Fiona Dalziel and Erika Piazzoli*

"It comes from you": Agency in adult asylum seekers' language learning through Process Drama

Abstract: In this paper, we present a study of adult asylum seekers learning Italian as a Second Language through Process Drama. Adopting an ecology of language approach, we first set the scene by examining some of the most salient issues regarding the language learning needs of asylum seekers and refugees, including the challenge of fostering both language proficiency and a sense of autonomy and agency. We then introduce the topic of performative, or drama-based pedagogy, focussing on how this has been adopted for second-language learning, presenting the main features of Process Drama. We go on to evaluate a number of drama-based projects aimed specifically at adult asylum seekers and refugees before presenting the specific context of this study. The Process Drama sessions, organised in the 2016/2107 year, were part of a project called "Cultura e Accoglienza", which allowed for the enrolment of 30 asylum seekers as "guest students" at the University of Padova in Northern Italy. In particular, we look at one of the Process Drama sessions, in which the participants became members of an association of community workers welcoming migrants, and the teacher took on the role of the asylum seeker. Through the dramatic frame, we, as facilitators, drew on the learners' expertise in settling into the Italian culture, and in welcoming new arrivals. Our aim was that of using 'time', 'place' and 'role reversal' as distancing devices to challenge the notion of 'otherness'. The analysis from videos, focus groups and teacher journals suggests that the drama gave participants the chance to shift perspective, and that this impacted on their sense of agency as second language learners.

Keywords: asylum seekers, Process Drama, performative learning, agency, reciprocity

*Corresponding author: Erika Piazzoli,** Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland,
E-mail: erika.piazzoli@tcd.ie
Fiona Dalziel, University of Padova, Padova, Italy, E-mail: fionaclare.dalziel@unipd.it

1 Refugees and language learning

In this paper we argue that quality language provision for refugees and asylum seekers should revolve around learner agency and celebration of diversity: whatever there may be in the outside world, the language class should recognize the differing needs of participants, build on the strengths of their existing language competence and foster a sense of belonging by seeing inclusion as two-way process. It will also explore the concepts of vulnerability and resilience, arguing that as well fostering agency, drama approaches can allow refugees and asylum seekers to step outside the role of victim and to enact narratives which they acquire the power to transform. In doing so, we adopt an ecological view of language education, one in which "context is the heart of the matter" (van Lier 2004: 5). In order to frame the Process Drama project under investigation, this first section will attempt to outline some of the issues relating to adult refugees and asylum seekers learning the language of their host countries. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to address the complex and ever-evolving terminology of migration, a brief explanation of the terms chosen here is necessary. While some use the term "migrant" as all-encompassing, it is sometimes used to denote someone who does not have refugee status[1]. A distinction is also made between "forced" and "economic" migrants, even though, as Gold and Nawyn (2013: 97) point out, this dichotomy may be misleading because "many migrants feel compelled to move for a combination of reasons that include political, environmental, and/or economic incentives". In this article, the authors use migration/migrant as a neutral umbrella term for all those people who move from one country to another, specifying when relevant that refugees and asylum seekers are being referred to.

　　The starting point for this discussion, one which will make it possible to better understand some of the dynamics of the language learning process, is that of a world which sees migration as a problem, one in which those forced to leave their homes are at best begrudgingly hosted, or at worst prohibited from crossing borders.[2] Even if fortunate enough to be given the opportunity of resettlement, refugees are seldom celebrated by host societies as a valuable linguistic, cultural, social and economic resource; as underlined by Li and Sah (Forthcoming): "Few countries [...] have treated integration as a two-way

1 See for example, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34061097 (accessed April 1, 2019).
2 According to the UN Refugee Agency: "There are [...] an estimated 10 million stateless people who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement" http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html (accessed August 25, 2018).

process". In fact, it is this somewhat problematic understanding of the word "integration" which has led to our preference for the term "inclusion". While the former simply implies that the migrant is required to adapt to his/her host country, the latter involves change taking place on both sides, in order to co-create a welcoming, multicultural society. Sadly, the Italian context described in this article is one which has seen "the systematic negative representation of migrants in Italy as a burden to Italian society" (Catalano 2016: 62). Seen in this light, refugees and asylum seekers not only have a pressing need to acquire the language of the host country so as to face up to the tasks and challenges of everyday life, but also "to demonstrate their skills and abilities to the host community" (Plutzar and Ritter 2008: 9), a host community which may be reluctant to enter into exchange and dialogue with them.

The comments above can be related to the concepts of second and foreign language learners. Like all second language learners, in other words, those acquiring a language in a place where it is spoken, refugees and asylum seekers have concrete language needs directly related to their relationship with the host nation. In brief, their language learning is part and parcel of the resettlement process, providing them with an essential tool to achieve economic independence by entering into the world of work and to take care of themselves and their families (see for example Li 2013; Li and Sah Forthcoming). Language proficiency can also be a necessary requisite in attaining a residence permit and/or citizenship[3]. Yet, at the same time, while most second language learners will find themselves immediately immersed in the target language, in school, work or social environments, with refugees and asylum seekers this is not necessarily the case. Especially in the case of those waiting to find out whether their asylum application has been accepted, the opportunities for language use could be almost totally confined to the language classroom, just like learners studying a foreign language in their own country. This is because they often live and attend language and vocational classes together with other asylum seekers, with whom they share their native language or use a lingua franca, such as English, to communicate. Their use of the target language may well be confined to service encounters in places such as shops, stations and offices of various kinds.

As regards their language learning, all the above means that while refugees and asylum seekers are doubtless receiving some input in the target language, they might not be producing much "comprehensible output", which as Swain

---

3 A 2014 Council of Europe survey of 36 member states found that in 23 of these there is a language requirement in order to gain a residence permit, and in 26 a certain level of competence is required for citizenship.

(1985) stresses is an important factor in driving forward the acquisition process. In fact, the participants in the Process Drama project described here often remarked on the fact that they had little opportunity to practice their Italian outside their classes, as it was very hard for them to enter into those informal networks in which participants are of equal status. Thus, these learners are not only denied the chance to experience a wide range of language registers, but they are far less likely to be able to engage extensively in "negotiation of meaning" (see for example Long 1983), as they would in informal situations. This observation is confirmed by Li (2013: 276), who notes that: "In societies with anti-immigrant sentiments social interaction decreases between natives and immigrants, which in turn decreases immigrants' exposure to the official language and hampers the process of language learning".

One may thus conclude that in order to ensure high quality language provision for refugees and asylum seekers, ample opportunity for spoken interaction must be ensured. It should not be assumed that all that is needed in classes is input and that the learners will then have the chance to put into practice what they have learned. Learners clearly need to be given the chance to practise those functions which they require in their daily lives, so as to be able to perform these effectively. Yet language practice should not be confined to these. As well as not giving learners the chance to enhance their skills in a wide range of situations, such functional practice casts them in the role of the needy person who constantly seeks to acquire rather than to offer goods, services and information (for further discussion see below). We would argue that asylum seekers and refugees should be offered the chance to step outside their everyday roles, and do so in a safe space conducive to rich language use, in other words, one in which the affective filter may be lowered (Krashen 1982).

