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‘My language is part of your country’

Creating a deeper sense of belonging through two-way language teaching in process drama/in-role drama

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Abstract

Youth disengagement is closely linked to current phenomena of (Islamic) radicalization in Western societies and beyond. Therefore, substantial funding is dedicated to ‘de-radicalization programs’ such as the ‘Aarhus Model’ within the Danish de-radicalization ‘Action Plan’ (2009–). Providing support for finishing school, housing and work to ‘would-be fighters’ in conflict zones of the Middle East offers an alternative to punitive approaches. Nonetheless, sustainable success in creating a sense of belonging in liberal democracies arguably needs to start earlier and avoid discriminatory assumptions like those seen in the term ‘de-radicalization’. The author proposes a strategic initiative in Applied Theatre. Based on Process Drama and In-Role-Drama, the initiative focuses on the two-way teaching of language(s) in the Drama classroom. It considers both the pragmatic need for one (or several) official language(s) to keep open the sophisticated channels of communication in modern liberal democracies, and the rich cultural and linguistic heritage that arrives in many Western societies from other parts of the world every day. Employability needs meet the need for reciprocal empathy and shared cultural acknowledgement. Avoiding the common vocabulary of deficiency (‘lack of language proficiency’, ‘need for cultural integration’) the article outlines the possible benefits and potential obstacles of this new approach.

1 Introduction

The following discussion will outline context and theoretical underpinnings of a possible future initiative at the cross-roads of Language and Drama teaching that aims to address the current problem of youth extremism in many Western societies by minimizing, at the same time, problems of stigmatization and short-term politicking that can be linked to the term ‘de-radicalization’. Far from proposing a complete design and definite institutional involvement, the article rather seeks to initiate and/or add to a rich discussion and encourage further suggestions. In the best sense of recreating the serious play in the rehearsal room, it hopes to offer a room for thoughts and convince other

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Drama and Language teachers to join efforts and rethink societal belonging in both challenging and exciting times of ever more globalizing societies in an increasingly complicated world of diversified models of life.

The article first gives a brief general context of 'de-radicalization' initiatives in Europe, continues by introducing more in depth structure, measures and theoretical grounding of the so-called 'Aarhus Model' as exemplary for an 'inclusive' approach to violent extremism and, subsequently, points to a dilemma that even less punitive, holistic programs often face. The last part of the discussion will offer an overview of some joint Language and Drama teaching approaches and discuss both their positive 'synergies' and possible setbacks when explicitly used in immigrant and refugee integration contexts. The article will end with a series of observations about how to avoid the discussed disempowering effects of initiatives thought to empower, and offer a draft outline of what could be called Process and In-Role Drama-based 'Two-Way' Language Teaching for fostering holistic societal integration.

2 'De-radicalization' and the reflux of 'foreign fighters'

'De-radicalization' has become a key word in terrorism prevention at least since the high hopes for political change in many Arab countries turned sour several years ago. Many, if not all, Western democracies suddenly envisioned the frightening prospect of so-called home-grown 'foreign fighters' (cf. Hegghammer 2011) in the thousands coming back from the Syrian Civil War (2011–) and other conflict zones in the Middle East and beyond: some of them disillusioned, others with plans to bring the conflict into their countries of origin and most, arguably, carrying the scars of harrowing war experiences back into their communities (Summerfield 2000; Ritchie et al. 2017). Not a new phenomenon at all – an estimate of 10,000 to 30,000 foreign fighters participated in "armed conflict in the Muslim world" between 1980 and 2010 (Hegghammer 2010/11: 53) – an EU Parliament briefing from 2016 urges that, "since the Arab Spring protests turned into a fully fledged civil war in Syria, the phenomenon has acquired an entirely new dimension" (EPRS Briefing 2016: 2); with about 5,000 out of 27,000 to 30,000 foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq alone originating from EU countries in 2015 (ibid.) and most of them enlisting with "jihadist groups, including ISIL/Da'esh and Jabhat al-Nusra, whose ideology is hostile towards Western democracies" (ibid. 3). Of those 5,000, an estimated 20% to 30% had returned home by the end of the same year (TSG Foreign Fighters 2015: 4; cf. Lindekilde et al. 2016: 869).[1] As the EU briefing goes on, approximately "one in nine of those who had gone to fight returned to

