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Words on stage

*Language learning and intercultural dialogue through music and
drama in migrant contexts*

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“Ridiamo, Brindiamo. Dentro di noi sfilano i feriti, gli offesi; dobbiamo loro memoria e vita. Perché vivere è sapere che ogni istante di vita è raggio d'oro su un mare di tenebre, è saper dire grazie”

François Cheng, *Enfin le royaume*.

Abstract

As has been widely demonstrated, students' traumatic experiences, diversity of schooling and educational experiences and the lack of specially designed materials catering for the needs of refugees are among the challenges faced by language teachers who teach students from refugee and migrant backgrounds all around Europe. The aim of this dissertation is to try to explore some of these challenges by investigating whether music and drama activities could foster an interactive language-learning process and intercultural dialogue among students with different cultural backgrounds. The study will focus on how a language can be taught in intercultural classrooms with migrant learners from different countries. Music and drama will be both considered as pedagogical tools, with a particular focus about what kind of musical activities could be used in order to work on intercultural dialogue and how they could foster second language learning. In conclusion, a lesson proposal will be presented in order to give language teachers useful and practical methods.

Research Questions

- Which musical and dramatic activities could be proposed in order to encourage intercultural dialogue while learning a language in migrant contexts?
- How can music and drama be combined in order to create useful activities for refugees and migrants' language learning and intercultural dialogue?

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Introduction

The aim of my dissertation is to explore different uses and benefits of using drama and music in language teaching to migrants, bringing a concrete lesson proposal divided in different phases. I chose this topic because I wished to investigate whether music and drama might foster language learning and intercultural dialogue between migrants. In this dissertation I will try to explore the following research questions:

- Which musical and dramatic activities could be proposed in order to encourage intercultural dialogue while learning a language in migrant contexts?
- How can music and drama be combined in order to create useful activities for refugees and migrants' language learning and intercultural dialogue?

During the last years I had the opportunity to volunteer and live with some migrants and refugees. Some of them were students in the Italian school where I volunteered in 2019, some of them have become my friends and some are my flatmates now. But, most importantly, some of them are now my brothers and sisters. Since I was at middle school, I had the greatest fortune of living in intercultural contexts and when I started teaching Italian to migrants I started interrogating myself on how languages can be taught and which were the alternatives to traditional frontal teaching methods. As a musician, I always felt that music and languages have a wide range of aspects in common and the same goes for drama, which I only recently discovered. When migrants arrive in a new place, one of their first needs consists in learning the language of the host country. It is clear that the traditional teaching approach cannot be the unique teaching method, since migrants, refugees and asylum seekers' needs are different from students who are born and raised in the host country, although a reflection about language teaching in Italian schools might be an interesting topic.

Through a literature-based study of academic articles, I will attempt to investigate which aspects of language learning and intercultural dialogue music and drama can help to develop, especially with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

The first chapter will explore the topic of teaching a second language to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, through different studies and researches. At the beginning I will focus on the migratory flow in the last decades, in order to explain to the reader the necessity of reflecting on migrants' inclusion in Europe. Furthermore, it will investigate the difference between migrant, refugee and asylum seeker, so the reader can have a clearer view about the different use of the terms. Lastly, I will explain the importance and report the challenges of language teaching in migrant contexts.

The second chapter will open explaining what is performative teaching and focusing on what Schewe defined as "Performative Foreign Language Didactics" (1993). Moreover, the second chapter will also investigate the definition of drama, as well as the role and benefits of drama in language classes, referring to different studies which used it during language courses. Then, it concludes by analysing teachers' behaviour and attitudes when they teach languages through drama, followed by an in-depth analysis of drama usage in migrant contexts.

In the third and last chapter I will be presenting a workshop based on music and drama which I created starting from my personal experience and from the bibliography. It is addressed to a group of migrants between 10 to 25 participants with an A2 level in Italian and who aim at reaching a B1 proficiency level. The entire workshop is designed to foster Italian language learning and intercultural dialogue between the students. It will be divided into four phases: introduction and warm up, experiential phase, musical activities and reflection.

Chapter 1. Teaching a second language to refugees and migrants

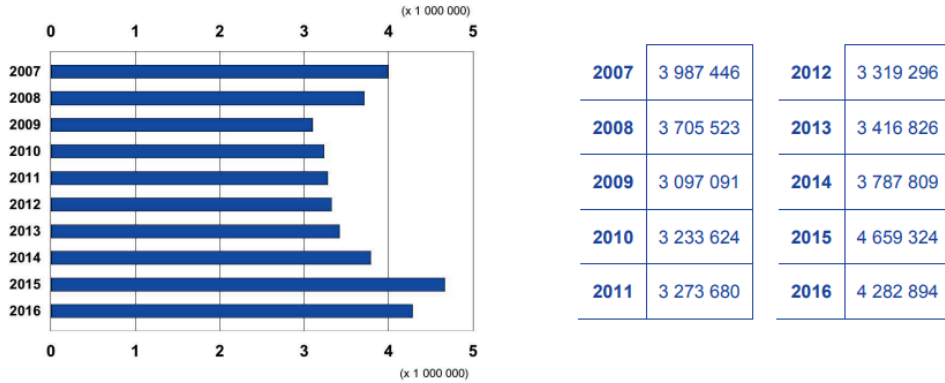
Since this dissertation aims to explore the function of music and drama activities in language teaching to refugees and migrants, in the following chapter I will analyse and report some academic studies concerning teaching a second language in this context. First, I will present some background information concerning migratory flows and asylum seekers in Europe in order to provide some indicators about the necessity of conducting research about refugees' inclusion. Secondly, I will explore the definition of migrant, refugee and asylum seeker, and I will present one of the main challenges migrants may have to face when they arrive in a new country, which consists in language learning. Indeed, learning the host country language is the key that opens the door to opportunities for inclusion and the social context plays a central role in the learning process. Furthermore, it is my intention to specifically concentrate on language learning and inclusion in Italy, in the light of recent migratory phenomena that have affected this country as well as other European countries. In the third part I will introduce the challenges language teachers may face while teaching languages to students from refugee and migrant backgrounds around Europe with a particular focus on students' traumatic experiences and how they affect language learning. In this dissertation I will use migration/migrant as a neutral term for all those people who move from one country to another, specifying when relevant that refugees and asylum seekers are being referred to and the difference between the two terms.

1.1 Migratory flows and asylum seekers in Europe

All through human history people have been moving to live in new places. However, over the past decade, a wide amount of research and reports have shown that globalisation, climate change, new-born conflicts, economic crises and persecution of various kinds boosted this process and caused a total annual immigration in the European Union which "fluctuated between 3 million and 4.7 million people". The graph below displays the total annual immigration "which refers to various nationality profiles: European Union citizens who migrated to a different EU Member State; citizens of non-EU countries who

immigrated into the EU; people who migrated to an EU Member State where they had citizenship (for example, returning nationals or nationals born abroad); as well as stateless people” (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019).

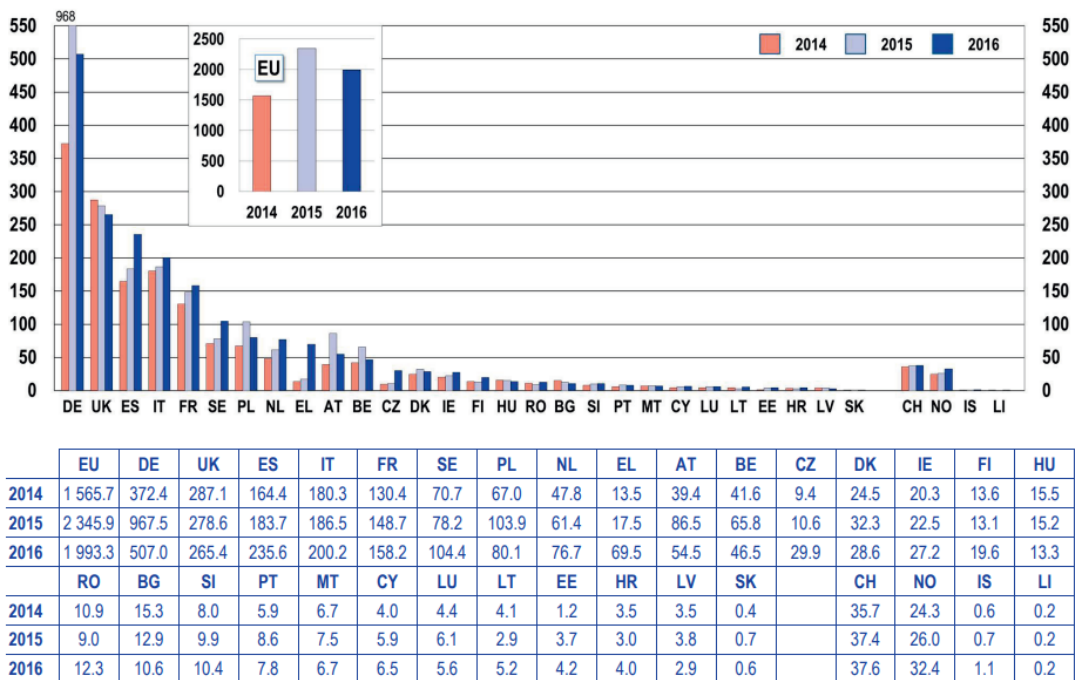
Figure 1: Total annual immigration in the European Union, 2007-2016



Source: Eurostat [migr_imm1ctz]. Data extracted in October 2018.

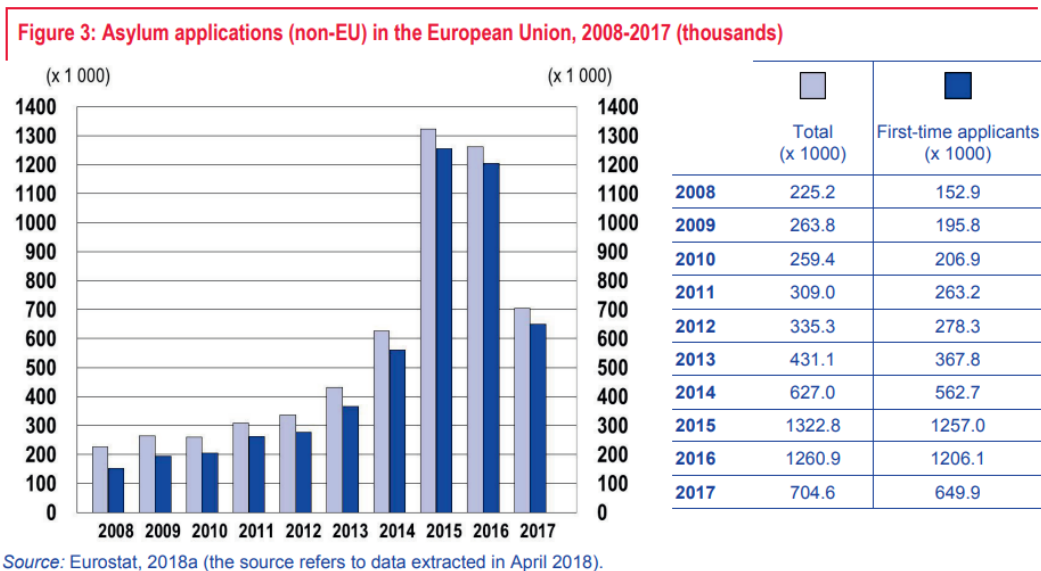
As already stated above, some of these migrants come from outside the EU. The second graph looks at the number of citizens of non-EU countries who immigrated to the EU and EFTA countries between 2014 and 2016.

Figure 2: Annual non-EU immigration in the European Union and EFTA countries, 2014, 2015 and 2016 (thousands)



Source: Eurostat [migr_imm1ctz]. Data extracted in October 2018.

Among people who migrated to the European Union, some applied for international protection and that is the reason why they are called “asylum seekers”. As Figure 3 shows, “there was a gradual increase in the number of asylum applications within the EU between 2008 and 2012, after which the number of asylum seekers rose at a much more rapid pace, with 431.1 thousand applications in 2013, 627.0 thousand in 2014 and just over 1.3 million in 2015” (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019). In 2016, slightly under 1.3 million citizens from non-EU countries applied for international protection in the EU Member States, while in 2017, the number dropped to 704.6 thousand.