Yet in order for such rich language use to be ensured, the classroom needs to adopt a learner-centered approach, one which builds on participants' resources and agency. This is clearly important with all adult learners: acquiring a higher degree of agency in the language (and other kinds of) learning enables adults to take charge actively of the processes that will help them to become life-long learners. Here it is also relevant to mention two of the terms used by van Lier (2004) with regard to the ecology of language learning: "value" and "critical". These are particularly relevant to language provision of refugees and asylum seekers, as the ultimate goal is that of supporting resettlement and in doing so working towards the development of an inclusive society. Yet, as noted by Balfour et al. (2015: 163) in the case of ESL provision in the Australian context, teachers may find themselves "under enormous pressure to deliver and measure the implementation of a structured curriculum", when what they believe in is a learner-centered approach that goes beyond that of a "skills-

based" industry. In other words, a number of external factors, including the need to teach to the test and limited resources may result in a "one size fits all approach", which will be ineffective with heterogeneous groups of learners, in terms of age, language background and schooling, and has been criticized by scholars such as Browder (2018). Similarly, Warriner (2007) criticizes "quick-fix" or "band-aid" approaches, arguing that what is really needed are "teaching and learning practices that facilitate the transformations required for genuine educational access and inclusion, long-term economic self-sufficiency and stability" (Warriner 2007: 356).

Moreover, in language classes, there may be a tendency to transmit information about the language rather than to foster language emergence (van Lier 2004); the latter requires an approach which encourages learners to adopt strategies which suit them and to become autonomous learners. The notion of autonomy is closely related to that of agency; as Little (2012: 4) highlights: "Learners take their first steps towards autonomy when they recognize that success in learning depends on them: their commitment, their initiative, their effort". The focus on the acquisition of enhanced autonomy, as described above, is facilitated by the fact that refugees and asylum seekers generally come to the language classroom with a vast amount of previous knowledge and a keen awareness of language and its sociocultural importance (see for example, Krumm and Plutzar 2008). They are often plurilingual and/or have experienced contexts of diglossia. Yet it is rare for their previous language experiences to be used as a valuable resource in the classroom. Instead, by tapping into these precious resources, language providers not only value learners and their identities as speakers of other languages, but also prepare them for the real speech communities they are about to enter, which are rarely homogenous and more often comprise "a diversity of dialects, culture and social customs" (van Lier 2004: 7).

2 Performative approaches in L2 teaching and learning

The last two decades have seen a steady growth in drama-based approaches for second language teaching and learning. While theatrical methods to teach foreign languages have been documented as early as the ancient Greeks, it was not until the late 1990s that performative language pedagogy gained attention within the research community. The term 'performative language teaching' refers to the use of theatre and drama-based techniques, strategies and

approaches to facilitate second language acquisition. The phrase was coined by Schewe (2013), validated by Even and Schewe (2016); Fleming (2016) and recently documented by Mentz and Fleiner (2018). Though the use of the term 'performative' is clearly quite recent, it is rooted in an older scholarly tradition known as 'Drama in Education' that originated in the 1950s in the UK and spread to Ireland, Australia, Canada and the United States (Bolton 1979; Heathcote 1991; Morgan and Saxton 1987; Anderson and Dunn 2013; Duffy 2015).

Currently, in the Higher Education sector the specialism 'Drama in Education' is offered as both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes around the world, including the UK, Ireland, The United States, Germany, Spain, Australia and New Zealand. A number of academic journals are dedicated to disseminating research in this field while research conferences, symposia and international Summer Schools exist to train pre-service teacher and offer continuing professional development to professionals. Since the late 1990s, Process Drama (O'Neill 1995; O'Toole 1992) has also emerged as a popular form within Drama in Education. While Process Drama and Drama in Education focus on any strands in education including, but not limited to, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), the expression 'performative language teaching' is grounded in these traditions, and is specifically applied to the area of L2 education.

To better capture the essence of performative language teaching, a brief historical overview is required. Up to the mid-1950s, theatre-based education in the UK was associated with either studying literary works or training actors for the stage. In the 1960s, a surge of innovation brought teachers to consider drama processes as a means to foster creativity, self-esteem and confidence in the classroom (Slade 1955; Way 1967). This meant, in practice, a renewed interest in drama processes not necessarily with the objective of studying or performing existing plays, but also of engaging students in improvised creations to explore critical issues. These drama processes vary in form and are based on the principle that, in order to bring the curriculum to life, the teacher can actively join learners in an improvised performance (Teacher-in-Role) to connect curricular 'facts' to lived-experiences. The aim here is that of stirring emotions and constructing scenarios that colour the learner's meaning, a notion that, half a century later, has been validated by educational neuroscience (Sambanis 2016). In essence, drama-based learning aims to make the curriculum alive with feeling, imagery, sound, movement – drawing on the syllabus to embody co-created stories that can engage learners in authentic shared contexts. Teachers trained in such an approach can be referred to as teacher/artists; they channel their own inspiration with the suggestions of the group, shaping a story through the elements of drama (Haseman and O'Toole 2017) to capture the students' imagination – and facilitate learning.

In this paper we zoom in on performative language teaching – specifically the Process Drama tradition. While a complete overview on L2 Process Drama is beyond the scope of this publication, here we limit ourselves to sketching out its main features. Process Drama as a dramatic form operates with the teacher/artist starting from a pre-text (stimulus) and inviting the group to formulate open questions that create the foundations for a story. These suggestions are then channelled into a performed narrative, with all participants sharing the roles of actors and spectators (integral audience). Often, in Process Drama, the teacher/artist will choose to impersonate a low-status character, deliberately subverting classroom expectations and roles. Conversely, students' roles are often construed as experts – a cornerstone principle of the field (Heathcote 1984 in O'Neill 2015). This role reversal strategy has been implemented since the 1960s with positive results in enhancing confidence, communication, motivation, fluency, classroom dynamics, social skills, literacy and numeracy.

The first documented research in Process Drama applied to L2 learning dates back to 1995, with Shin Mei Kao's discourse analysis investigation. Her fieldwork was based in a university context in Taipei, with undergraduate students of English as a Foreign Language. Her findings point to L2 Process Drama increasing motivation to communicate, confidence and fluency in English. Her publication *Words into Words*, co-written with O'Neill (1998), illustrates this study, and introduces the theoretical framework of the approach, backing it up with empirical evidence. Since then, two decades of research have validated those findings – focussing on questioning and turn-taking (Kao et al. 2011); foreign language anxiety (Piazzoli 2011); multi-modality (Yaman Ntelioglu 2011); vocabulary acquisition (Kalogirou et al. 2017); intercultural competence (Rothwell 2017); motivation (Stinson 2008). See Stinson and Winston (2011) and, more recently, Piazzoli (2018) for a comprehensive overview of research and practice.