[1] This number includes about 1,200 'home-comers' to Austria (70 out of 300), Belgium (118/470), Denmark 62/125), France (250/1,700), Germany (200/760), the Netherlands (40/220), the United Kingdom (350/760) and Sweden (115/300) alone, with proportionally very high numbers returning to Denmark (49.6percnt) and the UK (46%) and very low numbers returning to France (14.7%) and the Netherlands (18.2%) (TSG Foreign Fighters 2015: 7-10).

perpetrate attacks in the West" (EPRS Briefing 2016: 3; cf. Hegghammer 2013: 7). While this number puts into question the simplistic approach of considering every foreign fighter a potential domestic terrorist, a clear "veteran effect" (ibid. 10) appears to emerge, as Thomas Hegghammer, Director of Terrorism Research at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI), points out in a recent study. Data from his 'Jihadi Plots in the West (JPD) Dataset', gathering information about terrorist attacks perpetrated between 1990 and 2010 (ibid. 2), suggests that plots with veteran participation are twice as 'effective' in terms of their 'lethality' as those perpetrated by far less battle-tested attackers.[2] Thus, the EU push to coordinate member state activities "regarding the prevention of radicalisation, the detection of travel for suspicious purposes, the criminal justice response, and the cooperation with third countries" (EPRS Briefing 2016: 1), intensified since 2015, seems comprehensible.

Number and variety of de-radicalization initiatives in the EU alone are vast, as the *Inventory of the best practices on de-radicalisation from the different Member states of the EU* (2014) shows. They include proactive, preventive and punitive measures spanning from programs that intensify existing immigration efforts such as "language promotion" (ibid. 5) and "familiarization training for religious representatives from Turkey" (ibid. 6) in Austria or initiatives "intended to strengthen collaboration with Muslim communities and to isolate, prevent and defeat violent extremism" (ibid. 54) such as PREVENT in the UK, through to up-dating legislation and improving law enforcement and border security in Bulgaria (ibid. 10). While many countries including France and Spain favour "a repressive approach" (EPRS Briefing 2016: 8), there are some others like Denmark that have opted very early on to rely mainly on 'inclusive soft measures' in order to avoid further damage by alienating marginalized groups and, thus, prevent further "polarising [of their] societies" (ibid.). The 'Aarhus Model' from Denmark is somehow the 'poster boy or girl' of soft measure driven de-radicalization initiatives (Braw 2014), also for its particularly productive theoretical approach that categorizes systematically a series of risk factors in the lead up to potential extremism.

3 The Danish national de-radicalization Action Plan (2009) and the 'Aarhus Model'

Although slightly preceding the Danish national Action Plan together with a similar initiative from Copenhagen, the 'Aarhus Model' should be considered in the context of the broad government initiative that set out, in 2009, to "prevent extremist views and radicalization among young people" (Kühle & Lindekilde 2010: 13), producing at once "scientifically sound" research to fill a lacuna

[2] Of 49 (46%) plotted attacks with veteran participation, 14 (58%) were executed and 8 (67%) were lethal; of 57 (54%) plotted attacks without veteran participation, 10 (42%) were executed and 4 (33%) were lethal (Hegghammer 2013: 11); Hegghammer himself asks for caution with regard to the data while he also emphasises that all data sets the JPD is based on are "well referenced and rarely disputed" (ibid. 2).

as for the reasons behind the current phenomenon of so-called 'radicalization' among European Muslims (ibid.) – strikingly high proportionally in a country of a sophisticated welfare system like Denmark (Neumann 2015). The model, established around 2007, can be described as a collaborative multi-agency intervention program mainly supported by Aarhus Municipality and the East Jutland Police (EC 2017). It benefits from almost forty years of "solid experience and know-how" in interdisciplinary collaboration for crime prevention between schools, social authorities and police (SSP) and is organized as one of many SSP programs that exist in all Danish municipalities (Bertelsen 2015: 242). External partners are the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs, the Danish Intelligence and Security Service (PET) and the University of Aarhus; namely the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences (Anti- and De-Radicalization Research Project) and other "experts in the fields of politics, sociology, psychology, acculturation and religion" (ibid. 242; cf. EC 2017). Furthermore, it collaborates closely with other similar Danish and European projects and is linked to the European Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN), as one of the leading academics involved in this initiative, Preben Bertelsen from the University of Aarhus, explains in an introduction to the 'Aarhus Model' from 2015.

