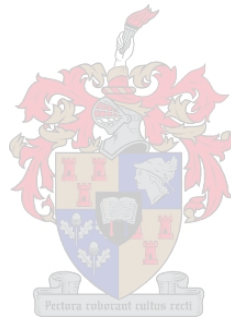# Finding Creativity: Integrating drama teaching techniques in creative writing lessons.

by

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at
Stellenbosch University

Supervised by: Professor Christa van der Walt

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Declaration

I declare that "Finding Creativity: Integrating drama teaching techniques in creative writing lessons" is my own original piece of work, that I am the author/owner thereof. I have not previously submitted a copy of this entire work, or part of it, at any university for obtaining any qualification.

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P Jordaan

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Abstract

Creative writing forms an essential part of the English language learning area in any curriculum. The expression of knowledge and ideas through writing is an integral part of the communication process; however, some learners struggle to express their thoughts and ideas in creative writing tasks. As such, this thesis strives to discover how creativity can be stimulated in order to assist learners in their written expression. Drama techniques, stimulation activities and other multi-literacy resources have been employed to try and understand the discovering and 'finding creativity' process through creative writing, journaling and performance in the drama classroom.

The research utilises the action research methodology, employing participant observations, semi-structured interviews and reflective classroom discussions. It also uses the creative writing journals of the learners in an attempt to investigate how drama techniques can stimulate creativity for the creative writing process. The units of analysis in this case study are 13 grade 9 learners at a private school in the Western Cape, South Africa.

The analysis of the data collected reveals that by utilising drama techniques, along with other stimuli and resources, in the classroom the process of creative writing become less troublesome and more enjoyable for both learners and teacher-researcher alike. Another finding is that the open, free and flexible atmosphere, which is created in the classroom assists learners not only with the development of their written expression, but also with verbal expression. The learners learn how to express their creative thoughts and ideas, about the world they live in, in a respectful, sensitive and empathetic manner. The creative writing programs have proved to be more than just tools to improve writing competence, but also have equipped learners with the tools to become creative, thinking citizens.

Opsomming

Kreatiewe skryfwerk vorm 'n essensiële deel van die Engelse leerarea in enige kurrikulum. Die uitdrukking van kennis en idees deur die skryfproses vorm 'n integrale deel van die kommunikasieproses, maar sommige leerders vind dit uitdagend om aan hulle gedagtes en idees in kreatiewe skryftake uiting te gee. Met hierdie tesis beoog ek om dus om te ontdek hoe kreatiwiteit gestimuleer kan word om leerders met hulle geskrewe uitdrukkings vermoë te ondersteun. Dramategnieke, stimulerende aktiwiteite en ander meerdoelige geletterdheidshulpbronne is gebruik om te probeer verstaan hoe die ontdekking van die kreatiwiteitsproses deur kreatiewe skryf, joernaalinskrywings en opvoerings in die dramaklas, kan plaasvind.

Hierdie studie het die aksienavorsingsmetodologie gevolg, waar deelnemende waarneming, semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude en reflektiewe klaskamergesprekke, asook die kreatiewe skryfjoernale van die leerders, gebruik is om te ondersoek in hoe 'n mate dramategnieke kreatiwiteit vir die kreatiewe skryfproses kan stimuleer. Die studie is op 13 graad 9-leerders wat by 'n privaatskool in die Wes-Kaap, onderrig word.

Die analise van die versamelde data openbaar dat, wanneer dramategnieke in samewerking met ander stimulus en hulpbronne gebruik word, dit die kreatiewe skryfproses vergemaklik en dit meer genotvol vir beide die leerders en die onderwyser-navorser word. Nog 'n bevinding toon dat die oop, vry en inskiklike atmosfeer, wat in die klaskamer geskep word, nie net die leerders in die ontwikkeling van hul geskrewe uitdrukking bygestaan het nie, maar ook met hul verbale uitdrukkingsvermoë. Die leerders het geleer hoe om hul kreatiewe gedagtes en idees oor hul individuele wêrelde in 'n respekvolle, sensitiewe en empatiese manier uit te druk. Die kreatiewe skryfprogram blyk veel meer as bloot 'n hulpbron te wees om die skryfvermoëns van die leerders te verbeter. Dit het hulle ook toegerus om kreatiewe, denkende landburgers te word.

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- My sister, brother and friends who are my partners in play and inspire me to think outside of the box.
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- My Heavenly Father, the ultimate creator, who has blessed me with creativity and who gave me the inspiration, courage and strength to complete this task.

