imaginary line on the floor that represents the particular spectrum.

A few examples of the end points of a spectrogram:

- I came a great distance/short distance to get here.
- I like western rock music a lot/not at all
- I have a lot of experience/ no experience with working with *Motivational Arts*
- I am generally comfortable/uncomfortable in a new group

2. *Locograms* show a choice or preference of group members among 3 or more possibilities. *Locograms* are constructed by indicating a location for each choice by using an object (chair, scarf, etc.) Sometimes we label each location on a piece of paper to help the group members remember which location stands for which choice.

A few examples of the locations of a *locogram*:

- My favorite time of day is: morning, early afternoon, late afternoon, night time.
- I live closest to: Denpasar, Sanur, Ubud, Pedangbei, etc.
- I work with young people in: a school, a community organization, a Banjar youth group, a health setting, etc.
- The greatest challenge to me in working with youth is: the young people, the parents, the setting in which I work, the community, etc.

3. Points to think about when choosing and wording the question, issue or feeling;

- Begin with a few easy or neutral statements to help the group get used to the process and feel comfortable with it.

- Keep the wording simple and clear.
- With questions that aim for a deeper sharing, avoid wording the question too specifically or narrowly; leave 'emotional' space to allow each group member to reveal something.
- choose questions for spectrograms for which you are fairly certain there is some range of opinion, feeling, etc.
- If the group members are just getting to know one another [i.e., a new or very early stage group], avoid questions for which there are likely to be very strong opinions at each extreme.

II. Common points for spectrograms and locograms:

1. Take plenty of time for the warmup, especially if the group is new to these types of activities. Explain the process clearly and allow participants to ask questions. Acknowledge that people may feel a bit anxious moving into spontaneous, unscripted action, in which they will say something about themselves.
2. Give participants time to become clear about their opinion, feeling or choice. Remind the group that each person has a different mental tempo, and some will take longer than others. Only when everyone is ready ask group to put their choice into action.
3. If a participant does not want to show his or her choice, even after gentle encouragement, acknowledge this participant's choice with respect and acceptance. Later, during the *Sharing*, encourage the participant to share feelings and reasons for not choosing. Make sure other group members respect him/her; don't allow criticism or shame against this participant.
4. When participants are ready, then ask them to place themselves on the line of the *Spectrogram*, or at the location place in the *Locogram*.
5. After the action (participants have placed themselves) allow time for *Sharing*:
 - Give each participant an opportunity to share briefly reasons or feelings for his/her choice.
 - IF group is very large, use selective sharing: selected volunteers from different points on the *Spectrogram* line or location place in the *Locogram*.
6. You may also invite any participants who want to try out a very different (contrasting) place on the line, or a different location in the *Locogram* to do so.
 - Ask them to share from this new position and then decide if they want to return to their original position or remain in the new spot.
 - Check in with the rest of the group to see if these new choices effect anyone else's choice.
7. Another possibility for exploration is to invite participants to ask a question of someone who is in a very different place from themselves.

Director's Check List:

PLACE OBJECTS

- 2 objects separated by imaginary line for *spectrogram*.
- 3 or more objects in different places for *locogram*.
- If group is not experienced, briefly define *spectrogram*, or *locogram* (see p. 1)

SAY THE QUESTION

- At least 2 times.
- Say it the same way each time, so group is not confused.

SHOW THE POSSIBLE POSITIONS

- For *spectrogram*, walk the imaginary line in both directions, stating possible meanings at different positions on the line.
- For *locogram*, walk to each position and say what choice that position represents.

MAKE SURE GROUP UNDERSTANDS THE QUESTION

- Ask if anyone needs more explanation.

LET THE GROUP MEMBERS DECIDE WHERE TO PLACE THEMSELVES

- Allow time for each group member to decide where they will stand before asking them to move into action.
- If the question is not simple, use some method for participants to indicate that they have made their choice (for example – “Hold up one hand and lower it when you know your choice.”)

INVITE THE GROUP TO PLACE THEMSELVES

- When all group members are ready, direct them to move to the place that shows their answer to the question.

ASK GROUP MEMBERS TO CHECK THAT THEIR PLACE IS ACCURATE

INVITE SHARING

- Depending on size of the group and purpose of the activity you may ask each person to share or only one from each end and one from the middle (in a *spectrogram*).

- For a *locogram* you might have each person share or have each group have a discussion and have one person summarize for the group.
- You might also ask people who are standing in different places if they have any questions or advice for others standing in other positions.

CLOSE THE SOCIOMETRY

- Thank the group for their participation.
- *de-role* the objects – remove the criteria they have been holding and allow them to become a neutral object once again.