Not all asylum applicants in the EU acquire a refugee or a comparable international protection status. More specifically, in 2017, out of around 1 million first-instance decisions that were issued in the EU Member States, 444 thousand (46 %) resulted in a positive outcome. An additional 95 thousand positive decisions were issued as a result of an appeal or review (36 % of final decisions were positive). This means that around half a million citizens of non-EU countries received an international protection status in the EU in 2017.

During more recent years (2021, 2022, 2023) these statistics have changed. Indeed, according to the UN Refugee Agency’s Global Trends Report about forced displacement (2021:2), 89.3 million people had been forcibly displaced worldwide by the end of 2021, as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously

disturbing public order. As this report states, this is more than double the 42.7 million people who remained forcibly displaced at the end of 2012 and represents a sharp 8 per cent increase of almost 7 million people in the span of just 12 months. As a result, above one per cent of the world's population – or 1 in 88 people – were forcibly displaced at the end of 2021. The data mentioned above clearly underline the importance of reflecting on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers' inclusion, in order to create a welcoming space in a society that may be very different from their own. First and foremost, the process of language learning should be one of the aims.

1.2 Definition of the terms refugee, asylum seeker and migrant

Before starting to speak about the process of language learning, I believe it is important to define the difference between refugees, asylum seekers and migrants since they refer to different legal and political status. Starting with the term “migrant”, it is important to underline that, according to the UN Migration Agency (IOM) (2019:132), it can be defined as an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. More specifically, it defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of the person's legal status, whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary, what the causes for the movement are; or what the length of the stay is. Instead, “refugees” and “asylum seekers” can be considered as migrants with a specific legal and political status. According to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, refugees are those who have fled their country and are unable to return due to a “fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion”. When people flee from such political, economic and social crises and arrive in a European country they do not immediately receive the “refugee” label. At first, they are defined as “asylum seekers”, which means they are individuals who are seeking international protection and whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country to which they have submitted it. Not every asylum

seeker will ultimately be recognised as a refugee, but every refugee is initially an asylum seeker. As concerns Italian procedures, the process of applying for a residence permit and waiting for the answer frequently takes a considerable amount of time and asylum seekers need to learn the language (sometimes more than one) so that they can understand all the procedures they have to face. If it is true that the three categories (refugees, asylum seekers and migrants) have different needs and reasons for moving, it is equally true that they have a common primary necessity: learning the host country's language.

1.3 Importance and challenges of language teaching in migrant contexts

While waiting, as well as after having obtained the permit, refugees and asylum seekers need to learn the host country's language, in order to fulfil their primary needs such as finding a job, paying a rent and buying food and the same can be said for migrants who do not necessarily fled their country because they were in danger but for other reasons. According to Capstick (2021:123), for most learners the prime goal of learning a second language is to be able to use it for communication. For migrants living in a new country, "this communication is often in the form of speaking to other speakers of the language or reading and writing written texts in it for personal, social and professional purposes" (Capstick 2021:123). However, learning a language, especially for migrants, has other important aspects to consider. For example, Kramsch (1986 in Capstick 2021:125) adds two other competences in addition to the communicative one, which are the interactional competence and the symbolic competence. The former is viewed as the ability to engage in interactions using the linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic resources of a language, building conversations cooperatively with others and coping with the often unpredictable flow of communication. According to Young (2000 in Capstick 2021:125) it is co-constructed by all participants in a discursive practice. On the other hand, the latter is based on the view that learning a language invariably involves learning another culture, and that language learners' understanding of other cultures is affected by their own culturally defined world views (Kramsch, 1993 in Capstick 2021:126).

Looking back at his personal experience, Alhallak suggests that “state-run language schools for adults are often the best and the least expensive option” (2019:175) but applying what it is taught seems to be the most challenging phase. In fact, he claims that “language schools do not teach the language but give the keys and put the learner on the right path to complete the path alone” (Alhallak, 2019:175). It is essential for a language learner to talk and communicate with individuals in the host society in order to practise the language in everyday situations, although we find areas where “the community’s rejection of foreigners in general is growing for reasons of racism or conservative society in general” (Alhallak, 2019:175). Here comes the role of humanitarian, relief and refugee care organisations (but also citizens) that are responsible for offering intercultural opportunities by organising activities that allow migrants to communicate with those around them. These events may be exhibitions, concerts, cultural evenings, seminars, debates, sports activities or art-based activities. They provide the migrant with the opportunity to identify and acquire new personal and life knowledge, through applying and practising the language and rules taught in schools or by volunteers.

As is imaginable, teaching a second language to migrants is a challenging task, especially if they are refugees and asylum seekers who have passed through traumatic experiences in their country as well as along their dangerous journeys. According to Stathopoulou (2020), there are three main challenges that language teachers have to face when teaching to refugees: non-school experiences and non-literacy, dealing with ‘singular pluralities’ and diverse identities, and traumatic experiences and post-traumatic stress.

1.3.1 Literacy

When asking teachers about the main problems they must face while teaching to refugees, the issue of literacy is a fundamental one. Barton (2010 in Capstick, 2021:82) suggests that we now live in a textually mediated world, which means that we are required to be able to read and write to make sense of our social world. According to Capstick, migration is a clear example of this if we think about the bureaucratic procedures that migrants must engage with to join family, find work or process a visa application. Some refugees could

find these operations complicated and unclear. Some of them cannot read or write in their own language because they have not studied formally at school in their country and mentors have to teach them the alphabet and how to read and write but, at the same time, they need to give them some elements for simple communication (Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:63).

Moreover, literacy is an important issue to analyse also because of the diversity of literacy uses within individuals' and families' migration. Capstick defines literacy as situated, social and as part of people's practices. It is situated because its uses change from situation to situation; social because "it is imbued with people's individual and group meanings, intentions and purposes" (2021:83); and it is part of people's practices as it is "bound up with their broader goals and activities" (2021:83). As Freire emphasises in his works, literacy can also be a political action as it is highly demonstrated by the fact that illiterate refugees have been oppressed and they cannot show their full potential (Hull & Schultz, 2001 in Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020) because they cannot read or write. Stathopoulou and Dassi take up this concept when they affirm that "literacy can be much more than just learning vocabulary and grammar" (2020:63) and it can open multiple worlds of opportunities and being excluded by them means being exposed to oppressions and exploitations in the host communities as well as in the country of origin.

1.3.2 The concept of identity

As research suggests, dealing with different identities is another issue that teachers have to deal with. Identity is a concept of great importance for teachers but also for migrants themselves. According to Capstick (2021:67) "maintaining the language and culture of the country of origin is central to many migrants' sense of identity and community" and it can be considered as a key identity marker as well as a potential source of resistance to discrimination and marginalisation. Indeed, Capstick affirms that this maintenance can be seen by members of the receiving state as proof of the inability of migrants to integrate or to deal with the modern industrial societies. This view may contribute to defining migrants' identity in a wrong way, depicting them as victims and distorting their own idea of their identity. As Gutiérrez (2013, p. 45) states:

an individual's identity is partly in his or her control and partly in the hands of others who seek to define/create/act themselves. As an individual, I can project a particular image of myself by the things I say (to myself and others) and the ways I interact, but others also participate in my identity by interpreting (through their own lenses) the meanings of my words and actions

This double conception of identity helps us to understand the difficulty of migrants in building a new identity and combining it with their stories when they have to start a new life in a new country. So, on one hand teachers have to deal with all the different identities they may encounter in the classroom (Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:61), on the other hand they will also have to help their students reinforce (Cummins, 2003 in Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:6), sustain and sometimes even shape their own identities. This can be possible through language, since “with every speech act we make, all individuals perform an act of identity” (Capstick, 2021:73). According to Capstick, with this personal use of language individuals reveal their sense of ethnic or social solidarity or difference. This explains why we need to be careful in considering migrants and refugees' identities, because the label “refugee” could create a distortion when they try to define their own identity and it does not help them “clearly see and shape who they really are, who they used to be, combine the two and adapt to the new reality” (Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:63). Constantly referring to them as “refugees” may reinforce the idea that they are in a disadvantaged condition, while the host communities should consider them as people with their same rights, dreams, aims and possibilities.

1.3.3 Dealing with trauma

Another major problem experienced by teachers is their students' traumatic experiences and how to deal with them. As Palanac states (2019:3) , it seems difficult for teachers to gain the required knowledge and skills to work with refugees who experienced traumatic events but also post-traumatic stress. In fact, not only do refugees have to face traumatic experiences, but they also have to deal with “delays with the asylum claim, and prolonged waiting time leading to severe stress, financial difficulties, social isolation, stigmatisation

and discrimination” (O’Toole Thommessen and Todd, 2018 in Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:62) and “the stress of resettlement” (Kirova, 2019 in Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:62). As has been argued also by Palanac (2019), these traumatic experiences may somehow interfere with the lesson and the learning procedure itself. For example, as Murray (2019 in Stathopoulou and Dassi 2020: 9) admits “the high prevalence of psychosocial issues experienced by child refugees impacts their ability to concentrate and learn as well as interact with classmates”. Some of these students have lost their entire families, their homes, their jobs. Some have been persecuted, trafficked, tortured. This implies that teachers need to adapt the existing pedagogy to tackle the issue of trauma in the classroom (Palanac, 2019:4). Of course, the possibility of trespassing into the domain of the therapist is a risk in these cases, which could cause further harm.

Even though this field has not been explored so much, certain pedagogical interventions can be and have been successfully implemented in the language classroom to minimise the damaging effects of PTSD symptoms on language learning in refugees (e.g. Clayton, 2015, in Furneaux, 2018:66; Finn, 2010; Stone, 1995). According to Palanac, it is important to examine the symptoms of trauma in order to understand how they might present in the language classroom (2019:4). Firstly, many trauma survivors are trapped in semi-permanent ‘fight or flight’ mode (van der Kolk, 2014:46), reacting to their environment as though the traumatic event was still happening. This often brings heightened levels of stress, being restless and irritable, startling easily, being fearful of taking risks and feeling generally unsafe. This can make it very difficult for them to feel that they can trust others and it might also lead to avoidance behaviour such as being absent or late for class, not turning up for tests and creating excuses to leave the classroom. In order to shut themselves down from their constant sensory overload, some people experience dissociation, numbing themselves to their emotions when they feel overwhelmed (van der Kolk, 2014:84).

As Palanc observes, much of the above behaviour might be misinterpreted as deficiencies in motivation or discipline. However, Kerka (2002) points out that, in the case of trauma survivors, these are adaptive behaviours which function as ‘survival mechanisms’ as a response to one or more traumatic events. If this shift in perspective could be considered

as one of the first steps towards employing a trauma-informed pedagogy, it is also true that other strategies can be exploited. First of all, Palanc suggests that

“we can help reduce students’ anxiety by reassuring them that we understand that they may be experiencing difficulties, which might mean that they sometimes need to be late or absent from class, that they might not be able to complete their homework on some days, or that they may need to leave the classroom to make a phone call” (2019:6).

Furthermore, it is important to find out which types of situations they most need functional language for, and to help them meet this need through language classes.

Another functional approach could consist in creating a safe space. According to Palanac, “a safe space is one in which a person can feel confident that there will be no unpleasant surprises or threats to the self, one in which an individual can experience some measure of control over events” (2019:6). This could be done in terms of establishing a predictable routine, structure and clear expectations and laying out what you expect from students and what they might expect from you from the beginning of a course. Other examples of learner-centred strategies that might be used with trauma survivors are: actively giving time and space to learners to discuss their daily struggles (Isserlis 2000 in Palanac 2019:7); ensuring that a course is meaningful to students by making it relevant to their daily contexts of language use (Finn, 2010:592); and giving students the opportunity to select materials and set goals (Horsman, 2004 in Palanac 2019:7). However, Horsman warns that raising control issues with trauma survivors in the classroom before they are ready can be extremely problematic, and that, for some, activities such as setting goals may be very difficult indeed. Furthermore, although trauma triggers do vary from person to person, it is prudent to tread carefully around certain potentially triggering topics which are common to ESOL courses such as those of family, homes, journeys and one’s past life (Stone, 1995: 52). Therefore, wherever possible, it is advisable to “move slowly, starting with ‘safer’ topics, building relationships with and between students and being responsive to the students in front of you, taking cues from the students themselves as to what topics they feel comfortable discussing” (Palanac, 2019:8), but always keeping in mind that trauma may affect individuals differently, and that not all individuals respond in the same way to classroom strategies.