While not at all disregarding hard, or punitive, measures (Bertelsen 2015: 241), the 'Aarhus Model' focuses on a sophisticated early prevention and exit program in order to "stop or redirect the process of violent radicalization" (ibid.). It is based on the notion of 'inclusion', defined by Bertelsen as "a social, cultural and societal practice about incorporating the diversity of different forms of life in a joint effort to form a community" (Bertelsen 2016: 16) and, thus, takes very seriously the institutional responsibility in modern liberal democracies to guarantee fundamental constitutional rights such as freedom of expression and political and religious activity (Bertelsen 2015: 241). This commitment necessarily includes the acceptance of extremist yet *non-violent* views and attitudes, which are, as Bertelsen points out, predominant in the great majority of radicalized movements Bertelsen (2016: 2).[3] Accordingly, the initiative is about "transform[ing] the personal, social, cultural and political motivations into legal modes of participation and citizenship" (Bertelsen 2015: 243), rather than primarily fighting extremism *per se* by turning every individual view into a non-offensive intellectual middle ground opinion. It focuses on the prevention and countering of *violent* extremism at the core of any *illegal* process of radicalization and is, therefore, in need of a set of sensitive, theoretically and scientifically grounded instruments to assess every individual case with regard to the best measures to adopt.

What are the measures of the 'Aarhus Model'? Main elements of the prevention program are the InfoHouse, a mentoring program, prevention workshops for youth, a parents network, and an ongoing dialogue between the Aarhus

[3] According to Bertelsen, this clearly includes many peaceful, legal and non-violent movements such as spiritual communities that "find their own non-violent and legal, but segregated, place in an open, democratic society" (2016: 2).

team, Aarhus Municipality and different Muslim communities, organizations and mosques. The InfoHouse, staffed by East Jutland Police, is a first contact point for any person worried about the potential *violent* radicalization of another individual. Often coming from "parents, teachers, youth club workers, outreach workers, social workers, and/or the police" (ibid.), this information is assessed based on further research, commonly in collaboration with a consulting interdisciplinary workgroup, and triggering specific anti-radicalization measures in case "risk factors for violent radicalization are identified" (ibid. 245). Contact to the person and parts of the individual's network is sought, the situation explained and alternative, *legal* "ways to find answers to questions of life, as well as alternative ways to resolve resentment and offence" (ibid. 243) are discussed. A critical part of this process is tailored mentoring by a team of ten specifically trained and supervised mentors of very diverse background with regard to age, gender, ethnicity, formal education, experience, political and religious knowledge and familiarity with different social and cultural environments in order to be "well-informed, interested and empathic sparring partner[s]" (ibid. 244) for their mentees. A network to empower parents of radicalized youth (of any kind) is an additional element of support.

For early prevention the Aarhus team has developed a series of two-hour workshops for primary and secondary school students. They inform about the danger of terrorism and the problem of violent radicalization. Using "short presentations, dialogues/discussions, exercises, games and role-play" (ibid. 244) they aim to help both teachers and students acknowledge in their peers "risk factors and markers of radicalization processes" (ibid. 245), on the one hand, and, on the other hand, they seek to raise awareness of "digital behaviour, prejudice, exclusion, citizenship and participation in social life, community and society" and, thus, foster resilience against a series of risk factors of radicalization (ibid. 244). Since 2013 the 'Aarhus Model' also offers a specific 'exit program' for homecoming foreign fighters that relies on many of the above measures and is only available for those who have not been involved in criminal acts (ibid. 245). Once a case is approved as feasible, a task force recommends a range of appropriate services, such as "employment/education, housing, psychological counselling/therapy and medical care" (ibid.), chooses members of the individual's social network that can lend support in the process as 'resource persons', and works out a "written exit-process cooperation agreement" together with the homecoming person (ibid.).

4 Life Psychology – A framework to detect risk factors of violent radicalism

As is very clear, this model is in need of a reliable mechanism able to identify risk factors that can turn non-violent extremism into its illegal violent form of radicalism which is, after Bertelsen, "[*a*]*n intense desire for*

and/or pursuit of a universal and comprehensive change in own and common life, socially, culturally, and/or societally, by violent means – *where the consideration for human coexistence is set aside*" (2016: 1; my inverted emphasis). This framework is offered by Life Psychology; a theory, and scientific discipline linked to the University of Aarhus, that integrates social, societal and personality psychology with social sciences (politics, sociology, law) and humanities (culture, religion, ethics) (Bertelsen 2015: 243). Core presumptions of this theory are – very roughly speaking – that "everybody aspires to a good-enough life" (ibid. 246) and every individual is "striving for agency in the own and common life" (ibid. 242). The attribute 'good-enough' points both to the lack of achievable perfection in life and the need for sufficient life skills in order to cope with everyday life's tasks (ibid. 246). The *impression of agency* can be lost for many reasons and lead to a "state of *non-flow* (experienced as stress or anxiety)" (Bertelsen 2016: 2; cf. Csikszentmihalyi 1990). 'Non-flow' can be experienced as 'frustrating' (when skills exceed possibilities, conditions, etc.) and as 'overwhelming' in any opposite situation (ibid. 6f), both leading to the impression that a "good-enough life embeddedness" (Bertelsen 2016: 4) is under threat. In other words, life is no longer experienced as meaningful, comprehensible and manageable (ibid.), and the *quest* to reestablish life embeddedness and, thus, agency is considered a fundamental human reaction rather than a deviation (ibid. 21). Therefore, as Bertelsen points out,

