Educational project children's opera "Imola":
encompassing multilingual, musicological and pedagogical issues

Slađana Marić
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Serbia; sladjana.maric@ff.uns.ac.rs

Abstract
This research introduces the children's opera "Imola" (libretto by R.Fleis, music: F. Kovac) as a pedagogically significant material to be used in teaching and learning in arts, theatre, language and music education contexts - for familiarizing with the multilingual demands of both operatic and vocal music repertoire, thus educating students as an audience, able to enjoy the artistic output. The different forms of music-linked translation (MLT) associated with opera are discussed, as a descriptive approach was applied. In this research, the process of translation is explored from an interdisciplinary point of view, encompassing musicological, multilingual and pedagogical issues.

Keywords: *children's opera, libretto translations, opera education, storytelling with music, music-linked translation (MLT).*

Introduction
"Children's opera: music + interactional context + combination of activities familiar to children from a very early age = successful learning" (Liubinska, 2021: 137)

In the context of arts "opera is a unique collaboration of music, dance, literature, theatre, and visual arts which some observers believe is the greatest of all art forms" (Tehrani 2019: ii). From the context of education, opera can be regarded as "a multidisciplinary fusion of subjects such as music, theatre, playwriting, visual arts and stage design" (Soliveres, Giráldez-Hayes & Parejo 2021: 235). In this paper children's opera "Imola" by composer F. Kovac[18] is introduced as a pedagogically significant material with multilingual translations for singing, to be used in teaching and learning in arts, theatre, language and music education contexts. This opera was developed as a project for talented children from the primary general education students as singers and members of the orchestra of the Primary School "Secenji Istvan" from Subotica (Northern Serbia), and with the help of teachers and parents in rehearsing, performance, and recording digital opera in both Hungarian and Serbian language. "Imola" may be described as the project-based learning (PBL) methodology resource in language and music education, for singing in multiple languages (Hungarian, Serbian, German). Therefore, this research work aims to offer possible pathways for additional singable translations in English and Italian, that can be further used for the development of collaborative and interactive learning in cultural, linguistic/literacy and music arts/opera education contexts internationally.

---

[18] Note: Biography in Appendix 1.

Literature review
Children's opera

Over the past half-century in European and North American contexts, different ways of "engaging children and adolescents in opera arenas of both audience appreciation and performance participation—have emerged and developed" such as the New York Metropolitan Opera Children's Chorus, the autonomous Canadian Children's Opera Company (CCOC), the Opera North Children's Chorus (ONCC) in Leeds, Welsh National "Regional Youth Opera"/"Youth Opera Young Company", and the Royal Opera House "Youth Opera Company", offering opera chorus training as "a useful complement for formal music education in schools" (Rhoda 2017: 73). Similarly, the research by Soliveres, Giráldez-Hayes & Parejo (2021), introduces the "Opera as a Vehicle for Learning" (LOVA) (2021), as an opera-based educational project in which both teachers and students through classroom activities "create" opera as part of the formal curriculum activities during a complete school year (from scriptwriting, composing music, scenery design, crafts creating, etc.).

The aims of these children's opera companies, youth opera companies, opera theatres, projects by music conservatoires or academies of music (e.g. Children's chamber opera "Beyond the Wall" by the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (Jayakumar 2018)), schools and individuals that undertake such activities in Classical Music and Opera, are to offer children additional music education and training for public performance. In that way, they are bringing operas of the highest possible artistic quality to the audiences on the local or international level (focusing on the opera as a more engaging operatic genre for children).

In contemporary music literature and repertoire for children, children's opera as "storytelling with music", or in more modern terminology "opera for children" is still very rare. Several questions may emerge in defining children's opera. Firstly, is this music written by children or adults? Is it intended for children or adults, but one that children can easily enjoy listening to? Who are the performers (singers and players of the orchestra)? In which language is the opera? … Children's opera can be a project of children's engagement in the process of writing scripts, music and choreography, but also a musical piece composed for children, where, in both cases, children can be the performers of vocal and instrumental parts, they can be partly included in the performance or not present at all, but they should be the main audience of the children's opera. The children's operas are very different in terms of themes, including "fairy tales or stories to which children can relate that teach about specific themes, cultures, and morals" (Sosenheimer 2015), then, duration and structure, as they seek to be age-appropriate in terms of language and vocabulary, music style, vocal and instrumental choices, and theatrical staging solutions.