List of Abbreviations

A Levels	Advanced Levels
AO	Assessment Objectives
AR	Action Research
AS Levels	Advanced Subsidiary Levels
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CEA	Centre for Education and Assessment
CIE	Cambridge International Examinations
DoBE	Department of Basic Education
FAL	First Additional Language
FL	First Language
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
NRS	National Reading Strategy
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SMT	Senior Management Team
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

"It is my wish that the voice of the storyteller will never die in Africa, that all the children in the world may experience the wonder of books, and that they will never lose the capacity to enlarge their earthly dwelling place with the magic of stories"

- *Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The school system in South Africa strongly emphasizes the importance of literacy and numeracy of our learners. Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga claims that "[o]ur national strategy for improving literacy and numeracy has assisted in improving education quality" (De Waal, 2013), however, statistics have shown that 13% of our grade 5 learners are illiterate (Jansen, 2013). Furthermore, shocking results are still seen at the end of each year when matriculants graduate. Spaull (2014) suggests that the actual matric pass rate in South Africa for 2013 was "a truly shocking cohort matric pass rate: 40%! That is to say, of every 100 pupils who started school, only 51 made it to matric in 2013, 40 passed and 16 qualified to attend university" (Spaull, 2014). He further states that the "tale of the matric results is a story half-told". He contextualizes the matric class of 2013:

> "there were 562 112 full-time candidates, of whom 439 779 passed, yielding a matric pass rate of 78.2%. But how many pupils were there to begin with? If we look at the 2013 grade 12 cohort, we see that there were as many as 1 111 858 pupils in grade two (in 2003), 1 094 189 in grade 10 (in 2011) – but only 562 112 in grade 12 (in 2013). What happened to the other 549 746 that never made it to matric?" (Spaull, 2014).

How will these illiterate learners of today be able to find a job or generate an income? How will they be able to function in the national and international business sphere? If learners cannot perform the basic operations of literacy, how can they be expected to function on a higher cognitive level where they are required to think creatively and solve problems?

Creative writing has its roots in storytelling in the initial stages of education. Bloch (2012) states that "storytelling and reading expose children to a special form of language that is holistic, rich and complex […] This allows them to tune into the rhythms and structures of language and broadens their conceptual worlds and their vocabulary to express themselves". Creative writing has always been part of, as well as plays an integral role in, the English language learning area. Through these writing activities and tasks, English language teachers are provided with the opportunity to diagnose the language proficiency of their learners, as well as identify areas that need attention or improvement. Creative writing is a compulsory part of the Revised National Curriculum (2007) in the learning area English Language as well as in the new CAPS document that has been implemented at the beginning of 2014.

If one considers the empirical research conducted on the writing process as a whole, one will discover that this is a complicated and integrated practice and that creative thoughts need stimulation and the necessary tools in order for expression of thoughts to proceed (Furner, 1973; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Light, 2002; Kruger, 2006, 2008, 2009; Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011; Kelman & Rafe, 2013; Perry *et al*, 2013). In my experience I have found that the current conditions in some schools in South Africa do not allow room for the development of creativity for creative writing tasks, the active teaching of strategies for creative writing, and that the available resources are not always sufficient for stimulation of imaginative practice. Some teachers do not seem to have the theoretical knowledge to teach creative writing in their classes and do not necessarily understand how to implement strategies, techniques and activities that could stimulate creativity for the writing process. These could ultimately make the creative writing process easier for their students and also more enjoyable for both parties.

Flower and Hayes (1981) discuss writing as a cognitive process within an intricate writing model (1981:370). Their theory has brought new insights to how the writer and the writing process is viewed as a whole and that teachers, especially, should consider that "[in] the act of writing, people regenerate or recreate their own goals in the light of what they learn" (Flower & Hayes, 1981:381). If we look at how some teachers attempt to present creative writing in the classroom the process is

sometimes too organized – the learners are instructed to plan their writing, write a rough draft, revise their writing without any real assistance from the teacher, and then hand in the final piece of writing. However, Flower and Hayes (1981:377) state that the "writing process may seem unstructured, disorganized, chaotic". If one takes this statement into consideration many teachers of creative writing might have to re-evaluate what is expected from learners and their assignments. They might also need to reflect on their teaching practices.

Csiksentmihalyi (1997) is not only a published author and theorist of creative writing, but also a supporter of the 'development of creativity movement'. He provides insight into creativity and into the worlds of some writers and how they practise their craft. These writers explain how they set about the task of writing, where they find inspiration and what tools they use for stimulation when they are writing. His research has inspired me to re-evaluate my own process of creative writing and as a teacher, I constantly try to remind myself that each child is a unique individual and therefore their process of writing must differ from their peers. Csiksentmihalyi highlights the fact that all writers, and this includes the learners in our classrooms, are "involved in creating imaginary worlds that are as necessary for them as the physical world they inhabit" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:239). As both a Drama and a language teacher, it seems to me that Csiksentmihalyi's (1997) contribution to the 'development of creativity movement' and Flower and Hayes' (1981) statement that the writing process could be "unstructured, disorganized, [and] chaotic" (1981:377), have provided the cross-curricular link between drama and creative writing.

