DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CREATIVE INTERPRETATION OF TRADITIONAL DRAMATIC TEXTS IN POST-APARTHEID THEATRE: A CASE STUDY OF SHAKESPEAREAN INTERPRETATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

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Abstract

While student demographics in higher education have changed to reflect South Africa's multicultural society, many universities are still offering traditional Drama curricula with colonial-based content. This thesis focuses on developing a methodology for the creative interpretation of traditional Shakespearean texts in the post-apartheid theatre and educational space. Shakespeare is still the most read and most often produced playwright in the world, but the thesis argues that if his texts *are* to be taught, this cannot be in an ahistorical or political vacuum, and the focus should be on performance. From within a constructivist approach, a case study methodology was used to explore combining Text Study with workshop theatre to facilitate the interpretation of traditional texts, as well as integrating discrete syllabus items into a holistic teaching and learning process. Digital technology was used as an innovative part of the proposed teaching and learning methodology, as the current student body are now the 'virtual generation'. Constructivist pedagogy, together with postcolonial and decolonial theories, provided the theoretical framework for the study. The empirical work was in the form of a case study, comprising teaching the Text Study module and developing a production as part of the process, and was carried out as an extra-curricular research project with students of the Drama Education Department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The socio-political-economic context was post-apartheid South Africa, with the student group being predominantly African, and the majority, isiZulu-speaking, who were for the most part, economically - and educationally - disadvantaged. At the time the empirical work was carried out, the Drama Education Department curriculum at UKZN was heavily loaded with the study of classical texts, in particular, Shakespearean plays. The results suggested that the methodology developed not only resulted in an enthusiastic response from student participants, but also led to a more scholarly approach to the actual texts. It also gave the participants, who were student teachers, insights into ways in which Drama Education could be dealt with in their own teaching practice. The product of the research was a model of teaching methodology for creative interpretation of Western traditional dramatic texts in Africa contexts. This pedagogical approach has the potential to form the core of an agential curriculum transformation process in Drama Education, as well as ultimately contributing to the decolonising of not only Shakespeare, but university disciplines emerging out of the Liberal Arts.

Declaration

I, Nellie Nicola Ngcongo-James, declare that:

(i) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

(ii) This dissertation/thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

(iii) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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Signed: ……..…… 20 June 2021

Prior publications/papers arising from this research project:

Ngcongo, N.N. and Pratt, D.D. 2016. '400 years later, the Bard still rocks': modelling interpretation of Shakespearean drama on Moodle. Paper presented at the *10th Annual UKZN Teaching and Learning Higher Education Conference*. Elangeni Hotel, Durban, South Africa, 20-22 September 2016.

Ngcongo, N.N. 2017. Developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre: a case study of Shakespearean interpretation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Paper presented at the *Annual National Doctoral Conference 2017: Building and Dynamising the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Birchwood Conference Centre, Johannesburg, 1-2 November 2017.

Ngcongo, N.N. 2018. A methodology for creative interpretation of Shakespearean dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre. Paper presented at the *Annual National Doctoral Conference 2018: Building and Dynamising the Humanities and Social Sciences*. Birchwood Conference Centre, Johannesburg, 30 October-1 November 2018.

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Preface

The idea behind this thesis came about as I reflected on my effectiveness as a Drama Lecturer when students expressed disdain for Shakespeare whether it be in a Text Analysis module or the interpretation of Shakespeare through performance in the monologues module. When I questioned the students further, they responded by stating that Shakespeare was 'too difficult to understand', that it was at times 'boring;' and that they 'did not understand why they had to learn it'. It was then that I sought to develop a methodology to facilitate the creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts such as those of Shakespeare, a methodology that was in tune with the current student demographic and which would not further erode their confidence as learners and as Africans. Although the politics of teaching Shakespeare in South Africa in the twenty-first century runs through this thesis, it is not primarily concerned with whether or not Shakespeare *should* be taught but rather seeks to find a way of teaching that is creative, engaging and relevant when his texts *are* prescribed.

Conventions used

The referencing style used is the version of Harvard based on the *EndNote* 8.1 template for DUT Harvard style 2015.

The hyphenated form (post-colonialism) is taken as signifying the end of the era of colonialism, and the unhyphenated term (postcolonialism) as referring to any theory explaining the attempts of the previously colonised to move beyond subjugation by Western ideology towards their own history and cultural heritage (see Jeyalakshmi 2019: 237). Exceptions are made in titles or verbatim citations where authors cited have not followed this practice.

Pseudonyms have been used for all participants, including the lecturers interviewed.

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- I would also like to thank my husband Roy James for his endless support, well timed coffee delivery and ensuring that I don’t procrastinate.
- I would also like to thank my Ngcongo and James family members for putting up with my constant absence and moods.

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Prequel: The Bard and I

Meet Nellie

I feel that to understand the relevance of this research fully and why it speaks to the person I am so deeply, I should probably introduce myself. My mother was a domestic worker and my father (whom I remember meeting once in a bus) was murdered during the political uprising towards the end of apartheid. I grew up in white households as a playmate to their children, mentored in etiquette yet casually reminded of how I don't belong.

Having been trained in the art of whiteness while my mother became a distant shadow in the background and my Madam (I was always reminded to call her that in front of her friends) became my white saviour and surrogate mother. My Madam, through church networking, managed to get my brother and me into a programme that would prepare us for the opportunity to receive a full ride to a private school and obviously better education. I think this had something to do with the release of Mandela and charity or something…

When the white kids were picked up by their mothers at Kloof High School, my brother and I were allowed to step foot onto their holy grounds. We were taught by white teachers and given mince and brown bread during our afternoon breaks. Since we had the advantage of knowing how to 'be' we excelled in the programme and in the following year were accepted into the prestigious Thomas More College.

My relationship with Shakespeare

Fast forward to high school. Being well spoken and very 'dramatic' I ascended the ranks of English superiority from the C to the A class where I revelled in the attention of my peers when having to read different characters in plays. Then came *Othello*… It was the first time I wasn't really encouraged to read any of the characters, and quite frankly I was alright with that since I felt out of my depth. My aging and wonderfully British English teacher (as most of them were) felt it would be best to watch the film first to really visualise the beauty of the work. Well I'm not so sure about the beauty that we were supposed to experience, but I sure as hell experienced many amazing naps. I also had the

supposed pleasure of watching a dress rehearsal/photoshoot for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the sprawling lawns opposite the dreaded chapel (a story of forced Catholicism for another time). What I saw were lanky white (I mean pale) matric boys bouncing around awkwardly in colourful leotards, screaming at the top of their lungs as their doting mothers swooned at their sons' obvious acting prowess. I never got to see the final performance because taxis from my township stopped running after 19:00, but I hear the performance was life changing and brought old Will back to life.

Willy, my old friend, we meet again…

As luck would have it, after High School I was accepted (very late, I might add) into a drama diploma programme through a friend's mother who was 'connected'. Having written and excelled in IEB examinations and being so refined and well-spoken I was a shoe-in, and was told how refreshing and lovely I was. As I whizzed past my peers in theory modules, flew through prose and poetry and impressed my voice teacher with my vocal dynamics, I became the 'go to' girl for civilised and nuanced works. I was the leading lady Emma in Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, Emily in in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* but only good enough to be a prostitute (silent role) in the isiZulu production of *Iphi Ntombi* (see Figure ii). I could barely speak my mother tongue and couldn't do Zulu dancing, because my background in dance was as a Thomas More Morris Dancer (see Figure i), and probably because I myself now looked down on anything glaringly black.

Figure i Morris dancers in traditional English costume (https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/the-hopping-skipping-handkerchiefwaving-mayhem-of-morris-dance)

Figure ii Zulu dancers in *Iphi Ntombi* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8266 xTybUa8)

Then in walked my old acquaintance William Shakespeare in the form of Monologues under the umbrella module of Acting Techniques. We were told to arrive with a Shakespeare monologue that we loved and wanted to perform. One by one we were put through the ordeal of explaining to lecturer and the class what the play was about, who the character was, why they were saying what they were saying, who are they, how old are they etc. After the first victim was grilled and seemed to not know anything about his monologue, our lecturer in all her glory performed the student's monologue off the cuff, and, like the fans we were, we broke out in applause and all agreed that indeed we knew nothing. We spent the next several classes being nudged towards monologues that suited us, memorising the words and following step by step directions on how to perform it. I performed the famous Lady Macbeth monologue from the 'Scottish play' (apparently we couldn't say the name 'Macbeth' because it was bad luck or something). I received the highest mark for my performance during exams, but to be honest I had no clue what I was going on about. I just mimicked how my lecturer performed it and hoped to hell she wouldn't mark her own performance poorly.

For the department it seemed that Shakespeare was a rite of passage for all students who really took acting seriously. If you could pull off the performance you impressed lecturers and peers alike, suddenly you were a real actor. I couldn't help but feel a twang of survivor's guilt while watching some of my peers who had thick isiZulu accents stumble

through their performances or just give up half way through and mutter to themselves "what's wrong with me?"

The student becomes the master

When I became a lecturer, I worked really hard to find ways of teaching that were effective and fun, particularly since I was asked to teach Text Analysis, which was rumoured to be the most intellectually demanding course. Students hated it but my ego would not allow me to be hated along with the course. The biggest restriction for me was that Theatre History and Text Analysis had to be aligned. This meant that, if Theatre History was dealing with the Elizabethan period, a Shakespeare text had to be analysed. Worse still was that Theatre History and Text Analysis would have made more sense being called 'Western Theatre History' and 'Western Text Analysis'. I say this because Western history along with its texts in my opinion were given more attention and treated as 'sacred'. To add to the confusion, as part of first year acting, students were flung into a Shakespearean nightmare even though they were not studying the period or analysing the text in any module. For example, I once had to teach a South African text only to realise that the Theatre History class was busy visiting the Holocaust Centre primarily because the lecturer was tired of talking about apartheid and, as a German who converted to Judaism, this made more sense to her.

When it came to the Acting module, first year students were expected to select a monologue and perform it as part of their exam. Students relied heavily on the lecturer to select and interpret the monologues for them, as the language was difficult to understand, and references made in the pieces were foreign to them. To me it just seemed that the whole exercise was lecturer-centred and students were puppets that were manipulated to create a perfect picture that would vibrate with English superiority, and, if one wiggled the students just right, you could hear the echo of Will's voice in the performance. Something was horribly wrong, and at the time I perhaps didn't have the vocabulary to express what was irking me.

At my current institution in the Drama Education department (UKZN School of Education), the syllabus is dictated by the CAPS document that is used to teach in schools. Again there is a presence of Shakespeare, and students still struggle, just as my previous

students did. At this institution students generally seem to think that being able to read let alone perform Shakespearean texts means that your English is superb, and by default, you are intelligent. Students seem to be under the impression that they have trouble understanding Shakespeare because something is missing from their end, that they are at fault. They are also concerned that if they don't understand Shakespeare how on earth will they be able to teach it?

It may seem that perhaps I have just had poor experiences with the Bard, but I think it goes beyond that now; and, while I had over the years made Shakespeare my arch nemeses, in fact it may have been what he represented which offended my senses.

White is right

The idea that some of my successes in life have come about due to my proximity to whiteness, constantly complimented for not being like the others and thus being the 'special black', the token used to show all other blacks what they should be like. I resent Shakespeare perhaps not for Shakespeare himself but for how he has been and continues to be used as a symbol of white superiority and civility. I don't understand why every great writer or playwright (particularly African) is compared to Shakespeare; why is he the default? It's a strange hierarchy that I would liken to apartheid, when white was the default and the rest of the population were non-white, and then it became a slippery slope from human and sub-human.

I find it uncomfortable that in a post-apartheid South Africa some drama departments, which in my experience are run by white academics, hold Western canons in such high esteem and occasionally throw in a crumb of *Woza Albert* or *Madmen and specialists* from the table of 'legitimate knowledge'. What is even worse is when the same injustice is perpetrated by black academics who have uncritically assimilated to Western ideas and hold African knowledge and works to be inferior. As Mbembe (2016: 32) points out:

> A Eurocentric canon is a canon that attributes truth only to the Western way of knowledge production. It is a canon that disregards other epistemic traditions. It is a canon that tries to portray colonialism as a normal form of social relations between human beings rather than a system of exploitation and oppression.

It strikes me as a grave injustice that black students from poorly resourced schools have to master something so foreign linguistically and otherwise to prove that they are competent in performance or analysis; it really is an unnecessary hurdle and an unfair disadvantage.

Further, the idea of lecturers or directors putting on Shakespearean plays that have been accessorised with gumboots and leopard print to read as 'Africanised' is as absurd as admitting that apartheid was wrong but not admitting that you benefitted from it, and certainly not recognising or giving up your white privilege. Use Shakespeare for good they say: my initial response would be to say that for South African students it would be good to let the poor poet rest in peace.

However, there are in fact good reasons for 'bothering' to teach Shakespeare, as there is no denying that he was a superb playwright with a prolific output ranging across a wide range of human experience. Moreover, Shakespeare is still taught in schools, Drama Studies departments and definitely at Drama Education departments. I may not have the power to change this, but I do have the power to lessen the predicament facing the students by trying to develop a way that Shakespeare can be taught that is relevant, contextualised and exciting. This approach is necessarily performance based and student centred. This would be a method in which the excluded poor black student could feel empowered, a method with which a new young Drama teacher can begin to tackle the task of teaching Shakespeare, and a way for actors to use Shakespeare as a repository to inspire the creation of their new works. This thesis suggests how this could be done in such a way as to transform not only Shakespearean production but also to transform the Drama Education curriculum. It has also transformed my own understanding of my field, Drama, as well as how to approach teaching and learning in Drama Education.

Meet the participants

Julius Caesar: a Durban Tale

Back row: [redacted] (Actor), [redacted] (Actor), [redacted] (Actor), [redacted] (Actor)
Front row: [redacted] (Wardrobe), [redacted] (Actor), [redacted] (Director), [redacted] (Actor and lighting technician), Nellie, [redacted] (Actor), [redacted] (Scriptwriter)
Front centre: [redacted] (Actor) [names redacted to maintain anonymity]

The Director

The Writer

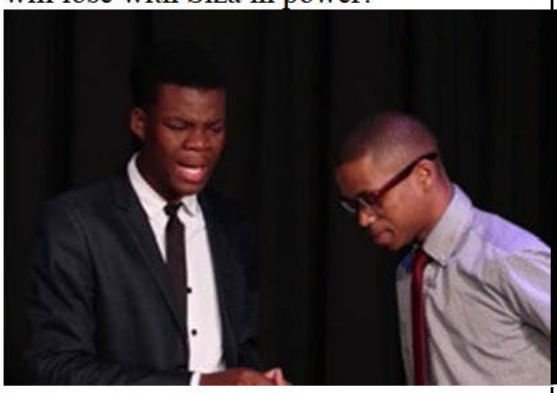
The Cast in Action

Siza: It is my intention to root out corruption and protect the public purse.

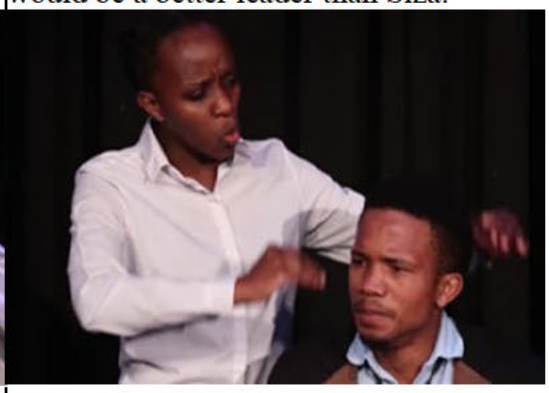
We will lose opportunities to profit from tenders if Siza comes to power.

See the opportunities for enrichment we will lose with Siza in power!

Although you are his friend, Beki, you would be a better leader than Siza.



Don't worry about attending our meeting, Beki has it all under control.



Great Siza, the people expect a mighty leader to attend his inauguration.

My guilt poisons me!

Look, the people are turning against us!

Chapter 1: Prologue

1. Introduction

I termed this chapter 'prologue' because it performs functions similar to that of the prologue in a play:

> While its most basic task is to seize the attention of a noisy audience, the prologue's more significant threshold position is used to usher spectators and actors through a rite of passage. Engaging competing claims, expectations and offerings, the prologue introduces, authorizes and, critically, straddles the worlds of the actual theatrical event and the 'counterfeit' world on stage. In this way, prologues occupy a unique and powerful position between two orders of cultural practice and perception. (Bruster and Weimann 2004: i)

The 'drama' begins with a description of the context of the research in terms of both the wider social context of decolonising South African universities and the narrower context of current Drama curricula. I then look at the location of the study, Drama Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and go on to discuss the research problem and objectives. Next, as in a dramatic prologue, I unfold the main themes of the research, and suggest definitions of key terms used in the thesis. Finally, I suggest that the value of the research and new contribution to knowledge lie in the innovative methodology developed for interpretation through performance, the use of social media, and the modelling of a process for decolonising the university in the area of Drama Education, which process is documented throughout the thesis.

1.2 Context of the research

There are two aspects involved in the context of the research. The first is the social context of decolonising the university to make it relevant to the population it is meant to serve, and the second, the teaching and learning context of South African universities in general, and in particular, the university where the research project took place. The social context in which this research unfolds is what has been termed as the "decolonising" of the university, in other words, making the universities relevant to the social contexts in which they are situated (Alvares and Faruqi 2012; Grosfoguel, Hernández and Velásquez 2016). In post-apartheid South Africa, this means making curricula not only relevant, but

meaningful and useful to the citizens of the communities they serve (Garuba 2015; Le Grange 2016; Etheridge 2018). Until recently, universities have followed the Western-European epistemological traditions imposed by colonialism, in particular, traditions legislated by apartheid in South Africa, and which are to some extent still entrenched in the education system (Sithole 2016; Heleta 2018).

In a historical overview of the progression from Precolonial education to Democratic education (see Table1.1), Jansen represents the various curricula as "knowledge regimes" imposed by the authorities in power in that era.

> Knowledge regimes are described here as the dominant and authoritative form(s) of knowledge, often originating in the state, which determine what counts as official knowledge (curriculum) in a nation's educational institutions. (Jansen 2019: 75)

Jansen's overview goes some way towards explaining how curricula have evolved to their present-day state in South Africa, and the legislation (discussed below) which was set in place by the apartheid government (in Phase 4), as well as attempts (in Phase 5) to dismantle it by the liberation government.

Table 1.1 Curriculum as knowledge regimes (adapted from Figure 3.1 in Jansen 2019: 74)

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
PRECOLONIAL EDUCATION	**COLONIAL EDUCATION**	**SEGREGATED EDUCATION**	**APARTHEID EDUCATION**	**DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION**
Tribal authority	Dutch/British authorities	Dutch/British authorities	Afrikaner authority	First democratic government
Authoritarian	Religious	Common B/W curriculum but at segregated schools	Different B/W curricula and resources	Cleanse apartheid syllabuses, install new knowledge structure
Imitative learning, transmission mode	Slave education/ mission schools	Ideological inculcation of respect for (European) authority	Christian National Education (scientism/ racism)	NQF and OBE (later CAPS): focus on learning outcomes rather than content
pre-1650s	1650s	1910s	1940s	1990s

The educational curriculum can thus be seen as a "regime" imposed by legislation, and any resulting inequities and inequalities set in place as being deliberate, informed by ideology, and not incidental or innocent. It must be noted that, while Precolonial

education, according to Jansen, was authoritarian in its nature, this was part of the 'cultural currency' of the indigenous people of Africa, and not imposed by an outside coloniser. Interestingly, while slave education (by the Dutch) was minimal and very basic, mission education (by the British) "produced an African elite of well-schooled Christians" (Jansen 2019: 75). In Phase 3, while there was a common curriculum for whites and blacks, and they wrote the same examinations, conditions were unequal in terms of infrastructure and resources, and the curriculum was designed to inculcate respect for European authority. It must be emphasised that the Christian National Education (CNE) imposed by the apartheid government was very different from the religious education of British mission schools, and represented knowledge as "neutral" (scientism) while propagating racism (Jansen 2019: 76). Jansen points out that apartheid education was not "foreigners imposing their will on black people, but fellow South African citizens"; he adds the caveat that "the blanket, accusatory statement that university curricula are colonial artefacts and therefore in need of decolonisation is, at best, misleading" and that "colonialism was only one influence on knowledge and curriculum" (2019: 80). It has in fact been the dismantling of apartheid which has been most problematic (see Phase 5 in Table 1.1). How apartheid education was set in place by the legislation imposed in Phase 4 is discussed in more detail below.

A brief review of the legislation which set apartheid in place and ensured that indigenous Africans received an inferior education is given here to explain the quandary in which higher education found itself at the time of writing and to contextualise the #FeesMustFall protests and demands for decolonisation. African students were (and still are) not just protesting about exorbitant fees[1] but also about the unsuitable nature of the mainly colonial-type university curriculum. The Bantu Education Act of 1953, which was later termed the 'Black Education Act', enforced - as law - certain precepts of apartheid, that is, the system devised mainly by Hendrik Verwoerd to ensure separation of different South African peoples on the basis of race (Parliament of South Africa. Department of Native Affairs. 1953).

[1]According to South Africa's Education statistics (2020), 51% of youth aged 18–24 claimed that they lacked the financial means to pay for University tuition. Moreover, the same source reported that 18% of those aged 18–24 and not registered at a tertiary institution had indicated that their weak academic performance had excluded them.

While Verwoerd has been termed the "architect of apartheid" (Kenney 2016), as Venter (1999: 415) points out, the basic tenets of apartheid were already in place by the time he became prime minister: what Verwoerd did was systematically legalise a cruelly discriminatory system which was allegedly the accepted viewpoint of the Afrikaans people (Giliomee 2003: 374), who at the time held political power. Under the Bantu Education Act the education of black South Africans was used strategically and punitively to suppress and channel black South Africans into the labour force (Thobejane 2013). At the level of higher education, the Act affected the universities in enforcing that educational institutions were kept separate on the basis of race and reinforcing structural inequalities. So-called 'white' universities were well-resourced and located in the metropoles of Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, and the 'black' universities were under-resourced and geographically isolated in what were known as the Bantustans. [2] As As Soudien (2015: 8) points out, "race" was a central aspect to the beginnings of the university system in South Africa, and black universities became "tribal", being taken over by the nationalist government and downgraded as part of Bantu education. The Extension of University Education Act of 1959 made it a criminal offense for a non-white student to enrol at a "white" university (Parliament of South Africa. Department of Native Affairs. 1959). Later, during the interim and post-apartheid period, these discriminatory laws were repealed, notably by the Education and Training Act, 1979, the Interim Constitution in 1993, and the South African Schools Act, 1996 (South Africa. 1993; South Africa. Department of Education. 1979,1996).

However, huge damage had been caused to the South African education system. Ntantala, writing in the 1960s, termed the resulting chaos caused by these discriminatory acts the "Abyss of Bantu education", leading to "the debased education of the new tribal colleges" (1960: 42), thus downgrading university education for black South Africans:

> The mutilation of Fort Hare [3] and the establishment of the tribal colleges are, of course, a logical conclusion of Bantu Education - a fact that was ignored

[2] "Bantustan, also known as Bantu homeland, South Africa homeland, or black state**,** any of 10 former territories that were designated by the white-dominated government of South Africa as pseudo-national homelands for the country's black African (classified by the government as Bantu) population during the mid- to late 20th century" (https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bantustan).

[3] While Fort Hare was situated in the 'homelands', the college was initially vibrant and multiracial, and was significant in its nurturing of black leaders and a small class of black professionals, notably, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Robert Sobukwe and Mangosuthu Buthelezi in South Africa. However, the taking over Fort Hare by the National Party government from the 1960s and its later 'independence' (circa 1980) reduced it to the level of a tribal college, which was "a marked decline from its previous status as the greatest centre of black higher education in Southern and Eastern Africa" (Fort Hare 2020).

> or played down, if foreseen at all, by those universities in South Africa that claim to be guardians of education but which are only now awakening to the dangers of Nationalist education policy for the country as a whole. (Ntantala 1960: 42)

Lockhat and Van Niekerk (2000: 294) conclude that the Bantu education system was designed to deny African children the opportunity for gaining the quality education which would enable them to compete with whites at an economic level. Moreover, the debased and under-resourced nature of black school education meant that very few African students actually reached tertiary level (Lockhat and Van Niekerk 2000: 294). As Motlhaka sums up:

> In essence, Bantu Education was designed to inculcate a sense of inferiority in blacks. For this reason, blacks were trained to acquire practical and technical skills in order to become carpenters, labourers and artisans for the white economy, but not professionals or critical thinkers who might threaten the status quo. (2016: 65)

Motlhaka refers to Freire's description of this type of transmission education as suppressing the students' creativity, innovativeness and critical thinking and disposing them to "serve the interests of the oppressors who do not care about educational transformation" (Motlhaka 2016: 65). Freire's original text (2005: 72) is interesting, because he castigates the transmission type education which was imposed on pupils in African schools, where "learning off by heart" became the stock method of coping with unintelligible content in what was virtually a foreign language, that is, English or Afrikaans. However, the issue of critical pedagogy will be dealt with later in this account (see pp. 38-39; 56-59).

Soudien (2015) contributes an interesting perspective on the development of white university curricula, relevant in terms of these now being opened to African students. He argues that the university curriculum, imported from overseas, was "indubitably European in its essential foundations", but it was not, he points out, "anti-African or even racist" (Soudien 2015: 17). This is a point supported by Jansen (2019: 80): "it is important to restate that colonial knowledge is not the same thing as apartheid knowledge". What was (and still is) problematic is that the curriculum was Europeanised and founded on a Eurocentric scientific base for establishing the validity of knowledge claims. This provided a template for progress which was "ineluctably racial" even though

it admitted non-Europeans into the world of the refined European scholar (Soudien 2015: 17). According to Soudien, even recently the "whiteness" of the universities is being staunchly defended in spite of attempts to make them more appropriate to the country's demographics (2015: 19). He concludes with a comment which illustrates the ambivalence of universities at the time my study commenced:

> The important insight to take away here is that even as this white supremacy entrenches itself, there remains inside the universities the persistent expression of an alternative sociocultural appreciation of the other. (Soudien 2016: 18-19)

The teaching and learning context of the universities, as discussed next, makes sense when viewed in this social context, given the above backdrop. While communities have - and still are - changing dramatically in response to globalization, in terms of young South Africans appropriating Western (and other) tastes, fashions and habits, including use of digital technology, some university staff and students have tended to resist change, in spite of attempts at 'transformation', which have often been little more than adding a surface veneer of Africanisation in pasting in "indigenous languages, games, stories, songs and factoids to create a 'decolonised' curriculum" (Clements 2019: 18). Moreover, as Jansen has explained (see p. 2 above), European colonialism was not the only influence on knowledge as reflected in the curriculum, and it is the complex nature of the knowledge imposed on the curriculum by successive "knowledge regimes" which is the problem, as well as the fact that not all universities were affected in the same way (2019: 80). And while attempts at "indigenisation" to Africanise the curriculum are valuable in uncovering the wealth of undiscovered knowledge (the 'cultural currency' mentioned above (p. 3), in its extreme form, Africanisation could be seen as unethical in attempting to "mimic the coloniality from which we try to escape in creating a new power asymmetry where Africans exercise power over others" (Naude 2019: 288).

When one looks more at the university context, as will be discussed below, one finds that syllabuses and teaching/learning methods have not changed materially to reflect the needs of the community, and therefore, the students (Mbembe 2016; Magoqwana 2018). Genuine attempts at Africanisation would include addressing the issue of Eurocentric curricula at a more profound level and increasing the numbers of African academic staff. One of the problems facing this kind of Africanisation is that universities and their settings are very different, and that even successfully negotiated changes need to be

monitored constantly by stakeholders to check that they are still on track, as this is an "ongoing process" (Costandius *et al*. 2018: 84), in which the transform*ing* curriculum is "a space of struggle, creativity and transformation" (Le Grange 2016: 7).

As mentioned in the Preface (p. v), this research was prompted by my reflections on my effectiveness as a drama lecturer when students expressed dislike for Shakespearean content whether in text analysis or monologue performances. The students' responses indicated that Shakespearean texts were difficult to understand, boring and - to them - irrelevant. Given that this material was unavoidable, I was motivated to develop a methodology to facilitate the creative interpretation, of traditional English dramatic texts (i.e. such as Shakespearean texts), a methodology which might be more relevant to the current student demographic. The issue is not whether Shakespeare should be part of the South African curriculum, but how teaching can be made creative, engaging and relevant when Shakespearean texts are set as part of the syllabus. Moreover, the fact that the language of instruction at UKZN is still mainly English (Murray 2019: 2) makes interpretation of English texts by isiZulu-speaking students even more daunting. [4] This research project, in the form of a case study, comprised teaching the Text Study module and developing a production as part of the process, and was carried out in the Drama Education Department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The socio-political-economic context of the university is post-apartheid South Africa, with the student group being predominantly African, and the majority, isiZulu-speaking, who were for the most part, economically - and educationally - disadvantaged. At the time the empirical work was carried out, the Drama Education Department curriculum at UKZN was heavily loaded with the study of classical texts[5], in particular, Shakespearean plays.

Changing student demographics

The demographics of students attending higher education in South Africa have changed considerably since 1994, when universities started admitting an increasing number of

[4] It must be noted that, at the time of writing, UKZN's language policy of 2006 is in the process of being implemented. Its mission is: "To embrace and foster functional bilingualism at the University of KwaZulu-Natal through the promotion of equitable use of the English language and isiZulu as provided for in the University Language Policy (2006)". This includes development of technical terminology in isiZulu, provision of translation, editing and translation to the university community, and to develop an isiZulu National Corpus and Term Bank. (http://ulpdo.ukzn.ac.za/HomePage.aspx)

[5] In the UKZN Drama Education Department, Shakespearean texts are grouped in a 'classical' type category (part of Theatre History), together with Greek, Roman, Elizabethan (other than Shakespearean), Restoration and Commedia dell'Arte plays.

students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002; Mouton, Louw and Strydom 2013: 287). In spite of this, Heleta (2016: 8) contends that universities are on the whole still offering traditional curricula with colonial-based content:

> Since the end of the oppressive and racist apartheid system in 1994, epistemologies and knowledge systems at most South African universities have not considerably changed; they remain rooted in colonial, apartheid and Western worldviews and epistemological traditions. The curriculum remains largely Eurocentric and continues to reinforce white and Western dominance and privilege.

While some progress has been made in transforming drama curricula in South Africa, universities still lag behind in favouring Afrikaans and western scripts, and drama departments do not have sufficient competent and qualified academic staff to undertake the transformation (Ebewo 2011: 133,135; Ebewo and Sirayi 2018: 90). Should universities, then, be setting Shakespeare in drama courses, in terms of the colonial baggage it might be seen to be bringing? Or should the study of Shakespeare be viewed as fitting "within a global system of meaning-making and within complex networks of cultural production," that is, "without borders", as Young (2014: 47) suggests?

Many of the difficulties experienced by my students in KwaZulu-Natal can be traced to the practice of setting traditional texts, in particular, Shakespearean texts, in Drama Education (and Drama Studies)**.** [6] What is set in Drama Education (and, to some extent, Drama Studies), is of course, dictated by the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). This is because student teachers need to learn the content and processes they will be teaching at school. This means that the Drama Education syllabus is closely tied to CAPS, with little flexibility. The term 'traditional' texts has been used in this study to refer to the stock repertoire of Western classic texts customarily set by Drama and Drama Education Departments, which may include classical texts (e.g. *Lysistrata*), Shakespearean texts (e.g. *Hamlet*) and modern texts (e.g. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*?) (Worthen 1998). The setting of these texts follows a Western literary tradition and forms part of colonial discursive practices (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002).

[6] The lecturers consulted (see Appendix D) confirmed that traditional texts (Greek, Roman, Medieval, Elizabethan) are still being set at their universities and that syllabuses have not changed to accommodate the changed student demographics.

The paradox of writing African stories in English

African writers such as Ngugi wa Tiong'o (2009) felt strongly on issues such as the paradox of black African writers using the English medium to tell their African stories (see Lehohla 2019). Ngugi (2009) and Okara (1964) bring it to our attention that English in colonised countries is not merely a medium of communication but a vehicle for the transmission of culture, a concept supported by both postcolonialists (Gandhi 1998; Popa 2013) and decolonialists (Grosfoguel 2007; Velásquez 2016). This implies that one does not simply learn to speak and write English fluently without assimilating the culture that it carries. Du Bois (2007) expressed the concept of "two-ness", being African yet deeply assimilated into European culture, as "double consciousness", described also by Fanon (1986).

When African writers refuse to write in English, they are often told that they will fail because English is universal and your culture's languages are not. When one asks "Why Shakespeare?" the response is that Shakespeare is universal, and that his characters and themes transcend culture, time and place thus making him the best writer that ever lived (see Bloom 1994, 1999). This view of Shakespeare reflects the core beliefs of British imperialists as critiqued in postcolonial studies. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2003: 55): "We are often told that what makes Shakespeare or Dante or Goethe 'great' is their ability to reveal something of 'the universal human condition'". However, they describe universality as a myth and dismiss it as purely a manifestation of imperial control in literature studies. The notion of the 'universality' of great literature follows the tradition of liberal humanism: "the 'liberal' articulates the political complacency of traditional scholarship, the 'humanism' the belief in the universality of literature, that good literature benefits all humanity" (Cuddon 2013: 395). However, its critics argue that there is no "inherent truth" in literature, that "its meaning and value are always culturally and historically situated", and that "literature rarely promotes the interests of all humanity, but usually those of ruling elites" (Cuddon 2013: 395), insights which inform much of postcolonial critique, as will be discussed later. Habib (2019: 11) terms the tenets of liberal humanism as a myth, in fact, as "Medieval conceptions", concluding that: "This movement is also *the inner dialectic of imperialism,* its drive not only to conquer but to assimilate and integrate the Other" (my emphasis).

In an essay in *The Post-Colonial Reader*, Achebe (2003) refutes the idea that there is universality in literature. He defends his position by stating that it is clear that when a writer is Western his work is said to be universally informed while others are seen as having to work very hard to achieve this status. This creates the illusion that to find universality one must travel to Europe or America. Postcolonial authors reveal that English literature was used as a way of educating and indeed civilising its colonial subjects (see Singh 1989: 446; Sharpe 2003: 100; Chibber 2013: 16). The very idea of universality negates the fact that, though colonised societies possessed some similarities, the effects of colonialism in these societies could also differ vastly. For example, in India English literature was used as a tool for spreading British culture to the middle class, thereby creating a class in Indian society with "English taste, opinions, morals and dialect" (Morton 2007).

During colonisation Shakespeare was put on a pedestal, declared the best writer in the world, and became the personification of Englishness and a measure of civility. Shakespeare was used to endorse colonialism in the conservative ways that it was interpreted, essentially maintaining the status qu**o** (Loomba and Orkin 1998). Cartelli (2005) is in agreement, and goes so far as to say that privileged texts such as Shakespeare's have a powerful ability to affect the way the reader views the world.

Why bother to teach Shakespeare?

Why, then, in view of my perception that Shakespearean study can be not only meaningless but oppressive to my isiZulu students in their university context, bother to teach Shakespeare at all?

In post-colonial societies where the dominance of imperial canons is particularly evident in choices made in the curricula, and the value placed on these texts as well as on how they are taught, it becomes important to find a way of **s**hifting their power (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002), perhaps to de-emphasise the canonical aspect. Moreover, though I may point out some difficulties experienced in the teaching and learning of Shakespeare, and at times refer to my personal Bard trauma, it does not mean that I believe that Shakespeare should be scrapped. To the contrary: when Shakespeare is decolonized, it becomes a rich repository of plots for teachers/learners and professionals alike (Marowitz 1991,

Mondello 2006). Aside from plots, Shakespeare's texts can inspire contemporary works with its themes, history, folklore, stories, and real and fictional characters.[7] In an interview after a production of *The Tempest*, South African actor and liberation activist John Kani, stated that, in spite of our history of colonisation, Shakespeare's work is "classic" in that it still has relevance for African society:

> We have a history of colonisation by the British. Through missionaries at schools, we were taught to speak good English, the Queen's language. Why Shakespeare is relevant to us as Africans is that he tells stories of great kingdoms, great wars and battles, great love stories, stories of hatred, good vs. evil, mythology. These things make up the African culture. What makes Shakespeare's work classic is that it still has relevance today in African society. (Artslink.co.za News 2008)

When Shakespeare is not taught for Shakespeare's sake, his work is no longer about putting English culture on a pedestal, or justifying British colonial rule, but about using this repository as a resource for theatre making. This would require transforming the perspective of Shakespeare as a 'holy grail' or Bloom's (1994) celebration of the 'best' in literature and representing a 'canon' of excellence. Note that my intention is *not* to detract from Shakespeare's individual stature as a dramatist/producer, but rather to ascertain whether/how his works are relevant to Drama Education pedagogy in the university context where I now teach. My rationale for 'bothering' is as follows. Shakespeare used whatever resources were available – in histories, folklore, the Greek/Roman classics, and the Bible, amongst others (Gillespie 2007). His plays, therefore, not only offer students a "rich repository of plots" (Cartelli 1999: 170), but also a portal to these original sources, which may suggest a very different interpretation (to that given by traditional critics - or Shakespeare himself) when seen through different cultural perspectives in post-colonial times.[8]

At present, in the 'digital age', we are at a similar watershed, where plots, themes and characters of traditional plays, films and serials are being 'made over' rapidly to satisfy a global audience with near-instant viewing access. Demand for content in this environment is both huge and expanding: the demand for entertainment in digital format

[7] Lecturers consulted made the point that Shakespeare "speaks to many cultures", "is incredibly rich and layered", and has "universal themes".

[8] As Young (2019: 25) says: "Shakespeare's work becomes dislodged from what has at times been its woeful historical position, embedded within the forbidding literary canon propagated by a succession of British colonial regimes".

is in fact insatiable (Glenday 2019; Sayal 2019). Viewers see these makeovers and question the history, authenticity and reliability of these accounts, often going back to books or archives to argue (online) about the faithfulness of portrayals of historical figures and celebrities (see Richardson 2017: 111): there is a hunger for novelty, authenticity and knowledge about the often bizarre nature of humankind's actual history and the history of our storytelling. Shakespeare himself has become an iconic figure, a commodity, with all kinds of arguments waging about his identity, personality and authorship: a strangely reclusive 'Renaissance man' who lived, acted, scripted, directed and produced a massive output of English theatre; to be celebrated, marketed, exported, transformed and disseminated globally.

1.3 Interpreting meaning through performance

However, there still remains the problem of how to deal with the formal setting of Shakespearean texts in syllabuses, where the lecturer is not given the latitude to use Shakespeare as a rich repository for theatre-making, and to adapt or 'recycle' plots and themes at will. As a former lecturer in the Department of Drama Studies at the Durban University of Technology (DUT), where Shakespeare was set in abundance, I had little say in the matter: my brief was to tackle the teaching and learning of Shakespeare to the best of my ability. In my current position as lecturer in Drama Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), I find that a similar situation applies, in that students are set canonical texts for study, with little attention being given to actual performance, and that most students have difficulty understanding the prescribed texts. One option would be not to set canonical texts such as Shakespeare's plays. However, if Shakespeare *is* to be taught, I agree with the points which Thurman (2016) makes in his article, published on the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death:

> These examples make it clear that Shakespeare can't be viewed or read – and therefore cannot be taught – in an ahistorical or a political vacuum. If we are to teach Shakespeare in Africa, we cannot teach the text alone. We owe it to students to acknowledge, indeed to emphasise, and then to analyse the baggage that Shakespeare brings with him. Ultimately, the discipline in which Shakespeare really "belongs" is drama…Whether it is at secondary or tertiary level, as part of a formal curriculum or extra-curricular activity, in Africa or elsewhere in the world, the magic of performance should remain at the core of any assignation with Shakespeare. (Thurman 2016: 16)

In other words, Shakespeare's plays should be treated "as great dramas rather than sacred texts" (Thurman 2015: [1]).

In my lecturing practice so far, I have found that isiZulu-speaking students have difficulty in navigating traditional texts (in particular, Shakespearean texts) and interpreting meaning through performance. The difficulties experienced in interpreting Shakespearean texts are not limited to South African students; as seminal theatre theorist Peter Brook (1996: 9) confesses: "secretly we find it excruciatingly boring - and in our hearts we blame Shakespeare or theatre as such, or even ourselves". I believe that the learning of classics should be accessible, collaborative, exciting and contextually relevant. Advocates of student centeredness in education practice would be in agreement that it is of the utmost importance that lecturers be active in identifying student learning needs (Weimar 2013: xvi). With that in mind, it became vital for me to reflect on the effectiveness and relevance of the methods employed in the Drama Education Department's teaching of Shakespeare. The research problem was therefore identified as developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts, a methodology which might transcend the barriers of culture, language and historical era in the South African context. This study explored how combining lectures in the Text Study module with the workshop theatre process might go some way towards solving the problem of interpreting traditional texts. The underlying hypothesis was that using this methodology might not only solve the problem of textual interpretation, but, at the same time, might help to integrate discrete syllabus items into a holistic teaching and learning process.

However, at the time of carrying out this study, it was not just the interpretation of Shakespearean texts, or other traditional texts, which my isiZulu-speaking students found problematic. A more basic problem was that the student demographics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal had changed to such as extent that students came to textual study lectures inadequately prepared to deal with the actual texts themselves, as these were (and still are) are culturally and linguistically inaccessible to English Second Language (ESL) speakers coming from disadvantaged educational backgrounds.[9] As shown in Chapter 1

[9] Lecturers interviewed all confirmed the fact that their students found the language of Shakespeare's plays difficult to understand, and that they made various attempts to solve this problem (e.g. modernisation, setting the scene in a South African context, choosing short plays or plays students could identify with.) However, they admitted that none of these methods proved to be particularly effective, and that students tended to learn without understanding.

(pp. 2-6), the legacy of apartheid-era Bantu education meant that even today, the majority of Black students entering universities are still at a disadvantage and not prepared for study at tertiary level. As a consequence, most of my lecture needed to be spent dealing with the literal meaning of the texts before any attempts at interpretation could take place. This 'text-as content' approach tends to disengage students, and lecturers (myself included) tend to add more and more personally-relevant content to make it more 'interesting'. Thus the curriculum becomes more and more fragmented, more difficult for students to make sense of, and even less related to real-world aspects of theatre.

This research is part of what I believe should be a whole curriculum transformation process: it seeks to retain what is good while ensuring that tuition is relevant and student-centred. It speaks to the nature of teaching and learning, not just of drama, but all processes which are part of the interwoven fabric of our social context, and which frame, define and enable our everyday lives. The transformation process involves how teaching and learning can be made creative and fulfilling for both teacher and students, as well as relevant in terms of the real-world context. One of the methods of creative experimentation I have explored is the use of digital technology, which I feel is particularly appropriate for the current student body, who are now the 'virtual generation', blogging, texting and 'tubing' on the Internet. In my experience, even students from rural areas quickly accommodated to use of cell phones and social media within a short time of becoming part of the university community. This did not mean that they had any experience of online learning, or how an LMS worked as opposed to a cell phone app, but they were by now aware of the Internet, and could be trained in the basics of online learning on the Moodle LMS. This meant that I saw use of digital technology as a key component in bridging the gap between the linguistic and cultural disconnection which the students perceived between themselves and the Shakespearean texts, as they were 'connected' to the information age through social media.

In this study, I interrogate what it means to be creative in terms of:

- transforming what is potentially dull and boring educational content into a vital teaching and learning process;
- integrating discrete syllabus contents into the social process involved in theatre-making; and
- enhancing the teaching and learning process with digital technology.

This fits in with my teaching philosophy, which is that the pedagogical process should be involved, collaborative, relevant and student-centred. As I see it, students have a shared responsibility in their own education and growth, and need to be made to feel that they are capable, responsible, and have a voice in shaping current events. They should feel empowered by the teaching and learning process, and should feel that the lecture room and studio are safe places in which to experiment, although always within responsible bounds. In my experience, this approach enables creativity, and creativity is an essential part of performance.

In conclusion to this section, my motivation for this research project can be seen to combine a number of overlapping interests: creative learning, use of digital technology for learning, theatre, and performance making.

1.4 Research problem and objectives

I identified my research problem as finding a means of facilitating the dramatic interpretation process for students where Shakespearean texts are prescribed as part of the Drama Education syllabus in higher educational institutions. This led me to the identification of two related problems. Firstly, as interpretation is only a part of the acting process, a means also needed to be found of integrating textual interpretation with performance. Next, ways also needed to be found to make the interpretation through performance of Shakespearean texts relevant for today's students. My research objectives were as follows: to develop a methodology for creative interpretation through performance of Shakespearean texts prescribed as part of the Drama Education syllabus in higher educational institutions, and to find ways to make this process relevant and empowering for today's students (more specifically, my students in the UKZN Drama Education Department).

In order to focus the research more narrowly, I formulated the following specific research questions:

1. In the application of a constructivist pedagogy[10] to combine lectures in textual

[10] It is acknowledged that my use of constructivist pedagogy had congruencies with critical pedagogy, which is understandable, as my intention was to empower the students by making Shakespearean texts more accessible. These congruencies will be discussed in Chapter 2, pp.56-59.

interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation and use of digital technology, how is this experienced by students, in terms of:

   a. their response to the teaching and learning approach,

   b. their understanding of the language of the prescribed traditional text/s, and

   c. their dramatic performances of the prescribed text/s?

2. Based on the individual and shared experiences of the groups involved, what features of this integrative approach might be identified as facilitating creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts?

3. What pattern theory or model of the developing teaching methodology emerges as a result of the analysis of the answers to the above questions?

Reflecting on the answers to the above questions, I hoped, would lead to drawing general conclusions about the effectiveness of the teaching and learning of Shakespearean interpretation through performance in the Drama Education Department.

1.5 Main themes of the research

The following are the main themes of the research:

- The notion of interpretation through performance (Gilbert 1984; Brown 1993; Kirk 1999).

The notion of interpretation through performance is the main focus of this study as it seeks to de-centre the text that brings with it barriers of language, era and culture and instead find ways for contemporary students to connect with and transform texts in dramatic interpretations that go beyond the given texts, so that the text can be viewed as a jumping off point rather than a fixed canon (Wolf, Edmiston and Enciso 1997). This can lead to a completely new product, termed "syncretic theatre", which combines features of Western and indigenous cultures (Hazou 2015: 144).

- The need to develop a methodology that is student-centred (constructivist) (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Manning 1997; Lincoln and Guba 2013), in being:
  - contextualised in post-colonial South Africa
  - relevant to today's students
  - collaborative

- interactive
- creative
- performance-based

The need to develop a student-centred methodology was addressed by applying constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation with the innovative use of digital technology for inspiration, reflection, documentation, and to collect data. A methodology contextualised in post-colonial (i.e. post-apartheid) South Africa and relevant to today's students meant 'decolonising' Shakespeare and 'recycling' his texts in a form accessible and relevant to students in my lecturing context, KwaZulu-Natal.

- Modelling as a way of summarising the main features or process used in a teaching/learning methodology. Constructivism has been criticised for not being generalizable but it can be argued that a case study is a microcosm of the general situation, so that what is observed there is to some extent generalizable (Moriceau 2009: 421).

I developed a model for the creative interpretation of Shakespearean dramatic texts from the results of the empirical research which, as I was using a constructivist research orientation, emerged as a pattern theory (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Lincoln and Guba 2007). The process of transforming the teaching and learning of traditional texts by means of teacher agency[11] was also modelled in this research, as I will suggest in the concluding chapter.

1.6 Definitions of key terms

Brief definitions are given here of key terms related to Drama and Drama Education used in the thesis. These terms and associated concepts will be dealt with in more detail in the Literature Review.

- **Canonical texts**: This refers to a body of privileged texts with a reserve of meanings accessible only through special disciplines of interpretation. Canonical texts are not simply interpreted, making their message available; it is insisted that its given form is

[11] Agential transformation of the teaching and learning methodology is suggested as a means of initiating the decolonising process.

the only means through which its message can be reliably transmitted (Kibel 1983; Gates 1985).

- **Traditional**: The term 'traditional' in this thesis refers to the stock repertoire of classic texts customarily set by Drama Education, which may include classical texts (e.g. *Lysistrata*), Shakespearean texts (e.g. *Hamlet*) and modern texts (e.g. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*?) (Worthen 1998). Setting of these texts follows a Western literary tradition and forms part of colonial discursive practices (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002).

- **Interpretation**: The interpretation of dramatic text attempts to render creatively the social interactions enacted in the life-worlds represented in texts: this may be done so as to conform to the given text as closely as possible, or so as to produce free representations, according to participants' contexts, needs and purposes (Skinner 1972; Link 1980; Furlong 2014).

- **Improvisation**: In the arts, improvisation involves suspension of set structures for a practice and the introduction of non-traditional elements. As a precondition, improvisation thus requires the power to invent new forms spontaneously (Carter 2000; Maples 2007; Flegar and Viljevac 2018).

- **Innovative**: The term 'innovative' characterises the production or adoption of useful ideas and idea implementation (Van de Ven 1986; Scott and Bruce 1994), and refers to a state of mind rather than a product (Zaghloul 2018).

- **Workshop theatre**: Workshopping is a collaborative construction through assembling, editing, and shaping individuals' experiences of the world into an original product (Kendall, Kendall and Lee 2005; Singh 2012; Oddey 2013).

- **Model**: A model is used to describe, make sense of, explain or predict the behaviour of some complex system. Models are designed to meet particular purposes in specific situations and thus involve situated forms of learning and problem solving. A model has been shown to be a powerful conceptual framework for research on the interacting

development of students, teachers, curriculum resources, and instructional programs (Greeno 1991; Lesh and Lehrer 2003; Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Confrey and Maloney 2006).

- **Methodology**: Developing a teaching/learning methodology for interpretation through performance was the focus of this study. This is not to be confused with the term 'methodology' used with the meaning of '*research* methodology', but refers rather to the learning and teaching methodology used in Education (Vin-Mbah 2012: 113).

- **Creative**: 'Creative' is defined as representing something new, different or innovative; of high quality; and appropriate (i.e. to the task at hand); in other words, "a creative response is novel, good, and relevant" (Hackbert 2010; Kaufman and Sternberg 2010; Toivanen, Halkilahti and Ruismäki 2013).

- **Drama in education:**[12] This is an approach falling under the 'umbrella' of applied theatre and means that one uses drama techniques to assist teaching and learning in the classroom with students/learners, guided by the teacher. Drama in education (or DIE) can be seen to be a tool for teaching across the curriculum, essentially repurposing drama methodology for education (Bolton and Heathcote 1999) .

1.7 Value of the research and new contribution to knowledge

While the literature shows that there have been various studies on the benefits of using performance-based approaches when teaching Shakespeare, I believe that this study adds to the body of knowledge by creatively combining known methods to create a methodology to facilitate the creative interpretation of Shakespeare. The new contributions to knowledge are the methodology developed for creative interpretation through performance, expressed as a model, and the innovative use of social media as part of this methodology, as well as for data collection. It is my belief that the methodology for interpretation of Shakespearean texts through performance has value for teaching and learning, as it de-mystifies the interpretation process by setting it in a modern-day local context, and actively engages students in various aspects of theatre-

[12] Not to be confused with the academic subject in universities called: "Drama Education".

making. I would argue that the research also has value in modelling a process for decolonising the university in Drama Education in terms of transforming the teaching and learning of traditional texts by teacher agency, and discuss these aspects in more detail below.

The methodology developed for interpretation through performance

A methodology was developed for interpretation through performance which was received enthusiastically by participants, and not only engaged them in theatre making but also modelled for them, as student teachers, a methodology which could be used in their own teaching practice. Moreover, I found that defocusing from textual interpretation at the outset led to more participant engagement with the original text in the later stages of the process, and actually helped them to understand the canonical text better (Kirk 1999), as it had by then been properly contextualised in the course of the project sessions. In other words, the process had facilitated understanding of the text as part of a play performance, and not just a verbal puzzle to be solved (Somers 1994). While all of the methods I used (e.g. workshopping, constructivist pedagogy, group work and social media platforms) were not in themselves original, it is my position that their integration into a composite methodology was what made this approach a creative and exciting methodology for interpretation through performance. Moreover, the expression of the basic elements of this methodology as a five-stage model means that the underlying process is easily accessible to other educators who might wish to apply it. To my knowledge, this modelling of the methodology is a new contribution to knowledge in the field of drama education, and, although many of the methods used are also those used in drama in education, these are used in various subjects across the curriculum rather than in the theatre-making process itself, which is not limited to a school or university environment.

Use of social media

The research involved use of trendy social media platforms which were popular with students, accessible, and facilitated communication, reflection and feedback. Because of popularity, familiarity of use, and accessibility, social media engaged students to a greater extent than traditional lecturing media (Sandpearl 2016). Social media were not only used as part of the developing methodology for interpretation through performance but

also as a method for collecting data from participants. YouTube was used as a repository for viewing multiple interpretations of Shakespeare performances, as well as for uploading participant performances on their own YouTube channel. Participants looked towards the large online community dedicated to the interpretation of Shakespeare for inspiration and took great pride in seeing their work on the online platform, and this encouraged reflection (Desmet 2009). WhatsApp was an already popular application that was used by the participants on a daily basis. I therefore created a WhatsApp group which allowed for a private space that allowed voice notes, texting, sharing of content (videos and images) as well as video calling (Bouhnik and Deshen 2014). The flexibility and user friendliness of this application allowed for focus group discussions, individual and group reflections as well as workshopping ideas. The use of WhatsApp also allowed for the participants to be engaged, and extended learning and creating outside of the sessions (Sandpearl 2016). I created a private Instagram account for the participants, providing a platform which could be used as a repository for video performances and images (i.e. for choreography) during the workshop process and also as an interview medium. Short (under one minute) videos were uploaded for reflection on performances and images were posted for staging or reflection in rehearsal. Instagram also encouraged engagement outside of the sessions themselves (Handayani 2015).

