



## 10. Broken action

### Learning Objectives:

- Train the precision of the gesture
- Find new ways of expression to communicate your emotions
- Learn to use objects as partners
- Train the sense of rhythm
- Learn a new creative process

### Materials: music

**Description:** I carry out a "complex" action on or with everyday objects, such that I can break it down into a sequence of "micro-actions".

A few examples among countless: I fold/stretch a garment; I put on/take off a garment; I open/close an umbrella; I sit down/get up, pour, drink, eat... with the related necessary objects. The first task will be to "drain" the action to get to the essential, eliminating unnecessary gestures. Then I create the sequence by performing one micro-action at a time; to highlight the beginning and the end of each single micro-action I insert a pause between one and the other. Each micro-action must have the same duration.

Example: I pour a liquid from a bottle into a glass. 1) I grab the bottle with one hand 2) I lift the bottle 3) I bend the bottle to pour the liquid into the glass 4) I straighten the bottle 5) I put the bottle down 6) I let go the bottle.

The precision of the movement shouldn't be confused with rigidity and mechanicalness (unless you want to play on this aspect, like puppet-robots).

This exercise is very useful to gain awareness of what we are doing and making it more meaningful in a theatrical context.

After that I can create more and more complex actions.

Some examples of "application" of the sequence:

- "Skill": even the simplest action can turn into a show of mastery, like a spectacular "number": "Look how good I am!". The more "trivial" the action, the better! But with even greater commitment and precision. The performance may also have a clownish development with connected "failure".
- "Advertising": the action can be transformed to advertise an object of daily use (a chair, a handkerchief, an umbrella, a bottle) as an amazing originality, with related "instructions for use".
- "Lesson": teaching a "naive" student how to perform a daily action.
- "Training": how a boss gives orders to a group of subordinates.
- "Musical": the same sequence of actions performed by a group on the rhythm of a music.

**Variants:** Once the sequence has been well learned, the object is removed and a gestural sequence is obtained which can be used as an excuse to "dance" freely, with or without music.

**Development:** How to give body and life back to this "stripped" action?

We will give life (and meaning) to the action thanks to rhythm and tension (see "Breathing" sheet), just like we give life to a written text through our voice, our breath.





The same action and each micro-action can be performed with greater or lesser tension and with a different duration (slow/rapid). Each pause will have a meaning (a doubt? a problem?). At any moment of the sequence I can stop, go back and then resume. I can play with the (obsessive?) repetition of a single fragment.

For example, if we want to put into practice the action "pouring a liquid", we will start asking ourselves questions that can stimulate our imagination: "What's in the bottle? Water or something else? Do I drink to quench my thirst or for another reason? Do I like it or not? Maybe I have a drinking problem and want to stop drinking?" And still more questions...

The same action can tell a different story and convey different emotions depending on **how** I perform it.

**Observations:** It is important to understand that I can make any daily action interesting and above all that, through this, I can express and communicate my emotions.