> [...] we should not search for the fundamental risk factors of extremism in something insane only found in a few abnormal individuals. The basic factors of extremism should be found in the universal human striving for a good enough life embeddedness, and may simply be a natural reaction to threats – regardless of how insane and dangerous the extreme (re-)action might be. (ibid. 3)

Whether individuals in this situation turn extreme or even opt for taking violent radical action, depends – if one follows the understandings of Life Psychology – on two sets of accumulative risk factors linked, again, to the so-called 'Basic Five' (ibid. 4) of intentional agency: volition (what one strives for or wants), ability (individual skills and knowledge), external possibilities and conditions (or the structural factors of the individual's existence), the social and relational conditions (or how the individual is 'being met') and the actual 'doing', i.e. "being in process of working on something with regard to realize one's life skills and handle one's life tasks" (ibid.). Set 1, the "basic factors", is "*based on the flow in the realization of universally human life competencies*" (ibid. 6) and includes ten factors that are linked to 'non-flow' situations with regard to a "close social network", the "framework for own interests" (or life task handling), "community participation", the ability to be "focused and engaged", to be "practical and pragmatic", to make "moral and normative" judgments, to be "aware of the surrounding world" and read its "cues", to be self-reflective, to experience "empathy" through "perspective-taking" and to the ability of navigating the surrounding world taking into account "important systems, rules and regulations" (ibid. 6-10). The second set, the "moderating factors", is a

taxonomy describing the personal "realization style" of the above "universally human life skills" which can – again roughly speaking – trigger violent extremist responses to a situation of acutely experienced non-flow or, to the contrary, work as *protective* factor in the above 'non-flow' situations (ibid. 11). These factors relate to the individual's "cognitive structures", the "dynamic level of energy" and the "general human personality style termed the mirroring/idealizing style regarding self-consolidation and the quest for belongingness" (ibid.). With regard to cognitive structures, the need for "cognitive closure" (i.e. for distinct and unequivocal explanations) is considered a mayor risk factor leading to mainly four 'basic cognitive styles' that *can* favour violent radical behaviour: "Ambiguity intolerance", the tendency to "[j]ump to conclusion", the extreme obsession with a single idea known as "[m]onomania" (ibid. 12) and "[f]undamentalism", or "a mindset based on mandatory truths" (ibid. 13). As for the 'dynamic style', "high energy level", "[e]xcitement-seeking" and "[j]ump to action" *can* lead to violent extremist action (ibid.). The personality or 'mirroring/idealizing' style is linked to identity creation through the individual's actions and the world's reactions to them in as much as one *mirrors* oneself in the world's reactions and can find and accept the *ideals*, or "contents and direction to life" (ibid. 14) by individually important others. In this context, Bertelsen speaks explicitly of two "disordered personal styles" favouring violent radicalization: firstly, an "extreme need of mirroring" potentially leading to megalomaniac omnipotent self-assertion and secondly, "an extreme need to belong" leading to "a very unrealistic idealization of others (or of a a cause)" (ibid.). Also here, the theory identifies three and five risk factors or preferred risky behaviours respectively for the personal mirroring and the personal idealizing styles: "Self-assertiveness", "[r]umination and grievance" and "[a]ggression and violence as the preferred response" (ibid. 15) for the former, and "'[d]ying to belong'", "[e]asy to mobilize" (ibid. 16), "[g]uilt and shame" (or felt obligation for action), "[s]elective recognition and identity simplification" (ibid. 17) and "aggression and violence as accepted cost for belongingness" (ibid. 18) for the latter.

