

Article 2

PROCESS DRAMA AND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE TEACHING: REFLECTIONS ON THE DANTE ALIGHIERI IMMERSION WEEKENDS

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Abstract

This article considers process drama as a medium for teaching additional languages (AL). The Immersion Weekend is an intensive workshop of Italian organised by the Dante Alighieri Society. Traditionally, it featured a themed workshop where students created and performed theatre sketches. In 2008 and in 2009, I was asked to redesign the format of this event, using process drama to train the ten teaching staff and facilitate the workshop with 50 students. In this article, I reflect on the experience of training, designing and facilitating the dramas. I analyse the strengths and weaknesses of each workshop and reflect on three key features of AL process drama: the importance of an educational focus with intercultural potential, the value of a visual pre-text and process vs product-oriented language. In describing these issues, I reflect on the needs of AL teachers new to process drama, in terms of teacher training and support. My reflections point to the importance of the artistry of drama teaching in order to embrace the medium.

Abstract

Questo articolo prende in considerazione il *process drama* per l'insegnamento delle lingue straniere (LS). Il Weekend d'Immersione è un laboratorio intensivo di Italiano (LS) organizzato dalla Società Dante Alighieri di Brisbane. In passato questo evento prevedeva un laboratorio a tema, dove gli studenti creavano e recitavano delle scene teatrali. Nel 2008 e nel 2009 mi è stato chiesto di ri-creare questo evento, usando la pedagogia teatrale *process drama* per formare 10 insegnanti e facilitare il laboratorio con 50 studenti. In questo articolo rifletto sull'esperienza di formazione, programmazione e gestione dei laboratori. Analizzo le caratteristiche dei due laboratori, riflettendo su tre punti fondamentali del *process drama* applicato alla glottodidattica: l'importanza di un obiettivo didattico interculturale, i vantaggi di un canovaccio (pre-testo) visivo e la differenza fra lingua-processo e lingua-prodotto. Nell'affrontare queste problematiche, considero i bisogni di formazione di docenti interessati al *process drama* nell'ambito della glottodidattica. Le mie riflessioni sottolineano l'importanza dell'arte di insegnare teatro per poter acquisire questa pedagogia.

Biography

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Biografia

Erika C. Piazzoli è iscritta ad un dottorato di ricerca alla *Griffith University*; l'argomento della sua tesi è il Teatro Didattico ed in particolare la dimensione estetica nella pedagogia teatrale *process drama* per l'insegnamento delle lingue straniere. Erika è di nazionalità italiana e lavora presso la *Griffith University* dove insegna arte drammatica (Facoltà di Teatro Didattico) e Italiano LS (Facoltà di Lingue).

PROCESS DRAMA AND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE TEACHING: REFLECTIONS ON THE DANTE ALIGHIERI IMMERSION WEEKENDS

Introduction

The Immersion Weekend is an annual event that has been held at the Dante Alighieri Society in Brisbane since 1985. It consists of a two-day intensive language workshop for students of Italian at all levels, from beginner to advanced, conducted solely in the target language. Traditionally, the event is based on a theme that changes every year and culminates in a final performance, typically short sketches. In 2008, the Dante Alighieri director complained that too much emphasis had been placed on the final performances, with a tendency to focus on blocking and memorising lines, as opposed to spontaneous communication in the target language. She called for more spontaneity in language production.

This divergence between *product* and *process* stems from a long tradition in additional language (AL) learning, which identifies drama with performance. In this regard, Kao and O'Neill (1998) conceptualised the different types of drama approach taken to language learning on a continuum: on the one end they placed 'scripted role-plays' and on the other they positioned process drama (1998: 6). Over the last decade, research has indicated that process drama can offer stronger learning experiences than product-oriented practices because it can enhance language learning by generating an authentic desire to communicate (Araki-Metcalf 2008; Kao and O'Neill 1998; Marschke 1994; Stinson and Freebody 2006; Stinson 2008).

Being in my first semester of postgraduate studies in Applied Theatre, I volunteered to redesign the Immersion Weekend (IW) event using process drama. This entailed designing a fifteen-hour workshop for 45 adult students of Italian, running a demonstration for the twelve school staff (unfamiliar to drama teaching) and supporting the team to facilitate the workshop on the two-day event. As an additional language teacher with limited experience in planning extended process drama, this was my first real experience of designing and facilitating such an extensive event. I therefore felt hesitant about leading the event; however, with the assistance of my supervisor the event was successful and left students and staff enthusiastic about the possibilities offered by process drama.