1.3.4 Approaches to language teaching in migrant contexts

According to Capstick (2021:122), language learning is a complex and dynamic process. Referring to Jack Richards' view, Capstick describes second language teaching as a "matrix in which learner needs, curricular goals and objectives, instructional practices and environmental factors all intersect" (2021:122). This approach underlines that there is not a unique method for language teaching, but all the different approaches need to take into account what students need to learn, the social and psychological factors that influence their learning, and the kind of classroom interventions that are practical and appropriate for their diverse contexts. As has been reported above, teaching a second language to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can not exclusively consist in giving theoretical concepts and indicating the right path to follow. So, in this section I will report some research and one personal story which may provide the reader with different approaches to language teaching in migrant contexts.

According to Alhallak's personal experience (2019:176), coexistence can be an effective experience to develop linguistic and cultural inclusion, whose purpose is to break down barriers between the host society and the guest in order to create a bridge through which to converse in the language of society without restriction. This experience has the great advantage to foster conversations which is a practical application for written rules that are taught during language lessons. In fact, "linguistic rules are undoubtedly important, but they remain mere theories if not worked and applied on the ground" (Alhallak 2019:176).

Another strategy could be giving migrants the possibility of coming to contact with mixed contexts, namely formal and informal learning environments, which are the main sources for acquiring the language of the host country (Favaro 2014 in Carloni and Sisti 2019:98). This concept is reprised also by De Costa (2010:777), who claims that a double linguistic recalibration is often required of them: first, immigrant students (especially young migrants) have to learn how to align themselves with the formal register (in a second language) anticipated of them at school; additionally, they would need to negotiate the informal register (in the second language) to forge solidarity bonds with their peers. In this perspective learners' sociolinguistic needs and identity play a central role since

migrants' complex identities are constantly changing due to contacts with new contexts of both time and space (Norton 2013 in Carloni and Sisti 2019:98). Indeed, "migration, like education, is a process where the identity undergoes change and is destabilised" (Plutzer and Ritter 2008: 10). Norton envisions migrants' multifaceted identities as the product of the way in which migrants interpret their relationships with the transnational socio-cultural parameters experienced and conceive their opportunities and their expectations in the host country. Adopting Weedon's view (1997 in Carloni and Sisti 2019:98) of language conceived as the symbolic medium through which identity is created, Norton argues that language not only defines institutional practices but also serves to construct our sense of ourselves and our subjectivity (Norton 2014 in Carloni and Sisti 2019:98). In addition, Norton suggests that it is of paramount importance for migrants "to have a high level of investment" in order to engage in second language learning. In his view, when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but "they are constantly organising and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world". Thus, an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own identity and it subsequently impacts their learning outcomes (De Costa 2010:770). To foster migrants' investment in language learning, Norton explains that instructors need to implement pedagogical practices that have the potential to be transformative in offering language learners more powerful positions than those they may occupy either inside or outside the classroom (2014 in Carloni and Sisti 2019:100).

While analysing migrants' language learning approaches we cannot forget to mention the Narrative Theory, originally theorised by Bruner (1986) and reprised later by Carloni and Sisti (2019). According to them, the process of knowledge construction is guided by two kind of thinking modes (2019): logical thinking, which organises units of memory, and narrative thinking which "structures and interprets experience, transforming it into narrative to be told and shared with other community members" (Bruner 1986 in Carloni and Sisti 2019). In the life of each individual, narrative reorganises experience through a categorising process. Through this strategy, people are able to organise their own life experiences and embed them in their minds. This organisation creates a more logical and stable vision of reality, allowing individuals to understand and imagine the behaviour of

others and to control their own behaviour appropriately. Therefore, “our behaviour is guided by the meaning we attribute to reality, and we are constantly negotiating with the other members of our culture through language” (Carloni and Sisti, 2019:101). If we consider this concept, thinking about migrants and refugees’ language integration and innovative ways to include them seems to be necessary in order to develop new tools for inclusion in our communities. In fact, from a socio-linguistic point of a view, the words used by migrants evoke meanings that are closely related to the experiential context and therefore to cultural models related to the life experiences of the speaker. Using words from the host country’s language means trying to find meanings in the socio-cultural context in which migrants live after having left their country of origin. This use of the host country’s language underlines that it can help migrants find new meanings for their new lives in the new social context. As Carloni and Sisti declare, “migrants need a good command of the language spoken in a host country to establish an empathetic dialogue within the new environment” (2019:103). According to them, this empathetic dialogue is possible only if we consider two main aspects when we teach a language to migrants:

Teachers, volunteers and educators need to develop a climate of mutual empathy in which migrants can identify potential obstacles in communication and create remedial strategies to overcome episodes of linguistic-cultural conflict or misunderstanding.

Local communities should adopt an intercultural perspective, an attitude that “prende atto della ricchezza insita nella varietà, che non si propone l’omogeneizzazione e mira solo a permettere l’integrazione più piena e fluida possibile tra le diverse culture” (Balboni and Caon 2015 in Carloni and Sisti 2019:106).

As concerns the first aspect, instructors’ main aim should be promoting not only the understanding of a new linguistic code but also an effective use of the language. In the class, an encouraging and supportive atmosphere allows the learner to comprehend and produce oral and written linguistic acts that are appropriate in the new social and psychological context. The technique of storytelling and the application of the already mentioned “narrative thought” can be extremely useful because they “foster empathy and lower the affective filter, thus favouring a higher degree of socialisation and language incarnation” (Carloni and Sisti, 2019:107). Moreover, the use of the senses and

movement are indispensable in facilitating the comprehension and memorisation of new terms in L2, that's the reason why ample time should be dedicated to the dramatisation of dialogues that simulate real life situations and to fun activities that make exercises enjoyable and interesting from a cognitive perspective and that are emotionally captivating (Sisti 2013b in Carloni and Sisti 2019:107).

As emerges above, the task of inclusive language learning does not have to be taken for granted. The second aspect mentioned above calls for efforts on the part of language teachers but also on the part of social and cultural communities. From a cultural point of view, teachers who work with migrants and refugees operate with multicultural classrooms, which is the reason why they need to develop new pedagogies and language programmes which promotes the “multi” idea in a context where multiple languages coexist (Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:61).

In conclusion, teachers should promote an enjoyable learning process that should imitate first language acquisition as much as possible and the inclusive function of language will manifest itself in full “allowing migrants and members of the host community to embrace diversity” (Carloni and Sisti, 2019:107). In this perspective, Dalziel and Piazzoli's distinction between the words “integration” and “inclusion” seems to be the perfect conclusion for this part: “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” (2019:8).

1.3.5 The situation in Italy

As Carloni and Sisti report, Italy seems to have formally adopted the intercultural perspective described by Balboni and Caon (2015) and has activated a national observatory at the Ministry of Public Education to promote the inclusion of foreign students and intercultural education. With the “Linee guida per l'accoglienza e

l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri” and various related documents published by the Ministry of Education afterward, Italian schools have established that “la diversità come paradigma dell'identità stessa della scuola, occasione privilegiata di apertura a tutte le differenze” (2019:106). This vision intends to promote a real dialogue and comparison among cultures and verbal language occupies a decisive role since, for the migrant, understanding and being understood are basic needs. However, if this vision concerns the wide category of migrants, according to Bianco and Cobo, the specificity of refugees has only recently been taken into account by Italian didactics. This has occurred thanks to the first phase of experimentation on the toolkit of the Council of Europe for the Education of Adult Refugees (Council of Europe 2014). The experimentation of this toolkit is taking place inside some selected provincial centres for adult education and training (CPIA), with the aim of specialising in refugees' linguistic education. Unluckily, as Bianco and Cobo highlight, the linguistic education provided to refugees in Italy is limited and generally designed to let refugees reach only a basic level of language knowledge (namely, the A2 level of the CEFR). The material used in these centres is usually designed for immigrants or foreign language learners, and not for the specific needs of the refugees (Bianco and Cobo, 2019:3). As a consequence, more appropriate material and methods are needed. Textbooks and lessons “should be built on refugees' needs and daily life in order to provide immediate and useful help to their daily needs” (Bianco and Cobo, 2019:3).

In addition, if we look back at Italy's migration politics, we find out that the intercultural perspective which was described in “Linee guida per l'accoglienza e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri” and various related documents published by the Ministry of Education afterward has not always been respected. For example, as Bianco and Cobo report, the DL n. 113/2018, or Decreto Salvini, affected linguistic, social and cultural inclusion. Between the important changes of this law, the so-called Decreto sicurezza abolished humanitarian protection, a widely diffused kind of protection that up until now had granted a permit of stay to more than 20% of asylum seekers (data extracted from Rapporto sulla protezione internazionale in Italia 2017, in Bianco and Cobo 2019:3). As a result of these changes, humanitarian protection holders will be excluded from the hosting system, hence from any integration plan. In addition, according to the data

collected by Bianco and Cobo's study, teachers believe that "the hours provided by the Italian language courses are insufficient to allow the refugee to enter the education system or integrate into society by entering the work field" (2019:8). Longer courses are required as well as a different teaching approach that is more focused on the integration of the refugee into society, hence using a more practical approach rather than "grammatically-oriented" classes.

It is important to say that the aim of this section is not to provide a complete portrait of language, social and intercultural inclusion in Italy, but rather to underline some contradictions that exist in the Italian approach to migrants' inclusion. Li and Sah (2020:6) highlight that the policies and programs in some of the major European receiving countries still practise what Gramling (2009 in Li and Sah, 2020:6) defines as the "cosmopolitan monolingualism". According to Li and Sah, it is "an assimilation approach characterised by an exclusive focus on learning destination language and culture while neglecting the language resources that newcomers bring from home countries" (2020:6). If we focus on the Italian general attitude towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, it is clear that this cosmopolitan monolingualism is still present in Italy. On the other hand, it is also true that there's a wide number of NGOs, associations, volunteers, teachers and organisations which acknowledge the notion of inclusion as "a two-way process" (Krumm and Plutzar, 2008:1) in which both sides, migrants and the receiving country, are open to creating new common ground for living together, respecting the already formed identity. According to Krumm and Plutzar (2008:1), this gives migrants a chance to make use of resources they bring with them and to expand their identity, acquiring new concepts and a new language. At the same time the receiving country will see migrants as people enriching its linguistic and cultural dimension. In this case language studies, accompanied by cultural studies and innovative teaching approaches become "indispensable instruments in social inclusion" (Carloni and Sisti 2019:106).

1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, as seen above, teaching languages to migrants brings many challenges to face, especially when refugees and migrants' stories are involved. When they start a

second language course they need to learn in a safe and intercultural space which gives them the opportunity to develop useful linguistic competence fulfilling their needs in everyday life. In addition, this space needs to distance itself from the cosmopolitan monolingualism described by Krumm and Plutzar (2008), preferring an intercultural approach which aims to emphasise resources that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers bring with them. This approach helps them to feel enhanced, confident and safe. Feeling safe in one's social environment is of great importance in learning a language, as this type of learning commonly requires students to take risks and make mistakes, which means that they need to first feel comfortable enough with their teacher and their classmates to do so (Stone, 1995 in Palanac 2019:8). As has been demonstrated by various studies and research, music and drama can play a central role in creating a safe space and strong relationships in the classroom and they may respond to the necessity to find innovative and more practical ways of teaching languages. That is the reason why, in the next chapter, I will analyse the use of music and drama activities in language classrooms.

Chapter 2. An insight into Music and Drama in intercultural classrooms

In this chapter it is my intention to introduce the theme of performative arts applied to language learning classes, with a particular perspective on using them with migrants and refugees who aim to learn a foreign language. As a musician, music really helped me to develop my second language skills and the same goes for drama. In fact, I had the opportunity to participate in drama courses in English which were organised by the Department of Linguistic and Literary Studies at the University of Padua. This boosted my English language skills and it really helped me to overcome the anxiety of speaking a foreign language in front of other people, especially if they are native speakers.

In my analysis, Schewe's idea of performative language teaching and his reprise of Pestazzoli's "imparare con la testa, le mani e il cuore" (Piazzoli and Tiozzo, 2023:16) will be the guiding thread, although other studies will be reported and analysed. First, I will present the theme of performative teaching and Schewe's experiential language learning, starting with a historical and intercultural analysis of this practice and passing through the definition of "performative". Secondly, I will explain how theatre can be used during language classrooms and its benefits for students. In this part I will first introduce the general topic of learning languages through drama and I will subsequently explain how it can boost vocabulary acquisition while, at the same time, overcoming anxiety which is, as seen above, one of the main manifestations of refugees' traumatic experiences. In addition, I will refer to an academic article written by Dalziel and Piazzoli (2019) which specifically focuses on adult asylum seekers learning Italian as a Second Language through Process Drama. Finally, it is my desire to conclude by investigating the use of music in language classes. Since music is commonly considered as a universal language, it seems important to me to consider its application in intercultural contexts such as classes with refugees. In this last section I will consider its various applications during language courses and how it can be used with migrants and refugees.