A common denominator between variations of dramatic forms is an emphasis on education, rather than therapy. As it stands, the thread that connects performative approaches is a firm determination to engage the emotions but to avoid the pitfall of using drama as 'simulation' – that is, using the medium of the drama to recreate participants' past stories. This can have a detrimental effect, particularly when stories are associated with trauma. Instead, drama strategies draw on the use of metaphor, symbol, role, dramatic tension and meaning to create new possibilities – touching on issues metaphorically, rather than literally. An essential strategy to ensure this goal is achieved is what Bolton (1984) refers to as "protecting into emotion", that is, engaging emotion in such a way that stimulates, rather than overwhelms, the emotional charge. Similarly, Eriksson (2011) refers to this concept as "distancing". This assumes further relevance when dealing with L2 education, as operating in a foreign language

often implies an implicit degree of distancing in place. In essence, "distancing can act as a barrier or a bridge, according to how the teacher/artist structures the drama and how the participants respond to it" (Piazzoli 2018: 144).

Using drama work to merely replicate a past situation, with no awareness of distancing strategies, is a common mistake of the novice L2 teacher interested in performative work. This is particularly significant with a refugee population, the focus of our current discussion. By mistaking dramatic exploration for replication, a facilitator runs the risk of re-enacting refugees' past stories, reinforcing narratives of victimhood (Jeffers 2008) that may be associated with having fled one's country, instead of activating new pathways to stimulate learning.

3 Performative approaches with adult asylum seekers and refugees

In the past decades, several performative language projects have been carried out with refugees and asylum seekers in a number of different countries. In this paper, we review four such projects. While all projects usually involve an inter-disciplinary collaboration from disciplines such as sociology, applied linguistics, or drama in education, the nature of refugee identity often demands that a focus on critical pedagogy, psychology of education and psycholinguistics is adopted rather than a purely linguistic approach. It follows that some of the main themes emerging from this brief literature review encompass those of belonging, reciprocity, resilience and empathy.

Research by Rousseau et al. (2012) reveals that including society's rich linguistic (and cultural) heritage "in the making" in the drama classroom appears to further strengthen its empowering effects. Rousseau et al. (2012: 187) studied the impact of "school-based intervention integrating drama and language awareness" in a 2009–2010 pilot project that addressed the learning difficulties of "underschooled" immigrant and refugee students in two high school classes in a socio-economically "underprivileged neighbourhood" in Montreal, Canada. As one of the positive outcomes, the authors point out that the integration of language and drama in a plurilingual classroom, cherishing linguistic diversity to support plurilingual communicative repertoires, prevented many students from feeling "doubly rejected" (Rousseau et al. 2012: 187), i.e. discriminated against for being part of both a stigmatized student group with learning difficulties, and a cultural minority seen as socio-culturally disadvantaged. While reaching more complex findings overall, the authors come to the

conclusion that "[t]he acknowledgement of diverse languages and identities can help restore *feelings of belonging*" (Rousseau et al. 2012: 187, our emphasis).

An investigation into feelings of belonging is precisely what inspired a large-scale project on performative language learning and refugees, that is, *Creative English*. The project is grounded in Smith's (2016a, 2017) research on establishing a sense of belonging. Her research became the platform for *Creative English*, an applied theatre project that won the 2013 UK government competition to find innovative ways of teaching English and increasing community engagement for speakers with low proficiency levels. The project avails of a drama-based, performative approach to language learning, described as "using drama, shaped by an ethic of care, to facilitate belonging" (Smith 2016a: 72). The programme has been ongoing since 2013, with several studies, both qualitative and quantitative, documenting the results (CTPSR 2015; Smith 2016a; Smith 2016b; Smith 2017). It has evolved from 78 participants with one facilitator, at the onset, to over 2,400 participants and 43 facilitators in 2016 (Smith 2016a). In 2018, it reached 5,894 participants (http://www.creative-english.org.uk/). The full programme consists of 38 sessions, although attendance is voluntary, where drama-based work is conducted with refugees and migrants with the aim of improving their conversational English. Targeted at low proficiency speakers, *Creative English* found results soared in terms of confidence to speak English in the community, self-efficacy and motivation. Out of a sample of 1,536 participants who completed 10 or more *Creative English* sessions, 81% declared that they talked to neighbours and acquaintances outside class; 78% had conversations with health professionals; 48% had conversations with landlords or housing services; 62% had conversations with teachers in their child's school or with adult education college; 47% made progress towards work; 78% engaged in new community activities and 100% of participants reported an increase in confidence (Smith 2017: 2). The lessons are structured following a storyline, with participants improvising in role as a community of different families living in the same street. As the project founder suggests, the network does offer an alternative family to participants, with both students and facilitators using the word 'family' to refer to each other, blurring the boundary between the dramatic frame and reality: "Family relationships have a universal quality and help participants find common ground, as similar feelings and pressures are shared regardless of cultural background" (Smith 2016a: 73).

Another valuable performative language learning study conducted with refugees is described in Balfour et al. (2015). A series of three Australia-based research projects, the overall aim was to investigate the use of drama and resilience when working with refugees. The three projects shared "the belief that language development is a critical part of the [refugee] settlement process

and [...] the positive role that participatory drama forms of drama might play in this area" (Balfour et al. 2015: 4). Of particular relevance to this paper, the first project spanned for three years (2011–2013), funded by the Australian Research Council, in collaboration with a MultiLink Community Services, a refugee support agency. It involved a series of Process Drama sessions, on a weekly basis, for 8 weeks, with two groups of children. Their findings suggest that

> drama offers useful alternate ways of approaching and supporting the language learning needs of young people with refugee backgrounds. These approaches, which encourage playfulness and real ownership of language, within authentic contexts and for real purposes, are quite different from those more usually employed. (Balfour et al. 2015: 201)

The authors initially set out to investigate the construct of resilience, and how to support the development of resilience through drama in refugee learners. In a highly reflexive turn, the authors describe a shift in their understanding of the concept of resilience, from a romanticized version to a more mature, ecological construct of the concept – this conceptual shift involved being able to understand resilience in refugees not as a trait that one either possesses, or does not, but as an existing condition. Such resilience, the authors came to understand, could either be tapped into by the drama work, or could go unnoticed – but it was not itself contained within the drama work. In their own words: "With this shift came a review in the function of the creative work, with a new emphasis being placed on identifying ways to resource resilience rather than to construct it" (Balfour et. al: 198). This point – *resourcing* resilience rather than constructing it – speaks to the core of our project, too, as the discussion below will reveal. The authors conclude:

> Resilience and hope are then not heroic strategies that can be put in place by skilled practitioners, but rather mundane, fragile and quiet processes embodied in each individual and environment. They are processes of ingenuity and survival, performed moment by moment with the resources that are at hand. (Balfour et al. 2015: 199–200)

Resilience as a trait is also connected to vulnerability. While, at a first glance, we may position these two qualities at the opposite ends of the spectrum, vulnerability is an important feature in relation to performative approaches by refugees. Cummings (2016) makes an informed analysis of three plays performed for/by refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Australia. She analyses three plays inspired by real events. Two pieces were written by playwrights and performed by professional actors; the third one was written and performed by a group refugees themselves (who had never acted before). Titled *Journey of Asylum – Waiting*, the latter play was devised by a group of refugees in Melbourne and based on their true stories, directed by Catherine Simmonds