Furthermore, "in parallel with contemporary globalization developments and with the advancements of digital media, opera continually attempts to reinvent itself by becoming ever more communal, more accessible, and cross-culturally adaptable" (Tehrani 2019: ii). In the year 2016, "The Watchers in the Wings" was "the first digital opera made by young people for young people" of The Royal Opera House's Youth Opera Company, for which the story was written (in English) by a child and music by a composer, and included 47 children (age 9 -13) performing alongside with a soloist tenor. It was filmed on location at the Royal Opera House telling the story of "a group of schoolchildren who find themselves whisked away on an adventure through the building, with a little help from a mysterious and enigmatic Tour Guide" (YOC, 2016).

From the educational context, according to a study by Liubinska (2021: 137), in the context of foreign language learning English in Ukraine at an early age, children's opera is used in both languages, firstly in the mother tongue and then in the foreign language, where music, "with its emotional nature, makes exposure to a new language desirable". This learning approach provides the context for interaction ("authentic language in stretches of discourse"), building phonological awareness - "characters from

opera greet, request, agree and question, which makes the new language natural and communicative from the very beginning". Furthermore, music sets the tempo and aids overall language fluency through physical movement (Liubinska 2021: 138).

Languages of the opera: libretto, multilingualism and translation

In the process of writing music, composers usually were guided by a particular language of the libretto[19] (Page 2013). Multilingualism and multilingual translations and musical adaptations of the opera librettos and productions to and from the Italian, French, German, English and Russian languages to other target languages were historically carried out taking into consideration many factors, such as the musical and cultural literacy of both the performers and the audience, language and other policies or practices of the opera houses (aiming to bring the opera closer to the audience). *Accessibility, multilingualism* and *transdisciplinarity*, remain the three "key issues in opera today" (Desblache 2013), including the form of children's opera (Orero & Matamala 2007).

In the literature review on translating vocal and/or vocal-instrumental music, "the coexistence of different languages was sparsely researched, by both language and music researchers" (Mateo 2014). In terms of the terminology used, different notions were noticed such as *non-singable* and *word-for-word* translations of lyrics, in contrast to *singable translations, translating for singing*, *song translation* and *music-linked translation* (MLT)(Golomb 2005: 124, Malmkjær & Windle 2012: 3). Additionally, the authors used similar terms to specifically state that the translation included the linguistic and musical skills of the translator, such as in "adapting the translation to the original music" (Franzon 2008: 376, Slavarani 2021: 462), "translation and musical adaptation" and "translation with musical adaptation" (Baker & Saldanha 2009: 3).

In the review of the book "Music, Text and Translation" (Ed. Minors, H.), Marta Mateo (2015: 359) notes that according to Peter Low, a distinction should be made between "translations to *sing*, to *speak*, to *read",* as well as "study translations' for performers, and subtitling, all of which are undoubtedly more effective options than an 'all-purpose' translation". From the context of children's opera, translations are very rare, in contrast to much more popular translations of musicals and songs "translated in various ways, for various purposes, and by a variety of mediators" (Franzon 2008: 374). Therefore, this article aims to contribute to the investigation and research literature on multilingual children's opera.

Research methodology
Aim of research

The focus of this research paper is to explore the interrelationship between text, music and sociocultural factors in the translation processes of the children's opera "Imola" (Kovač 2017). In this research, translation is regarded as the science, art and skill, with the aim of providing singable translations that will be also "culturally and linguistically appropriate" (Apter & Herman 2016: 157) and useful in pedagogical practice in both music and linguistic educational contexts. Therefore, advocating for the importance of children's opera in musical and more general (cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, language learning) education.

---

[19] Libretto - "the words that are sung or spoken in a musical work for the theatre" (Cambridge English Dictionary Online). Libretto also is "a part of literature" or "a set of works with the aim of aesthetic purposes" (Pavan, 2019: 178).

Research data

The textual materials for translation included a *libretto document* and *an unpublished music score* document received from the composer, maestro Kovac (Kovač 2017a). In the process of translation, a *demo audio recording* (22 minutes) in the Serbian language sung by the composer (Kovač 2017b) and the *two video-animation productions published online*, were consulted.

Research method

In this qualitative research study, a descriptive approach was applied to present the issues in the children's opera "Imola" multilingual translations of the libretto for singing. The translation process was enacted by the author[20] of this research article, from Serbian to English and Serbian to the Italian language. Italian was chosen as the "the opera's language of origin" and the main "language of music", while English was chosen as the most common language of study in primary and secondary educational contexts (ESL, EFL, ESP), and the main language of world communication (English as a Lingua Franca).