2.1 Performative teaching: what is it?

When we talk about the “performing arts” we include music, drama, dance, acrobatics, circus skills, street performance, magic, mime and many others. They are all arts in which the performer’s body plays a central role. So, how can they be related to education and why? In first instance, as Piazzoli and Schewe underline, if we analyse the adjective “performative” we find out that its roots “form” and “formative” are preceded by the Latin suffix “per” meaning “through” and “by means of” (2023:78). In this sense, “performative” education implies education through form, “with ‘form’ to be intended as art, language, and the body” (Piazzoli and Schewe, 2023:78). In this case a “performative” approach to teaching and learning can be defined as an embodied approach in which mind and body have the same importance (Varela et al.,2017 in Piazzoli and Schewe 2023). Piazzoli and Schewe affirm that the adjective ‘performative’ is imbued with many layers of meaning and it is connected to concepts like teacher/artist, embodiment, and aesthetic experience (2023:78). In the table below they tried to capture some relevant concepts which belong to performative teaching.

Table 1 *What does Performative stand for?*

P	PRESENCE. A state of heightened receptivity, enabling someone to think on his/her feet and act spontaneously.	AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE
E	EMBODIMENT. A kind of learning experience grounded in the mind, senses, body, imagination, reflection and social sphere.	
R	REFLECTION. The quintessential element of practice, what turns experience into insight.	
F	FEELING. The feeling dimension is activated when operating in a performative mode.	
O	OPENNESS – towards other students’ cultures and ideas, as well as ourselves as reflective practitioners.	
R	RISK. Risk of losing face, risk of appearing foolish, but also risk of letting go of the illusion of control, as we create with our students.	
M	METAXIS, a unique tension of dramatic form generated by playing a role while being ourselves, and the insights this may bring.	
A	AS IF. The realm of Imagination.	
T	TEACHER/ARTIST. A model for all artists who teach and all teachers who engage in creative doing.	
I	IMPROVISATION. The set of values underpinning our responses and interactions in the classroom.	
V	VISION. A vision of performative education	
E	EMERGENCE – of aesthetic meaning.	

According to the authors, teachers/artists need this vision to “allow for the emergence of meaning” (Piazzoli and Schewe, 2023:80). Their work starts by referring back to two important Unesco World Congresses: the Congress in Lisbon (2006) resulting in a Roadmap for Arts Education, and the Congress in Seoul (2010) in the Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education. I think it is important to report a few lines of the Roadmap for Arts Education in order to provide the reader with an intercultural perspective about the arts.

People in all cultures have always, and will always, seek answers to questions related to their existence. Every culture develops means through which the insights obtained through the search for understanding are shared and communicated. Basic elements of communication are words, movements, touch, sounds, rhythms and images. In many cultures, the expressions which communicate insights and open up room for reflection in people’s minds are called “art”. Throughout history labels have been put on various types of art expressions. It is important to acknowledge the fact that even if terms such as “dance”, “music”, “drama” and “poetry” are used world-wide, the deeper meanings of

such words differ between cultures. Thus, any list of arts fields must be seen as a pragmatic categorization, ever evolving and never exclusive. (UNESCO, 2006:7)

In 1993, Schewe applied this concept of performative teaching and learning to language learning and it was called “Performative Foreign Language Didactics” (PFLD). Schewe (2013) offered his perspective on PFLD and, for example, proposed that within PFLD

- the performative arts, particularly the art of theatre, become a central point of reference (but it can easily integrate elements from other art forms, for example dance, music and film)
- drama and theatre pedagogy be regarded as core disciplines
- in the future ‘performative’ be used as an umbrella term to describe types of foreign language teaching and learning that derive from the performing arts
- PFLD is critical of the science and business-based models of language teacher education and directs attention to an alternative arts-based model, by embracing the notion of the foreign language teacher as an artist.

Now that the reader has a clearer idea about what the term “performative” means, I will move to the next part of this chapter where I will focus on some studies concerning the use of Drama in language learning classes.

2.2 First definition of Drama

As McGovern (2017:11) affirms, a significant challenge in studying or defining drama in the L2 classroom is that drama, itself, is not a static entity. In addition to having its own evolutions, styles, and approaches, it has been paired with other disciplines to achieve a variety of goals throughout history. First of all, I believe it is important to underline the difference between the terms “drama” and “theatre”. According to Piazzoli and Tiozzo (2023:22), the word “drama” comes from the greek word δράμα “action”, while “theatre” comes from the latin *theatrum* which comes in turn from the greek θέατρον meaning “a place for viewing”. So, drama can be defined as “the activities which students portray themselves or act out as another person in an imaginary scenario” (Uysal and Yavuz,

2018:377) and it asks the learner to project himself imaginatively into another situation, outside the classroom, or into the skin and persona of another person (Holden, 1982 in Uysal and Yavuz). The first embryonic definition of Drama in education was formulated by Peter Slade in 1955. This theory was resumed by Slade's colleague Brian Way who applied it to the primary schools, using improvisation as the main technique (Piazzoli and Tiozzo, 2023:23). The key concept consisted in using dramatisation in the class opposed to the canonical approach based on the rigorous study of diction and memorisation for the stage. Towards the end of the seventies, Bolton and Dorothy Heathcote defined the discipline known as "Drama in Education" (Piazzoli and Tiozzo, 2023:24) giving birth to an international research and practical application of drama in education. Later in the nineties, John O'Toole used the term "process drama" for the first time during the National Association Drama in Education congress in 1990. In 1991 Brad Haeman defined "process drama" as theatrical improvisation which aims to involve both teachers and students, creating a collaborative environment. As Piazzoli and Tiozzo affirm (2023:25), in 1995 Cecily O'Neill disclosed process drama all around the world with her "Drama Worlds" and gave birth to many universities programs and studies. As it was stated above, in 1993 Schewe applied performative teaching and learning to language learning, but when it comes to process drama Piazzoli (2022:392) states that a turning point for research in this field was Shin Mei Kao's doctoral study on process drama for second language acquisition. As it is understandable from the previous explanation of its historical development, drama in education is a widely documented and tested practice and it can be applied to language learning with interesting results.

2.2.1 Usage of drama in language classes and its benefits

As Piazzoli points out, the synergy between drama and second language learning has been known for centuries (2021:391). According to her (2021:392), several studies in L2/process drama document the effects of drama on the oral proficiency of learners in various language teaching contexts: English in Japan (Nfor, 2020); German with adult refugees in Germany (Best, Guhleemann, & Guitart, 2020); English with undergraduates in France (Privas-Bréauté, 2019); French in an elementary school in British Columbia (Göksel, 2019); Italian in Ireland (Piazzoli & Kubiak, 2019); English with adults in

Switzerland (Scally, 2019); English with secondary students in Italy (Bora, 2019); Chinese with L2 students in China (Corderi Novoa, 2019). It seems clear that researchers recognise that drama can effectively support second language acquisition.

In the following lines I will explain how language acquisition can be implemented with drama activities and some benefits for the students. According to McGovern (2017:5), from the mid-20th century to the current day different methodologies have framed drama in relation to the theories they separately grew from. Reporting all of them here would take too many pages or maybe an entire dissertation. That's why it is my intention to report only some of them in order to give the reader an idea of what are the main approaches of drama usage in language classes. McGovern (2017:6) affirms that a variety of approaches such as playwriting, devising, and even some unnamed approaches have been explored in L2 research. Yet the following three approaches to drama in the L2 classroom emerge most frequently: Theatrical Performance, Process Drama, and Games and Improvisations. The first entails students rehearsing and performing a scripted play. The second requires students and teachers to take on roles in order to complete extended in-class improvisations, but not for performance. The third encompasses the broad array of approaches that call for theatre games to be used in L2 contexts. In 2017 Haseman and O'Toole (in Piazzoli 2018:80-81) illustrated the element of drama as:

Situation, character and relationships, driven by dramatic tension, shaped by focus, manifested in place and time, organised into narrative, expressed in language and movement, to create mood and symbols, which together create dramatic meaning. When performed for an audience, this becomes theatre. (Haseman & O'Toole, 2017)

In L2 process drama, the teacher/artist has to manage these elements, which are the essence to dramatic form, to create a felt-experience that generates “a living form, experienced and remembered bodily, with a relation to an Other that is mediated by symbolic forms” (Kramsch 2009 in Piazzoli 2018:82). This dramatic form is common to all the three approaches reported above, but they can differ in how they are seen as enhancing L2 learning according to students' needs and desires. For example, as Piazzoli remarks (2018:82), in Via's (1972) approach, the focus was primarily on the acquisition of language and understanding of the target culture, while in Cheng and Winston's (2011)

the focus was on the students in relation to societal power structures. According to McGovern (2017:12), Schewe (2013) presents a model of the various approaches to drama in the L2 classroom, dividing them in “Small-Scale Forms” and “Large-Scale Forms”. Small-Scale forms include in-class improvisations that unfold in a shorter time frame (one class or one unit) and do not typically result in a staged performance (such as process drama); Large-Scale Forms include both script-based and devised theatre, which require more time. He asserts that Large-Scale Forms demand high motivation and dedication and can only be materialised in extra-curricular contexts (2013 in McGovern 2017:12). Belliveau and Kim (2013) reported in the article published on Scenario Journal some examples of available resource sites for drama activities in education which I report here to give the reader the possibility to explore them:

- Bringing Language Alive through Process Drama: SYLLABUS: <http://drama2010evo.pbworks.com/f/Bringing+Language+Alive+through+Process+Drama+SYLLABUS.pdf>. This is a 6-week, online workshop in process drama in ESL/EFL classrooms offered annually by Gary Carkin and Shin-Mei Kao in the TESOL-Drama Forum.
- My Album: <http://gary-carkin.magix.net>. Gary Carkin creates a site displaying a collection of video drama activities.
- Drama Education Network: www.dramaed.net. This is a commercial site that provides services, teaching resources, and products for schools and teachers to promote the use of drama in arts, literacy, and language education.
- Improv Encyclopedia: <http://improvencyclopedia.org>. This provides a resource for improvisational activities in classrooms.
- ESLFlowRole-Plays: <http://www.eslflow.com/roleplaysdramatheatregames.html>. This provides information and resources for using role-plays on a range of different topics and themes in ESL/EFL classrooms.

- Drama in the ESL Classroom: www.esldrama.weebly.com. This resource offers a collection of drama techniques, lesson plans, strategies, and further resources in the use of drama in ESL/EFL classrooms.
- Resources for Teaching Drama: <https://www.msu.edu/~caplan/drama/biblio.html>. Sarah Dodson, drama educator, presents a useful resource for language and literacy teachers interested in incorporating drama into classrooms, including scholarly articles, books, lesson plans, and online sites.

After having analysed some useful approaches, uses and resources, in the next lines I will focus on the benefits described in the literature of using drama in language classes.

According to Uysal and Yavuz, through the use of drama learners are encouraged to engage in a conversation in improvisational dramas which makes it possible for learners to express their ideas and emotions through gestures and facial expressions (2018:377). Drama gives them a purpose to exchange language and provides them an imaginary scene in which they feel free to act and impersonate by experimenting a wider range of language rather than repeated drilling of decontextualized language patterns (Brauer, 2002 in Uysal and Yavuz, 2018). As Kim and Belliveau (2013:11) underlines, it is an opportunity for actual spontaneous communication which “promotes contextualised and authentic language use in a low stress and positive environment, boosts communicative competence and emotional and social growth and, at the same time, learners tend to appreciate and understand the target language’s culture and feel more motivated and enthusiastic” (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018:377). The drama-oriented verbal and nonverbal exercises encourage the learner to speak spontaneously, think in a more complex way and use body language since this kind of exercises offer language in a meaningful context and comprise vocal, physical and cultural, as well as intellectual components of communicative competence (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018:377). It combines verbal and nonverbal elements by correlating speech with the actions (Ronke, 2005) in a social context (Kim and Belliveau, 2013:11). Moreover, both Piazzoli (2022) and Byram (1997 in Kim and Belliveau 2013) drama also helps to develop intercultural communicative competence. Indeed, “drama can challenge stereotypes or reinforce labels; dislodge or reinforce viewpoints” (Piazzoli 2022:391) and it can also develop “one’s intercultural communicative competence which encompasses

elements such as open, curious, and critical attitudes, knowledge in sociocultural practices, skills of relating and making sense of cultures, abilities to discover and perform knowledge/attitudes/skills in and through interaction, and critical cultural awareness” (Byram 1997 in Kim and Belliveau 2013:11).