In this research I have decided to combine drama techniques with creative writing techniques because this is a perspective I am able to comment on as a teacher of Drama and English. Improvisation will be used as one of the central drama techniques to stimulate creativity and the process of journaling (creative writing activities) can help learners to express and reflect on their experiences in the written form. Ultimately, this research aims to discover, how drama (and journaling) will be able to stimulate creativity for the creative writing process, no matter what resources are accessible or available. I will look at the concept of "experiential learning" (Kolb 1984) as well as consider Kruger's (2009) and Richardson's (2003) views on constructivist education and how drama and journaling forms part of this learning

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styles. The drama techniques provide the learners with the experience, whilst the journal becomes a reflection tool for these experiences. As Phillips (1995:95) states,

> Drama is located in everyday life […]. Living may be essentially characterized as being caught up in a sequence of events of which we become adapted and where a great existential uncertainty must always hold sway about where we are going and where we are coming from. When within any sequence, a pattern of events may build up that results in a change in our understanding of those events or through them of something else, we can speak of learning taking place.

However, before a transformative space of learning can be established in classrooms, teachers should undergo a type of 'transformation' themselves. Julia Cameron (1995) describes a tool (the journal), which could assist teachers in developing their own creativity, as well as the creativity of their learners, and establish it in the creative writing classroom. Cameron's tool will be utilized in such a manner to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical creative development in the creative writing classroom, because Cameron provides us with exercises and suggestions on how to stimulate our creative development and writing by means of journaling.

Diane Lefer (2000) is a published author who has discovered that Stanislavski's Method Acting philosophy and technique assisted her in her writing process. She incorporated the most fundamental techniques of Stanislavski's Method Acting Technique (Realist and Naturalistic Drama Performances) and adapted them to fit the writer's profile and needs. She does, however, state that these exercises "aren't designed to be turned directly into stories. They won't do your work for you. They will help you break away from automatic responses and add the magic that comes of fresh and truthful observation" (Lefer, 2000:16). In combination with some of Stanislavski's performance techniques I will integrate selected techniques from Grotowski's theatre laboratory (object manipulation) and the historical drama era and style of Commedia dell' Arte to serve as stimulators for creativity which could be used to develop creativity for creative writing.

1.2   RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

"The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct acting from inner necessity. The creative mind plays with the objects it loves".

- *Dr. Carl Jung*

When the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) conducted two national systemic evaluations to establish literacy and numeracy levels in primary schools in 2001 and 2004, the DoBE was shocked by the low levels of reading ability across the country. The results have shown that our learners simply do not read at grade and age-appropriate levels. In an attempt to rectify and increase poor literacy by 50% this country by 2015, the DoBE launched their National Reading Strategy (NRS) in 2008, in support of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2013) and Literacy for All campaigns (Department of Education, 2008:5).

The current curriculum implemented in South African schools is the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). This is to be implemented in three phases: the Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) and Grade 10 was implemented in 2012, Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) and Grade 11 in 2013; and Senior Phase (Grade 7 -9) and 12 will be implemented in 2014. With CAPS the DoBE aims to produce one clear and accessible policy document, write a more streamlined curriculum, go back to subjects and essential subject knowledge, and standardised assessment (Curriculum News, May, 2011:14). In spite of the intended revisions of CAPS which are geared towards improvement, results from the latest national literacy performances conducted by the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), in 2011 proved that Grade 3, 6 and 9 learners are still not literate at the appropriate level for their grade.

My grade 1 teacher always said: "use your words" when you are angry or upset about something. The fact that our learners are illiterate is extremely worrisome, for most of our learners are unable to use their words to express themselves, be it verbally or through writing. During the past five years, I have discovered and observed how many high school learners struggle to express their creative thoughts, be it in a conversation or in a written piece. I observed that in some language

teachers' classes no real attempt was made to stimulate creative thinking. If the teacher did provide some sort of stimulation it was usually in the form of a badly photocopied picture which often was impersonal and uninteresting. The learners were not challenged to discover their own inspiration or as Habens (2007) states their "modern muses" (2007:50); bearing in mind that not all people are precisely the same or stimulated in the same way; and ultimately their writing was dull, bleak and uninteresting (Boulter, 2004:135). One should then ask what could happen to these learners' writing when they are intrigued and challenged to think creatively and eventually express their creativity in writing and enjoy the process?

The creative writing journal becomes an intricate part of documenting the learners' growth, discovery and development process and will be incorporated in the classroom in order to create a space where the learners can reflect on the learning process and write about their experiences, new ideas and insights. The 'play' element that drama will bring to the classroom will become a great source of information which could stimulate the creative writing process; for children will physically see how a story is constructed by being an integral part of the story making process.

My own training in drama and language teaching has made me aware of the hidden opportunities and possibilities that drama and acting could provide to break down barriers and stimulate creativity which could be incorporated into language classroom activities. With this research I am aiming to discover how drama can stimulate the creative writing process. I believe that through acting, improvisation and play, learners will be stimulated and gain insight into the inner lives of characters, their motivations, conflicts and different situations and scenarios.

1.3   CONTEXT FOR THIS STUDY

Nussbaum (2006), a prominent philosopher of education, advocates the inclusion of the arts in the classroom, not only for the holistic development of the child, but also to open their minds and raise awareness about societal issues guiding them to become democratic citizens. Language educators need to emphasise the creative process and the arts as "central aspects of the educational experience, […] the

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intense passion and investments of the teachers, their delight in the progress and also the individuality of their students" (Nussbaum 2006:386). This philosophy lies at the center of my personal teaching epistemology and is consequently also at the heart of this research project.