(2010 in Cummings 2016). Participants' main goals, according to Simmonds, was to "communicate to the audience that they are human" (Cummings 2016: 180). This urge of 'communicating humanity' to a sense of *vulnerability* echoes Smith's (2016b) words:

> Recent migrants need to break out of patterns of behaviour associated with struggling to survive. Refugees are constantly prescribed the role of victim by both society and the way they are represented in art, which foregrounds passive vulnerability and experience of trauma. [...] The mental release of alternative roles not only explores alternative possibilities which may be enacted in their lives but also helps them to cope better mentally with their current reality. (Smith 2016b: 10)

This sense of being released by a role emerges in the devised play *Journey of Asylum – Waiting*, particularly as one participant commented: "Telling one's story under these circumstances constitutes 'less of a performance' than doing so before immigration boards. She appreciated the performative process because "you can really tell your story from your own point of view, and *not act it*, and just tell it just the way you feel it" (Cummings 2016: 181). This performer is saying that, when on stage, she could 'really tell the story' instead of acting it. Here, she refers to having to re-enact her story in front of Immigration Boards, in order to provide evidence of being an asylum seeker. Acting off stage, then is more taxing to this individual than performing on stage – a more liberating process. As often happens in these circumstances, make belief and make-believe (Schechner 2006) are closely interlinked. In make-*believe*, the boundary between what is real and what is imagined is distinct, as in a group of actors performing and the audience watching; in make *belief*, this boundary is blurred, with professional roles, status, gender and race influencing situations to "create the very social realities they enact" (Schechner 2006: 42). Most of the participants/performers in Simmonds' play had pending asylum application cases at the time and were conscious that what was said in the play could potentially influence their application. As such, it was not only an act of make-believe, but also an act of make belief, that is, they were to some extent entrenched in the context of the asylum application process by constructing that very narrative.

An important point, connecting back to the argument on protection and distancing, is the following: as part of the workshop-process that culminated in the devised performance *Journey of Asylum – Waiting*, the director held individual interviews with each performer (none of whom had previous acting experience) to ascertain what they wanted/did not want to communicate and what they wanted/did not want to share. Only then did they share these stories with the group (Cummings 2016: 180). We make this point as we see this as an important form of emotional protection (Bolton 1984), a pivotal point in drama

work – particularly with vulnerable populations. As one participant in Simmons' play, *Journey of Asylum – Waiting* asserts: "I'm sick of telling my story; talk talk talk talk talk. I already told my story. It doesn't work. I don't want to. Don't make me do this. Sorry, I don't want to play" (in Cummings 2016: 161). Here the strategy of 'distancing', discussed above, becomes pivotal in granting enough emotional protection to allow the participants to take on a new role, without having to re-live their past situation. As Papadopoulos (2007: 20) argues, "if we view people from refugee backgrounds as universally and permanently depleted by their traumatic histories, then we may be missing something important, underestimating their potential for transformative renewal". By incorporating metaphor, symbol, and creative play, performative language learning can bypass this danger, offering authentic experiences to practice the language which are devoid of victimising narrative.

4 Context of the research: The "Cultura e Accoglienza" project

The present study was carried out thanks to a two-year project at the University of Padova called "Cultura e Accoglienza[4]", launched at the start of the 2016–2017 academic year. The project, which gave a group of asylum seekers the opportunity to become "guest students" for one year, was run by the Student Services Office in collaboration with the University Language Centre. The aim was to select a group of around 30 young people who were particularly well educated and motivated and offer them a series of services: the chance to attend one or more Italian courses at the Language Centre; access to all the language learning resources of the Language Centre and to the University's library services; one-to-one peer tutoring with volunteer student tutors; the opportunity to sign up for single university modules free of charge[5]. One of the advantages of the project was that of providing those participants with a high level of proficiency in Italian the opportunity to attend more challenging language courses

---

4 It is not simple to translate the word "accoglienza" ("welcome", "reception" and "hospitality") from Italian to English. In some cases, it has a positive connotation with the idea of welcoming newcomers, as with the project in question, but at other times it simply refers to the hosting of refugees, as in "centro di accoglienza" ("reception centre") or even to immigration issues in general as in "politiche di accoglienza" ("immigration policies").
5 For more information about the project see https://ilbolive.unipd.it/it/rifugiati-laccoglienza-passa-unipd and Duso & Marigo in this issue (accessed May 2, 2019).

than would otherwise have been possible. The Language Centre did not organise special courses for the guest students; instead they were included in the already existing courses for international and exchange students at the University. One of the authors, Fiona Dalziel, was the Language Centre coordinator for the project and in the Spring of 2017, the other author, Erika Piazzoli, was present at the University as a visiting scholar. We therefore proposed a series of Process Drama sessions for participants, with the aim of boosting their language competence and confidence.

There were in all six 4-hour sessions, which took place from April to June 2017. The first three sessions were facilitated by both authors, while the final three were facilitated by Fiona Dalziel with the collaboration of university language students. The total number of participants was nine, but of these a core group of five came to all, or nearly all the sessions. The learners were aged between 20 and 28 and had varying levels of competence in Italian, ranging from almost total beginner to A2. The countries of origin were: Cameroon, Egypt, Gambia, Nigeria (5 students[6]) and Syria[7]. The first meeting introduced the participants to some of the principal features of drama approaches to (language) learning such as voice training, image theatre and storytelling. After the usual warm-up session, the facilitators introduced activities related to the "Palette of Emotions" (see Piazzoli 2018: 31), as well as *tableaux vivants*. The meeting ended with the participants telling stories related to their first impressions of Italy, with facilitators aware of the benefits, but also, as mentioned above, the possible issues related to this choice:

> [...] within the context of arts-based work, especially theatre, personal testimony is often seen as a key means of empowering newly arrived individuals through the sharing of subaltern experience with a wider audience. However, as Jeffers (2008) warns, these stories can also be interpreted as problematic representations of victimhood. (Balfour et al. 2015: 5)

One of the stories, that of an asylum seeker's fascination with a group of street artists, was to provide the topic for the Process Drama of the following session. In all, there were four Process Drama scenarios: Street Artists; Iceland Migration (see detailed description below); the Restaurant; the Sardinian Myth. In all of these, one of the facilitators was Teacher-in-Role and interwoven into the story creation process there were a number of L2 vocabulary building tasks. One of the sessions was instead devoted to devising activities based on a workshop

---

6 Nigeria is the most common country of origin of asylum seekers to Italy. In 2017, 17% of all immigrants were of Nigerian origin.

7 The participant from Syria was not actually a member of the "Cultura e Accoglienza" project but was at the time involved in an internship at the Language Centre.

proposed by drama practitioner Garret Scally, University of Manchester. The *Iceland Migration* has been chosen as the focus of this article both because it seems to encapsulate the values and beliefs associated with drama projects for refugees and asylum seekers and also because it was the session that the participants themselves judged to be their favourite.