Drama frees the students from time and place and makes it possible to ‘walk in the shoes’ of another (McCaslin, 1996 in Uysal and Yavuz 2018:377). Therefore, it is a great opportunity to develop empathy and build social awareness. Drama is dynamic in nature and learners experience the complex nature of authentic communicative aspects of language such as hesitation, intonation, repetitions, incomplete sentences (Belliveau and Kim 2013:12). It recycles new vocabulary constantly and “appeals to different intelligences, including visual/spatial and bodily/kinaesthetic intelligence” (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018:377). The learners show empathy, take turns, make decisions and work in a team. It encourages taking responsibility and leadership roles (Boudreault, 2010). It also improves their self-confidence in learning the target language and in the classroom activities (Wessels, 1987 in Uysal and Yavuz 2013). For what concerns the pedagogical and linguistic aspect, Uysal and Yavuz suggest that improvised language games, mime, role play and simulations can be organised around four main skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing (2018:377). Furthermore, pronunciation and articulation games are best to teach the sounds as well as the correct rhythm and intonation (Dubrac, 2013 in Uysal and Yavuz 2013). Focusing on learning vocabulary, Nation (2011 in Alshraideh and Alahmadi 2020:42) claimed that language use and vocabulary knowledge exhibit a complementary relationship: language use increases vocabulary knowledge, and knowledge of vocabulary enables language use. In this case, using drama in teaching vocabulary is a strategy that “is reported to be useful and effective” (Alshraideh and Alahmadi, 2020:43). As they affirm, having students express their thoughts and feelings by “acting and doing” while learning new vocabulary has the potential to motivate them to understand and remember “the meanings of the words and expressions more effectively than rote memorization” (2020:43).

Another important aspect that drama can help to overcome is anxiety. As MacIntyre and Gardner (1991 in Ramadhani 2019:145) states, “anxiety poses several potential problems

for the student of a foreign language because it can interfere with the acquisition, retention, and production of the new language”. Foreign language anxiety can interfere learners’ performance in their communication with another speaker, and also influence their comprehension in the new language (Tóth, 2006 in Ramadhani 201:145). Students also feel anxious when their performance in speaking skill is evaluated by others. Cubukcu (2007, 133) establish the main sources of anxiety, which are: “(a) presenting before the class, (b) making mistakes, (c) losing face, (d) inability to express oneself, (e) fear of failure, (f) teachers, and (g) fear of living up to the standards”. In overcoming the feeling of anxiety during these situations, Drama could be very effective, because it can balance students’ thought and feeling and it makes the teaching learning process in the classroom become challenging and enjoyable (Wagner, 1998: 9). In addition, Scally (2019:110) argues that by using devising techniques with its emphasis on the role of the body, the learner becomes more physically relaxed and feels less anxiety in their use of a new language. Aligned with this emphasis on the body, “a focus on the voice and breathing can improve desired pronunciation while also lessening anxiety in oral production for additional language learners” (Scally 2019:110). Finally, drama provides learners to practise their English as an opportunity and they could feel free and safe. Through drama, the classroom’s atmosphere becomes friendlier and stress-free (Miccoli, 2003 in Ramadhani, 2019:146).

2.2.2 Teachers’ role and attitude

As it is plausible, in this drama-based learning process teachers have a different role compared to the traditional one. Indeed, they have to collaborate with the students and guide them without interrupting too much before and during the activities. Moreover, the teacher is a facilitator and counsellor and encourages them to express their ideas and emotions beyond their linguistic boundaries, encouraging them to take risks, express their ideas and feelings, and use their gestures and body language (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018:378). The teacher should welcome mistakes during the process and correct them after the drama-oriented exercises (Ronke, 2005) and s/he is not supposed to interfere with the flow of speech so that the students can be comfortable in communicating in the

target language. In addition, the teacher should be “facilitative, constructive and flexible with new ideas in drama-oriented activities” (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018:378). Fels and McGivern (2002 in McGovern 2017:10) invite teachers to adopt a critical stance by considering the following questions:

In the opening up of curriculum to the presence of our students, what learning will be realized within the interplay between the multiple world(s) of experience and identities embodied within each individual? What concerns, fears, challenges and questions will students entertain as they (re)language their world? What issues will they choose (if given a choice) to explore?...With what experiences, memories, stories will they gift us? How may we as teachers and learners engage in a meaningful dialogue that invites the sounding of all voices? (ibid. 21)

These questions invite teachers to approach drama from a critical sociocultural lens that views learners not as subjects required to master a target language or culture, but as complex beings able to participate actively in their own learning.

2.2.3 Drama in language learning in migration contexts

A wide number of organisations, researchers, artists, teachers and mediators (for example, Orton, Mazur, Noble, Muir, Smagala, Bryer, Barnes, Gulbay, Dalziel, Piazzoli, Taraborelli) investigated the theme of applying performing and participatory arts to the integration of refugees and asylum seekers from children to adults in order to facilitate their integration and to give them the opportunity to express themselves, create social relationships and use their imagination. Moreover, Smith argues that “impact on wider well-being is achieved through an applied theatre approach which emphasises play, creativity and laughter, and that learning through playing is as valuable for adult refugees and migrants as it is for children” (2016:2). Since one of refugees and migrants’ primary needs is to learn the language of the host country, we cannot talk about teaching a language without considering its ethos and cultural elements. These features of language push us to teach or learn the language in the social milieu. Moreover, when we learn a language, we get close to a new culture and drama seems to boost this process.

As may be imagined, the above is not an easy task and using the arts with migrants and refugees is a delicate activity which requires a quite ethical perspective. As Barnes states (2009:35), the majority of us who enjoy the privilege of living in a relatively safe country have a curiosity to know the hidden stories of refugees, in fact of anyone who has suffered. We have a desire to know what happened to them and we feel privileged if someone chooses to share their story with us (2009:35). However, Barnes argues that making these stories the focus of participatory arts projects is something that should be avoided. In fact, asking refugees to use their life stories as resources in the project and giving birth to storytelling based on real life seems to be really problematic for the refugees themselves, in light of the traumatic experiences they could have faced. According to Barnes, “the urge to exploit these stories should be resisted” in order to shift our perspective and “see the participants as equals, partners and as ‘us’ rather than ‘them’” (Barnes, 2009:35). Smith (2016 in Piazzoli and Cullen, 2021:7), the founder of *Creative English*, reinforces this point, affirming that “no one wants to be defined as a victim” and “it’s best therefore not to ask people about how they got here or why they had to leave”. In her view, focusing on the present and the skills and interests of a person is much more constructive, since refugees and asylum seekers are “constantly prescribed the role of victim by both society and the way they are represented in art” (Smith, 2016 in Piazzoli and Cullen, 2021:7).

Barnes’ Living Here project showed that drama helped young refugees to “make friends, to understand and to empathise with each other and to engage with the world around them and with the particular challenges that they face” (2009:36) . This change in perspective might be effective for people who desire to use arts with migrants and refugees, especially if they are able to make these practices inclusive, enjoyable and highly creative. In addition, it is important to clarify that during the drama-based experience “there are no wrong answers” (Barnes, 2009:36), so everyone should feel free to express themselves. According to Dalziel and Piazzoli (2019:8), “quality language provision for refugees and asylum seekers should revolve around learner agency and celebration of diversity” and drama can give refugees and asylum seekers the chance to “step outside the role of victim” (Dalziel and Piazzoli, 2019:9) in order to enact narratives that they can modify with their storytelling capacity. However, as Piazzoli and Cullen (2017:6) highlight, storytelling can

be a double-edged sword and it can reduce their identities to one single narrative which label them as victims who only have sad and traumatic stories to tell.

As already stated above, refugees and asylum seekers' language learning is part of the resettlement process: it can help them to achieve economic independence, to take care of themselves and of their families and it can be a necessary requisite in obtaining a residence permit or citizenship (Dalziel and Piazzoli, 2019:9). Unluckily, the participants in the Process Drama project described by Dalziel and Piazzoli often remarked on the fact that they had little opportunity to practise 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. So, as Dalziel and Piazzoli underline, "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" (2019:10). In this case, drama is a perfect tool for stepping outside their everyday roles and enriching their language use. However, Smith (2016:1) underlines that even if play and creativity are cornerstones of a person-centred approach it is important that language learning also addresses their functional needs, especially if learners are refugees, asylum seekers or migrants already living in the country where the language is spoken.

In the academic year 2016/2017 Dalziel and Piazzoli held some Process Drama sessions which were part of a project called "Cultura e Accoglienza" and allowed for the enrolment of 30 asylum seekers as "guest students" at the University of Padova in Northern Italy. According to them, these sessions were extremely successful, and they helped participants' "agency to communicate" (2019:22) also thanks to their intercultural literacy which allowed them to reciprocate. In particular, they identified 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 (2019:22). As they report, this study 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” (2019:29).

This intercultural perspective is also reprised by Piazzoli (2022) who argues that drama is a form of intercultural education. In fact, she affirms that “an effective way to support intercultural engagement is to harness imagination through the arts, and particularly through drama”. She also reprises the concept of intercultural literacy which can be developed only with empathy and an ethical perspective. This leads to intercultural awareness which Piazzoli defines as “a generative process that begins by questioning what we take for granted” (2022:393), favouring the transition from monocultural to intercultural attitude and developing our ability to decode cultural norms different from our own. The extent to which we are able to decode different cultural norms and function across cultural contexts relates to our level of intercultural literacy (Piazzoli 2022:392). She finally underlines that intercultural education and drama share several features, as both require the ability to decenter from our perspective (2022).

In conclusion, it seems particularly evident that drama could be an effective tool for inclusion and language learning, but only if we are eager to disconnect from re-enacting “narratives of victimhood” (Jeffers 2008 in Dalziel and Piazzoli 2019:29), through building drama sessions that can help us to see them for who they are: human beings with cultures and perspectives which can enrich our social and linguistic milieu.

2.3 Different uses of music in language classes and migrant contexts

In this part I will first discuss the different uses of music in language classes and its positive effects on the learning process. Then I will shift the perspective on how music can be used with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. As concerns this second part, it is not my intention to talk about the different ways in which music can function as a therapy for refugees’ traumatic experiences. On the contrary, music will be considered as an inclusive and intercultural practice which might help them to create connections with the social and cultural milieux, but without making it a therapy in the strict sense.

2.3.1 The correlation between music and language

The starting point will be the question “ how can educators define the relationship between language learning and music?” In order to answer this question I believe it is important to investigate the relation between music and language. Oats and Grayson (2004 in Israel 2013:1362) write of language acquisition being rooted in phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Connections in the acquisition process can be seen as follows:

Levels of Language Learning

1. Phonology: consists of symbols that represent the sounds of language.
2. Morphology: form of words establishes meaning and grammatical function.
3. Syntax: order of words constitutes sentence formation.
4. Semantics: vocabulary creates meaning and understanding.

If music can be seen as a language as well, then “parallels can be drawn between the acquisition processes applicable in language learning and music learning” (Israel, 2013:1362). This strong relationship between music and language has been demonstrated also by Engh who affirms that “there are examples in the literature to argue the strong relationship between music and language that are substantiated by research in the fields of cognitive science, anthropology, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, First Language Acquisition (FLA) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA)” (2013:113). Another study conducted by Horn also confirms that music is a form of language, which uses tones, pitch, timbre and rhythm as a universal language. Both language and music are “communicative modes, aurally and orally transmitted, containing phonetic, syntactic, and semantic components, develop early in life and are socially interactive media” (2007 in Israel 2013:1363). Furthermore, he suggests that music should be used to encourage learners to listen in a mentally active and analytical way, adding that “in learning the language of music, just as in learning any language, learners need to listen to the language and its sound patterns before they are able to use it” (2007 in Israel 2013:1363).