The use of tablets rather than computers in laboratories or laptops is what transformed this project in terms of being a portable, and therefore, handy tool for recording, playing back and reflecting on drama activities ranging from participant introductions, 'ice-breakers' and improvisations to more formal rehearsals. Instagram was particularly appropriate for this study as it focused on physical as well as verbal aspects of performance and had the cachet of being used by celebrities. WhatsApp had by the time of the project morphed from a cheap texting tool into an extremely popular app used extensively for social and academic communication by university staff and students. It also had advanced capacity for voice, visual and video communication. As opposed to being merely an academic tool, digital technology in the apps used rapidly facilitated the kind of social bonding and quick communication needed to weld a group of student volunteers at different levels (some were not even Drama or Drama Education students) into a cohesive and effective theatre workshopping group.

Modelling a process for decolonising the university in Drama Education

What this research also does is model not only a methodology for creative interpretation through performance, but also, in microcosm, a process for decolonising the university (Alvares and Faruqi 2012; Le Grange 2016; Bala 2017) in the area of Drama Education with regard to transforming the teaching and learning of theatre-making based on traditional texts. While this has not been expressed formally as a model, this process is documented throughout the thesis. Furthermore, although this study did not set out to transform the Drama Education curriculum per se, in the summing up of the results (see Chapter 6), I conclude that the creative methodology developed could be viewed as a form of 'agential curriculum transformation', that is, transformation from within by teacher agency (Priestley *et al.* 2012; Toom, Pyhältö and Rust 2015).

1.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to show the main elements of the research project, and also to show that the aspect focused on in this study, interpretation-through-performance, does not occur in a vacuum, but in a specific social context and era. In this case, the post-colonial context and the need for transformation of the universities through a 'decolonising' process, have been shown to have impact on the study, its focus, objectives and approach. These issues will be unfolded and discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2: Exposition

2.1 Introduction

'Exposition' is the term I have used for the literature review, as it is the part of the play that "sets up the main action, introduces the characters, explains the background, and anticipates the conflict" (Quinn 2006: 154). It is here that important background information is revealed about the characters (which may include past experiences), the setting and events leading up to the main action. This chapter is as much about me as it is about other authors' experiences, as the literature I have selected to 'set the scene' speaks to my experience as lecturer in Drama Studies and Drama Education. The focus on interpretation through performance of canonical texts came about through my experience that education in Drama (which I lectured at DUT), as well as Drama Education (which I now lecture at UKZN) required teaching and learning techniques which integrated discrete items into the real-world practice of Drama/Drama Education, that is, theatre-making. Students need to experience drama as a process, not as separate instances of 'learning' a list of separate items. These items might well be linked in terms of all relating to a specific era or school, but the connection usually remains implicit (except in the minds of the educators), as well as how these elements are actually integrated in real-life dramatic productions. Developing a methodology for interpretation through performance was an attempt to link purely textual analysis to actual stage performance. This would emphasise the point that 'scripts' of Shakespearean plays were meant to be performed (in a Drama programme, at least) and not analysed like ancient Latin texts. In the real-world situation, actors might be required to act out Shakespearean plays (or excerpts), and not 'translate' the written texts for a producer or audience.

I challenged the assumption that this kind of translation (i.e. for the lecturer, as evidence of understanding) had to be done before performance, rather than having meanings emerge from attempts at enacting summaries of the plays/excerpts. These summaries would perforce have to be created by the lecturer, and would need to be phrased in a contemporary argot accessible to the student participant/actors. Interpretation then becomes co-creation between lecturer and students in a process which loops back in time to the prescribed Shakespearean text, revealing deeper meanings and further potential for

re-enactment. The students bring their own local community (whether town or city) meanings to the text, which makes them not just actors but co-authors. In this way, separate syllabus items such as 'Textual analysis', 'Theatre History' and 'Performance' can be integrated into an authentic learning interaction which resonates at many levels and is not only appropriate and meaningful to students but is understood by them. Phrasing a syllabus as discrete, abstract items is a typical feature of Western curricula, a theme which runs throughout works on decolonising the university. This approach to content views reality as if it were "motionless, static, compartmentalised and predictable" (Freire 2005: 71). The teaching/learning method developed in this study suggests that an integrated approach should be used, rather than 'teach' the syllabus item 'Text Analysis' as interpretation of text-on-a-page, the item 'Theatre History' as learning content, and 'Performance', and producing a play with no reference to the other elements being involved or how.

In this chapter, I will review literature on Shakespearean interpretation relevant to this study, focusing on the following themes:

- the interpretation of Shakespearean texts through performance (the development of a methodology for this is the focus of this study);
- insights offered by postcolonial and decolonial theories, including the role of applied theatre in decolonising education;
- transforming the teaching/learning process by using constructivist pedagogy, theatre workshopping and digital technology.

They will be dealt with in the above order, for the following reasons. Firstly, interpretation of Shakespearean text, whether as a literary exercise or to produce a play, is a complex process, even for mother-tongue English speakers in England (Daily Mail Reporter 2016). Next, some of the reasons given by educators for retaining inaccessible canonical works in modern-day curricula are discussed. Then literature on postcolonial theory is reviewed for its insights into both the importance afforded to Western canonical texts and their effects on colonised people. Reference to decolonial theory suggests a diversity of ways in which the negative results of colonising on indigenous populations can be addressed. The final section will look at the combination of pedagogical processes and digital technology proposed in this study to transform teaching/learning, and in the process, 'decolonise' Shakespeare.

2.2 Interpretation of Shakespearean texts

Textual interpretation of Shakespeare involves moving past the barriers of language and culture. However, though Shakespeare's works may carry immense educational potential (Bloom 1994, 1999), one cannot ignore the difficulties presented by the text, particularly when teaching second or even third language English speakers.

Difficulties experienced by students in interpreting texts

Aydin (2013) explains that second language English speakers often have a difficult relationship with Shakespeare, as they find the language archaic, the teaching methods limited, and the cultural concepts difficult to understand. Haddon (2009) states that the sheer amount of what is unfamiliar in Shakespeare's text creates bafflement, which then turns into indifference and hostility. During my lecturing in DUT's Drama Department and UKZN's Drama Education Department, isiZulu-speaking students consistently admitted to having difficulty in navigating Shakespearean English and interpreting meaning through performance. They questioned the relevance of learning to interpret stylised, archaic Shakespearean texts in the contemporary South African context. Therefore, if one is to teach Shakespeare's plays, it is essential to reflect on the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed, and to find ones that suit the student profile.

The interpretation of dramatic text attempts to render creatively the social interactions enacted in the life-worlds[13] as represented in texts: this may be done so as to conform to the given text as closely as possible, or so as to produce free representations, according to participants' contexts, needs and purposes (Furlong 2014). It is understood that the interpretation of dramatic text does not stand in isolation of the language used, as life-worlds are created and reflected by means of language in both verbal and nonverbal modes (see Figure 2.1, showing students interpreting Shakespearean texts nonverbally). According to Wolf, Edmiston and Enciso (1997), Drama Education advocates for a free imagination which allows students of diverse cultural backgrounds to connect with and transform texts in dramatic interpretations that go beyond what is on the page of the given

[13] Sauter (2000: 120-121) defines the term life-world as "meaning simply the world in which we live", and shows it as being significant in not only contextualising a theatrical event but in providing elements which might facilitate its production and exposure to audiences.

texts, so that the text can be viewed as a jumping off point rather than a fixed canon (Wolf, Edmiston and Enciso 1997). Furlong (2014) likens interpretation of dramatic text without performance to teaching Mozart from his scores alone, without listening to the music played. In drama pedagogy, interpretation of dramatic text and performance are inextricably linked, as text and performance in drama have complementary roles; it is not enough to unpack the text linguistically, as it is the performance that communicates the interpretation. Textual study through enactment is necessary if our students are to look at Shakespeare's work as more than a vexing puzzle to be solved (Somers 1994).

Figure 2.1 Participants interpreting Shakespeare through movement

The complementary role of performance and text

In the teaching of Shakespearean texts in the English classroom, the complementary role of performance and text has been explored, in that there have been numerous studies by English teachers enquiring into the effectiveness of using performance-based teaching methodology in teaching literature such as Shakespeare (Aydin 2013: 66-69). Gilbert (1984) argues that using performance in a literature classroom is necessary to introduce students to what dramatic texts are all about. She explains that when an actor looks at a script s/he must discover what the character's motivation is in order to speak the lines convincingly and display genuine responses to what is said. With that in mind, the

rehearsal process can be seen as a time for actors to find and refine connections amongst one's own words and those said by other characters on stage. Her point is that the same interpretive process can happen as students rehearse a scene, starting at a level as simple as asking themselves what a particular word means. Brown (1993) is also in support of the idea that the literature classroom should read dramatic texts from an actor's perspective. She believes that acting techniques such as the Stanislavsky's "magic if" assist readers to uncover a play text's central theme and the complexities of characters.[14] She further asserts that using such techniques allows students to demonstrate deeper insight into the characters' motivations and attitudes; therefore "coaxing what is not there from the reader's imagination" (Brown 1993: 19).

In his doctoral dissertation, Kirk (1998) attempted to place the text and school learners centre stage to determine the effect of performance-based teaching methodology on thirty-nine grade nine English learners' understanding of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* He asserts that, traditionally, Shakespearean plays in the English classroom have been treated as literary works to be read. However, he contends that Shakespeare in the classroom needs to be approached as a work of performance, and that it is through this performance that learners can begin to unlock the mysteries of Shakespeare's language. Like Gilbert (1984) and Brown (1993), Kirk sought to approach the teaching and learning of Shakespeare much like actors and directors approach a play when rehearsing for a performance. O'Brien (1994) attempted to gauge whether performance-based teaching methodology influenced student attitudes towards Shakespearean study positively and significantly compared to students who learned Shakespeare through non-active classroom methods. The study found that students who were taught through performance-based teaching methodology had a more positive attitude towards Shakespearean study than those taught in traditional methods. Furthermore, it was noted that what was affected most positively were the student attitudes towards their own ability to understand Shakespeare's language and the belief that Shakespeare can be enjoyable to study. It must be noted that Kirk's study relates to the setting of Shakespeare's plays as part of the school English syllabus, and not as part of a Drama Studies course. However, it is directly relevant to the UKZN Drama

[14] Konstantin Stanislavsky created a highly influential system of dramatic training which catered to a style of acting more appropriate to the realism of 20th-century drama. He also wrote seminal texts on the art of performance, namely: *My Life in Art*, *An Actor Prepares*, *Building a Character* and *Creating a Role*.

Education Department's treatment of traditional texts in Text Studies lectures, where the focus is on interpreting the meaning of the words as in the study of a novel.[15]

Student-centred approaches to interpretation

In a study closer to my own in terms of the approach used, Allen-Hardisty (2003) sought to improve the learning experiences of thirty-four grade nine learners as well as improving her own teaching practice. Her study was carried out within the constructivist orientation using an action research approach. She generated data through the learners' written journals, interviews and questionnaires, as well as documenting her own teaching experiences, and discovered that student-centred strategies which gave learners access to each other's knowledge assisted in making connections between their world and Shakespeare's world. She also discovered that such strategies allowed learners to influence each other's understanding of the play through the interactive process.

Ideally, then, understanding how to interpret a play requires not only that students can see the connections between text and performance, but also that they can integrate the layers of meaning in the world of the play with their own experience of the world. From the above, it also seems clear that the method of teaching and learning dramatic interpretation needs to consider multiple exposure to performances as well as a good understanding of the text. It is also evident from Allen-Hardisty's (2003) research that a student-centred approach can lead to better understanding of what is involved in the world-view of the play, and that group as well as individual discussions can help with this deeper understanding. However, as the next section will attempt to show, setting traditional texts which are the legacy of Western colonialism adds another level, in that the world view reflected in the text may make it not only incomprehensible but irrelevant to the previously colonised.

2.3 Postcolonial and decolonial theories

Postcolonialism and decoloniality are two significant strands of attempts to decolonise the university (Jansen 2019: 71). Mignolo (2011: xxvi) describes decoloniality and postcoloniality as "complementary trajectories with similar goals of social

[15] While the Text Studies module is intended to enhance performance through analysis of text, it does not include performance of the actual texts studied.

transformation", asserting that: "Both projects strive to unveil colonial strategies promoting the reproduction of subjects whose aims and goals are to control and possess" (2012: xxvii); that is, they are two different options with a similar overall purpose. However, any attempt to define the differences in more detail arrives at the conclusion that postcolonialism and decolonisation are "contested, flexible and ambiguous terms" with "a plethora of different perspectives and theories, as well as many crossovers" (Lowman and Mayblin 2011: 5). According to Mignolo (2011 xxiii), "decolonial thinking" predated the postcolonial movement as the former was an immediate response to the imposition of colonial power (16^{th} - 18^{th} centuries), while the latter emerged later (in the 1970s) out of the experience of British colonisation of Egypt, India and the occupation of Palestine. While both postcolonialism and decolonisation are referred to as 'theories', there is a difference in the way in which each operates. Postcolonialist theory can best be viewed as a means of critiquing and contesting oppressive colonial practices which linger in post-colonial societies (Gandhi 1998; Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2013; Popa 2013).

While much of the earlier focus of postcolonial theory is on textual analysis, particularly of canonical texts (such as Shakespeare's) which were claimed to embody universal values and to illustrate the superiority of British imperial culture, the term "postcolonial" has also been used to refer to the experience of people of formerly European colonies in political, linguistic and cultural fields (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2013: 204). These experiences were not necessarily homogenous nor entirely negative or resistant, and, as Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2013: 207) point out, the context in which colonial occupation took place is an important aspect of postcolonial critique: "The materiality and locality of various kinds of postcolonial experience are precisely what provide the richest potential for postcolonial studies, and they enable the specific analysis." This is not to justify colonialism in any way, and perhaps this description by Robinson (2017) will remind readers of the atrocity of colonial disempowerment:

> Perhaps the easiest way to understand why colonialism was so horrific is to imagine it happening in your own country now. It is invaded, conquered, and occupied by a foreign power. Existing governing institutions are dismantled and replaced by absolute rule of the colonizers. A strict hierarchy separates the colonized and the colonizer; you are treated as an inconvenient subhuman who can be abused at will. The colonists commit crimes with impunity against your people. Efforts at resistance are met with brutal reprisal, sometimes

> massacre. The more vividly and accurately you manage to conjure what this scenario would actually look like, the more horrified you will be by the very idea of colonialism.

The theory of decolonisation, while related to postcolonial theory, addresses the problem of lingering colonial hegemonic practices "'from the borders' of coloniality, from outside European thought" (Loomba 2005: 4), and focuses on the process of decolonising rather than textual analysis and critique. As Mignolo (2011: xxvii) points out, decoloniality means "decolonial options confronting and delinking from coloniality, or the colonial matrix of power". The variety of potential options available is why the decolonisation literature constitutes a plethora of different voices on diverse topics, and not a unified movement, explaining why there is no universal theory or canon of thought governing the process of decolonising (Grosfoguel 2007: 212). This is because decolonialists envisage a "pluriversal world" (Sithole 2016: 130) with "epistemic diversity" (Grosfoguel 2016: 31). It is the continued existence of allegedly 'universal' canons of colonial thought which are problematic in our universities in South Africa, and which triggered the #FeesMustFall protests and the call to "decolonise" universities (Langa 2017; Luescher, Loader and Mugume 2017).

In spite of the impetus to decolonise, universities are on the whole still offering traditional curricula with colonial-based content (Heleta 2016: 8; Ndelu 2017: 18). While some progress has been made in transforming the Drama Education curriculum in South Africa, universities still tend to favour Western scripts, probably because departments do not have enough competent and qualified academic staff to undertake the work of transformation (Ebewo 2011: 133,155). Postcolonial theory explains the problems experienced by our mainly isiZulu-speaking Drama Education students in interpreting Shakespearean texts as not only due to the prescribing of inappropriate material for that student demographic, but also to the colonial influence in categorising Western-European texts as 'better', and 'more prestigious', and, more importantly, in the case of Shakespeare, 'universal'.[16] The immensity of range covered in Shakespeare's plays, and, hence, potential value to an actor's repertoire are not disputed. However, claims of his 'universal' relevance (Thurman 2014) have been identified by postcolonialist writers as

[16] Two out of the three lecturers consulted felt that Shakespeare's work was "universal", with the third saying that it should not be done away with, as it as "it has its place". There were also comments that it should be "modernised" and "Africanised".

an attempt to impose Western values and norms on indigenous cultures (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2003). This practice has been termed "epistemicide", which has resulted in the global expansion of Western knowledge and the displacing of other kinds of knowledge (Grosfoguel 2016: 30; Sithole 2016: 123). Postcolonialist writers have challenged the claims made of the timelessness and universality of English literature and drama (Achebe 2003; Singh and Shahani 2010), and have used cultural expressions such as plays, novels, poetry and films as a form of resistance against colonialism (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002). A criticism of the postcolonial approach is that such writers "inadvertently end up reinventing the hierarchies they seek to problematize or question by using Shakespeare as the privileged site for thinking about non-Western subjectivities" (Garuba 2002: 220). It must also be noted that the focus in postcolonial studies has been largely on critically analysing texts, rather than on suggesting procedures and processes which might lead to empowerment of the previously colonised, as in the projects involved in this research, where educator *agency* could be seen to be a significant means of transforming pedagogical practice (Priestley *et al.* 2012).

Postcolonial theory

The literature on postcolonial[17] theory shows the extent to which colonialism disrupted African history and culture. McClintock (1992) states that colonialism involves a process of directly usurping another geo-political entity, exploiting its resources and labour and interfering with the capacity of its culture to organise its dispensation of power. Settlements in colonies initially took place to facilitate travel along trade routes or to supply necessary provisions for traders. However, capitalism played a key role in expanding settlement and disempowering the colonised, and is inextricably intertwined with the relative affluence of the West at the expense of the colonised. It is Austin's (2014) contention that colonisation, rather than imbuing the colonies with the higher standard of living experienced in the West, fed back into the development of capitalism in the home countries of the imperialist colonisers, leaving the colonised peoples economically as well as politically disempowered. Austin (2014: 301-303) traces the progression of economic disempowerment of the colonies, starting with the "gulf"

[17] Following Jeyalakshmi (2019: 237), the hyphenated form (post-colonialism) will be taken as signifying the end of the era of colonialism, and the unhyphenated term (postcolonialism) as referring to a theory explaining the attempts of the previously colonised to move beyond subjugation by Western ideology towards their own history and cultural heritage (an exception will be made in direct citations where authors have not followed this practice).

between the incomes of the colonised and the colonisers, followed by a "European invasion" of the colonies' markets, which led to the evolution of "empires of trade" into "territorial empires with huge subject populations". This, in turn, lead to the founding of "settler-monopoly" colonies or "neo-Europes," which then pressed for independence from the mother-empires, only to join market forces with them after independence. What this effectively meant was that the old empires plus those now controlled by their settlers formed a trade hegemony which basically disadvantaged "Third World" countries and kept them in a cycle of dependence on the more affluent West. This dependency cycle meant that "the only world system which exists is the capitalist world system which consists of two parts, the center of which is located in the industrialized West and its periphery the underdeveloped countries" (Senani 1983: 2).

Crow and Banfield (1996) assert that the aftermath of colonialism today is an Africa that is rife with ills such as civil war, economic stagnation and political instability. They point out how the European imperial powers imposed artificial borders, resulting in different people of different languages being joined together and decreed as new nations. This meant that when independence became an option, ethnic rivalries exploded, and their economies laboured under mounting foreign debt, corruption and under-development. It is also important to note that in order to deepen the chains of subjugation and sustain authority, imperial Europe launched a strategy to civilise its colonies. It did so by importing European language, literature and learning that involved the suppression of a vast wealth of indigenous culture**s** (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2006). It was important for colonial imperialists to ensure that their white settlers and colonial officers in Southern Africa felt supported and connected to their European culture. Theatre thus became a strategy to essentially kill two birds with one stone. In other words, the colonists attempted to introduce European theatre to serve not only as a psychological support for their settlers and officers but also to educate the 'natives' into Western 'civilisation' (Banham 2004).

The former colonies were, and still are, overwhelmed by the effects of colonialism, as, in addition to the physical violence and psychological damage it caused, it shaped language, education, religion, artistic taste and even popular culture. Given this pervasiveness, it becomes the duty of postcolonialists to draw from and challenge colonialism's discourses, power structures and social hierarchie**s**. According to Jeyalakshmi (2019:

237), the main aim of postcolonial critics is to demolish Western 'myths' of superiority. Postcolonialism essentially uses Eurocentric literary genres as a form of resistance against colonialism (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002). Of the possible textual cultural expressions, theatre, as a form of resistance, stands out as the one which puts its practitioners at most risk. As Gilbert and Tompkins (2002) point out, since post-colonial theatre is capable of publicly critiquing political structures, it stands a greater risk of political interruption in the form of censorship and imprisonment.

Ashcroft (2013: 7) describes postcolonial studies as follows:

> Post-colonial studies developed as a way of addressing the cultural production of those societies affected by the historical phenomenon of colonialism. In this respect it was never conceived of as a grand theory but as a methodology: first, for analysing the many strategies by which colonised societies have engaged imperial discourse; and second, for studying the ways in which many of those strategies are shared by colonised societies, re-emerging in very different political and cultural circumstances.

Postcolonial studies, however, should not be seen as a unified movement with a distinctive methodology (Abrams 2005: 245), but rather as an "umbrella term" referring to the various forms of criticism involved in this area (Rad 2014: 4). It must also be noted that postcolonial studies focus on analysis of the problems imposed by colonial subjugation, and not the solutions, apart from the notion of resistance. Moreover, the fact that "plays, novels, verse and films" (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002: 2) are suggested as the forms which resistance could take precludes the existence of local forms of expression *not* based on Eurocentric norms. Many indigenous cultures did not in fact possess anything resembling Western literature at the time colonisation began (see Popa 2013: 92).

The main principles of postcolonial studies have been identified as follows, in that they:

- represent the political, linguistic and cultural experience of societies that were former European colonies (Sawant 2011; Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2013);
- draw from and challenge colonialism's discourses, power structures and social hierarchies (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002); and
- use cultural expression such as plays, novels, verse and films as a form of

resistance against colonialism (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002).

Postcolonial theory shows how the 'civilising' colonial education system could be described as a strategy to divide and conquer, creating a class of Western educated colonised elites who felt a stronger connection to their colonial masters than their own people, history and culture. Seminal postcolonial theorist Franz Fanon (1986: 16) spoke of this phenomenon, how gradually the Western educated 'negro', through the loss of his cultural identity and viewing his world from a Western lens, seems at some point to believe that his race no longer understands him or that he himself no longer understands them, as if he has somehow evolved past them. This disconnection from their culture entangled with the desire to assimilate essentially created the perfect environment for the colonised elites to transform indigenous people into Western clones who, when colonialism ended, took power and continued with colonial worldviews, ideologies and systems that they had internalised. This continuation of Western hegemony is most evident in our universities where Western educational modules are used and Western tastes, opinion, morals and intellect are viewed as the ideal to which students are meant to aspire (Alvares and Faruqi 2012: 10).

Fanon (1986) spoke to the power of Western/colonial education and how it allowed for the colonised to climb a type of hierarchy by silencing who they are and actively embracing Western hegemony. He stated:

> Every colonised people - in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality - finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonised is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (Fanon 1986: 18)

However, it must be noted that this is not merely an indigenous/coloniser divide, and that white people of colonial descent can also suffer an identity crisis, as explored in novel format by Bellaflamme (2015: 662):

> Like most White Australians, Perdita is torn between her parents' British ancestry, on the one hand, and her Australian-cultivated mind on the other, and she eventually realizes that *European cultural codes do not fully apply in the Australian context* (my emphasis).

It must also be noted that, while postcolonial theory tends to focus on the analysis of text, textual analyses of Shakespeare's plays can be valuable in showing how the context in which these plays were written was not necessarily reflected in the play content, which was geared to fit audience stereotypes rather than the actuality of intercultural interactions concerned with trade and travel in the days of early colonisation (Rad 2014).

The points noted by postcolonial theorists help to explain the problems faced by my Drama Education students, in particular, those caused by the setting of traditional canonical texts in Drama Education and difficulties they experience interpreting such texts, whether through performance or in a merely textual interpretation. The problems encountered by our Drama Education students in interpreting Shakespearean texts can be attributed not only to the prescribing of inappropriate material for that student demographic, but also to the colonial influence in categorising Western-European texts as superior to the indigenous texts of the colonised. In the case of Shakespeare, his works were also considered 'universal' (Bloom 1994: 51) The latter quality would not in fact necessarily be inappropriate for a multicultural student body. However, while the canonical significance of Shakespeare's plays, and, hence, potential value to an actor's repertoire are not disputed, claims of his 'universal' relevance (Kott 1964; Valdivieso 2013; Thurman 2014) have been identified by postcolonialist writers as an attempt to impose Western values and norms on indigenous cultures (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2003). According to Ashcroft *et al.* (1989: 3): "Literature was made as central to the cultural enterprise of Empire as the monarchy was to its political formation" (Ashcroft *et al.* (1989: 3). In other words, Western texts were 'weaponised' so as to subdue the colonised into a state of cultural inferiority.

In South Africa, the ideology of the European administrators "erased the cultural heritage of the African people and replaced it with European art" (Sirayi 1997: 5). This goes some way towards explaining why Shakespeare has always been seen by the English-speakers of colonial descent as a signifier of refinement and education, and additionally, a signifier for white apartheid 'civilisation' (Distiller 2009). The importance placed on Shakespeare is evidenced in that his works were a compulsory text in secondary education literature syllabus throughout the country up until the end of the apartheid era (Orkin 1991), and while Shakespeare is no longer a compulsory element of the secondary school curriculum, the plays are still often prescribed within both government and private

schools and universities. This might prove to be challenging for many teachers, and more so for the under-resourced black population, who are mainly ESL speakers. Moreover, even in post-apartheid South Africa, Orkin's ideas are still relevant in terms of how colonial discursive practices resist transformation in a post-colonial context (Loomba 2005; Distiller 2009; Parvini 2012).

In the South African educational system, it becomes evident that the idea of a 'universal' Shakespeare conflicts with its own cultural and historic specificities (Aydin 2013). When discussing the impact of Shakespeare on the (then) educational system, Gilbert and Tompkins (2002) stated that its primary purpose was in maintaining the interests of imperialism by sustaining ideas, values and epistemologies which are foreign to the learners and therefore of little relevance. Even though the political dispensation in South Africa was at the time in which Tomkins wrote in a state of transition towards liberation, this meant that colonial values were still entrenched in the educational system. Orkin (1991) echoes this perspective by saying that South African students are taught Shakespeare in a way that encourages attitudes of submission to existing hierarchies set in place by colonialism. He further accuses apartheid education of having used mainly literature from England, such as Shakespearean texts, as an indicator of actively suppressing South African literature. This study investigates the option that, rather than being seen as something of 'universal' significance, a Shakespearean play could rather be viewed as a 'starter text' , which might be interpreted, adapted or appropriated by present-day students of different cultures to result in a novel, high quality production suited to its intended audience and purpose (Földváry 2013: 307).

The plight of my students confirms what postcolonial theory has revealed about the inappropriateness of using Western canonical texts for dramatic interpretation. The students are all black, speak English as a second language and study English medium modules (except for those majoring in isiZulu). In a focus group carried out in this study to ascertain their preconceived notions about Shakespeare, it became evident that English stands out as a problematic issue where Shakespeare is concerned. Key words and phrases that participants used are: "confusing", "Godfather of English", "people look up to him", "perfect English", "so good in English". It is thought-provoking that the impression that Shakespeare has made on young black participants is that they are generally in awe of his ability to write in what they believe to be the best English possible.

They do not blame Shakespeare for writing in a language that is confusing to them, in fact they take responsibility for their *own* state of confusion. They feel that the fault is their own for not being perfect English speakers, therefore placing themselves in a deficit position. In their defence, it should be noted that Shakespeare's plays were written four centuries ago in a poetic form of English. For modern-day readers and viewers, even for those who are mother-tongue speakers of English in the land of Shakespeare's birth, "some of the words simply do not make sense nowadays" (Mail Reporter 2016: 4). In South Africa, the legacy of Bantu education has also been instrumental in putting African students at a disadvantage educationally (Chapter 1, pp. 2-4) so that many are not fluent in modern-day English.

The participants' preoccupation with so-called perfect English speaks to postcolonial theory, in that the colonised values the coloniser's language more than their own and the language works as a tool of division among the colonised. For young black people in South Africa English is a very complex with many dualisms in terms of cultural identity and 'belonging'. I myself am an African woman who has become acculturated to English by virtue of a having attended a private, very 'English' elite school from Grade 3 until matriculation. I therefore myself experience the kind of 'double consciousness' described by Du Bois (2007) (See Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Two sides of the same coin: Nellie's 'double consciousness'

It can be said that English is a form of currency, and that those who speak it well are able to speak to the right people in a literal language that they understand. Therefore, speaking good English well puts you in better standing to become upwardly mobile. Furthermore, as speaking good English is interpreted as a sign of intelligence and class in South Africa; it can open a gateway to access middle-class/white experience and advantage. By becoming 'unlike the others' you can become 'one of us' to the privileged. On the other side of the coin, black people who speak English well can experience negative reactions from the community such as being called the derogatory term of 'coconut' or 'oreo'. These terms basically translate to being white on the inside and dark on the outside, and are used to denigrate educated black people by implying that they have sold out their culture by sounding and acting white, essentially assimilating to whiteness, as Soudien comments, admitting non-Europeans into the world of the refined European scholar (Soudien 2015: 17).

For my part, in spite of, on the surface, presenting very much like a white educated person, I empathise with the position of being, under the surface, thought to be inferior in intelligence and class. In fact I do experience the kind of double consciousness described by Du Bois. This may explain why, in spite of adopting a constructivist pedagogy, in order to accommodate the current diversity of student opinions and needs, I find myself in sympathy with many aspects of critical pedagogy, which will be discussed in more detail later (pp. 56-59). This can be seen in the description of my research projects and in the results of my research, as will be indicated in Chapters 3 and 5. The main tenets of critical theory involve understanding society, particularly the power relations governing our everyday lives, and applying a Marxist critique with the intention of emancipating the disempowered and making society more equal. The precepts of critical pedagogy which are congruent with the 'oppressed' side of my own split consciousness as well as my preference for constructivist pedagogy are as follows.

Critical pedagogy, like constructivist pedagogy, involves a will towards social action which is empowering, and includes problem posing and questioning traditional knowledge. Like constructivist pedagogy, critical pedagogy rejects transmission (i.e. passive) learning, encourages creativity, curiosity and active engagement, and is driven by the imperative to liberate untapped or suppressed potential by collaborative exploration rather than authoritarian imposition. It also emphasises reflection to find out

what makes interactions meaningful or not. Critical pedagogy, like constructivist pedagogy, is interactive, experiential and encourages students to question existing knowledge; it pushes for social change, and, like constructivist pedagogy, celebrates diversity, or finding "an-other way" (Mignolo 2011: 217) of doing things which fits the reality of the times, as opposed to traditional ways enforced by custom. These aspects of Freire's pedagogy are adapted from Shor (2004: 24-25), who used a phrase which really caught my attention: "They [critical educators] do not lecture students *into sleepy silence*," echoing my frustration as a student at being subjected to boring Shakespearean films (see: "I sure as hell experienced many amazing naps" p. xiii).

Decolonial theory

Decolonial theory has been said to offer strategies to resolve the problems revealed by postcolonial theory (Lowman and Mayblin 2011: 5). Le Grange (2016: 3) describes decolonising as a process that involves five stages namely; "rediscovery and recovery; mourning; dreaming; commitment and action". These phases put the onus on formerly colonised people to discover and recover who they would be were it not for the interruption of colonisation. To come to a state of awareness about the past and ongoing covert and overt violence against their very being begins the process of healing. This process is continued by the formerly colonised claiming their place in the world by telling history from their perspective, looking at the world through their own gaze and searching their indigenous knowledge systems to seek alternatives to those claimed to be 'universal truths' by the colonisers. Furthermore, it then becomes essential for the formerly colonised and their allies to focus on the mission to centre the voices of the colonised in order to transform not only universities but society itself.

One needs to keep in mind the fact that Europe developed scientific thought, pursued expansion, 'discovered' other worlds (as if they were not already there or populated), and created colonies as well as systematically colonising indigenous populations, which gave Europeans the power to define the nature of knowledge as well as to privilege and validate certain forms of knowledge over others (Smith 2008: 59). The ability to declare their own forms of knowledge and knowledge creation legitimate became a powerful tool in silencing indigenous voices. The decolonialists remind us that not only certain forms of knowledge, but also certain forms of instruction, such as the formal school system, with

its de-contextualised, abstract and compartmentalised approach to knowledge, are Western constructs (the "banking education" referred to by Freire 2005: 72, see pp.54-55). This ignores the real-world operation of schools and universities and their material, political and economic aspects (Velásquez 2016: xii). It is not enough, then, to 'Africanise' the university syllabus (Clements 2019: 8), as it still leaves us with the decontextualized abstract syllabuses typical of Western education, as well as material aspects of university life (e.g. poverty, transport, physical hardship, access) which are often overlooked - or paid lip service to - by university management. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), when it comes to decolonising the university, the colonised should be aiming for an African university in every sense, and not simply a university in Africa. He believes that the South African university in particular need an urgent transformation, from "the curriculum, institutional frameworks as well as faculty members" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 49).

The process of decolonising is associated with postcolonial theory but is not thought to have emerged from it, but from initiatives by South American, Indian and Muslim activists who pointed out that universities were based on Western models of education and not the needs of the previously colonised communities in which they were situated. While the decolonising movement did not arise out of postcolonial theory, it can be seen to address or suggest solutions to many of the problems identified in postcolonial literature. Shakespeare has a vast history of being appropriated by formerly colonised countries, therefore transforming the Bard to speak to their unique contexts (see Dionne and Kapadia 2008). Some of these appropriations work as a way of correcting colonial misrepresentation and others as a way to subvert the authority given to Shakespeare by the British Empire. Essentially these reproduced Shakespeare performances should not be judged on the original understanding of Shakespeare as they were created for their own purpose (Cartelli 2005: 100-101). These appropriations suggest that perhaps Shakespeare was not just a man of his time but a body of work that is re-invented by each generation into its own reflection (Bate 1989: 3). Furthermore, a Shakespeare that is no longer in service to imperial interests can be utilised to address societal issues and can also be used for its rich plots to create various adaptations (Cartelli 1999: 169-170).

Bulman (1996: 7) also talks about a common belief that there is a correct and specific meaning that actors must uncover from Shakespearean texts, as if the spirit of

Shakespeare himself is channelled through the actors so that we may hear his universal voice. This belief can be seen to be quite problematic for actors as well as students in post-colonial societies, as they see Shakespeare as foreign and "articulate imperialistic values of domination" (Salter 1996: 111). In the context of the ongoing colonisation of Palestine, the acting approach as exhibited in rehearsals at the Drama Academy in Ramallah seemed uninterested in letting Shakespeare 'speak'. Rather, it was as if the cast were more focused on finding their own voices, and finding ways of letting their bodies speak through physical explorations and staging (Hazou 2015).

As it is hoped that this study will in some way contribute to the transformation of the drama curriculum, it is important to take into consideration the current state of the post-apartheid South African university and its urgent call for transformation. The call for transformation is not new but recent student protests have placed this issue under a spotlight, requiring swift action (Vorster and Quinn 2017: 2). There have been many recent student protests, one that garnered a great deal of attention was the #RhodesMustFall movement (see Figure 2.3 showing student protestors) which catapulted the later #FeesMustFall movement (Langa 2017; Malabela 2017).

Figure 2.3 #RhodesMustFall protestors demanding a decolonised education

Kujeke (2017: 85) explains the significance of this movement:

> The #FeesMustFall movement has fast become one of South Africa's most significant student uprisings since 1994. From protests over outsourcing of critical services, to the removal of colonial statues, decolonisation of the curriculum and free higher education, this movement has started a revolution in universities nationwide.

One of the important issues at the heart of student protests is the call for a free, quality decolonised curriculum. One could not be faulted for asking the obvious, "What is decolonisation and how do we go about achieving it at South African universities"? Le Grange (2016) suggests that we should first realise that South African universities adopted Western models of academic organisation which rejected and invalidated the knowledge of colonised people. Furthermore, the student demographic may have changed since the end of apartheid, but the staffing in universities has not changed, thus ensuring the preservation of colonial academic curricular and organisation. One cannot help but wonder about the appropriateness of a South African/African university that is a clone of Western universities and promotes only Western ways of knowledge production: this seems to be a mismatch and devoid of context (Mbembe 2016).

It should then come as no surprise that the South African university student is dissatisfied when some institutions are essentially teaching irrelevant forms of knowledge with methods that do not fit the context; simply put, we have to re-think what we teach and how we teach it (Mbembe 2015). Mbembe (2015: 9) states: "There is something profoundly wrong when, for instance, syllabi designed to meet the needs of colonialism and Apartheid continue well into the post-Apartheid era." Heleta (2016: 8) shares this sentiment and argues for dismantling "the epistemic violence and hegemony of Eurocentrism"; we should, he says, "completely rethink, reframe and reconstruct the curriculum and place Southern Africa and Africa at the centre of teaching, learning and research". In this way we would be decolonising knowledge itself (Heleta 2018). However, it is my contention that decolonisation at its core does not mean to throw away the proverbial baby with the bathwater but instead to decentre Western canons and emphasize African and South African epistemologies. This idea could go a long way in creating a relevant and meaningful curriculum as well as a University space that reflects the community in which it is located.

The decolonising literature has been useful in suggesting alternatives, rather than just resistance, to colonial canons. However, the most pertinent contribution the literature on decolonising makes to our cause in transformation and recurriculating the Drama Education syllabus are the following two points. Firstly, the recognition that the current structure (i.e. format, not building) of the school - and the university - is 'naturalised' and 'normalized' by virtue of a European educational tradition (Velásquez 2016: ix). Decolonising the university may in fact require re-inventing it rather than a hasty 'Africanising' with cosmetic changes to subject content and teaching/learning methods *which are still restricted to Eurocentric concepts of the disciplines*. By re-inventing it, we mean looking carefully at *what* should be taught on a wider scale than the traditionally Western 'disciplines', and *how* it should be taught and examined. Secondly, the point that the need to transform curricula may be related to critical worldwide issues such as energy, climate change and production of food, but universities currently *tend to do this a Eurocentric way*, that is, using abstract theory and compartmentalising the issues within discrete disciplinary units.

This ignores what Velásquez calls the 'materiality' of an educational institution, by which he means material aspects such as "the land it is on, property tax, the bricks, the chairs, the electricity in classrooms, the water, sewerage systems, heat, the food, toilets" as well as "the wider political economy: energy, electric, and phone companies, and food manufacturing industries" (Velásquez 2016: xii). These aspects, central to the operation of a school or university, are treated by universities as abstract syllabus items in the academic disciplines. This struck a chord resonating with my struggle with a Drama Education curriculum which contains discrete syllabus items, ignoring the reality that Drama is about theatre-making, a real-world activity, bringing employment to actors and others involved in production, and entertainment to the whole world. The critical aspect which I perceived in my pedagogy would also both sensitise students to the potentially oppressive effect of seeing canonical texts as 'superior' and provide them with an opportunity for a more conscious and political understanding of the word. The onus is on the teacher/lecturer (not the curriculum theorist working in abstractions) to make the connection clear, which is why I believe that the agential model of curriculum transformation is 'the way to go', at least to *initiate* decolonising Shakespeare as well as - ultimately - the university.

To conclude this section, decolonising the university does not have to mean 'Africanising', or even re-curriculating syllabuses (Clements 2019: 8). The focus of this research is on ways of transforming the teaching/learning process to make it relevant and useful to students as well as the community the university serves. It must be stressed that the attempts at transformation described in this thesis happened within the current national, institutional and departmental constraints of my teaching/learning environment, and at the level of the micro-curriculum. This does not mean that it does not have important implications for transformation at the other levels.

2.4 The role of applied theatre in decolonising education

Applied theatre with its many forms has the potential to be useful in decolonising education. Augusto Boal (1979) was a Brazilian activist and theatre practitioner who extended Paulo Freire's problem-posing methodology to develop games and exercises in a theatre of the oppressed (Prendergast and Saxton 2009: 69). Other forms and hybrids of applied theatre, such as theatre for development (Mda 1993), have shown how the interaction, creativity and dialogue that occurs when engaging with performance are powerful in the decolonising of the mind. Although to engage in too much detail would be to go beyond the scope of this study, it is important to locate the case-study within a field that acknowledges that there is a vibrant tradition of using performance as a way to undo or ameliorate the experience of oppression broadly, and colonisation specifically. It can be seen from the above section on decolonial theory that decolonising university curricula requires transforming the teaching/learning process to make it relevant and useful to students as well as the community served by the university. This section discusses the role of applied theatre in decolonising education by transforming the teaching/learning process.

The development of a teaching/learning methodology described in this thesis is situated within the broad field of applied theatre (Prendergast and Saxton 2009; Prentki 2009; Taylor 2003), and a subset of the area, drama in education (Bolton and Heathcote 1999). Applied theatre (sometimes referred to as applied drama) is a broad and inclusive area of theatre theory and practice that addresses the fact that that theatre has as its focus something beyond entertainment. When describing the term applied theatre, there seems to be agreement in the field that this means something completely different from

traditional or commercial theatre. Applied theatre is seen more as the use of drama in a way that does not necessarily train actors but has a larger purpose, which is to reach the issues affecting communities and society generally (Nicholson 2014). Hughes and Nicholson (2016) echo this definition by stating that applied theatre centres around human agency, and uses theatre practice to create different forms of individual improvement or collective societal action; essentially change for the greater good. Schonmann (2011) sums up applied theatre as follows:

> Although the terms applied drama/theatre and performance [i.e. production] are differently inflected, it is widely understood to refer to theatre practices that are applied to educational, institutional and community contexts. This work is usually led by professional theatre-makers and is intended to be socially or personally beneficial to participants. (Schonmann 2011: 241)

By focussing on the various intentions of theatre to address specific community concerns and needs applied theatre is able to include intersecting areas of education, development, consciousness raising, psychotherapy and social change. Prendergast and Saxton (2009) identify these theatre forms as theatre in education, popular theatre, theatre of the oppressed, theatre for health education, theatre for development, community-based theatre, grassroots theatre, social theatre, political theatre, radical theatre, and drama in education. Two of the most enduring and dominant forms within this 'umbrella' are theatre in education (TIE, Jackson and Vine, 2013) and drama in education (DIE, Bolton and Heathcote 1999).

When it comes to DIE, not everyone believes that it belongs under this umbrella (Ackroyd 2007). Ackroyd (2007) argues that DIE does have some of the hallmarks of applied theatre but that what differs is the purpose and context. She agrees that drama in schools happens in classrooms, which is unlike traditional theatre; her issue of contention, however, is that it takes place within the constraints of specific curricula or the school's context.

Drama in education

My study is located within the area of DIE, and is essentially about using theatre as a method in the classroom with students/learners, guided by the teacher. Drama in education (also known as theatre in education, or TIE) is one of the many forms which falls under the umbrella of applied theatre, and can be seen to be a tool for teaching across

the curriculum, essentially repurposing drama methodology for education (Bolton and Heathcote 1999). In agreement, Anderson (2004) states that DIE simply means that one uses drama techniques to assist teaching and learning in the classroom. Marjanovic-Shane (2016), in her study "'Spoilsport' in drama in education vs. dialogic pedagogy", goes into more detail by defining DIE as:

> …a variety of educational programs, procedures and techniques, all of which use either some form of dramatic arts or some form of children's imaginative play for educational purposes – i.e. to teach a particular curriculum, to immerse students in particular experiences… (2016: 48)

Although the definitions provided above are clear and in alignment with each other, I do not feel that they sufficiently emphasise the idea of DIE as not script-centred but a process approach that relies on the immediacy and authenticity of guided experiential learning (Bilal 2019). However, O'Toole, who defines drama in education as a classroom-based "form of dramatic activity centred on *fictional role-taking* and improvisation" (1992: 4), does in fact emphasise the process aspect of drama in education, making the point that it is performance-based: "drama is not literature, words on a page" (1992: 1).

The use of DIE as a tool for learning across the curriculum is certainly not new. In the article entitled "Drama: a tool for learning", Kalidas (2014) talks about the difficulties of teaching Business modules, as they were lecture-based and essentially lecturer-centred.[18] The article describes drama strategies in a glowing light and states that they can assist by providing various ways of approaching learning styles as well as promoting active meaning and reflective learning. Annarella (1992) confirms the positive effects of using drama as an educational tool, and adds:

> Creative drama in the classroom can help to develop divergent thinking skills, inventive creativity, cognitive thinking skills, and stimulate the development of oral and written communication skills. (1992: 5)

At this point it becomes useful to delineate the two forms of performance in the educational space: DIE and TIE. While the terms are at times used interchangeably, and for certainly there are crossovers, they are slightly different in outcomes and application. For example DIE can involve school pupils and staff in dramatizations across the

[18] Kalidas (2014: 445) also explains why lecturers are wary of using drama because of anticipated lack of control, noise level and not achieving learning outcomes, which concerns, he shows, are ill-founded.

curriculum in order to achieve curriculum outcomes. TIE, on the other hand, is the name given to a particular kind of theatre, practised by professional drama companies, or TIE teams, which work specifically in educational projects to be devised at schools (Pérez Valverde 2003: 8). TIE at its core is more focused on being a theatre form that creates a social change rather seeking to create future audiences for traditional theatre, and also differs from DIE, as it is not a tool to be used across the curriculum (Jackson and Vine 2013). TIE is usually a scripted and rehearsed theatre performance as a tool for learning which can be interactive and is created by theatre companies. The plays produced by these companies are usually written with the official school curricula in mind (Schonmann 2005). O'Toole (2009) confirms that TIE programmes are expected to support school curricula: "TIE programmes were tailor-made for their particular schools, for a closely defined age-group, and most importantly, for a particular and often challenging educational aim" (2009: 379). He goes on to state that, since these programmes are usually based on issues in the school or lives of the learners, the programmes are often designed in a way that is open-ended, allowing for problem solving and audience participation (O'Toole 2009).

When speaking of DIE, one needs to acknowledge the work of the powerhouse theorist and practitioner Dorothy Heathcote, who developed a teaching and learning approach known as the "mantle of the expert" (or MOE). I would liken my study to MOE in that my study created a 'professionalised' real-world experience for drama education students, as will be discussed in more detail below. Having met her in person, Wagner (1976) describes Heathcote as almost a wonder to behold. She is described as "large" and "sturdily built" (1976: 8) but, in the same breath, as someone who created excitement and exuded as much power as her medium of teaching and learning. MOE is a way of teaching that changes the power dynamics of the traditional classroom: it makes the teacher stand back by taking on a fictitious role and creating a scenario that places the student as an expert of the subject matter at hand (Heathcote and Herbert 1985). MOE is interesting in that, as in my study, it seeks to integrate discrete syllabus items into a more meaningful and authentic learning experience. As Aitken (2013) states:

> In Mantle of the Expert, curriculum is encountered in the same way as in real life: not as a set of separated "subjects" or "learning areas", but as landing points within a holistic ongoing experience. Mantle of the Expert, then, is an approach to curriculum integration. (Aitken 2013: 37).

Another important practitioner who at times worked with Heathcote was Gavin Bolton. Bolton described his type of teaching and learning as 'contextual drama', which can be described as a sort of roleplay where students enter a fictitious real-world situation where they take on particular roles. He created a safe space for the purposes of learning and understanding where students stepped into other people's shoes in various contexts and would have to respond and react as those people would (Burk 2013). According to Allern (2008: 321), "What has become known as 'process drama' combines elements from exercises, dramatic play and theatre, creating a new form, where focus is placed on establishing learning situations based on a given topic or stated problem." Allern (2008: 321) cites O'Neill's (1995: xiii) comment that process drama is not scripted, has an unpredictable outcome, has no separate spectator audience, and it is unique in that what occurred during the process cannot be replicated. He adds that process drama is "a genre especially related to fictional role-taking and improvisation in schools" (Allern 2008: 322).

To conclude this section, in my study I am in no way implying that I am the first person to grapple with Shakespeare using drama, as the dramatization of Shakespeare for educational purposes has a long history. An example of this is given by Edmiston and McKibben (2011), who, even though they are literacy education experts (i.e. focused on written text), decided to embark on an action research study by teaching *King Lear* using drama performance and rehearsal processes. They found that this method promoted engagement and collaboration and resulted in an experience where learners were collectively making meaning of a world that existed in a text. Heller (2005) speaks amusingly about the experience that inspired her to do her doctoral study on teaching Shakespeare. She describes the horror of being a first-time literature teacher with high expectations for her favourite area, Shakespeare, and having learners stare back blankly with no interest whatsoever. Like myself, she soon found that there are barriers of language and culture that can be daunting for both student and teacher (hence the need to 'decolonise' Shakespeare). She also realised that Shakespeare's plays are dramas to be performed and not simply read as written text on a page (Thurman 2016). Her solution was to use drama in education techniques, using theatrical production with the integration of technology (as done in my study, but with a different purpose and focus, as will be shown below).

2.5 Decolonising Shakespeare

Some of the postcolonial and decolonising strategies which have been suggested to 'decolonise Shakespeare' are as follows: update and re-situate (Salter 1996); translation (Caulker 2009); tradaptation (a combination of the first two methods, Saoudi 2017); and syncretic theatre (Hazou 2015). For the postcolonial Shakespeare expropriator there is certainly power in translation, for, as Bulman (1996: 7) suggests: "translation is a key post-colonial strategy that 'subverts the authority of Shakespeare's text'". Moreover, translation into indigenous languages not only makes Shakespeare's text more accessible and relevant, but also goes some way towards 'indigenising' it (Young 2019: 90-93). However, translation has its pitfalls, even for post-colonial populations of European descent who would supposedly be familiar with English, mainly because mere translation of the Elizabethan text can seem incongruous when set in a modern context (see Salter 1996: 119). Tradaptation avoids the pitfalls of translating by adapting the text to fit an era and context which will make sense to the audience as well as being socially relevant. In 1964 in Sierra Leone playwright Thomas Decker appropriated and translated Shakespeare's Julius Caesar into Krio renaming it *Juliohs Siza* (Caulker 2009). This appropriation was particularly powerful as the country had recently gained independence from England and what better way to assert sovereignty than appropriating and translating what is considered the literary and cultural peak of the British Empire (Caulker 2009: 209). Syncretic theatre uses indigenous material within the framework of Western drama to create a completely new product, as with the "Bollywood Lear" described by Földváry (2013), which has a revered matriarch (not patriarch) as the focal character (deceased before the plot commences), diaspora characters (see Young 29019: 20), and is called, not *King Lear*, but *Life Goes On*. Syncretic theatre was considered to be a more viable option than indigenisation, which, as Young (2019: 53-54) points out, is fraught with problems of social stratification and racial categorization, as well as the risk of replacing domination by a colonial culture with a "narrow Africanism" (Jansen 2019: 83).

Syncretic theatre is recommended as one of most effective ways of decolonising drama, "since it is creative and liberating in the way it combines elements from Western and indigenous cultures" to respond to Western attempts to preserve homogeneity and purity (Hazou 2015: 144). It has much in common with "creolization" as described by Young:

> In its repudiation of stable identity politics, creolization offers to contemporary cultural studies a model for conceptualizing the cultural resonances of race and ethnicity as unstable and shifting, while being unflinchingly attuned to the ravages of historical injustice that result from imperialism's racialized denigrations and the brutal dispossessions of slavery. (2019: 29)

It speak to the "interwoven complexity and shifting multiplicity and only ever a matter of becoming" (Young 2019: 29) which reflects the complex identity of the young South African students I lecture. Balme (1999: 8) believes in the effectiveness of syncretisation as a tool for decolonising performance as it is inclusive. It does not attempt to throw out the proverbial baby with the bathwater but rather includes Western and indigenous cultures. Syncretic theatre lends itself to hybridity, which is not viewed as a problem, as my students are hybrids, already combining many different cultural lifestyle features, owing to colonialism in the past and globalisation more recently (Huddart 2007; Földváry 2013). Our Drama and Drama Education classes comprise newly-citified millennial[19] students, quick to adopt overseas fashions and trends, which they update daily on Instagram, and emulating the appearance of the casts of American television series such as *Scandal*, rather than the apparel of their more traditional elders. They also regularly use code switching between isiZulu and English, which, according to Ndimande-Hlongwa and Ndebele (2014: 247), is motivated by the perception that English is more prestigious than isiZulu and a wish to be associated with this prestige. Even when speaking in English, their everyday argot is 'creolized' in being a very different variety of English from that of their lecturers. They could also be considered a "diaspora" [20], not in the sense of having emigrated to a foreign country, but in the sense of being displaced from their community settings (Young 2019: 103), which are varied and diverse (see the reference on p. 93 to "*amabhinca*" or students from rural areas, who at first might have imagined that they were in some foreign country when first coming to university, although they are quickly acculturated by their peers.

[19] The "Millennial generation" refers to the computer literate generation born from 1981- 2001, also known as the "Net generation", raised an era of instant access, learning and communicating through multimedia. Common methods of contact are text messaging and cell phones, and learning methods include web based tools, online courses, online journals and i-pod downloads (Nicholas 2008: 1). It has been suggested that and anyone born from 1997 onward is part of a new generation, "Generation Z" (Dimock (2018), but since the empirical work was carried out pre-2018, the term "Millennial" is used in this thesis.

[20] Although this thesis explores the teaching of Shakespeare in South Africa, it will not engage, except peripherally, with notions of diaspora and creolisation as this goes beyond the scope of the focus of this dissertation.