The research was conducted at an independent private school in the Western Cape Province, South Africa which uses the Cambridge Curriculum. The name of the school will be withheld in order to protect the school, its teachers and learners.   As part of an honours final research assessment I conducted a pilot study (see 1.3.1) in order to test the research instruments which I used during this research project.

The 13 participants for this research project are in grade 9 and are approximately 14 – 15 years old. In grade 9 the theoretical and practical foundation is laid for the learner to be fully prepared to write his IGCSE Drama examinations at the end of grade 10. What makes this grade ideal for the research is that the drama course is not specified. The teacher may use his/her discretion when selecting the theoretical and practical course work in order to prepare the learners for the IGCSE examinations. Bearing this in mind, the selected course work was done with the students, along with all of the set formal assessments required. This research was intended to enrich the learners' learning experience in the Drama class, whilst helping them develop creativity. This exercise could also be integrated in the language classroom.

1.3.1   The Pilot Study

The pilot study took place in the IGCSE[1] Drama class in which there were three female learners who were 16 years old. At the beginning of 2009 these learners chose the subject Drama as one of their A / AS level subjects. The IGCSE Cambridge Drama curriculum stipulates that the learners should write a one act play and perform in it for their final practical examination (refer to 2.3.3 for detailed information about the curriculum). However, when these learners had to start devising their written piece, I noticed that the learners struggled to conceptualize and

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[1] IGCSE – International General Certificate in Education

formulate their performance ideas in writing and this is how the research question manifested; how can drama stimulate creativity in writing?

1.3.2   The Research Problem

The empirical research available on the development of creativity in education is mainly focussed on pre-primary or primary school learners. Subsequently, the problem that this study strives to address is that there is a lack in the development of creativity in high school learners and that these learners are not provided with enough opportunities to develop their creativity for creative writing tasks.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTION AND AIMS

The primary goal of the study is to find a response to the research question: How can drama techniques stimulate creativity for the creative writing process?

1.4.2   Main aims and specific objectives

The first aim of the intervention was to *create and design a creative writing programme* that was flexible and adaptable in which I could incorporate drama techniques to stimulate creativity of learners for the creative writing process (see Chapters 2 and 4).

The second aim was to *break down barriers and inhibitions in creative thinking*, and to find drama techniques that can stimulate creativity for creative writing which could also be incorporated in English Language classrooms (see Chapter 4).

The third aim was to *monitor and assess the impact of the creative writing programme* based on insights gained from the literature review (see Chapter 2) and to critically reflect on each step of the implementation in order to implement a revised strategy if needed (see Chapters 4 and 5).

The fourth aim was to *supply teachers with deeper understandings and insights* (provided by the qualitative data), which could encourage a sustained change in their creative writing pedagogical practice (see Chapter 5).

1.5   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1   Research Design

1.5.1.1   *Action Research (AR)*

In an attempt to answer the research question this study utilised the Action Research methodology (AR) which is a multi-focused method. Action Research (AR) allows the researcher to be actively involved in bringing about change in real-life social settings, for example the selected school in this research. The reason why AR is the chosen method is because, it is flexible and provides educators with the opportunity to "act on, observe, reflect on and re-plan" the change they have initiated in order to improve the identified problem in their practice (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000:595). The participatory nature of Action Research means that both the researcher and participants are actively involved in the research process. Action Research works in cycles and these cycles allow the researcher to plan, act, observe and reflect with flexibility and momentum in order to implement change as well as to reflect critically on the complete process (Wallace, 1998:12). Figure 5 (chapter 3 in section 3.2.4) is a graphic representation which illustrates the cyclic nature of AR and demonstrates the sequential process. Through these cycles, the researcher/ educator hopes to "become aware of what is really happening" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002:157) in the classroom at the identified school, in order to attempt to solve the 'problem' as the project progresses. Thus, through Action Research, the researcher takes on the role of a positive change agent.

1.5.1.2   *A cyclical process of the creative writing programme*

<u>Step 1:</u> The first step was to determine the target group size and to come to a deeper understanding of the situation at the selected school. The research participants were selected based on their subject choice. These learners decided to take the advanced IGCSE Drama course in grade 9 in order to prepare them for the final IGCSE Drama examination at the end of grade 10. In order to deepen the understanding, quantitative data was gathered by means of observing a creative writing lesson. A semi-structured group interview was held with the observed language class in order to understand how they had experienced the lesson and the creative writing activities.

Step 2: I engaged with the participants of the research study by means of an unstructured interview with one research participant as well as a classroom discussion in order to establish if the research participants had the same attitude towards creative writing as the learners in the language class.