In the review of the research literature, Srut (Šrut 2018) describes the process of music text translation, that can be summarized as follows: (1) translation requires time, (2) includes brainstorming, (3) requires constant decision making "about what will be retained and what removed, and to what extent", (4) requires previous knowledge about the content, characters and place and time of the action, and performance history, (5) requires previous knowledge about the music through listening "in order to get a general impression of it how it sounds, who sings it (ensemble, soloist, soloist), what it's about, how much they are complex in harmony and melody, and the like", (6) knowledge about the works of the authors of libretto and music, (7) knowledge about the audience, (8) directed attention to the emergence of cultural concepts, considering which method would be optimal for their translation, (9) singing the verses after each written version of translation, and (10) using an appropriate dictionary in translation (Šrut 2018: 160).

Therefore, the developed and applied methodological approach for the translation of the children's opera "Imola" from Serbian to English and Italian language, included the following activities:

- pre-translation activities: 1) learning about the music piece - reading about the children's opera and children's opera "Imola" (historical review of literature, performance reviews), 2) *reading* the text lyrics and the music score, 3) *listening* to the music audio recordings, 4) *watching* digital opera productions, and 5) learning the music piece - *rhythmic reading, singing* and *playing* the opera in the Serbian language;
- translation activities: 1) *writing* all the translation options in English, 2) *translating* from Serbian, English to Italian ("triangulating" translations), 3) *singing* the translations in both English and Italian, line by line, and writing them into the music score, and 4) *editorial work* on the translation text - *reviewing* and *editing* the final text of the libretto and the text in the music score, with multiple *testing* of the translations for "the quality of being singable" *by singing* (Apter and Herman 2016).
- Additionally, digital online resources and tools were used for researching specific information in archives and other specialized dictionaries (HU/SR/ENG/IT).

---

[20] The knowledge of languages of the translator is the following: Serbian (mother tongue), English (foreign language) and Italian (foreign language). In the context of knowledge in music, the translator graduated in Music Performance (Piano, Opera) and Music Theory, and has completed the tertiary level of education in Music Pedagogy (with the knowledge in subjects such as: choral conducting, music culture and literature, music analysis, singing, piano performance, orchestration and arranging, teaching methodology, etc.).

Results with discussion
About the children's opera "Imola"

Children's opera is one of the newer genres of Classical Music, and in Serbian music literature existing from the early years of 20th Century, the two oldest pieces titled "On the Fairy's Mountain" (*U vilinoj gori* 1918) and "The Forest Queen" (*Šumska kraljica* 1919) opera for children performed by children, both by composer Franjo Štefanović (Petrovaradin, Vojvodina, Serbia), from which the second received several public performances from 2013 onwards by students of primary music school choir "Isidor Bajić" in Novi Sad with acclaimed opera singers, in the original form with piano accompaniment (in the Serbian language). Additionally, the children's opera titled "Children's Room" (*Dečja Soba* 1941), written by Milenko Zivkovic (Živković) in classical opera form, was renewed in performance in 2021 (Belgrade), by music opera theatre organization, including young opera artists, conductors, instrument players, working with already affirmed artists.

The Children's Opera "Imola" may be regarded as the first bilingual children's opera. It is a music theatre piece for children, which premiered in 2017 on a concert stage of the City Town Hall of Subotica (Vojvodina, Serbia) in 2017. The libretto by Rita Fleis was written in the Hungarian language, and put to music by the composer Ferenc Kovac (Kovač), additionally providing the second version of the libretto in Serbian language. Therefore, children's opera "Imola" may be regarded as *the first children's opera with originally two singable librettos*, in Hungarian and Serbian language.

In this research paper, the additional focus was on this opera as a specific "didactic tool", composed of shorter musical and stage images, ideal for introducing the young audience to the world of music and opera. The music score (Kovač 2017) consists of an Ouverture titled "Music Introduction", and five acts. Melodies are lightly structured as arias, duets and trios, with recitative or speech elements, choruses and orchestral interludes. Elements of traditional, popular and some rhythmic-melodic patterns of children's rhymes and songs can be easily recognized. The opera characters are the following: *Father, Mother, Martin, Boys, Girls,* and *Children*, while in the orchestration part there is a guitar and a string quartet. This opera tells the story of the *last standing hundred-and-fifty years old windmill*[21] in a small village of Mali Bajmok (Subotica, Vojvodina, Northern Province of the Republic of Serbia, Europe). The idea of the libretto was to nurture the cultural heritage of the multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic town of Subotica. In the title, the word "Imola" represents "the windmill" and "the youngest and smallest female child in a working family of eleven". Through work, play and adventures children learn about the history of the place, its architecture and people such as Ivan Sarić, the athlete and pioneer of aviation in Eastern Europe, or Lajos Vermes (Vermeš), initiator of local sports games (Palic Olympic Games 1880)[22].