There are two further ideas which I find resonate with my attempts to 'decolonise Shakespeare'. Firstly, there is the notion that Shakespearean texts can be used as a 'jumping off point' for local productions (Földváry 2013: 307), and next, that Shakespeare might be "reassigned to the domain of popular culture where he may serve as an instantly recognizable icon and article of consumption, and as a rich repository of plots for updated adaptations and make-overs" (Cartelli 1999: 170). Shakespeare might then be 'recycled' in the same way that our screen 'classics' (of cinema and television) are currently being recycled as 'new' television series.

2.6 Transforming the teaching/learning process

In the above sections I have suggested that a locally-relevant, contextualised student-centred approach would be the best option for a teaching/learning approach which might assist in 'decolonising' university study. Why not decolonise the Drama Education (or Drama) syllabus so that Shakespearean texts no longer dominate? However, individual lecturers, while pushing for change, are not in a position to make instant radical changes to the curriculum. From the perspective of theatre-making, Shakespeare's plays can be viewed as "great dramas" (Thurman 2015). Moreover, they show an understanding of human frailty (Földváry 2013: 306), which may well be applicable to the traumatised state of previously colonised populations. In this section I will deal with three approaches adopted in this study which could be seen as potentially transforming the teaching/learning approach.

The first such approach, though generally applicable to teaching/learning and not just Drama Education, is that of constructivist pedagogy. Another such approach, offered by a constructivist-type teaching/learning process directly applicable to Drama, is workshop theatre, pioneered by Joan Littlewood in the 1970s, and applied subsequently in the South African context as protest theatre. An approach closely associated with constructivist pedagogy is that of using e-learning, or digital technology, which has also been pioneered by Philip and Nicholls (2001, 2007, 2012). I will discuss all three approaches, as they were combined in the methodology pioneered in this study, as will be explained in the next chapter (Chapter 3).

Constructivist pedagogical theory

My preferred teaching method is involved, collaborative, relevant and student-centred. These are typical features of constructivist pedagogy (Richardson 2003), which can foster an in-depth approach to learning. According to Campbell *et al.* (2001: 174):

> Qualitative or constructivist conceptions of knowledge and learning concern the relationship between different ideas, and the evaluation of alternative perspectives. This conceptualization is likely to lead to deep approaches to learning where one is concerned with the complexity of the material and constructing personal meaning.

The epistemological assumption of constructivist pedagogy is that the individual creates meaning from his/her own experiences (Jonassen 1991: 10). According to Jonassen *et al.* (1995: 13-14), constructivist learning environments are based on the following principles: context (a real-world setting), construction (active meaning making by learners), collaboration (to assist and reflect on meaning-making) and conversation (as meaning making is language-generated). Such constructivist learning environments thus "engage learners in knowledge construction through collaborative activities that embed learning in a meaningful context and through reflection on what has been learned through conversation with other learners" (Jonassen *et al.* 1995: 13). This view of constructivist learning epistemology is supported by Rockmore (2005: 79), who asserts that knowledge is constructed by "an individual or group of individuals who interact among themselves and with their surroundings in the process of acquiring knowledge". It must also be remembered that the real-life context in which learning takes place, termed an "authentic learning environment" by Herrington and Herrington (2006), is also a sociocultural setting. Vygotsky, one of the seminal theorists informing constructivist learning pedagogy (Derry 2013), posits in his sociocultural learning theory that one cannot understand the development of the cognitive abilities involved in learning without a consideration of the culture in which learning takes place (Pressley and McCormick 2007: 153). The various contesting levels of culture at a multicultural university in a post-colonial setting, such as UKZN, make this an important focus of attention in terms of influences (positive and negative) on the learning process. I considered constructivist pedagogy appropriate for this study, as, apart from being congruent with my own teaching and learning principles, "a constructivist view of self, society and history can usefully inform the efforts of individuals working towards postcolonisation" in terms of breaking down the cultural barriers which separate us (Bignall 2010: 188).

According to constructivist learning theory, individuals construct their own (new) understandings in an interaction between what they already know and new ideas with which they come into contact (Richardson 2003: 1623-1624). However, it must be noted that, as Davis and Sumara (2002: 410) point out, "constructivist discourses were not originally conceived as educational discourses" and that neither Piaget nor Vygotsky were developing a pedagogical methodology for practical implementation, but to explain how learning occurred in child development. It was for this purpose that Piaget developed the theory of cognitive constructivism while Vygotsky proposed the theory of social constructivism (Griffin 2011). Piaget's cognitive constructivism places the individual at the centre of the learning process and posits that change and transformation produce knowledge (Blake and Pope 2008). Liu and Matthews (2005: 387) explain this concept as follows:

> They [i.e. cognitive constructivists] argue that knowledge is not a self-sufficient entity; that knowledge is not directly transmittable from person to person, but rather is individually and idiosyncratically constructed or discovered.

Vygotsky's social constructivism, on the other hand, places social interaction at the centre of learning, implying that the learner constructs his/her own knowledge through interaction with others (Blake and Pope 2008). Cole and Wertsch (1996) agree, and state that Piaget believed that the individual constructs knowledge through their actions on the world while Vygotsky focused on social processes. Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories make certain assumptions about development. The former's assumptions are that development is an organic, universal, evolutionary process that is best encouraged through facilitative teaching methods; the latter's (are) that development is a cultural, contextual, revolutionary process which is best encouraged through direct mediatory educational techniques (Griffin 2011).

The concepts in Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories were developed by educationists into a pedagogical theory. The constructivist pedagogical theory used in this study is based on constructivist learning theory (Jonassen 1991: 10), and involves setting up learning environments in a real-world setting, active meaning making by learners, use of collaboration to assist and reflect on meaning-making, and conversation, as meaning

making is language-generated (Jonassen *et al.* 1995: 13-14). Constructivist pedagogy is student-centred, and favours authentic learning contexts, as well as use of technology as a learning tool (Land and Hannafin 2000: 2). As a result, models of online courses by pioneers of digital technology for learning tend to favour constructivist learning theory and pedagogy (Jonassen *et al.* 1995; Mason 2001). Typical features of constructivist pedagogy are explained below.

Student-centred learning

Constructivists believe that students should be viewed as active creators of their knowledge rather than recipients of others' knowledge. This involves seeing students as bringing their own experiences, perceptions, and knowledge to the classroom and not merely empty slates (Cook-Sather 2002).

Lea, Stephenson and Troy (2003: 322) state that student centred learning has the following characteristics:

> …reliance upon active rather than passive learning, an emphasis on deep learning and understanding, increased responsibility and accountability on the part of the student, an increased sense of autonomy in the learner, an interdependence between teacher and learner (as opposed to complete learner dependence or independence; Fay, 1988), mutual respect within the learner–teacher relationship, and a reflexive approach to the learning and teaching process on the part of both teacher and learner.

Weimar (2013) supports the above by stating that student-centred teaching and learning create a shift in the balance of power, the function of the content, the role of the teacher, and responsibility for learning, as well as in the purpose and process of evaluation. The changes suggested by Weimar when shifting towards student-centred teaching and learning means that there have to be changes to the learning environment itself. Of particular importance are changes in how the learning content is communicated, and in the assessment of learning (Barraket 2005). There are many terms that are associated with student-centred learning, and one of the more prominent ones is experiential learning (O'Neill and McMahon 2005).

Experiential learning

Experiential learning can be defined as learning through experiencing and doing. This way of learning encourages reflection and new ways of thinking; it is essentially a more meaningful way of learning. Furthermore, experiential learning does not see a student as an empty slate but rather capitalises on their previous experiences and existing knowledge (Lewis and Williams 1994). According to Kolb and Kolb (2005), experiential learning theory has six characteristics that scholars seem to agree upon, namely:

1. Learning is best conceived as a process.
2. All learning is relearning.
3. Learning requires the resolving of conflict.
4. Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
5. Learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and the environment.
6. Learning is a process of creating knowledge (Kolb and Kolb 2005: 194).

The Arts have a reputation for using experiential learning (Boggs, Mickel and Holtom 2007), and what form of Arts more so than Drama Studies? According to Annarella (1992), creative drama can be used across the curriculum as it encourages student centred experiential learning. In her dissertation titled *Drama and Theatre as experiential learning tools for Canadian classrooms,* Carter (2007) argues that "putting yourself in someone else's shoes" has the ability to make a sense of meaning about the world, others and oneself.

Small group teaching and learning

Small group teaching and learning is important as it creates a student-centred cooperative environment whereas other methods may result in individuals sitting in a large group therefore putting the teacher at the centre (Webb 1982). According to Gillies (2004), reporting on a study on the effects of cooperative learning during small group learning:

> The study showed that providing children with the opportunity to work cooperatively together on a regular basis in structured cooperative groups encourages students to be more involved with each other, to actively promote each other's learning, and to develop those social behaviours that encourage participation in the group's activities. When this happens children are likely to feel more committed to the group and more willing to promote its goals (Gillies 2004: 211).

Steinert (2004) conducted a study seeking to find out what students' perceptions of

effective small group teaching are. Her students believed that effective small group teaching should include the following elements:

> effective small group tutors;
> a positive group atmosphere;
> active student participation and group interaction;
> adherence to small group goals;
> clinical [i.e. for medical students] relevance and integration ; and
> cases that promote thinking and problem solving (Steinert 2004: 289).

There are two types of small group teaching namely, cooperative and collaborative. Steinert's study can be seen as cooperative as it is highly structured. However, for the purposes of this study collaborative small group teaching is used, as it has relatively unstructured processes through which participants "negotiate goals, define problems, develop procedures, and produce socially constructed knowledge in small groups" (Springer, Stanne and Donovan 1999). To conclude this section, it should be noted that 'student-centred' learning is not meant to exclude teacher planning, management and oversight of learning processes. The focus is rather on "collaborative co-production of knowledge by teacher and learner", with both "playing an active role in meaning-making" (Murris 2017: 119).

Congruencies between constructivist and critical pedagogies

As I reflect on my study, I begin to see how my identity and beliefs, though sometimes implicit, have been explicated. In all honesty I have always seen myself as a teacher, and see teaching as a calling and not a mere career choice. I love and respect my students as people and always try to go about teaching in a way that is beneficial to them. This, I have come to realise, is a commonality I share with Paulo Freire, who stated:

> I love being a teacher. To me, being a teacher does not mean being a missionary, or having received a certain command from heaven. Rather, a teacher is a professional, one who must constantly seek to improve and to develop certain qualities or virtues, which are not received but must be created. The capacity to renew ourselves every day is very important. It prevents us from falling into what I call "bureaucratization of mind". I am a teacher. (Freire 1985: 15)

The love he speaks of is not a fluffy, wishy-washy definition of love, but a sincere love of humanity. It is a love that Darder (2003: 498) describes as "unconstricted, rooted in a

committed willingness to struggle persistently with purpose in our life and to intimately connect that purpose with what he called our 'true vocation' - to be human". Therefore it is not enough to be a loving teacher but still remain complicit in an educational system that is inherently oppressive and dehumanizing to its students. As the South African University waxes lyrical about decolonising and transformation, it becomes important that individual lecturers reflect on whether they are embracing a humanising pedagogy in their classroom, or simply feeling pity whilst helping to maintain the status quo (Zembylas 2018: 1).

To be loving to students in this case would mean questioning the oppressive educational system within which lecturers operate, and holding ourselves accountable and being open to finding other - better - ways of doing things. When speaking of the oppressive educational system, I am referring to what Freire (2005) termed "banking" education in chapter two of *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. Freire lists the characteristics of this kind of education as follows (2005: 73):

(a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
(b) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
(c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
(d) the teacher talks and the students listen - meekly;
(e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
(f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
(g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
(h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
(i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
(j) the teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects.

The characteristics of banking education draw a picture of a power imbalance in the teacher/student relationship, thus centring the teacher and placing the student on the

periphery. According to Leonard and McLaren (2002), Freire offered a different approach with what he termed "problem-posing education", which can be said to flip the power relations and associated processes of education on its head. The teacher and the student create knowledge together through enquiry about the world around them (Roberts 1996). Behizadeh (2014) shares similar views on the democratic nature of problem-posing education in her study *Enacting problem-posing education through project-based learning*. She emphasises that students should not be viewed as empty vessels to be filled by the teacher but equal participants in the creation on knowledge where "teachers and students both teach and learn in any educational endeavour" (Behizadeh 2014: 4).

While my research project used constructivist pedagogy, personally and politically this research is motivated by the decolonisation of education and therefore shares resonances with critical pedagogy. Further, it is important to note that congruencies exist between the constructivist approach and Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy. The commonalities between both pedagogies as applied in my own constructivist teaching approach are as follows. Teaching/learning:

- occurs in a real world setting;
- is student centred;
- deals with the real world experiences of students;
- involves collaboration, and each voice is said and heard;
- is compatible with student culture.

These common aspects do not, however, mean that constructivist and critical pedagogy are interchangeable. The major difference lies in the purpose of critical pedagogy, which Bercaw and Stooksberry (2005: 2) identified in as "an education for social transformation toward a fully democratic society, where (a) each voice is shared and heard in an equal way, (b) one critically examines oneself and one's society and (c) one acts upon diminishing social injustices".

The emancipatory aims of critical pedagogy could be seen as informing a blueprint for the decolonising and transformation agendas in South African Universities and schools alike, although the decolonising literature suggests that there is no universal theory or canon of thought governing the process of decolonising (Grosfoguel 2007: 212). Perhaps a starting point could be to restructure the university setting with the outcome of providing

more empowering teaching and learning strategies instead of ones that are cold and dehumanizing (Darling-Hammond 1994). This could be done, even though, as Burbules and Berk (1999: 50) point out:

> It is an effort to work within educational institutions and other media to raise questions about inequalities of power, about the false myths of opportunity and merit for many students, and about the way belief systems become internalized to the point where individuals and groups abandon the very aspiration to question or change their lot in life.

To sum up this section, Freire's focus is societal, to encourage learners from marginalised and/or oppressed groups to understand and challenge the false ideologies imposed by the powerful elites, and most importantly, to question the false belief of their own powerlessness against such forces (Aronowitz 2004: 14). Constructivist pedagogy, while it views knowledge as socially constructed, is more narrowly focused on achieving effective teaching and learning practice within a specific classroom context. This strategy is far more aligned with the objective of my study, which is the teaching of an existing curriculum (Shakespearean texts as part of the English curriculum) to aspirant teachers, who will go out to teach in schools. This is not to say, however, that lessons learned here may not be taken out of the individual classroom setting to transform not only the curriculum but also society. It must be noted that while congruencies exist between critical and constructivist pedagogies, the values and beliefs informing each approach, as well as the desired outcomes, are very different, as has been suggested in this section (also see Guba 1990: 23-27 for the differences in the basic beliefs of the orientations governing these approaches).

The workshop theatre process

In this study, I decided to use the workshop theatre process as a student-centred, collaborative and creative way of engaging students in performance-based interpretation of traditional texts, and one which, for these reasons, would achieve the decolonising process described above. According to Armstrong (n.d.), the workshop process consists of observation, improvisation, selection and recording (see Figure 2.4). The observation stage is focused on research, and involves reading, interviews, observation of other people's lives and personal experience. At the improvisation stage, the workshop directors choose structures and themes around which the actors might improvise. At the

selection stage, the directors edit the resulting improvisations so as to arrive at a polished theatrical performance; the actor group, however, may be aiming at political statements or providing a record of events (i.e. within the framework of the direction).

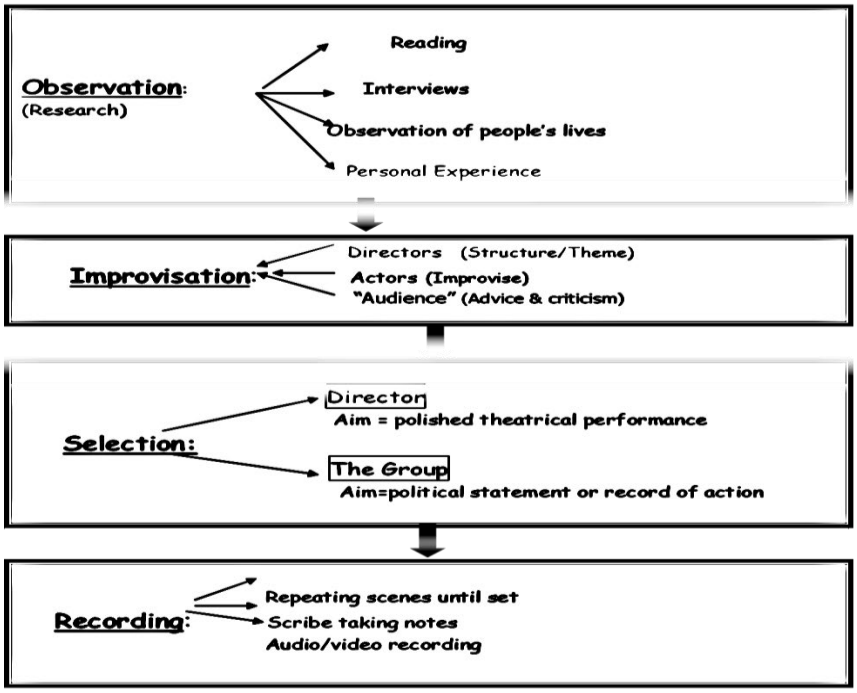


Figure 2.4 Stages of the workshop process (Armstrong n.d.)

The British socialist theatre director Joan Littlewood was one of the key practitioners of workshop theatre in Britain in the 1960s (Holdsworth 2011; Rufford 2011; Grainger 2013). Joan Littlewood's workshop theatre could be viewed as political with regard to its dedication to drawing attention to the lived experiences of the working class. Workshop theatre[21] aimed to reveal life, not just merely imitate it; furthermore, this type of theatre was a collaborative construction between the director, actors and audience which was aimed at an authentic and meaningful experience (Grainger 2013: 41). While there were other experimental workshop theatre practitioners, notably Grotowski (Findlay and Filipowicz 1986), Littlewood's work has particular appeal for me in terms of her collaborative engagement with working class people and her emphasis on their real-life experiences, which are congruent with my collaborative, student-centred teaching and learning approach, which focuses on issues which are relevant to them.

[21] "Theatre Workshop" was the name of her theatre, "workshop theatre," the name of the genre she pioneered.

This form of theatre was more inclusive than the traditional theatre practice of its time as it did not require trained actors nor did it require the actors to be literate (Croydon 1969-70: 63). The qualities of Littlewood's workshop theatre seemed to fit with the purpose of South African theatre makers in the 1970s and 80s who were in the throes of an overtly oppressive apartheid system: this meant that in South Africa workshop theatre came to play an oppositional role as protest theatre (Hutchison 2004: 357). Some well-known plays came out of the workshopping process during apartheid, namely *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* (1972) and *The Island* (1973), which were the product of collaborations between Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona. *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* explored how apartheid oppression worked through the policing of the black populace through pass laws, and *The Island* exposed the injustices of the judicial and prison system (Hutchison 2004: 354). Another popular play of the genre was *Woza Albert*, a collaboration between Barney Simon, Percy Mtwa and Mbongeni Ngema. It was uniquely centred around the second coming of Christ as if he were to land at the - then - Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg. The play was characterised by its fast-paced comic episodes, offering a sweeping view of black South Africans during apartheid. Interestingly all three of the abovementioned plays were collaborations between black and white people, which in itself was a form of protest against the apartheid system (Kerr and Chifunyise 2004).

According to Fleischman (1990: 89), workshop theatre can be identified by the following characteristics:

- It is a collaborative process.
- Performances have more to do with life then text, this making it difficult to publish a workshopped play as the performance is not easily separated from the text.
- The structure is unique and is influenced by oral tradition.
- The performance style is non-naturalistic, physical, and musical with a style generic to South African townships.
- It makes use of different performance forms within a single performance.
- It deals with a collective issue not just a single character.
- It is an urban form of cultural expression.
- It uses parody in a way that is regenerative and transformative.

Although this mix has much in common with township culture, many of these elements can be traced back to indigenous cultural roots, according to Kerr and Chifunyise (2004: 306). It must be noted that, while sharing many characteristics of Joan Littlewood's workshop theatre, many of the similarities between African theatre and workshop theatre are not derived from her process, but are cultural features of indigenous African theatre (Kamlongera 1988). Examples are the connection between theatre and everyday life, the focus on oral (i.e. not written) scripts, and the integration of audience with cast (i.e. *everybody* participates in the performance), and that speech, music, dance and art are all integrated in performance, and not seen as separate elements but as part of whole experience (Nkosi 1981: 176; Sirayi 1997:6). However, Nkosi (1981: 176) suggests that, rather than seeing African theatre as being based on indigenous African theatre or developed out of it, traditional and modern forms co-exist "side by side", creating "an immensely rich environment". He adds that the problem with scripted African plays is that they have lost touch with the shared community beliefs of the audience, becoming literary creations rather than community-based drama (Nkosi 1981: 176). This is not the case with South African protest theatre, however, which was workshopped before a script (if any) was co-produced, and then more often in the form of a recording rather than a written text (as in my workshop theatre process).

Fleischman (1990: 100) explains that there is a unique process in creating a workshop theatre production which can be broken up into three phases: observation, improvisation and selection. It is important to note that the workshop theatre process is often seen as interchangeable with the terms "devised theatre" or "collaborative creation" (Heddon and Milling 2006; Oddey 2007). Devised theatre has been described as a collaborative construction through assembling, editing, and shaping individuals' experiences of the world into an original product. Oddey (2013) asserts that this process supports intuition and spontaneity, as well encouraging the accumulation of ideas. Clark (1971) has identified three approaches to workshop improvisation: "'working in' to an existing text, 'working out' from unformed material gathered around a theme, and 'working out' from material that evolves from group-developed situations" (ERIC 2015). In this study I used an approach which views a text studied in lectures as the jumping off point for a production (Wolf, Edmiston and Enciso 1997). The students would then in effect be "working in" to a traditional text to arrive at a production which would, I hoped, be culturally relevant as well as situated in a present-day context, yet, thus transformed,

might still retain the original script's thematic relevance.

The workshop theatre process can be appropriated into a useful pedagogical strategy. The process in itself can be said to be student centred as in places value in the insights and lived experiences of the participants. The process of observation, improvisation, selection and recording allows for the expression of ideas, reflection on the process of dramatic play making, recreating lived experiences through performance as well as allowing for discussion and critique (Rasmussen and Wright 2001: 6). Furthermore, workshopping in an educational space is centred on the experiential process rather than the final product. This is similar to how in professional theatre one could assert that for the actor the experience and knowledge gained through rehearsals can be seen to be more valuable than the performance itself. Grotowski (in Richards 1995: 118) expresses similar sentiments:

> Rehearsals are not only a preparation for the opening, they are for the actor a terrain of discoveries, about himself, his possibilities, his chances to transcend his limits. Rehearsals are a great adventure if we work seriously.

According to Asen (2015: 118), theatre workshop is an important teaching method that supports students' creative development as artists, teachers and critically engages them in the artistic process surrounding theatrical productions. In another article investigating the challenges of teaching theatre workshop, Oshionebo and Asen (2017: 251) state that the advantages of teaching workshop theatre are as follows:

- It promotes student's critical thinking through the medium of theatre by introducing the students to provocative and challenging theatre experiences and fostering their understanding of performances through discussion.
- It encourages critical analysis of performances.
- It increases participation and engagement in performing arts.
- Engages students in the collaborative process of theatre production and offering them the opportunity to connect theatre to their own coursework and life
- Promotes the spirit of teamwork.

As can be seen from the above, theatre workshopping with groups of performers who were not necessarily trained actors using current social themes served to contextualize theatre in a contemporary setting and make it socially relevant. It led to the vibrant kind

of engagement that I hoped to introduce in facilitating the interpreting of traditional texts in performance. But, unlike the working-class British in Littlewood's improvisations, and the township people of the 70s protesting against apartheid, my 'born free' students are typical 'Virtual-generation' members (Proserpio and Gioia 2007: 70), spending hours glued to their smartphones or tablets (as, I must confess, I myself do). This suggested to me that use of digital technology might be another means of setting interpretation of traditional texts in a present-day context and giving it a modern 'vibe'. I must emphasise, however, that this study is not a stock 'blended learning approach' (see p. 66) to dramatic interpretation by performance: it is about using digital technology in ways which are appropriate to the research aims and objectives. In the next section of the literature review, then, I give a brief overview of the ways in which digital technology has been used as a creative enhancement to Drama pedagogy.

Use of digital technology in drama pedagogy

I consider digital technology to be an innovative aspect of transforming interpretation-through-performance for the following reasons: it makes drama teaching/learning resources more relevant and accessible, puts teaching/learning in the 21st century", catering to the millennium generation, and makes dramatic performances (whether past performances or the current rehearsal process) available quickly and cheaply. However, when it comes to digital technology in the classroom Flintoff (2005) describes Drama educators as resistant. Factors identified by Flintoff were limited knowledge of exactly how and where digital technology should be introduced as well as access to the appropriate technology. According to Flintoff (2005: 11): "the uses of technology in Drama Education have not been adequately explored and as such Drama teachers have few models from which to develop their own practice". [22] This may be because it is only recently that Kohler and Mishra's work (2006, 2009) on TPACK [23] has been referred to in the context of Drama, and then in Drama *in* Education, in relationship to "performative language learning"…"with particular attention to aesthetic distancing and protection as

[22] The nationwide imposition of lockdown and social distancing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that "The current agenda on the table is how HEIs continue to facilitate teaching and learning". The resultant reliance on distance measures will require lecturers to become conversant with online learning (Myende and Ndlovu 2020).

[23] TPACK technological pedagogical content knowledge: "Building on Schulman's (1986) model for pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), Mishra and Koehler added the dimension of technology knowledge (2006: 1027) and demonstrated how various kinds of teacher knowledge could be derived from the integration of technology, pedagogical, and content knowledge" (Rambrij 2018: 41). Kohler and Mishra's work (2006, 2009), while it was not used in this study, offers a means of informing educators about use of digital technology in Drama Education.

essential elements of pedagogical content knowledge in a post-pandemic society, looking at examples from both embodied practice and research" (Piazzoli 2020). Anderson (2005) warns that if drama educators do not take the initiative of incorporating technology into their teaching learners may find spaces outside the classroom to express their creativity. Lupson (2017) agrees by saying that Drama educators should be interested in new technologies and be cognizant of the role it plays in their students' lives. Digital technology is so pervasive in students' lives that they have become its native speakers leaving most teachers needing to adopt this language in order to communicate, rendering them digital immigrants (Prensky 2001).

Cameron and Anderson (2009) state that the Drama Education research community will lag behind others if it does not consider the ramifications of the technological revolution on teaching and learning as well as how these technologies can be appropriated in the classroom. They suggest that teachers could experiment with blending digital media forms with well-known drama conventions to suit their contexts, for example, using digital media to establish the drama, using digital media within the drama, using digital media to continue the drama. This is not to say that there has been no research conducted into Drama Education and technology, as there are researchers who have made headway into the exploration of the potential of this integration. In a historical role play in which students enacted convicts' arrival in Australia in 1788, researchers found that the student's access to historical documents provided by the internet enhanced historical accuracy of their production and also increased student engagement (O'Toole and Dunn 2008). In an ethnographic study that integrates the use of mobile devices in the teaching of Drama and Dance, Li (2016) explored the effectiveness of mobile technology and the role it plays in teaching and learning. The study found that the use of mobile technology enhanced researching, communicating, reflecting and efficiency for both the teachers and students.

Davis (2010) used two case studies to explore the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) in Drama Education in school-based contexts. The first was a pilot study that complemented the curriculum over a period of six months. It used digital technologies and online spaces to encourage communication, interaction and to provide a virtual space to promote the creation of creative content. The focus study was a curriculum-based cyberdrama project. Dramatic work was produced in the classroom

and uploaded in cyber spaces such as YouTube. The two case studies showed the various ways in which ICT could be used to assist in the creation of drama in school-based contexts as well as support live drama processes. The findings also suggested that some students preferred human interaction in their creation of drama over ICT mediation. However, students were excited at the idea of recording their work and sharing it with a larger audience on YouTube. In another school-based study integrating drama with technology, Sandpearl (2016) explored how students used mobile applications in classroom activities. Students chose to use WhatsApp (see Figure 2.5, showing my research participants using WhatsApp for video of activity reflection), Pinterest, iTunes, Spotify, YouTube as well as pdfs for various outcomes. Sandpearl found that the use of applications enhanced learning, prolonged it outside the classroom and allowed for greater student peer interactions.

Figure 2.5 Participants posting reflections in video form on the WhatsApp group

Jennifer Nicholls and Robyn Philip have pioneered use of digital technology for Drama in all three of the following areas (with some overlaps):

- The standard learning management system (LMS), such as Blackboard or Moodle, used to run a Drama (or other) course, either completely online (e-learning) or partly face-to-face and partly online (blended learning).
- Social media, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and blogs (but the latter are also

now included in most LMS[24]).

- Simulations[25] (sims), games and historical era excursions (these can include immersive online sims such as *Second Life*, theatre-making sims, online video- and board-type games, or virtual "excursions" to a given historical era *or* play setting).

Using a standard LMS (WebCT, now Blackboard), they ran two fully online distance semester Theatre courses for first-year and second-year students at the University of Sydney, *Elements of Drama* and *Genres of European Theatre*, respectively (Nicholls and Philip 2001; Philip and Nicholls 2007). Action research was used to refine the courses within a collaborative constructivist teaching approach. The courses held multiple online resources as well as online digital video footage of theatrical examples created especially for the course modules (Philip and Nicholls 2007: 267). Opportunities for structured and non-structured interactions were provided. Feedback suggested that students had found the courses excellent, particularly in that the information in the readings was backed up by the enacted scenes, but also in the amount of choice afforded to students in the topics and projects, and the flexibility of the programme, which allowed students to participate off-campus. However, as Nicholls and Philip point out, the courses dealt with theory only (any acting or practical work was done only to clarify points made in the theory).

Nicholls and Philip also used social media, namely, group blogs, in collaborative playmaking with small groups of students (Philip and Nicholls 2009). Using action research methodology within a case study approach, they evaluated the process of group blogging in a course unit, their aim being to "to replace the traditional individual reflective journal as an assessment task, with a group blog, and to evaluate the effectiveness of reflection within that collaborative environment" (Philip and Nicholls 2009: 683). Participants were a mixed group of third-year students in creative arts and other disciplines, and trainee teachers. Nicholls and Philip found that group blogs expedited working through the stages of play-building, which left more time for actual improvisation and rehearsal, kept them "on task", and prompted a deeper reflection on

[24] "LMS" is regularly used for both singular and plural forms.

[25] Simulations, or "sims", are simulated real world environments which participants can "enter", usually through use of avatars, or computer-generated personae, and experience events and interactions. Simulations are frequently used in computer gaming to give a sense of immediacy and involvement to the player/s. Immersive simulations allow users to become immersed in a virtual reality, as in *Second Life*, an online site which allows users to "visit" various "islands" representing both real and fictional worlds (e.g. Mecca, Macbeth Island).

the issues involved in good drama; students also claimed that group blogs were a more efficient way of communicating than email" (Philip and Nicholls 2009: 689-690). The blogs also offered more scope for creativity than individual written journals and had more purpose, in being the medium for a group communication process. According to Nicholls and Philip, "The result was an embedded, visually interesting and media rich environment, not merely a space full of written text that would have been the case had, for example, we used only a traditional LMS discussion board" (Philip and Nicholls 2009: 694).

Nicholls and Philip (2012) also took a small group (four) of students on "virtual field trips" into immersive online simulations. The first was "Macbeth Island" (Richards, Ely-Harper and Thomas 2008), in *Second Life,* in which student could adopt avatars and move around (walk or fly) in various features of the virtual terrain. Next, in avatar form, they "visited" theatre spaces in the *Theatron 3 Project*, which contained three-dimensional models of European theatre designs, where students' avatars could "fly down" and sit in theatre seats or galleries. The theatres involved in this simulation were the Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus and the Globe Theatre. In all three simulations participants could communicate with each other. According to Nicholls and Philip (2012: 10): "Exploring these virtual stages in 3D … meant that students experienced the excitement of discovery with others, in an 'authentic', or simulated real life space". It must be noted that Nicholls and Philip define "authentic" in Herrington and Herrington's (2006) terms, that is, in relating to "real life tasks" and "real life space" (albeit a simulated space, Nicholls and Philip 2012: 6,10).

Although Drama was the discipline involved in all three of Nicholls and Philip's projects, their pedagogical purpose in each case was different: they used the LMS for a theory subject; group blogs, for group improvisation; and an immersive simulation, to allow students to experience the *mise-en-scène* of plays and theatres. As Bloom (2015: 115) points outs, in theatre-themed games (many of them based on Shakespearean plays), there is a mismatch between the "bodily mechanics" of theatre-making and the activities involved in computer game playing (e.g. watching a screen and using a computer keyboard). In immersive simulations, on the other hand, whether gaming or *Second Life* excursions, students can more easily identify with what Bloom (2015: 116) calls "the distinct physical experiences" involved in theatre-making.

To conclude this section, it must be noted that not only digital technology, but student populations are changing rapidly with the times, so that standard e-learning or blended learning approaches are rapidly becoming passé in the exponential surge of digital developments, even in the South African context (Bhorat 2014: 70; Reddy 2014: 53). While Philip and Nicholls must be given their due as innovators in their time, it must be noted that actual use of an LMS, group blogs and/or immersive sims for teaching and learning (in Drama or other disciplines) is not particularly innovative or research-worthy per se in present day. Proserpio and Gioia (2007: 70-71) speak of "Virtual-generation" students with "V-Gen learning styles", and suggest that this requires a teaching approach commensurate with the students' learning approach, which has now become more visual than verbal (2007: 73). Current e-learning or blended learning courses are predominantly verbal: this is because of the design of the standard LMS (such as Blackboard), which structures content thematically rather than in terms of student engagement, and makes it difficult to integrate visual and verbal messages. In the emerging V-Gen landscape, the days of the LMS are apparently numbered in favour of "self-organising adaptive network models" (Wise and Quealy 2006: 905), within which social media can be loosely linked up to form more "constructivist" (and less transmission-type) courses.

However, as Notess (2009: 2) comments "Not everyone is cut out to be an EduPunk, cobbling together unique collections of social media tools to craft the customized toolset for each learning event." In terms of accommodating my V-Gen students' preoccupation with visual media, and the fluid and emergent nature of performance, Instagram was used for individual and group reflection during play rehearsals. I considered WhatsApp a more suitable application for group discussions than group blogs, as it was the group discussion method predominantly used by my students and was at the time evolving to include visual and sound enhancements.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to show how the interpretation of Shakespearean texts through performance is fraught with problems caused by Shakespeare's language, unfamiliarity with the context in which he wrote, or, in fact the Eurocentric context in which he was idealised as an exemplar of 'Englishness' and English superiority.

Moreover, the focus on text which language complexities seemed to demand can be seen to have led to the assumption that the language of the printed text needed to be studied before any attempts at performance could be made. However, the literature reviewed also suggests that the text could be used as a 'jumping off point' and that student engagement with the process is important. Interpretation-through-performance can be seen to be complicated by the fact that Drama and Drama Education syllabuses tend to list aspects of theatre-making as separate items. This, in itself, supports a transmission approach (i.e. top-down content lecturing), rather than integration of various skills into a meaningful experience of theatre.

I argued that the setting of 'traditional' texts, such as Shakespeare's, was a major cause of the problems experienced by students, and explained this by recourse to postcolonial and decolonial theories. Postcolonial theory showed how British imperialism during the colonial period used English literature and theatre to 'civilise' the 'natives', in the process demonstrating the supposed superiority of the British Empire. It was also used to 'connect' the British settlers to their mother country, maintain solidarity, and assure them of support and solidarity. However, postcolonial writers tended to suggest resistance as a strategy for the disempowerment experienced by formerly colonised peoples, rather than new beginnings emerging from a multitude of very different cultures. The latter is a feature of decolonial theory, whose writers, while very diverse in their focus and application, write from perspectives originating in their own cultures, thus de-centring the issues from the European perspective (which, they point out, is *not* an exclusive 'global' or 'modern' view, as claimed). The literature shows that there is no easy path to decolonising, as society is infinitely more fragmented and complex than represented, and not only diaspora communities, but also indigenous communities, are not as homogenous as thought (see Young 2019: 54-55). To sum up generally, postcolonial and decolonial theories work together in that postcolonial analytical *critique* can be used to identify the problems experienced by the previously colonised, and a decolonising *process* (which may involve various strategies) can be used to suggest solutions to the problems identified.

The solutions which seemed appropriate to me in this study were to use aspects of constructivist pedagogical theory, the theatre workshop process, and digital technology to develop a methodology which would creatively transform the process of interpretation-

through-performance for my Drama Education students. All three theories, and their applications as reviewed in the literature, can be seen to emphasise the importance of experiential learning, a student-centred approach, and working as a community or group in an authentic context. I discuss how these aspects were integrated in the research design of this study in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Rising action

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the research design used in this study, which is in a sense the 'rising action' of this thesis presentation, setting in place the series of events (in this case, procedures and methods) building up to the climax and final resolution (Cuddon 2013: 291). I chose the constructivist research orientation as being appropriate for this topic, as interpretation of dramatic texts involves numerous subjective aspects, and is shaped by the social context and era in which it takes place. The theoretical framework comprised postcolonial theory, decolonial theory and constructivist pedagogical theory, all of which are congruent with the constructivist paradigm, which emphasises the importance of knowledge being constructed in a social context relevant to participants, with a focus on its being co-constructed by participants rather than being imposed by the instructor. The case study methodology used also served to contextualise the project involved in the research, which I then describe, showing how aspects of the theoretical framework were integrated in the project, as well as how workshopping theatre productions constitutes a form of constructivist pedagogy. I then go on to describe sampling and data gathering methods, and explain how rigour and reliability were maintained within the constructivist orientation. I also show how aspects of the theoretical framework were integrated in the project, and conclude by focusing on some of the key points mentioned.

3.2 Research design used in this study

The research design used in this study is shown in Figure 3.1. Working within a constructivist research orientation, I formulated a theoretical framework comprising postcolonial and decolonial theories and constructivist pedagogical theory, all of which theories were used to analyse the data generated. I used a case study methodology to explore combining text analysis with performance using the workshop theatre process to facilitate the interpretation of canonical western texts, as well as integrating discrete syllabus items into a holistic teaching and learning process. Digital technology was an innovative aspect of the case study methodology, as the current student body was, at the time of the research, the 'virtual generation'. I hoped that analysis of the results would

contribute to a model of a teaching methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts.

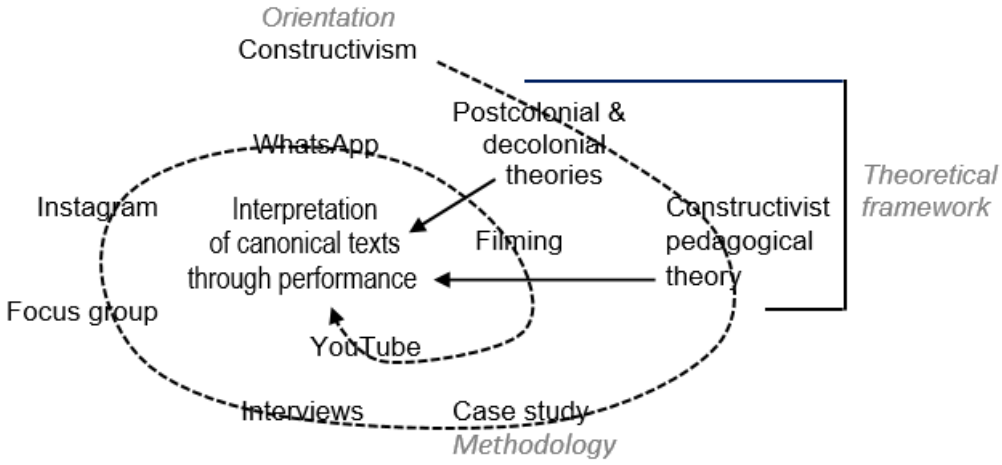


Figure 3.1 The research design used in the study

3.3 Constructivist research orientation

This study was carried out within the constructivist paradigm. Creswell (2009: 6) refers to the term paradigm as a worldview, and defines it as a "general orientation about the world and the nature of the research that the researcher holds". Guba and Lincoln (1994: 105) describe the term paradigm as a basic belief system that is fundamental to an investigator epistemologically and ontologically, as well as guiding choices in method. When speaking as to how paradigms guide the inquirer's actions, Guba (1990: 18) states that an advocate of any paradigm is answerable to three basic questions, which are ontological, epistemological and methodological, as follows:

(1) *Ontological*: What is the nature of the knowable? Or, what is the nature of reality?

(2) *Epistemological*: What is the nature of the relationship between the knower (the inquirer) and the known (or knowable)?

(3) *Methodological*: How should the inquirer go about finding out knowledge?

In answer to the above questions, the constructivist inquirer holds specific ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions (Lincoln and Guba 2013: 40).

Ontologically the assumption centres around the notion that reality is constructed by individuals and their shared experience through social interactions; it is therefore relative and multiple (Costantino 2008: 117). The epistemological assumption is subjectivism; that knowledge is created through the interaction between the researcher and the research participants (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 110). Given the ontological and epistemological assumptions, it follows that the methodological assumption is one that probes through interaction, the meaning and sense making of both researcher and research participants therefore negotiating a mutually constructed research product (Manning 1997: 95).

Interpretation of dramatic texts involves a number of subjective aspects, and is greatly influenced by the social context in which it takes place (including the time era). In an academic context, factors include, amongst others, the student and lecturer demographic profiles, departmental practices, the prescribed learning outcomes, assessment processes (and the assessor profiles) and logistics of staging. There are also personal elements, such as individual preferences and tastes, and each participant's individual creativity, making interpretation largely subjective. For these reasons, I considered the constructivist paradigm a highly suitable research orientation for this study. Its assumption that reality is socially constructed by individuals, and therefore relative and multiple, fits the multi-faceted process of dramatic interpretation as a creative performance which is co-constructed in social interactions: the very nature of drama is that it is a shared construction between actors and audience (Brook 1996).

3.4 Theoretical framework

Three theories provided the theoretical framework for this study, postcolonial theory, decolonial theory and constructivist pedagogical theory (see Figure 3.1). All are congruent with the constructivist paradigm in emphasising the importance of knowledge being constructed in a social context relevant to participants and the focus on its being co-constructed by participants, and not imposed by the instructor alone. I reviewed relevant literature on each of these theories in the last chapter (Chapter 2). In this section, I will show how they contributed to the research design in setting the parameters of the project used to test out the teaching/learning methodology which I piloted in this project, as well as providing the tools for analysing the data thus generated.

The theories were used as follows. Postcolonial theory clarified the difficulties experienced by Drama Education students in interpreting Shakespearean texts by identifying the colonial strategies which still implicitly underpinned South African university syllabuses, making the setting of Eurocentric texts seem 'normal' (Velásquez 2016: x). In the analysis of the data, the precepts of postcolonial theory were used to identify any residual legacy of discomfort felt by the previously colonised or ways in which this had been overcome. Decolonial theory suggested ways in which a teaching/learning method could assist learners to "rediscover and recover their own history, culture, language and identity", "imagine alternative possibilities" (Le Grange 2005) in interpreting Shakespearean texts, and where their own voices could be heard rather than 'reciting' Shakespeare's voice. The model thus developed could be viewed as one potential strategy for social transformation. In analysis, decolonising principles could be used to identify achievement of these outcomes. Constructivist pedagogical theory suggests that teaching/learning should be specifically geared to the local context and culture of the intended learner group, and authentic, in terms of being related to their perceptions and interests. Learning also needed to be experiential and student-centred, which is potentially liberating and empowering for students starting at the relatively powerless position of tackling the formidable intellectual and creative task of interpreting a Shakespearean play through performance.

In the next sections I will discuss the case study methodology used in the study, as well as the methods I used to design and test out the interpretation-through-performance methodology developed.

3.5 Case study methodology

According to Yin (2002), the case study can be referred to as a "methodology", as in Figure 4.1. However, it is more an issue of the subject being investigated than a methodological choice (Stake 2005: 443). In this case, the subject being investigated was the formulation of a teaching/learning methodology for creative interpretation through performance of dramatic texts. I considered the case study an appropriate approach for this study, as qualitative case studies use the in-depth strategies typical of constructivist research, for example, thick description and a close focus on social processes (Fouche and De Vos 2005: 106).

In case studies, the focus is on the "internal complexity" of the situation rather than on what generalizations might be drawn from it (Blatter 2008: 69). However, an argument can be made from the in-depth evidence gained to support development of a theory or model, as the generalizations arising out of constructivist research emerge as "pattern theories", which represent interconnected ideas or issues (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 24). The case study is viewed as a "microcosm" of the general situation, so that what is observed there is to some extent generalizable (Moriceau 2009: 421). These generalizations are not abstract or objective in the sense of the generalizations of the natural sciences, and may also include my own personal experiences as researcher, termed "naturalistic generalizations", as well as their professional knowledge (Stake 2010: 195-198). While case studies may limit the transferability which a larger data pool allows, the advantages are that they are a source of theoretical innovation, look closely at the causal mechanisms involved in social processes, allow comparisons because of the depth of their analysis, and have advantages with respect to theory construction and internal validity (Blatter 2008: 69).

In this research, the case study comprised an extra-curricular project involving interpretation through performance of excerpts from a Shakespearean text (Julius Caesar) which is usually set in Drama Departments. The project took place in 2017 over the first two months of the second term in the Drama Education Department, in a series of sessions, as I describe in subsequent sections. The teaching/learning methods used in the extra-curricular project were based on the constructivist pedagogical approach, the workshop theatre process and the use of digital technology, particularly social media. I have discussed the rationale for using these methods in the review of associated literature in Chapter 2.

3.6 Project involved in the case study

After giving a description of the project involved in the case study, I will look at aspects of the theoretical framework integrated in the project. I will then suggest that workshopping theatre is a form of constructivist pedagogy, and discuss features of social media used in the project which can be seen to congruent with constructivist pedagogy.

Description of the project

The project involved in the doctoral case study was pre-empted by a pilot study, an independent research project which I ran in Drama Studies at DUT in 2016.

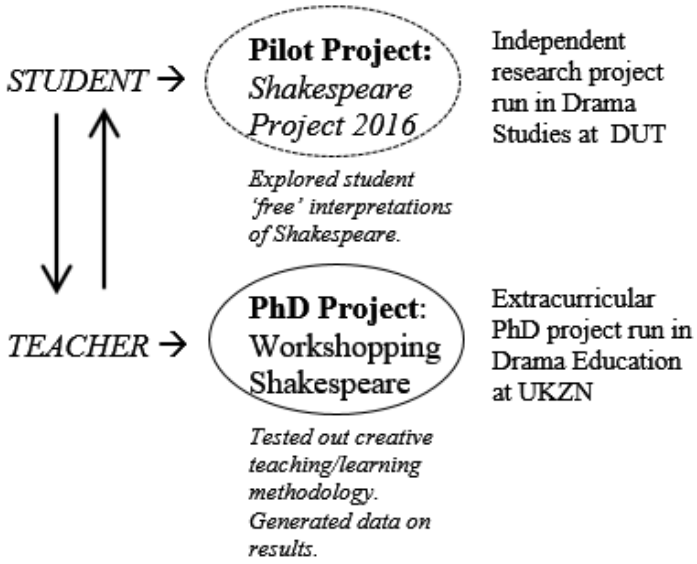


Figure 3.2 How the pilot project pre-empted and fed into the doctoral project

I mention the pilot study here, as many of the insights and techniques in the interpreting methodology developed in the doctoral project arose out of the pilot study, which was an independent research project approved and funded by the Durban University of Technology, and was subject to rigorous Ethical clearance (Ngcongo and Pratt 2016). Figure 3.2 shows how the pilot project pre-empted the doctoral project, and how the pilot project was student-driven, while the doctoral project was teacher-driven. In Table 3.1, I give a more detailed overview of the three levels involved in the development of the interpreting methodology. This overview shows how the real-world problem I experienced in my actual teaching/learning context was first tackled in a pilot project *(The Shakespeare Project 2016),* held in the DUT Drama Department in the anniversary year of Shakespeare's death, and in which the students 'free-performed' excerpts from Shakespearean plays.

Table 3.1 The complementary nature of the pilot and research projects

REAL WORLD PROBLEM	**CONTEXT OF ACTUAL TEACHING/LEARNING** Lecturing in the Drama/Drama Education Departments in the post-apartheid era
	Syllabus as discrete content items, not a process of 'theatre-making'
	The setting of 'traditional' Drama offerings of canonical western texts
	Difficulties of isiZulu-speaking students interpreting Shakespearean texts
	QUESTION: *How can syllabus delivery be transformed to facilitate acquisition of theatre-making competences and be accessible to the current student body?*
PILOT PROJECT *The students 'free-perform' Shakespeare.*	**CONTEXT OF *THE SHAKESPEARE PROJECT 2016*** Independent Research Project (extra-curricular) in the DUT Drama Department held in the anniversary year of Shakespeare's death
	The LMS Moodle was used to: • provide a communication forum for participants; • access repositories of filmed Shakespearean performances; • access and view recordings of students' 'free' performances of excerpts; • contextualise Shakespearean study as relevant in the 'digital age' (FaceBook, Twitter and WhatsApp were also used); • gather feedback (informally, or by pre- and post-surveys).
	Plenary sessions were held for pre- and post-surveys, to set Shakespearean plays in context for 'millennial' students, and for general discussions.
	In small groups, students chose, rehearsed and performed play excerpts.
	Performances were video-recorded and set up online for viewing.
	Group and individual reflection took place on the performances, as well as a ceremony where certificates of participation were issued.[26]
	QUESTION: *How do students respond in 'free' performances of excerpts of Shakespearean plays?*
RESEARCH PROJECT *The lecturer 'workshops' Shakespeare.*	**CONTEXT OF THE PHD RESEARCH PROJECT** Extra-curricular project 'workshopping Shakespeare' with student volunteers held in the UKZN Drama Education Department
	This project involved workshopping interpretation-through-performance of a Shakespearean text (*Julius Caesar*) to develop and test out a teaching/learning methodology which might integrate syllabus items in actual play production.
	Workshopping took place over seven sessions, culminating in a 'film day'.
	Problems which students might face were pre-empted with pre-questionnaires, insights from postcolonial theory, and solutions suggested by decolonising strategies.
	The participatory, flexible, interactive nature of the workshopping process was assisted with use of constructivist pedagogy and digital technology, namely, use of WhatsApp and Instagram.
	The workshopping both developed and tested out the proposed creative teaching/learning methodology of interpreting-through-performance of canonical texts, and generated data which could be analysed to answer the research questions.
	QUESTION: *Can canonical texts (e.g. Shakespeare's plays) be 'recycled' to produce 'good theatre'[27] by workshopping them in a modern-day context relevant to students?*

[26] The students who took part in the pilot project expressed confidence when Shakespearean study was covered later in formal lectures and achieved higher academic scores than students who had not taken part in the project.

[27] 'Good theatre' is taken to mean theatre which is effective (i.e. it works); keeps theatre alive as a viable form of entertainment; and involves the audience by generating an almost electric form of energy: "The indispensable party to the play is the audience, and good theatre is created in their minds or nowhere" (Styan 1969: 385).

An innovative aspect of the pilot project was use of digital technology to set Shakespeare in the context of the Millennium students. Insights gained from the pilot project fed into the design of the doctoral project, an extra-curricular project in which I 'workshopped Shakespeare' with student volunteers, held in the UKZN Drama Education Department.

The doctoral case study carried out in Drama Education at UKZN was thus based on an extra-curricular project involving interpretation of a Shakespearean text (excerpt from *Julius Caesar*), which took place over a period of two months, in seven sessions, as follows:

Session 1: Dealing with the digital

The introductory session consisted of a group discussion on the project, following that participants who did not have access to smart phones were supplied with Lenovo Wi-Fi tablets. A large portion of the first session was dedicated to the downloading of the necessary apps (i.e. WhatsApp and Instagram) and creating profiles for them. The university's Wi-Fi was tested by uploading introductory Instagram videos. The group Instagram account was private to the participants. The accounts username was *Research Thingz* and the password was Shakespeare@2017. Participants opened their own Instagram profiles if they did not already have them; they were then invited to follow the research account. In this way they could upload their pictures and videos as well as view those of other participants in the group.

Session 2: Dealing with Shakespeare

The second session involved video viewing on different interpretations of Shakespeare on the YouTube platform. A PowerPoint presentation of Julius Caesar showing an act by act summary, characters, plot, theme and background was presented and discussed.

Summarised key actions in Caesar were translated into modern language, and set in a South African context. Self-chosen groups of random participants were given scenarios for which they assumed Director status, and then selected a cast (which might include themselves). The various groups then improvised around the scenarios, and the resulting performances were filmed and uploaded to both the

Instagram private account and the YouTube channel set up for that purpose. This session used postcolonial theory in that Shakespeare was contextualised to be meaningful to the participants; different YouTube adaptations were viewed and discussed. The improvising around scenarios involved small group interaction. In this session I also used constructivist pedagogy, as the task was student centred and allowed the participants to construct meaning of the scenarios collaboratively.

Session 3: Student reflection on improvisations

Student reflection on session two was conducted via WhatsApp. This online reflection was student centred as it was concerned with the participants' experiences within the project. It was also constructivist as it allowed participants to share their lived experience and make meaning of it.

Session 4: Social media (digital) and improvisations continued

Participants commented on their experience with the use of social media applications within the project. The improvisation activity from session two was continued and completed.

Session 5: Workshopping

The session was dedicated to workshopping. Using the text as inspiration participants created a song or a dance. Two songs were created and one movement piece. Participants selected one group member to write a draft script for their film which would later be refined by the group.

Session 6: Workshopping from the text

Participants used the draft script as a stimulus from which to workshop. They cast themselves, referred back to the original text, improvised, edited their draft script and rehearsed.

Session 7: Film day

The filming took place in the Gcina Mhlophe studio on Edgewood campus UKZN.