Step 3: The first cycle was concerned with the planning, construction and implementation of the creative writing programme and drama activities. With the data and deeper understanding of the problem formed by the observations, interviews and classroom discussions I selected drama activities and creative writing tasks to design the creative writing programme. Content for the Drama curriculum had previously been selected and based on this content, creative writing tasks were designed in which the integrated drama techniques would help to stimulate creativity for the creative writing process. This process would culminate in a final performance at the end of the term or cycle 1. These drama techniques and creative writing tasks took place over a period of 10 weeks (1 term).

Step 4: Reflection on the effectiveness of the creative writing programme: Reflection on the effectiveness of the implemented creative writing programme, drama techniques and creative writing tasks happened continuously throughout the implementation. Tasks and techniques that needed to be readapted were identified.

Step 5: The second cycle: Implementation of a revised creative writing programme. Based on the fact that new theoretical content had to be taught, as well as the data gathered from the observations and feedback of the first cycle, new drama techniques and creative writing activities needed to be implemented to assist learners in the development of the creativity for the creative writing process.

1.6   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

"Researchers are unconditionally responsible for the integrity of the research process. Ethics is foundational to all research; with power comes responsibility" (O' Leary, 2004: 50). Therefore, according to Merriam (2001: 214) the fact that qualitative researchers are "guests in the private spaces of the world, their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict". In honouring the ethical protocol

needed for this research, permission to conduct this research at the identified school was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) (see Addendum A) and ethical clearance for the research project was obtained from Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee. Permission to perform my research study at the research school was obtained from the principal and teachers (see Addendum B). Taking into consideration that the participants were minors, written consent was obtained from the parents to allow their children to participate in the programme (see Addendum C). The learners also signed this document with the parents or guardians. The consent form explained the research purpose and methods of the study.

1.7   RESEARCH SITE: THE SCHOOL

The School was chosen as the school for this research project. The choice was influenced by the following reasons: (1) the researcher was an active and fulltime member of the staff at the school; (2) the school offers a course in Dramatic arts; (3) the researcher is qualified to teach Drama as well as English FL to high school learners, and (4) the school is multicultural, including learners from all walks of life. Some of the learners are from an affluent background, but other learners are attending the school with full bursaries based on their individual excellence in sport, culture and/or academic results. Some learners are foreigners and attend this school due to the fact that they follow the University of Cambridge Curriculum (CIE). However, the majority of the learners are born and raised in South Africa. Some of the parents are professionals who excelled in their line of work and/or own their own companies, whilst other parents are middle-class earning a moderate salary and then there are parents struggling to make a living. However, all of these parents have one thing in common and that is that they value education.

The school is moderately new. It was only 10 years old when the research was conducted. The School is a non-profit organisation. Its sole purpose is to provide excellent education and extra-mural activities to its learners. It has a board of trustees that manages the financial and business side of this private school. The school is funded by school fees. In terms of the hierarchy at this school, the senior management team (SMT) of the school consists of the Headmaster, two deputy

principals, head of departments and the heads of culture and sport. The headmaster is contracted to the board of the school. One deputy principal manages learner affairs (sport, culture, discipline) while the other manages academics.

Space has always been a problem at this school, as this school caters for learners from Grade RR to Grade 12. The campus is separated into two schools: the Junior School and the High School. However, both these schools are in the same building, with the exception of the Nursery (Grade RR to Grade 1), which is in another building on the same grounds. Understandably, negotiating break times, classroom space and sport field space has always been a headache at the School. The classrooms are neat, but not furnished with state of the art equipment that one would expect in a private school. A few teachers are forced to 'float' from one classroom to another, due to the fact that there is simply not enough space for these teachers to have a classroom. I was one of the teachers who moved from one classroom to another. I had a little office (which was actually a converted storeroom) in the back of an English classroom. The drama lessons took place in this English classroom.

The whole school comprises of approximately 800 learners, of which 350 are in the High School. More than half of the learners in the High School are white, English speaking learners. The other learners are Asian, Coloured and African. The teachers are all white, and speak English and Afrikaans and dominantly female.

1.8   LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 of this research is concerned with the introduction of the reader to the research topic and aims of this study. This chapter briefly describes the background of the study in terms of the South African educational approach to creative writing. It explains the social context of the school and learners as well as the rationale for the research project. It contextualizes the pedagogy of creative writing in the classroom as well as the inability of learners to express creative thoughts and ideas, verbally or in written form. The chapter further deals with the methodology of AR and establishes why this is the most appropriate approach to address the research aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2 provides the reader with a theoretical framework for the research. This chapter focusses on drama philosophies, practitioners, principles and techniques which are integrated in the creative writing programme. It also focusses on the process of writing and how the cross-curricular gap between these two domains could be overcome. The chapter also includes a description of the assessment objectives (AO) and course descriptions of the University of Cambridge Curriculum (CIE) as well as how this curriculum corresponds with the RNCS 2007 and CAPS curricula of South Africa. It further looks at how drama techniques could be integrated in creative writing in order to stimulate creative development in a constructivist classroom.

Chapter 3 introduces the preferred methodology of Action Research which will be used to implement the creative writing programme. The underpinning assumptions that define AR are described, as well as the desired outcomes of the study. The chapter further describes details about the research participants, the instruments used for qualitative data gathering and lastly, it describes how the gathered data were analysed and interpreted.