2.3.2 Concrete uses: a survey of the literature

Now that the relation between music and language has been clarified, I think it is fundamental to understand how music can be concretely used during language teaching. I will report some studies concerning different approaches and uses of music in language classes. Degraeve states that “When we review the literature about the use of music in the FL classroom, it appears that music-related teaching methods can be classified in three main categories: the use of music without lyrics (sounds or background music), the use of songs and the use of rhythmic activities” (2019:412). As regards the first, linguists and researchers have advocated that listening to non-linguistic sounds or having background music during a task could enhance performance, among others at the linguistic level. Alfred Tomatis, an otolaryngologist, stated that ‘the voice only contains what the ear hears’ (Tomatis, 1991 in Degraeve 2019:413), which implies that one can only vocally reproduce what one can hear. For Tomatis, this is also relevant for the perception of foreign languages: he claims that languages have different frequency ranges, which makes the perception and production of a language with a large frequency range impossible for a native speaker of a language with a short frequency range.

Today, thanks to the new imaging technology, researchers can anatomically analyse whether background music can improve abilities and which specific process is affected and how. For example, Ferreri, Aucouturier, Muthalib, Bigand, & Bugajska (2013 in Degraeve 2019:413) examined the neurological process when background music is played during the encoding of a verbal memory task. Music facilitated the retrieval of the encoded material and results suggest that the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (DLPFC), a region known to be usually crucial during memory encoding processes, was deactivated during word encoding in the musical context, and that music helps verbal encoding by facilitating associative and organisational processes.

Another and more frequent way of integrating music into the foreign language classroom is the use of songs. Moreover, teachers sometimes intuitively use music-teaching methods to develop oral production. For example, they clap their hands to emphasise the rhythm of the speech, they make gestures that illustrate the speech intonation or they annotate

written sentences to indicate the position of the stress as in a music score. Some of these intuitive rhythmical activities have been formalised. For example, Graham (1993), an English teacher, linked the rhythms of spoken American English to the rhythms of traditional American jazz, creating the Jazz Chants, which are rhythmic presentations of natural American English that emphasise natural stress and intonation.

Another interesting use of music in teaching foreign language and culture is musical mnemonics. As E. Noelliste and J. Noelliste point out, “mnemonic devices increase connections of a given concept with other mediums (such as images, acronyms, or melodies) in order to enhance memory and recall through a richer associative network. These multiple connections stimulate quicker and more permanent, long-term recall of information” (2018:2). The foundations of the mnemonic technique were established in Ancient Greece, and the term itself originates from Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory in Greek mythology (Yates 1996 in Noelliste E. and Noelliste J. 2018). As such, mnemonics have had a long history in education, and a number of techniques have developed, such as link method, method of loci, peg system, keyword method, phonetic system acronyms, and acrostics, as well as songs, stories, and rhymes (Putnam 2015 in Noelliste E. and Noelliste J. 2018). In their article, E. Noelliste and J. Noelliste provided a 4-steps method to create musical mnemonic device, which it is my intention to report here, since it could be useful for language teachers:

- Step 1: Select a portion of a popular or common song from the language you teach.
- Step 2: Decipher the syllabic structure or meter (how many syllables are in each line?).
- Step 3: Decide on a topic you want to teach.
- Step 4: Compose lyrics to fit the syllabic structure, and negotiate tune adaptation, if necessary.

When the authors use the expression “tune adaptation” they refer to the process of addition and subtraction which can be applied to melodies when set to a text which varies slightly in its syllabification (2018:6). It is the authors’ belief that musical mnemonics can be efficacious with any age group and, as noted above, they can cover a multitude of

topics, not simply grammar. Mnemonics can also be an excellent opportunity to include students in an interactive activity. Instructors can present students with the four simple steps above and assign students to create their own unique mnemonic devices (Nuessel 2007 in Noelliste E. and Noelliste J. 2018). Interestingly, the literature on mnemonics cited throughout E. Noelliste and J. Noelliste's article covers a large range of ages for learners, indicating that mnemonics are effective, regardless of a learner's age. Furthermore, the authors underline that "It is important to remember that singing in the classroom is performative, not performance; in other words, the efficacy of musical mnemonics is developed through engaging all students in a performative act, not in attaining an elite level of performance" (E. Noelliste and J. Noelliste, 2018:10). Developing new musical mnemonic devices seems to be relevant also because of its intercultural role in L2 teaching and learning: "every culture has its own unique musical expressions, and music is one of the most accessible portals for integrating culture in the L2 classroom" (E. Noelliste and J. Noelliste, 2018:10).

Another example of how music can be used is the work of Murray (2005 in Israel 2013:1363), who analysed songs as poems, expanding the student's grammar and vocabulary, developing skills needed for learning the target language in greater depth. Pronunciation was also improved, because her students listened to the beat, rhythm, flow or accent that was used. Students were also able to study the differences between the oral and written forms of the target language (2005:9). Other examples are Eady and Wilson's approaches (2004 In Israel 2013:1363) which suggest the following methods to teach reading and language skills:

- activities using word cards featuring favourite words of songs;
- forming new sentences from words in favourite songs;
- guessing first lines of songs, with the teacher giving word configuration clues, and
- creating crossword puzzles in which the entries are words in song titles.

Another important asset in the field of language learning could be rap and hip hop. It is common knowledge that rap and hip hop is unifying an entire generation of various

cultures and it often reflects teenagers and young adults tastes and styles, which is the reason why it should be exploited in the classroom as part of a multicultural approach to education. For example, “positive lyrics can be improvised and composed to a driving beat, to add interest in lessons to be learned” (Israel, 2013:1364) or, if we consider the relation between rap and poetry, learners can recite poetry traditionally and set the poem to rap beats. Indeed, Merina (1993 in Israel 2013:1364) confirms that poetry teaching is stimulated by rap. This relation has also been explored by Akala in his TedX talk in 2011. In 2009, he launched the 'The Hip-hop Shakespeare Company', a hotly tipped music theatre production enterprise which aims at exploring the social, cultural and linguistic parallels between the works of William Shakespeare and that of modern day hip-hop artists.

2.3.3 Benefits of using music in language acquisition

Now that the reader has a general view about how music could be used in language classes, I will report some studies about why it should be used. Degraeve affirms that research reveals that music can be beneficial for foreign language acquisition, both for specific linguistic skills (e.g., vocabulary, listening skills or pronunciation) as for more general aspects. According to Degraeve, the use of music and songs in the FL teaching methods also “provides cultural knowledge of the target language: the context, the singer, the musical style, etc. are culturally rich resources for language lessons” (2019:415). As it is stated above, music could also improve various linguistic skills, such as vocabulary, listening comprehension, writing skills and phonetic acquisition. Concerning the use of songs in the FL classroom, Murphey (1990) argues that songs could help to easily remember vocabulary or phrases: this author stated that the ‘involuntary mental rehearsal’ (i.e. a ‘phenomenon occurring after a period of contact with a foreign language in which the new information repeats without the speaker’s intentional effort’) exists - and is even stronger - with songs. He argues that the rehearsal of language from music, the Song Stuck in My Head Phenomenon, may be triggered with a much smaller amount of input time. Different class intervention experiments confirm this phenomenon (Medina 1990,

Salcedo 2010, Legg 2009 in Degraive 2019). Regarding the impact of rhythmic activities, the experimental study of Ludke, Ferreira, & Overy (2014 in Degraive 2019:416) gives interesting results. They analysed vocabulary learning in three listen-and-repeat conditions: participants heard either sung phrases, rhythmic spoken phrases or spoken phrases. A significant difference between the sung/rhythmical and spoken conditions was found for the tests in which the participants had to speak in the foreign language (Hungarian), although performance was highest in the sung condition for all tests. Another important listening skill in foreign language acquisition is the ability to segment speech into words. Schön et al. (2008 in Degraive 2019:416) performed an experiment to determine whether songs can help learners segment foreign language speech. One group heard a continuous spoken stream of syllables, a second group heard a continuous sung stream of syllables with an association syllable/pitch (e.g. syllable gi = C), a third group also heard a continuous sung stream of syllables but without association syllable/pitch. After this training phase, they heard words and had to mention whether these were present in the stream that they have heard. The percentage of correct responses was the highest for the group who heard the sung stream with an association syllable/pitch and the lowest for the group who heard the spoken stream. Moreover, different studies examined the impact of musical second language methodologies on phonetic skills. For example, Heidari-Shahreza & Moinzadeh (2012 in Degraive 2019:417) focused on the impact of listening to melodies on stress perception. Participants were divided into two groups and were taught four stress patterns of two- and three-syllable English words. The experimental group heard first musical stimuli that are acoustically similar to word stress patterns (see Figure 1 for an example).



Figure 1 Musical stimulus acoustically similar to a two-syllable word with the stress on the 2nd syllable

After having heard the musical stimuli, the related target words (e.g. Japan, hotel) were introduced and practised. This procedure was repeated for the four stress patterns. The control group listened first to each group of target words, then the placement of the

primary stress was indicated and finally, the participants repeated the target words. After a short diversion activity, participants heard sets of four words and mentioned which has a different stress pattern. The experimental group obtained significantly higher results than the control group.

2.3.4 Music with migrants

Some activities reported above could also be used with migrants, taking into account that some of them are refugees or asylum seekers and therefore music could evoke some traumas they are not ready to cope with, if it is not chosen accurately. Yet, the question arises: how can music be used as a means of helping migrants become a member of their adoptive culture? As Bruscia and Burnett explain (1998 in Campbell 2019:8), music experiences can be created, moulded, and designed to highlight relationships within a person, between a group of people, and between a person and their (new) environment, as well as to explore one's feelings and emotional responses. The narrative presented as regards how migrants are or wish to be perceived may be somewhat taut, as communication between the "host" country and the "visitors" may be hindered by cultural, social, or linguistic differences. Music – often considered a universal language – helps to break down these barriers, working towards creating social harmony and helping decrease the divide between "us and the other" (Campbell, 2019:5). This perspective has also been reprised by Gianluca Taraborelli, also known as Johnny Mox, who created a musical project called "Stregoni" based on the migratory politics of the European Union. In 2015, he travelled all around Europe to play in reception centres with refugees and asylum seekers. In his documentary about this project, Taraborelli highlights that music should not simply tell migrants' stories with a dramatic view. On the contrary, music should create a free space, a structure which allows strong and authentic relationships to arise, regardless of participants' musical capacities. For migrants, music's place in cultural and personal identity acts as a means to opening dialogue and expression of both "new" and "old" cultures. Music is not only a tool that can be used to mould us and our behaviours, rather can also be used as a means of understanding ourselves via human and musical interaction, with cultural cohesion, communication, and

comprehension at the core. However, Campbell underlines that “knowledge on how to regulate or elicit specific emotional reactions, however, is needed for regulatory music to be effective” (2019:6) and that is particularly true in migrants’ contexts, especially with refugees and asylum seekers.

Much of previous research on creativity and migration relating to music has also focused on song lyrics (Bailey & Collyer, 2006). In entering a new culture, a new society, one’s past may inevitably become a source of comfort and is the foundation upon which new experiences are built. Music is a source of social stability and means of communication within this chaotic social change. “Aiming at a clearer picture between the blurry lines of belonging and newcomer” (Campbell, 2019:12), the lyrics of the song could be seen as the narrative which migrants present to the host social community, which suggests that asking them to write the text of a song could be a positive activity also because they find it difficult to talk about their issues and trauma, but singing – although certainly personal – is not as invasive as speaking (Campbell, 2019:12). Moreover, music-making can be a powerful way to discuss and dissect relationships, as music is inherently a social activity, either as a group playing/experiencing or as a relationship between the listener and the artist (Campbell, 2019:8). Several methods are used within music for migrants such as improvisation, song singing and writing, music and movement, as well as in various genres such as hip hop and rap. The fact that hip hop and rap are cited in the literature as useful methods for migrants’ integration suggests that it could be an important asset when we think about activities about the inclusion of young refugees and asylum seekers. This has also been confirmed by Gulbay (2021), whose study resulted in a new intervention model called “The Integral Hip-Hop Methodology”. This methodology aimed to “foster a grounded, confident and active sense of self by bringing the participants into the present reality and self-consciousness” (Gulbay 2021:12) and “to play a significant role in the asylum seeker and unaccompanied minor migrant youth population's PTSD symptom reduction”.

As has been highlighted in the studies reported above, music can be a common language, even when many languages are fused together, and it can help migrants to be included in the host country’s community and social milieu. In the next chapter, music and drama

will be combined together in order to provide the readers with a lesson proposal for L2 teaching to migrants.