Aspects of the theoretical framework integrated in the project

The project involved various aspects of the theoretical framework (i.e. postcolonial and decolonial theories, and constructivist pedagogy), as shown in Table 3.2. The performance was captured in digital form, becoming part of an infinitely larger 'global' collection of archived Shakespearean performances, thus creating an 'alternative canon'. The project can also be seen to include elements which were congruent with constructivist pedagogy, and therefore, I thought, appropriate for accommodating the change in university demographics, involving a generation of contemporary African youth. These elements were as follows:

- Workshopping (a process used in South Africa to reflect the voice of the people as a resistance to colonial theatre traditions [28]); and,
- Digital technology appealing to the Millennium generation (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp).

This section shows how the workshop theatre process and the use of digital technology are congruent with the constructivist pedagogical approach, which, as shown in Chapter 2, is based on constructivist pedagogical theory.

Workshopping as a form of constructivist pedagogy

Workshopping was used in the process of play production as well as a pedagogical tool. Some key principles of theatre workshopping practice that lend themselves to constructivist pedagogy are as follows:

- Collaborative construction aimed at an authentic and meaningful experience (Grainger 2013: 41).
- Emphasis on real life experiences (Holdsworth 2011; Rufford 2011; Grainger 2013).
- Inclusive, as it does not require trained actors (Croydon 1969-70: 63).

[28] Workshopping has been discussed extensively on pages 57-61, and, while this has a specific trajectory and politics in South Africa, this method is also known as devised theatre (Heddon and Milling 2006; Oddey 2007).

Table 3.2 Aspects of the theoretical framework in the project

Session	**Postcolonial and decolonial theories**	**Constructivist pedagogy**
Session1: Dealing with the digital	Problem: Plays set in the Elizabethan era; "greats" of English colonials Solution: Contextualisation of project in terms of students' culture and era (Millennium students)	Online WhatsApp and Instagram communities Group discussion
Session 2: Dealing with Shakespeare	Problem: Very "English" interpretations Solution: Context- and culture-specific interpretations of Shakespeare	Student-centred activity in casting play excerpts and improvisations [29]
Session 3: Student reflection on improvisations	Problem: Barriers caused by English language/ Shakespearean English, English culture and Elizabethan era Solution: Breaking down barriers caused by language, culture and era	Sharing lived experiences of adaptations and improvisation
Session 4: Social media (digital) and improvisations continued	Problem: Generational mismatch of "traditional" approach/es (chalk and talk) Solution: Adaptation of canonical texts using digital technology	Sharing digital experiences and group improvisations, contd.
Session 5: Workshopping explored	Problem: Authoritarianism of "traditional" approach/es (top-down) Solution: Participant-based, rather than on imposed colonial "traditions"	Knowledge is constructed by students in collaborative, student-based, authentic and experiential learning.
Session 6: Workshopping from the text	Problem: "Traditional" approach/es rigidly based on text Solution: Text used as 'jumping off' point	Knowledge is constructed by students in collaborative, student-based, authentic and experiential learning.
Session 7: Film day	Problem: "Traditional" once-off, live performance, with limited access for actors/audience Solution: The performance is captured in digital form, becoming part of an infinitely larger "global" collection of archived Shakespearean performances.	The knowledge constructed is shared more widely by digital means, inviting wider comment and reflection.

[29] Improvisations were mainly in English, but with occasional code-switching to isiZulu.

Features of social media congruent with constructivist pedagogy

In this study, participants used social media in the form of WhatsApp, Instagram and YouTube. Social media can be described as online resources that people use to share content, for example, video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humour, opinion, gossip, or news (Drury 2008). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classify the categories which social media applications fall under as collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds. Though social media make no educational promises, they have been said to place the learner at the centre of networks of knowledge and expertise that can lead to new forms of learning (Friesen and Lowe 2012). In the spirit of student-centeredness, I consider it important to identify what benefits social media provide for students. According to Blankenship (2011) social media create greater engagement and interest, and allow students to have control of their education as well as taking responsibility for it.

The WhatsApp group was first proposed as a means of communication between myself and participants. However, it later proved to have pedagogical, social and technological benefits. WhatsApp is a portable digital community that can be used to complement lectures as it allows for announcements to be broadcasted, ideas and resources to be shared as well as instigating online discussions (Susilo 2014). Bouhnik and Deshen (2014: 217) found that WhatsApp groups serve four main purposes: "communicating with students; nurturing the social atmosphere; creating dialogue and encouraging sharing among students; and as a learning platform". WhatsApp is complementary to constructivist pedagogy as it has an openness and fluidity in how it operates, and allows users to contribute to the content and determine direction (Lorenzetti 2009). In a study on mobile instant messaging support for teaching and learning in higher education, So (2016) found that WhatsApp not only improved learning achievement but that participants accepted WhatsApp as a teaching and learning tool. Furthermore, the participants rejected the concept of receiving questions and study material only during class hours. The positive response to WhatsApp as a teaching tool is supported by Alsurehi, Al Youbi and Alfaries (2014: 217): "Many Universities in the Western world today offer a variety of social networking applications to students in order to facilitate enhanced communication, collaboration and research." In a South African study at a

University of Technology, WhatsApp was used as part of an information technology course (Rambe and Bere 2013). The aim of the study was to strengthen lecturer–student and peer-based participation and to enhance pedagogical delivery and inclusive learning in lectures and informal spaces. The findings showed a heightened student participation, the fostering of learning communities for knowledge creation and progressive shifts in the lecturer's mode of pedagogical delivery.

Another social media application used in this study was Instagram. According to Salomon (2013), Instagram is a mobile app (iOS and Android) that enables users to instantly turn their mobile snapshots into visually appealing images and short videos, which are then shared with others on the network. How Instagram is used in a course is limited only to the lecturer's imagination. Blair and Serafini (2014) suggest using Instagram videos to do book reviews, creating photo essays, using "photo prompts" to engage students in writing responses, or taking pictures of a "step by-step process" while adding a caption to each photo. Handayani (2015) advocates for the use of Instagram in the classroom by stating its benefits, being that Instagram allows for the creation of a socially connected community of learners, enables students to communicate and socialize beyond the classroom setting, and that, due to its popularity, students are usually very familiar with it and do not require training, and, lastly, is easy to access.

This study also made use of YouTube, the video sharing website which allows users to upload more substantial video content. YouTube was used because it has the capacity to allow users to view multiple interpretations of Shakespeare. I created a channel for the project which then functioned as a repository, as performances were uploaded for viewing (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQLF7Gtrh8zxniShJJs4N5A. Desmet (2009) is in support of using YouTube in the teaching of Shakespeare and points out that on YouTube there is a community dedicated to Shakespeare performances and adaptions. Furthermore, she gives the following reasons why teachers should use the platform: the popularity of the platform for student producers of Shakespeare performances and parodies; the fact that students are already using YouTube for inspiration; and that it has the ability to allow the users to review rapidly a multitude of videos of similar themes (Desmet 2009: 65). Thompson (2010) speaks of a new genre emerging on YouTube, the "classroom-inspired performance video". This genre takes advantage of the numerous interpretive opportunities that the platform provides by providing a space where students can update

the language, plot and setting of Shakespearean plays. O'Neill (2014) is in agreement with the usefulness of YouTube as a classroom resource, as the platform is accessible and provides users with the opportunity to access a vast repository of Shakespeare material, while at the same time contributing new forms of do-it-yourself Shakespeare.

3.7 Sampling and data-gathering methods

This section deals with the sampling and data-gathering methods used.

Sampling

I put up a notice asking for volunteers on the notice board of the UKZN Drama Education Department, as it was the department in which I was lecturing, and had a curriculum heavily loaded with classical plays from first year onwards. However, not all volunteers were from the lecture group assigned to me in 2017/18 for a module that included textual interpretation, but were from other levels, and others were not registered in Drama Education, but responded as they had an interest in participating in the workshopping project. The sample size was nine. While fifteen is the average size of a Drama Education class, a smaller group was used as there was a small number of volunteers. Volunteering is the standard means of recruiting casts and crews for play production in the Drama Education Department, and was used so that the study could "faithfully reflect [the] lived reality" (Castellano 2008: 428) of interpretation by performance.

Data-gathering methods

Interviews, focus groups and online discussion forums were used to gather rich data. I used focus groups for oral data collection, as they are particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and in examining what people think and why they think in that way (Kitzinger 1995). I also used a survey to establish participant attitudes to Shakespearean interpretation before and after the interpretation lectures and workshop exercises. Digital technology featured in the data collection as follows. I set up a WhatsApp group as well as an Instagram account so as to collate the data obtained and facilitate inter-connectivity between participants (Wise and Quealy 2006: 899-900). YouTube provided an archive of resources used as exemplars of Shakespearean interpretations (Shohet 2010), and also served as platform for project group rehearsals, as well as the film produced in the project, a student interpretation of an excerpt from *Julius*

Caesar, the culmination of the project in terms of showing what they had learned about interpretation of Shakespearean texts. An innovation for data collection during workshop productions was the use of an online mobile service (Instagram) for sharing photographs, videos, and networking (restricted to private use in this case). I issued the students involved in the project with tablets for the duration of the course so that they could use this service to engage in individual and shared reflection on their rehearsals.

I attempted to answer the specific research questions as follows. The focus groups and online discussion forums provided rich data for establishing 1. *how application of a constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation and use of digital technology is experienced by students in terms of* (1a) *their response to the teaching and learning approach* and (1b) *their understanding of the language of the prescribed traditional text/s*. Use of Instagram provided rich visual (some being video) data combined with text to show (1c) *how their dramatic performances of the prescribed text/s [were experienced]* (i.e. in terms of 'working in' to the traditional text studied to achieve a production). The answer to research question 2., as to *what features of this integrative approach might be identified as facilitating creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts, and why [this is so]* were established by myself as researcher by exploring themes and patterns which could be seen to emerge from the data, using manual coding (Saldaña 2009: 22). Combined with my observations of the students as the project unfolded, and my own experience as Drama Studies lecturer and play producer, this allowed me to come to conclusions and suggest answers to research question 3. as to *what pattern theory or model of the developing teaching methodology emerges as a result of the analysis.* The answers to all of the above questions as well as the emerging pattern theory or model enabled me to draw general conclusions on the effectiveness of the methodology for teaching of Shakespearean interpretation through performance in the Drama Education Department.

3.8 Rigour and reliability

In keeping with the principle that the validity of a study should be judged through the lens of its own paradigm (Healy and Perry 2000), in this study constructivist validity criteria

applied (Guba 1981: 80). Positivist criteria are given in brackets to highlight the contrast between interpretivist and positivist ways of establishing rigour and reliability:

- credibility (in preference to internal validity);
- transferability (in preference to external validity/generalizability);
- dependability (in preference to reliability);
- confirmability (in preference to objectivity).

The means whereby I attempted to meet these criteria are given in more detail below.

Credibility

I strove to achieve credibility through prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis and referential adequacy.

Prolonged engagement

In this study, I used an ongoing teaching and learning situation as opposed to once-off sampling. While the actual case study consisted of a two months extra-curricular project, for the researcher, it was an ongoing process of refining a teaching and learning methodology over a three-year period.

Persistent observation

Facilitation of dramatic interpretations through performances requires persistent close observation on the part of both researcher and participants. The digital recordings of rehearsals and performances made more prolonged and thorough observation (and reflection) possible than a fleeting first-hand experience.

Triangulation

Triangulation is defined as "the mixing of data or methods so that diverse viewpoints or standpoints cast light upon a topic" (Olsen 2004: 103). I achieved this mixing by means of exposure of participants to traditional and modern interpretations of Shakespearean texts and performance; mixing live and digital performances; the different qualities of the digital media used to elicit and capture data; and the juxtaposition of common aspects in the theory, methodology and emerging teaching/learning methodology. I also achieved a degree of triangulation by holding interviews with Drama lecturers from other public universities (to a total of three, in terms of availability and readiness to participate).

Lecturers were invited to participate, and were interviewed individually to establish whether they faced similar challenges with student interpretation of traditional texts, and, if so, how they dealt with them. I used the data gathered from these interviews to assist further with triangulating the data.

Peer debriefing

The use of a project co-researcher who is a research professor but not a specialist in Drama Studies afforded me the opportunity for peer debriefing (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 308). In this case the main supervisor, who was a research professor but not a drama specialist, acted as peer-debriefer.

Negative case analysis

This involves identifying data items which contradict or do not support the patterns emerging generally from the data (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 308). My lecturing experience had suggested that not all students would find interpreting Shakespearean plays difficult. This turned out to be the case in this study, and presented me with an opportunity to refine the analysis.

Referential adequacy

Referential adequacy is attempted by identifying a portion of data to be archived, but not analysed (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 314). The researcher then conducts the data analysis on the remaining data and develops preliminary findings, and returns this archived data and analyses it as a way to test the validity of his or her findings. I used archived data in the form of online discussions (i.e. following project events) together with the data from the interviews and focus groups as a further test for validity.

Transferability

I attempted to achieve transferability through thick description, which is a way of achieving the kind of external validity described by Lincoln and Guba (1985: 218-219). By describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail, one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people. In my opinion, the rich data provided by the open-ended questions in the

focus discussions, as well as that obtained by online discussions and observation, went some way towards achieving this type of external validity.

Dependability

External inquiry audit involves having a researcher who is not involved in the research process examine the process and product of the research study. In this case, Ms Mari Peté (Educational Technologist of the DUT Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching) offered me her services as external auditor.

Confirmability

Confirmability was attempted through a confirmability audit, an audit trail, triangulation, and reflexivity. The confirmability audit was carried out as for Inquiry audit (above). The audit trail comprised all raw data, all notes and summaries of data, all interpretations, notes of processes followed, and my personal reflexive diaries, as well as all forms and schedules drawn up in the course of the project. Triangulation was carried out as in 4.6.1 above. To achieve reflexivity, I kept a reflexive journal (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 143) in which I made regular entries during the research process, reflecting on issues such as methodological decisions, project logistics, and what was happening in terms of my own beliefs and values (this was a private diary, of which excerpts only have been used in the actual writing up of the thesis).

Consistency and congruency of research approach

The fact that there were common aspects in the theoretical framework, the methodology, and the interpretation pedagogy pioneered meant that there was a degree of triangulation involved, as well as congruency and consistency in the research approach and the results (see Table 3.3).

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were as follows. While play production involves public performances where anonymity, by virtue of the activity, is simply not possible, anonymity was preserved by participants using pseudonyms in the research reports in the

presentation of written blogs (i.e. diaries), online discussion forums and spoken discussions (i.e. in focus groups).

Table 3.3 Common aspects in the research approach

Theoretical framework		**Specific methods used to gather data**	**Interpretation pedagogy pioneered**
Postcolonialism and decolonialism	***Constructivist pedagogy***		
Contextualises theatre-making in a specific era.	Features of social media congruent with this pedagogy.	1. digital technology used to gather data (millennium generation)	digital media used in archives, rehearsal and performance
Contextualises theatre-making in its socio-cultural setting.	Student-centred learning; small group learning.	2. scripting of play to suit student group in current socio-cultural context	workshopping contemporary Shakespearean theatre
Contests colonial discourse, power structures and social hierarchies.	Experiential learning using workshopping.	3. decolonising of play in scripting with different cultural emphasis.	workshopping so that participants themselves create theatre

As with standard play production activities, participation was voluntary, and participants were able to withdraw at any time during the project. All online data was shared amongst participants only (except for those who withdrew) by using private social network groups and accounts. An exception to this was performances, namely, rehearsal videos and the project film, which by nature of being dramatic performances, were intended for public viewing. After completion of the study, I made myself available to meet participants to ask them if they wanted to discuss any aspect of the process. I also undertook to send all participants a letter with the institutional web address where they could access a full copy of the thesis, and the address of the library where the thesis copies could be accessed.

3.10 Conclusion

In retrospect, one of the most striking aspects of the research design is the extent of the congruity existing between the various elements and the real-world processes it investigates, namely, theatre-making and Drama Education (see Table 3.4). The constructivist paradigm, in my opinion, is particularly appropriate to theatre-making, as context, players and audience are key factors in shaping productions. Constructivism is also appropriate to drama pedagogy as a decolonising strategy to 'act out' various roles and viewpoints in different contexts. The associated constructivist pedagogy shows how

this can become an experiential learning process, involving participant-based learning in a specific socio-cultural context.

Table 3.4 Congruity between elements of the research design and real-world activities

ELEMENTS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN	FEATURES OF THESE ELEMENTS	REAL-WORLD ACTIVITIES
Constructivist paradigm	Reality is socially constructed by participants in specific socio-cultural contexts.	Theatre-making
		Drama Education
Postcolonial theory	Colonisation propagates a Eurocentric consciousness which is at odds with the KwaZulu-Natal context and populace.	Interpretation through conventional performance of canonical texts is problematic.
Decolonial theory	Decolonise Shakespearean interpretation by setting plots in local socio-cultural contexts can start the decolonising process.	Method: "recycle" Shakespeare in trendy digital Durban format.
Constructivist pedagogy	This involves participant-based learning in a specific socio-cultural context.	The theatre workshop process/experiential learning of Drama pedagogy/digital media.
Case study methodology	The case study focuses on a specific activity in a specific social context.	Developing a methodology for interpretation-through-performance of Shakes-pearean texts in post-apartheid South Africa.

Postcolonial theory identifies the problems caused to the previously colonised by lingering Western canonical traditions, while decolonial theory provides a rationale for solving these problems, as well as exemplars of transformation in very different contexts. The case study methodology contextualises both the problems and the proposed solution. In the course of the research, I experienced these elements as a 'gestalt' operating holistically, and following my sense of what was working (or not), with the explicit working of these aspects being articulated more precisely in retrospective reflection, or even later, in writing up the thesis. I was therefore acting in congruence with my "knowledge-practice" (Melrose 2003: 14) rather than imposing theory *on* practice or deriving theory *from* practice.

Chapter 4: Climax

4.1 "The play's the thing"

The climax of a play has been defined as: "That part of a story or play (for that matter, many forms of narrative) at which a crisis (q.v.) is reached and resolution achieved" (Cuddon 2013: 130). The climax of the research was the project itself, where I felt the same excitement I feel in production, of being in a 'creative space'. As a director, I do not plan consciously, but intuitively and holistically, allowing my 'knowledge-practice', or innate skills and experience, free rein. I also rely on my actors' innate talents, which guide the production rather than a script. This is why I identify with the workshop theatre process, as this is how I make theatre, with actors rather than scripts: it is 'actor centred' rather than script-centred. Traditional Drama offerings, particularly Shakespearean plays with set ways of interpretation in performance, are in direct conflict with my preferred modus operandi, and perhaps why I fixed on Shakespeare as my 'arch nemesis', and took such pleasure in decolonising the Bard! In this chapter I shall try to portray some of the excitement of the workshopped production, which grew 'organically' rather than being pre-planned. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the project involved interpretation of an excerpt from *Julius Caesar* by 'working in' to the text, which took place over a period of two months, in seven sessions, which will form the headings of this chapter. I will also be answering self-posed reflective questions which probe my process in each session, as well as showing my 'off the cuff' responses to the way things worked out in each session.

At a deeper lever, this chapter will also probe the process of empowerment for my students and myself which the project involved, drawing on the theories and themes underpinning this research to support the narrated experience. In effect, the theoretical aspects form a kind a 'subtext' revealing the deeper implications of what was involved in the project. As shown in Figure 4.1, the term 'Durban view' signifies the way/s in which those disempowered by colonialism view the world in my home city. However, the fact that my students and I are black South Africans does not imply homogeneity in terms of being 'black', or that disempowerment is a given static condition. For example, young urban blacks (like many of my students) have seized the opportunity of coming to the

'big city' to improve their education and prospects of employment: they are, in effect, on the first rung of the social ladder, and 'city smart'. Rural African youth also view metropolitan areas as the lands of opportunity, but are naïve as to the actual nature of 'big cities', and their naivety draws scorn from their urban peers, who mock them as being *amabhinca* (i.e. 'traditional Zulu') which word has the force of 'peasant' or 'yokel'[30] in that context.

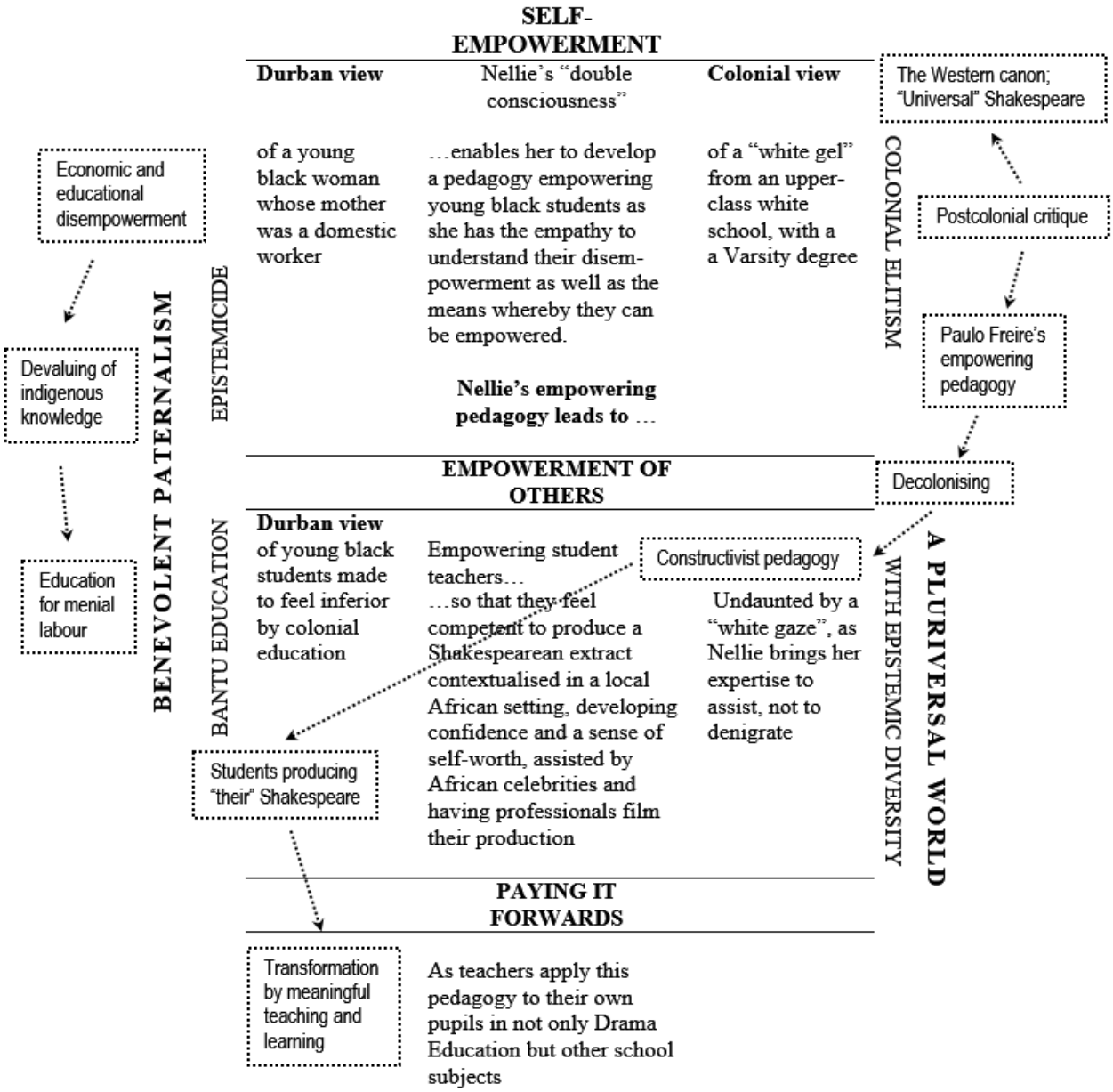


Figure 4.1 The process of self- and other empowerment involved in the project

[30] It has also come to represent a fashion trend or aesthetic adopted by Maskandi fans, who dress in traditional attire, and is therefore not an insult in this context (i.e. 'folksy' rather than uncouth).

There are contradictions and divisions within black South Africans which are amplified in the big cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. However, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal (place of the Zulus) is a particular case, as it is the urban stronghold of the dominant ethic group in South Africa, the Zulus. Yet we Zulus are not a homogenous group: "the Zulu are often cited as a good example of South Africa's heterogeneity…Zuluness is an epithet implicated in tensions between rural and urban, or tradition and modernity (Piper 1998: viii)". The situation reported by Reed (1994: 13) has not changed materially at the time of writing this thesis: "Zulu society is at odds with itself: country-bumpkins versus petty bourgeoisie; unschooled versus schooled; traditional power versus economic power". Thus the 'Durban view' in Figure 4.1 represents different levels of disempowerment amongst black youth. Opposed to the 'Durban view', is the 'colonial view', the legacy of colonial occupation, which holds Western literature to be the pinnacle of civilized intellect (Bloom 1994), with "universal" Shakespeare being the prime exemplar (Kott 1964; Valdivieso 2013; Thurman 2014).

As shown in Figure 4.1, at the outset of the research project, I can be seen to have been experiencing 'double consciousness' (Fanon 1986; Du Bois 2007), where my African roots were at odds with my colonial-style education at an elite private school followed by a university degree. My education emphasised the importance of being conversant with the Western canon, in particular Shakespeare's plays, which to be honest, I found incomprehensible. However, this 'double consciousness' turned out to be my greatest asset in my attempts to empower my students, as I could not only see where they were coming from, but also what kinds of demands the university put on them.

My initial readings on postcolonial critique revealed what was oppressive about Western education, and challenged the Western canons, while showing by literary analysis how loaded the texts were with negative stereotypes of indigenous people and their cultural values, and set them on the periphery, 'othering' them (Gilbert and Tompkins 2002; Sawant 2011; Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2013; Jeyalakshmi 2019; Young 2019). In the same way, the colonial-based university education 'othered' my students and denigrated their culture (Alvares and Faruqi 2012: 10). I did not adopt critical theory as my research paradigm (Guba 1990: 23-25) as postcolonial studies tend to focus on analysis of the problems imposed by colonial subjugation, and not the solutions, apart from the notion of resistance.

However, there was an undercurrent running through my attempts to empower my students, in terms of my recognition that a "banking" type education (Freire 2005: 72), consisting of separate abstract items which are never combined into a meaningful professional experience, was part of the problem of teaching effective Drama or Drama Education. I therefore identified strongly with the type of teaching/learning methodology favoured by Paulo Freire (see Shor 2004: 24-25), which combined genuine love for his students with meaningful experiential education that aimed to create a personal and political shift. This, in my opinion, would go some way towards initiating the decolonising of the Drama Education syllabus at UKZN. However, I chose constructivist pedagogy as a means of tackling the epistemicide perpetrated by colonialism (Grosfoguel 2016: 30; Sithole 2016: 123) and the sense of black inferiority which was the legacy of Bantu education (Motlhaka: 2016: 65). This is because constructivist pedagogy gives all students the chance to contribute to their own learning from their own unique cultural perspective, contextualises learning in a relevant socio-cultural context, and gives students control of their learning, and hence, the confidence to explore their own unrealised potential (see pp. 52-56 above). Developing this potential would enable them to obtain certification and professional expertise, leading not only to educational but also economic empowerment. This chapter will show how the project empowered my students to produce 'their' Shakespeare as well as modelling a pedagogy which could transform their own teaching.

4.2 Session 1: Dealing with the digital

The introductory session consisted of a group discussion on the project, following which, participants who did not have access to smart phones were supplied with Lenovo Wi-Fi tablets. A large portion of the first session was dedicated to the downloading of the necessary apps (i.e. WhatsApp and Instagram, see Figure 4.2) and creating profiles for them. The university's Wi-Fi was tested by uploading introductory Instagram videos, on a group Instagram account which was private to the participants. The account's username was Research Thingz and the password was Shakespeare@2017. Participants opened their own Instagram profiles if they did not already have them; they were then invited to follow the research account. In this way, they could upload their pictures and videos as well as view those of other participants in the group.

Figure 4.2 WhatsApp and Instagram apps used by participants

Why did you deal with this stage first?

I made the decision to begin with the digital because I needed to persuade participants that this project would be 'cool' and fun to be a part of. I instinctively knew that I had to de-centre focus on Shakespeare, and the only way I could think of doing that was centring the project on the students' egos and love of digital technology. I also needed to entice them to stay the course of the project by giving them their own tablets to use, and which they could keep after the project. I had anticipated that I might have to start with a very small group of participants, so I had to make the first session memorable enough for the participants to spread the word about my project and get other students interested. To do this, I needed to think like an Instagram/Twitter brand influencer. I needed to brand the project and make it trend with the students on campus. Celebrity endorsement was one such strategy to validate the project as something new, trendy and worthwhile. I identified three popular and attractive local celebrities (Mpo Sebeng, Siyabonga Radebe and Bohang Moeko) who were involved in a big Soapy titled *Ring of Lies* (see Figure 4.3). Using my contacts in the industry as well as a little bit of flirtatious banter, I convinced these young stars to film themselves on set sending my participants a congratulatory message on being part of my project. I then asked them to WhatsApp me

these videos which I leaked one by one to students. This video trended, and for a week or so was all students asked me about.

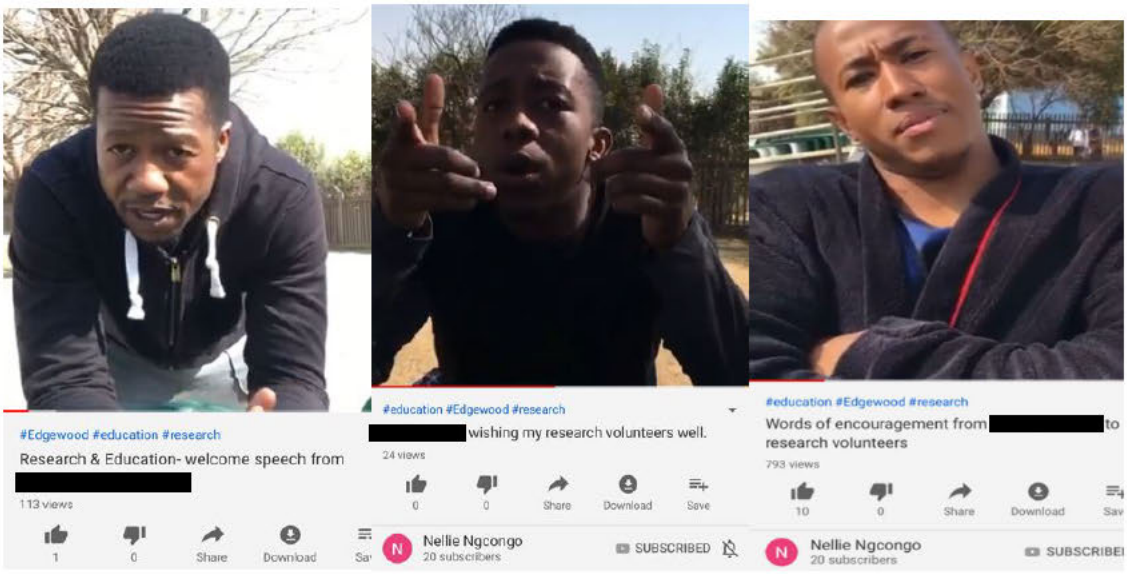


Figure 4.3 Popular local celebrities

Nellie's 'off the cuff' response

Dealing with the digital cut straight into the 'youth age' phenomenon and established a rapport with the students as consumers of social media. It established 'common ground' between me and the students, so that the idea of studying a text receded into the background. Most lecturers would have relied on university computer laboratories for Internet access, with long queues and booking requirements. However, use of tablets was more suitable for Drama studio work in terms of versatility and portability. The students' reaction to the use of digital devices and social media confirmed my intuitive decisions that this would work for the project!

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 1: Dealing with the digital

In retrospect, the inclusion of popular young black celebrities not only made the project attractive, but allowed the students to identify with professional actors of their own culture, boosting their sense of self-worth, and their importance to the profession as well as to society as a whole, as drama educators. The importance of professional expertise to young South African blacks cannot be over-emphasised, as this is the route to economic

as well academic empowerment (see Figure 4.1). This was evidenced by the extensive and enthusiastic chatter that this decision elicited (see p. 97). The significance of this in post-apartheid South Africa is that these young people may be the first generation to have access to tertiary education. Thus they are not only emerging out of poverty as individuals forging a career, but are potential supporters of extended families left behind, as it were. This financial obligation on the part of emerging young black professionals to support an extended family whose members are still caught in the trap of poverty has been termed "black tax" (Magubane 2016; Mangoma and Wilson-Prangley 2019). Magubane (2016: 1) points out that black tax may also refer to the barriers black people have to overcome to access quality education and employment, because of the inequalities caused by apartheid, for example, not being able to apply for internships as they live in remote townships and/or lack personal transport, which expenses the intern salary will not cover. It has been shared with me informally that even students suffer from black tax in having to share funding meant for books and subsidence with not-so-fortunate extended family members, in particular when obliged to stay at home during the COVID-19 lockdown. This means that young professionals and students have difficulty saving or purchasing items which are fashionable or trendy, thus enabling them to be identified as emerging members of the middle-class (Magubane 2016: 2). I assumed that, if students were given tablets, they would stay on the project and it would make them feel 'cool', as most could not afford android smart phones or tablets, and, at the time of starting the project, the university was not giving students their own laptops.

With reference to Table 3.1, the theoretical underpinning to this stage was the fact that plays set in the Elizabethan era, that is, the 'greats' of English colonials (Bloom 1994, 1999), were not in fact accessible or relevant in terms of the 'Durban view' of my student group. However, an adaptation of a Shakespearean play or excerpt contextualised in the digital era might offer a different perspective as well as acknowledge the social media expertise of most of my students. In other words, the project was contextualised in terms of my students' culture and era (Millennium students). In this way, I used my "double consciousness" (Fanon 1986; Du Bois) to anticipate what would not only appeal to Durban youth, but would also bolster their self-esteem in terms of expert use of social media. Moreover, expertise in social media not only empowered students educationally, but also economically, with marketable skills. To sum up:

- Teachers can use social media skills to enhance teaching and learning (particularly in the COVID-19 pandemic) and are more likely to reach and connect with their learners.
- Social media teach entrepreneurial skills in terms of media, advertising and performance, as well as 'influencing'[31] and product placement.
- Exposure on social media has now become an important aspect of securing employment as a performer, as well as access to multiple streams of income.

Use of social media (in which I was already conversant) not only boosted student self-esteem, but also my own confidence in using a skillset I had mastered socially for educational use: this was a form of self-empowerment. It was also a career booster for me, in terms of realising how I could create my own content on digital platforms and create a following as either drama educator or performer (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KRcS1dqZ1M)

While using digital technology had immediate relevance for contextualising the project and developing useful teaching and marketable skills, it must be remembered that, at a deeper level, I was responding to postcolonial critique which exposed the inappropriateness of traditional Western syllabus content (Alvares and Faruqi 2012: 10). Instead, I was using an empowering pedagogy which echoed Paulo Freire's contention that education should be accessible, appropriate, practical and useful, and stimulate students' minds, rather than fitting them for a life of servitude (Motlhaka: 2016: 65).

4.3 Session 2: Dealing with Shakespeare

How did you deal with Shakespeare, and why? Why did you not start with the text?

I chose to deal with Shakespeare in the second session as by now the students were fully committed to the project and were itching to begin some sort of performance. As a drama educator who prefers workshopping because it is actor-centred, and not text-centred, I realised that I was dealing with motivated, self-actualising human beings, and not puppets. To begin the session, I showed videos with different interpretations of Shakespeare on the YouTube platform as well as a relaxed lecture/discussion in the form of PowerPoint presentation of *Julius Caesar* showing an act by act summary: characters,

[31] The term "influencers" refers to individuals on social media who are in a consumer's social graph and have a direct impact on the behaviour of that consumer (Ge and Gretzel 2018: 1273).

plot, theme and background were presented and discussed. Thus our 'way in' was through a mediated form which the students were far more comfortable with and which had positive associations.

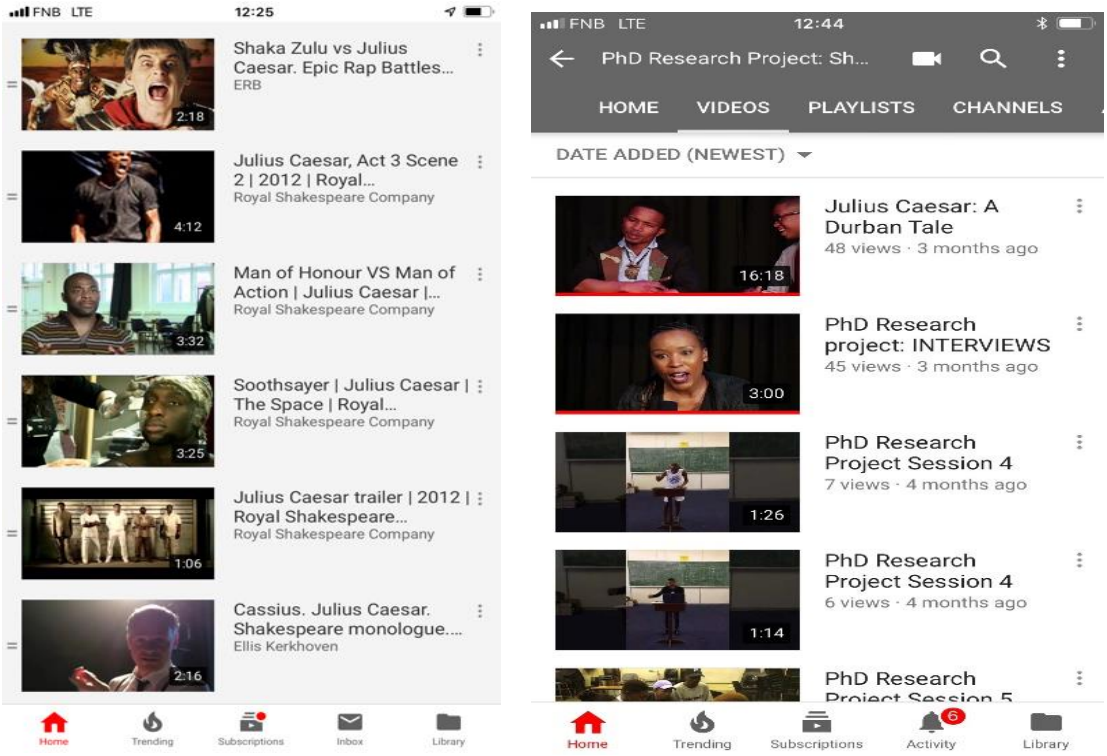


Figure 4.4 YouTube Shakespearean archive (including archived PhD project work)

Figure 4.5 Shakespearean interpretations on YouTube

Figure 4.4 shows screen dumps of the extensive YouTube Shakespearean archive which we accessed for examples of different interpretations, as well as the archived work from this PhD project. The archive included animated versions of Shakespeare and scenes in modern settings (Figure 4.5), as well as a 'rap' battle between Caesar and King Shaka Zulu (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 'Rap' battle between Caesar and King Shaka Zulu

Table 4.1 Modern Shakespearean scenarios for improvisation

Act 1 Scene 2 G3 (2 Characters) As the party continued at Cubana, outside Bheki is getting some fresh air with a beer in his hand and a full tummy. He is content, but out of the shadows a dark figure approaches. A familiar face - Cebo - reveals to Bheki that Comrade Siza is not as great as they all think, that in fact he is weak! He points out that Bheki himself is even better then comrade Siza. That comrade Siza is a poser who does it all for the Instagram: he isn't all that. This man needs to be erased #Dead.	***Act 1 scene 1 G1*** (3 Characters - Some extras) There was an ANC conference that was called as a matter of urgency: Political infighting and ethnic rivalries have caused nothing short of a civil war. After much violence resulting in the death of the previous mayor, the ANC UKZN Branch has unilaterally elected Comrade Juliyasi Siza. This Comrade was an anti-apartheid hero and has through his strategic genius built immense wealth for the kingdom of the Zulus. Outside in the CBD two Municipality officers chase away street vendors and tear down decorations that honour the new mayor.

The second step of the second session was about contextualising Shakespeare and improvisation. I loosely described scenes in *Julius Caesar* using modern 'slangy' language, and setting them in a South African context (see Table 4.1). I then let the participants form self-chosen groups, where they were given the scenarios, for which some assumed Director status, and then selected a cast (which at times included themselves). The improvised scenarios were then performed in chronological order to create the plot in action. After each improvised scene, a short forum discussion took place. This time was then used to explain the similarities between their improvised scenes and the original text. These scenes were filmed, and the discussions were recorded. The various groups then improvised around the scenarios (see Figure 4.7), and the resulting performances were uploaded to both the Instagram private account and the YouTube channel set up for that purpose. In this session I drew on postcolonial theory to ensure that Shakespeare was contextualised to be meaningful to the participants; also, YouTube adaptations set in different contexts were viewed and discussed. The improvising around scenarios involved small group interaction, which involved constructivist pedagogy, as the task was student-centred and allowed the participants to construct the meaning of the scenarios collaboratively.

Nellie's 'off the cuff' response

I really enjoyed this activity and it was lovely to see the students engaged and excited. They immediately ripped the envelopes open and started casting themselves, playing and trying out different ideas. Lots of laughter and energy! Students were freely asking each other for help and asking what certain words meant even though the sentences were in modern day English. When it came to the actual performances it was very clear that one or two groups had completely misunderstood their scenario. This of course was the perfect opportunity to clear up misunderstandings and bring the original text to their attention. After realizing this, I constantly compared their improvised scenes to what happened in their original text. I decided that I was going to teach myself how to edit videos and pictures on my phone so that every session has memories that are uploaded onto the YouTube channel as well as Instagram. I also tried to explain to them that they must not comment on the Instagram account as the account itself but on their personal account, otherwise it appeared that only one person was participating. I tried to discourage them from following other accounts with the project's account, as this filled

the timeline with things irrelevant to the study. I had to log into the account and delete some of their personal posts and 'unfollow' some accounts.

Figure 4.7 Groups improvising around the scenarios and reflecting on the performance

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 2: Dealing with Shakespeare

My attempt to assist students to 'deal with Shakespeare' was carried out in digital space, following the use of digital technology pioneered by Jennifer Nicholls and Robyn Philip (Nicholls and Philip 2001, 2012; Philip and Nicholls 2009,2007). The fact that Shakespeare was introduced via digital platforms not only built on the social media skills introduced in the first session, but also presented Shakespeare in a modern digital setting, that is, moving him out of the old-fashioned 'very English' Elizabethan cultural context (see Table 3.2 Aspects of the theoretical framework in the project). One of the performers viewed online in the pilot project was a black student 'rapping' Shakespearean texts, setting Shakespeare in a modern music genre set in black American culture (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSbtkLA3GrY), a far cry from Elizabethan England (see also Figure 4.6 'Rap' battle between Caesar and King Shaka Zulu). The whole idea that a student could interpret Shakespearean texts in very different cultural manner and timeframe encouraged my students to explore culture-specific interactions which were 'cool' and accessible. This introduced the idea of context- and culture-specific interpretations of Shakespeare, which formed a type of syncretic theatre (Hazou 2015), which uses indigenous material within the framework of Western drama to create a completely new product (for example, the 'Bollywood Lear' described by Földváry 2013). Syncretic theatre is considered one of the most effective ways of decolonising the stage, "because it utilizes the performance forms of both European and indigenous cultures in a creative recombination of their respective elements, without slavish adherence to one tradition or the other" (Balme 1999: 109); Egwuda-Ugbeda 2014). It has been described as "creative and liberating in the way it combines elements from Western and indigenous cultures" to respond to Western attempts to preserve homogeneity and purity (Hazou 2015: 144). According to Balme (1999), syncretic theatre lends itself to hybridity, which I do not see as a problem, as my students are hybrids, their ethnicity diluted by colonialism in the past, and globalisation more recently.

Session 2 also involved student-centred activity in casting play excerpts and improvisations. This served as a dummy run for the later production of an excerpt from a Shakespearean play, and led students through the processes of acting, impromptu improvising, and reflecting on performance. Session 2 thus started the process of decolonising Shakespeare (Loots, Young and Young-Jahangeer 2017) in the sense of making his texts relevant to a non-Western student group, as I translated the archaic text

into something more modern and accessible, but still retaining the core plot and any relevant themes, although the emphasis might well shift in a different era and setting. My adaptation of the texts was a necessary stage in bridging the gap between Elizabethan and modern English, as, in my experience, it was the barrier caused by experiencing Shakespearean plays as an analysis of incomprehensible text on a page rather than as a scenario to use as a basis for performance. Moreover, the excerpts they were given provided them with a taste of what they could expect in an extended performance, in terms of intriguing themes which might draw them to explore the original text (which in fact it did).

4.4 Session 3: Student reflection on improvisations

Why did this stage happen next?

I chose to conduct the reflection at this time as I felt enough sessions had been carried out for the participants to have an opinion of their personal experience, and had got an idea of what the project was actually about (see Table 4.2). Reflecting on the improvisations involved in Session two was conducted via WhatsApp, and participants were free to use WhatsApp's various functions such as voice notes, video and texts. This online reflection was student-centred as it was concerned with the participants' experiences within the project. It was also constructivist as it allowed participants to share their lived experience and make meaning of it (i.e. *What do they bring to the table?*)

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 3: Student reflection on improvisations

As suggested in Table 3.2 (Aspects of the theoretical framework in the project) the constructivist pedagogy used involved sharing the students' lived experiences of adaptations and improvisation. In this way they actively construct knowledge with themselves and their surroundings in a real world setting (Jonassen *et al.* (1995: 13-14; Rockmore 2005: 79). My analysis of the previous session focused on how setting Shakespeare in modern digital setting made it far more understandable by students, as well as contextualising it in the digital, not Shakespearean era. It also showed options for seeing Shakespeare as 'groovy' and 'cool'. This signalled the initial stages of the process of decolonising Shakespeare (which a project such as this could initiate, only). However, my approach to decolonising Shakespeare was to use, not critical, but constructivist pedagogy, as, in my opinion, it was an empowering approach

Table 4.2 Examples of participant reflections on performance

Participant 1 reflection:	**Participant 2 reflection:**
The method that was used was explanation, questioning and demonstrating. It was effective because we knew what was lesson about and what we had to do. The interesting part it was when Nellie used folded paper as resource for the lesson which had scenarios, it made us interact with each other by sharing ideas. We also learned many skills in one session, we were acting and discussing reflecting on our improvised scenes. She was very creative because we did a very long play in a very short time. My suggestions would be for her to use different resources maybe like more video clips and voice notes, that would very interesting because we are different in class some of learners only understand something through touching it, seeing it…	In our last session we talked about *Julius Caesar* and I thought it was very effective because it took the text, the whole chunk of confusing language and put it into something modern, something that we could relate too like a soap opera and touched in things that happen in real life. I could say it was also effective in terms of teaching as students, we watched video clips, performed the scenario's and sat down to discuss each scene that was just acted out so that those who were confused were able to know what was happening on the text itself and were able to catch up. I felt that next time we should use some quotes or words from the text book in the scenario's that will be acted out so it will fully relate to the play.
Participant 3 reflection:	**Participant 4 reflection:**
The strategy utilized for the session, for me they were very interesting because Nellie was able to modernize or use scenario's in a modern way for instance we took the king on the play *Julius Caesar* and made a character of a local Councillors which was a good idea and very relevant to all of us as we were able to relate or act out something that we come across on a daily lifestyle. I found that her teaching strategy was very effective in a sense that it gave us an opportunity to explore and be creative and also gave us an opportunity to work together as a group.	I think our last session was very effective considering the way that we acted everything without using the script, we got to understand the characters without using the script. There was a lot of improvisation. It was easy and fun at the same time as we got to express ourselves and there were not a wrong or right way of doing things. It was very interesting. In my acting experience, I've never done this style and I felt it was the best way of teaching people to act out what's in the script. I'm very keen and can't wait for the next session.

This is because, in constructivist pedagogy, knowledge is constructed by students in collaborative, student-based, authentic and experiential learning (Jonnassen *et al.* 1995; Manning 1997; Land and Hannafin 2000; Rockmore 2005: 79; Herrington and Herrington 2006). This approach also echoes Paulo Freire's solution to the problem of "banking education" (Freire 2005: 72), that is, to challenge it by assisting learners to develop skills which will empower them academically and economically, using "problem-posing education" (Leonard and McLaren 2002). Constructivist pedagogy leads to "deep

approaches to learning" (Campbell *et al.* 2001: 174) rather than the surface treatment given by the transmission approach inherent in banking education. I was very much in the same position as Freire in objecting to the Western-style syllabuses for Drama and Drama Education, consisting of discrete abstract items which were taught separately rather than being integrated into the theatre-making – or drama teaching – process. In constructivist pedagogy, syllabus items are integrated so that students are engaged in academic and professional processes, rather than knowledge-telling, or the regurgitation of inert knowledge (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1985). Interaction between the various elements shows students why the various aspects are relevant and how they come together in real life processes. For example, my project involved traditional 'subjects' such as Theatre History, Text Analysis, Acting Techniques, Directing, Scriptwriting and elements of technical production. However, my constructivist approach integrated them into a meaningful theatre-making process, as well as modelling constructivist pedagogy for them. While this approach uses very similar methods to those favoured by Freire, the values and principles of the paradigm informing constructivist pedagogy, that is, the constructivist research paradigm, are different from those informing critical theory (Guba 1990: 23-27). Being able to draw together the strands of a discrete syllabus into a meaningful whole experience not only empowered the students, but also myself as educator. Furthermore, the student reflections showed an appreciation for how the pedagogy was working for them and how they might apply it in their own Drama Education teaching practice, thus 'paying it forwards' (see Figure 4.1).

4.5 Social media (digital) and improvisations continued

Why did this session come next?

This session came next as I wanted to know how/whether digital media were working for participants. I thought it would be a good idea to start off this session with the participants' recorded comments regarding their experiences with digital technology during the project. I wanted to know how they were experiencing the use of digital technology and if perhaps they had any ideas that would require me to make some adjustments. Participants had already used WhatsApp to comment on their recorded online performances on the YouTube channel (see Figure 4.8).

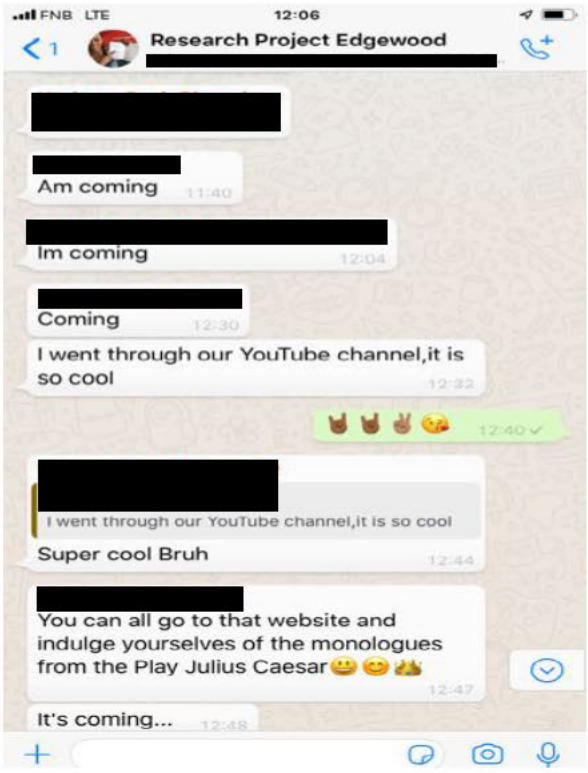


Figure 4.8 Participants' reactions on WhatsApp to YouTube performances

They had also been interviewed on video about their experience of using social media, and these are some of the responses given in their video interviews:

> I felt so great, although I don't know how many times I had to do it over since I was satisfied with the other videos. It felt good telling people about me and many other people are going to see it. I felt a bit nervous but also good at the same time, because I saw it as a stepping stone. I didn't know anything about Instagram and now I know something, so I also learned a few things. Watching myself on the laptop or computer felt a bit good, it felt really good. Watching my peers and listening to what they know and what they said helped me to relate it to my own ideas, I learned a lot. Regarding the WhatsApp group, I don't feel that I should privately send voice notes because if I send them privately it takes time. If I send it to the group it makes it easier for everyone to hear what I said, to correct me wherever they want to correct me. I feel like everyone should send their voice notes to the group so that we can learn. I always value other people's opinions but I also critique their opinions because so I can take the conducive things that inspire me, especially if they motivate me. I think the YouTube channel is the best because if I wasn't here

because I had other commitments I get a chance to see them in my spare time to know what happened and see how things were done and try to catch up, and also learn because it is a more modern way of learning. I like to see myself on the YouTube channel, I get to see other people, I get to learn new stuff and it's a great way of teaching. I think it should be introduced in schools.

When I watched myself I felt like an idiot because I don't come out well on camera but watching others I got to see people just naturally being themselves and doing their thing, which was pretty cool. I think it's a good thing to be sending voice notes on WhatsApp because I think it should be sent to the group so that we can know what other people are thinking and if we have the same ideas then…And also to get ideas from other people as well. It's also a good way for us to interact together all at once instead of one person sending a voice note away from each other. We get to come to one central place to interact with each other and listen to the views and opinions of others. We can develop our own views and opinions from that as well. I love other people's opinions because although I may have something to say another person may have something different and because of that we get to learn things we never knew. The YouTube channel is pretty cool because then we actually get to see our work, and YouTube is actually a very big platform and if somebody stumbles there by mistake then we are getting exposure. It's also a worldwide thing so it's not just here in South Africa where it just here- it's actually all over the world. Other people around the world can see out ideas and they can also use it in their own context when they are teaching and learning. I feel good watching the YouTube channel, I actually feel accomplished because I'm part of this project and being a part of it, seeing your work and being on a platform that can be seen around the world that's pretty cool.