Chapter 4 describes the actual creative writing programmes as it progresses over two AR cycles. The planning, acting, observing and reflecting phases of the AR cycles are described in detail by means of the creative writing stages. The chapter provides a detailed account of interpreted qualitative data gathered during the study and describes how the research question and aims were addressed by the study.

In *Chapter 5* the findings and conclusions from the analysed data are discussed and recommendations for future practice and research are made in order to encourage South African language teachers to think differently and creatively about their own practice in their classrooms.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE OVERVIEW: CREATIVITY, CURRICULA, DRAMA PHILOSOPHIES, AND CREATIVE WRITING

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter is the theoretical foundation of the research conducted. I will discuss the requirements of the curricula I have taught and am currently teaching, the two dramatic arts philosophers who have inspired this research, as well as look at the historical context in which their philosophies, principles and techniques developed. I will then discuss the theoretical viewpoint of the writing process and in particular creative writing. Based on the discussion of these main topics, I will then attempt to show how to bridge these two disciplines and how drama can stimulate the creative thoughts which feed the creative writing process. However, before these discussions, I need to clarify creativity, its characteristics and how one could attempt to stimulate and develop it in an educational context.

Creativity is an age old concept which has been part of human existence for more than 40, 000 years. Creative activity flourished as humans employed it in their language as well as in the development of art, technology and their daily existence and survival, making it "one of the most striking features of the human species" (Newton & Donkin, 2011:285). Through the ages, be it stone, bronze, iron or technological the human evolution and material advances have been dependent on creative thinking skills and problem-solving. However, on a personal level creativity can empower humans to find fulfilment and satisfaction in their lives (Newton & Newton, 2014:576).

However, creativity is an elusive, vague and complex characteristic which avoids definition or categorization. Researchers and theorists alike have generated numerous descriptions and definitions for creativity and creative thinking in different contexts (Newton & Newton, 2014:576). In an overview of creativity, Craft (2001) discusses the major role players in the field. She identifies Torrance as a leader in the field of psychometric approaches to creativity, who saw creativity as the broad

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process of "sensing a problem, searching for possible solutions, drawing hypothesis, testing and evaluating, and communicating the results to others" (Craft, 2001:13). Furthermore, Torrance saw creativity as a process which included "original ideas, a different point of view, breaking out of the mould, recombining ideas or seeing new relationships among ideas" (Craft, 2001:13).

According to Craft, Vernon as well as the authors Rhyammer and Brolin took these descriptions further and argued that creativity refers to the ability to produce new or original ideas, to restructure existing ideas, to invent things or develop artefacts; whether scientific, aesthetic or of social value. In contrast, Craft notes that the Carruthers is one of the first authors to suggest that the conceptualisation of creativity can be simplified: it can simply be the ability to imagine a different form or state that is a "fundamental [human] attribute to enable adaptation and response in a fast changing world" (Craft, 2001:114). However, Craft (2001) is insistent that a very clear distinction needs to be made between types of creativity. On the one hand we encounter "high creativity" and on the other "ordinary/democratic creativity" (2001:13). The concept of high creativity is attributed to Feldman, Cziksentmihalyi & Gardner who explain that high creativity can be seen as something significantly new and remarkable. Focused on the extraordinary, it describes people who are extremely talented. For the conceptualisation of day-to-day creativity in classrooms, this type of creativity is regarded as less relevant to the field of education (Craft, 2001:13).

Ordinary creativity is what this study strives to develop in learners. This democratic creativity "recognizes that all pupils can be creative" (Craft, 2001:14). She highlights the following concepts which need to be considered in order to develop creativity in learners; namely personality traits, cognition and ways of stimulation.
In his research Brolin (1992) argues that the creative personality contains the following dominant traits: Strong motivation, endurance, intellectual curiosity, a strong desire for self-realisation, independence in thought and action, self-confidence, openness to impressions from within and without, high sensitivity, high capacity for emotional involvement in investigations, attracted to complexity and obscurity, strong sense of self and deep commitment. Some theorists may argue that

these can be both "superficial and contradictory" (Craft, 2001:7), however, on close inspection all of these traits could be developed in a school environment.

The second aspect to consider for the development of creativity is cognition. Craft (2001) refers to the authors Ryhammer and Brolin who describe creativity in relation to various processes of thought and experience and have summarized their findings as follows: thinking in opposites, analogies and metaphors, intuition, inspiration, intelligence, problem finding and problem solving. Once again, teachers can guide their learners to develop these traits by setting appropriate tasks and challenges for their learners.

Lastly, Craft (2001) mentions ways to stimulate creativity. There are numerous approaches to stimulating the development of creativity in the classroom, however, for this research the "System Approach" (Edwards & Springate, 1995) was utilized. This teaching system entails strategies that empower the teacher to modify the classroom and teaching environment in order to support the learners' creativity. It is however, important to note that this approach is mainly concerned with the development of artistic creativity, due to the subject matter of this research.