The Children's Opera "Imola" was produced also as a "digital children's opera"[23] and published as two audio-visual projects in both Hungarian and Serbian language, in the form of a DVD recording. These recordings were later posted on social media (YouTube) (Imola 2019 a, b). It is important to note that these recorded video productions were not fully based on the original score by Ferenc Kovac (2017), but on the arrangement of the local school orchestra conductor Mr Tamas (Šandor Tamaš), who needed to adapt the score to the specific small local teaching and performing community, the availability of the student orchestra players (two violins, violoncello, saxophone, oboe, two accordions, two mandolins, and a guitar) and teachers as volunteer-players (flute, two violins, viola, violoncello, bass, three guitars, bass guitar, piano, drums and percussion). However, these visual productions

---

[21] In this territory, there were eleven windmills built in the nineteenth century (1862).

[22] Lajos Vermes https://visitsubotica.rs/en/see/cultural-monument/monument-of-lajos-vermes/

[23] Additionally, an example of the "digital children's opera" by the Royal Opera House can be found on the ROH YouTube Channel.

provided the author of this research with insightful *contextual information*, which facilitated a better understanding of the source texts (Hungarian/Serbian). These recordings may be regarded as an extremely useful basis for additional opera *surtitling*[24] (subtitling) projects in different languages, or as a starting point of reference for other future opera or school theatre productions.

Children's opera "Imola" music score and a bilingual libretto in Hungarian and Serbian, were published in a publication entitled "Imola, gyermek báb-opera" or "children's puppet-theatre opera" (Kovacs, Nemes-Fekete & Fleis 2020). In future research, the author plans to do an additional detailed comparative research study on the libretto and music score of the "Imola, gyermek báb-opera" with the original score (Kovač 2017), referenced in this research work.

The source text: linguistic and socio-cultural contexts

Opera, according to Tehrani (2019: ii) "has existed as a significant source of cultural and national identity through sharing stories from different nations, addressing social and political issues, and creating new meanings and trends through the combination of old and new". With the translations of the source text in the Serbian language for the new contexts, the English and Italian, the aim was to offer an opera text that can help young performers understand the story using a historically and culturally appropriate interpretation. Additionally, to offer a text that could be memorized without difficulties ("learned by heart"), as needed in theatre and opera performances.

As the idea of the writer was to nurture the cultural heritage and the entrepreneurial greatness of important citizens of the multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic town of Subotica (Hungarian, Serbian, etc.), in the northern part of Vojvodina (Serbia/Europe), translation equivalents were chosen according to the phonological characteristics of the target language, the number of syllables, if the line is being sung or spoken (recitativo), note durations, rhythm and overall melodic movement. It is important to note that in terms of easier readings, the spoken or recitativo parts were written in *italics* while the "plain text" is the text "for singing" (Figure 1). Additional suggestions were marked and explained, while in some places more than one solution for interpretation was offered (e.g. as in the excerpts from Table 1 and Figure 1). For example, although as one of the most frequent Hungarian surnames "Molnar" has its meaning "miller" in English (Farkas 2013: 505), for the line "Molnáréknak szekere-ke-rekeke" (Hungarian), and its Serbian translation of "mlinareva zaprega je ragaga", the English translation aimed to "keep" the original surname - "Molnar's wagon chariot, ch-cha-ri-ot", rather than using the translation "miller's wagon", or with the capital letter "M" as "Miller" (frequent surname in English). In the Italian translation, two possible solutions were found, first, "Carro del mugnaio", a rather difficult translation in terms of vocalizing an uprising melody, and the second one, more appropriate in terms of singing: "Ruota del car-re-lo(lo), car-re-lo(lo)", offering a rather musically descriptive movement and motion of wheels turning during the ride.

---

[24] In the context of opera, *surtitling* or translated text projected on a screen above the stage, was introduced in the nineteen-eighties USA and Canada (Low, 2002). The main aim of this intervention in opera productions was intended to make opera accessible to a larger audience, as "they fulfilled the basic requirement of maximum comprehension, minimum distraction", with optimal "quantity of displayed text" (Palmer, 2020). The second form of subtitling came with the development of digital technologies, as the translated text into a native or target language was displayed at the bottom of the screen in video recordings of the performances. According to Mateo (2014) subtitling/surtitling needs to be 'easy to read', avoiding any ambiguity, and presented as self-contained short statements, with basic and omitted punctuation and repetition. Translators have limited space and time for each line on the slide, using punctuation to indicate dramatic shifts, such as dashes or parentheses, to indicate a character has been cut off, etc.