It felt good, it got me seeing how people view their own worlds, other people's worlds. I think it's ok that the voice notes are sent publically, sent in the group because it gets one to listen to other people's views and opinions. It's also kind of funny listening to yourself sometimes, but its ok because it makes people hear what you also have to say. You can be corrected, so it's

really good that it can be sent publically. People's opinions are so good because you get to hear where another person is coming from, you get to be taught things you weren't aware of and you get to understand people's minds and see how they think. It also helps us to grow because we get to engage. I really like the YouTube channel, when I watched the first time I literally opened the videos that I did not know because the other videos are of us 'the group' from Edgewood. Looking at other videos especially from 2016, I was really inspired. I looked at how other people were rapping *Julius Caesar*- it was just inspiring. It sort of rekindled the artist in me. I feel great about the YouTube channel, I think it's amazing.

I feel so impressed and comfortable as we share more ideas as student teachers. With regards to WhatsApp voice notes – I like it a lot as it allows me to become closer to other people. It also educates me because I get to listen to other people and get a sense of maybe where I could have gone wrong, a type of clue or correction which I like. I appreciate opinions a lot, but not all of them, I like those that are good for me. I feel so comfortable because everyone around the world can see me and maybe one day I will end up being a model.

Nellie's 'off the cuff' response

I'm quite excited now, because the participants are responding so positively to using digital media. They even saw WhatsApp in a way that I didn't - I just thought we could use it for announcements and keep in touch. It was the participants who suggested that we should communicate, and share ideas and performances on the platform. I'm also seeing why WhatsApp is so popular; if you hate writing and reading, you can just choose the option of voice notes. It's more immediate and free. If you like writing then you can just send text. I also like that the group of participants did not feel the need to communicate with me privately but enjoyed the immediate feedback they got from others in the group. I like the fact that they were so comfortable with each other and did not feel shy or judged. I am also surprised about their maturity when receiving feedback or corrections from other group members. WhatsApp has really made my small group of participants into a little supportive online community. All the participants loved being on YouTube; I can tell it made them feel special, even professional. At first I thought they

might have some reservations about privacy but they really seemed to want as much exposure as possible (see pp. 97, 133, 147 on the importance of gaining Internet exposure either for acting jobs or third-stream income as product 'influencers').

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 4: Social media (digital) and improvisations continued

One of the principles of constructivist pedagogy is to set the students free to work independently of the instructor (Jonassen *et al.* 1995: 13; Rockmore 2005: 79). The problem with using face-to-face methods, such as formal lecturing, is that students do not get the chance to collaborate and share ideas with each other, which are essential features of real world projects. The participant comments show that use of social media went beyond its initial use, as planned by me (i.e. announcements and to keep in touch); and note that it was the participants who suggested that we should communicate, and share ideas and performances on the digital platforms. WhatsApp transformed my small group of participants into a supportive online community, justifying research showing its fluidity, versatility and popularity as a teaching and learning tool (Bouhnik and Lorenzetti 2009); Deshen 2014; Youbi and Alfaries 2014; So 2016). Social media can be seen to have increased, accelerated and heightened interpersonal communication, enabling students not only to make a success of the project, but also to be 'set free' of the instructor, democratising teaching and learning. Again, the constructivist pedagogy can be seen to have been a vital element in both self- and other empowerment, boosting my confidence as educator, and empowering my students to unleash their potential in a hitherto daunting area (see Figure 4.1 above, p. 91, in which constructivist pedagogy forms a kind of 'bridge' linking educator and student empowerment and facilitating the decolonising process).

4.6 Session 5: Workshopping explored

Why explore workshopping now?

I felt that the participants were now confident enough to begin experimenting with different ways of interpreting the text through various art forms to explore what workshopping could do (e.g. dance, play, song, film), and individual talents were being auditioned informally as various talents were seen to be needed. This session was also to encourage them to share ideas, understand the workshopping process and to start creating

on their own without guidance from a facilitator. Using the text as inspiration, participants created a song and a dance. After the exploratory workshopping, the participants decided on what they would like to be their final product. They decided that they would like to create a film and selected one group member to write a draft script for their film which would later be refined by the group.

Rap Song by Thabo Maphumulo - Julius Caesar rap

Hey y'all I'm Julius and as y'all guessed the play is on me
I'm the man in this play
I'm the starring y'all can't touch me
Greatest military leader Pompey was a breeze
Didn't even break a sweat my army ran through him
Came was praised and loved by all of my people
With my wife Calpurnia we gonna rule this land

But my blindness got to me
Even though my good friend mark had warned me
Not to trust these snakes lurking in the grass
Some could say I was too trusting
Which is true cos it got me killed
Stuck a knife right in my back
Even Brutus who I trusted
Helped set up this scheme
"Et tu, Brute" were the last words I said as I fell to the ground

All the while I never knew
That there was a plot that started against me
With the people I trusted
Talking lies about me
Ambition and power is what they said it was all about
But I just loved my Rome
And was doing it for the people

My blindness is what killed me
Even though I had been warned
About the ides of March
Another sigh that came was when my wife had a dream
And I was almost convinced
Till Decius arrived
Then bye-bye Caesar
Should've listened to those ides

Rap song on the project by Snoop

Chorus
Caesar x2 hero
(You fought for the people of Rome) x2
You bought the captives' home to Rome x3

First verse
So what up homies, can he rap really?
We doing PhD project with Nellie
We doing it fairly, we nailing it really
We growing bigger, bigger than your fat belly
We doing Shakespeare, we make it all clear
So I suggest that you open up your ears
We make it relevant, modern, and so brutal
We speak about Anthony going through agony
Of seeing Brutus, killing Caesar so brutal
We talk about deceivers, snitches and killers
Planning to kill Caesar like the Jews killed Jesus
Using his friend Judas, so it was Brutus
He was the last one to put the knife through
So contagious, and so jealous, he then told the people Caesar was ambitious
Was it true really? Or was it - was it just a lie?
If it was true then I will choose to differ, when that the people cried
Caesar wept with them, that's why he bought home many captives to Rome
Only if he knew that he was about to blow, not to grow, and not to glow
Hear me out, people of Rome.

Back to the chorus

Second verse
It's like I'm acting movie you know standby and action
Before I become the best you know I got the passion
Before I got the passion I started to have a vision
And the vision that I had inside was to face all this mission
Before it went so far I knew it was a competition
And everyone started to enter for the audition
I didn't believe so soon judges made the decision
But the decision just got me out of my good emotion.

Nellie's 'off the cuff' response

I am blown away, as the participants took chances and collaborated in a way that I would never had expected. Some quieter participants started taking up leadership roles and at times encouraging others. The movement piece was absolutely beautiful and the participants worked as a unit, navigating the space and generally having a good time. When the participants who had songs introduced them to the group, it was magic. Other participants started joining in and being taught the lyrics - it felt like a Justin Bieber

concert. The participants have become so comfortable and free with each other. I also noticed strong friendships building within the group, students who generally would never have met on campus were now interacting like a family. They helped each other and even travelled home in groups.

I asked the group to please start writing up the script and decide in what capacity they would like to contribute to their film. I let them know that in the meantime I would be scouting for a videographer. This seemed to frighten the participants and they started to realise how much work they still had to do. They also got quite excited, and one of the participant said that his strength was writing, so he would like to be the scriptwriter. He promised the group that he would be supplying a draft to them on WhatsApp. The participants then had a brainstorming session so that the writer would have a blueprint to work from.

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 5: Workshopping explored

Although constructivist pedagogy uses experiential learning, it must be emphasised that students are not abandoned to work things out on their own. A scaffolded approach is needed in which students first explore a process and become familiar with the required skillset (Pratt 2011). This scaffolding was provided in Session 5, which allowed students to explore the various options available, and the freewheeling nature of this session allowed them to see that there was no limit set to how they could interpret Shakespeare. Another aspect of this session was that, in order to explore Shakespeare, students would now need to explore the traditional texts, which they now had the confidence to approach, not as a textual puzzle to be analysed, but a repository of plots and themes with production potential (Marowitz 1991; Cartelli 1999; Mondello 2006). They could debate interpretation, without having the lecturer's opinion imposed on them. It also initiated a fair amount of research in terms of finding various interpretations explained online. Thus, instead of forcing interpretations on students, the constructivist approach drew them towards it as a natural part of the theatre-making process. The workshopping process was empowering my students in a similar way to how it was used by Joan Littlewood to inspire working-class people to produce grass-roots theatre (Holdsworth 2011; Rufford 2011; Grainger 2013) and by theatre protest movements in South Africa (Hutchison 2004; Kerr and Chifunyise 2004) as a form of resistance against apartheid. Only in this case, it was

resistance against the colonial-type education still offered at universities (Grosfoguel, 2016; Sithole 2016; Heleta 2018).

4.7 Session 6: Workshopping from the text

Why do workshopping from the text now?

The previous session had prepared them for workshopping from the text. In this session the volunteer script writer produced a draft script which the group could use as a stimulus to workshop. They cast themselves, referred back to the original text, improvised, edited their draft script and rehearsed (see the call of the 'playwright' call for characters in Figure 4.9). Note that the participants were intuitively filling roles for which they thought they were best suited.

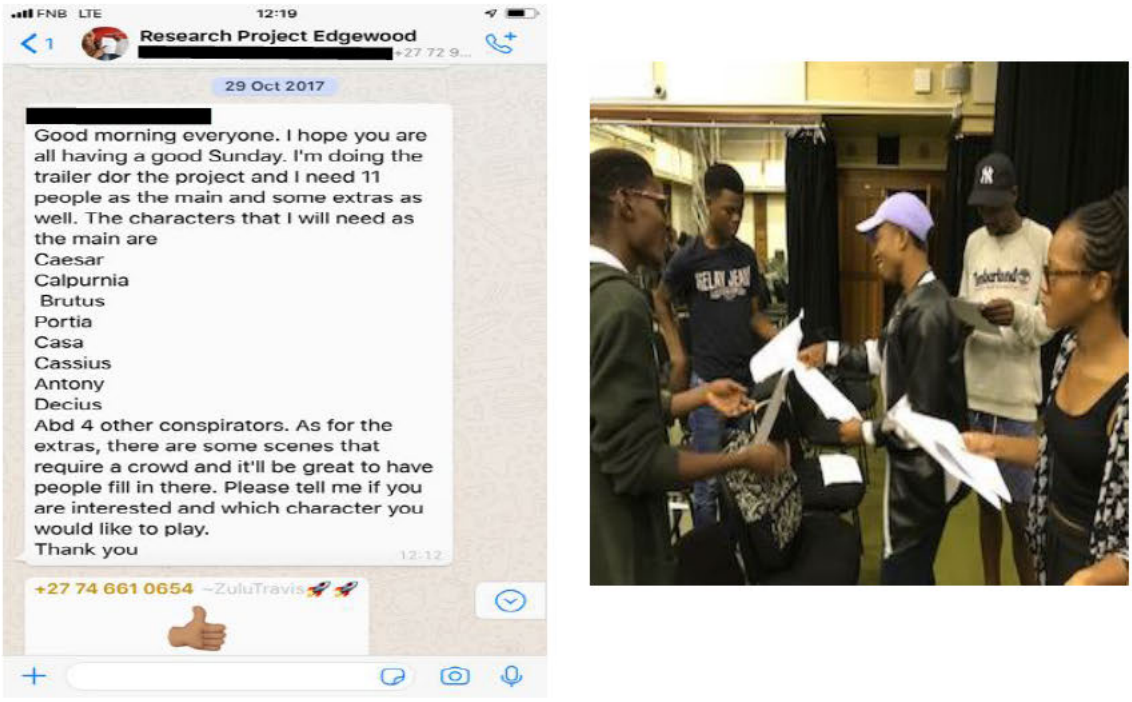


Figure 4.9 The call of the 'playwright' for characters on WhatsApp

Nellie's 'off the cuff' response

The script draft (see Table 4.3) was very interesting in that it was all in English, but as they started reading it out loud everyone switched to their mother tongue. The script was contextualised in Durban and revolved around ward councillors and the municipality. As the writer explained, what he envisioned as the script started to fall away as the

participant's adlibbed and further improvised around the script. Some parts were completely discarded while some were improved upon. The film morphed into something new as ideas flowed and changes were made. It became clear that some participants weren't actors and preferred to assist behind the scenes. Some took on roles of leadership; what struck me is how organically the unit worked. People just shifted into place and made things work, and it was at this point that I realised that no participant looked at me for assistance and I seemed to disappear from the process.

Table 4.3 Excerpt from draft script

Scene 4: ***The funeral of Caesar. Antony talking over the casket of Caesar. Scene will have him talking his first line then flash to how Caesar was killed while he talks. Scene will flash back to Antony when he says his last line***
Antony: Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears (*Scene flashes to Caesars coronation. Conspirators enter room where Caesar is*)
Antony: I come to bury Caesar; not praise him (*Conspirators edge closer to Caesar and draw their knives*)
Antony: the evil that men do lives after them The good is oft interred with their bones So let it be with Caesar (*Conspirators start to stab Caesar and he starts to fight them off*)
Antony: You did love him once. Not without cause What cause holds you then to mourn for him?
(*Brutus enters and stabs Caesar. Caesar stops fighting and looks at him*)
Antony: My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar… (***Caesar****: Et tu, Brute. Caesar falls and dies*)
Antony: … and I must pause till it come back. ***Scene 5: flashes to violence then to the conspirators toasting the death of Caesar***

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 6: Workshopping from the text

As a result of the exploration carried out in the previous session, the student group decided that they would make a film of an excerpt from *Julius Caesar*, a fairly ambitious project for a group with hardly a month's experience in interpretation. This shows the sense of confidence which was developed by using constructivist pedagogy. Not only were participants emancipated from formal 'Western type' lecturing, as it was now 'their thing' but also from the archaic text, which was used as a jumping off point only (Wolf, Edmiston and Enciso 1997; Földváry 2013). Students now had a sense of ownership in the project (Jackson 2005: 107), so that they felt competent to produce a Shakespearean

extract contextualised in a local African setting, developing confidence and a sense of self-worth, assisted by African celebrities and having professionals film their production. The accent on 'African' setting and celebrities is important not only to the decolonising process, but to the constructivist principle of setting teaching and learning in a cultural context. As mentioned earlier, Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory, which underpins constructivist pedagogy, requires taking into consideration the culture in which learning takes place (Pressley and McCormick 2007: 153).

4.7 Film day

Why use professionals at this point?

I decided to hire a professional videographer so that I could be assured of a quality product. Furthermore, a professional videographer ensured that the participants took the project seriously and saw themselves as professionals. I also wanted to do justice to the film as it would be uploaded on YouTube and could be viewed by all, as it was going to be added to the Shakespeare repository. The videographer also had skills that I did not have, such as the ability to edit. The filming took place in the Gcina Mhlophe studio on Edgewood campus UKZN.

Nellie's 'off the cuff' response

The participants ran over their scenes and fussed about costumes and props. As soon as the videographer arrived they became very serious and one of them organically became the leader of their physical and vocal warm-up. Another participant led the group in prayer. They showed the videographer what happens in each scene and soon began filming. It was as if we were on a professional set. They were prepared and efficient and worked smoothly as a team. Even the videographer was impressed by the level of professionalism and talent shown. At the end of filming there was a short interview with some of the students and myself (see Tables 4.4, 4.5. and 4.6). It was a very emotional ending for the students as they embraced, and some even cried.

Theoretical aspects underpinning Session 7: Film day

Participant reaction to the professional filming of 'their' Shakespeare shows the emotional commitment they had to the task. Thus interpreting Shakespeare had become, not an academic chore to be tackled grudgingly and as quickly as possible, but a chosen

project which gave them much personal pleasure as well as developing their academic and economic potential.

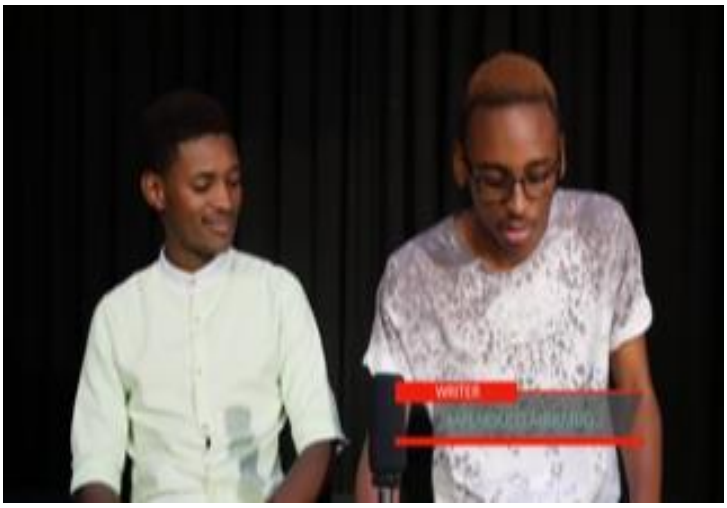
Table 4.4 Post-film interview: researcher

Hi. My name is Nellie Ngcongo and I am a PhD candidate at UKZN. This is the end product of my data collection and it has become a production. This is based on the idea of creating a new model of teaching drama which is includes traditional teaching, workshopping as well as improvisation. It's really cool because the students get to do something that they want to do, they get to guide the process, and they get to use digital media which everyone loves. We've got our Instagram page, we've got our YouTube channel up and its really something for the modern student to show that you can do anything you want to do and you don't only need traditional teaching when there is so much technology that you can use. I'm a researcher but I'm also a teacher at the same time so trying to find a way to empower students without suffocating them, but not making them feel like they have been thrown in the deep end so it's sort of a tricky adjustment to always be making. To always be trying to make sure that they did their best. It's been a very exciting road, I'm so excited about where we started and where we have ended, and I'm just so lucky to have had such a good group of volunteers.

Table 4.5 Post-film interview: director

Getting to meet other people who are as passionate and as they are for Drama as well as academic purposes. Njengoba uNellie kwakuyena umuntu [because it is Nellie] who like drove us and showed us that yes we can have Drama but it can also be a bit more meaningful process.	

Table 4.6 Post-film interview: playwright



To come to this stage, umm, we had a few sessions with Miss Nellie and then she just gave us a few ideas on things we could do like raps and things like that and then eventually she suggested that we do a sort of production with a movie. We started off with like so many things, so many huge things 'cause we didn't have a huge cast we then had to change things and then it evolved with the help of Brian it was …it came out very beautiful and with everybody else as well working hard and getting here. It been, it's been really good. Because it is the story of *Julius Caesar* I wanted to make it *Julius Caesar*. We took it and we put it in a South African context so that when we are teaching it out to students…when it's being taught it's something that they can relate to. Though it is a play from overseas we can bring it here to the students, make it South African so that they can learn and see it in their own context.

It must be remembered that this performance was achieved by students coming from the 'Durban view' position of economic hardship, with their cultural knowledge being dismissed as unimportant, ignored, and not being seen as potential graduates and professionals. Their importance as citizens of the world – a pluriversal world with epistemic diversity - has now been acknowledged: their lived experience has been validated, and brought into their interpretations and adaptations, and they have been able to explore skills that they had never been taught before, all integrated into the project. The film was posted online, taking its place in the repository of plots and themes already there, not hidden away in a leaky theatre on 'performance night', the fate of many home-grown productions. Film day showcases the elements of self- and other empowerment involved in the project, as shown in Figure 4.1, and challenges the elitist Western canon with 'another way' of doing things, informed by postcolonial and decolonial theories, showing that the world is varied with multiple opportunities, with the support of a scaffolded constructivist approach to de-toxify the legacy of apartheid and Bantu Education.

4.9 Curtain call

This process, to me, was the high point of the whole research, vibrant theatre-making in which all participants celebrated their talents, culminating in a performance which was professionally credible enough to be filmed and posted online in the Shakespeare YouTube archive. My 'arch nemesis', Shakespeare, had been disarmed and recruited to serve the purpose of a creative teaching/learning methodology, the Bard recycled and re-purposed to serve the Millennial generation in South Africa. Finally the theoretical framework informing my approach had been validated in leading to a participant-constructed, culturally-embedded interpretation of an excerpt of a Shakespearean text which was a vivid, lived experience, rather than a daunting puzzle set in an alien context and language.

Chapter 5: Falling action

5.1 Introduction

The falling action is that part of a play which follows the climax in Freytag's pyramid of play structure (Cuddon 2013: 291), and may contain a moment of suspense where the final outcome hangs in the balance. It is in the analysis of the data that the 'plot' of the thesis works itself out towards its final denouement (i.e. in the Conclusion, in this thesis). The researcher sets up the situation in the 'rising action' but is never sure how the 'drama' will unfold, in my case, whether the desired teaching/learning methodology might be vindicated in analysis. The previous chapter described the excitement of the project, but the research aspect of the project requires a more rigorous interrogation. In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the research as revealed in the data gathered in the empirical work, as well as in an analysis of the data in terms of the specific research questions used to focus the enquiry. As I explained in the methodology section (Chapter 2), rich data was obtained through focus groups, interviews and online discussion forums. I used focus groups for oral data collection, as they are particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and in examining what people think and why they think in that way (Kitzinger 1995). An innovation for data collection during workshop productions was the use of online mobile services (Instagram and WhatsApp) for online discussion, sharing photographs, videos, and networking (restricted to private use in this case). I issued the students involved in play production with tablets for the duration of the course so that they could use these services to engage in individual and shared reflection on their rehearsals. In this chapter, I discuss the processes employed and participant responses together so as to show how aspects of the methodology formulated developed in the course of the empirical work. Before concluding, the emerging model of the methodology for creative interpretation of canonical texts is briefly discussed in terms of key points arising in the data analysis.

5.2 Data sources used for analysis

The data analysed to answer the specific research questions came from the following sources. The interviews, focus groups, online discussion forums provided rich data for

establishing:

1. *how application of a constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation and use of digital technology is experienced by students in terms of:*
   a. their response to the teaching and learning approach, and
   b. their understanding of the language of the prescribed traditional text/s.

Use of Instagram and WhatsApp provided rich visual (some being video) data combined with text to show:

c. how their dramatic performances of the prescribed text/s [were experienced] (i.e. in terms of "working in" to the traditional text studied to achieve a production).

The answer to research question 2., as to *what features of this integrative approach might be identified as facilitating creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts, and why [this is so]*, were established by myself by exploring themes and patterns which could be seen to emerge from the data, using manual coding (Saldaña 2009: 22). Figure 4.1 (on p. 93) shows the major themes which emerged as well as the way in which these themes contributed in progression to the desired project outcome. Combined with my own experience as Drama Studies lecturer and play producer, this allowed me to come to conclusions and suggest answers to research question 3. as to *what pattern theory or model of the developing teaching methodology emerges as a result of the analysis of the answers to the above questions* (i.e. 1., 2., and 3.) I reflected on the answers to all of the above questions as well as the emerging model in order to analyse the data generated in the course of the project.

5.3 Analysis of responses to the teaching and learning approach

In order to show in some detail how participants experienced the emerging teaching and learning methodology developed in this study, I have broken the analysis down into sections, namely, analysing the participant responses to the use of contextualisation, improvisation, workshopping and digital technology (all features of the teaching and learning methodology). This is because the teaching and learning approach I developed could be seen to hinge around these four elements.

Contextualisation

To recap the teaching and learning approach used, in session two of the empirical work, I had introduced a group improvisation activity that was designed to contextualise the work so as to make it relevant to Millennium students in post-apartheid KwaZulu-Natal, with the 'Durban view' perspective (see Figure 4.1). The acts were re-written with a contemporary and local twist, and the participants were given a scenario around which to improvise in small groups. The improvised scenarios were then performed in chronological order to create the plot in action. After each improvised scene performance, a short discussion took place. Discussions were used to compare similarities of their improvised scenes with the original Shakespearean text. Video and/or recordings of these scenes were made on tablets and cell phones, and viewed by the participants so as to facilitate reflection on performance by cast and production crew. While this was part of the teaching/experience of text interpretation, it must be noted that this mirrors the real-world experience of theatre production, where even scripted plays are discussed with directors, cast and members of the production before formal rehearsals commence. In real-world production, the quality of performances (live and film) are often constrained by factors such as cost, time and scheduling. The production in this project was also affected by such real-world, such as the cost of hiring a professional videographer (i.e. hired per hour).

The participants expressed enjoyment when improvising around contextualised scenarios as they felt that they could better relate to the text, thus making it fun and interactive (as revealed by their responses). From the teaching/learning perspective, contextualising assisted with removing barriers created by the language of the original text whilst simultaneously creating a curiosity that enticed the participants to engage the original text. From the perspective of dealing with the Western canon of texts which are largely incomprehensible to my 'Durban view' ESL students, contextualizing excerpts of a Shakespearean play addressed the issues of educational disempowerment and the devaluing of indigenous knowledge (see Figure 4.1).

This can be seen in the participants' responses as to *how they experienced the use of the contextualisation as a teaching and learning technique* (see Appendix D on p. 232). The response discussed below is a good example of the importance of contextualising the

study of canonical texts. From my personal lived experience and experience teaching and mentoring young black adults in higher education I can say that there exists a glass box. The problem with this box is that much like a glass ceiling it has to be identified and then broken by the person it oppresses, the change cannot be created by those who directly or indirectly benefit from the oppression itself. The devaluation of indigenous knowledge (i.e. epistemicide) forms one of the walls of this box and it is the most insidious. It holds young black students in the most profound of ways, it falsifies their history, culture and value as human beings. Growing up in an environment where black people seem to not be literary (oral tradition), are not known for any innovation past King Shaka shortening his spear for battle and of course our ability to dance and sing very well. It is almost an embarrassment to be black; always associated with menial labour, crime, poverty and violence. With this in mind it is of the most urgency that teaching and learning comprises of the dismantling of these stereotypes that harm how the black students see their place and purpose in society.

It becomes an unavoidable duty of teaching and learning to affirm the black student's existence and legitimize their knowledge and ability to positively contribute to society and be creators of knowledge. This requires that the university does not look at students from a deficit point of view but from a view of endless possibilities. This response from Participant 5 is cited in full as it highlights the importance of making texts understandable to learners in a South African context:

> We tried to bring the characters' names [*into names we are familiar with*] and in fact they were defined in such a way that was appealing to an African context, a South African context to be specific. And it has been such a good experience and a challenge because you have read the Shakespearean text, and then contextualised it like here is our own South African context. (P5)

In this participant's comment it is made clear how important it is for these students to feel a sense of ownership of what they are taught, and to be reflected in that work and not be a mere outsider peering in. Colonisation was so violent in how it devalued indigenous knowledge and made Western knowledge superior as well as "universal". What also stands out to me about this comment is the idea that the right to name things gives one a sense of power. The thought that for decades under colonialism and then later under

apartheid black people's names were not used but they were rather given names that rolled off of the European tongue a lot easier. It is a powerful moment in this research when the participants change the names of the characters in the play to suit their culture and identity, essentially claiming their place in the world. Furthermore, I would argue that besides having their knowledge validated, students need to be taught in a way that caters to who they intrinsically are. As the participant below states:

> Workshopping was fun and without the restrictions you have in class like keeping quiet and just listening to the teacher talking made people want to be there and want to do something and once they had done something they were not told it was bad or it was wrong and not to do it. (P10)

I think colonial education and especially higher education has a way of working in strict silos with a traditional banking method of teaching and learning (Freire 2005: 72), where disciplines are created and modules taught as discrete syllabus items. The teacher is thought of as an endless well while the students are empty vessels needing to be filled, thereby creating banking or transmission education which is teacher centred (Freire 2005: 73). What the participant is touching on is that black people, and Zulu people in particular, traditionally learn, live and work communally and lack the Eurocentric sense of rugged individualism. The colonial education system is clearly at odds with the culture of the student demographic further alienating them and systematically excluding them from access to quality higher education. This project allowed black young people to function using *Ubuntu*[32] which is how they always were without the disruption of colonization and apartheid. This was indeed a rewarding experience as they were trusted to work together (as in the *Ubuntu* tradition) and share ideas which were validated by their peers (community) and became confident enough to take up space in their learning environment. The response below very aptly describes the principle of *Ubuntu* in action:

> We had an opportunity to learn collectively, and to appreciate each other's talents. My weaknesses were not that noticed because someone in the group covered and complemented them though their strengths, vice versa. (P4)

[32] *Ubuntu* has been defined as: "an African value system that means humanness or being human, a worldview characterised by such values as caring, sharing, compassion, communalism, communocracy and related predispositions" (Khoza 2005: 269).

It must also be remembered, that the point of this study was to facilitate students' interpretation-through-performance of canonical texts. As the comment below suggests, contextualising facilitated both understanding and performance:

> The method of contextualising the *Julius Caesar* text into a South African context was very productive. This helped us to understanding our characters and we were able to be naturalistic in our performance because the text was made to be relevant to us. (P2)

Improvisation

Improvisation took the following form. The participants were provided with envelopes that contained scenario descriptions and cast themselves, and then began playing and trying out different ideas. Participants would frequently ask each other for help with certain words even though the sentences were in modern day English. This brought attention to the fact that it is not just the language of Shakespearean text that some participants struggle with, but English in general. With regard to the performances themselves, when groups misunderstood their scenarios, it became a discussion opportunity where misunderstandings were explained and comparisons between their performances and the original texts were drawn.

What stood out in the participants' comments was that they admitted that they did not like to read. This speaks to the need of finding different ways of getting students to engage with a canonical text and enticing them to want to go and read it themselves. It is also evident from their comments that they understood the text better when they felt that they could relate to it (see "We tried to bring the characters' names"). Furthermore, they enjoyed learning the text through performance as opposed to reading written text and trying to analyse it, as shown by following comment:

> As students, we dislike reading, so we would prefer doing practical as we [are] not motivated to read. When they were given a chance to improvise the play I developed an interest in what was being said, so I can know the original play. (P1)

It must be emphasised that, although the students' dislike for reading might be attributed to the African oral tradition for disseminating knowledge, in my experience, it is also a result of being expected to read written texts which are part of the Western canon, as well as the Western emphasis on written texts as a source of knowledge. It seems to me that Western knowledge was simply transplanted to colonies and claimed to be the only legitimate form of knowledge and that it embodies universal values and therefore proves the superiority of British imperial culture. This extended to their canons of literature such as Shakespeare, which they deemed was the best writer in the world as his works allegedly transcend culture. This way of thinking meant that Shakespeare and other European canons were the barometer for excellence, an excellence that can only be reached by Western writers and never the indigenous people. Literature was used as a tool to 'civilize' the natives and later Shakespeare was used to denote class and intelligence.

With the advent of Bantu Education, which prepared black people for menial labour, Shakespeare was clearly above them and affirmed their inferiority. Even with South Africa's new dispensation that allowed education for all, somehow colonial teaching and learning as well as content stayed the same, creating an exclusive and alienating Higher Education environment for black students. While we should not completely eradicate Western knowledge, we certainly need to be cognizant of our student demographic and adjust our teaching and learning strategies to suit then rather that hoping they will assimilate. I think expecting people who have been so violated by colonialism and the legacy of apartheid to assimilate to oppressive systems is re-traumatising them and doing them a grave injustice. In the project I ensured that I introduced Shakespeare in a way that decentred him and centred the student's voices. The following participant responded positively to the idea of teaching and learning that is not text-centred:

> Very effective considering the way that we used it, we acted everything without using the script, we got to understand the characters without using the script because there was a lot of improvisation there. It was very easy for us and fun at the same time as we got to express ourselves and there were not a wrong or right way of doing things, we were all expressing what we felt the time. I've never thought of this style and I felt it was the best way of teaching people. (P3)

This response speaks to how different types of knowledge are valued by different world views. To generalize, I would say Africans are known as storytellers (Oral tradition), whose elders pass on valuable knowledge from generation to generation. Colonialists however seemed to put great emphasis on the written work, so much so that they imported it to the colonized societies to keep them connected to their motherland and to "civilize" the natives. The participant felt that the storytelling of Shakespeare through improvised performance was more natural than starting and relying heavily on the written text.

The workshopping process

To recap on the workshopping process, Session 5 was dedicated to workshopping using the text as a stimulus. The participants were encouraged to play to their strengths, and workshopped two songs and one movement piece. Towards the end of the session, they decided that they would like to workshop a performance for a film. One of the participants who had identified his strength as writing took on the role of scriptwriter. The participants then held a brainstorming session so that scriptwriter would have a blueprint to work from. Session 6 involved a group task of workshopping from the script that the scriptwriter had drafted. The scriptwriter immediately took the leadership role and gathered the group to explain the script. Participants auditioned for each other to find suitable characters for themselves. The participants would at times engage the original text to assist in understanding characters and scenes. The workshopping/process drama resulted in a film performance titled *Julius Caesar: a Durban Tale*.

To go into more detail in analysing the empowering aspects of the workshopping process, to get students past the formidable language barrier, I gave them excerpts of the play written in modern colloquial English (see Chapter 4). This had the effect of immediately putting them in touch with the plot so that they could easily workshop an interpretation contextualized in the local African setting (see Figure 4.1). This echoes Paulo Freire's empowering pedagogy (2005) in making the students active contributors to their own knowledge as understood in their own culture. In other words, the excerpts assisted them to apply indigenous knowledge to a plot that seemed foreign when put in Shakespeare's language (see also Young 2019: 49). This highlights the importance of knowing who your students are because, as the researcher I was cognizant of the fact that I was facilitating interpretation for participants whose culture preferred oral communication

over written. As participant P2 commented, the concept of improvising (i.e. in the workshopping process), was "exciting and insightful" (see p. 134). One of the ways that I used to empower students was to give them excerpts from the play in modern language so that they could rapidly grasp what was going on in the text. Modernizing the archaic text also gave students the chance to contribute to the theatre making process:

> [We] were given the chance to play around with our characters and not to stick to the Shakespearean language but to make it relevant to everyday life. (P3)

This strategy allowed them to experiment with their own ideas without being chained to a static text. The freedom that they experienced in contributing their own interpretations and ideas was empowering in terms of being participatory and not authorial. This resulted in teaching and learning that was in a way collaborative and supportive, a safe space to be one's true self experiencing authentic learning (see Participant 4's comment on p. 125 above about the help and support gained from group members). Workshopping set participants free to experiment and try out their own ideas without indoctrination or having to appease an instructor.

> Workshopping was fun and without the restrictions you have in class[33] like keeping quiet and just listening to the teacher talking made people want to be there and want to do something and once they had done something they were not told it was bad or it was wrong and not to do it. (P10)

It can be seen from the above comment that the workshopping process was the opposite of the transmission time banking education described by Freire as disempowering. The active participation as opposed to passive listening empowered students to contribute to constructing their own knowledge. Moreover, students were not daunted by the disapproving "gaze" of Eurocentric teachers (see Figure 4.1). The techniques in Paulo Freire's empowering pedagogy are echoed in the constructive pedagogy where the teacher is the guide and not the source of knowledge. This is particularly important in

[33] Note that workshopping and other forms of drama are accepted teaching/learning methods in Drama Education, but that many lecturers are not *au fai* with using these methods and that formal lecturing using transmission mode is regularly used.

terms of valuing the indigenous knowledge which students bring to the task. Furthermore, this project was seen to embody constructivist learning principles which include a real-world setting, active meaning-making by learners, and collaboration to assist and reflect on meaning making through conversation (Jonassen *et al.* 1995: 13-14). Participants' responses to the constructivist pedagogy used will be discussed in more detail in the section dealing with the teaching and learning approach overall.

This participant's comment highlights many of the benefits of the workshopping process:

> Workshopping for us activated sound ideas from sound minds. The process got me excited because I personally like to engage with people on topics. I have to hear their line of thought and it shows and proves the great aptitude in individuals. It strengthened my confidence and talents thereby allowing us to move towards what we wanted the play to be. At the end of it all workshopping in our case taught us discipline. Without this discipline, we would not have come to the product. (P2)

While these participants are Millennials, it must not be assumed that they like to sit isolated in front of computers 'doing their own thing'; in fact; research exploring the learning preferences of young college students shows that the 'Net Generation' express a need to engage with faculty staff and fellow students (Oblinger and Oblinger 2005). Participant P2 confirmed this: "I personally like to engage with people on topics." According to Hartman, Moskal and Dziuban (2005), it is misleading to assume that younger students of the Net Generation, in contrast to older educators, have a strong preference for digital technology for learning (as opposed to social use). Students have been found to be more interested in face-to-face interactions with staff and peers, and hands-on learning, than technology (Kvavik 2005; McNeely 2005; Roberts 2005; Windham 2005). In fact, the preference for experiential, hands-on learning appears to be a distinguishing feature of Net Generation learners (Ramaley and Zia 2005). Their preference for experiential learning, team work and social networking suggests that the activities in which students engage are more important than whatever technology they use (Brown 2005). As will be discussed in more detail in the conclusions (pp. 166-167), reflection on the results suggested that it was the combination of 21st century technology with face-to-face interaction in 'acting out' which made the process work for participants

at a deep level.

This participant also found that workshopping built confidence. It is also interesting that s/he mentions discipline: this emphasises the fact that a dramatic production requires not only creativity and aptitude, but also discipline, to 'keep on point', as required of professionals. As well as mentioning group functioning, the next participant makes the point that a theatre production involves many different skills, talents and functions, all of which are important:

> You had the opportunity to choose whether you want to remain behind the scenes or to be an actor. Hence, these options gave you as a student the opportunity to explore and discover your talent as a drama student. Working in groups motivated us to work together and develop new ideas. (P6)

This is true of most real-world activities, where people with various skills and talents contribute to the end product. Furthermore, in a truly collaborative learning group, the 'expert' is not expected to be the sole source of knowledge: this is shared amongst participants. One of the benefits of workshop theatre is that expertise is shared amongst participants, thus 'levelling the playing fields', as it were:

> It helped me as a person understand what the play was about and what I needed to do because I know that for other people they did not understand some parts so you could explain to them what needed to happen which I did a few times and what it was about and what they needed to do. (P9)

Use of digital technology

This section deals with analysing the participant responses to the use of digital technology as part of the teaching and learning methodology. It must be emphasised that the participants in the project were not all in the same class group, or year or even in Drama Education. This meant, at the outset of the project, participants were not necessarily known to each other, nor a cohesive group. This meant that some form of group bonding needed to occur right at the beginning of the project. It was also necessary for the proposed use of Instagram during rehearsals or any reflection on performance: this was

because there were certain prerequisites for using Instagram to record activities, in particular, the need for a partner to hold the tablet during recording. At the beginning of the project, participants were asked to introduce themselves to the rest of the group by using a recording on Instagram. This was thought to be a non-threatening and relatively simple introduction not only to the group but use of Instagram, with which about half of the group were already familiar, enabling them to assist first-time users. The use of Instagram as an introductory tool was affirmed by this participant:

> First question was how do I feel about the introduction of video on Instagram? Well I thought that was a good way to get to know everybody that's going to be working with us because even though we interact sometimes we don't even know where the person is from, things like that …(P1)

Introductions to an unknown group can be an ordeal to a shy person (who may feel more comfortable once participants are known), as shown by the following participant:

> The introduction on the Instagram was cool seeing myself in the public since I'm too shy and seeing others I felt like I can do something in front of camera and say something to people. (P2)

S/he was also encouraged to overcome her shyness of being recorded by seeing that other participants were able to do it. Making the introductory video not only helped students to overcome their shyness and become part of a cohesive social group, but also gave a sense of achievement in terms of making their efforts worth documenting:

> About the video I felt very motivated and very proud because we were so passionate about our work and the task given by the facilitator Ms. Nellie. We had "That Thing" or the "oomph" to this project and showcase our talent we were excited and happy even before we started the scenarios it was as if we knew what's going to be done for the day. (P7)

The last statement shows that this recording also gave cohesion to the project in terms of its being an ongoing, developmental process, and not a once-off transmission of lesson fragments.

As mentioned earlier, WhatsApp was originally intended to be used as a 'message board' for communicating dates, times dates and venues to all participants. However, I had underestimated the potential for social bonding and collaborating which the app possessed (Sandpearl 2016). This potential was immediately recognised by participants, who informed me that they could communicate more effectively as a group on WhatsApp, as stated by this participant:

> I think we should use the WhatsApp platform and messages can be sent on WhatsApp because there is a lot that learn from and there's a connection on the group lot of people participating and giving out ideas. (P4)

All students who had smartphones were in fact already using WhatsApp as a day-to-day communication tool: ease of use and free access to Wi-Fi make it very popular with university staff and students.

> I felt proud about seeing myself and the other students on the social platforms we use and the fact that we have an account dedicated to us. I'm happy and really appreciate the opportunity given, the work we have done has changed improved a lot. (P8)

Rather than catapulting participants straight on to YouTube, I gradually inducted them into how they were going to deal with global exposure to their talents. This also introduced them to the fact that not only their recordings could be displayed online, but that they could access a wide variety of Internet resources, including the Shakespeare archive (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkruVloyOxk). Recording their work on YouTube meant that, not only did they get exposure to (and potentially feedback from) a global audience, but that they also advertised their talents to potential employers:

> I think the YouTube Channel is something good and since people will get to see us nationwide, people will see the different talent and aspect we do in the drama such as Singing, Dance and Acting. I like the fact that this will be seen by a lot of people we might get people who are encouraged by what we are doing or maybe sponsors who're interested in extra actors or actress. (P9)

The talents advertised online include not only the performing arts, but also participants' potential aptitude for becoming 'influencers' on social media (Ge and Gretzel 2018: 1273). This was because during the project they learned the skills of content creation on a popular platforms (i.e. Instagram and YouTube), which is what influencers do to attract a following (Casaló, Flavián and Ibáñez-Sánchez 2018).

The teaching and learning approach overall

The participants, being potential teachers, showed some insight into the teaching and learning approach applied in the empirical work. This is evident in the responses that showed that, overall, they experienced the teaching and learning approach positively. In the next comment, team work is shown as building confidence:

> We learned a lot because this was a new approach to us, so after the project we will be able to use the same approach. This project encouraged team work and team work builds one's confidence as we all get to voice out our ideas and share skills. (P1)

This is significant as the Eurocentric transmission methods which still dominate South African schools and universities (Heleta 2016: 8) tend to isolate students and set them up to compete against each other: sharing ideas is often condemned as 'cheating'. The next comment shows not only the excitement felt by the participant, but also the insight s/he gained into the benefits of collaborating with group members and learning both about and from them:

> Working on the project was an exciting and insightful experience. I found out that there is a great deal to learn about people and their different talents, gifts, capabilities and creativity that is within them and finding a way to work with them. (P2)

The above comments suggest that students had a positive experience with the constructivist teaching and learning approach. The first comment shows that they were not aware that there are other teaching approaches aside from the traditional 'chalk and talk' approach. What I find particularly exciting is that the participant who intends to become a Drama teacher realizes the value of constructivism and wishes to use similar

strategies in the future. It says to me that the participant gained so many positive skills and experiences through the project that essentially, they would like to 'pay it forward' to future generations of learners (see Figure 4.1). It is wonderful to see that, through the constructivist approach of the project, the students gained confidence and, in a sense freedom, and wanted others to experience the same.

The second participant's comment brings me to the idea that, once students complete their studies, they go into the real world where people of all backgrounds work together to contribute to society. I feel this was simulated within the project as participants had to work as a team to create knowledge as well as an end product. They experienced the real world in a sense that being able to work with others, which is an essential skill in most organizations and disciplines. They realized that we do not always get to choose whom we work with but that we all bring different skills sets, expertise and experiences to the table that assist in ensuring a successful team and, moreover, 'roll over' to benefit society.

The third comment (participant 3) shows that the participant realises how constructivist pedagogy can create independent learners:

> It took a mother who is ready to let her children be set free. A mother who is ready to let her birds, her little birds stretch out their wings and fly. Imagine a mother who has nested right. Now because she has raised her children she doesn't have a problem freeing them because she has faith in the work she has done. She shows that she has faith in us. (P3)

This comment is quite poetic in its expression but the imagery is powerful. The participant is saying that experiencing the constructivist approach to learning set her free. She felt that she was facilitated in such a way that she was not restricted and was allowed to be heard and to grow. It seems to me that this approach made the participants feel that they were competent and confident because I affirmed them and showed them, through gentle guidance (and stepping back), that I had complete trust in their abilities.

5.4 Analysis of language difficulties experienced by participants

In this section, I attempt to find answers to research question: *(1b) their [i.e.*

participants'] understanding of the language of the prescribed traditional text/s. The answers shown in Table 5.1 suggest that most participants had difficulty understanding the language of *Julius Caesar*.

Table 5.1 Participants' understanding of the language of *Julius Caesar*

Do you understand the literal meaning of the text of the play you were given? Why/why not?	
No	Not really, [but] there were some instances where the language was understandable. The language is complicated, it is not the language we use in our everyday conversation. (P1)
Yes	I have always been interested in the English language and I always look up archaic terms out of interest. I love old language, words, meanings, so it wasn't difficult. Age and experience - I am specialising in English. (P4)
Not 100%, but I got the gist.	I was not familiar with the archaic language but I went to a former model C school and was introduced to Shakespeare. (P5)
No	It was very difficult. The words are archaic. (P9)
No	I don't understand the language, I had to google some of the words to make meaning. I think if I was watching the play I would understand it better because I would read the character's actions and draw meaning from those actions. It just was out of context for me. (P10)
No	It was really hard to understand. The text is quite different from the modern English that we know. It is not contemporary. (P7)
yes	I have familiarised myself with that sort of language without having read Shakespeare. I'm a devoted Christian and me and my family grew up on the King James version of the bible which has the same language. It made reading the text easier for me. (P6)
No	I never understood the play *Julius Caesar* before. (P3)
No	It was written in an old version of English. Most of the words were hard to pronounce and I didn't know the meaning of those words and I just didn't follow. (P8)

In the South African context, scholars such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o have emphasised issues such as knowledge and identity in countering Eurocentrism (Jansen 2019: 72). As Ngugi wa Thiong'o discussed in his book titled *Decolonizing the mind,* language is a vehicle for transmitting culture. The way I see it, colonization committed a violent action in its attempting to devalue a whole people's language as that action has dire consequences for those indigenous people. If you lose your language, you lose not only culture but knowledge that it carried with it, leaving you a shell of your former self. Apartheid also had no intention giving power to indigenous languages or forms of knowledge, the people

were forced to speak the language of their oppressor. Even in recent years I have experienced school environments where the black kids are punished for speaking in their mother tongue, with various facile reasons. The problem is expecting young black isiZulu speaking students to learn in a language (English, and even more so, Elizabethan English) that could be their second or even third language. This leaves the students disadvantaged as they may not comprehend the language well leading to linguistic alienation. The idea of not being able to comprehend English or a colonizer's language can and has been used as a tool to make the indigenous people feel stupid. That way of thinking is upended when the vernacular is introduced, because students immediately realize that they are not stupid/inferior and understand the tasks they have been given, and this could be a truly liberating moment. The issue of how language is experienced by participants then by default becomes of great importance in a study related to the teaching and learning of a colonial great that is Shakespeare. It came as no surprise to me that the participants found Elizabethan English to be a barrier in their learning, as shown by the participants' responses below:

> I don't understand the language, I had to google some of the words to make meaning. I think if I was watching the play I would understand it better because I would read the character's actions and draw meaning from those actions. It just was out of context for me. (P1)

This comment shows that actual play performance contains nonverbal and other elements which communicate the meaning of the play: this is why improvisation is so important in interpreting the meaning, as students are re-enacting the processes used by professional actors to interpret the play in performance.

> It was really hard to understand. The text is quite different from the modern English that we know. It is not contemporary. (P2)

This comment shows that the Elizabethan English of the written Shakespearean texts is a barrier to students who are used to modern English: it is basically a foreign language to them.

> It was written in an old version of English. Most of the words were hard to pronounce and I didn't know the meaning of those words and I just didn't follow. (P3)

This comment shows that not only meaning, but also pronunciation suffers, which makes reading the script or performing a monologue an embarrassing and daunting experience for students.

I think that prescribing Shakespearean text in a syllabus without acknowledging the historical baggage it contains for formally colonized nations/people is irresponsible. I think that teaching Shakespeare in this country and particularly to black students by centring the text is, for lack of a better word, ignorant. As participant P2 expressed, learning Shakespeare from a text is near-impossible but could be made easier if there was performance involved to assist with reading body language and drawing some sort of meaning from it. It is alarming to me that students are expected to somehow enjoy and understand Shakespeare from a text so archaic that it requires google searches, meaning wasted time self-translating. Furthermore, they expressed the wish that a teacher might show a video so they could perhaps decipher meaning through body language and facial expression. This language barrier means that students need to run a gauntlet before they can even begin an analysis, think critically and (God forbid) perform the text. I suppose this is why I was taught Shakespeare performance as a marionette where the lecturer had to control my every movement to get the voice of Shakespeare to come through me as if I were at a séance and I would come back to consciousness to applause and compliments, having never been there at all.

5.5 Analysis of participants' experience of their dramatic performances

In this section, I attempt to find answers to the next research question: *(1c) their [i.e. participants'] experience of their dramatic performances of the prescribed text/s.* Participants' responses were not only positive but show in-depth insights into the process of interpretation-in-performance, play production and Drama Education (see Table 5.2). The methodology developed in the project had also given them insight into the collaborative group processes which they could then use in their own teaching. Overall, participants reflected that by modernizing the text they were then able to interact with the

text more when workshopping the performance. They spoke to the benefits of group work by stating that they were able to understand the text better in a group setting as they could share knowledge. Furthermore, they spoke about how they enjoyed working in a team, and that all ideas were heard, making them feel valued. An interesting point made by one of the participants was that they had learned how to approach a classical text as future educators.

Table 5.2 Participants' experience of the dramatic performances of the prescribed text

How did you experience your performances? Elaborate.	
Excellent	We engaged with the text and understood it and then interpreted it in our own way. To do this I needed to know the text in depth. We took it out from where it was - the old language that they used uh back in the day that Shakespeare wrote in. We took it and we modernised it. Because we did this, we are able to interact more with the text. It's brought home for us and now we are able to see that it is something that can be modernised, that we can see in everyday life. (P1)
Amazing	It was amazing because among team players we played to our strengths. Some were directing, some producing. As a team that was working [it] was just amazing. I played the part of Julius Caesar's wife and it was just a ball of fun and experience and learning and growing all together and I enjoyed every part of it, it has given me a greater mind into how to look into a production as an educator. (P2)
Nice experience	Seeing myself performing on camera, I felt like my goals were achievable. I noticed that since I am familiar with stage, I learned how to perform on camera. The project allowed me to do different things than my previous performances. I searched deeper about characters and the researcher trusted us. I felt like there were exciting and different ways of approaching a text. Engaging with other people who understood *Julius Caesar* better than me helped me to grow and to understand better. (P3)
Awesome	The experience was awesome. I for one enjoyed it and found out that my colleagues also enjoyed it. That motivated us as a whole to want to carry on partaking in the movement piece. We also gained experience on camera so I can safely say it was really educational. Generally the experience was awesomely awesome. (P4)
Helped with acting and team building	The project did not only help me with acting skills, but it also taught me collaborative learning skills (where we were given short scenarios and had to improvise). Moreover, I learnt that drama requires different people's perspective to produce solid work. The project was opened to different opinions and that made the project a success to me. In addition, shooting the "Durban Tale" made me realise that film and theatre can complement each other. Films require realistic setting, props, costume, etc. However, we did not have them but we managed to tell the story successfully. (P5)
Nice	Engaging with the text was a nice experience. When we were working on our movement piece, it taught me how to use my body to express

	myself. The other participants created songs, I thought they were very creative. (P6)
Exciting and scary	I was excited but at the same time I was having doubts about whether I can do it. The reason why I felt this way was because it was my first time filming an acting piece. Lots of things we expected from me as a character. We did an exercise before filming and it helped because we were taught to put ourselves in a character shoes and I remember doing the first scene three times because it was not perfect and that's when I knew that acting requires passion, time, and patience. It was an amazing experience I had lot of fun! (P7)
Good	It felt so good to workshop the text into practice. It felt so good because I got to improvise and say the things I wanted and it was easy for me to become natural as there was no process of cramming the scripts. It gave me a chance to act the way I wanted without limiting my capabilities. (P8)
Amazing	The whole process of performing the scenes not as exactly as it was intended was truly amazing. It allowed us as participants to be creative and innovative. Our creativity was enhanced because our performance integrated many skills such as music, movement and poetry making the performances to be interesting and educative while sticking to the original play as a guide. I felt honoured, valued and appreciated as I was also allowed to have an input in the performance. The integration of many minds and ideas was absolutely amazing. So I felt like I had a voice because everyone's ideas were accommodated. Furthermore, the most amazing moment for me was during the shooting of the actual movie. There was such unity and growth in the actors and actresses, we have grown so much as participants and to see the end result of the project was rather exciting. Everyone was happy to see where our effort has gone to and I was amazed at the performance, it was amazing! In essence, I felt very happy about the whole project, the movement piece brought unity and harmony, the songs encouraged creativity and the movie itself allowed our talents to be on display. That is my short response, thank you miss for involving me in this exciting project. (P9)
Good	I thought that the research project allowed me to get the chance to work in different areas and I gained new knowledge and ideas in the process. I assisted by working behind the scenes. It was not easy. When the performances started I was the stage manager which was fun since I got to decide what was needed for scenes and what was not. I would say that I was groomed in the process since I did not do as I pleased but had the support of my peers. (P10)

In analysis, this response by participant 9 (who found the experience "Amazing"), in particular, highlights most of the relevant aspects of the project. This comment suggests that knowledge is learner generated unlike in transmission education, and is a feature of

constructivist and Freirean pedagogy: “It allowed us as participants to be ‘creative and innovative’.” The next comment speaks to the integration of skills in the holistic way in which they are applied in real-life situations, as opposed to the fragmented way in which they are regularly taught in formal education: “our performance integrated many skills such as music, movement and poetry”. The words: “sticking to the original play as a guide” remind us that Shakespearean texts are not being rejected, but recycled in exciting, relevant ways (i.e. using Shakespeare’s texts as a repository of plots and themes, see Marowitz 1991, Mondello 2006). The participant said: “I felt honoured, valued and appreciated as I was also allowed to have an input in the performance.” This comment touches on the issue of the devaluing of indigenous knowledge, which disempowers and discourages my ‘Durban view’ (i.e. local Zulu) participants from making the effort to contribute to their own learning. I have noticed that many of my students are not even aware than they *could* contribute to their own learning.