Chapter 3. Filobus n.75 per Sound City: a workshop proposal

In this last chapter I will present a workshop based on music and drama which aims at improving language learning and intercultural dialogue with migrants. First, I will describe all the different activities which will be divided into phases, giving birth to a well-structured organisation, but which also gives a lot of space to improvisation and to any enriching element which could come from participants' linguistic and cultural background. Each phase will be introduced by an explanatory scheme which will summarise all the provided activities. Secondly, I will explain why this workshop could boost Italian language learning and intercultural dialogue and which aspects it could help to improve. This workshop proposal has been created by the author taking into account his previous experiences with music and drama, as well as his observations and notes from a drama workshop about intercultural communication which was held by Professor Fiona Dalziel in November 2022 and was addressed to international students at the University of Padova. Furthermore, the literature analysed in the first two chapters has been the main theoretical source for the development of this workshop. Although some games and improvisations will be part of this workshop, the process drama approach will be the main dramatic technique. As Piazzoli and Tiozzo explain (2023) this has specific characteristics: the co-construction of story between teacher and students; no outside audience; students acting in and out of their roles, the mantle of expert (which modifies the difference in roles between teacher and students), and, lastly, the technique of teacher in role, in which the teacher act as a character in the story who interact with students.

3.1 General structure

This workshop has been conceived for a group of migrants (10-15 participants) with different migratory backgrounds who possess an A2 Italian level and aim at reaching B1. English could be used as a lingua franca if participants don't understand some words or

contents, although the teacher should encourage the use of Italian even in these cases. The expected duration is approximately 3 hours with a break in the middle. However, it is suggested by the author to divide it in two sessions so that it does not become too heavy. The presence of an assistant might be a good choice in order to not interrupt the flow of the dramatic tension when specific materials need to be prepared. A room and a corridor would be the perfect spaces for this workshop, although only one room is fine.

3.1.1 Introduction

As Piazzoli and Tiozzo underline (2023:228), the workshop should start with an introductory moment in which the teacher interacts with participants: he/she welcomes them and they might chat for a few minutes in order to create confidence and to lay the foundation for group cohesion. Then, the teacher can ask participants' names, even using some games for memorisation. This helps to create a safe and relaxed mood, which will be fundamental for the next activities. After this moment, the teacher should inform participants that in this workshop they will practise Italian language with their voice, their body and their imagination, explaining why he/she has decided to use process drama and music for language learning and always keeping in mind that participants possess an A2 Italian level.

3.1.2 Phase 1: warm up and icebreakers

- Stretch
- 4-7-8 breathing exercise
- Space warm up
- Conductors' game

After the introductory part, the workshop starts with some warm up exercises. First, the teacher invites participants to stretch their muscles, shoulders and neck in particular. This helps them to relax their body and it could start activating the awareness of body usage. Since they are going to use their voices (which will be central in this workshop), the next

step will be the so-called “4-7-8” breathing exercise, which consists in inhaling for four seconds, holding their breath for seven seconds and blowing it out for eight seconds. This can be repeated three or four times. It is important to explain that they have to use the diaphragm since this kind of breathing will increase their voices’ power. A useful demonstration could consist in doing this exercise in a lain position which favours the use of diaphragm. For this exercise the author suggests using “Ocean” by John Butler as background music, since it might help them to concentrare, while, at the same time, feeling relaxed and safe.

The second activity of phase one is called “ space warm up”. Participants are asked to walk at medium speed, exploring all the space inside the room with curiosity and trying to fill all the space while, at the same time, not being too close to each other. This helps to develop a perception of the space inside the room and between them. Then, the teacher tells them to stop and explains that they will be asked to walk with different gaits as if they were in different situations. For example, the teacher could ask them to run, to walk as if they were at the train station or to walk on their heels, just to mention some gaits. The author of this dissertation suggests changing the background song, in order to establish a more enlivened mood. “Take Five” by Dave Brubeck Quintet or “Wavy Gravy” by Kenny Burrell could be good choices for this purpose, since they are two jazz songs where drums and percussion contribute to create movement but without being distracting. Gaits and situations can be written on the blackboard in order to enrich participants’ vocabulary and to facilitate comprehension.

The third exercise is called “Conductors’ game”: it starts with asking participants which sounds they find difficult in Italian. After having listed them, they will place in front of the teacher and they will chorally repeat each sound after the teacher. After having tried together, a different sound can be assigned to each student and when the teacher points him/her, she/he will constantly repeat the sound as if he/she was a musical instrument which is playing. The teacher can vary rhythm, volume and dynamics in order to create a proper orchestra made of different linguistic sounds. When the teacher closes his/her hands, the concert stops. If they feel confident, they can become the conductors. The teacher can facilitate this by asking if someone volunteers for trying. As it is understandable, this exercise could be particularly useful for improving pronunciation

and it can also have an important intercultural value. Indeed, a comparison can be made between Italian sounds and sounds from participants' native language.

3.1.3 Phase 2: Process Drama story “Filobus n. 75”

- Teacher's storytelling: Filobus n.75 (Pre-text)
- Soundscape: the trolleybus
- Still image
- Improvisation
- Gossip mill

After having moved to the corridor, the teacher introduces the pre-text reading the first lines of “Il filobus numero 75” by Gianni Rodari:

Una mattina il filobus numero 75, in partenza da Monteverde Vecchio per Piazza Fiume, invece di scendere verso Trastevere, prese per il Gianicolo, svoltò giù per l'Aurelia Antica e dopo pochi minuti correva tra i prati fuori Roma come una lepre in vacanza.

Then, an image of a trolleybus is shown to participants. While listening to “Gymnopédie No.1” by Erik Satie, the group will have to watch the picture trying to catch as many details as possible. After that, the group will have to recreate the trolleybus soundscape only using their voice, their bodies and the objects they can find in the room. When they are ready, the teacher gives the signal and they can start representing the soundscape of the trolleybus 75. In addition, the teacher might ask permission to record the soundscape if he/she intends to use it again during the workshop. When the teacher gives the signal everyone will stop and the group will discuss which sound they chose and for which reason.

In the second part of this section participants are asked to think about which character they want to impersonate on the trolleybus. The teacher gives them a role card on which they will write the name, the age, the country, the job and the personality of their

character. This is particularly relevant, since they have the possibility to distance from themselves and from their story while rethinking about their identity. “Gymnopédie No.1” by Erik Satie can be the right background for this moment since this composition contributes to create a suspended and floating mood which can be connoted as neither “sad” and neither “happy”. It creates a suspended moment which lets space to imagination and creativity. After a few minutes of thinking (3/4 minutes), one at a time they take their position inside the trolleybus (the corridor) without saying who they are, what they are doing or what they would like to do. They simply take a posture (which includes specific gestures and facial expressions) which should represent their characters and they freeze in that position. This activity is called “still image” and it “allows learners to make a dramatic statement without having to worry about lack of acting ability” (Schewe and Woodhouse, 2018:59).

When all of them have done this, the teacher can kick off and the improvisation (in Italian) begins. This can be considered as the prominent activity for what concerns language learning because participants have to interact using their knowledge of Italian language but without being forced to use particular grammar structures or vocabulary: they can feel free to say whatever they want, as if they really were on a trolleybus with other people. This is the perfect example of what Carloni and Sisti (2019) defined as the necessity to create occasions for simulating spontaneous conversations in real life situations. After the improvisation (which could last from five to ten minutes), the next activity will be the “gossip mill”: participants will walk around on the trolleybus while “A day in the life” by West Montgomery will be played in the background. When the teacher stops the music they will form couples and they will start gossiping based on a pre-selected question (such as “did you hear that...?”). After a few minutes the teacher will play the music again and they will start walking again. When the music stops they will form new couples and they will create new gossip. In the end, a linguistic summary should be done in order to start a discussion about the consequences of gossip. It is important to explain to them that gossip can have very bad consequences on people and on their psychology, because gossip often generates stereotypes. Furthermore, it is important to give everyone the possibility to say something about the scene in order to value everyone’s opinion and

point of view. This also gives them the possibility to paraphrase and to use the Italian past tenses.

3.1.4 Phase 3: Welcome to Sound City!

- **Still image**
- **Teacher in role**
- **Drum circle**
- **“Words have rhythm” activity**

In this section the second part of the story starts: the teacher tells them that the trolleybus has changed its usual itinerary and it is now heading to the countryside. Here, participants are asked to perform another “still image” in which they have to represent how they feel about this news. Are they stressed because they had to go to work? Are they curious about what’s happening? This activity should be done in groups of 4 or 5 people. This time, the still image will be performed one at a time and the other two groups will have to guess what the acting group is representing. In this case, the group will operate in three phases: first, they will decide what to represent and how; second, they will try different positions for their representation; third, they will act in front of the other groups. Then, the teacher recreates a recorded voice which tells the passengers that they are arriving at Sound City and the trolleybus will stop there. The participants open the classroom’s door as if it were the trolleybus’ doors and they come back to the classroom where they will find the teacher (or a collaborator) acting as if she/he was a citizen of Sound City, a place in which the time is marked only by sounds, rhythms and music. Since it is a new character, it is probable that participants will interact with him/her, trying to understand who he/she is. He/she will improvise reacting to participants’ incentives, but always keep in mind that he/she must explain to them that Sound City has changed during the last years. Indeed the character will tell them the following story:

On the parliament’s wall there is a huge metronome which, in the past, marked the rhythm of life in Sound City. Unfortunately, the metronome stopped eight years ago when the progressive party “Quiete e Progresso” took control of the city. It declared that it

would abolish all the traditions considered as old and unnecessary, including the ritual drums which were supposed to make the huge metronome work. From that moment on, the progress would have been the guiding light. All the workers who played those magical drums were fired and the party affirmed that those “ancient and rudimental” drums would have never been used again. The party also promised that everyone would have obtained his/her personal metronome. Now everyone is focused on his own rhythm and is not able to communicate with other citizens because they speak with different sounds and rhythms. In the past, crosswalks played like piano keys when someone walked on them, dustmen used to play drumming beats on the bins, dishwashers used to sing while washing and families’ choirs flew from windows facing the street. Now, everyone speaks whispering and the entire city is silent and quiet, except for the rich people district. Here, since they are rich, every single person bought a personal metronome and now they only care about their own rhythm, at the expense of poorer citizens which are slowly turning off their emotions, becoming machines without voice.

To conclude, the group will find out that the character they met was one of those drummers in the past who made the metronome work. Participants will then be asked to discuss what to do, so that they can decide and try to find a solution for this problem. This activity is called “teacher in role” (Piazzoli and Tiozzo 2023:251) in which the teacher (or the collaborator) aims at transporting students through the story by changing his/her role. This role can correspond to three different social status: higher than students (a manager, a king, a queen etc.), same role as students (a friend, a colleague, etc.) or inferior to students (a subordinate). In this activity Piazzoli and Tiozzo (2023) identify three phases: the preparation, in which the group thinks about some questions that can be addressed to the new character; the improvisation, in which the teacher will act as if he/she was the character with a specific voice and posture; the linguistic reflection, in which the teacher, out of the character, helps participants to summarise what happened. This last part is particularly relevant since it gives participants the opportunity to use the Italian language to put together what happened, learning new vocabulary and using past tenses. If necessary, an image of a metronome can be shown in order to explain to them how it works. From that moment on, the teacher will not have the control on the narrative anymore, since it will be the group, with its own decisions, to carry the story on.

The second activity is similar to the soundscape activity in phase two, but this time participants will have to bring Sound City back to life with the musical activity called “drum circle”. How this activity will be introduced depends on students’ storytelling and decisions. Since in Process Drama students need to decide how to develop the story with their actions, the ability of the teacher will consist in finding a way to link this musical part to the previous one, considering students’ narrative choices. Seated in a circle, each participant will take a percussion (which might be drums but also percussion and recycled objects such as bins, bottles, keys etc.) and the teacher starts playing a percussive and repetitive beat. Then, one at a time, everyone adds his/her own beat to create the beat of Sound City. In this activity no musical experience is required, although the contribution of a musician could help to create cohesion between the different drumming beats. It is important to explain to them that listening to the others playing their own rhythm is fundamental in order to create a unique and cohesive beat. Moreover, each participant might propose some traditional rhythms from his/her own culture and share it in the drum circle as a way to create an intercultural dialogue through music.