Following that positive experience, the following year I again was asked to design and run a process drama for the IW. This time I felt more confident, as I had gained additional practical experience in designing and facilitating process dramas in an AL context. However, to my surprise, feedback from students and teachers suggested that the 2009 workshop did not run as well as the first offering the previous year. This article examines the reasons behind this discrepancy, illustrating the different challenges I encountered as my understanding of dramatic processes increased. In comparing the 2008 and 2009 IW dramas, I reflect on the basic features of process drama for AL learning, and on the needs of AL teachers new to process drama pedagogy.

Immersion Weekend 2008: 'La Piazza'

The theme for the 2008 Immersion Weekend was 'La Piazza'. The Dante Alighieri School endeavoured to re-create an experience of a typical Italian piazza, engaging 45 students of Italian (AL) in a full immersion of the target language. Students ranged from beginner to advanced level of proficiency, with the majority being intermediate to advanced speakers. Learners were divided into three multi-level groups, each supported by two teachers. During an initial teachers' meeting to discuss the event, we brainstormed the Italian piazza as a concept, suggesting that it evoked the Italian values of a sense of community, rich cultural heritage and intense social life. Such an educational objective worked well, as it had potential for intercultural growth. The intercultural dimension is an essential component of contemporary AL teaching methodologies, which promote meta-reflection on the target culture, as well as on students' own culture and on how this mediates intercultural perceptions. This process is considered essential to current AL learning discourse, which positions intercultural reflection as an essential component of learning a foreign language (Scarino and Liddicoat 2009).

The piazza theme also guided my choice of pre-text: given that the workshop was to be attended by a different range of speakers, I decided to use a *visual* pre-text to ensure it would have a strong impact on all participants, regardless of proficiency. As O'Neill (1995) points out, the effectiveness of a pre-text depends on its essential simplicity, minimal character and implications for action. These were my

guidelines as I searched through numerous photos of Italian squares. Eventually, I selected a photo (below) of the central square of Grosseto, Tuscany.



Figure 1: pre-text for 'La Piazza' process drama

The picture was successful in plunging participants into the dramatic context, but lacked the 'implication of action' – the intrinsic tension that launches the dramatic world. O'Neill also observes that a pre-text must be sufficiently distorted or reworked to become new (1995: 39). In line with her recommendation, I reworked the photograph, super-imposing an abandoned easel with an unfinished painting on it. The easel, and the whereabouts of the artist, became the focal point of the drama.

I decided it would be interesting to start the drama with the teacher in role as the street artist, Marcella, an eccentric woman who had worked in the square all her life and who had *never*, before that day, left her easel unattended. Participants, who had explored questions regarding her possible whereabouts through tableaux, had a chance to confront her and slowly tackle her evasive answers to find out just *what* had pushed her to leave her work station. Marcella hinted at an alarming piece of information she overheard from two foreign businessmen. As the future of the piazza was under threat, she felt the need to advise her cousin, who worked for the Mayor in the City Council. Participants, in role as citizens of Grosseto, were thus invited to re-create the very moment when Marcella overheard the information. Through the 'gossip mill' convention, citizens found out that the piazza was going to be sold to a foreign client and spent the rest of the day working on the ritual of a protest, preparing slogans, banners and advertising materials to prevent the sale. An official letter of complaint was written and a petition was signed across the three groups. This marked the end of the first day of the workshop. As participants focused on the following day's protest (including the possibility of stopping the contract), the tension was increased. The stakes were high – as citizens, they knew they would lose their jobs if the piazza were sold.

On the next day, we began by exploring the possible dreams that the Mayor might have had the previous night. Next, we carried out the ritual of the protest. Over 50 protesters marched from outside the school building into the hall, holding banners and chanting slogans. Once we reached an established point, the march stopped but the chanting kept going, calling out for the Mayor. Eventually the Mayor (teacher in role) arrived, looking apologetic and frightened by the impetus of the protest. The petition was formally presented amidst roars of complaints. After tense moments of hesitation, the Mayor was persuaded to

cancel the deal. Citizens responded with an ovation when the Mayor tore up the contract in front of the crowd, a symbolic gesture that was understood by all – regardless of language proficiency. The power of the symbolism of this gesture was overwhelming to experience. The workshop ended with in-role writing and a reflection on the socio-cultural value of the piazza in the Italian culture.