The comment about the “integration of many minds and ideas” shows not only that elements of the Drama Education syllabus are being integrated in the project, but also that participants are learning the power of collaboration, which is essential in most professions and industries (Lewin 1946). “I had a voice because everyone's ideas were accommodated” shows that the participant has learned that, to be heard, other people’s ideas also need to be accommodated, which is not only necessary in the workplace, but also in a multicultural society. The participant is aware that the project developed capacity, rather than expecting it to be necessary at the outset, as shown by: “There was such unity and growth in the actors and actresses, we have grown so much as participants and to see the end result of the project was rather exciting.” This is an important principle, not only for the teaching and learning methodology developed in this study, but also for future educators, who will be faced with unprepared learners whose skills will need to be developed gradually. Finally, the comment: “the movement piece brought unity and harmony, the songs encouraged creativity and the movie itself allowed our talents to be on display” shows that the participant saw the harmony between various aspects of workshopping as theatre-making, as well as the importance of showcasing the finished production, not only to a local, but also a global audience. This suggests that the project had not only made participants feel competent as theatre educators and performers, it had also made them ‘citizens of the world’.

5.6 Features of the approach identified as facilitating creative interpretation of texts

The features of this integrative approach that were identified as facilitating creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts could be divided into three main strands: the group process, the production process and the pedagogical process, as shown in Table 5.3.

The group process

This study involved a small group of participants and, according to Blumenfeld *et al.* (1996), small group work is a way of improving attitudes towards education, fostering achievement, developing thinking skills, and promoting interpersonal and intergroup relations. The group process used in this study can be divided into five stages, which are as follows: breaking the ice, fighting for control, resolving conflict, consensus and productivity, and individual reflection. Tuckman (1965: 396) describes a similar process in four stages: forming, storming, norming, performing. Brooks-Harris and Brooks-Harris (2005: 3) summarise Tuckman's stages as follows:

- **Forming:** The group comes together for the first time or re-forms in a new way. Interpersonal relationships are characterized by "testing and dependence" and the discovery of which interpersonal behaviors are acceptable in a group setting.
- **Storming:** Intra-group conflict as members resist the formation of group structure and attempt to express their own individuality. Members may react emotionally to the group and resist demands placed on individuals.
- **Norming:** Resolution of group conflicts that lead to the development of group cohesion. Having learned important lessons during the storming stage, norming is characterized by mutual acceptance and a sense of harmony.
- **Performing:** The group becomes a "problem-solving instrument." Members have learned how to work together to accomplish group goals. Individuals have found ways to play to their strengths and to complement the efforts of others.

On reflection, I could see these stages in the group process had taken place during the project's Production process (see the Group process column in Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Features facilitating creative interpretation

Group process	**Production process**	**Pedagogical process**
Stage 1 Breaking the ice	Reading the text *Julius Caesar*	Contextualising the project
	Watching multiple interpretations	
	Improvising around the original text	Introductory activities
Stage 2 Fighting for control	Discussion of draft script	
	Creation of rough draft script	
Stage 3 Resolving the conflict	Reading through rough draft script	
Stage 4 Consensus and productivity	Improvising around the scenes in the script	Drafting the project
	Editing based on improvisation results	
	Rehearsals	Carrying out the project
	Performance/Filming	
Individual reflection on group functioning	Reflection	Feedback on the project

This small group functioning, in my opinion, could be seen to facilitate the process of creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts, as all participants had 'bonded' and, in the process, had become a more cooperative, creative and productive theatre workshopping group.

Later Tuckman and Jensen (1997) updated the model by adding a stage called "adjourning". Rickards and Moger (2000) describe adjourning as group termination due to a task's completion or membership disruption. In this study, adjourning meant the disbanding of the group after completing the digitization of the performance in film, so that it has not been included in Table 5.3. It was implicit in the project that this was an extra-mural project, and that this specific group would disband on completion, as with most casts and support staff in theatre projects, and closure was brought about by individual reflection on group functioning.

The production process

The production process used was workshopping with the original text as the stimulus. The focus of the workshopping process used in this study was experiential, as the participants, in creating dramatic forms, reflected on the process of acting and the resulting lived experience (Rasmussen and Wright 2001). Workshopping allowed learners to understand the process of play production without having a theory imposed by the teacher: it gave them insight into the process of play production and therefore their concept of this was related to their own experience. This, in my opinion, helped to stimulate participants' creativity.

Participants were encouraged to read the original text followed by viewing multiple interpretations on YouTube. The viewings were followed by improvisation around the original text that resulted in a film script. The film script was then used as a blueprint to further improvise around resulting in editing. The final script was then rehearsed and developed into a filmed performance. Participants then reflected on their lived experience of the production process. The series of stages in the Production process with defined objectives but open-ended results, as well as repeated improvisations, contributed to the work-shoppers' creativity

The pedagogical process

The pedagogical process involved contextualizing the project, introductory activities, drafting the project, carrying out the project and receiving feedback. In other words, teaching and learning were involved throughout the Production process, allowing flexibility of approach as the process progressed, and not just a formulaic application of a fixed series of steps. This meant that participants not only learned how to fulfil various stages of the Production process, but they also learned the value of flexibility in addressing the process: flexibility and adaptation (when needed) meant that the process was more open-ended, and thus potentially more creative.

5.7 The emerging model of the teaching and learning methodology

Reflection on, and continued refining of the results led to the development of a tentative model of the methodology for creative interpretation of canonical texts pioneered in this study, as shown in Table 5.4. This, then, provided an answer to research question 3.,

namely, *what pattern theory or model of the developing teaching methodology emerges as a result of the analysis of the answers to the above questions* (i.e. 1., 2., and 3.)?

Table 5.4 Emerging model of a methodology for creative interpretation of canonical texts

1.	**CONTEXTUALISE**	Making the play relevant.
2.	**IMPROVISE**	Experimenting with new ideas.
3.	**SYNTHESISE**	Scriptwriter collating ideas generated in the improvisation stage.
4.	**ACTUALISE**	Rehearsal of the script developed from the first three stages.
5.	**DIGITISE**	Filming the final stage production.

The sequence of stages given in Table 5.4 is meant to be followed as numbered, although the stages are to some extent recursive, with participants rehearsing or revisiting earlier stages along the way. It must also be remembered that certain aspects (e.g. digitise) may need to be pre-empted and developed as the process unfolds, so that participants are not faced with mastering unfamiliar skills or technology too suddenly. For example, participants in the Shakespeare project were introduced early-on to using social media for introductions, improvisations and rehearsals so that they were prepared for the filming of the completed production at the end. While the performance was filmed by a commercial company, participants were by then familiar with many aspects of digital recording, having experimented with it on Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube.

The 'contextualise' stage

From the perspective of dealing with the Western canon of texts which are largely incomprehensible to my 'Durban view' ESL students, contextualizing interpretation though performance of an excerpt from a Shakespearean play addressed the issues of educational disempowerment and the devaluing of indigenous knowledge (see Figure 4.1). Running throughout the analysis in this chapter are participant comments expressing pleasure at feeling that their opinions are valued, celebrating (rather than

denigrating) the local 'Durban view' perspective, and that they feel free to express their creative ideas without being oppressed by the 'colonial view' which, by contrast, renders their perspective - and contribution - as being worthless by Eurocentric criteria (see: "they were not told it was bad or it was wrong and not to do it"). Setting the text in a South African context made the activity seem *familiar*: "we were able to relate or act out something that we come across on a daily lifestyle" (participant 3 reflection); and involved "things that happen in real life" (participant 2 reflection). Also expressed was the pleasure of having a South African context, using local terminology with joy and not shame, and making a Shakespearean performance not only understandable but *do-able*, to 'sing like a bird released'[34], as participant 3 puts it: "It took a mother who is ready to let her children be set free. A mother who is ready to let her birds, her little birds stretch out their wings and fly." (Participant 3's response is cited also on pp. 135 and 237 as it relates to other key areas in the project). Contextualising situates theatre-making in the real world, and rebuts the assumption that Shakespeare is universal and universally understood.

It emphasises the fact that knowledge itself is neither universal not universally comprehensible but is time-, place- and culture-specific, and may need 'decolonising' (Heleta 2018). Also, learning styles can differ (oral/written/kinaesthetic): the African principle of Ubuntu supports collective learning, unlike the focus of the West on the individual. In syncretic theatre, contextualising to make the source material locally relevant transforms the performance into a new hybrid performed in ways familiar to the local audience (Balme 1999), who might well be participants rather than an audience of viewers separated from performers in the Western sense.

The 'improvise' stage

Having got everyone 'on the same page', so to speak, it is now time to experiment with new ideas, set free from the constraints of traditional productions but not the practicalities of the given time, place and resources. One cannot expect participants to 'buy into' a production without some personal stake in the process and end product. However, ideas are cheap, so it is necessary to 'act out' or 'dummy run' these in actual practice to see if/how they work. While students are often asked to act out adult roles in project work, it

[34] Crowded House (1991), *Weather with you*.

must be remembered that, while this is a safe space for experimentation, pride in achievement even in front of a peer audience requires some prior rehearsing and polishing. Rehearsing informally can be fun, and sets participants free to experiment. As participant 4 said: "It [*improvisation*] was easy and fun at the same time as we got to express ourselves and there was not a wrong or right way of doing things." Improvisation is the stage in workshop theatre where participants improvise around themes.

The 'synthesise' stage

To 'synthesise' means to put things together, in this case, to put a Shakespearean scenario into a South African context, to rework the content to suit audience and purpose, and in the process, generate a new product. It must be remembered that this is similar to the process followed in syncretic theatre, which generates hybrid local spin-offs from exotic source material (Balme, 1999: 109; Hazou, 2015: 144). Group projects also require a fair amount of planning and organising in terms of how the product/production/activity will unpack, so that synthesis is a collaborative process carried out by participants, and not by a single individual in authorial isolation. This corresponds to the selection stage of workshop theatre, where the directors edit the resulting improvisations so as to arrive at a polished theatrical performance. In this project, the participants took control, and the selection process was more collaborative and interactive.

The 'actualise' stage

Here 'actualise' refers to acting out the agreed-on performance, to see whether it actually works. In this project it referred to rehearsals, not of individual exploratory projects, but the synthesis which had emerged (by collaboration) as the group performance. It is in acting out that the knowledge-practice of the instructor is echoed in the performance of the novice-learners, a capacity which has to be experienced and 'felt' holistically, and not just intellectualised, as the work of Melrose (2003), Heathcote, and Bolton (Bolton and Heathcote 1999) emphasises.

The 'digitise' stage

It has for some time become usual to post projects or performances online, not only to celebrate achievement and facilitate for peer and educator assessment and feedback, but also to showcase work for a larger audience. The benefits of using the Internet in project

work to facilitate briefing, enhance and accelerate interpersonal communication, and enable public display of work have been known for some time (see Pratt 2003: 5). Public display of work is known to motivate polishing and refining of the end product, and uploading onto the Internet not only expands the potential audience exponentially but also gives a permanence not afforded by unrecorded dramatic performances in a theatre or written assignments kept briefly in dusty storerooms before being thrown away. In this project the digital aspect ran through the process, acting as a means of recording, communicating and accessing resources, culminating in the actual filming, for which participants were by now well prepared. To sum up, digitising enhances and accelerates interaction and communication, facilitates peer and instructor communication, multiplies resources and makes the product part of the global archive of performances and resources. In this project use of tablets not only enhanced and accelerated these processes, but also gave the participants the mobility and flexibility needed to occupy a stage rather than be tied to a computer in a laboratory.

The versatility and adaptability of the model

To sum up, this model (or "pattern theory") is easily understood by both teacher and students, and can be adapted to suit different contexts. It contains in essence the main insights which this study revealed about interpretation through performance of the canonical texts set in most Drama or Drama Education courses, following a colonial-based tradition. The model could also be adapted to assist interpretation of Western-based literary texts and educational resources, as well as for assisting students to acquire professional communication skills using scenarios (Conolly 1992; Pratt 2011) or other types of student-centred, experiential learning (O'Neill and McMahon 2005; Estes 2008). It might also serve as providing a blueprint for role-play or acting out scenarios in DIE or TIE projects.

5.8 Summary of results

The analysis of the teaching and learning approach used in the project revealed the following findings. It could be seen that the contextualising strategy used in the learning approach not only made the Shakespearean text understandable, but gave participants a sense of ownership: the *Julius Caesar* project became a grass-roots South African production, and not a foreign imposition. Even the character names resonated with local

meaning. The text was made *relevan*t to participants, who also felt included and valued rather than being a passive audience 'talked at' by an expert. Contextualising the project allowed participants to put *Ubuntu* into action, following a South African philosophy of community caring and togetherness. Having been set free from a virtually 'foreign' script, participants improvised on various themes without fear of misinterpretation, and understanding developed as themes were acted out, in other words, students were 'interpreting through performance' on a stage, rather than by analysis of an incomprehensible written text on a page. As student teachers, participants also realised that this approach might be a good way to teach their own learners.

As mentioned in the chapter, the workshopping process set participants free to experiment and try out their own ideas without indoctrination or having to appease an instructor. Excerpts of *Julius Caesar* written in modern colloquial English gave participants immediate access to the plot, so that they themselves could contextualise the production in an African setting and make it relevant to everyday life. This was an empowering pedagogy, the very opposite of the transmission-type 'banking education' criticised by Freire. Workshopping also heightened the face-to-face engagement with peers which has been identified as needed by Net generation students. Workshopping taught them discipline, but a self-chosen discipline, and not something imposed by an instructor. As this was a diverse group in terms of levels and production experience, participants also acted as a resource for each other, without the teacher having to explain everything.

The digital technology was not only popular and efficient, but particularly suited to its users and purpose: tablets gave budding actors the flexibility and mobility they needed to get immediate feedback on their performance, and require a 'buddy' to hold it while being recorded, in a sense requiring participants to collaborate rather than hang back. The apps were suited to purpose and audience. Instagram encouraged novice actors to 'flaunt' their talents as they had watched celebrities doing on the same app. WhatsApp enhanced and accelerated interpersonal communication in written, oral and visual/video form. YouTube not only acted as a repository of resources, but provided a place for students to showcase their work online to a larger audience than is usually available to a class or a theatre cast. Analysis of participant feedback suggested that the teaching and learning approach was well received overall, and did what it was intended to do: welded a group of random volunteers into a powerful production team. This was in spite of the fact that,

as the analysis showed, very few participants understood the language of the traditional text of *Julius Caesar.*

Participants' responses to the experience of engaging in dramatic performances of the prescribed text showed that they not only expressed enjoyment and excitement but also showed insight into how and why the project had worked so well, as well as evidence of personal growth during the project. An analysis of the group process, the production process and the pedagogical process suggested how and why the project had been successful. The emerging model of the teaching and learning methodology developed in the course of the research showed how key elements of this methodology worked to achieve the desired results. Finally the versatility and adaptability of the model is emphasised, suggesting that it provides an easily-understood blueprint for teaching and learning which could be applied or adapted to suit many different academic subjects.

5.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I described how application of the research design adopted for this study resulted in a model or pattern theory for creatively interpreting in performance canonical texts, which are the legacy of colonialism, and are still routinely set for Drama and Drama Education courses in post-apartheid South Africa. The students participating in this study, which involved an extra-curricular Shakespeare project, were a multicultural group of the Millennium generation, mainly isiZulu speaking. However, the tentative model shown in Table 5.4 is thought to be sufficiently generalizable to be applied to a variety of student target audiences in very different social contexts. I will argue to support this claim, as well as the recommendations arising from the findings, in the next chapter. The responses of the students, as shown in this chapter, speak to the enthusiasm generated by this teaching methodology as well as the insights it offered them into the language of the actual written texts. Thus the project involved not only "recycling Shakespeare" (Taylor 1989; Marowitz 1991) in trendy digital format, but also kindling a sense of scholarly engagement with the language of the traditional Shakespearean text. The project also inducted future Drama educators experientially into a teaching and learning method that they would be able to use later with their own pupils.

Chapter 6: Denouement

6.1 Tying up the loose ends…

The term "denouement" refers to the final part of a play where the various strands of the plot are drawn together and all the dramatic issues have been resolved (or explained):

> …the process of denouement begins, whereby each of the threads of the plot is disentangled from the knot, one by one or several at a time, so that finally all the dramatic problems have been resolved, for better or for worse. Ideally, no "loose ends" remain as the curtain falls (Scanlan 1977: 13).

Although the workshopping process I described in Chapter 4 was freewheeling, intuitive and organic, following my intuitions and innate practice-knowledge of theatre-making, the analysis in Chapter 5 suggests that the formal objectives of the research were fulfilled. This chapter will 'tie up the loose ends' with a reflection on what worked and why, and will also refer back to accounts I read (not all before the project, I might add) which confirmed or denied my assessment of the creative methodology developed. In Chapter 5, the results were analysed using the research questions which were framed to focus the research. In this chapter, I engage in a more general discussion as to whether the research objectives were achieved, and to what extent. To recap, these objectives were as follows:

- To develop a methodology for creative interpretation through performance of Shakespearean texts prescribed as part of the Drama Education syllabus in higher educational institutions.

- To find ways to make the interpretation through performance of Shakespearean texts relevant for today's students (more specifically, students in the UKZN Drama Education Department).

I first look at the objectives, which sum up the general aims of the research. Next (as undertaken in Chapter 5), I discuss in more detail the answer to research question 3: "What pattern theory or model of the developing teaching methodology emerges as a result of the analysis of the answers to the above questions?" I then engage in a self-

critique commenting on factors which might be seen to have contributed to the success of the teaching/learning methodology, as well as factors which might have constrained its effectiveness, if carried out as part of everyday university lecturing practice. Reflecting on this study also raised a number of further questions, which are included. I next draw conclusions on an aspect of the study which, on reflection, showed the process involved in developing the teaching/learning methodology research to have modelled a process for curriculum transformation by educator agency, tentatively suggesting a means of 'decolonising the university'. The chapter ends with the personal impact this research journey has had on me and my knowledge-practice.

6.2 The creative methodology developed

The aim of this study is encapsulated in the title of the thesis: "Developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre: a case study of Shakespearean interpretation at the university of KwaZulu-Natal". Developing the methodology involved integrating three main strands: constructivist pedagogy, workshop theatre and use of digital technology (see Figure 6.1), which is discussed in the next sections.

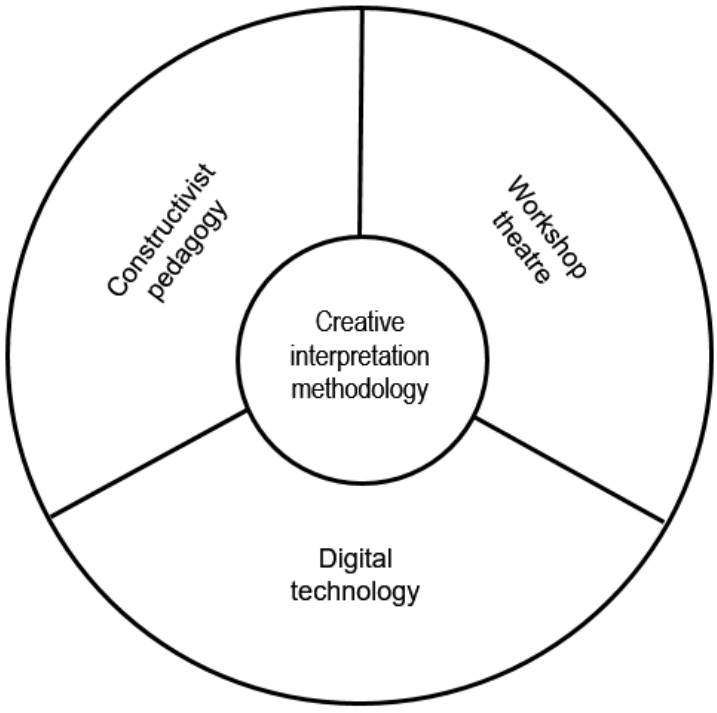


Figure 6.1 The strands involved in developing a creative methodology

6.3 Shakespeare recycled

My first objective was to develop a methodology for creative interpretation through performance of Shakespearean texts prescribed as part of the Drama Education syllabus in higher educational institutions (p. 13). The first objective was met by the application of a constructivist pedagogy combining textual study, workshop theatre and digital technology to 'recycle Shakespeare'. Workshopping was congruent with constructivist pedagogy in promoting engagement and commitment by all participants, as it made scripting, rehearsing and production participant-driven activities. Use of digital technology, in particular, certain popular and familiar social media applications, facilitated interaction and reflection during the workshopping process. It must be noted that the empirical research took place as an extra-curricular project comprising seven sessions over a period of two months at the UKZN Drama Education department with volunteers from all levels of the degree, and that it was not carried out with lecture groups during lecture periods. Also note that not all volunteers were students registered for Drama and/or Drama Education.

Constructivist pedagogy

The results (as I discussed in Chapter 5) suggest that the application of a constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop and improvisation was found to be beneficial to the participants. They found that contextualisation of the text as a point of departure assisted them to overcome barriers such as language, culture and historical era, and this can be seen in their comments. Their comments also suggest that student empowerment was taking place, where they moved from a position of passive disempowerment (in not understanding Shakespeare's text) to one of engagement and excitement in experiencing the plays in their own sociocultural context, and even a desire to explore the 'traditional' text (elements of critical pedagogy suggesting student empowerment are shown by highlighting).

These were some of the participants' comments on contextualisation:

> So what she (the researcher) did was to contextualise it. She takes *Julius Caesar*, she sort of brings him into the African context and plays around Shakespeare and said this is Shakespeare in his context, this is us in our context, can we try and understand *Julius Caesar* in this context. We tried to

break it down, we thought ok Emperor, we thought kingship, and we thought statesmanship. We thought you know a sense of ruling, we thought ok politics- we thought political party, we thought stuff like that and we tried to bring the characters' names and in fact they were defined in such a way that was appealing to an African context, a South African context to be specific.

From Nellie's reflective diary:

This comment shows me the power of contextualising. The text has to make sense and the student needs to identify with it. It also answers the question of 'why bother?' teaching canonical texts. This comment makes me feel that I am on the right path and have 'hooked' them.

In our last session we talked about *Julius Caesar* and I thought it was very effective because it took the text, the whole chunk of confusing language and put it into something modern, something that we could relate to, and touched in things that happen in real life. I could say it was also effective in terms of teaching as students, we watched video clips, performed the scenarios and sat down to discuss each scene that was just acted out so that those who were confused were able to know what was happening on the text itself and were able to catch up.

From Nellie's reflective diary:

Again we see the importance of contextualising so that students have a point of reference. I love the idea that these students are engaged in the sessions but also taking a step back to think about the processes at play. "…sat down to discuss each scene that was just acted out so that those who were confused were able to know what was happening on the text itself and were able to catch up*"* - I like it that there is a sense of empathy building up in more experienced group members for the learning pace of less experienced group members. This for me shows they view themselves as future teacher and not just actors. "I could say it was also effective in terms of teaching" – thus the project modelled for student teachers an experiential, interactive project-based teaching and learning methodology.

> As a drama teacher I think Nellie's method of contextualising the *Julius Caesar* text into a South African context was very productive. This helped us to understand our characters and we were able to be naturalistic in our performance because the text was made to be relevant to us.

From Nellie's reflective diary:

This comment makes me think of how important it is for texts to be made relevant to the time, place and audience involved. I also feel that they are already envisioning what their performance will look like, for example, 'naturalistic'. This suggests that participants are already considering how their own audience will experience any performances/renditions of canonical texts.

The responses above resonate with Wolf, Edmiston and Enciso's (1997) assertion that in order for students to connect and transform texts in dramatic interpretation, they have to be allowed to go beyond what is given in texts therefore viewing the text as a jumping off point. This approach allowed for greater confidence when improvising, as the text was now made relevant to their everyday lives, and they were no longer restricted by the text. Furthermore, the improvised scenarios were constructed in an order which gave the participants a summary of the play without having to read the text. The excitement of creating and viewing the summary in action ironically enticed the participants to engage with the original text and sparked discussion (see Figure 6.2, showing students in spirited discussion of their improvised Shakespeare scenes).

Workshopping the Bard

The method of using workshopping in the performance-based interpretation of dramatic texts can be said to have heightened participant engagement and to have improved attitudes towards the study of Shakespeare. The very nature of workshopping can be viewed as student-centred as it is a collaborative construction between participants with an emphasis on lived experiences (Grainger 2013: 41). The literature is in line with this conclusion in that studies that have used student centred strategies have been found to give learners access to each other's knowledge and assist in making connections between their world and Shakespeare's world (Allen-Hardisty 2003).

Figure 6.2 Participants engaged in discussion of improvised performances

Furthermore, much like this study, the literature shows that teaching Shakespeare through a performance based methodology influenced student attitudes towards Shakespearean study positively and significantly, compared to students who learned Shakespeare through non-active classrooms (Gilbert 1984; Brown 1993; O'Brien 1994; Armitage and O'Leary 2003). (See Figure 6.3, showing students interpreting Shakespearean texts through performance). Participants' comments (as in the examples below) give evidence of this heightened engagement and more positive attitude to Shakespearean textual interpretation.

Figure 6.3 Participants interpreting Shakespeare collaboratively through performance

Participants' comments on the use of workshopping as a method of interpreting Shakespeare through performance:

> It was nice to work in a group with other students and have everybody participating. It improved our discipline and areas such as time management.

From Nellie's reflective diary:
This comment speaks to 'real-world' skill, in essence, educating the students holistically. The student comments about the importance of working together, time management, and of discipline. This was unexpected!

> I never understood the play *Julius Caesar* before and the way it was taught helped me to understand it. I felt like there were exciting and different ways of approaching a text. Engaging with other people who understood *Julius Caesar* better than me helped me to grow and to understand better.

From Nellie's reflective diary:
This comment is quite interesting to me. The idea that the collaborative nature of workshop theatre allowed more sharing and creating knowledge, also peer teaching.

The comments below also stress collaboration and "team building":

> Participating in your project was very fruitful. The project did not only help me with acting skills, but it also taught me collaborative learning skills.

> One thing that was a highlight for me was to get in touch with team building, working together as a team and a principle around that. The fact that we learnt to work with people from other levels in terms of studying and to share the same kind of passion.

From Nellie's reflective diary:
Both "acting skills" and "collaborative learning skills" are necessary skills for drama or drama education students. Moreover, Drama Education students can

not only learn to learn more effectively, but also to *teach* more effectively in the classroom.

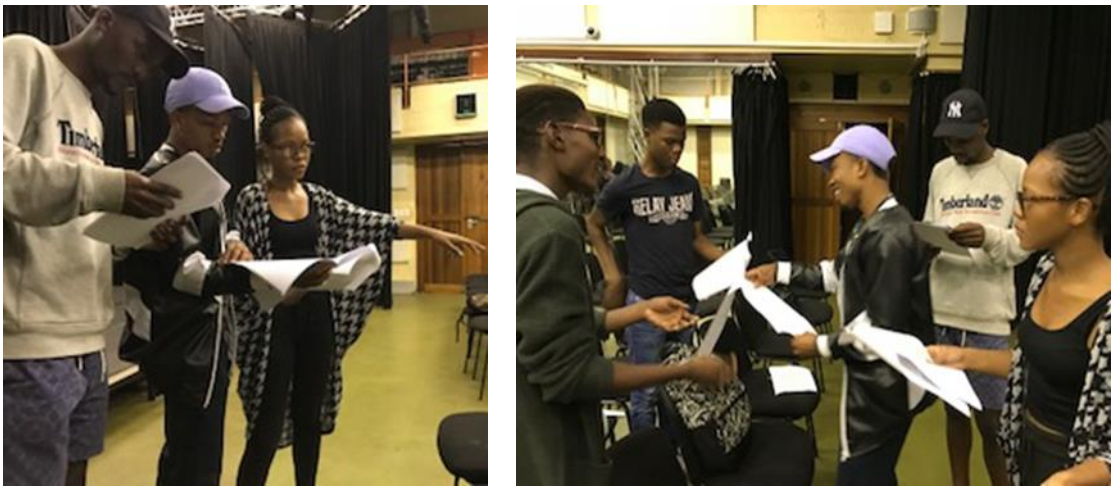


Figure 6.4 Participants workshopping into the text

The first product of the workshopping sessions was a contextualised Shakespeare in the form of a draft script which was then used as a stimulus (working in to the text). The draft script was then edited and refined, and researched further by engaging with the original text as well as viewing multiple interpretations which resulted in a film titled *Julius Caesar: a Durban Tale.* Participants expressed having gained confidence through group work and having gained insight in different ways to creatively teach a canonical dramatic text (see Figure 6.4, showing students workshopping into a draft script).

These were participants' comments on their experience of workshopping into the contextualised script:

> It has given me a greater mind into how to look into a production as an educator. How to look into a text.
>
> Now when it comes to let's say in a school context teaching the play you'd only just read the play to the students and explain it but if you are going to be doing all these things like raps and things like that children are going to be able to find it fun, they are going to want to interact more with the text and if

you can find a way to contextualise or bring it to them be it dance be it acting be it singing and the learning the text would be extremely easy.

From Nellie's reflective diary:
Real-world application is already being seen by the students! It's a different layer, they no longer view themselves as students but as future drama educators.

Digital Shakespeare

Digital technology contributed to interpretation through performance in the theatre workshopping process in a number of different ways. Use of Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp could be seen to have contributed to the process of interpretation through performance as follows. Participants could record and view their performance any number of times, using self- and peer-feedback to assess and /or improve on performance. Recordings allowed participants to edit productions not only in terms of acting but also in terms of stage directions, blocking, props, setting, sound effects and lighting. Use of WhatsApp facilitated immediate responses from participants, even if not in the same locations, and sparked discussions on performances. It is important to note that this was self-directed learner communication, so that feedback on performance was not always mediated through the lecturer, as well as being a good sign of learner engagement. YouTube recordings brought about a sense of seriousness in the sense that the actors could be seen to be performing for a global audience; it also spurred ambition in the sense of advertising their acting talents to potential theatre/film makers and producers. A link to such YouTube performances could be added to their professional acting portfolios as evidence of talent and acting experience, or to serve as their audition pieces, as well as giving them materials to create their own YouTube channel to establish a following (this would be useful for auditions which look for social media influence). Use of YouTube in the project could be seen to have provided students with a quick course in how to use social media for professional acting purposes, although this was not my original intention in using YouTube. Recorded performances could also be used as a resource for curricular work in providing examples of interpretation through performance. Finally, the use of digital technology modelled for student teachers how they might incorporate digital technology in their own teaching practice.

Participants' response to the use of social media and digital technology were as follows:

> I feel great, I see my skill in the industry growing and seeing myself on YouTube and see where I need to improve. WhatsApp makes things easy … and it also encourage us to do team work.
>
> About the video: …I like the fact that this will be seen by a lot of people we might get people who are encouraged by what we are doing or maybe sponsors who [are] interested in extra actors or actress.

From Nellie's reflective diary:

I like how they sound that they are already familiar and comfortable with using the apps (using WhatsApp in particular was the students' suggestion to improve communication). The video appears to have 'hooked' their egos, and to have given them a sense that what they were doing was important, as well as being a resource for auditions and castings, making them feel more like professionals.

6.4 Shakespeare reloaded

Objective two was to find ways to make the interpretation through performance of Shakespearean texts relevant for today's students, in particular, students in the UKZN Drama Education Studies Department (p.13). The second objective was met by 'reloading Shakespeare' with the use of digital media throughout the case study for several different uses, such as data collection for the researcher, viewing of different interpretations of Shakespearean texts through performance, uploading and viewing creative works that were produced in sessions, reflection, hosting forum group discussions and allowing for interaction outside the sessions. The use of digital media also assisted with achieving research objective 2 in the sense of making the activities enjoyable and relevant to Millennium students. The participants enjoyed using digital media as they were familiar with the applications (no training required) and found them convenient and accessible (Handayani 2015). The digital technology was observed to have served as a flexible online space where participants to interact as a community as well as fostered engagement. In a South African study at a University of Technology exploring the use of WhatsApp had similar findings in that in that there was evidence of heightened student participation, the fostering of learning communities for knowledge

creation and progressive shifts in the lecturer's mode of pedagogical delivery (Rambe and Bere 2013).

Studies exploring the use of digital technology in university drama courses have had similar findings to this study. Even though Philip and Nicholls (2007) were dealing with drama theory, they found that the flexibility of online spaces allowed for continued study off campus. This finding is important because it speaks to how the accessibility of online space can prolong engagement with the subject matter. Another important finding by Philip and Nicholls (2009) is that certain digital technologies can replace and transform drama activities such as the use of group blogs as opposed to the traditional individual journals for reflection. My study differs, however, in the innovative use of familiar social media applications for different purposes throughout the empirical research. WhatsApp was used as both a tool for announcements as well as a space for online discussion, sharing information and collaboration (Susilo 2014). Instagram was used to upload pictures and short video clips of rehearsals (Salomon 2013). YouTube allowed for multiple viewings of different Shakespearean interpretations through performance as well as acting as a repository for participants' performances. YouTube also proved particularly useful in the teaching of Shakespeare as there is a community dedicated to Shakespearean performances and adaptions (Desmet 2009).

One could suggest that in my study social media worked as a tool to make drama activities more efficient so that more could be accomplished in a short amount of time; furthermore, the use of social media allowed for participants to be involved in different activities simultaneously, allowing them to play to their strengths. Philip and Nicholls (2009) made similar observations about the use of group blogs in that expedited working through the stages of play building, which left more time for actual improvisation and rehearsal (see Figures 6.5 and 6.6, showing students interacting on selected social media platforms). However, the main advantage which digital technology provided was to help to contextualise Shakespeare's plays by showing how they could be set within the Millennial age, in the sense of accessing Internet repositories of Shakespearean performances on YouTube. (i.e. not just verbal text). YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp, social media which Millennials were familiar with also now became part of the theatre-making process, particularly in providing a type of 'rehearsal space'. This online space was actually found to replicate the Drama classroom/studio in terms of being

the ‘empty space’ in which participants can create (Brook 1996), thus transporting the rehearsal space into the Millennial age,

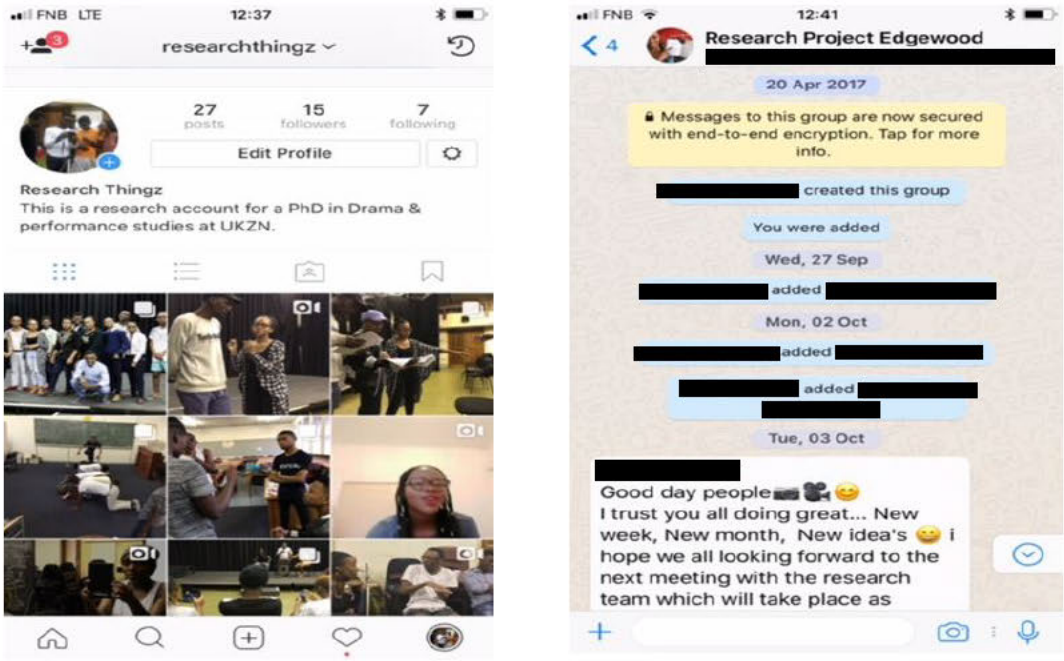


Figure 6.5 Screen shots of Instagram and WhatsApp ‘apps’ used in the empirical research

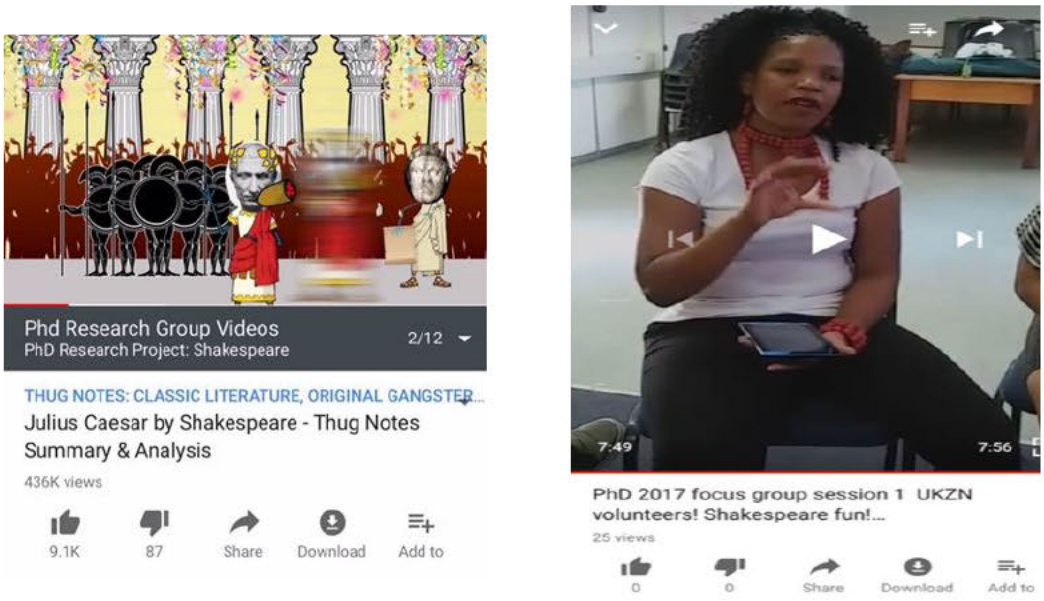


Figure 6.6 Screen shots of YouTube videos used in the empirical research

The digital rehearsal space no longer contained ‘once-off’ performances to be remembered (imperfectly, and incompletely, by performers themselves) but a continuum of captured performances which could be revisited any number of times, and *at* different times by participants in different locations. It also made the stages of theatre-making less dependent on printed texts while accelerating digital communication for feedback and further generation of ideas. Digital technology, then, contextualised the interpretation-through-performance process for participants by setting it within the digital age. However, potential barriers such as the archaic (and thus a virtually ‘foreign’) Shakespearean language, as well as the geographical and cultural setting of the participants’ production meant that the performance had to be contextualised in the real-world or lived experience of the participants. These are important aspects of both constructivist pedagogy and workshop theatre.

One advantage of the types of digital technology (i.e. social media) used in the project was that, unlike the traditional LMS (e.g. Moodle), which is an efficient and cost-effective way of making accessible up-to-date curricular information and resources, these, by contrast, prompted student engagement (see Thackaberry 2018: 1, on a "post-LMS world"). It was also the choice of a mobile device (i.e. tablets) which transformed this project in terms of providing a portable means of recording and playing back improvisations and rehearsed extracts for reflection and feedback. Instagram was not only a popular app, but appropriate for this project as it focused on performance aspects which could then be captured, unlike live performances, and had the added attraction of being used by celebrities. It must also be noted that participants were first introduced to the digital technology used by means of Instagram, which was trendy, fashionable and has an immediate appeal, unlike other platforms used for educational purposes, even Facebook (which now tends to be used by the older generation). By the time of the project, WhatsApp had become an extremely popular app, was used extensively for social and academic communication by university staff and students, and also had the capacity for verbal, oral and video communication. As opposed to being merely an academic tool, the digital technology in the apps used rapidly facilitated and accelerated the social bonding needed for the workshopping process.

6.5 Shakespeare transformed

One of the research objectives (but subsumed in Research question 4.) was also the formation of a model or pattern theory offering insights into the conceptual nature of the process (i.e. rather than just a series of steps or stages). In Figure 6.7, a photograph of the UKZN Drama Education students is used as the backdrop for the model of the teaching/learning methodology. The model which emerged as a result of the analysis (see Chapter 5) should not be seen as a systemic model, identifying supposed generic features of social functioning, but as a personal model, illustrating the key features of my transformational teaching/learning process. The model is also specific to play production. However, it was formulated in more abstract terms so that other educators might adapt the teaching/learning method or aspects of it for their own use in their own contexts.

Figure 6.7 UKZN students celebrate their creative interpretation of Shakespeare

The model captures the essence of the process used to 'transform Shakespeare' from a boring and daunting study of the archaic text into vibrant theatre, with all participants - cast, playwright, director, props and costume - playing a part, and generating a huge

amount of enthusiasm in the process. There is no 'right way' to achieve what the model suggests will work, but its elements can be seen to be crucial, as follows.

Contextualising a script is essential for understanding, relevance and engagement of participants, as Joan Littlewood's workshop theatre and constructivist pedagogy have shown. The contextualising process described in this project dealt with setting the Shakespearean text to be interpreted in a context which would make it relevant and understandable to the mainly isiZulu-speaking student group (my 'Durban view' students) in a modern-day setting, that is, taking the archaic written text, and addressing the disempowering elements identified by post-colonial theory using decolonial strategies. Improvising assists creativity by allowing participants to 'think out of the box' and gives their ideas an immediacy and flexibility which a set script lacks. At the next stage, participants had to work together as a team by synthesising ideas generated by the improvisations into a focused course of action, crystallising the raw ideas into a workable script. Once students felt comfortable with their ability to 'handle' Shakespeare, they could start blending old and new into hybrid forms which had elements of the original script which were deemed valuable (as relevant 'theatre') but translating these into modern stage argot, as it were. These new hybrid forms needed to be acted out to see if they were feasible production options, given the constraints experienced even by professional companies (e.g. time, cost, location, size/abilities of cast and crew). Use of digital technology throughout the production process can be seen to have facilitated communication and to have promoted intense engagement. The actual performance was then digitized, that is, filmed and posted online, making the production available for participant reflection as well as national or even global showcasing and feedback. Digitising not only moves the production into the digital age by making use of social media in rehearsals, but also creates a polished filmed product which can be added to an online repository of Shakespearean interpretations (i.e. on YouTube). Apart from adding permanence to an otherwise fleeting moment, the online platform also provides aspiring actors with exposure as well as potential audition material which is immediately accessible to agents and producers.

On reflection, the process of developing the teaching and learning methodology encapsulated in the model could be seen to have operated on different levels, as shown in Figure 6.8.

Figure 6.8 Levels at which the teaching and learning methodology operated

At surface level, and at face value, the process seemed to be just about dealing with the difficulties my students experienced when attempting to interpret the written text of a Shakespearean drama. The text, whether experienced as 'words on the page' or 'words on the stage' (i.e. in traditional, formal delivery), is not easily understood by the students now attending South African universities. At the level of theory, postcolonial critique, as well as decolonial strategies, helped to identify what the problems were as well as suggesting various means of redress. However, decolonising theory emphasised the need for local solutions to address specific local issues, that is, no universal decolonising method was claimed to exist, although some general principles became evident, the most cogent of which was to get involved 'hands-on' in developing solutions in collaboration with stakeholders. At the next level, that of actually getting involved instead of theorising, pedagogies needed to be applied which would include all participants in decision making, as well as address the effects of disempowerment caused by imposition of foreign beliefs, values and epistemologies during colonization. A constructivist pedagogy with very similar methods to Freirean pedagogy (but informed by a different paradigm) seemed to offer opportunities for collaboration and idea-sharing between

participants which would go some way towards liberating the oppressed and forging new, more accessible teaching and learning methods.

The deep level core of the teaching and learning methodology was in fact thought to be at the level of the interaction, where the *process* engaged in by participants was the key to effective learning. Ironically, the digital technology involving tablets and social media apps, usually viewed as something added as an enhancement (but not an essential element) 'because it's modern' could be seen to operate at this deeper level, facilitating intense and frequent communication. This comprised intra-personal, interpersonal and mass communication, using multimedia: written text, images and voice and video recordings. The technology was not just a more efficient medium than 'old-fashioned' arts and literature media used in the past, such as letters, paper books, hard copy pictures, voice recorders, video cameras and film on cassette or even computer disks; it multiplied exponentially and intensified the interactions which were part of the workshop theatre process. The theatre-making process, on the other hand, while video-recorded, manifested an age-old process of live human interaction embodied in people acting out intense dramatic moments on a physical stage. The digital technology did not detract from or belittle the live performance, as feared by 'Luddites': it enhanced it, as well as facilitating the stages whereby the final performance was achieved. It is this deep-level operation of the interactive process, heightened by use of social media apps, which is thought to have made the teaching and learning methodology work so well in this project.

6.6 Reflection on the creative methodology developed

Though the results of my study were positive on the whole, there are still areas for critique, the most important of which is that the model has not been tested out outside of the study. Furthermore, the model requires that the facilitator/ teacher is very confident with digital media and that the institution is well resourced with tablets (or that participants have personal mobile smart phones) and reliable internet access, which may not always be the case. One should also consider factors that contributed to the success of the study such as working with a small group. Having a small group of participants allowed for efficient communication as well as peer support/teaching. This can be corroborated by Gillies (2004), who in his study found students in small groups were more willing to work with others on the given tasks and provided their peers with detailed

help. The small numbers also allowed for a larger amount of activities to be accomplished in a short amount of time. One cannot be certain if this model would be effective with a much larger group of participants. Another point to consider is that all the participants were in the same demographic: isiZulu-speaking and black. I cannot help but think that this made all the processes of the model smoother to execute as the participants were culturally similar. I therefore did not have the challenge of having to gain knowledge about the diverse cultures represented in my classroom (Sheets 2009). An example of this would be that the film that was the final product was spoken largely in isiZulu and the interpretation leaned towards political issues in KwaZulu-Natal. I cannot be certain whether the model would need to be altered for a more culturally and linguistically diverse group of participants (Figure 6.7 shows the homogeneity of the demographic of the group of student participants involved in the project).

It is important to note that the research project was run as an extra-curricular activity, which meant that it was flexible and free from restraints caused by the syllabus or academic operational structures. To be specific, the volunteers chose when they would like to meet, which meant that some of our sessions took place on the weekends when the campus is quiet and there are no disturbances (strikes) or classes to compete with. Sessions could be as long or as short as the volunteers and the researcher felt necessary to complete tasks. Since there was no impending threat of assessment or examination, the volunteers could focus on the experience, explore without risk, and be thoroughly engaged in the process of theatre making. Another factor to consider in the success of the research project was that the pilot project was not only an extra-curricular activity but it was also funded by the Durban University of Technology. This meant that I could take time off from lecturing by employing a locum and I could also focus solely on the project. Furthermore, the subsequent (i.e. main) research project was also funded, in that I was awarded a scholarship from the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS). This scholarship allowed me to take some time from teaching in my data collection phase and also allowed me to purchase tablets, provide refreshments for participants (which was a highly motivational factor) as well hire a professional videographer for the resulting final product, which was a film, *Julius Caesar: a Durban Tale*.

The extra-curricular aspects, as well as funding and small-group volunteer, in my opinion, led to a teaching/learning ecology which provided a "relevant, inspiring and constructive environment" for myself as university staff member and the students (Toom, Pyhältö and Rust 2015: 615). This would not necessarily be the case in running similar projects within the curriculum, as both of the universities involved in the research projects, DUT and UKZN, were (and still are) facing the crises experienced in many universities in South Africa:

> The South African higher education system is contending with all sorts of challenges - including funding, delinking itself from colonial and apartheid legacies, and increasing the number of students who are qualified to be part of the higher education learning environment. This crisis is compounded by the global and national inequalities, environmental problems, financial instability, and violence in our societies (Magoqwana 2018: 112).

There are possible constraints which might have been problematic if the research project had been part of the actual Drama Education syllabus. Registering large numbers of academically underprepared students and the consequent high dropout rate has tended to result in an over-focus on results and throughput; a 'dumbing down' (rather than transforming) of syllabus content and pedagogy; lack of infrastructure, including sufficient staff numbers, resources and venues appropriate to the purpose; and, in particular, lack of digital infrastructure, including sufficient computer rooms and Wi-Fi coverage. As the academic year is now interrupted by student protests on a regular basis, the resulting lack of instructional time leaves lecturers little other option than transmission teaching of content and cramming for examinations. Accommodating demands that university instruction is free or supplemented by further funding has resulted in larger class groups, and less funding for infrastructural support, including sufficient full-time staff. Standardised end-of-year/semester written examinations encourage transmission teaching and cramming, and even so-called 'continuous assessment' is often used to test discrete syllabus items rather than middle-order competences. The latter obstructs integrated and holistic teaching/learning methods, such as the one developed in this study, and leaves little or no time for actual teaching/learning. Finally, in the context of social distancing and the resulting emergency switch by universities to online learning (Myende and Ndlovu 2020), it is clear that, while this situation persists, the application of the principles contained in the model might be very different from that used in this study.

This study builds on to previous research into interpretation of dramatic works (Gilbert 1984; Brown 1993; O'Brien 1994; Kirk 1998; Allen-Hardisty 2003; Armitage and O'Leary 2003; Sheets 2009; Aydin 2013). It also builds on the pioneering works into use of digital technology (Nicholls and Philip 2001; Philip and Nicholls 2007, 2009; Nicholls and Philip 2012) as well as confirming the more recent insights into use of social media in education (Salomon 2013; Susilo 2014; Handayani 2015; Tsukayama 2016). It benefits the field in that it can be seen as a guideline for teachers who are experiencing difficulties in teaching the interpretation of Shakespeare through performance. The study also takes the idea of digital technology in Drama Education a step further by creatively incorporating various familiar social media into drama process and activities in a way that is complementary and efficient. Moreover, the study's combination of textual study, workshop theatre and digital technology appears to be an original approach, and opens the door for further exploration.

The application of the research design adopted for this study resulted in a model or pattern theory for creatively interpreting in performance canonical texts, which are the legacy of colonialism, and are still routinely set for Drama and Drama Education courses in post-apartheid South Africa. While this study uses a case study methodology, the emerging model is thought to be sufficiently generalizable to be applied to a variety of student target audiences in very different social contexts (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 24). The responses of the students speak to the enthusiasm generated by this teaching methodology as well as the insights it offered them into the language of the actual written texts. Thus the project involved not only 'recycling Shakespeare' (Taylor 1989; Marowitz 1991) in trendy digital format, but also promoting scholarly engagement with the language of the traditional Shakespearean text.

Reflecting on this study raised a number of questions, for example:

> How would the model work in combining other items in the Drama Education syllabus?
>
> How would the model work with groups whose MT is not isiZulu, multicultural groups, institutions with fewer digital resources, or in different disciplines?

As drama educators have been slow to adopt digital technology as a teaching method, what might encourage them to engage more fully with digital technology?

What effect (if any) does this teaching/learning methodology have on academic achievement?

With regard to the last question, a pilot project using similar techniques as those described in the model was found to have effected a marked improvement in the participants' academic achievement in the syllabus item relating to the canonical text in question (Ngcongo and Pratt 2016). While the model has not so far been used as actual part of the Drama Education (or Drama) syllabus at UKZN (or DUT), extra-curricular use may well impact on academic performance in terms of contextualising Shakespeare for students. Thus, a fruitful area of further research might be to investigate the effect/s of such projects on academic performance.

6.7 Shakespeare decolonised

I must emphasise that this project dealt with a teaching/learning methodology in a specific area, and was not intended to be part of a 'curriculum transformation' initiative. However, reflecting on the results of this study suggested that the project formed the core of a method which could be applied - or adapted - to serve as a process of curriculum transformation through teacher agency, that is, agential curriculum transformation (Priestley *et al.* 2012; Toom, Pyhältö and Rust 2015). While this was not initially an objective of the research, it suggests the potential of how the approach - and the model summing up its operation - could be developed further. Figure 6.8 shows how this study modelled a teaching/learning methodology for the creative interpretation of Shakespeare. However, it goes further in showing a possible method for transforming university curricula, thus 'decolonising the university'. By using the model's five stages (Contextualise, Improvise, Synthesise, Actualise and Digitise), an interpretation of a Shakespearean play, *Julius Caesar*, was realised which was relevant, context specific, authentic and meaningful to the participants. The five stages are not just a series of steps to follow, but have their own complexities as well. The methodology shown by the model involves input from both the participants and lecturers at all stages. The process, which is complex and recursive, also does not abandon what is useful and valuable about

Shakespeare's work, but rather evaluates its possible worth and uses it as a 'jumping off point' to 'recycle Shakespeare'.