5 Context of the drama: Iceland migration

The Process Drama *Iceland Migration* took place on May 18, 2017 and was attended by five learners. In view of the problems inherent in the telling of migrants' stories and the value of distance in educational drama, as mentioned above, it was decided to adopt a number of distancing devices, which, as will be seen, had the dual functions of protecting and empowering the participants. As Eriksson (2007: 13) reminds us: "It is important to sustain distance, as a safeguard against blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. If distance is not observed, there is a danger that the playing becomes private, therapeutic or simply mundane". The first element of distance was that of place and time. The drama was to take place ten years into the future (2027) and although the location was to be Padova, the migratory flows in question were from north to south, rather than the other way around. The learners were told that due to environmental problems, large numbers of migrants had begun to arrive in Italy from countries such as Iceland. The next distancing technique was one of role reversal: the learners were told that they were to take on the roles of members of an association dealing with the reception of migrants in Padova. In other words, they were plunged into a context that was familiar but they now took on the role of the expert, providing rather than receiving help and information, so that they could "explore material that is relevant to them but that contains a degree of distance" (Balfour et al. 2015: 54). In this case, the role reversal was a powerful tool for emerging from the common narratives of victimhood discussed above. To quote Smith (2016a: 10):

> Recent migrants need to break out of patterns of behaviour associated with struggling to survive [...] the mental release of alternative roles not only explores alternative possibilities which may be enacted in their lives but also helps them to cope with their own current reality.

It is also worth noting that a further layer of distancing was added by the fact that everything was carried out in a foreign language (Piazzoli 2018). As the story unfolded, it was clear that the way in which the Process Drama was framed

made it possible not only to approach and to understand the concept of otherness, but also to challenge it.

After the explanation of the dramatic context, there followed the phase in which the facilitators' purpose was Building Belief in the drama. The group discussed the possible members of the association (President, Coordinator, Secretary, Communications Officer, Treasurer) and decided who would adopt each of these roles. They then proceeded to create an association logo, to draw up a list of rules and regulations, to draft a welcoming protocol and to devise some interview questions for new arrivals. All this was done with the facilitators acting as guides, offering language scaffolding where necessary, but taking their lead from the learners themselves. The next step was the Experiential Phase with Fiona as Teacher-in-Role, playing the part of Freya, a newly arrived refugee from Iceland. The participants in their roles as members of the Association interviewed Freya, asking about her status and discussing her dream in this new country, that of wishing to open up her own farm. An intercultural exchange ensued, with Freya introducing some facts about her country, the landscape and the food, and the learners giving her some useful information about Italy, from how to buy a bus ticket to what to expect in a supermarket. The participants then explained their rules, stating finally that the Association must be notified if refugees leave the city for more than 3 days. This final observation was to provide the dramatic tension for the last activities of the drama. It was announced that Freya had disappeared for 5 days and that it was their task to find her and to convince her to return. The participants were then divided into two groups (one also including Erika) and the story was narrated by means of a *tableau vivant* and then a brief improvisation (both with and without verbal communication). As Erika comments in her Reflective Journal (RJ):

> Like in the previous group, the scene was played twice, once with movements only and once with movement and dialogue. After the first sequence (movement only) we tried to guess what the story was, but we couldn't: it took a second go, with dialogue, to put the pieces together. This was particularly insightful, I thought, as it gave the actors the power and satisfaction of having used verbal communication successfully, to be understood. (RJ: 9)

As regards the Reflective Phase, when "the teacher can guide learners to reflect and analyse the language arising in the improvisation" (Piazzoli 2012: 33), the students and the facilitators went in and out of role throughout the drama so as to debrief and to discuss (in Italian) what was taking place. Finally, five weeks later, at the end of the very last meeting, a Focus Group discussion was organised and participants spoke (in English) about the experience with the help of Video-Stimulated Recall (VSR) and the use of objects and costumes from the drama in question.

6 Findings

The data suggests that drama was effective in triggering participants' agency, intended as the motivation and willingness to purposefully communicate, verbally and non-verbally, in the target language. This statement aligns with twenty years of research (Kao and O'Neill 1998; Piazzoli 2018). What then, may be some of the factors contributing to such state of affairs? In this paper we unpack this concept, striving to understand what factors contributed to this boost of agency. We identify four main themes that activated participants' agency to communicate: (1) a degree of (pre-existing) meta-linguistic awareness in the learners; (2) the drama tapping into participants' attitude of reciprocity; (3) the role/status reversal of the drama activating participants' intercultural literacy; and (4) the symbol of 'family' providing a potent sociocultural frame, connected to the participants' affective engagement. Below we outline these arguments, sharing classroom data and, as mentioned above, focussing on one, out of the six performative sessions.

6.1 Meta-awareness as L2 learners

During the Focus Group (FG) discussion, when asked whether the drama sessions were effective in helping them with language-related issues, Max and Adam[8] respond affirmatively. Adam reiterates, stating it was "very effective" (FG: 2). At this point, Max makes a connection between drama and agency:

> Max: I mean lessons, ordinary lessons, you always speak when the teacher gives you the opportunity to speak... while in the theatre ... *it comes from you*! [...] Yes, give the opportunity to speak, ask question, to play, to make rules everything, yes. (FG: 3, lines 4–7)

This statement strongly points to the agentic nature of drama. The four students who participated in the Focus Group revealed a high degree of meta-linguistic awareness as L2 learners:

> Fiona: If you're thinking about your Italian, do you feel confident about speaking Italian?

> Adam: For me I think sometimes you feel confident. It depends on who you are speaking with, sometimes you lose your self-confidence, and you forget some words (FG: 3, lines 3–4)

> Max: For me it depends on the context and the topic. (FG: 2, line 6)

---

8 All participants have been assigned pseudonyms.

It is interesting that both of them are able to give an answer that shows meta-cognition and awareness as a language learner. This is not surprising, as they all spoke more than three languages. Their answers reveal an understanding of confidence as a complex construct that shifts in relation to status differentials – who you are speaking with (line 3) and context (line 4). Participants were also able to point out non-verbal aspects of communication as an important components of language learning:

> Adam: I think this class is quite different from normal classes because here we use everything, both body language and writing and speaking to learn so many new things unlike the normal class where they only teach the verbs and you do assignments and classwork. (FG: 2, lines 17–19)

Adam mentions "body language and writing and speaking" as part of his idea of "everything" (we use "everything") – thus he is effectively including his body language as a communicative tool, putting it in the same category as writing and speaking. It is also significant to note how he uses the plural pronoun 'we' rather than 'I' – indicating an implicit vision of the drama classes as a socially grounded process. Max also hints at a mode of learning that may not be as explicit and direct, but is more subtle:

> Max: I think you improve. It helps you to improve your Italian without realising it. So you improve without even knowing you are improving. After a certain time you realise that your Italian becomes better and better. (FG: 2, lines 20–22)

Here Max's answer is highly sophisticated, as it shows a certain level of meta-cognition as a language learner. Obviously this answer mirrors his own experience of having learnt Italian through performative language pedagogy – he must have gone through this realisation himself in order to offer such an answer in the Focus Group. As stressed by Thalgott (2017): "Language is central to many of the issues raised by migration, particularly integration and social cohesion" (2017: v). Sebastian's view of language learning in the context of our project aligns with this statement, and emerges clearly during the Focus Group. Replying to Fiona's question as to whether he likes the language, he chuckles as he states: "Once you're in the country you have to learn the language" (FG: 2, line 26). Here, Sebastian links the idea of migration and language learning to *liking* the language, an indication of the complexity of the concept of motivation in language acquisition (see for example Dörnyei 2001).