During my observations, it occurred to me that the highest amount of tension of the entire workshop had been the calling out for the Mayor during the protest, when the march had stopped but the chanting continued, followed by the tearing up of the contract. Coincidentally, the symbolism of tearing the contract was also the catharsis of the final performance. Thus the feelings of frustration and anger caused by the idea of commercial development destroying cultural heritage were replaced by feelings of fulfilment as the people's voices had been heard by the local authorities.

The final performance – traditionally an important moment of the IW, when the groups presented their work to community members and guests – was a collective reconstruction of the process drama episodes. As opposed to the previous years, where each group had worked on a individual performance, this year the IW participants had engaged in a committed effort with language focussed on process, rather than product.

Teachers' Preparation Workshop

My challenge when illustrating the episodes described above to the staff, a few weeks prior to the IW, had been to introduce the process drama strategies, unfamiliar to all twelve teachers, in an efficient, straightforward way in the unrealistic timeframe of two hours. I was aware that there was not enough time to discuss the foundations of process drama theory in depth, so I opted for an experiential approach. In discussing the 'Flying Drama' school project, Prior (2005) – who also trained classroom teachers in process drama – suggested that an experiential process had been vital to gain a rapid understanding and application of the medium. I decided to take the teachers themselves through a shorter version of the workshop, with a focus on meta-analysis on AL learning.

In hindsight, during the preparation workshop I failed to point towards the aesthetic dimension of the art form, presenting process drama as an alternative approach that could be mastered in a relatively short time by any AL practitioner. As McCaslin (2005) has argued, the aesthetic is the most important element in teaching drama, and this ought to be made clear from the very beginning. However, my limited experience in drama teaching, coupled with an overwhelming passion to improve the IW format, drove me to believe that I could 'train' my colleagues within the unrealistic timeframe of two hours. This meant that in the teachers' preparation workshop I had to overlook some of the cornerstones of the pedagogy – for example, an understanding of the elements of dramatic form, the art of questioning, reflection in action and the need for teacher and students to become co-artists in the process.

It was this last aspect, I believe, that presented some controversy among teachers' practice. For example, in one of the groups two citizens were in favour of the sale of the piazza. This was not anticipated in the existing drama structure. Teachers from that group strongly objected to this idea, complaining about the 'misconduct' of their students, and redirecting them into the original idea of opposing the sale of the piazza, as per lesson plan. In effect, as I led the teacher preparation workshop, I did not explicitly mention the role of students as co-artists in the creation process. Following this, the drama structure worked well in the limited timeframe, but sticking too tightly to the lesson plan prevented students from exploring the material in their own ways (O'Neill and Lambert, 1982). This incident and other similar ones helped me to realise that my colleagues needed more support in facilitating drama, which provided the basis for the 2009 teachers' preparation workshop.

Immersion Weekend 2009: 'The Time Machine'

After the positive experience of 'La Piazza', I was again asked the following year to develop a process drama for the Immersion Weekend, inspired by the 2009 theme, 'Science and Technology'. The teaching staff decided to have a drama based on the idea of 'The Time Machine'. This is the first point of difference between the 2008 and 2009 IWs: the first process drama ('La Piazza') held an intrinsic intercultural focus, evoking socio-cultural values attached to the Italian piazza; by contrast, 'The Time Machine' theme did not contain a hook for intercultural discussion. Nevertheless, it was a playful drama with scope for dramatic exploration.

On the day of the event, the pre-text was introduced: the website of the Museum of Science and Technology in Milan (www.museoscienza.org). The website was projected on to the wall, with the

facilitator navigating through the areas of the museum, installations, exhibitions, and so on. The teacher outlined the history of the museum and allowed students time to familiarise themselves with its location, structure and function. This phase, I believe, marked another flaw in the 2009 IW: the pre-text was not *visual* but was textual – and hence less suitable for beginner to intermediate AL speakers. The textual information might have been too technical for some learners, and it was not possible to translate and/or explain the full content of the website in class. In addition, this pre-text did not hold intrinsic dramatic tension; it did not 'bind the group together in anticipation' (O'Neill 1995: 20) like the piazza illustration did. The weaker pre-text could account for a student's comment that in the 2009 IW 'there was little scenario compared with last year; no intrigue, no mystery, no passion'. Perhaps this comment, from a student who had been an enthusiastic leader of the piazza protest the previous year, could be traced back to the lack of tension in the pre-text.