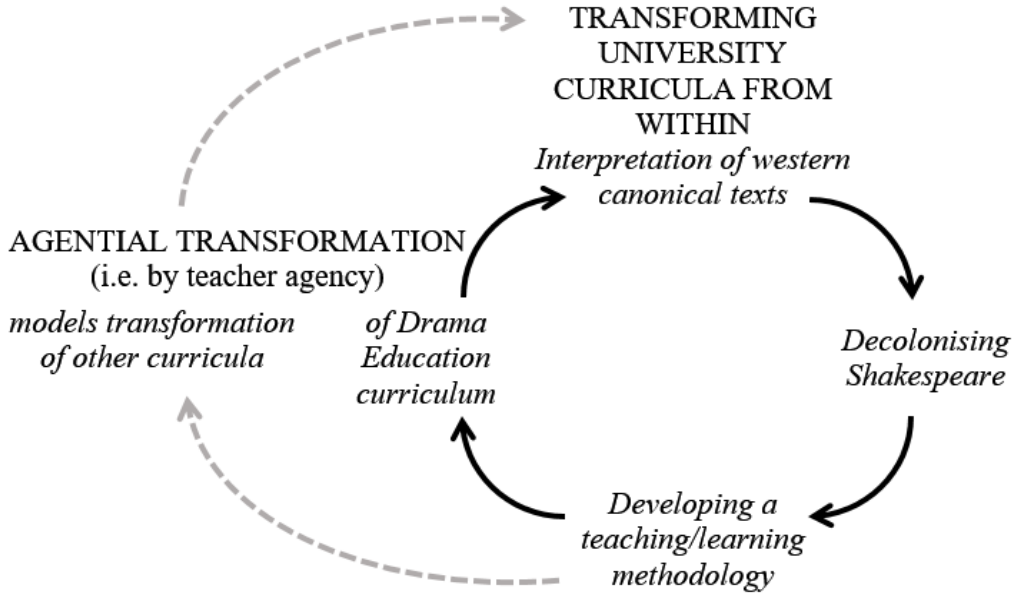


Figure 6.9 Transforming university curricula from within

The process of developing the teaching/learning model could actually be seen as decolonising Shakespeare, using aspects of the postcolonial and decolonising strategies mentioned in Chapter 2 (see pp. 31-44). *Julius Caesar* was essentially updated and re-situated (Salter 1995); the language predominately used was the participants' mother tongue, so that the text was essentially translated (Caulker 2009); the result can also be seen as an example of tradaptation (Saoudi 2017). Yet, although the resulting production contained aspects of all of the above, the teaching/learning methodology could best be seen to be an example of syncretic theatre (Hazou 2015), which uses indigenous material within the framework of Western drama to create a completely new product.

The developed teaching/learning methodology could be used to transform the Drama Education discipline. The methodology and its process could be used to transform how other modules are presented and developed, particularly if they consist of canonical texts or Eurocentric subject matter. In order for this to happen, one has to consider the idea of teacher agency, the notion that teachers can bring about positive change to the curriculum

and essentially their teaching environments (Toom, Pyhältö and Rust 2015: 615-616). In the case of curriculum transformation in the Drama Education Department at UKZN, teacher agency would need to be seen as something that all the lecturers take part in and not just the project of an individual. Lecturers would have to work together to eliminate certain constraints brought about by the university context and structure, in order to create an environment that is more flexible and allows transformation initiatives to be accommodated (Biesta and Tedder 2007: 137).

While slogans such as 'decolonise the curriculum' and 'transform the university' are chanted by students at university protests around the country (Langa 2017; Luescher, Loader and Mugume 2017), there is only so much that meetings and symposia will achieve. Lecturers should rather have a strategy for transforming university curricula from within through teacher agency, instead of waiting for it to come from 'somewhere else'. The model developed through the process of this study could be adjusted in different ways to suit different disciplines. Furthermore, it could be used to persuade other disciplines to deliver their content in a more integrative and contextually relevant manner, and go some way towards transforming the university from within.

6.8 The curtain falls….

Before the curtain falls, I need to emphasise how much this research has been an inspiration to me in terms of both my academic and theatre involvement. It has vindicated my professional knowledge-practice in terms of my intuitive 'feel' for how drama should be taught and learned, as part of performance, not as abstract syllabus items, but as a totally engaging holistic experience, as 'theatre-making'.

The inspiration for this research started when I was a lecturer at the Durban University of technology teaching modules in the Drama Studies Diploma. I had always heard students complaining about having to learn Shakespeare as it was boring and difficult. It occurred to me that modules were taught separately and that the students were meant to connect the dots themselves. An example of this was that Shakespeare texts were analysed in Text Analysis, and were later used in the content of delivering a monologue or giving a scene performance in the Acting module.

This realisation inspired me to create an extracurricular pilot project on Shakespeare where students created interpretations of Shakespeare through multiple forms of performance art. I wanted to include digital media for the purpose of collecting data in the form of online activities on Moodle. The problem with this approach became clear - trying to reflect or discuss performance-related issues in a computer lab made the process static. Furthermore, the booking of the lab and a performance studio became very inconvenient and made the process feel fragmented. What stood out to me was that the project had to happen as an extracurricular activity to avoid restrictions imposed by the syllabus and timetables. I knew that the project was beneficial for the students as they all said as a group that they were a lot more confident and prepared when it came to Shakespeare performances later in the year, and their marks when their written work was assessed were some way above average.

When I changed employment to the University of KwaZulu-Natal Drama Education department, I become aware of the same issues that had plagued the students before. I started this research with the experience of my pilot project in mind to anticipate any challenges. It was clear that the project work would have to be extracurricular and with volunteers so as not to hold students captive in a class where they might feel coerced into giving responses to please me and for the reward of marks. This meant that I obtained volunteers who were generally interested in the project and there were no issues of venue clashes or bookings. Digital media were something I still wanted to include, but the pilot project had made it painfully clear that a desktop computer ties the participants down and that students do not really want to participate on learning management systems such as Moodle. Digital media were not the problem - it was the device and platforms used that were the challenge. For these reasons I decided to buy my participants tablets, which meant that they could be more mobile, and encouraged them to use social media which most were already familiar with.

The case study in this project was carried out with the intention of developing a model that would assist in transforming the teaching and learning of Shakespeare from something traditional and teacher-centred into a vital, authentic and meaningful experience. To do this I had to ascertain what the participants' previous experiences with Shakespeare had been, to assist me in the beginning to structure my teaching and learning process.

From this data I was able to identify the major challenges that the participants experienced in interpretation of Shakespeare through performance. The first challenge was that they had experienced Shakespeare mainly as text on a page to be translated, and were not taught how to do this, and that this process was not integrated with actual performance. The second challenge was a result of the teaching strategies used in teaching and learning: the participants had experienced this in a traditional, teacher-centred way that left them feeling disempowered and not a vital part of the process. The third challenge was the language of the text, which was foreign, and from a different era and culture, rendering Shakespearean texts inaccessible to my students.

The study of Shakespeare itself carries a lot of historical baggage as a colonial export, and postcolonial theory helped me to identify the lingering effects of the legacy of colonialism in its former colonies. Decolonial theory sought to find solutions to right the injustices of the past and to oppose the lingering vestiges of colonial oppression, essentially decolonising our minds and transforming society. These theories showed that the model I was hoping to develop was more than a way of facilitating the interpretation of Shakespeare through performance: at a deeper level it was a project geared at 'decolonising Shakespeare'. This meant that whatever strategies were used had to move away from Eurocentric ideas of knowledge and how it is created. The project needed a Freirean approach to education, abandoning transmission delivery (i.e. the "banking education" criticised by Freire) and moving towards a way of teaching that is empowering, collaborative and meaningful.

The project at this point had a blueprint: it would consist of a constructivist teaching and learning approach, workshop theatre and using digital technology with social media apps to hold the project together. Much like Freire, I attempted to develop a model that was student-centred, collaborative and empowering. The model had to teach a variety of real-world skills to be meaningful and authentic. The communal nature of both constructivism and workshop theatre was heightened by the use of social media to rapidly create a sense of bonding and community which held the participants and the project together. Thus, one of the products of this research was the model of the teaching and learning methodology, which, in my opinion, could not be used only to transform teaching and

learning in Drama Education, but also in other academic subjects, as in 'drama in education' (DIE) projects.

This project was about how acting out Shakespeare's text not only facilitates interpretation, but also changes attitudes to such texts, with students seeing them no longer as alien content to be learned by rote, but as offering exciting opportunities for performance. In the process of writing up this thesis, I realised that it was not just a documentation of the research process and results, but a learning experience which in a sense changed my world. This is because writing at this level brings discoveries in a similar way that acting out a text brings about interpretation through the actual performance, as ideas are being acted out on the page.

This, then, has been as much a learning experience for me as it has been for my student-participants. On this note, I will bid my audience farewell!

Exit Nellie stage left…

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Appendix A: Gatekeepers' letters and letters of information and consent

[Date] 2017
Mr Simon Mokoena
The Registrar
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Mr Mokoena

Permission to conduct doctoral research within UKZN's Drama Education programme, for a thesis entitled:
Developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre: a case study of Shakespearean interpretation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
Research Ethics Clearance Number: [pending]

I am a lecturer in Drama Education at Edgewood Campus, and am registered for a PhD in Drama and Performance Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The aim of my research is to develop a teaching and learning methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre. The empirical work will consist of a case study involving Drama Education students interpreting Shakespearean texts at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It is hoped that this case study approach will not only develop a teaching and learning method for use with tertiary students, but will also give student teachers insight into how to approach the teaching and learning of textual interpretation in their own classroom situation.

The following provisos will apply:
1. Students will be told that this project is voluntary and that they may choose not to participate.
2. No names will be mentioned or students identified in the thesis.
3. The research will not interfere with the academic programme.

Kind regards

Nellie Ngcongo
Student no: 21607613

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

[Date]

[Lecturer's name]
[Name of Department of Drama Studies [Name University where lecturer is employed [Address]

Dear [Name]

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW LECTURERS AS PART OF MY PHD DATA COLLECTION FOR A PROJECT RUN AT THE DRAMA EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, UKZN

I am currently registered for a Ph.D. in Drama and Performance Studies at UKZN, and wish to carry out my research project as part of my 2017/2018 lecturing duties at UKZN. My topic is as follows: "Developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre: a case study of Shakespearean interpretation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal".

My lecturing experience has shown that IsiZulu-speaking students in my department (Drama Education) have difficulty in navigating Shakespearean English and interpreting meaning through performance. The research problem has thus been identified as finding a means of facilitating the interpretation process. The approach used will involve investigating how textual interpretation during Text Study lectures can be enhanced by means of the theatre workshop process (i.e. play production).

I would very much like to consult lecturers at other universities to see if they face similar challenges, and, if so, how they deal with them. To this end, I would very much like to hold a short interview with some of your lecturing staff members to get feedback on their personal lecturing experiences of student interpretation of traditional texts.

All discussions, responses and opinions will be kept confidential: information will be collected from participants, but pseudonyms (false names) will be used in all written documents to protect the identity of all participants. Computer files will be password-protected, and the files will be deleted after the researcher has obtained the qualification.

Please could you reply to this request to say whether permission is granted for me to interview whomsoever of your lecturers might agree to participate.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either myself or my Supervisor, Prof Dee Pratt (031 373 6003, deep@dut.ac.za).

Yours sincerely

Nellie Ngcongo Cell: 0766579597
Email: Ngcongon@ukzn.ac.za

[Date]

[Lecturer's name]
[Name of Department of Drama Studies [Name University where lecturer is employed [Address]

Dear [Name]

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW YOU AS PART OF MY PHD DATA COLLECTION FOR A PROJECT RUN AT THE DRAMA EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, UKZN

I am currently registered for a Ph.D. in Drama and Performance Studies at UKZN, and wish to carry out my research project as part of my 2017/2018 lecturing duties at UKZN. My topic is as follows: "Developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post-apartheid theatre: a case study of Shakespearean interpretation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal".

My lecturing experience has shown that IsiZulu-speaking students in my department (Drama Education) have difficulty in navigating Shakespearean English and interpreting meaning through performance. The research problem has thus been identified as finding a means of facilitating the interpretation process. The approach used will involve investigating how textual interpretation during Text Study lectures can be enhanced by means of the theatre workshop process (i.e. play production).

I would very much like to consult lecturers at other universities to see if they face similar challenges, and, if so, how they deal with them. To this end, I would very much like to hold a short interview with you to get feedback on your personal lecturing experiences when dealing with student interpretation of traditional texts.

All discussions, responses and opinions will be kept confidential: information will be collected from participants, but pseudonyms (false names) will be used in all written documents to protect the identity of all participants. Computer files will be password-protected, and the files will be deleted after the researcher has obtained the qualification.

Please could you reply to this request to say whether you are willing to be interviewed, at your convenience, of course.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either myself or my Supervisor, Prof Dee Pratt (031 373 6003, deep@dut.ac.za).

Yours sincerely

Nellie Ngcongo Cell: 0766579597
Email: Ngcongon@ukzn.ac.za

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Drama Education Students

I am looking for students who would like to be participants in a research project that is part of my PhD studies. The project involves the use of YouTube, Instagram and Blogs to facilitate the creative interpretation of Shakespeare. If you are creative and want to experiment with new ways of learning about classical texts, then this opportunity is for you!

Participation is voluntary and students may withdraw at any stage of the project! The participant's anonymity will be respected at all times. For those who are interested, this project will be discussed in more detail in class.

If you wish to participate please feel in your details below:

Name:	Student no:	Email:

Regards
Ms Nellie Ngcongo

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

PARTICIPANT LETTER OF INFORMATION

Dear [participant's name]

Thank you for volunteering to be a participant in my research project!

The title of the project is: "Developing a methodology for creative interpretation of traditional dramatic texts in post- apartheid theatre: a case study of Shakespearean interpretation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal". What I am trying to do is to find creative ways of helping students to interpret Shakespearean plays so that they can put on performances which are relevant and exciting to our KwaZulu-Natal audiences.

I**,** Nellie Ngcongo, am the main researcher in this project, and Professor Dee Pratt is my Supervisor.

The research involves an enquiry into the experiences of isiZulu-speaking Drama Education students in interpreting Shakespearean dramatic texts. In view of these experiences, the project seeks to find a means of facilitating the interpretation process.

The research procedure will be as follows. You will be asked to take part in an online survey, blogs and focus group discussions in which your experiences will be explored. Focus groups will take place in informal and comfortable surroundings (e.g. the Gcina Mhlophe Studio). You will not spend more than one hour in the focus group discussions and online survey. You will also be invited to comment (on the group blogs) on the results of the project when these are communicated, but this is optional.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts for you or others participating in the project.

You may in fact benefit by gaining a richer understanding of interpreting Shakespearean dramatic texts through performance. Based on this project, I hope to produce journal articles and conference papers, in which you may be invited to co-author. I also hope the findings of this project will contribute to re-curriculation of the Drama Education course with reference to Shakespearean plays and to the development of online student and lecturer resources for the Drama Education Department.

There will be no adverse consequences for you should you choose to withdraw, which is entirely up to you.

While you will not receive any monetary or other types of remuneration for taking part in the project, you will not be expected to cover any of the costs of the project.

Information will be collected from you and other participants, and not shared, except in the case of focus discussion groups, in which you (and others) have a choice to participate or not. Pseudonyms (false names) will be used in all written documents to protect your identity. Computer files will be password-protected, and the files will be deleted after I have completed the project, written up the results, and published journal articles (approximately two years).

In the event of any problems or queries, the person to contact is my Supervisor**,** Prof Dee Pratt, on 031 373 6003 (deep@dut.ac.za), or myself, on 031 373 2070 (nellien@dut.ac.za). Any complaints can be reported to UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, whose contact details are as follows:

Research Office, Westville Campus Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001 Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Best regards

[redacted]

Nellie Ngcongo
Date: [insert relevant date.]

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

LETTER OF CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Project:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Nellie Ngcongo, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this project - Research Ethics Clearance Number: [Pending],
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the project.
- I am aware that the results of the project, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a project report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this project can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the project.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the project.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may be related to my participation will be made available to me.
- If I have concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researcher, then I may contact the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, and have been provided with the contact details.
- I hereby consent ☐ /do not consent ☐ to have all interviews recorded (tick **one** box to show which option you choose.)
- I hereby consent ☐ /do not consent ☐ to video-recording of interviews and other research activities (tick **one** box to show which option you choose.)

_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Participant	**Date**	**Signature / Right Thumbprint**

I,_____(name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above project.

Nellie Nicola Ngcongo	_____	_____
Full Name of Researcher	**Date**	**Signature**

Appendix B: Survey, focus group and interview questions

Student survey questions

[In response to a textual extract from a Shakespearean text set for that year:]

1. Do you understand the literal meaning of the text? Why/why not?
2. From reading the text, what do you think is going on in that part of the play?
3. Are there any particular words or expressions which you do not understand? Explain why (if possible).
4. How would you act out this text, if you were set it as a practical?
5. What is your reaction when faced with interpreting this kind of text?
6. What impression does this kind of text give you of the Drama Education Programme?

Focus group procedure and questions

Time and place for focus group: The focus group can last about two hours, and can have breaks in between for refreshments. Participants will receive clear details of where and when the focus group will take place and how long it will last.

Ground rules

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. There may be a temptation to jump in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- You do not have to speak in any particular order.
- When you do have something to say, please do so. There are many of you in the group and it is important that I obtain the views of each one of you.
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group.
- Does anyone have any questions? (Answers).

Student focus group questions

Peer viewers:

1. What do you think the actors were trying to achieve in this interpretation?
2. How did this performance come across?
3. What, in your opinion, was good about it?
4. How in your opinion, might it be improved?
5. What would your interpretation have been (i.e. if you had a different one)?
6. Any other comments?

Performers:

1. What were you trying to achieve in this interpretation?
2. To what extent do you think that you achieved this, and why/why not?
3. What challenges (if any) did you experience?
4. If you could do it again, what would you do differently, and why?
5. Any other comments?

Conclusion

- Thank you for participating. This has been a very successful discussion.
- Your opinions will be a valuable asset to the project.
- I hope you have found the discussion interesting.
- I would like to assure you that any comments featuring in this report will be anonymous.

Staff interview questions

These will be semi-structured interviews, based loosely around the following questions:

1. How long have you been lecturing Drama Studies?
2. What modules do you lecture/have you lectured?
3. Has there been any change in student demographics over the years you have been here. If so, how?
4. Has the syllabus changed in any way/s to accommodate the changing demographics? If so, how?

5. Classical texts have been defined in terms of era, into, for example: Greek/Roman, Medieval, Renaissance, Elizabethan, Jacobean, Restoration and so on.
6. In the case of the setting of classical texts:
    a. How does your Drama Department define “classical” texts?
    b. Does your syllabus include classical texts? If so, which ones, and at which level are these introduced?
    c. Which ones do you teach (if any)?
7. What methods are used to teach these texts?
8. How do your students respond to these methods?
9. Are there any particular issues which come up in the teaching of Shakespearean texts (if applicable)? What are these, and how do you deal with them?

Appendix C: Participants' responses to activities and questions

Please note that pseudonyms have been used for all participants**.**

PHD RESEARCH PROJECT

29/07/2017

SESSION 1
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DBJs9YWLnE
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BkXQLCG2UU&t=6s

This was an interaction between Nellie and the students at room S303 in UKZN Edgewood Campus.

- Welcome speeches
- Introduction to Instagram (Username: researchthingz Password: Shakespeare2017)
- Opening Instagram accounts for those who do not have them
- Orientation of Instagram
- Handing out tablets (for those without smart phones)
- Shooting introductory videos
- Uploading videos to Instagram
- Collecting cellphone numbers for WhatsApp group
- Introducing students to YouTube and how a channel works

Instagram: Introductory Videos

- This is Sze Zuma, I'm so excited to be in this research project. Well my talents are that I'm a good singer, I really can sing, I can write and I can also act. I'm hoping to have a great time, get to know everybody else well and do a lot of crazy stuff that I'm going to remember forever.
- What's up guys, my is Thabo Ndlovu but everybody calls me Bokkie. I'm really excited to be working with you guys and I hope to get to know everybody really well. My skills are…I'm really bad at acting, I'm really bad at singing so I'm just really good at being alive and surviving and things like that. So yes, I'm pretty funny so once you guys get to know me you'll be laughing your asses off the whole time. I'm really excited to be doing this.
- Hi everyone, welcome to Nellie's research about Shakespeare. My name is Zinhle Ngcodo, as you can see I'm an artsy person, I love art, I live art, I love drama, and I'm a drama queen. It's so nice to be a part of this research project, it's going to be fun, I'm very excited about this.
- Hi everyone. My name is Sazi Mkhize, I'm excited that we will work together, so we can show them that we are brought together here by work. I'm just in a hurry that we start. Let's start, I'm in a hurry to work with my peers, I hope we work well together. Yes, Thank you]
- I'm Jabu Lawrence Makhaya. I'm also with Miss Nellie in *Research Thingz*. I'm so happy! I'm an actor and a rapper. There are so many things that we will be doing together with her.
- Hi, guys. It's Sipho Blessed Gumede. So I am myself, I am natural and I can communicate with people. I'm a person who loves acting. I'm an art person, I'm an artist in other words.

So in this *Research Thingz* group I am prepared to invest my time and commitment so that everything we do will be great. Thank you.

- Hi people, my name is Sakhile Dlamini, I go by the stage name of Happy. I'm very passionate about this research project. The stage has always been my freedom, where I feel free, I can do everything. I'm coming with my passion. I'm a poet, an actor, and a writer. I favour acting and poetry so I can be famous like Mfundi Vundla or something. Ok, so good people, I'm happy and I think me and my team will create a great performance.

Focus Group Discussion

Nellie:

So tell us what do you know or think about Shakespeare or when I say Shakespeare what's the first thing that's comes into your mind?

Student 1:

Educational

What I mean let me elaborate this, first thing that's comes to my mind is confusion. Because honestly, I did Shakespeare from the 10th grade up until grade 12. And I was confused half the time, the only thing that helped me out was I had amazing teachers who could take what was in the book and make it reality. Which made it fun and more understandable and I think that's how I was able to ace the grades and whatever (Smiling). I'm hoping to learn more, I'm hoping to love it and I'm hoping it will be amazing as they were to me.

Nellie:

Cool, anybody else?

Student 2:

Well when they talk about Shakespeare my impression is like uh (gasps) perfection. His is so good in English, he's like I don't know. Like the God father of English and Poetry. His poems are the best! The one I remember is "When to the sessions of sweet silence thoughts". That poem still rings in my mind till today. It was the best poem ever and some of his plays were so horrible to read because there were words like "Thee Thou Thy". I'm hoping to learn more Shakespearean language through this research project, in which I am ready to have so much fun.

Nellie:

Ok, Can I ask a question round on what she just said? She says that Shakespeare is a master of English, so as black South African in a post freedom society is that what you want to be? Perfect English, is that how you identify yourself as?

Student 2:

Well I am not perfect in English, I'm always trying my best all the time. I'm always learning each and every single day, so I don't mean I want to be like him because I don't think I will be good as him but I just like his English.

Student 1: So there's a saying that us girls use, we like to say a black person doesn't owe anyone proper English which I believe is partly true but then let's think about it. If your parent were able to let you go to the multiracial schools, it was easy to learn how to speak English. However we live in an era where if I was like "Thou shall do this and that and that", they wouldn't understand so I think the Shakespearean language should be dropped but we must still learn English because it is a universal language at the end of the day.

Student 3:

Hi my name is Thandeka Sibisi, I'm from UKZN I'm doing my 1st year. It's so exciting, I'm very grateful for this opportunity. It's great especially if you are coming from a disadvantaged school and we were not taught much about Shakespeare, where they just

taught for exam purposes. So with this opportunity I think it's going to give me a chance to experience Shakespeare and I think I'm going to learn a lot, I'm so excited!

Nellie:

Gentlemen, do I have any of the gentle men who want to say something?

Student 4:

I have something, I don't know how this is going to work. (Gives Nellie the phone to record)

Nellie:

(Takes the phone continue to record) There we go.

Student 4:

I think mastering the language (English) is good, I think knowing the language is good because it opens up so many platforms worldwide not just in South Africa. If you are only going to speak isiZulu you are not going to get far but if you know English you will be able to communicate with different people. However English is not just a language that's set in stone, it's evolving which is why we've gone from Shakespearian to having slang words that are also being put into the dictionary.

Nellie:

Ok so why do you think Shakespeare is so popular like everyone around the world seems to know of him? What is it about him if it's not just the language then what is it?

Student 4:

Well for one he's dead (Mockingly) but he seems to be a trend, and also his plays speak about things that were happening in the past but they also relevant now. For example, the *Julius Caesar* play has back stabbing and this sort of thing still happens today.

Nellie:

Ok cool

Student 5:

I think what made him popular even though I'm not certain, during his days they didn't have so many writers or if they had they were not as good as him, that's why he was popular.

Nellie:

Do you think they will ever be a writer greater then Shakespeare?

Student 6:

The problem is I don't know this Shakespeare that's why I'm participating in this project so I'll know more about him.

Nellie:

Ok good, does anybody want to add anything else?

Student 7:

Nobody can defeat Shakespeare, even if there was that person would have to generate so many new words. Shakespeare was good at using bombastic words that require us to use a dictionary when reading his works.

Nellie:

But do you guys know that Shakespeare created a lot of words we used today?

Student 4:

But back in his time he wasn't very popular because theatre was hard back in the day. If they didn't like your play they would boot you out that second so it was very hard for him and other playwrights to come out. However he made it and after he died people started seeing that his work was good and now in modern times we are using his works.

Student 2:

I think Shakespeare was the foundation for all the writers we have now because most people do refer to him. In my opinion most people look up to him even if they are not following in his footsteps. **Student 3:**
I would like to agree with you if other authors write they quote what Shakespeare said because when he writes he thinks deeply.

Researcher Reflection:
The volunteers seemed very excited and engaged with what we were doing. Some volunteers were not familiar with Instagram and had to be orientated. This made me realize not everybody is social media savvy even if they are young and "cool". It was also nice to see the students assisting each other to prepare and shoot their introductory videos for Instagram. The Wi-Fi was very strong and reliable, I think that this may be because it was a Saturday and not many students were on campus. It is important to note that the number of students was smaller than anticipated.

SESSION TWO:
09/10/2017
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bk_eRdqx5JI
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olbBVjFXwQw

Activity:

The first few acts have been re-written loosely with a modern, local twist. The students are given each scenario in small groups to improvise around. The improvised scenarios are then performed in chronological order to create the plot in action. After each improvised scene, a short forum discussion takes place. This time is used to explain the similarities of their improvised scenes and the original text. These scenes are filmed and the discussions are recorded.

Julius Caesar
Act 1 scene 1 G1 (3 Characters - Some extras)
There was an ANC conference that was called as a matter of urgency: Political infighting and ethnic rivalries have coursed nothing short of a civil war. After much violence resulting in the death of the previous mayor, the ANC UKZN Branch has unilaterally elected Comrade Juliyasi Siza. This Comrade was an anti-apartheid hero and has through his strategic genius built immense wealth for the kingdom of the Zulu's.

Two Municipality officer's chase away street vendors and tare decorations that honour the new mayor .

Act1 Scene 2 G2 (4 Characters and the Crowd)
At a social gathering celebrating the new mayor at Cubana Florida Road, something utterly disturbing happened. While the festivities were in full thrust a huge disturbance was heard at the entrance, the bouncers could be heard shouting "You are not even on the list". Juliyasi Siza with a full glass of Moet said, "Let him in so he can come and perform uGandaganda Matiyosi" (a popular song and dance) with us. Out of the commotion a small fat sangoma in traditional regalia steps forward, he has a prophecy; "Be wear of the 15th of March"!

Act 1 Scene 2 G3 (2 Characters)
As the party continued at Cubana, outside Bheki is getting some fresh air with a beer in his hand and a fully tummy. He is content, out of the shadows a dark figure approaches. A familiar face Cebo reveals to Bheki that Comrade Siza is a B*tch nigga and hella weak! He points out that Bheki himself is even better than comrade Siza. That comrade Siza is a poser who does it all for the gram he isn't all that. This nigga needs to be erased #Dead

Act 1 Scene 2 G4 (4 Character -Crowd)
While Cebo and Bheki are chatting out comes Khaya with an interesting story to tell. According to him the day has been crazy! Apparently earlier at City hall opposite the play house, a crowd had gathered chanting that Juliyasi Siza must be their leader. However comrade Siza announced that even though he had differences with the previous mayor, he himself had no ambition to be a mayor. The crowd begged him 3 times and each time he said no, then the dude suddenly fainted!

Act 1 Scene 3 G5 (4 Characters)
Khaya, Cebo and Smanga are chilling at the crib, they are trying to figure out how to get Bheki to be on their team, to get rid of comrade Siza (Who is getting utterly annoying). They are terrified of not getting their tender kickbacks. They fear losing their piece of the pie. They come up with the idea of setting up false followers on Instagram, these followers will be DM'ing Bheki to complain about Siza and giving support to Bheki to be their new leader. They know very well that Bheki is loyal to his followers. #theystan

Act 2 Scene 1 G6 (4 with 1 minor character)
Cebo and his crew (Smanga, Khaya, Bheki and Cebo) and a possible new member (Athandwa) meet up on the 15th of March and consider killing Andile another close comrade of Juliyasi Siza in the end after much deliberation, they decide against it.

Act 2 Scene 2 G7 (2 Characters)
It is a day on which falls the ANC Trade & Industry Conference at Grayville Race course, Khethiwe Siza wife does not intend to be at this function she's tired and quite worried. Comrade Siza is like "Bae imagine the Instagram followers, don't you want to show them how much you slay!! #Husband #StrongCouple #Familythingz #Blessed"

Act2 Scene 3 G8 (1 Character)
Athandwa feels hella bad and reckons he should give Siza a heads up, like a real G. He wants comrade Siza to know what's cracking behind his back, so he send a meeting request.

Act 3 Scene 1 G9
The Sexy PA is like;
"One of your comrades wanna meet,
He's already waiting at Tashas Gateway saving you a seat.
It's an emergency! In his voice I heard urgency!
Siza was like "nah girl I'm busy, how agitated is he?
This nigga needs to know that it's always not about him.
Some of us are drowning. Why should I care what he's after?
Its isn't all about the laughter!

Notes: Not all the scenes were covered as only 8 out of the 20 students who had RSVP'd arrived. The smaller number of the volunteers was surprisingly effective. Volunteers were focused, engaged and did not need encouragement. The group proved independent and highly creative.

Session 2: Voice Note Feedback via WhatsApp

Student 1: The modern interpretation of the play was exciting, apart from the excitement, the style of improvising scenes of the play in a South African context before reading the original text. As students we dislike reading. We prefer doing practical work as we are not motivated to read. When we were given a chance to improvise the play I developed an interest in what was being performed so I can understand what the play is about.

Student 2: The method that was used was good. I liked the use of explanation, questioning and demonstration. It was effective because we knew what the lesson was about and what we had to do. The interesting part it was when Nellie used folded paper as a resource for the lesson which contained descriptive scenes. This made us interact with each other and share ideas on how our staging and how we were going to interpret our characters. We also learned many skills in one session, we were acting, having discussions about each other's performances and the original text, and we got the chance to reflect on our own improvised scenes. She (the researcher) was very creative because she taught us a very long play in a very short time.

Student 3: I think our last session was very effective because we acted out everything without using the script, we got to understand the characters without relying heavily on the script, and there was a lot of improvisation. It was very easy for us and fun at the same time as we got to express ourselves and there were no wrong or right way of doing things, we were all expressing what we felt at the time. It was very interesting. In my acting experience, I've never been taught in that style and I felt it was the best way of teaching people to act simply what's in the script. I'm very keen and can't wait for the next session.

Student 4: In our session we had with our facilitator and the other team mates the strategy utilized to teach us was for me very interesting. She was able to modernize or use scenario's in a modern way, for instance she took the Emperor in the play *Julius Caesar* and translated him into a character of a local councillor which was a good idea and very relevant to all of us. We were able to relate or act out something that we come across on a daily lifestyle. I found that her teaching methods were very effective in a sense that it gave us an opportunity to explore and be creative and also gave us an opportunity to work together as a group.

Student 5: In our last session we talked about *Julius Caesar* and I thought it was very effective because it took the text, the whole chunk of confusing language and put it into something modern, something that we could relate too like a soapy and touched on things that happen in real life. I could say it was also effective in terms of teaching, we watched video clips, performed the scenario's and sat down to discuss each scene that was just acted out so that those who were confused were able to know what was happening in the text itself and were able to catch up. I felt that next time we should use some quotes or words from the text book in the scenario's that will be acted out so it will fully relate to the play.

Researcher reflection:
I really enjoyed this activity and it was lovely to see the students engaged and excited. They immediately ripped the envelopes open and started casting themselves, playing and trying different ideas out. Lots of laughter and energy! Students were freely asking each other for help and asking what certain words mean even though the sentences were in modern day English. When it came to the performances themselves it was very clear that one or two groups had completely misunderstood their scenario. This of course was the perfect opportunity to clear up misunderstanding and bring the original text to they're attention. After realizing this I constantly compared their improvised scenes to what happened in their original text. I decided that I was going to teach myself how to edit videos and pictures on my Phone so that every session has memories that are uploaded onto the YouTube channel as well as Instagram.

I also tried to explain to them that they must not comment on the Instagram account as the account itself but on their personal account, otherwise it appears that only one person is participating. I also tried to discourage them from following other accounts with the project's account as this fills the timeline with irrelevant things to the study. I had to log into the account and delete some of their personal posts and unfollow some accounts.

Session two pictures:


SESSION 3:
07/10/2017

Response to the Use of social media and digital Technology
I thought it would be a good idea to start off this session with one on one questions regarding their experiences with digital technology during the project.

Student 1: I thought I should share my first experience with Nellie's PhD Project. One thing that was a highlight for me was to get in touch with team building, working together as a team and the principles around that. The fact that we learned to work with people from other levels in terms of our degree and to still share the same kind of passion. The session itself was very helpful and I particularly enjoyed the activities and participating in the project.
Student 2: How is it going? My name is Thabo Ndlovu currently at UKZN Edgewood. First question was how do I feel about the introduction video on Instagram? Well I thought that it was a good way to get to know everybody that is going to be working with us because even though we interact sometimes, we don't even know where the other students are from.
Student 3: Hello everyone, its Nandi here reflecting on the second session of the research project by Nellie. The introductory video on Instagram was cool, seeing myself in on the platform- since I'm really shy. Seeing the others doing it first made me feel like I can do something in front of camera too and communicate with people. The entire introductory video session was cool because we could see what other people said about themselves and how they introduced themselves, we were communicating in a way. I think we should use the WhatsApp platform and messages can be sent because there is a lot that we can learn from each other. We can also create a group so we can have a connection and it will encourage people to participate and share ideas.
Student 4: I'm so humbled to be part of this research project with our facilitator Ms. Ngcongo. I feel great and proud because that's who I am, it was an introduction of me. I am humbled, it's like the beginning of my dreams and wishes of being an actor. I feel great, I see my skills in the industry growing and seeing myself on YouTube and see where I need to improve. WhatsApp makes things easy so I feel it should be left in as it also encourages us to work as a team.

Student 5: I'm Siduduzo Qwabe I go by the name of Mabila as my stage name. This is the second time I participate on the research project. About the video, I felt very motivated and very proud because we were so passionate about our work and the task given by the facilitator Ms. Nellie. We had the oomph to put into this project and showcase our talents, we were excited and happy even before we started the scenario's it was as if we knew what's going to be done for the day. I felt proud about seeing myself and the other students on the social media platforms that we used and the fact that we have accounts dedicated to us. I'm happy and really appreciate the opportunity given to us, the work we have done has helped us to improve a lot. I think the YouTube channel is something good and since people will get to see us nationwide, people will see our different talents and the different things we do in the Drama such as singing, dance and acting. I like the fact that this will be seen by a lot of people we might get people who are encouraged by what we are doing or maybe sponsors who are interested in hiring extra actors or actresses.

Researcher reflection:
The idea for this session was completing the scenes we did not get to finish in the previous session and getting the learners to reflect on the use of digital technology for this project. It became fun and sometimes competitive as volunteers tried to outdo each other in responding to their questions. I have also started the volunteers on brainstorming regarding what could be done a final product. The students seem to gravitate towards a short film, they are excited about the prospect of acting.

Session 3 pictures:


SESSION 4:
21/10/2017
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RF1H8LtJoQs&t=2s
The session was dedicated to workshopping and creating together. Using the text as inspiration I encouraged the volunteers to create a song or a dance. Two songs were created and one movement piece. Volunteers were also asked to start writing the script for their film, one student volunteered to try writing a draft to be refined by the group.

Rap Song by Thabo Ndlovu
Julius Caesar rap

Hey y'all I'm Julius and as y'all guessed the play is on me
I'm the man in this play
I'm the starring y'all can't touch me
Greatest military leader Pompey was a breeze
Didn't even break a sweat my army ran through him
Came was praised and loved by all of my people
With my wife Calpurnia we gonna rule this land

But my blindness got to me
Even though my good friend mark had warned me
Not to trust these snakes lurking in the grass
Some could say I was too trusting
Which is true cos it got me killed
Stuck a knife right in my back
Even Brutus who I trusted
Helped set up this scheme
Et tu Brutus were the last words I said as I fell to the ground

All the while I never knew
That there was a plot that started against me
With the people I trusted
Talking ish about me
Ambition and power is what they said it was all about
But I just loved my Rome
And was doing it for the people

My blindness is what killed me
Even though I had been warned
About the ides of March
Another sigh that came was when my wife had a dream
And I was almost convinced
Till Decius arrived
Then bye-bye Caesar
Should've listened to those ides

Rap Song by Snoop

My rap lyrics
Title: Julius Caesar
Artist: Handsome

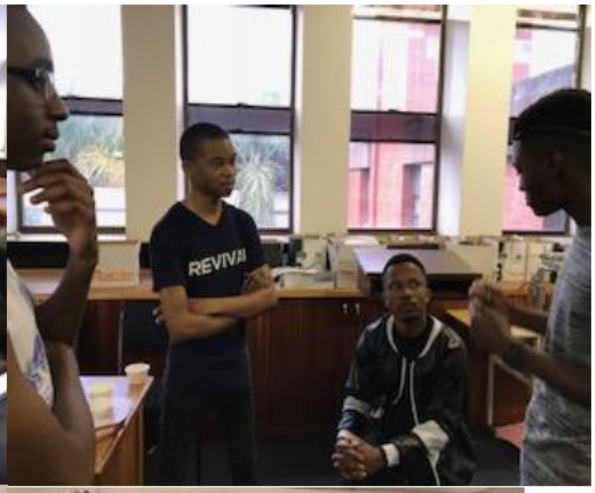
Chorus
Caesar x2 hero
(You fought for the people of Rome) x2
You bought the captives' home to Rome x3
First verse
So what up hommies, can he rap really?
We doing PhD project with Nelly
We doing it fairly, we nailing it really
We growing bigger, bigger than your fat belly
We doing Shakespeare, we make it all clear
So I suggest that you open up your ears
We make it relevant, modern, and so brutal
We speak about Anthony going through agony
Of seeing Brutus, killing Caesar so brutal
We talk about deceivers, snitches and killers
Planning to kill Caesar like the Jews killed Jesus
Using his friend Judas, so it was Brutus
He was the last one to put the knife through
So contagious, and so jealous, he then told the people Caesar was ambitious
Was it true really? Or was it was it just a lie?
If it was true then I will choose to differ, when that the people cried
Caesar wept with them, that's why he bought home many captive to Rome
Only if he knew that he was about to blow, not to grow, and not to glow
Hear me out, people of Rome!

Back to the chorus

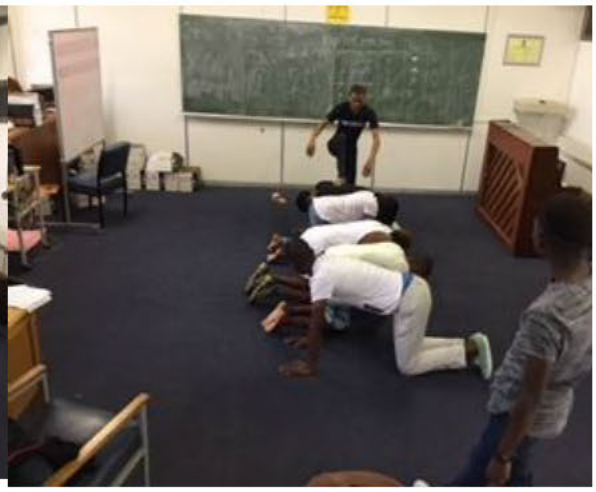
Second verse
It's like I'm acting in a movie you know standby and action
Before I become the best you know I got the passion
Before I got the passion I started to have a vision
And the vision that I had inside was to face all this mission
Before it went so far I knew it was a competition

And everyone started to enter for the audition
I didn't believe so soon judges made the decision
But the decision just got me out of my good emotion.

Session four pictures:



SESSION 5
06/11/2017
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lH9yB3ZF6RM
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=la9nCtnEuNk
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-kyefX4abM
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ui8Mq3lFjRs
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MukBKZtKouM
This session was dedicated to looking at the film script, workshopping it further and improvising around it.

Film Trailer Script
Scene 1: Caesar's Bedroom
Caesar looking at himself in the mirror and trying on some clothes. He tries one on and fades out. He flashes back to a memory of the soothsayer.
Soothsayer: Beware the ides of March!
Caesar comes back to the present when he is disturbed by his wife coming in.
Calpurnia: Good morning my love.
Caesar: (*coming back to the present*) good morning my beautiful wife. How did you sleep?
Calpurnia: Not very well. I had a dream of monsters and animals and some shadowy figures soaking their hands with your blood. It's a bad omen. Please don't go to the coronation today.
Caesar and Calpurnia mine arguing but snippets of their argument will be heard
Caesar: But I have to go, it's my coronation!
Mimed arguing
Calpurnia: It's dangerous. You can postpone it. Say you're not feeling well. It's not more important than your life.
Mimed arguing
Caesar: It's what I have been fighting for my whole life!
Mimed arguing
Calpurnia: Please don't go. Do it for me!
Caesar: Fine. Anything for you my love.
Decius enters
Decius: Great Caesar. Are you read… oh milady (*bows*)

Calpurnia: Decius. I will leave you to it then.
Calpurnia leaves
Decius: Are you ready for possibly the biggest moment of your life?
Caesar: No Decius. I will not be attending today.
Decius: And why not?
Caesar: My wife has had visions of something very ominous. She has never been wrong.
Decius: Great and noble Caesar
Mimed convincing from Decius until he finishes
Caesar: You are right. This is my day. With you by my side, what could go wrong?
Decius smiles at the camera wickedly and the scene ends
Scene 2:
Caesar riding in and people are cheering. Casa and Cassius are watching as he comes in and are conspiring
Cassius: Caesar is doing a great job cleaning up the city.
Casa: Yes. He has put some high officials behind bars
Cassius: Yes, and that can't be good for us.
Casa: Not one bit.
Cassius: We have to get rid of him
Casa: How? The people love him. It would spark an outrage
Cassius: It's what must be done to protect our interests, and I have the perfect way to do it.
Cheering volume increases and camera zooms in on the face of Cassius who is staring into the distance. Camera pans and reveals that he is looking at Brutus. Scene ends
Scene 3:
Caesar talking to Antony about not trusting Cassius while they are meeting at the senate house. Cassius is in the other room conspiring to kill him.
Caesar: We have to be more careful now. Supporters of the officials we put away will not be happy because of the money they lost.
Antony: Agreed. I will talk to your assistant about having more guards.
Caesar: We also need to keep a closer eye on that Cassius.
Antony: Why? He is our ally.
Caesar: I cannot for the life of me trust him. Just a feeling I have…
Antony: I really see no need. He has supported you the whole way. But if that is what you want, then so be it.
Scene shifts to Cassius talking to his co-conspirators about killing Caesar
Cassius: We have to get rid of him as soon as possible. We are losing money!
Con 1: Agreed. But how do you propose we go about it?
Con 2: Cautiously
Cassius: I have solicited the help of somebody very close to Caesar. He will get us close to him and the deed will be carried out.
Con 3: That sounds like a very good plan. We have the how, we now need the when
Cassius: What other time than the one that will be most dear to him?
Con 4: The day of his coronation.
Cassius: Aye (*Brutus walks in*) and here is the man I have been talking about that will get us close to Caesar. His most trusted Brutus.
Antony: (*continuing with his conversation with Caesar*) (*conspirators are nodding and looking at each other in agreement*) I do assure you Cassius is a man we can trust?
Scene 4:

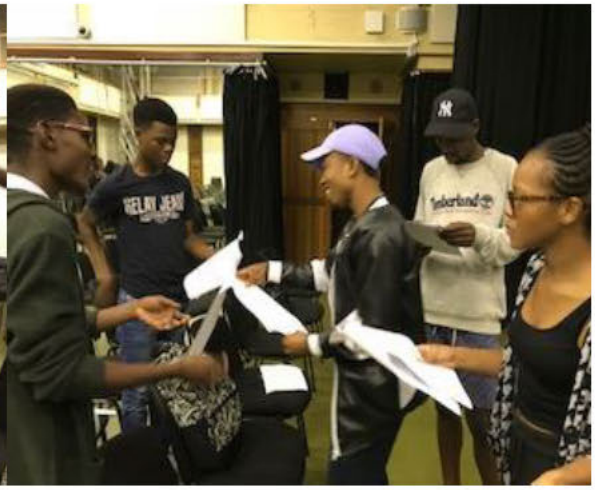
The funeral of Caesar. Antony talking over the casket of Caesar. Scene will have him talking his first line then flash to how Caesar was killed while he talks. Scene will flash back to Antony when he says his last line.
Antony: Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears
(*Scene flashes to Caesars coronation. Conspirators enter room where Caesar is*)
Antony: I come to bury Caesar; not praise him
(*Conspirators edge closer to Caesar and draw their knives*)
Antony: The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones. So let it be with Caesar.
(*Conspirators start to stab Caesar and he starts to fight them off*)
Antony: You did love him once. Not without cause. What cause holds you then to mourn for him?
(*Brutus enters and stabs Caesar. Caesar stops fighting and looks at him*)
Antony: My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar.
Caesar: Et tu Brutus
(*Caesar falls and dies*)
Antony: And I must pause till it come back
Scene 5:
Flashes to violence then to the conspirators toasting to the death of Caesar
Cassius: We have rid ourselves of that scoundrel Caesar. Our business should be booming in a few days
All in unison: Cheers!
Toasting is disrupted when there is a loud bang at the door. They peek outside and see people chanting for their death
Brutus: They are trying to get in. What do we do?
Cassius: Everybody calm down. They will not be able to get through. We are safe here!
Time lapse. The people outside eventually gain entry. Brutus runs to the back room and closes the door. The others get there too late and are stopped at the door and start to bang it wanting to be let in. the crowd approaches looking angry and approach the conspirators slowly. A gunshot goes off. A pause. The crowd continues to approach and one of the draws a gun. Another gunshot goes off and the screen fades to black
Scene 6:
The funeral of Brutus

Antony: This was the noblest Roman of them all
All the conspirators, except only him,
Did what they did because of envy of great Caesar
He alone, out of generally honest thought
And in the common good of all, joined them.
His life was noble, and the elements
Were so balanced in him that nature might stand up
And say to all the world, “this was a man!”

END

Session five pictures:



Appendix D: Participant data grouped to answer the research questions

Appendix D contains participant data grouped in terms of how the comments provided answers to the research questions, and referred to in Chapter 5 in the course of the data analysis.

D.1 Responses to the teaching and learning approach

This section contains data used to answer research question 1a: *In the application of a constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation and use of digital technology, how is this experienced by students, in terms of: a. their response to the teaching and learning approach?* To show how participants experienced the constructivist pedagogy used in this study, data have been broken down into sections, namely, responses to the use of contextualisation, improvisation, workshopping and digital technology. This is because the teaching and learning approach developed could be seen to involve these four techniques.

Responses to the use of contextualisation

This section contains participants' responses as to *how they experienced the use of the contextualisation as a teaching and learning technique:*

- The concept was exciting, the style of improvising scenes of the play in South African context before reading the original Text. As students, we dislike reading, so we would prefer doing practical work (P1).
- We talked about *Julius Caesar* and I thought it was very effective because it took the text, the whole chunk of confusing language and put it into something modern, something that we could relate to like a soap opera and touched on things that happen in real life (P2).
- [We] were given the chance to play around with our characters and not to stick to the Shakespearean language but to make it relevant to everyday life (P3).
- Fun and interactive so that when you did finally did get into the text and things

like that, you knew what the text was about. You knew what you were trying to do and it was fun. And because it was fun, you started to want to learn more and know more about it in depth so that when you started doing your performances it was absolutely accurate and it could be something that was extremely helpful to people (P2).

- We took it out from where it was - the old language that they used uh back in the day that Shakespeare wrote in. We took it and we modernised it, we contextualised it in a South African manner. Because we did this you are able to interact more with the text than - it's brought home for you and now you are able to see "oh it's not just something that happened however many years ago but it's something that can be modernised, that we can see in everyday life" (P4).
- We tried to bring the characters' names and in fact they were defined in such a way that was appealing to an African context, a South African context to be specific. And it has been such a good experience and a challenge because you have read the Shakespearean text, and then contextualised it like here is our own South African context (P5).
- The method of contextualising the *Julius Caesar* text into a South African context was very productive. This helped us to understanding our characters and we were able to be naturalistic in our performance because the text was made to be relevant to us (P2).

Responses to the use of improvisation

This section contains participants' responses as to *how they experienced the use of improvisation as a teaching and learning technique:*

- As students, we dislike reading so we would prefer doing practical as we not motivated to read. When they were given a chance to improvise the play I developed an interested of what was being said, so I can know the original play (P1).
- Very effective considering the way that we used it, we acted everything without using the script, we got to understand the characters without using the script because there was a lot of improvisation there. It was very easy for us and fun at the same time as we got to express ourselves and there were not a wrong or

right way of doing things, we were all expressing what we felt the time. I've never thought of this style and I felt it was the best way of teaching people (P3).

- I found that teaching this way was very effective in a sense that it gave us an opportunity to explore and be creative and also gave us an opportunity to work together as a group (P6).
- It made us to interact with each other, sharing ideas on how our set up in stage is going to be like, our characters. We also learned many skills in one session we were acting and the discussion part where we must reflect on our acting scene (P10).
- Improvising in itself boosts one's confidence and allows for strong articulation as it teaches you the sense of communication (P2).

Responses to the workshopping process

This section contains participants' responses as to *how they experienced the use of the workshopping process as a teaching and learning technique:*

- One thing that was a highlight for me was to get in touch with team building, working together as a team and a principle around that. The fact that we relearned to work with people from other levels in terms of studying and to share the same kind of passion (P1).
- Workshopping for us activated sound ideas from sound minds. The process got me excited because I personally like to engage with people on topics. I have to hear their line of thought and it shows and proves the great aptitude in individuals. It strengthened my confidence and talents thereby allowing us to move towards what we wanted the play to be. At the end of it all workshopping in our case taught us discipline. Without this discipline, we would not have come to the product (P2).
- Working around Thabo's script for me was really an amazing process, but also challenging at the same time. Firstly, there was no designated leader which means that we had to find a way to accommodate every person's input and ideas and that required lot of maturity from us as a group (P3).
- We had an opportunity to learn collectively, and to appreciate each other's talents. My weaknesses were not that noticed because someone in the group

covered and complemented them though their strengths, vice versa (P4).

- During our workshops, we were put in groups and Ms Nellie gave us the platform to portray different characters that were abstracted from the play *Julius Caesar* (P5).
- You had the opportunity to choose whether you want to remain behind the scenes or to be an actor. Hence, these options gave you as a student the opportunity to explore and discover your talent as a drama student. Working in groups motivated us to work together and develop new ideas (P6).
- We learned a lot because this was a new approach to us, so after the project we will be able to use the same approach. This project encouraged team work and team work builds one's confidence as we all get to voice out our ideas and share skills (P7).
- Workshopping was actually a great experience for me. Usually I don't enjoy working in groups because some people don't want to do their part or do not want to take part and do not want to put in the work but here when we came in as a group, nothing was forced (P8)
- It helped me as a person understand what the play was about and what I needed to do because I know that for other people they did not understand some parts so you could explain to them what needed to happen which I did a few times and what it was about and what they needed to do (P9)
- Workshopping was fun and without the restrictions you have in class like keeping quiet and just listening to the teacher talking made people want to be there and want to do something and once they had done something they were not told it was bad or it was wrong and not to do it (P10)
- It was nice to work in a group with other students and have everybody participating. It improved our discipline and areas such as time management (P11).

Responses to the use of digital technology

This section contains participants' responses as to *how they experienced the use of social media and digital technology as a teaching and learning technique:*

- First question was how do I feel about the introduction of video on Instagram? Well I thought that was a good way to get to know everybody that's going to be working with us because even though we interact sometimes we don't even know where the person is from, things like that …(P1)
- The introduction on the Instagram was cool seeing myself in the public since I'm too shy and seeing others I felt like I can do something in front of camera and say something to people (P2).
- The entire introduction was cool because you because can see what other people say and how they introduce themselves, it like we communicate in a way (P3).
- I think we should use the WhatsApp platform and messages can be sent on WhatsApp because there is a lot that learn from and there's a connection on the group lot of people participating and giving out ideas (P4).
- I feel great, I see my skill in the industry growing and seeing myself on YouTube and see where I need to improve (P5).
- WhatsApp makes things easy so I feel it should be left and it also encourage us to do team work (P6).
- About the video I felt very motivated and very proud because we were so passionate about our work and the task given by the facilitator Ms. Nellie. We had "That Thing" or the "oomph" to this project and showcase our talent we were excited and happy even before we started the scenario's it was as if we knew what's going to be done for the day(P7).
- I felt proud about seeing myself and the other students on the social platforms we use and the fact that we have an account dedicated to us. I'm happy and really appreciate the opportunity given, the work we have done has changed improved a lot (P8).
- I think the YouTube Channel is something good and since people will get to see us nationwide, people will see the different talent and aspect we do in the drama such as Singing, Dance and Acting. I like the fact that this will be seen by a lot of people we might get people who are encouraged by what we are doing or maybe sponsors who're interested in extra actors or actress (P9).