Figure 1. Act Four. The spoken or "recitativo" parts, in italics.

ČETVRTI ČIN	ACT FOUR	ATTO QUARTO
Deca: *Imola, gde si?*	Children: *Imola, where are you?*	Bambini: *Imola, dove sei?*
Tata: *Imola, gde se skrivaš?*	Father: *Imola, where are you hiding?*	Papà: *Imola, dove ti nascondi?*
Dečak 1: *Imola, hajde sa mnom. Gledaj, cela varoš je ispod nas. I svi ugledni građani.*	Boy: *Imola, come with me. Look, the whole city is below us. And all the respectable citizens.*	Ragazzo 1: *Imola, vieni con me. Guarda, l'intera città è sotto di noi e tutti i cittadini rispettabili.*
<u>Deca: (istovremeno tapšu)</u> *Hura! Hura! Bravo! Ivan Sarić!* (svi u isti glas): *Subotica! Sabatka!*	<u>Children: (at the same time tap)</u> *Hooray! Hooray! Hooray! Bravo! Ivan Saric!* <u>everyone in the same voice):</u> *Subotica!* Szabatka!** (*Subotica = /suboti:t.sə/, ** Szabatka = /səbətcə/)*	<u>Bambini: (applaudono contemporaneamente)</u> *Evviva! Evviva! Ben fatto! Ivan Saric!* <u>(tutti con la stessa voce):</u> *Súbotizza! Sábatca!*
<u>(nešto je puklo, prekida se muzika)</u>	<u>(something is broken, music interrupted)</u>	<u>(qualcosa si rompe, la musica si ferma)</u>
Dečak (veselo): *Imola, tu je tvoja kvatrokitara. Bez nje ne bi ništa uspelo.*	Boy (merrily): *Imola, here's your cuatro-guitar. Without it, nothing would have worked.*	Ragazzo (allegramente): *Imola, ecco la tua quattro chitarra, senza di lei, niente avrebbe funzionato.*
<u>(muzika)</u> *Drži se! Visoko ćemo leteti! Ptica! Oblak! Zvezda! Šta bi želela da budeš?*	<u>(music)</u> *Hold on! We'll be flying high! A Bird! A Cloud! A Star! What would you like to be?*	<u>(musica)</u> *Aspetta! Saremo in alto! Uccello! Nube! Stella! Cosa vuoi essere?*
Dete: *Visina! Sloboda!... Gledaj, mašu ti tvoje sestrice.*	Child: *Height! Freedom! Look, your sisters are waiving to you.*	Bambino: *Altezza! La libertà!... Guarda, le tue sorelle ti stanno salutando.*

Table 1. Serbian to English/Italian extracts of possible translation solutions of the title and specific words and phrases

Serbian libretto	English libretto translation	Italian libretto translation
IMOLA - vetrenjača Dečija opera	IMOLA - windmill Children's opera	IMOLA - Il mulino a vento, Opera lirica per i bambini *Note: NOT to confuse with Imola as a town and comune in the Metropolitan City of Bologna, Emilia-Romagna region of northern Italy.*
Mama: Dođi meni, dođi meni *vragolanko*!	Mother: Come to mommy, come to mommy, *little naughty*!	Mamma: Vieni, vieni! Vieni qui *tesoro mio*!
Devojčice (zadirkuju): Imola je žgoljac, porodični moljac.	Girls (teasing Imola): Imola's a little cloth, family's flour moth!	Ragazze (stuzzicando Imola): Piccolina Imola, la falena nostra!
Mama: Ta još da zverate samo?	Mother: And spend your time aimlessly wandering?	Mamma: Nulla voi volete fare?
"Mlinareva zaprega je ragaga" (HU: Molnáréknak szekere-ke-rekeke")	"Molnar's wagon chariot, ch-cha-ri-ot" (*Miller's/miller's wagon)	"Ruota del car-re-lo-(lo), car-re-lo-(lo)"

Musical parameters - melody and rhythm

As noted by Dullea (2017: 80), similarly to the Kodály method and the Orff "music and movement" method, operatic performance requires the skill of integrating singing, movement, and gesture for its full expression. It is important to underline that this opera received two interpretations and publications, first in Hungarian and the second version in the Serbian language (the second being the main reference for the translation process to English and Italian language). In the translation process, the rhyming intensity of the Serbian original was retained as much as possible, following the rhyming schemes in the target languages English and Italian.