In other words, the 2009 pre-text *introduced*, but did not *launch*, the dramatic world. This difference is subtle and can be grounded in the discrepancy between drama and AL teaching methodologies. The AL teacher often begins a foreign language lesson with a 'stimulus', referred to as 'the motivation phase' (Balboni 1994). In AL methodology, the stimulus provides an initial platform for discussion and a hook for a grammar topic to be made during the lesson. The *stimulus* (a photo, a song, the scene from a film, an article) serves to introduce a topic, but does not necessarily hold dramatic tension. Its function is limited to providing an introduction to an educational topic. The *pre-text*, on the other hand, launches the dramatic world and needs to effectively tie the sequence of episodes together. When designing the 2009 process drama, I was necessarily wearing two hats (language and drama teacher), and I overlooked the profound but subtle difference between stimulus and pre-text.

In the following phase, participants were asked to imagine being professors with expertise in a particular field of knowledge and committee members of the museum. They were handed role cards to be filled out. Once all the professors had introduced themselves to each other, I took on the role of the president of the committee and welcomed them to our meeting. Although my role as chair of the commission was higher in status than the others, I intuitively adjusted to balance this power relationship by assuming an insecure personality – someone who constantly needed their approval. Through this subtle adjustment, I was able to chair the meeting but, in essence, give the professors full decision-making power. This is what happened in my class; I am not sure how the other teachers handled their role in terms of power dynamics, but I suspect they held on to the higher status to retain control. I opened the meeting to announce that, in a last-minute arrangement, a famous senator was going to visit our museum the next day. The senator was considering donating a lump sum to the museum. This contained inherent tension as I reminded them that our museum relied on this donation to keep running.

The meeting was interrupted by an unexpected intruder (second teacher in role), the cleaner of the museum. As a layman with an interest in science, the cleaner wanted to share his exciting scientific discovery with the experts. He had found a functioning time machine and wanted the committee to buy it. Flooded by the tension of surprise, professors interacted with the cleaner with suspicion and growing curiosity. Later, the tension of mystery kept them focused on the task as they verified the authenticity of what the cleaner claimed to be the authentic drawings of Leonardo Da Vinci.

In the next phase, they 'tested' the time machine, representing their time travels through tableaux. This was the core of the drama, which was unique to each class. The outcome of the time travels was to be negotiated by the participants, focusing the tableaux with the help of teachers. My group, for example, decided to travel to the library of Alexandria before the great fire destroyed it, in order to rescue Euripides' and Aristotle's manuscripts. Out of role, I helped the students to frame their choice: they decided to travel to 46 BC in the fifth day of celebration, five minutes before the fire was lit. We spent the rest of the day researching encyclopaedias for information on this topic, drafting a floor plan of the library and developing an action plan to defy the guards. The following day, we recapitulated our findings and undertook the journey by developing a ritual to use the time machine, improvising the library expedition and then, finally, sculpting three tableaux. In this sense, the 2009 process drama was less structured than it had been the previous year, as the central part of the drama was not prescribed episode by episode, but rather was to be focused by the teachers' questioning and the groups' research. This, I believe, was the main weakness in the 2009 IW: while I planned a more flexible structure which mirrored my own evolution as a drama teacher, it was harder for the other teachers to follow.

In fact, during this phase a number of students from the other groups disengaged, not seeing a clear focus in the work. Teachers also panicked, complaining that the time allocated for this episode was too

long and too unstructured. Untrained for engaging in reflection-in-action, the teachers relied on me to reflect on their group's choices, often running out of their classrooms to ask for support. I realise that reflection-in-action, the cornerstone of effective drama teaching (O'Mara 1999), is not a straightforward practice in which to engage for an inexperienced drama teacher. I only managed to reflect-in-action in my own practice after several experiences as a process drama leader. However, it was challenging for me to assume the responsibility of *their* reflection in action, given that I was not aware of the specific context of their group. This state of affairs might account for a teacher's comment, stating that her drama was 'full of gaps where students were unsure of what was happening', compared with the comment made by the teacher in my group, who stated that 'everything was structured as a continuous whole'. Once again, the two comments point to the opposite ends of Kao and O'Neill's (1998) continuum.