The pedagogical approaches, are listed below (Craft, 2001:20):
- Time – learners need time to finish their work
- Space – learners need a space in which they can create. It should be a bright and harmonious space with examples of their own and others' work alongside the work of masters in the different fields of learning.
- Rich resource materials – The space should be filled with sensory and inviting materials and resources. The learners should help with the selection of these materials and resources for it as it makes the space personal and the learners are invested in the materials.
- Climate – The atmosphere in the classroom should "encourage risk taking, making mistakes, innovation and uniqueness, alongside mess, noise and freedom, whilst in an overall environment of order" (Craft, 2001:21). Teacher themselves should be encouraged to experiment alongside their learners.

- Occasions – The teacher should create or provide opportunities where learners can experience intense and exciting encounters between their inner and outer worlds. Introducing experts to the classroom environment, but also taking the learners on outings, all contribute to the positive stimulation of creativity.

Considering the abovementioned three major lines of development in creativity, this leads us to the question of how drama techniques can inspire this creative development. However, before I can discuss drama and creative writing and how these two disciplines can meet, we need to look at the meeting place, the constructivist classroom.

2.2   CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING THEORIES: LEARNING THROUGH DISCOVERY.

In the modern classroom in South Africa most teachers will be faced with children from different backgrounds, races and socio-economic circumstances. Some may have different learning abilities and some may experience different types of barriers to learning in classrooms that have no resources whatsoever. However, I believe that the current South African curriculum leans toward the constructivist method of teaching and learning. In a postmodern society our schools and learning strategies need to become more flexible in order to accommodate and include all learners from all walks of life.

According to Richardson (2003:1626), constructivist education can be seen as the creation of a classroom atmosphere, activities and teaching strategies which are based on constructivist learning theories. These are based on goals and outcomes that focus on the individual learner, his/her development of a deep and comprehensive understanding of the concerned subject knowledge, whilst keeping in mind what their interests and habits are and how this will influence learning in the rest of their education and school life. Richardson (2003:1626), further discusses the following key aspects of constructivist education strategies which can be integrated in the language teaching plans, activities and classroom:

- undivided attention to the individual and respect for the learners' background and developing knowledge concerning elements of the specific subject field (thus creating and developing a learner-centred teaching practice);

- facilitating group discussions which focus on discovering a certain element of the learning area with the intention of creating a shared comprehension of the topic in the learning area;

- planned, but also frequent unplanned, introductions and discussions of formal topical knowledge to conversations with definite educational value;

- to and utilizing texts, discovering web pages and other resources;

- creating space and giving learners the opportunities in the classroom to be able to discover and identify their own knowledge, attitude, value and comprehension and to be able to broaden challenge their own knowledge and views, by giving them the opportunity to interact with tasks and assignments, which were created and intended for this purpose. This will add value to the learner's learning experience and development, but most importantly provide the child with the opportunity to discover the meta-conciseness of their thinking and learning processes (Kruger, 2009:186).

Kruger (2009:187) discusses constructivism and the visible effect these theories have on a language classroom. She uses Hofer's (2001) model as an example to show how his epistemological theories can influence the classroom.
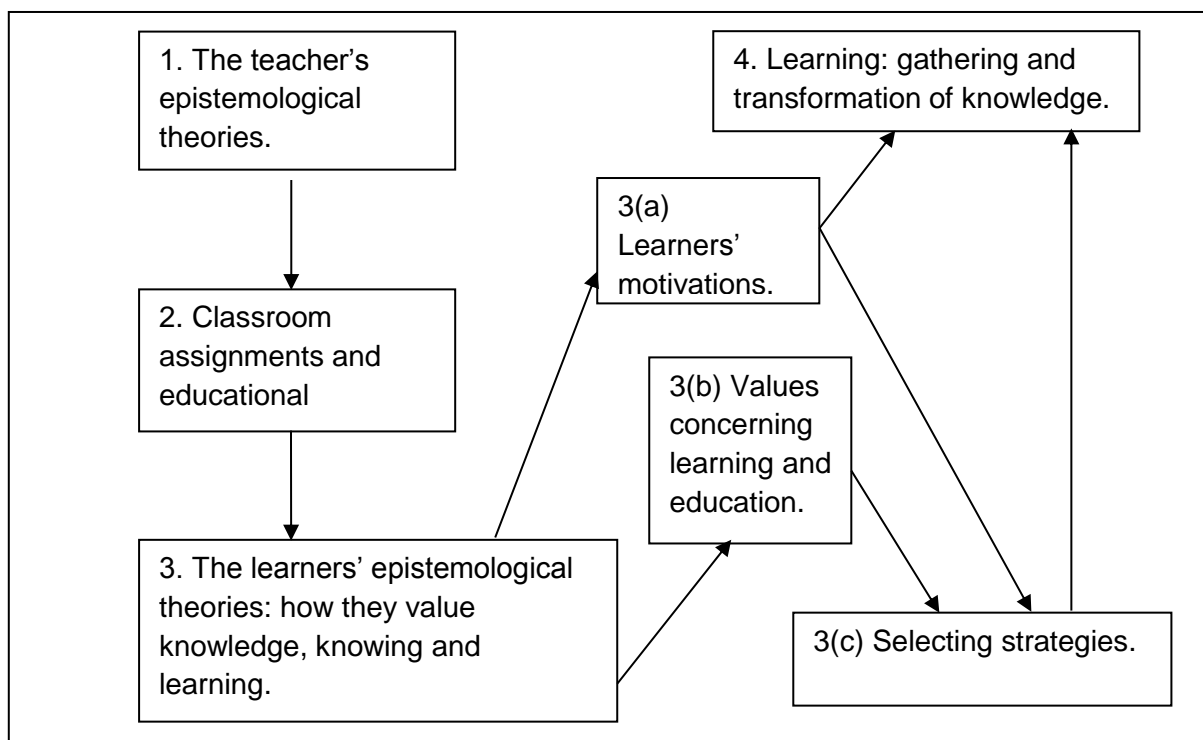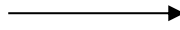
Figure 1: The influence of epistemological theories on learning in the classroom.