The third activity is called “words have rhythm”. The teacher (acting as the citizen) explains to the group that rhythm is not enough to make the metronome work. They also have to put feelings in their playing. So, while students keep playing, the teacher will put some written words related to emotions on the floor (e.g. felice, triste, annoiato, curioso, spensierato etc.). One at a time, participants take a word and when all of them have one, the music stops. Then, they can try to write one verse of the song they are going to create together. This might stimulate their writing skills since they have the possibility to write their texts with their own words about a particular topic. Then, they can read, rap or sing it one at a time while the others play the same rhythm as before. Since writing a verse could be complicated for some people, a good alternative could be to create a mnemonic musical device (E. and J. Noelliste, 2018) by choosing an Italian song and helping participants to modify the text working on the syllabic structure of verses but keeping the same rhythm. In the end, the teacher (always acting as the character) reproduces the sound of the metronome (with the phone or any other audio device) in order to underline that the metronome started to work again. Once this activity is finished it is important to recognise everyone’s effort by applauding with all the group. This also helps to underline that the experiential part is finished.

3.1.5 Phase 4: Reflections

The conclusion is very important because it will help participants to summarise what they experienced and how they felt during the workshop, as well as expressing what they have learnt about Italian. The teacher and, eventually the collaborator, take two large papers; on the first they will write “Come mi sono sentito/a durante questo laboratorio?” while, on the second they will write “Cosa ho imparato di nuovo?”. Participants now can write their answers in Italian on each paper but using only one or two words and explaining their choices. Giving them the opportunity to write words in their native language could be particularly useful to create an intercultural and interlinguistic discussion. This moment is particularly relevant because participants can talk Italian referring to the Italian language itself, giving birth to a metalinguistic reflection. They can also draw their answers, explaining why they chose to draw that thing in particular. The teacher might suggest participants take pictures in order to remember what they wrote or drew.

3.2 Conclusion and greetings

In conclusion it is important to thank all the participants for their effort and for their participation, giving them the possibility to stay as much as they want, asking questions, talking, exchanging numbers and any other activity which could reinforce the good mood created during the workshop.

As the reader can see, this workshop is just a proposal and it has not been tested yet. That is the reason why all the previous considerations are only hypotheses based on what the literature has shown so far. It might be relevant to try this workshop with a group of migrants in order to verify the outcome and to collect data about the benefits of these activities for language learning and intercultural dialogue.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this dissertation, it is evident that language learning and intercultural dialogue improve when music and drama are used in language teaching with migrants. As seen above, teaching languages to migrants brings many challenges to face, but it surely can be seen as an enriching opportunity. When they start a second language course they need to learn in a safe and intercultural space which gives them the opportunity to develop useful linguistic competence fulfilling their needs in everyday life. In addition, this space needs to distance itself from the cosmopolitan monolingualism described by Krumm and Plutzer (2008), preferring an intercultural approach which aims to emphasise resources that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers bring with them. Schewe's idea of Performative Language Didactics (1993) and the use of drama and music during language teaching can become important assets which contribute to create an intercultural and linguistic exchange, as well as enhancing different cultural and linguistic aspects such as experimenting with language (Brauer, 2002 in Uysal and Yavuz, 2018), spontaneous communication (Kim and Belliveau 2013), vocabulary acquisition (Alshraideh and Alahmadi, 2020), developing intercultural communicative competence (Piazzoli, 2022), listening, speaking, reading and writing (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018). Furthermore, teachers are invited to approach language learning and the use of music and drama from a critical sociocultural lens that views learners not as subjects required to master a target language or culture, but as complex beings able to participate actively in their own learning (Uysal and Yavuz, 2018 and Ronke, 2005).

As reported above, a wide variety of musical and dramatic activities have been created in order to foster language learning and intercultural dialogue with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. With this dissertation, it is my intention to add the workshop described in the third chapter to the list, but with a slightly different approach which involves the combination of music and drama. I believe that, when melted together, they can be a great resource for language learning and intercultural dialogue. However, as regards the limits of this dissertation, the workshop proposed has not been experimented yet. This implies that it would be interesting to test it with a group of migrants in order to find out whether the theoretical assumptions can be confirmed with concrete results during the experience.

To conclude, we can say that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers' inclusion is an important task in this century and language learning and intercultural dialogue represent one of the first needs for people who arrive in a new country. As citizens of the host country, we must stop depicting them with narratives of victimhood, because sometimes labels do not help them “clearly see and shape who they really are, who they used to be, combine the two and adapt to the new reality” (Stathopoulou & Dassi, 2020:63). On the contrary, we should become aware of the cultural, linguistic, economic and social resources that they bring to share in the host communities. In this case, music and drama can definitely become the perfect tools for cultural and linguistic inclusion, since they both break down stereotypes and labels, giving voice and body to what all human beings have in common: dreams, rights, labours, fears, dignity, stories, uncertainties... in one word, humanity.

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Summary in Italian

Questa tesi nasce dalla necessità di interrogarsi sui possibili metodi di inclusione di migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo in Italia che mirino a favorire un apprendimento linguistico efficace e a sviluppare competenze interculturali che consentano di far dialogare individui provenienti da contesti socio-culturali molto diversi fra loro.

Come è stato evidenziato da numerosi studi e ricerche, la musica e il teatro possono adempiere benissimo a questo compito e possono essere impiegati come strumenti pedagogici utili all'apprendimento della seconda lingua (in questo caso l'italiano) e alla creazione di un dialogo interculturale. L'obiettivo di questa tesi, quindi, è di esplorare i diversi usi e benefici della musica e del teatro nell'insegnamento di una lingua straniera, proponendo, in conclusione, un vera e propria lezione laboratoriale suddivisa in tre macrofasi. In particolare, verranno approfondite le seguenti domande di ricerca:

- Quali attività musicali e teatrali possono essere proposte per incoraggiare il dialogo interculturale durante l'apprendimento di una seconda lingua in contesti migratori?
- Musica e teatro come possono essere combinate per creare attività utili per l'apprendimento linguistico e il dialogo interculturale con migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo?

Quando un migrante arriva in un posto nuovo per stabilirsi, uno dei bisogni primari è imparare la lingua del paese ospitante in modo da poter comunicare con il contesto sociale, potersi interfacciare con la burocrazia del paese e adempiere a tutti gli altri bisogni primari e secondari. Come è deducibile, la modalità di insegnamento canonica della lingua non può costituire l'unico metodo di insegnamento, dato il particolare contesto didattico legato anche alla storia e alle vicissitudini degli studenti e delle studentesse. Questa tesi è frutto anche di una riflessione personale avviata nel 2017, anno in cui feci servizio come volontario in una scuola di italiano per migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo. Mentre insegnavo italiano, cominciai ad interrogarmi su quali metodi innovativi potessero essere utilizzati per l'insegnamento delle lingue straniere. In quanto musicista, ho sempre percepito che tra musica e linguaggio ci fosse un legame molto forte, e lo stesso può essere detto per il teatro che ho scoperto solo in anni più recenti, frequentando il corso di teatro in lingua inglese organizzato dalla professoressa Fiona Dalziel al Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari dell'Università di Padova. Questa sensazione, unita agli studi accademici riportati in bibliografia, è stata il motore di questa scelta di utilizzare proprio la musica e il teatro come mezzi per l'apprendimento linguistico e il dialogo interculturale.

La tesi, di natura eminentemente bibliografica, è suddivisa in tre capitoli.

Nel primo capitolo vengono riportati e analizzati alcuni studi accademici riguardo all'insegnamento di una seconda lingua a migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo. Inizialmente, vengono presentate alcune informazioni di base riguardo ai flussi migratori in Europa durante gli ultimi decenni, in modo da fornire al lettore alcuni indicatori riguardo la necessità di condurre ricerca riguardo all'inclusione di migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo. Successivamente, viene fornita una definizione approfondita dei termini "migrante", "rifugiato" e "richiedente asilo", sottolineando la differenza di utilizzo e introducendo una delle principali sfide che i migranti si trovano a dover affrontare nel momento in cui mettono piede in un paese straniero: l' apprendimento della lingua. Questo primo scoglio rappresenta la chiave che apre le porte ad opportunità ed occasioni di inclusione e il contesto sociale e culturale gioca un ruolo centrale durante il processo di apprendimento. Inoltre, verrà fornito un approfondimento riguardante il caso specifico dell'Italia, alla luce dei recenti fenomeni migratori che hanno riguardato questo Stato come anche tanti altri all'interno dell' Unione Europea. Nella terza parte del primo capitolo verranno riportate anche alcune difficoltà riscontrate dagli insegnanti di lingua durante la didattica con studenti con background migratorio, con un focus particolare sulle esperienze traumatiche vissute dagli studenti e dalle studentesse e come esse possono influenzare l'apprendimento.

Il secondo capitolo si apre con il tema delle arti performative applicate all' insegnamento delle lingue straniere, analizzandone, in particolare, l'utilizzo con migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo che desiderano apprendere una lingua straniera. Durante questa analisi, l' idea di Schewe riguardo all'insegnamento performativo delle lingue e la sua ripresa del motto di Pestazzoli "imparare con la testa, le mani e il cuore" (Piazzoli and Tiozzo 2023:16) faranno da filo conduttore, anche se altri studi verranno riportati ed analizzati. Innanzitutto, verrà presentato il tema della didattica performativa delle lingue cominciando con un'analisi storico-interculturale di questa pratica e passando dalla definizione di "performativa". In seguito, verrà spiegato come il teatro può essere utilizzato durante l'insegnamento della lingua e quali benefici può apportare, sia a livello linguistico che psicologico e sociale. In questa parte, prima verrà introdotto, in maniera

generale, il tema dell'apprendimento linguistico attraverso il teatro e, successivamente, verrà spiegato come esso possa implementare l'acquisizione del lessico e, allo stesso tempo, aiutare a superare l'ansia da prestazione nel parlare una lingua straniera davanti ad altre persone. In conclusione, l'attenzione verrà spostata sulla musica e sul relativo uso durante l'insegnamento della lingua e in contesti interculturali come una classe composta da migranti provenienti da tutto il mondo.

Nel terzo capitolo, invece, viene presentato un laboratorio basato su musica e teatro che mira a migliorare l'apprendimento della lingua e il dialogo interculturale con i migranti. In primo luogo, verranno descritte tutte le diverse attività che saranno suddivise in fasi, dando vita a un'organizzazione ben strutturata, ma che lascia anche molto spazio all'improvvisazione e a qualsiasi elemento di arricchimento che possa derivare dal background linguistico e culturale dei partecipanti. Ogni fase viene introdotta da uno schema esplicativo che riassume tutte le attività previste. In secondo luogo, viene spiegato perché questo laboratorio potrebbe favorire l'apprendimento della lingua italiana e il dialogo interculturale e quali aspetti potrebbe aiutare a migliorare. Questa proposta di laboratorio è stata creata dall'autore tenendo conto delle sue precedenti esperienze con la musica e il teatro, nonché delle osservazioni e degli appunti presi durante un laboratorio teatrale sulla comunicazione interculturale tenuto dalla professoressa Fiona Dalziel nel novembre 2022 e rivolto agli studenti internazionali dell'Università di Padova. Inoltre, la letteratura analizzata nei primi due capitoli è stata la principale fonte teorica per lo sviluppo di questo laboratorio. Anche se alcuni giochi e improvvisazioni faranno parte di questo laboratorio, il Process Drama verrà utilizzato come tecnica drammatica principale. Come spiegano Piazzoli e Tiozzo (2023), questo ha caratteristiche specifiche: la co-costruzione della storia tra insegnante e studenti; l'assenza di un pubblico esterno; gli studenti che agiscono dentro e fuori dai loro ruoli, il mantello dell'esperto (che modifica la differenza di ruoli tra insegnante e studenti) e, infine, la tecnica dell'insegnante in ruolo, in cui l'insegnante agisce come un personaggio della storia che interagisce con gli studenti.

In conclusione, è possibile affermare che l'apprendimento linguistico e il dialogo interculturale migliorano notevolmente quando la musica e il teatro vengono utilizzati

come strumenti pedagogici con migranti, rifugiati e richiedenti asilo, anche se la proposta laboratoriale rimane puramente teorica. Un passo successivo potrebbe consistere nel proporre e testare nella pratica il laboratorio in modo da poter raccogliere dati ed informazioni utili a comprovare questa tesi.