In the Video-Stimulated Recall (VSR), participants were shown one extract from the Process Drama, namely the Teacher-in-Role episode, with Fiona in role as a newly-arrived migrant, and the participants in role as members of the Association (discussed above in Section 5). Students were asked what they were thinking at the

time (five weeks earlier). VSR can be an insightful strategy to access the beliefs of participants, and it has been used extensively in educational research. Interestingly, the first point Max makes is that he feels a "drop of confidence":

> It was in my case here there is a lack of confidence. Sometimes you even know the word but sometimes you don't have the confidence to express the words you feel in you. When you feel the words and another person who knows the word in your place you realise that, was what you wanted to say. So there is a little bit the drop of confidence. (FG: 3, lines 21–24)

Stephen, on the other hand, comments that, at the time, he was happy and that his Italian was improving: "I was happy, I'm improving" (FG: 3, line 28). Both comments are worthwhile, as they show two learners at different stages. What is insightful about their observations is that, rather than focussing on their appearance on the screen, as often happens when watching a replay of one's performance, these two learners were able to engage in critical observations related to their learning. This, again, denotes a degree of meta-cognitive awareness. As expected, it took time to adjust to the convention of Teacher-in-Role, as Max observes:

> [about Teacher-in-Role] At the start I didn't know what was going on and it was after that I start to realise that it was all professional. (FG: 3, lines 32–33)

This resonates with Balfour et al. (2015: 202–203), who comment that, across their case studies "there was also a strong sense of ownership in the process, with decisions being left for individuals and/or subgroups to make in different ways".

6.2 Reciprocity as an attitude to fuel motivation

A thought-provoking finding of the study was connected to the participants' attitudes within the drama improvisation. The fiction, as it emerged, tapped into the participants' desire to reciprocate, to give back to the community which was hosting them. The data suggests that the drama which was most effective in triggering such sense of reciprocity was the *Iceland Migration* drama. When asked, all participants pointed to that session as their favourite. As Max explained:

> Yes, because I recognise myself in that story. There's a little bit of my case in Italy... in that story. (FG: 4, lines 4–5)

Thus, while having been careful to distance the context of the drama from a simulation, which could have directly evoked previous traumatic experiences,

through this fictional context we were able to create a space for participants to engage on an affective level, focussing on their new experience as 'experts of the Italian culture', rather than lingering on their past as victims. It was the fictional frame, and the role reversal created in the drama, we argue, that enabled such empowering shift – in line with the literature (Jeffers 2008; Balfour et al. 2015; Smith 2016b).

During the *Iceland Migration* workshop, as facilitators, we wondered whether this fictional situation and the welcoming attitude they embodied in the drama, was in fact closer to their actual experience, or whether it was what they wished they had received when they arrived in Italy. Commenting on this dilemma in her Reflective Journal, the Erika writes:

> I wonder if in this situation Max was recreating something that really happened to him (as a migrant) or if he used the dramatic frame to create a situation that he *wished* had happened – and I wonder how he felt in role and how he would feel, talking about it. (RJ: 7, lines 40–42)

When asked about it, participants addressed this point. They stated that through the context of the drama they were able for the "first" time to "give back" – the drama offered them a fictional space to return the hospitality they had received when they arrived. Yet more than this, through the drama, they were able to position themselves as individuals with something concrete and valuable to contribute to society rather than being cast in the role of passive recipients. This could even be seen as a first step towards what Parati (2005) calls "acts of talking back", in other words questioning the hegemonic discourses and unfair practices of the host culture. Thus by means of improvisation and play, they were able to reciprocate, and to enter into a two-way relationship:

> Adam: Yes just like they did to us when we arrived a year ago...
>
> Max: This was the first occasion to give what we received.
>
> Adam: Yes. This was the first occasion to give back what we received. (FG: 4, lines 12–14)

This, we argue, is the sort of medium that can breed generative spaces that are conducive to meaningful language learning experiences – as they tap into participants' motivation to communicate. The drama provided productive, creative tools to re-invent themselves and treasure a unique experience. Erika also notes this in her Reflective Journal:

> The cunning thing about today's workshop is that it was so simple, yet so powerful. We managed to find enough distance for them to feel comfortable to live through some of the

experiences related to welcoming migrants, re-settling, and cultural misunderstanding – but from the opposite perspective, that is, from the receiver's end. (RJ: 5, lines 22–24)

The role and status reversal embedded in the drama, which underpin the performative approach, functioned as a catalyst to draw on their expertise, as newcomers, to help out the teacher in role as the newly-arrived migrant.

These impressions echo findings from the *Creative English* project, discussed above, where "participation in creative tasks provides a shared history, however short term, as well as reciprocity that can be found in the creative process itself." (Smith 2016a: 75). As Smith affirms: "Reciprocity is part of a collaborative creative process; as it is not dependent on language skills or cultural awareness, all participants can contribute" (2016a: 82–83).

6.3 Status reversal and intercultural literacy

The dramatic frame adopted for the drama also activated participants' prior expertise of navigating Italian culture as an outsider. When Freya asks the members of the Association about everyday life in Italy, they give her advice on how to: travel by public transport (pointing out that before travelling by bus it is necessary to buy a bus ticket at the station of at a newsagent); buy fruit and vegetables in a supermarket (where it is obligatory to put on a plastic glove before weighing one's own groceries); find work in Italy (where it is important to describe your previous experiences on a piece of paper called a CV). In this way, the dramatic frame harnessed and at the same time valued the participants' own experiences of re-settlement, concerning the process of seeking asylum (life in reception centres), satisfying one's everyday needs (travel and shopping), and laying the foundations for a possible new life and economic stability (finding work). Thus through the dramatic frame a group of asylum seekers were empowered and could support Freya in her attempts to realise her dreams of a new life in the host country.

At this point, the notion of empathy is worth unpacking. While this term is often associated with host community members feeling empathy for incoming minority groups, the opposite is also true, though perhaps less explored. Cummings (2016) makes an interesting point here. She stresses that refugees and asylum seekers need to feel a degree of empathy towards the host culture to be able to fit within the new cultural norms – making an active effort to become "legible to those in power" (Cummings 2016: 162). In fact, as the examples above show, the status reversal gave a richer layer of meaning to the concept of Intercultural Literacy, passing on to a vulnerable other what they themselves had gleaned in previous experiences by means of empathy.