Overall response to the teaching and learning approach

This section contains participants' responses as to *how they experienced the teaching and*

learning approach overall:

- I found that her teaching ways were very effective in a sense that it gave us an opportunity to explore and be creative and also gave us an opportunity to work together as a group (P1).
- I could say it was also effective in terms of teaching(P2)
- Being part of Ms Nellie's research project, was phenomenal experience that I wish that each and every university student could experience (P3).
- In terms of learning we learned a lot because this was a new approach to us so after the project we will be able to use the same approach on our project as this project encourage team work and team work build one's confidence as we all get to voice out our ideas and share skills (P4).
- Working on the project was an exciting and insightful experience. I found out that there is a great deal to learn about people and their different talents, gifts, capabilities and creativity that is within them and finding a way to work with them (P5).
- It was - pretty much - such a remarkable way of teaching, because Nellie has very interesting methods around you know, introducing stuff. Introducing work, introducing topics you know. Introducing any form of discussion. You know, working around *Julius Caesar* has been such an amazing way of working (P6).
- I really, really want to get to how we learn. We learned *Julius Caesar* in that way. It was easier for us to understand the concepts around *Julius Caesar*, to understand *Julius Caesar*, to understand the text, to understand the story, to understand the characters. It has helped us and then because then we got into understanding the text fully through such a method (P7).
- It took a mother who is ready to let her children be set free. A mother who is ready to let her birds, her little birds stretch out their wings and fly. Imagine a mother who has nested right. Now because she has raised her children she doesn't have a problem freeing them because she has faith in the work she has done. She shows that she has faith in us (P8).
- It has been so amazing, such amazing sessions in the project. If I had to do it all over again I would, such is the maturity I have gained from it. So it has been amazing. It has really, really been a phenomenal project if you wanted to learn,

to grow, to understand the dynamic around the learning and growing in the arts, vision and academia (P9).

- The experience was quite awesome, I for one enjoyed it and found out that my colleagues also enjoyed it. I can safely say it was really educational. Generally, the experience was awesomely awesome (P10).
- I felt very happy about the whole project (P5).
- I thought that the research project allowed me to get the chance to work in different areas and I gained new knowledge and ideas in the process (P4).

D.2 Language difficulties experienced by participants

This section contains participants' responses when questioned to find answers to research question 1b: *In the application of a constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation and use of digital technology, how is this experienced by students, in terms of their [i.e. participants'] understanding of the language of the prescribed traditional text/s?* The answers shown in Table D.1 suggest that most participants had difficulty understanding the language of *Julius Caesar*.

Table D.1 Participants' understanding of the language of *Julius Caesar*

Do you understand the literal meaning of the text of the play you were given?	**Why/why not?**
Not really, there were some instances where the language was understandable.	The language is complicated, it is not the language we use in our everyday conversation (P1).
Yes	I have always been interested in the English language and I always look up archaic terms out of interest. I love old language, words, meanings, so it wasn't difficult. Age and experience- I am specialising in English (P4).
Not 100%, but I got the gist.	I was not familiar with the archaic language but I went to a former model C school and was introduced to Shakespeare (P5).
No	It was very difficult. The words are archaic (P9).
No	I don't understand the language, I had to google some of the words to make meaning. I think if I was watching the play I would understand it better because I would read the character's actions and

Do you understand the literal meaning of the text of the play you were given?	Why/why not?
	draw meaning from those actions. It just was out of context for me (P10).
No	It was really hard to understand. The text is quite different from the modern English that we know. It is not contemporary (P7).
yes	I have familiarised myself with that sort of language without having read Shakespeare. I'm a devoted Christian and me and my family grew up on the King James version of the bible which has the same language. It made reading the text easier for me (P6).
No	I never understood the play *Julius Caesar* before (P3).
No	It was written in an old version of English. Most of the words were hard to pronounce and I didn't know the meaning of those words and I just didn't follow (P8).

D.3 Participants' experience of their dramatic performances of the prescribed text

This section contains participants responses when asked *how they experienced their dramatic performances* in order to find answers to research question 1c: *In the application of a constructivist pedagogy to combine lectures in textual interpretation of texts with workshop improvisation and use of digital technology, how is this experienced by students, in terms of their [i.e. participants'] dramatic performances of the prescribed text/s?*

Table D.2 Participants' experience of the dramatic performances of the prescribed text

How did you experience your performances?	Elaborate.
Excellent	We engaged with the text and understood it and then interpreted it in our own way. To do this I needed to know the text in depth. We took it out from where it was - the old language that they used uh back in the day that Shakespeare wrote in. We took it and we modernised it. Because we did this, we are able to interact more with the text. It's brought home for us and now we are able to see that it is something that can be modernised, that we can see in everyday life (P1).

How did you experience your performances?	**Elaborate.**
Amazing	It was amazing because among team players we played to our strengths. Some were directing, some producing. As a team that was working [it] was just amazing. I played the part of Julius Caesar's wife and it was just a ball of fun and experience and learning and growing all together and I enjoyed every part of it, it has given me a greater mind into how to look into a production as an educator (P2).
Nice experience	Seeing myself performing on camera, I felt like my goals were achievable. I noticed that since I am familiar with stage, I learned how to perform on camera. The project allowed me to do different things than my previous performances. I searched deeper about characters and the researcher trusted us. I felt like there were exciting and different ways of approaching a text. Engaging with other people who understood *Julius Caesar* better than me helped me to grow and to understand better (P3).
Awesome	The experience was awesome. I for one enjoyed it and found out that my colleagues also enjoyed it. That motivated us as a whole to want to carry on partaking in the movement piece. We also gained experience on camera so I can safely say it was really educational. Generally the experience was awesomely awesome (P4).
Helped with acting and team building	The project did not only help me with acting skills, but it also taught me collaborative learning skills (where we were given short scenarios and had to improvise). Moreover, I learnt that drama requires different people's perspective to produce solid work. The project was opened to different opinions and that made the project a success to me. In addition, shooting the "Durban Tale" made me realise that film and theatre can complement each other. Films require realistic setting, props, costume, etc. However, we did not have them but we managed to tell the story successfully (P5).
Nice	Engaging with the text was a nice experience. When we were working on our movement piece, it taught me how to use my body to express myself. The other participants created songs, I thought they were very creative (P6).
Exciting and scary	I was excited but at the same time I was having doubts about whether I can do it. The reason why I felt this way was because it was my first time filming an acting piece. Lots of things we expected from me as a character. We did an exercise before filming and it helped because we were taught to put ourselves in a character shoes and I remember doing the first scene three times because it was not perfect and that's when I knew that acting requires passion, time, and patience. It was an amazing experience I had lot of fun (P7)!
Good	It felt so good to workshop the text into practice. It felt so good because I got to improvise and say the things I wanted and it was easy for me to become natural as there was no process of cramming the scripts. It gave me a chance to act the way I wanted without limiting my capabilities (P8).

How did you experience your performances?	Elaborate.
Amazing	The whole process of performing the scenes not as exactly as it was intended was truly amazing. It allowed us as participants to be creative and innovative. Our creativity was enhanced because our performance integrated many skills such as music, movement and poetry making the performances to be interesting and educative while sticking to the original play as a guide. I felt honoured, valued and appreciated as I was also allowed to have an input in the performance. The integration of many minds and ideas was absolutely amazing. So I felt like I had a voice because everyone's ideas were accommodated. Furthermore, the most amazing moment for me was during the shooting of the actual movie. There was such unity and growth in the actors and actresses, we have grown so much as participants and to see the end result of the project was rather exciting. Everyone was happy to see where our effort has gone to and I was amazed at the performance, it was amazing! In essence, I felt very happy about the whole project, the movement piece brought unity and harmony, the songs encouraged creativity and the movie itself allowed our talents to be on display. That is my short response, thank you Miss for involving me in this exciting project (P9).
Good	I thought that the research project allowed me to get the chance to work in different areas and I gained new knowledge and ideas in the process. I assisted by working behind the scenes. It was not easy. When the performances started I was the stage manager which was fun since I got to decide what was needed for scenes and what was not. I would say that I was groomed in the process since I did not do as I pleased but had the support of my peers (P10).

Appendix E: Interviews with drama department lecturers

Please note that, while the transcripts are otherwise verbatim, pseudonyms have been used for all lecturers interviewed.

CERTIFICATE OF VERACITY

We, hereby certify that in as far as it is audible the aforegoing is a true and correct transcript of the recording provided by you in the matter:

(NAME OF AUDIO: [Lecturer's real name])

DATE COMPLETED : 25/09/2017

NUMBER OF PAGES : 16

PROF LIZ WALKER: He also asked me; why are you still teaching Shakespeare? The thing is...

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: The students like Shakespeare but some Shakespeare.

NELLIE: Not all.

PROF LIZ WALKER: They still when they, when they can choose they still come up with Shakespeare.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: But when I did the first year text analysis.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I did King Lear, but I found King Lear was too difficult for them.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Because, of the almost double plot it was just a little bit too difficult, so the year after that and also we then already, it is quite a while now

that we had to start this Africanisation.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So what I decided at that point is, and they also did Oedipus as a Greek thing which was okay, they could sort of identify.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: But then I chose Medea because there was Guy Butler's South African sort of equivalent Drama.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And also because I chose Macbeth because there was Umabatha.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: But all ready with Macbeth they struggle with the language and this is why I tell them to get annotated editions so that see what it means.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: But Macbeth because I think it is the shortest play of Shakespeare first of all and secondly they can identify with this power hungry, ambitious, this killing to get into a higher position. Because to be honest, we have it in South Africa in the political field.

NELLIE: Of course, yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So they can identify with that and this whole thing about blood and gore, it does sort of, they appeal to it and they really enjoy.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Macbeth, so depends on the plan. And then, then from there I went to *Umabatha* so then they could identify and they could see how *Umabatha* sort of based on it.

NELLIE: yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And but then unfortunately *Umabatha* is now out of pint so it is extremely difficult to get it now, we did have some copies in the library but you know our library books disappear.

NELLIE: People yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Yes so then for 2 years I could only do Macbeth and not do *Umabatha* but what I did was I did one production which is called a sort of Macbeth that I did for them so that they can see it in performance. Now what I did there was, the actors went on strike.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: But the technical staff only found it out about 2 hours before the performance, and they were in total panic and the audience is starting to arrive, so what I did when they what, now and when the audience was there what can we do. And they were saying that I still remember it from matric year and the others and do you not. Okay we have been sitting as technical crew.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Through all the rehearsals, so we sort of know what is going on, the show must go on.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So then they performed it, so I took the basic Macbeth and a lot of the actual text, but I also wrote and I went to the Elizabethan thing of anyone, Lady Macbeth, the witches they were all men. I am sorry, I forgot now, I had got the photographs where I can show you.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: You know and so we did it in that thing and but there weren't enough actors so for some group scenes we had some puppets.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: At [inaudible 03:48] which I brought in as well.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And you know I put in a lot of little bits of humour like, he would come in with a dog which is just a toy dog on a leash, and Lady would say, out damn spot, like the dog is spot. You know little things because they, I know the story and we know this is what is happening or sort of forgotten it, let us improvise.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And that worked very well with the students and the audience and that because they really felt they now understood the gist of Macbeth.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So I think it is the way in which you adapt it for them and what, say King Lear I think is and I think any of the histories is not because they, look they don't even know their own history.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And just on the other side.

NELLIE: It is true.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I mean I was busy with Albert yesterday and I said to him, okay who does this Albert refer to? I don't know, I said okay does Albert Luthuli ring a bell? Yes, I said who was he? Eventually some said he was somebody in the African National Congress. I said but what precisely?

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Don't know, and we were talking about Timol as well, there was this thing about you know Morena the John Voster Square.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And okay, I said, don't you watch the news, don't you know is, now this is a problem. If you choose, I think Romeo and Juliet might, they might identify with that as well, but you have got to bring it into, I am not saying you must Africanise it but you must bring it into something that they can identify with.

NELLIE: yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And they, and modernise it.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: As well, if you can modernise it to some extent that helps.

NELLIE: Now I just want to back track a bit.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Yes sure.

NELLIE: Now you are saying okay, you are trying to modernise it and all of that so I want to know, how many years have you been here?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Well next year will be my 40th year.

NELLIE: 40th year, okay, so you have obviously I suspect have noticed a change in demographic of students?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Oh yes, yes.

NELLIE: So your way of dealing with that has been to just Africanise it, modernise it, is that how you have…

PROF LIZ WALKER: In a sense yes, modernise it into, you have got to understand that and especially sort of I found over the last 6, 7 years.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: These students are so into social media.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And you have got to, if you can throw a hash tag in there, no honestly, I think there are some students who really are into it and I am not only talking about African students.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I mean white students because we have now about 2 or 3 per year.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So we have black students mainly. And some of them do go for that and they do want to do heightened text and they want to do the proper Shakespeare.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: You know and some of them want to do Hamlet you know I say to them guys, you are a little bit too young.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: You know you don't have the experience for Hamlet but they do want to do it, but in a class of 40.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: You need to just bring it into their, a little bit into their realm and sort of just you know, as I say if you deal with the power hungry and ambitious Macbeth in sort of Lady Macbeth, okay Grace Mugabe. I should maybe put this off the record.

NELLIE: No, no I will…

PROF LIZ WALKER: But you know and then they understand the power behind the throne kind of think. So you need to just bring in things that within their field of reference.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And then they enjoy it, and then they, they struggle with the language but that is why I used Shakespeare, they must have an annotated edition.

NELLIE: Okay what is interesting for me is that is for my research what I am doing is obviously I am in Kwa Zulu Natal, everybody is Zulu speaking, they have a problem with connecting to the era, the language and culture. The cultural sort of nuances that are in Shakespeare. So now I am not saying, I am just trying to just sort of create a model that any teacher can take and sort of work on it. So

now I am trying to add…

PROF LIZ WALKER: It is difficult.

NELLIE: Yes it is and it may work and it may not.

PROF LIZ WALKER: it may not yes.

NELLIE: But what I have started doing is using social media like you mentioned so I was very glad that you mentioned it. So the first thing that I have done is I have opened an Instagram page, and all of a sudden people are logging and putting pictures of themselves in a costume and saying look at me, I am Lady Macbeth. Or look at me I am…

PROF LIZ WALKER: You see I think that is the most important thing, try and Africanise it to a sense.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I try and modernise it but you have got to also keep up with modernising it.

NELLIE: The times yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Because these they are constantly on twitter, Instagram, anything like that and if you bring Shakespeare into their realm of understanding they will enjoy it.

NELLIE: I am going to say something but I don't know how it sounds because it is coming off the top of my head. But the reason why I wanted to come to TUT particularly besides been a past student here, was that in Durban I know the majority are black IsiZulu speaking, IsiZulu culture, so I can sort of relate to them in a way that perhaps other teachers cannot.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Right.

NELLIE: So that is why it is important for me to see and here, when I was here hardly anybody spoke Zulu actually. Everybody was Tswana, Afrikaans, so it is very interesting and now that you speaking about social media for me maybe that is the common language.

PROF LIZ WALKER: You know what, I think so, what we have here is we have got quite a mix, we do have actually because just yesterday one of the students said to me, Madam I speak Zulu so now I struggle with the script writing. And I said no you can write it in IsiZulu and just translate it for me.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: We do have IsiZulu but largely Tshwana and Sepedi

because of the area and then English speaking and few Afrikaans these days. And we don't even draw our feeder from the Cape with all the, well to use that classification, so called Cape Coloureds.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: We don't have him, I think we might have, we have got one at the moment.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: We are sort of Afrikaans in that sense, so it is not that as you can identify with isiZulu, they understand that we have such a mixture of cultures.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So as you say, the common language is Instagram and Twitter and that.

NELLIE: Facebook as well.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Facebook, absolutely, so if you can bring that in. One, for a purist.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And I am sort of a purist but I love Shakespeare.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And I sort of think, oh you know but you have got to keep up with the times, you have got to make it work for the students. If you then through modernising to some extent Africanising and "Instagrammy" or "Twittery" it, then I have found too that they develop a love for it and then want to go into.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Somebody else cane and said, I am now going to read hamlet, because I like Shakespeare so much.

NELLIE: yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And I said okay good you know, but because you don't initially make it so difficult for them to identify and understand.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Because then it puts them off.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: They just go oh my God, Shakespeare excuse my

language, Shakespeare no, no.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: That, that is not, and whereas if you know sort of create a little bit of a laugh then they want to go and investigate a little bit more and yes.

NELLIE: So now in just, I just want to clarify that in this department is Shakespeare part of the sort of curriculum or do the lecturers choose it as a production out their own choice, is it written somewhere that it has to be taught at this level?

PROF LIZ WALKER: It is in the first year text analysis.

NELLIE: Okay.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Because we start with the Greeks still we are busy Africanising the whole curriculum and so on and second year is basically South African plays, third year is African although we still do break as well. But the first year they do one Shakespeare.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And then they for their own monologues or duel logs may choose, they might even chose and some of them for, we have the third year [inaudible 13:11] they can chose an extract from Shakespeare, even [inaudible 13:18] and we have had people. Last year, the year before last we had a Hamlet, I mean a King Lear but almost a physical theatre King Lear.

NELLIE: Lovely.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So it was very interesting, it was Calvin Riklaad, he is now doing a lot of work outside but he took King Lear and he took excerpts from it and mixed it up with performance art.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And it was a very interesting production in his fourth year.

NELLIE: Sorry I just want to grab onto that thing.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Yes sure.

NELLIE: You said that it is for first year text analysis, do you take that class?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Not anymore, Leandi takes it.

NELLIE: But you had it before?

PROF LIZ WALKER: I used to, that is when I used all those things and uMabatha and that kind yes.

NELLIE: Yes how, I am trying to figure out okay obviously text analysis people

think it is the text in front of you, you read it and you analyse it. Were there any particular sort of methodologies that you used to bring it to life or what techniques did you do?

PROF LIZ WALKER: I, I try, we try and see if there is a production of something, Albert was in the beginning of the year in Johannesburg to go ahead and see it because although it is text analysis and you deal with the text itself it is always good for them to see it in performance.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Because it is written for performance. So I act it out, [inaudible 14:53] To be perfectly honest.

NELLIE: Yes of course.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I do show them, sorry I am just going to ignore that. I try and get some video material if there is not a stage play.

NELLIE: yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Just show them you know this is how it is been performed.

NELLIE: yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So get an idea but when we deal with the text itself I bring it to life by, but I perform it for them.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I don't just read it. If I read it then there is no point.

NELLIE: Yes, yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So I, my thing Is I get quite animated.

NELLIE: But you are a drama lecturer, you should be an example.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly and yesterday to, you know there are a few "f" words and a few other words in *Woza Albert*

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And they are sort of like, and I said them and they, I said it is not me people it is the character.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: I am so, I try and bring it to life by it.

NELLIE: Okay and then I want to ask, when you talk about Africanisation, something you have mentioned quite a few times, what do you mean, is that like type of decolonising…

PROF LIZ WALKER: Yes you see we have a workshop just 2 Fridays ago again,

and there is a lot of debate about what is Africanisation, what actually is decolonisation and transformation?

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Those three sort of go, at the moment it is the curriculum, but it does not mean totally take away Eurocentric things like take away although some do want any Eurocentric, for example take away although some do want Eurocentric, everything.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Taken away, but it is bringing more African content and more South African content and also critics, African critics. Rather than referring say to, Oscar Brocket and Ball, is there an African critic who wrote and are there essays and so in other words that we bring in the African critics that would bring in more African plays, that is [inaudible 17:03] And that is why I say, I did the parallel, I started doing the parallel thing, the only problem with Umabatha is now totally out of print so it is difficult to do that.

NELLIE: And a lot of articles that I have been reading have been almost fighting with each other, it is almost like two schools of thought, the first one is that Shakespeare is universal.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly.

NELLIE: And then the others are saying universal from as European perspective and all the countries that are, have an interest in Shakespeare seem to be countries that have been former Colonies. Where do you stand?

PROF LIZ WALKER: You see the thing is we have that debate constantly, that what is universal?

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: But what I, let me just come back to Woza Albert, and I told the students, it is Universal, every conference I go to overseas, I would be asked whether it is from the Philippines or wherever so have you seen a Woza Albert production? And I said yes I am from South Africa I have seen several because we are doing it.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And the thing with *Woza Albert* is, and why *Woza Albert* is, although it dealt with apartheid, it was a universal thing of oppression.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Which you get in Chile, which you get in Myanmar, which you get everywhere else and so that is why, so in my, for me *Woza Albert* is universal.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Because for me the universality lies in a theme, and I mean Macbeth now and I am taking that because that is the one I take.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Ambition and killing people to get what you want, it is, that is universal.

NELLIE: even in Games of Thrones, even in fictitious…

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly, exactly, so for me this thing about universal is only universal in terms of Eurocentric, no it is not. For me, universal lies in the fact that does it speak to many cultures.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And Macbeth speaks to many cultures, because of the, might be you know, you have witches in Limpopo [inaudible 19:20] so it is not as if the concept of witches is foreign. Or it depends on precisely how, but you know so, I am on the other, I am not one of these who says, absolutely everything.

NELLIE: Must go.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Must go.

NELLIE: Yes and now sorry, your heritage are you, were you born in South Africa?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Yes born in South Africa, I am actually Afrikaans but I am married to a British person.

NELLIE: And then did you, were you taught Shakespeare in school? Or were you taught in a different way to how you are seeing it been taught now, how was it taught for you?

PROF LIZ WALKER: It was taught, well you know I was at Meisies Hoer Afrikaans Skool, so that sort of like a high level of.

NELLIE: Education.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Education English so we did Shakespeare since, what would the grades be now, it was standard 8, grade 10.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Grade 10, from grade 10 onwards, we started with Romeo

and Juliet and did the Merchant of Venice and…

NELLIE: But how was it taught, what methods did the teachers use?

PROF LIZ WALKER: As in, well we had one very innovative teacher, she used Mandalas and we also in matric had to make a whole Mandala.

NELLIE: What is a Mandala?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Mandala, it is technically, it is sort of a circle in which you draw the acts and with one, let us say you are acting this, you do one for Macbeth then how all the acts relate and with pictures like, okay now there is, Duncan is getting murdered.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So you take just one quote that sort of definitive of that scene.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And draw little dagger with blood, and you can paint it.

NELLIE: Oh so it is very visual.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly.

NELLIE: Wow.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And that worked and I used that, I taught English for 3 months, [inaudible 21:22] before I started teaching at university, and I used the Mandala for them as well and it works because it is visual.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So perhaps that, the concept of the Mandala is, I don't have an example for you.

NELLIE: No but I can visualise.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And you sit and you watch it, and you see, okay that scene is there, there is a crown he was been now the crown that sits uneasy on my head. That was the thing and just paint a little crown. And so that works very well.

NELLIE: Sounds good.

PROF LIZ WALKER: That visual thing.

NELLIE: And also I was going to say, another part of my research, it is actually brought into three different areas and the one besides just reading a text and analysing it and using social media another is actually, social media is more of a vehicle, it is not yet a mainframe for me, what I am going to be doing is using workshop, so they are going to be workshopping off the characters and the themes

but making it their own. But the rehearsals, they are now going to be able to put on Instagram because on Instagram you can put 59 second videos on there.

PROF LIZ WALKER: That is right.

NELLIE: So now I can rehearse my bit and you can rehearse your bit, we don't even have to be in the same space.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly.

NELLIE: Because what we have in Durban is transport is not as, like here transport is amazing, like everything is just connected. In Durban you will wait for 3 hours.

PROF LIZ WALKER: When they are not on strike.

NELLIE: Yes but you will wait for 3 hours for a taxi.

PROF LIZ WALKER: REALLY.

NELLIE: So sometimes for students to get to a rehearsal in actual fact it becomes a waste of time. So I want to use it in innovative ways like that where I, where even a student can say, I am even using WhatsApp as my focus group. So I will, somebody, I will put up a scene, or I will say guys, if I interpret the character like this and on WhatsApp it can be as long as you want.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly.

NELLIE: So if I go, if I see it like this, does it give you the same meaning? And then the student can just say, Mam I would say that but they can record it because there is voice note and there is video calling. So they can record something and send it and go, I will do it like this, because for me it means this. So for me I don't know what…

PROF LIZ WALKER: In terms of that it is interactive.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: And that, that I think is a good idea.

NELLIE: And for me WhatsApp it is the only way they actually respond, you know I actually get more taught on there, I will teach class and they are like yes, yes. And then when I get home I write, guys remember that thing that I said, I have changed my mind about it, what do you think? And then all of a sudden there is a storm of communication happening and fighting over something that happened in class, so it is almost as if you are enriching the learning experience later.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Yes the thing is they are, because the minute they step out

of my class they have to switch off their phones unless I tell them to Google something, or unless some of them download the texts, because they don't buy it, onto their phones which is not conducive but yes can do nothing about that, they need to take notes. The minute the class ends and they stand up, on goes the phone.

NELLIE: yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: That they are totally, it is almost like a drug. It is, they cannot live without their phones, so if we can use the social platforms.

NELLIE: Yes and you know what I have noticed as well, I have opened a You Tube Channel, they love seeing themselves on the internet.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Of course they do, yes.

NELLIE: Feels like they are on television.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Especially the drama people, they do. I see they often post, oh they said if they have a performance like anything, somebody records it and next day it is on social medial.

NELLIE: But don't you think it is also part of what we are teaching them, I think they should be able to be entrepreneurs, you know for me the idea of going to an audition and getting an agent is just, I don't want to be, it is a bit pase for me because if you are a wonderful, funny girl and you have got all these ideas you could have your own channel like Suzy DIY.

PROF LIZ WALKER: That is right.

NELLIE: And be sponsored and now be a millionaire.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly.

NELLIE: I don't think, I think part of the teaching is not just the subject matter, but actually preparing for the life outside, and unfortunately or fortunately everything is digital now, it is all about media content, it is all about what image you create for yourself.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Exactly.

NELLIE: Using social media in an intelligent way, not just putting pictures of your naked self like the Kardashians.

PROF LIZ WALKER: That is a problem, I will say be careful what you post people, think twice before you press the button. Sorry.

NELLIE: No, no problem, do you need water?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Okay it is just, we all have sinus here.

PROF LIZ WALKER: It hasn't rained.

NELLIE: So do you have any final words or anything?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Not now please.

NELLIE: Oh my gosh! Are you ok?

PROF LIZ WALKER: Good heavens I am sorry.

NELLIE: No, no I am just worried about you.

PROF LIZ WALKER: no, no I get so much sinus and I didn't do my [inaudible 26:40]

NELLIE: Okay so I was going to say, are there any final words or anything you can or advice you can give me.

PROF LIZ WALKER: No I think those things that, the visual, I think the visual is the important thing. Whether the visual is being able to show them the production, being able for them to perform it and see how and post it and let other people see what they are doing.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Or using something like the Mandala to make the text so that they understand how the scenes are related.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: So I think although it is text analysis and they deal with the word and it is important, the visual aspect is for me important in the teaching of it.

NELLIE: Yes.

PROF LIZ WALKER: Whichever way you do the visualising, I don't know does that help you?

NELLIE: It has helped me tremendously, thank you so much, I really appreciate your time, thank you.

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NELLIE: [inaudible 00:00]
NORA KLIPSTEEN: Third year as a full time lecturer.
NELLIE: Okay.
NORA KLIPSTEEN: Before that I was part time for a quarter and before that I was a student here.
NELLIE: Okay and what modules do you teach?
NORA KLIPSTEEN: I teach theatre studies 1, 2 and 3, text analysis for the first years. Oral interpretation for the third years, computer skills and singing for everybody from first year to B Tech.
NELLIE: Wow, shew, I am feeling tired on your behalf.
NORA KLIPSTEEN: I understand scatter brained.
NELLIE: So tell me then in the first year that is when they do the text analysis and they do Shakespeare?
NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes.
NELLIE: So you are handling that?
NORA KLIPSTEEN: And we have just wrapped up Macbeth.
NELLIE: How was it, how was it?
NORA KLIPSTEEN: Disastrous.
NELLIE: Can you be more specific, what were the problem areas that you

noticed?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: The big problem is and I don't think that is the problem that we want to be talking about but, the big thing is trying to get them away from summarising the text, and with that copying and pasting from sources that summarise the text.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: So that is why I gave them an extra assignment now because of the summary problem. They are not analysing, they are copying summaries, so not really understanding what they are doing.

NELLIE: And any other problems besides that?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Not really.

NELLIE: They okay with the language, they okay with…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: What I did and I started doing this last year and that kind of helped, is that instead of just asking them to get the formal, original Shakespeare English text, I let them download a text where you have that on the one side but you have the modern English right next to it.

NELLIE: That is interesting.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes so that we can kind of jump between the two.

NELLIE: But why have the original text then if you have got the modern text but speaks to them and still carries whatever.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: it is interesting because some of the students actually prefer the older text.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Where they say the context and how they explain things actually make more sense in the original text than in the modern. And for some of the students it is just the other way around.

NELLIE: And what percentage do you think, like half, half, like…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Like two thirds, third.

NELLIE: And what is the demographic of you class do you know in terms of language, culture, race?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: In terms of language no, I have 5, 6 Afrikaans students, and we are a total of 49 minus two that disappeared, so 47.

NELLIE: Okay, so those are probably all like Sotho, Pedi etcetera?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes.

NELLIE: Do you have some Zulu's in there?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: We might actually, I know the biggest language that our kids struggle with is Xhosa.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes, I get that [inaudible 02:52]

NELLIE: So can you talk me through like how you would just like start and like your first class, like what would you do?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: First class I usually talk about the back ground of the text.

NELLIE: Okay.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Instead of just jumping in and starting to read, I like to spend some time on the context as well especially because I teach theatre studies and text analysis so we cover the Elizabethan history and then I do the texts with them. But I like to refer them back and forth and just to create that picture of as different context, a different time. You also need to constantly remind them that remember there were no selfies and cell phones and Wi-Fi and things that you depend on now. And they will look at you like who, what, yes. So just kind of to paint that picture in that context.

NELLIE: Are hey receptive, like what is the attitude when they first walk in, you go "we're doing Shakespeare" is it like woo whoo, or like oh no!

NORA KLIPSTEEN: For some it is woo, woo for some it is, because a lot of them did Macbeth or Shakespeare at school. Then they like not again kind of thing.

NELLIE: But do they feel almost a growth, as if there is an improvement in understanding?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I think they do because you can see it on their faces, you can see it on their faces. And I stop constantly and I would like ask things and engage in discussions and conversations and then you can see the lights go on. Okay now that makes sense.

NELLIE: So what about in terms of activities, what activities do you do besides the reading and…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Well sometimes we play the text, we would get volunteers.

NELLIE: That is nice.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Otherwise it is just me reading all the time.

NELLIE: Yes, are they up to volunteer or is it just…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Not really, initially it is like very hesitant but after a while when they get into it is actually quite fun and then it is like fighting, who is going to be [inaudible 04:45] and who is going to play Macbeth and what.

NELLIE: That is nice.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: But I also started using last year, but not for the whole text, but for chunks of it is to use the audio books.

NELLIE: Yes where do you get those?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I subscribe to, I don't know if you know the Script app? You spell it S C R I B D and it like a data base with e-books and books and articles, especially since you are also a PHD Scholar and I am going in that direction. So then you pay a subscription fee and a lot of these really expensive books you can then read online. So then I find the audio books there and I specifically look for audio books where different people read the different characters, and that also kind of helps.

NELLIE: Now I am just thinking, in terms, because you were a student here, and then you were part time and then full time. In that space it has been like 5 years, how many years did you say it was?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: When did I get my Masters, 2014?

NELLIE: You were a student here, for that?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: B Tech student here in 2011.

NELLIE: Okay so as somebody who was around the department, has the demographic of the students changed a lot?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I think it changed but I think it is kind of going back, because we had a year or 2 where we had specifically talking about Afrikaans students where we had 1 or 2.

NELLIE: Really.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes in a class of 50. Where when I was a student it was really well balanced I would think, but yes this year again we have got quite a number of Afrikaans students coming in.

NELLIE: That is cool.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: And I know that specifically in the marketing plan, or it was part of the marketing plan in the last two years in terms of where we market TUT, what are the types of students that we attract, especially because we didn't have open days last year of this year because of financial things. So…

NELLIE: So as, not necessarily as a teacher just as a person, do you think Shakespeare could be done away with in our curriculum? Like what would be the disadvantages of if not being there? Do you know what I am saying, like personally not…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I know what you are saying, I know what you are saying.

NELLIE: And what do you think?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I don't know, it is difficult because I think Shakespeare has a very particular taste, because some people will be like all for Shakespeare and other people like kind of, what is the use? And I can tell you, from my under grad studies I mean we had a year where Shakespeare was hammered in every subject, not just text analysis, so we did Shakespeare for a whole year. And I really don't see the point. I think too much focus is placed on it, I don't think you should do away with it completely, I think it has its place but not to this lengthy extent that it is still now.

NELLIE: But does it have its place or are we just trying to stay onto like almost like a Colonialist nostalgia of sorts?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I think it is important to do it, not necessarily in that context but to see how things have changed.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: And how things can change. I think from that perspective it is valuable.

NELLIE: And do you think it is universal?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Shakespeare?

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Kind of.

NELLIE: Why kind of and not yes or no?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: To some extent, because there are things that you can identify with even though we don't have saints and ghosts and.

NELLIE: Because right now it like there is two schools of thought, like there is the whole, yes it is universal because it speaks about the human emotions but then people like, you have to look at the, it is very, everybody's lives are very specific and you cannot just sort of generalise emotions as if everybody has the same way of feeling and things.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: And relating to it.

NELLIE: And relating to things. And also I was also just thinking when you were saying now you have now how many Afrikaans and you think some might be Zulu and whatever. How do you contextualise it in a way that is like social and in the now and present when everybody is so many different cultures and languages?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly and that is why I like to open it up for discussions so that the students actually kind of take the lead. So I would give them like the framework and you know how does this make sense to you, and why does this make sense to you? And then we kind of start the dialogue around that. The other thing that one needs to be careful of is that it could very easily end in bad arguments. Because of different contexts and different experiences and things.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: So also just to create that sense around the students that this is a safe environment and we will differ from each other, and we won't agree on everything and that is okay just to get them to that point to actually share.

NELLIE: And you were saying earlier something about cell phone, selfies and all of that. Do you think, because if we try and take Shakespeare and bring it to the now, is there any way that you think those devices and those apps and those social media platforms could somehow bring Shakespeare to life for those who live in that world which is basically what they do their most in it?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: What I definitely do is I kind of compare the witches to social media.

NELLIE: How so, explain.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Because I mean that is a big influence on [inaudible 10:11]

NELLIE: Are the witches Cloe, Kim and Courtney Kardashian?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: No, [inaudible 10:19] especially scams and since we have the malware attacks and whatever and people stuff got stolen, and like it gives you that suggestion. Open this link, click here.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: They don't give you the processes like the witches, it gives you those suggestions, click here and they bill them. But it doesn't tell you how you are going to get there, they steal your money first.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Kind of thing.

NELLIE: Gosh, that is so interesting, I must use that.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: These kids and social media, oh my word. They will take selfies in class, and I am like "what is the value of a selfie in a text analysis class?" I don't know.

NELLIE: Just another question which I forgot to ask but I think you can answer it. In this department what do you consider classical text, where is your timeline because you [inaudible 11:05]

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Really, oh wow.

NELLIE: What is your, does it change according to how, blink this eye Bridget according to how the Head of Department feels. So it was once from 14 something to now it is anything from 200 years ago [inaudible 11:25] so what is, where is the book that tells us, so what is considered, do you even separate it like that?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Greek, Roman, Medieval.

NELLIE: So okay and Elizabethan obviously.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes.

NELLIE: And then okay, all right.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes Greek, Roman, Medieval, Elizabethan.

NELLIE: Okay do you think the most emphasis is put on Elizabethan or do you try to spread it?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Elizabethan and Greek.

NELLIE: Okay and now what else was I going to ask?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Also with the, because we still do Every Man, and students tend to understand that text a lot easier so it doesn't take that much time.

NELLIE: And it is quite short as well.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly and it quite short, where with the English and the Greek and the Elizabethan…

NELLIE: And then I was going to say, something that I don't know but, has the syllabus changed in a way to accommodate how the profile of the students has changed, so do you guys redesign it every now and again or do you just stick to what?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I don't think that is a good question to ask me, because I have been teaching it for only 3 years.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: I can tell you that going into the planned new curriculum

things will change. But every year from my side I try to use examples in discussions that are a bit more recent to connect to an unfamiliar context.

NELLIE: Okay, let me get your opinion on what I am sort of trying to do. So for me it is like, I am in an environment where everybody is Zulu speaking, they all went to some rural school somewhere where there were for better words, even neglected or the teacher was not skilled enough to give them the quality education, so I get those people like in the reading levels may not be where they should be. Like and then now they must learn Shakespeare and we sitting there going… And you read the first thing and the person is like, and especially if like you read bits and I read bits. It will take them an hour to read that but because they are just like [inaudible 13:34]

NORA KLIPSTEEN: And they focusing on pronunciation and basic things and not really understanding.

NELLIE: Yes so for me it has moved away from focusing on the language so much in its, and yes I do refer to the text for certain scenes or where it is really interesting and I can sort of get all fired up about it. But I cannot go through language and I cannot do text analysis the way it was done otherwise they are all going to fail and then what was the point?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly what is the point?

NELLIE: So now what I am trying to do is use social media as a vehicle, but I want for them to start using the Shakespeare themes, characters, of whatever those that they hold onto and sort of do workshopping around those issues but in a modern day context. Like if you were going to do Julius Cesar, Brutus could be Julius Malema and Zuma could be, because he is worshiped just like that. I mean he is one step short of getting his face put on a coin.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly, on a coin.

NELLIE: So it, you know sort of working like that rather instead of trying to [inaudible 14:33] and trying to explain that because they will completely lose them, and then using social media because they are so obsessed. Like using WhatsApp the voice notes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes.

NELLIE: Also the general discussions or whatever and then also using Instagram where they can shoot a character development snippets.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: That is cool.

NELLIE: As they go along, and then at the end some obviously will, I don't want to guide them too much, some will go over. Some are very visual so they want to do movies and music videos and some want to do theatre, theatre on the stage.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: yes.

NELLIE: Some leaving that open they have got a You Tube channel running and whatever. How, do you think I am missing out on something or…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: No, because what you are describing is something that I did as a student, while I was undergrad but we had a lot more time.

NELLIE: Yes.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: And I would have love to do it here because we did many Roman texts, many group texts and then we would kind of also to discuss the outlines and whatever of the text and then you were divided into groups and that group needed to create a similar story but in modern day context. I remember us doing [inaudible 15:36] with the sex drug and then, and that was the time when load shedding was huge [inaudible 15:43] exactly, so we kind of used that and it actually worked really well. And up until this day I enjoy the text more because I did it in that way.

NELLIE: And for me another sort of layer to the complexity is that I am actually not at a drama department, I am at a drama education department, so I am teaching teachers.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: That changes the…

NELLIE: So that is why I am trying to develop a model that they can take.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly.

NELLIE: To schools and have them have a confidence in it, understand why they are doing it, have a meaning you know what I mean a resonance within them because now they are going to go to some school with no like modern anything except the computers and maybe Wi-Fi and even then the kids don't even have cell phones that connect to the Wi-Fi.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly.

NELLIE: So that is why for me it is so important to create a model that even though it uses social media, whatever but it can use whatever those kids in that context are interested in.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: And have available.

NELLIE: And I feel like if I sit there and I teach them in a traditional way it is

just going to, they are going resent it and the thing is now if you are doing drama, most people will do drama in English, you won't like drama maths, it is highly unlikely. So they will do drama in English, so you have to teach Shakespeare in drama and in English. So they already feel like, and now they have to teach it to a class of close to 100 grade 10's who's English is about as far as I go home now. You know what I mean?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Yes.

NELLIE: So for me it is a, it is not just about being drama, being an actor, it is actually like carrying it on to the next generation.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly and being creative in doing that.

NELLIE: And already our teaching sort of standards have fallen.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Drastically.

NELLIE: Even our Dean was saying that, they were saying that before Edward, that is our Campus, is very famous for producing teachers in this Country, we have produced the most and school have actually been saying that they would rather take UNISA people.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Oh wow.

NELLIE: Because it is, but it is an issue of [inaudible 17:44] how are you teaching, what do you teach and are you teaching like how your teachers taught, how did they teach you. So at some point somebody has to intervene.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly and kind of break that cycle.

NELLIE: You know and then just to share but like I have to go to schools and watch student teachers as well, and they are teaching drama like it is geography. Like I cannot tell the difference, like I cannot tell and I have always felt that a drama teacher should be special. They should be the weird one.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly.

NELLIE: The class should be so loud that the Head Master has to be like sorry madam.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly.

NELLIE: So yes for me it is like trying to make all these things that they are going to have to teach make sense to them, be interesting to them, light something in them so that they can pass it on to the next…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Get your students involved, I mean otherwise especially with Shakespeare they are going to sit there and…

NELLIE: And that is why I picked it, I mean I could have picked something more modern or whatever but it is the point that it is still the curriculum and you cannot just take it out.

NORA KLIPSTEEN: Exactly.

NELLIE: So how do you…

NORA KLIPSTEEN: How do you make it work?

NELLIE: How do you make it work?

NORA KLIPSTEEN: With the time remaining

NELLIE: So that is basically what the project is about…

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NELLIE: With KEELEY MARLIN, hey?
KEELEY MARLIN: Yes.
NELLIE: So to start off with, let us just find out, how long have you been here at this institution in the drama department?
KEELEY MARLIN: Full time 6 years, before that 4 years part time so in total a decade.
NELLIE: Okay and in that time have you noticed any changes in the student demographic?
KEELEY MARLIN: Definitely.
NELLIE: And what are they?
KEELEY MARLIN: Well when I started the, do you want to sit on the couch?
NELLIE: Yes I just want to be close to you.
KEELEY MARLIN: It is fine put it on the floor then we both comfy. When I started here we literally had an Afrikaans class and an English class.
NELLIE: Yes.
KEELEY MARLIN: So you had the demographic was a lot more Afrikaans.
NELLIE: Yes.
KEELEY MARLIN: That has shifted completely to the point where I think our demographic now represents a South African demographic in that we have one or

two white students in a year group.

NELLIE: Okay, and then which modules do you lecture specifically?

KEELEY MARLIN: Okay I lecture first year voice.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Anything on building, the basics, second year voice where we do voice. The text where I do Shakespeare with the drama students. We, I do heart and text with them as one of the things. I do third year voice, it is application of voice, and then a B-Tech, specialisation in voice. And then I teach acting, film acting in second year, and I teach a small component of third year acting and I have B Tech acting students as well.

NELLIE: Okay could you explain to me what you mean heightened text?

KEELEY MARLIN: Heightened text is any text, not just Shakespeare, but any text that does not resemble natural speech. That is poetic, rhythmic, that has a lot of imagery.

NELLIE: Okay, what other example than Shakespeare?

KEELEY MARLIN: For me Loca, for example Loca, Juan Loca [inaudible 01:55] the Spanish playwright.

NELLIE: Okay.

KEELEY MARLIN: [inaudible 02:03]

NELLIE: Yes, yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: [inaudible 02:06] even modern playwrights like Sarah Cane.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: So when it is poetic, it is rhythmic and it has a lot of images in it.

NELLIE: Okay that sounds really intense. Okay so now that you have noticed that there has been this change of demographic, what have you done or taken upon yourself to try and cope with that as a teacher?

KEELEY MARLIN: Well what I have done very strategically is I have, I went to the Head of Department and the Dean and I spoke to them about the Language Policy because the Policy is English and I think Tswana as a second language but other I feel is quite pointless for an actor to get all their training especially because I teach voice, so I work with text a lot. To do all the text training in English yet when you get into the industry you need to be able to act never in English, I mean most television excetra theatre happens in a mixture of languages.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: More than that, so I got clearance and I teach the classes in English but we do application in different languages.

NELLIE: That is beautiful.

KEELEY MARLIN: So and, so I try to make voice very multi lingual, I have also brought in especially with my third and fourth years a big focus because voice especially for an actor is very closely connected to language. You cannot separate the two, and that is connected to identity. So I, instead of skirting around that we do a module on voice and identity, where we like take a look at the different paradigms, so that we embrace it. And I have had very cool results with that and I find that people are embracing their roots more. You know rediscovering their more traditional vocal performances as a result. And as a result I have learned a lot.

NELLIE: Yes, and so what methods do you use, so let us say I am walking in, I am from Soshanguve and my school maybe taught Shakespeare but my teacher didn't really know what she was doing or whatever and now you have me in voice and you teaching me heightened text and you are using Shakespeare. What is the first thing you do with me?

KEELEY MARLIN: I will, for me the reason that Shakespeare is still alive is because the themes, the core themes that he writes about: love hate, lust, greed, power, is well and alive.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: And those are very universal themes, and the beauty about heightened text is all the emotion, so I go to an emotive place.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Rather than a cognitive let us understand this place because people, people get immediately freaked out because they see all these strange words that make no sense.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: So what I do is I go and I use some of the elements of Elba immersing etcetera and I work a lot with Prosodies, the Prosodic Element of Speech.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: And a big part of my Doctorate, so we take a look at what

is the feeling imbedded, the emotion imbedded in the text.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: And those emotions are universal and then from the emotion, we will go and take a look, okay so how does Shakespeare depict this emotion? And then we take a look at the sound combinations, and then sometimes what I will physical do in a voice class is if we take, we did the Sonnet Fear No More which is about death on Monday. And I literally would get people to explain their understanding of it or the feeling of it in their own language. So translate it so that it goes deeper than just the words, because I think people try to approach Shakespeare very much at a cognitive level.

NELLIE: Yes you know I was about to ask you a question you sold it, but I feel like I should say it anyway. I was going to say, like isn't it difficult to teach people from so many different backgrounds, something so complex but now you have said it. If you are dealing with emotional part, we all feel emotions, we all understand them and we all understand pain the joy and whatever.. So now the emotions become the central language for everyone.

KEELEY MARLIN: For everyone and if you, if you take a feeling, like if you take a Shakespeare, I've got one piece from Romeo and Juliet that I use then somebody would explain that in Zulu, and somebody else would explain it in Venda, someone else would explain in Afrikaans. Even if I don't understand what you are saying, I am picking up the core intent and that intent lies in the pattern. And we learn that pattern as people before we learn language, and then it is about discovering that emotive pattern and then transferring it to Shakespeare. Obviously then I would go cognitive and then we would have to say, okay what does this word mean.

NELLIE: Okay not to be just a little bit naughty, if you are teaching it from an emotive standpoint, why bother with Shakespeare at all?

KEELEY MARLIN: Because I think people still connect with it, I also think that there is a reason why Shakespeare survived so many centuries because it is incredibly rich and layered, and it has universal theme.

NELLIE: But don't you think there are writers today who are layered and have universal themes that you could…

KEELEY MARLIN: Definitely yes, definitely. But I do think as an actor and I am talking about, I see it as we train professional actors.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: As a professional actor you do need to get to a point where you can explore the technical demands.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Especially because I teach voice, the technical vocal demands of Shakespeare. And I don't only do Shakespeare, I will do some Selinca text with them as well, and Lorca text etcetera so we don't just do Shakespeare. And I will ask students to bring their own heightened text in another time. Go and find a poem or something so that we understand that poeticness of all the meaning and emotion lies in the words, it is not like a realistic modern play where you have everything done as a sub text, yes.

NELLIE: Okay, can you tell me something from a voice perspective about Shakespeare that is not common knowledge even for other drama lecturers? Is there anything that is unique or interesting that is not common knowledge?

KEELEY MARLIN: About Shakespeare?

NELLIE: About Shakespeare.

KEELEY MARLIN: The fact that, well it is all documented.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: People have written everything about him.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Vocally what is interesting about Shakespeare is the fact that there is always patterns, so you always find specific consonant patterns that is used over and over again. So I am trying to think of a cool example for you now. Let say we take an example I would give my students is "to be or not to be".

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: You have got that, he could have said, why am I alive but to be or not to be, you have that combination of strong [inaudible 09:26]

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Okay, that creates a specific rhythm.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes think about that versus, "shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" the soft essence.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Now the sound the phoney, the vowel the consonant

immediately also generates and feeling.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: And Shakespeare more than anybody else embeds that feeling in the sounds. So I say to my students, if you play the sounds, the feeling is there. There is a very cool book Linklaters Freeing Shakespeare's voice, you should read it.

NELLIE: I will read it definitely.

KEELEY MARLIN: You must read it.

NELLIE: You know what is so interesting speaking to somebody who teaches voice compared to people who teach acting even though of course you would think the two are… but your mind set is completely different to what I have been experiencing with other people.

KEELEY MARLIN: But I think the challenge, I take it back to myself when I was a student at the times I have directed Shakespeare.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: I have done one Shakespeare here but I have done a couple before, is that I think people, the barrier to performing Shakespeare lies in this very strange language. And if you just jump in and you work with that, explore with that strange language make it your friend instead of it becoming this…

NELLIE: So when you, when you directed, has it been with professionals or students?

KEELEY MARLIN: I have done professional productions, last year we did Hamlet with students.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: And we did, we called it [inaudible 11:07] rather because I just changed some names and we adjusted the context slightly. So the king was a Chief Executive Officer and instead of it being a war, it was a riot, a protest. But the rest of the play we kept identical. And it was amazing for me how the students, the entire cast related 100% to something that was written what, 600 years ago. You know the father figure that was absent, the uncle that played such a big role in his life. The revolting against the corrupt leader, there is just so many themes in that so totally, totally relevant, and again what we did there, is I explored with, with in rehearsals we used some translation that we took out later etcetera. I think the other thing that is weird about Shakespeare is the fact that characters speak

their feelings, which is a shift for a modern actor.

NELLIE: Yes, we are trying to be subtle.

KEELEY MARLIN: And we must subtext our feelings.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: And but I think it is very powerful to explore with that speaking your feelings, it is important. So I was, I was very wary of going into a Shakespeare with students but it actually turned out to be a wonderful experience and because it is rhythmic instead of moving away from the rhythmic embrace it, and I do an exercise with my students where I show them how they can rap Shakespeare because Shakespeare raps like this.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes we did the performers in Hamlet, is we rapped, really complicated ext.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: So I think it is just about really going to the core things and not to get stuck on the Elizabethan period, for me.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Because the minute it becomes all Elizabethan period then for me it even becomes boring to me.

NELLIE: But I mean I must agree with that, okay so I am just going to say something about my research and then just hear your perspective from a voice.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes.

NELLIE: Okay so, what I want to do as, I am not saying these kids must master Shakespeare [inaudible 13:03] I am just trying to make it relevant enough for them to take an interest and almost have a self-directed learning and be able to teach it to somebody else in a way that makes sense to them. So and also since they teachers not to teach something else and if they hate it and don't understand it how are they going to do that you know?

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes.

NELLIE: So what I am trying to do is, I will obviously teach Shakespeare themes and we will have discussions and whatever and then after that they take it and they workshop around it, and to document the processes that they going through we are going to use Instagram where they can put, let us say, I want to phrase it like this but now the meaning is not, they can put it on Instagram and the other kids are

also in the same group and they can respond. So then I can sort of use that as data and also they can use the voice notes that are on Whatsapp, all of the have Whatsapp.

KEELEY MARLIN: Awesome.

NELLIE: And so you can read your little monologue whatever, somebody can go, something is wrong there. I am not feeling, I thought it was about this, how can you convey that.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes.

NELLIE: So that is what resonates with me when you talk about the emotions and voice, because I am not trying to make them some colonial clones.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes, and I think the minute people think Shakespeare they think about an element of correctness.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: It must sound like that now I must whip out the perfect pronunciation, it is not about that, it is not about that at all. If you bring the emotion across then that is the only important thing. Because it is written so rhythmically.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: If the intent is there it actually takes care of itself.

NELLIE: And I just think, never mind the voice like the literal voice, what about the metaphoric voice as well and I think social medial is very powerful in the sense that I have a WhatsApp group and I occasionally for my research, occasionally I will just pop in something ridiculous just to see their response. And the quietest child or student who never speaks is so vocal, it is almost like all of a sudden I am getting a piece of who they are compared to when in class they just stare at me and go… you know. So yes I think the voices is, I don't know it is so powerful not just as, even your internal voice how you speak to yourself, how actors speak to themselves as they are rehearsing, as they are in character. So everything you have said is just it is amazing.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes, and I mean, I have actually had chance because there is a debate, we are very strongly talking about decolonisation of the curriculum which I fully support.

NELLIE: Wait, wait sorry, can you explain to me, sorry I'm just checking the recording. Can you explain to me your understanding of decolonising or what it

means to you?

KEELEY MARLIN: To me, to me it means acknowledging the indigenous knowledge.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: Giving it, its rightful place and putting it on an equal level of importance.

NELLIE: Okay.

KEELEY MARLIN: So that it is not a question of, we are now cutting this but we are doing that.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: It is acknowledging that, bringing it in. And in many cases seeing, acknowledging that people come from different frameworks in terms of learning and that we acknowledge all of it. But that is what it means to me, and I have often thought about you know, and there have been debates about do we cut Shakespeare, do we not. I was invited to a conference last year about my production in Belgium, I count go about Shakespeare in education. But I have actually felt the opposite, I find that my students want to do Shakespeare because the themes are so primal and very dramatic. It resonates and in a strange way it is this challenge of, it is like the ultimate think from actors' perspective.

NELLIE: Yes.

KEELEY MARLIN: So it is colonial but also isn't in that the themes I think are very universal.

NELLIE: I have heard a lot that, not heard a lot read a lot that in India they have almost like Shakespeare doesn't even belong to the English anymore, they have completely, I don't know how to say it, I almost say they raped it.

KEELEY MARLIN: [inaudible 17:50] adopted it.

NELLIE: So now you see all these shows and you like, isn't that Shakespeare but they completely just sort of put it into their culture, and I think that is quite beautiful.

KEELEY MARLIN: Yes, I mean two of my B Tech students, we are doing theme studies now and they are kind of insisted that they want to do Shakespeare for their one theme study. So there is two guys, because text is hard for them and I said okay well here is Julius Cesar, go find a scene and they found a scene and literally you can, it is this debate between Brutus and Cassius about what are we

going to do with our corrupt leader?

NELLIE: Yes

KEELEY MARLIN: And they kind of just transposed that entire scene into our current situation in South Africa. So I think, I think people shouldn't be too precious about Shakespeare as well.

NELLIE: Yes, I agree.

KEELEY MARLIN: If there is a perceived correctness, this is the way that Shakespeare is done, then I think we must get rid [of it]...