5 Stigmatization, discourses of deficiency and de-radicalization initiatives

The 'Aarhus Model' has been chosen here to exemplarily introduce more in depth current 'de-radicalization' initiatives for offering a particularly sound, sensible and successful approach, practically and theoretically, to one of the crucial endeavours of modern liberal democracies: to guarantee the highest possible physical (and mental) integrity within the maximum of political (and religious) freedom. It shows clearly a commitment to filling the lacuna of a scientifically grounded taxonomy (Lindekilde 2012: 386) that helps to describe and detect (violent) extremist behaviour comprehensively and, as much as possible, universally, at the same time as it points to a range of specific levers, or

areas where prevention most likely will have maximum impact.[4] Additionally, it is a good example of the genuine dilemma most, if not all, similar initiatives are facing. While aiming for greater societal participation and, ultimately, fighting against discrimination, also this model continues to be inscribed in common discourses of deficiency (Rougeaux et al. 2014) and, thus, runs the risk to stigmatize rather than break down borders. In other words, who *needs to be de-radicalized* is considered, or labelled, as suffering from a lack of democratic understanding and/or integrity for a series of factors linked to both his or her personality *and* upbringing. What is more, linking this deficiency to particular ethnic and religious groups, simply for presupposing any set of shared predispositions, will increase most likely unwanted disempowering effects of initiatives and measures that genuinely seek to empower members of those groups, as I have discussed in depth elsewhere (cf. Bastian 2016).

Still reasonable to a certain extent where potential violent extremism has been detected, this discourse can become highly problematic in prevention settings for school children where the recognition of risk factors is part of the training program (Bertelsen 2015: 244). This danger, while still not studied enough (START 2016: 12), has been emphasised by many researchers and affected members of what could be called 'focus communities' (Kühle & Lindekilde 2010: 126-128). The 'Aarhus Model' is not blind to this danger though; as early as in 2012, Lasse Lindekilde from the University of Aarhus emphasized the need in the Danish Action Plan to separate, rather than integrate, measures that specifically focus on counter-radicalization and those which generally foster community integration and participative citizenship, since, "despite the good intentions[,] the aim to counter discrimination and foster equal opportunities for all is by some end target groups perceived as problematic when it is pursued as a part of a counter-radicalisation strategy" (Lindekilde 2012: 399).

In the following part of this discussion, I will therefore outline a potentially very productive initiative in the area of combined Language and Drama Teaching which aims to avoid, or at least minimize, those disempowering effects while, at the same time, neither ignoring the potential risks of radicalization through systemic youth disengagement, nor denying the many legitimate conflicts and strong emotions, including fear and anger, that accompany processes of change such as those caused by heightened immigration in times of accelerating globalization. Language development is not only paramount for childrens' overall development but has been identified repeatedly as a core factor in identity formation and, thus, as particularly decisive for youth disengagement and/or societal success of bilingual (or plurilingual) students (cf. Cummins 2001: 76-78; Azevedo 2010). Drama pedagogies have developed over the years a range of techniques such as Process Drama and In-Role Drama that

[4] While measuring success in this area appears to be a problem still to be resolved (Lindekilde 2012: 385f; cf. START 2016: 11f), an early external review process of implementation and effectiveness states that "there are various reasons to believe the strategy is being implemented soundly, on schedule, and is providing encouraging results" (Vidino & Brandon 2012: 57; cf. COWI 2011).

focus particularly on empowering the students' own voice and have proven particularly successful in forstering identity and resilience in young people that are prone to experience discrimination (cf. Nelson 2011). As will be seen, the proposal thus takes up the call by Bertelsen himself to "address the factors of exclusion and other threats to fundamental life embeddedness" (2015: 251) not only through the lens of individual *agency* but as well from a *structural* point of view. Accordingly, the proposed initiative aims to induce young people, through a more generalized approach, to developing resilience against a diverse range of violent extremisms by "strengthening, developing, informing and forming life skills – through [...] civic formation in school, (age adequate) existential conversations and deliberative community building [...]" (Bertelsen 2016: 19), seen by Bertelsen as essential for sustainably opposing youth disengagement and, thus, violent radicalization in the West and beyond.

6 Language Teaching and Process Drama/In-Role Drama

Language and Drama Education have been discussed together for many years (Kao & O'Neill 1998: 490). Language is a genuinely embodied human activity and few theatre productions can dispense entirely with language. Additionally, an important focus has been set in recent years to the opportunity of fostering particularly migrant students' self-esteem through the promotion of first languages other than English in Drama classes within Anglophonic educational systems (cf. Lazarus 2012: 132ff; Donelan 2002). This effect, again, is most likely to do with the generally positive impact of Drama Education on the building of strong communities, composed by self-confident and resilient individuals, that is described in literature (cf. Cahill 2002; Nelson 2011). The initiative of Process and In-Role Drama-based 'Two-Way' Language teaching I propose here is informed by the experience from existing programs that benefit from linking methodologies in Language and Drama teaching and also seeks to learn from some drawbacks that have recently been described in literature (cf. Rousseau et al. 2012). A brief introduction to both advantages and potential risks will set the context for my final draft proposal at the end of this discussion.