Cummings (2016: 187) adds: "If empathy *gives* anything, it does so only through collaboration" (original emphasis). And again: "If new narratives emerge to expand what is tellable and hearable in regard to refugee experience, they do so because performers and audience have, in some sense, worked together" (Cummings 2016: 187). This is a crucial argument that we want to bring to the table in relation to the *Iceland Migration* process drama. In a performative context where learners and teachers acted alternately as both audience and performers, all individuals worked together to create a meaningful story, through which these refugees were able to harness their empathy for a fellow asylum seeker, played by the teacher. This kind of role reversal created fertile conditions for linguistic and intercultural confidence to flourish – with the group being able to position themselves as 'experts' in giving practical advice (public transport; buying groceries; finding a job) to the newcomer.

Cummings (2016: 161) concludes that empathy "is most effective at fostering greater understanding when it involves an equal exchange between all parties involved" and not just when one party feels empathy for another. Often, when empathy is one-sided, she argues, the one who empathizes holds a position of privilege and power. In the lesson described in this article, the increase in understanding was mutual: the authors, who participated in the drama as teacher/artists, gained greater understanding of a milieu which was not accessible to them (rules and regulations in a migrants' welcoming association; seeing the Italian culture from an outsider's point of view). The participants also experienced being in someone else's shoes, playing the role of the volunteer welcoming a newcomer. This role reversal, as they mentioned in the Focus Group, was a possibility for them to "give back", but also to capitalise on their know-how and intercultural literacy related to arriving in Italian society.

6.4 'Family' as symbol: A sociocultural performative lens

One memorable and particularly powerful moment in the drama took place the first time that the Teacher-in-Role strategy was used. During the interview with Freya, the family metaphor was explicitly used to refer to the welcoming attitude of the Association members.

Rick [in role as Coordinator] : Freya, we are your family now.

Freya: I'm so glad, you know... I have no family here.

Rick: You're no longer alone. *We* are your family.

This pivotal moment, the beginning of a relationship that was to manifest itself further in the following activities, was keenly felt by Erika, who spoke of it in her Reflective Journal.

> Everyone is nodding at this stage. There is instant bonding, belief and investment in the situation. Fiona in role as Freya must have felt this, too, as she pushed her chair closer to the group, looking vulnerable and lost in her role as a displaced Icelandic school teacher. She was clinging to her white bag, from which she produced a seal toy, a present from her pupils in Iceland. She was very credible and the group kept asking her to come closer, physically closer with her chair. (RJ: 7, lines 32–38)

The closeness of the fictional relationship was confirmed in an observation made by one of the participants, Sebastian, during the Focus Group discussion, revealing that even five weeks later, he still felt a sense of betrayal on account of Freya having abandoned the Association. This comment refers to the fact that, in the story, Freya went missing and it was later discovered that she had ran away from the centre.

> Sebastian: (*laughing*) You left. We welcomed you … we welcomed you … (*laughs*) (FG: 4, line 17)

Yet despite Freya having turned her back on her new family, when she was rediscovered, the participants, rather than showing their disappointment, welcomed her once again, rather like a prodigal daughter figure. This too is evident from Erika's Reflective Journal entry, when she comments on the second tableau.

> It was interesting to see their choice [when they found Freya] they almost enacted the idea of 'being family' – with the fatherly attitude being at the centre of the scene. Again clearly marked power and status reversal here, with them in role as the experts, with the power, and the migrant even more displaced, having lost the one thing that she cared the most: her Seal – the memory and affection of her previous life. This was pointed out as Rick [observing] deliberately asked about the symbol of the Seal, with Sebastian, Rick and Stephen explaining that to us. (RJ: 9, lines 11–17)

So once again, the participants affirmed their agency and revealed their sense of empowerment, but rather than chiding and showing resentment, their empathy led them to act as a real family might do, with affection and acceptance.

7 Conclusion

When sketching the educational profile of asylum seekers and refugees, stereotypes abound. Conscious of the benefits and pitfalls that a performative

approach may entail, in this project we wanted to disconnect from re-enacting "narratives of victimhood" (Jeffers 2008: 218). Our goal was to take a step back and allow participants to practice the target language in a scenario that was devoid of stigmatisation. This effort resulted in the creation of a dramatic frame that reversed the roles of teacher and student, refugee and citizen, novice and expert. As the discussion above shows, this experiment produced some worthwhile results: it revealed that the adult refugees participating in our study could tap into their intercultural literacy and achieve a high degree of agency, by finding themselves in a position to reciprocate. Drawing on Butler (2014), Cummings argues:

> we might resist this binary framework (power/powerless; vulnerable/invulnerable) and instead recognize that we are all vulnerable in the world around us. We experience that vulnerability in differing ways and to different degrees, but none of us can survive or thrive without a range of support systems. *To be vulnerable does not mean to be without agency.* (Cummings 2016: 186, our italics)

In our study, we found that the performative frame was able to position us as vulnerable and our students as active agents and welcoming individuals. This openness was not only related to their cultural attitudes; it also represented a welcoming of target language use – a critical factor towards the learning of a second language.

References

Anderson, Michael & Julie Dunn. (eds.). 2013. *How drama activates learning: Contemporary research and practice*. London: A&C Black.

Balfour, Michael, Penny Bundy, Bruce Burton, Julie Dunn & Nina Woodrow. 2015. *Applied theatre: Resettlement: Drama, refugees and resilience*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Bolton, Gavin. 1979. *Towards a theory of drama in education*. London: Longman.

Bolton, Gavin. 1984. *Drama as education: An argument for placing drama at the centre of the curriculum*. Essex, England: Longman.

Browder, Christopher T. 2018. Recently resettled Refugee students learning English in US high schools: The impact of students' educational backgrounds. In Shawna Shapiro, Raichle Farrelly & Mary Jane Curry (eds.), *Educating Refugee-background students*, 17–32. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Butler, Judith. 2014. Bodily vulnerability coalitions and street politics. *Critical Studies* 1(37). 99–119.

Catalano, Theresa. 2016. *Talking about global migration: Implications for language teaching*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Centre for Trust, Peace & Social Relations. 2015. *Evaluation of the creative english programme*. Coventry: Coventry University.

Creative English. http://www.creative-english.org.uk/ (accessed 16 August 2018).

Cummings, Lindsay B. 2016. *Empathy as dialogue in theatre and performance*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dörnyei, Zoltan. 2001. *Teaching and researching motivation*. London: Longman.

Duffy, Peter (ed.). 2015. *A reflective practitioner's guide to (mis)adventures in drama education —Or—What was I thinking?* Bristol: Intellect.

Eriksson, Stig. 2007. Distance and awareness of fiction: Exploring the concepts. *NJ Drama Australia Journal* 31(1). 5–22.

Eriksson, Stig. 2011. Distancing. In S. Schonmann (ed.), *Key concepts in theatre/drama education*, 65–72. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Even, Susanne & Manfred Schewe (eds). 2016. *Performative teaching, learning, research— performatives Lehren, Lernen, Forschen*. Berlin: Schibri Velag.

Fleming, Michael. 2016. Exploring the concept of performative teaching and learning. In S. Even & M. Schewe (eds.), *Performative teaching, learning, research—performatives Lehren, Lernen, Forschen*, 189–205. Berlin: Schibri Verlag.