As a composer who dedicated a large number of music pieces for children as performers, Ferenc Kovac in this opera also respected the range and movement of the child's voices, while, at the same time, provided all the characteristics of an opera, in terms of the relationship between the orchestra and the singers, and especially the melodic lines of these miniature "arias" (e.g. Aria of the Mother, Aria of the Father). According to Franzon (2008: 389), if "the main purpose of the translational action is to deliver a singable translation, there are certain aspects of the musico-textual fit which seem to require particular attention". According to Franzon (2008: 390), a singable lyric achieves three matches, the first being a *prosodic* match - observed through the *melody*, where the lyrics are comprehensible and sound natural (syllable count; rhythm; intonation, stress; easy singing), second, a *poetic* match (rhyme; segmentation of phrases or lines, location of key words, etc.) and final, a *semantic-reflexive* match ("the story told, mood conveyed, character(s) expressed; description (word-painting); metaphor").

Figure 2. Example of a minor musical adaptation intervention in the Italian translation - Devojčice: "Brašno, brašno, brašno, brašno, pa opet brašno, brašno"./ Girls: "Flour, flour, flour, flour, more bags of flour, flour."/ Ragazze: "Farina, farina, farina, farina, sempre farina, farina."

In the translation process from Serbian to English and Italian, special attention was put on every of the mentioned aspects. The number of syllables was aligned the same in almost all verses of the original text. The places where this was not the case, included the "spoken language" or recitativo parts (marked in *italics*). In some vocal parts, minimal interventions were applied, for example, for the Italian translation, a quaver was inserted before the first note in the melodic-rhythmical pattern (e.g. fa- ri - na), as both words in Serbian (SR) - "brašno" /braʃno/ and "flour" in English (EN), have two syllables (e.g. Figure 2).

Use of digital media and online dictionaries and tools

The overall translation process, apart from physically playing the piano and vocalizing the text, singing, was enacted in the digital space. This included sending and receiving files (e.g. Wetransfer; Gmail, Google drive), using digital forms of text and music score documents (e.g. document writing and reading software), digital audio players, video productions published on social media (e.g. YouTube), online dictionaries and translators (Collins Online Dictionary/Translator/Grammar (English-Italian/Italian-English), Cambridge English-Italian Dictionary and Translator, Linguee.it, Glosbe (it.glosbe/en.glosbe), Google Translate and Reverso Context), online name repositories and archives (e.g. Wiktionary; Wikipedia Prenomi Ungaresi; Namepedia), programs for music notation writing and editing (e.g. Flat, collaborative online music writing application), and additionally, music keyboard digital and virtual (e.g. Musicca.com/piano), etc.

The use of online browsing software was very useful in terms of cross-checking the original first source text version in Hungarian and the second version in the Serbian language, with both English and Italian translation. Spell checker applications online were used for English (e.g. Grammarly, SmallSEOtools) and Italian language texts (e.g. Italiancorrector; Italianchecker).

Final remarks

The focus of this research paper was on music and translation as cultural exchange, exploring the interrelationship between text, music and sociocultural factors in translation processes within children's opera "Imola" (libretto by R. Fleis, music: F. Kovac). The different forms of translation associated with opera were discussed, as a descriptive approach was applied in the research to propose the methodological process of multilingual translating of the libretto from Serbian to English and Italian. The purpose of these translations was to introduce this music piece to the possible future performers from educational and artistic contexts of learning music, languages and theatre. As noted by Russell (1984: 184):

> "One of the most valuable experiences which any school offers to its pupils is the chance to take part in a musical or opera. However small-scale the production, involvement in this sort of corporate experience can teach young people much more than dramatic and musical skills. Apart from showing a mode of relaxation and enjoyment which can carry on into adult life, the production engenders many social skills and builds confidence."