For the English-speaking context, it is possible to distinguish between two main approaches with regard to Language Education through Drama: firstly, the acquisition of foreign languages by means of drama practice and secondly, the use of theatrical techniques in order to improve English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) learners' engagement and thus language skill performance (Stinson & Winston 2011). As Stinson and Winston (ibid.) observe, reasons for discussing the synergetic effects of thinking Language and Drama Education together are provided by "several factors drama and language hold in common: the influence of context on communication; the socially constructed nature of both language and drama; and the importance of active participation" (ibid. 479). Being amongst the most influential approaches in language acquisition, both Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the related Cooperative Learning (CL) approach are based on the understanding

that social interaction and meaningful interpersonal exchange are seminal for successful language learning (Larsen-Freeman & Andersen 2011; Jacobs & Goh 2007). This genuine need for public (language) practice (Krashen 1981), which is necessarily embodied (Gilbert & Lo 2007), is – as much as (drama/theatre) performance is – reliant on a) the interpretation and application of pre-existing texts or structures, b) spontaneous, or unplanned performative interactions and c) a whole range of performative skills related to "vocal and physical dexterity" (Stinson & Winston 2011: 481).

From a (language) performance and (skill acquisition) result-oriented perspective, core arguments in literature that support the use of drama techniques in language teaching include the following:[5] an improvement in language facilitating scaffolding through more interactive questioning than in traditional language classrooms and by "enabl[ing] teachers to bring different social contexts, relationships, and registers into an otherwise rather fixed classroom discourse setting" (Kao et al. 2011: 511); the increase of experiences of relevance and authenticity in language performance through the creation of "*identity texts*", the provision of "room for *situated practice*" and "multimodal representations of meaning", i.e. outcomes that include written and oral language as much as visual, audio, tactile, gestural and spatial representations (Ntelioglou 2011: 596-598; cf. Cummins 2006); the reduction of language anxiety through the use of an affective space (Piazzoli 2011: 570); the support of intercultural language learning through the kinaesthetic elements in the drama classroom (Rothwell 2011: 591); the general stimulation of a greater variety in styles and levels of oral and written language use and the balancing of "informational, expressive, and interactional modes of language" (Wagner 1998: 35) which, in the end, is supported by a wealth of situations in the drama classroom that provide manifold opportunities both for the *use of language* in a wider than average variety of purposes and thus language registers and genres, and for an *understanding of language* as a powerful tool that enables the user to "act upon" rather than "be acted upon" (Wilkinson 1988: 12).

Whilst Stinson and Winston (2011) support the claim of many researchers in the field and observe that further long-term studies, considering "teaching-learning processes, contextual factors and the complexities that are embedded within local contexts" (ibid. 485f), are needed, the evidence of the benefits of linking drama practice to language learning already appears rather strong and manifold. What is not answered so far is why, and in what way, the explicit integration of Language Learning into the Drama classroom can foster inclusion, self-esteem and, last but not least, help all students independently of their background to better understand the complexities of modern societies in a globalizing world and, thus, prevent any student from disengaging with society by looking for simplistic answers in any kind of violent extremism. It is particularly important to address this question in view of strong critique against instrumentalizing Drama Education for other aims than aesthetic education and thus "relegating theatre craft, acting and study of plays to a minor or non-existent role" (Fleming 1998: 147). This argument has often been raised

and discussed comprehensively (Anderson 2012) and is valid in a situation where the Arts, all too often, have to prove their relevance alone against the parameters of cost-benefit analyses (Flew 2012: 11). I still sustain, with others, that the focus of the disciplines needs to be widened rather than constrained within an educational system that explicitly supports interdisciplinary learning as a strategy of student engagement and inclusion (Hyde 2014). Moreover, 'real life issues' and the critical engagement with the burning questions of society have always been an intrinsic part of theatrical creation, at least in the Western tradition. Therefore, addressing those issues by, simultaneously, learning a craft in the more specific sense (how to do theatre in all its many ways and techniques) and practicing a wide range of life skills (including several languages and the use of body and voice, emotion and reason) in general that help acquire resilience in an increasingly complicated world of diversified models of life (cf. Fraser 2009) does not seem to reduce the Drama classroom to a 'sidekick' of short sighted politicking. It rather seems to have the potential to further enrich the experience in the same classroom by the dimension of direct and relevant socio-cultural dialogue in an exciting (and sometimes exhausting) playful laboratory of life that the rehearsal room has always been.