For the final performance event, all groups gathered in the hall as the senator (school director in role) arrived at the museum. The three teams of professors were meant to share their time travel adventures by reproducing the tableaux they had prepared earlier. There was, however, a marked difference between the students in my group, who re-created the three tableaux vivants, and those in the other two groups, who presented short scripted scenes. For example, my group presented three moments of the extraction of the manuscripts before the fire. We used limited but powerful vocabulary; we played on contrasts like stillness and movement, light and darkness, silence and sound. The audience was still and attentive; mood and symbolism were strong. Coincidentally, the other two groups had also decided to travel to ancient Egypt. However, they featured stereotypical representations of Cleopatra, based on scripted role-plays, with a stronger emphasis on costumes and props. The scenes elicited continuous, coarse laughing from the audience. In other words, the other groups' final performances pointed to a product, rather than a process-oriented effort, which ranged from one side to the other of Kao and O'Neill's (1998) continuum for AL drama approaches. In order to find the roots of this inconsistency, it is interesting to revisit the 2009 teachers' preparation workshop that I conducted prior to the 'time machine' process drama.

Teachers' Preparation Workshop

One week before the IW, I led a teachers' preparation workshop to familiarise the twelve staff with the conventions of the process drama described above. Once again, I was only allocated two hours. None of the teachers had any other experience in drama teaching apart from the previous year; four staff members were new and had no experience at all. My understanding, by contrast, had considerably grown from 2008, as I had had the opportunity to run and design several process dramas in a language learning context. I felt more confident in working with the elements of drama, and I felt I had a deeper understanding of process drama applied to AL learning.

In light of the 'piazza' experience in 2008, in the teachers' workshop I chose to place a stronger emphasis on the facilitator's need to be flexible, encouraging participants to become co-artists in the process. The workshop therefore highlighted the role of *intuition* in teaching drama, again with a focus on the meta-analysis of process drama for AL teaching. After careful consideration, I chose not to begin by introducing the elements of drama, as I originally intended. This, I believed, would have been an overload of information with insufficient time for it to be processed. Instead, I chose to manipulate the elements in order to give teachers the experience and, when appropriate, to point out their significance. In other words, I was encouraging them to apprehend the medium in an *instinctive* way, following Saxton and Morgan (1987), who argued that the teacher who instinctively or deliberately makes use of the devices of the art form has a better chance of achieving her educational objectives (1987: 1). In hindsight, my colleagues did not practise *facilitating* process drama; they only practised the experience of being *participants*. Heathcote (1991) sheds light on this issue when she argues that:

It is essential that in training teachers we make certain that they [new teachers] are given experience in committing others to work. I believe that this area of training is grossly ignored in training schemes. Much energy goes into planning for keeping the would-be teacher in the pupil role, and hardly any in the 'teacher-instigator' role. If you accept this, then the tutor's task takes on quite a different aspect. (Heathcote 1991: 26)

In my rushed attempt to familiarise teachers with the conventions, once again I had failed to allow them the chance of 'committing others to work' in an active 'teacher-instigator' role. This meant that the quality of the drama was different in my group than in the other two groups, as my colleagues did not have

access to any *active* drama teaching experience. This also accounts for the discrepancy of feedback: a student from another group complained of a '*lack of flow* within the drama', whereas one in my group was thrilled by 'the *sense of flow* in the way teachers were structuring things'. Interestingly, both student comments described the drama in terms of *flow*, or lack of it.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) elaborates on the concept of 'flow', which he describes as the optimal experience of engaging in an activity in an 'effortless, yet focused state of consciousness' (1996: 110). In his study of creativity, he identified a common pattern to the experience of flow and elaborated a paradigm of steps to achieve a state of flow. One of the essential conditions to experience flow, Csikszentmihalyi maintains, is a balance between *challenges* and *skills*: unless this balance is achieved, the individual will experience either boredom or anxiety. He also points out that, during an experience of flow, there should be no worry of failure – this, he maintains, requires letting go of control (1996: 111). Feedback from my colleagues, as well as my observations led me to conclude that the balance between challenges and skills had not been achieved: I had raised the stakes by designing a more challenging process drama, without providing the staff with the necessary skills to meet that challenge. While my 'active experience' in drama had grown, I failed to foresee that my colleagues had not had similar opportunities for such development.

Process drama for Teaching and Learning Additional Languages

Using process drama for teaching an additional language is a specific sub-genre of process drama pedagogy. It requires both the drama teacher's understanding and the language teacher's sensibility to AL learning methodologies. In merging these two sets of skills, the facilitator needs to consider some key factors unique to AL process drama teaching. In this article, I have touched briefly on three main factors: the importance of choosing an educational focus with an intercultural potential; the value of a visual pre-text; and process, vs product-oriented language production.