In summary, in this research, the process of translation was theoretically and practically approached and explored from an interdisciplinary point of view, encompassing musicological, multilingual and pedagogical issues. The "harmony between music and language can only be achieved by understanding both dimensions" (Šrut 2018: 172), and therefore, translation was regarded as *science*, *art* and *skill*. Furthermore, this research also introduced the Children's Opera "Imola" as a pedagogically significant material to be used in teaching and learning in arts, theatre, language and music education contexts, familiarizing students with the multilingual demands of both operatic or vocal music and professional choral repertoire, and educating as an audience, able to enjoy the artistic output. In conclusion, in the future, the following steps would include the publication of the full score with both English and Italian translations for singing and their practical application in educational and artistic learning contexts. Specifically, in monolingual, bilingual or multilingual learning situations of formal and informal learning, only then will they be properly tested for the language to "sound natural" (*a unity of lyrics and music*), and not to be discerned as a translation.

References

Baker, M. & Saldanha, G. Eds (2009). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, Routledge.

Desblache, L. (2013). Tales of the Unexpected: Opera as a New Art of Glocalization. In H.J. Minors (Ed.) *Music, Text and Translation* (pp. 9-19). London: Bloomsbury (Bloomsbury Advances in Translation)

Dullea, R. (2017). Engagement, Participation, and Situated Learning in a Children's Opera Chorus Program, *Journal of Research in Music Education,* 65(1): 72-94.

Eberst, A. (1997). Kovač Ferenc/Kovács Ferenc. In *Musical Breviary of Novi Sad*. Novi Sad: Jeunesses Musicales of Novi Sad, (pp. 39-52).

Farkas, T. (2013). Surnames of Ethnonymic Origin in the Hungarian Language. In O.Felecan (Ed.) *Onomastics in contemporary public space: proceedings of the second international conference on onomastics "Name and Naming" [ICONN 2], Baia Mare, May 9-11, 2013* (pp. 504-517). Romania: Mega, Argonaut, Cluj-Napoca.

Franzon, J. (2008). Choices in Song Translation, *The Translator*, 14(2): 373-399.

Golomb, H. (2005). Music-Linked Translation [MLT] and Mozart's Operas: Theoretical, Textual, and Practical Perspectives, In L. Dinda Gorlée & B. V. Rodopi (Eds), *Song and Significance: Virtues and Vices of Vocal Translation*, Amsterdam – New York, NY.

Gorlée, D. L. (2005). Prelude and Acknowledgements. In: *Song and Significance: Virtues and Vices of Vocal Translation*, In Dinda L. Gorlée & Rodopi B.V. (Eds), *Song and Significance: Virtues and Vices of Vocal Translation*, Amsterdam – New York, NY.

Imola gyermekopera. (2019). [video] Published by OŠ "Sečenji Ištvan" Subotica (Szabadka: Széchenyi István Általános Iskola), 27 January 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3LseKXYXYw (accessed May 10 2022).

Imola – dečja opera. (2019). [video] Published by OŠ "Sečenji Ištvan" Subotica, on 27 January 2020 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T78KayaEEko (accessed May 10 2022).

Jayakumar, E. M. (2018). *Beyond the Wall An opera for children in 2 acts –and– Toward a more engaging operatic genre for children An exegesis.* https://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/2149

Kovacs, F., Nemet-Fekete, E. & Fleis, R. (2020). *Imola*, *gyermek báb-opera*. [music score, bilingual edition] in Hungarian and Serbian language/ Novi Sad: Međunarodni centar književnosti za decu "Zmejeve dečje igre", 2020 https://zmejevedecjeigre.org.rs/aktuelno/ (accessed June 10 2022).

Kovač, F. (2017a) *Imola*, *dečja opera* - [partitura/music score], unpublished.

Kovač, F. (2017b) *Imola*, *dečja opera*- [audio recording file] (in Serbian), unpublished.

Liubinska, M.S. (Любінська М. С.) (2021). Practical Usage Children's Opera at Early Age. *3rd International Scientific Pedagogical Conference,* National Pedagogical University, p. 136-139. Accessed from: http://dspace.tnpu.edu.ua/bitstream/123456789/18666/1/Liubinska.pdf

Low, P. (2002). "Surtitles for Opera: A Specialised Translating Task", *Babel*, 48(2): 97-110.

Malmkjær, K. & Windle, K. (Eds). (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies*, Oxford Handbooks in Linguistics, Oxford University Press.

Mateo, M. (2014). Multilingualism in opera production, reception and translation. Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series. *Themes in Translation Studies*, 13: 326-354.

Mateo, M. (2015). Book Review: Minors, Helen Julia (Ed.) (2013). "Music, Text and Translation". London: Bloomsbury (Bloomsbury Advances in Translation); *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 23, January 2015, 356-362.

Orero, P. & Matamala, A. (2007). Accessible Opera: Overcoming Linguistic and Sensorial Barriers. *Perspectives. Studies in Translatology,* 15(4): 427-451.