The above idea of understanding language as a tool of individual empowerment in a social environment, as advocated by Wilkinson, links directly to a series of approaches in Drama education of which I will introduce briefly two as particularly, although not exclusively, suited for the proposed project and often used in language learning contexts: Process Drama and In-role Drama (cf. Dunn et al. 2012; Nelson 2011; Lazarus 2012). Nelson (2011), partly relying on Neelands and Goode's (1990) definition, observes that the term Process Drama "refers to drama work that utilizes a variety of drama and theatre conventions, in which 'the conventions selected are mainly concerned with the processes of theatre as a means of developing understanding about both human experience and theatre itself'" (Nelson 2011: 81). The term In-Role Drama "refers to work in which students in role as experts, stakeholders or problem-solvers are confronted with a real or fictitious problem and are asked to question, debate, discuss, consider, and come to a resolution of that problem" (ibid. 81f).[6] Working with both approaches in combination has been considered by many scholars and educators a powerful strategy to encourage and facilitate the formation of a strong sense of community, challenge the status-quo in society, including the confinement of its individuals to particular roles, and with this the breaking out from seemingly pre-determined power-relationships (ibid. 82f). Power-relationships are particularly complex in multi-cultural – i.e. the great majority of all – societies, and no simple assumptions about the links between power, on the one hand, and race, ethnic identity, language and other related factors, on the other hand, should be made. Yet raising these issues in an environment that cherishes critical thinking and acknowledges equality without demanding sameness (Arber 2005: 648f) by supporting a process of

[6] In-Role Drama is closely linked to Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert approach to teaching and learning (cf. Heathcote & Bolton1994).

becoming (and *questioning*) rather than one of *cementing* identities, is one of the key purposes that arguably should be taken into account by any teacher in the context of educating responsible citizens within liberal democracies.

Including into the Drama classroom the rich linguistic (and cultural) heritage *in the making* many liberal democracies have to offer, appears to be able to further strengthen those empowering effects that the drama classroom can provide. This at least suggests research by Rousseau et al. (2012) who have studied the impact of "school-based intervention integrating drama and language awareness" (ibid. 187) in a 2009–2010 pilot project that was addressing the learning difficulties of similarly 'underschooled' immigrant and refugee students in two high school classes in a socio-economically "underprivileged neighbourhood" (ibid.) in Montreal, Canada. As one of the positive outcomes the authors point out that the integration of language and drama in a *plurilingual classroom*, cherishing linguistic diversity to support plurilingual communicative repertoires, helped most students against feeling "doubly rejected" (ibid.), i.e. discriminated for being part of both a stigmatized student group with learning difficulties and a cultural minority seen as socio-culturally disadvantaged. While reaching more complex findings overall, the authors come to the conclusion that "[t]he acknowledgement of diverse languages and identities can help restore feelings of belonging" (ibid.). This observation is somehow in line with recent studies on 'own-language use' in foreign language learning that show that teachers using, at times, the own language of the learners are often perceived as showing more empathy and solidarity with their students (Hall & Cook 2012: 17; Cummins et al. 2006: 25). Interestingly, however, the positive impact of plurilingual theatre intervention is not so clear in a more comprehensive follow-up study by Rousseau et al. (2014) two years later, including 477 participants in a three part randomized trial of a school-based theatre intervention, a focused tutoring intervention and a control group solely following the usual curriculum. Findings show, again very roughly, that while theatre intervention was "not associated with a greater reduction in self-reported impairment and symptoms in youth", a "reinforcement of feelings of exclusion" and an exacerbation of "perception[s] of dysfunction" could be found in second generation immigrant youth participating in the trial (ibid. 8). Being unexpected at first sight, the authors' search for reasons points directly to Lindekilde's above warning against blending explicit measures of de-radicalization with other programs that intend to foster general youth engagement with society and equal opportunities for all. While previous theatre interventions by Rousseau et al. (2007; 2012) had been done entirely with recently arrived students – and seemed to work as a support for regaining agency in a new environment – the more recent trial including students with a range of different 'immigrant biographies' seems to support the notion of a contrary effect concerning difficulties of a more "chronic nature" (Rousseau et al. 2014: 8). This effect *might* reinforce rather than reduce feelings of exclusion and disaffection by making students even more aware of their limitations and frustrations in a short-term program that does not offer enough long-term

support to overcome them.