Intercultural Potential

Language and culture cannot be separated from each other. They are interwoven, co-constructive elements of the same system. Learning an AL involves not only reflecting on one's culture and on the target culture, but also exploring how perceptions of the target culture are mediated by one's cultural background (Scarino and Liddicoat, 2009). When considering an educational focus for the AL process drama class, choosing an educational objective with intercultural potential helps the facilitator to direct the learning towards the intercultural dimension. In retrospect, it seems to me that 'the time machine' process drama lacked a focus on socio-cultural values that had made 'La Piazza' a meaningful platform for intercultural reflection. Morgan and Saxton (1987) stress the importance of having a clear educational objective as one of the most important elements of drama teaching. To their consideration I add that, in the field of AL process drama, having a clear intercultural focus embedded in the educational objective is an important element of AL process drama pedagogy.

Visual Pre-text

When dealing with foreign language speakers, using a visual pre-text works better for communicating an idea without the language barrier (Kao and O'Neill 1998). Although the 2009 pre-text (website museum) was a graphic representation projected on to the wall, its content was still textual in nature, and the idea it communicated was conceptual rather than visual. The language might have been too technical for some of the beginner and intermediate speakers, who would have benefited more from a visual input. In addition, the AL practitioner needs to be clear about the difference between the function of a *pre-text* in drama, as opposed to the function of the *stimulus* in AL teaching: the pre-text needs to launch, not just create a context for, the dramatic world. Understanding this difference requires an awareness of dramatic tension and its relationship with the other elements of drama.

Process vs Product-Oriented Language

AL teachers new to process drama need to be aware of strategies to support process, instead of product-oriented language. Such strategies require manipulating the elements of drama through reflection in action. For example, by focusing my group's idea of the great fire in the Alexandria library, framing it to a particular moment in time, creating a ritual to use the time machine and injecting dramatic tension through the threat of the guards, I manipulated the elements to create dramatic meaning. In this way, my group was able to produce process-oriented language, rather than scripted scenes featuring stereotyped

situations. In other words, to manipulate the elements of drama through reflection in action, AL teachers new to drama need to be aware of the artistry of drama teaching.

As Howell and Heap (2005) point out, the acquisition of understanding in facilitating process drama is not immediate, but rather layered, gained slowly in action. In describing how her mentor taught her to teach, O'Mara (1999) observed that she was not given a set of rules to follow, but she was 'being guided towards developing her own artistry in teaching' (1999: 6). O'Mara's research points to two types of artistry of teaching drama: artistry in creating process drama; and artistry of reflection-in-action. Both these artistries failed to be addressed in my teachers' preparation workshop, and do account for some of the criticism I received.

Conclusion

In this article, I have discussed the challenges encountered in designing and facilitating two workshops and training twelve staff new to the practice of process drama for AL teaching. It suggests that, although my understanding of dramatic processes increased from the first to the second IW workshop, my awareness of teacher support and development was still forming, and this had an impact on the outcomes achieved. By reflecting on the workshops, I realised that in the 2009 process drama I underestimated several key aspects of AL process drama teaching: the importance of educational objectives with potential for inter-cultural growth; having a visual pre-text to launch the dramatic world; and the difference between process- and product-oriented language.

Reflection from this experience suggests that, in order to encourage AL teachers to embrace process drama, it is necessary to dwell, among other things, on reflection in action, the artistry of teaching and the co-artistic relationship of facilitator and participant. Most importantly, facilitating drama in an AL context demands more than just learning some dramatic conventions; it requires aesthetic understanding specific to the art of drama coupled with an understanding of AL teaching methodologies, with specific attention to the intercultural dimension. As Heathcote (1991) observes, new teachers must practise creating learning experiences for others, rather than experiencing them as participants. In preparation for the *next* Immersion Weekend, I have run two preparation workshops in which teachers were asked to actively *lead* and then *discuss* drama strategies. I introduced the elements of drama, the art of questioning and reflection-in-action. I plan to run two further preparatory sessions, simplifying the content of the IW process drama and focusing on facilitation skills. I have also made drama textbooks available and pointed to further material for individual research. It is my hope that, in the next IW, I will give my colleagues an opportunity to balance challenges and skills, towards the achievement of a 'state of flow' within the art form.

To conclude, research over the last decade has shown that process drama can enhance the quality of AL learning; however, more research is needed in this emerging field to understand and support the needs of AL teachers new to process drama pedagogy.

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