Gold, Steven J. & Stephanie J. Nawyn. 2013. Part II. Refugees and forced migrants. In Steven J. Gold & Stephanie J. Nawyn (eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Migration Studies*, 97–98. London: Routledge.

Haseman, Brad & John O'Toole. 2017. *Dramawise reimagined*. Sydney: Currency Press.

Heathcote, Dorothy. 1991. The authentic teacher and the future. In L. Johnson & C. O'Neill (eds.), *Dorothy Heathcote: Collected writings on education and drama*. London: Hutchinson Publications.

Jeffers, Alison. 2008. Dirty truth: Personal narrative, victimhood and participatory theatre work with people seeking asylum. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 13(2). 217–221.

Kalogirou, Kostantina, Gary Beauchamp & Shona Whyte. 2017. Vocabulary acquisition via drama: Welsh as a second language in the primary school setting. *The Language Learning Journal* 1–12. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2017.1283351

Kao, Shin Mei, Gary Carkin & Liang-Fong Hsu. 2011. Questioning techniques for promoting language learning with students of limited L2 oral proficiency in a drama-oriented lan-guage classroom. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 16(4). 489–515.

Kao, Shin-Mei & Cecily O'Neill. 1998. *Words into worlds: Learning a second language through process drama*. London: Ablex Publishing.

Krashen, Stephen. 1982. *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krumm, Hans-Jürgen & Verena Plutzar. 2008. *Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Li, Guofang. 2013. Immigrant language acquisition: An international review. In Steven J. Gold & Stephanie J. Nawyn (eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of migration studies*, 271–282. London: Routledge.

Li, Guofang & Pramod Kumar Sah. Forthcoming. Immigrant and refugee language policies, programs, and practices in an era of change: Promises, contradictions, and possibilities. In Steven J. Gold & Stephanie J. Nawyn (eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of migration studies*, 2nd edn. London: Routledge.

Little, David. 2012. *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the European language portfolio: An introduction*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Long, Michael H. 1983. Native speaker/non-native speaker conversation and negotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics* 4(2). 126–141.

Mentz, Oliver & Micha Fleiner (eds.). 2018. *The arts in language teaching. International perspectives: Performative, aesthetic, transversal*. Vienna: Lit Verlag.

Morgan, Norah. & Juliana Saxton. 1987. *Teaching drama: A mind of many wonders*. Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes.

O'Neill, Cecily. 1995. *Drama worlds: A framework for process drama*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

O'Neill, Cecily. 2015. *Dorothy heathcote on education and drama: Essential writings*. Abington, Oxfon: Routledge.

O'Toole, John. 1992. *The process of drama: Negotiating art and meaning*. London: Routledge.

Papadopoulos, Renos K. 2007. Refugees, trauma and adversity-activated development. *European Journal of Psychotherapy Counselling* 9(3). 301–312.

Parati, Graziella. 2005. *Migration Italy: The art of talking back in a destination culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Piazzoli, Erika. 2011. Process drama: The use of affective space to reduce language anxiety in the additional language learning classroom. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 16(4). 557–574.

Piazzoli, Erika. 2012. Engage or entertain? The nature of teacher/participant collaboration in process drama for additional language teaching. *Scenario: Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning and Research* 6(2). 28–46.

Piazzoli, Erika. 2018. *Embodying language in action. The artistry of process drama in second language education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Plutzar, Verena & Monika Ritter. 2008. *Language learning in the context of migration and integration – challenges and options for adult learners*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Rothwell, Julia. 2017. Using process drama to engage beginner learners in intercultural language learning. In J. Crutchfield & M. Schewe (eds.), *Going performative in intercultural education: International contexts, theoretical perspectives and models of practice*, 147–171. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Rousseau, Cécile, Françoise Armand, Audrey Laurin-Lamothe, Marie-France Gauthier & Rita Saboundjian. 2012. Innovations in practice: A pilot project of school-based intervention integrating drama and language awareness. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* 17(3). 187–190.

Sambanis, Michaela. 2016. Drama activities in the foreign language classroom: Considerations form a didactic-neuroscientific perspective. In S. Even & M. Schewe (eds.), *Performative teaching, learning, research—performatives Lehren, Lernen, Forschen*, 206–221. Berlin: Schibri Verlag.

Schechner, Richard. 2006. *Performance studies: An introduction*, 2nd edn. New York: Routledge.

Schewe, Manfred. 2013. Taking stock and looking ahead: Drama pedagogy as a gateway to a performative teaching and learning culture. *Scenario: Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning and Research* 7(1). 5–23.

Slade, Peter. 1955. *Child drama*. London: University of London Press.

Smith, Anne. 2017. 'You are contagious': The role of the facilitator in fostering self-efficacy in learners. *Scenario: Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning and Research* 11(2). 3–14.

Smith, Anne. 2016a. 'They have become my family': Reciprocity and responsiveness in a volunteer-led program for refugees and migrants. *Artspraxis* 3. 71–86.

Smith, Anne. 2016b. Creative English: Balancing creative and functional language needs for adult refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. *Scenario: Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning and Research* 10(1). 3–17.

Stinson, Madonna. 2008. Process drama and teaching English to speakers of other languages. In M. Jacqueline, H. John & M. Anderson (eds.), *Drama and English teaching: Imagination, action and engagement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stinson, Madonna & Joe Winston. 2011. Drama education and second language learning: A growing field of practice and research. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 16(4). 479–488.

Swain, Merrill. 1985. Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In Susan M. Gass & Carolyn G. Madden (eds.), *Input in second language acquisition*, 235–256. New York, NY: Newbury House.

Thalgott, P. 2017. Foreword. In Jean-Claude Beacco, Hans-Jürgen Krumm, David Little & Philia Thalgott (eds.), *The linguistic integration of adult migrants. Some lessons from research, v-6.* Berlin: De Gruyter (for the Council of Europe).

van Lier, Leo. 2004. *The ecology and semiotics of language learning*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Warriner, Doris S. 2007. Language learning and the politics of belonging: Sudanese women refugees *becoming* and *being* "American". *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 38(4). 343–359.

Way, Brian. 1967. *Development through drama*. London: Longman.

Yaman Ntelioglu, B. 2011. 'But why do I have to take this class?' The mandatory drama-ESL class and multiliteracies pedagogy. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 16(4). 595–616.

Bionotes

Fiona Dalziel
Fiona Dalziel is a university lecturer in English Language and Translation at the University of Padova, Italy, where she teaches on the BA programme in Language, Literature and Cultural Mediation and the MA in Modern Languages for International Communication and Collaboration. Her research interests include: promoting learner autonomy; academic writing; the use of drama in language learning, including that of adult migrants. She has been the coordinator of the university English drama group for 20 years.

Erika Piazzoli
Erika Piazzoli is a university lecturer in Arts Education at Trinity College Dublin. She is international coordinator of the School of Education, and teaches on the Master's programme in Language Education and Drama in Education. Her research interests include: second language teacher education; aesthetic education; performative language pedagogy; the use of drama in language learning, including that of refugees and migrants.