7 Two-Way Language Teaching through Process Drama/In-Role Drama – A draft proposal

The apparent need for long-term initiatives leads to the concluding draft proposal for a strategic intervention at the cross-roads of Language and Drama teaching that aims to create a deeper sense of belonging, or 'pluri-integration' beyond short-term societal interests of de-radicalization. Far from offering yet a complete program, let alone fully developed modules ready to apply in any given Drama classroom the proposal rather wishes to support a lively discussion among Drama and Language teachers who also feel the need to rethink societal belonging in particularly challenging and/or exciting times and who can imagine to join efforts in this area. Based on the above findings showing that short-term programs run the risk of reinforcing rather than tackling feelings of exclusion, this strategic intervention is best envisioned as an ongoing generalized initiative linked to institutions of the widest possible impact; in the best of all cases as a core activity in all primary and secondary schools of a given country. While this seems much to ask – given the complexity and structural inertia of most national systems of education – and possibly rather centralistic, the opposite is intended here: two-way language teaching in the Drama classroom should be seen as a typical 'down-up' initiative where teachers use their daily experience to develop practices that are tailored to the needs of their particular schools. Only winning over more teachers over time will create the necessary momentum and, hopefully, as well bring supportive funding to further gather and spread existing knowledge and practices. There are certainly many answers to the multifarious questions of how to integrate Drama and Language learning in order to both foster a deeper sense of belonging and negotiate how society could and should change in order to minimize youth disengagement. In this context, the least complicated question might be how to integrate the teaching of any majority (or national) language into the Drama classroom. How to integrate the wealth of other languages, however, so that the *second direction* of language teaching does not become a merely tokenistic exercise seems more challenging, although crucial in order to succeed. This is more so since a number of research has clearly shown the importance of both consolidated proficiency and conceptual foundation in L1 for bilingual students to succeed academically and, thus, prevent a series of discriminatory and disengaging effects mayority language-centred teaching can have (cf. Cummins 2001: 76-78).

Therefore, 'two-way' language teaching would best be seen as a metaphor for ongoing negotiation and awareness practice linked to language as a central hinge between socio-cultural elements of identity formation and socio-economic aspects of skills training, both political and associated with manifold debates in current liberal democracies. By defining each involved Drama classroom

as a place of change, including linguistic *ex*-change, where not only the need to develop a common language (in every sense) is acted out, but also the dynamic character of any language placed among a rich ecology of other languages of the world is experienced, the initiative hopes to turn nation building into a tangible enterprise where the complexity of creating something new is lived every time again – moving away from simplistic instrumentalist ideas of the need to integrate and be integrated into something already given. Recent approaches to plurilingual education such as the European concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) will be as useful for further development of this initiative as will be the Life Psychology model in order to elaborate a series of age-appropriate topics, targets, modules, etc. that can create a critical loyalty towards the fundamental values of liberal democracy and, thus, foster resilience against searching for too simplistic solutions to very complex problems. This, in the end, is my idea of an inclusive, holistic and sustainable 'vaccine' against extremism of any sort. In the case of Australia[7] (and other countries with citizens of Indigenous descent) – as I would like to point out in particular – it would also open the place (much to the contrary of other initiatives) for Indigenous citizens who – roughly speaking – never emigrated anywhere and still feel (and are!) excluded in many instances.

There are many technicalities and in-depth planning issues yet to be resolved. Equally, I would like to caution against excessive hopes: classrooms are 'messy' environments and politics in education are as well. Student motivation in the Drama classroom will be an issue, as often; language rejection in second-generation immigrants is a common phenomenon and insensitive 'cultural voyeurism' needs to be addressed as much as simplistic ideas about culture and cultural expertise in order to make this a success. Another problem *can* be widespread monolingualism amongst the teacher population in some countries, and some politicians might feel a bit uncomfortable with abolishing the idea of 'something given' as 'nation'. Nonetheless, I believe that this project is worth trying and invite to dynamic debate in its most critical sense.[8]

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[7] Australia has been the author's place of residency for the last eleven years.

[8] A first phase of development is planned in collaboration with several schools in Germany. It aims to create an internet platform as a source of material (e.g. modules based on the above propositions and findings, linking Drama and Language pedagogies with youth radicalization research) and as a forum for ongoing exchange between teachers and other researchers. First outcomes will be presented in a future article.The author invites interested teachers from other schools internationally to liaise with the project stakeholders and/or become part of the project.

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