Page, J. (2013). Surtitling Opera: A Surtitler's Perspective on Making and Breaking the Rules. In: *Music, Text and Translation,* 35–48, Helen Julia Minors (Ed.), Bloomsbury Academic.

Palmer, J. (2020). Surtitles and the multi-semiotic balance Can over-information kill opera? In: *Opera in Translation: Unity and diversity,* (Eds) Adriana Şerban & Kelly Kar Yue Chan [Benjamins Translation Library 153] 2020, 35-51.

Pavan, L. (2019). Some Language Features in Italian Opera Librettos of XVII-XVIII Centuries. *International Journal of Literature and Arts.* 7(6): 172-178.

Russell, B. (1984). Published operas and music dramas for schools. *British Journal of Music Education,* 1(2), 184-187.

Šrut, A. (2018). Prevođenje opera i mjuzikla, *Hieronymus* 5 (2018): 149-174.

Soliveres, R., Giráldez-Hayes, A. & Parejo, J.L. (2021). Opera in primary education for the development of social and emotional skills: a case study from Mexico City. *British Journal of Music Education,* 38(3): 234-248. Cambridge University Press.

Sosenheimer, B. (2015). *Opera for Children: A Comprehensive Guide to Writing, Directing, Producing and Touring Children's Opera,* Doctoral Dissertation, Ball State University.

Tehrani, A. M. (2019). *An Investigation into Children's Opera: A Historical Survey, Its Nature and Condition in Canada Today*, Doctoral Thesis, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Appendix 1 - (Biography) F. Kovac, composer of the children's opera "Imola" (2017)

Ferenc Kovac (*Serbian*: Kovač, *Hungarian*: Kovács, 1948 - 2022) was a composer, arranger, conductor, music producer and editor (Eberst 1997). Ferenc graduated from the Faculty of Musical Arts in Belgrade and worked in Radio Novi Sad (Serbia) from 1969-2011 as the producer of the Dance Orchestra up to 2002, and the conductor of "The Grand Tamburitza Orchestra of Radio-Television of Vojvodina" from 2007-2011. For twenty years he was the music editor of "Zmaj Children Games" ("Zmajeve dečije igre") festival for children in Novi Sad, and for twenty-three years the music editor of "The Festival of Joy, Education and Culture of Children" in Novi Sad ("Raspustilište"). Ferenc Kovac was also the music editor of the redaction program for children of Radio-Television of Vojvodina. He wrote pieces in light orchestral and jazz style, musical dramas, songs for television shows and theatre, anthems ("Radost" anthem of the Red Cross children's games in Novi Sad, Studio M (2002), "Kaćka elegija", "Himna Kaćke letnje igrarije"), and sports cheerleading songs ("Himna RK Jugović"). The Children's Choir "Bajićevi Slavuji'' from the Music School "Isidor Bajić" in Novi Sad, premiered an a cappella piece titled "Milenium" by Kovac, at "The 33rd Festival of Children's Choirs in Sabac 2000/01" winning the Golden plague. For the celebration of 40 years of artistic work, on May 24, 2011 in Novi Sad, a unique music piece in contemporary piano and tamburitza orchestra repertoire "War Poem"/"Ratna poema", was performed by The Grand Tamburitza Orchestra of Radio-Television of Vojvodina and S. Maric (piano), conducted by F. Kovac. Ferenc Kovac dedicated much attention to the songs for children. For the children's choir "Jingle Bells"/"Zvončići" from Novi Sad, and their soloists, he composed and published many CD albums and books. For his compositions, songs and arrangements he was awarded numerous awards and recognitions from institutions on national and international festivals of music for children (Bolognia, Bari – Italy, Onesti – Romania, Bankya – Bulgaria, Malta). He was a jury member in many festivals in the country and abroad. A selected bibliography of published works by Ferenc Kovac includes: "Knjiga sa stihovima Dragutina Bega i notnim zapisom Ferenca Kovača" (The lyrics of Dragutin Beg with the music notation of Ferenc Kovač – 15 compositions, 1997); "Zvončići pevaju pesme Ferenca Kovača" ("Jingle Bells singing songs by Ferenc Kovac" – 18 compositions, 1998); "Na severnom polu (Songs on the lyrics of Dragutin Beg 'On the North Pole'– 17 compositions, 2003), "Imola, gyermek báb-opera. [music score, bilingual edition] in Hungarian and Serbian language", F. Kovacs, E. Nemet-Fekete and R. Fleis, Novi Sad, 2020.