Bearing this model of a constructivist classroom in mind, we now move on to the contextualisation of Drama education and how these theories and principles influenced my epistemology and approach to integrating drama techniques into the creative writing process in order to stimulate creativity for the creative writing process.

2.3   A BRIEF CONTEXTUALIZATION OF DRAMA EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Education in the Arts has been part of the South African Education System and Curricula in a limited capacity within certain schools before and after 1994. However, it does not have the same status and priority as education and further development in Technology, Mathematics, Sciences and Literacy. Arts-based schools have been opened in townships and a great deal of money has been granted for the education in the Arts. However, few learners really benefit from this, as most learners and their parents ask the fundamental question: 'What are you going to do with drama/art/music/dance after school?'. Only a select few will go on to be successful in the performing arts and generate an income that will financially sustain them.

Due to the limited work opportunities after school and the increasing emphasis placed on Technology, Mathematics and Sciences, Drama as a subject has become a luxury learning area at some schools, usually private schools. My personal experience in education has only been in the private sector and I may only refer to this, as I have not taught in a public school in South Africa. What I have experienced is that few teachers specialise and/or find work in this field. The classes are usually very small, it is a time consuming subject and has costly resources, which makes it an expensive subject for a select few. Some headmasters struggle to justify its worth to paying parents. The intensified focus on Numeracy, Sciences and Technology it has resulted in Drama ceasing to exist as a subject in some schools.

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This occurrence in itself is troublesome for Nussbaum (2006), a prominent philosopher of education. She advocates the inclusion of the arts in the classroom (academically as well as part of teaching methodology) not only for the holistic development of the child, but also to open their minds and raise awareness about societal issues which again guides them to become democratic citizens. Nussbaum calls on language educators to emphasize the creative process and the arts as "central aspects of the educational experience, […] the intense passion and investments of the teachers, their delight in the progress and also the individuality of their students" (Nussbaum 2006:386).

Thus all educators and parents should strive to raise children who can think for themselves as well as express themselves in a meaningful way – Numeracy, Science and Technology will mean nothing if our children cannot express their knowledge and find creative solutions to problems. The Arts help them discover the world which they inhabit and fosters the creative process that they need to solve complex problems.

2.3.2.1 What is Drama Education and how does learning take place in a Drama classroom?

Many theorists (Slade, 1954; Greger, 1969; Bolton, 1979; Davis & Lawrence, 1986; Hornbrook, 1991, 1998; Peter, 1994; Bailin, 1998; Fleming, 2000; Henry, 2000) discuss the nature of Drama education and have tried to find ways to define the content and methodology of this discipline. Fleming (2000) is of the opinion that it is not "enough to argue for an 'inclusive' approach to drama, … the concept of an 'integrated' approach to the subject is a more helpful way of differentiating practical and theoretical approaches" (2000:34).

The American theorist, Hornbrook (1991) did a great deal of research concerning the movement of "Drama in Education" (1991:10), which has been largely debated. Fleming (2000:34) states that Hornbrook's (1991) theory of 'Drama in Education' may be "regarded as a vagary of history" and it has been categorised, according to Fleming (2000) into contrasting concepts namely, "drama as a form of learning/ drama as play, personal / cultural justifications, and especially internal/ external dimensions of experience" (2000:33). This forces its practitioners and teachers to

make false choices because of the mistaken views and preconceived perceptions attached to 'Drama in Education'. Fleming's (2000) research is focused on an "inclusive approach to drama teaching (which accepts the value of different methods of working such as improvisation, performance, use of text)", which seeks to "integrate content and form, means and ends, and 'internal' and 'external' dimensions of experience" (2000:33).

Fleming (2000) states that 'Drama in Education' is often "defined in terms of what it is not rather than what it is" (Fleming, 2000:34), as "something other than theatre skills, improvisation, role play or performance" (Peter, 1994:5). Teachers and supporters of the 'Drama in Education' movement argue that Hornbrook's (1991) 'Drama in Education' does include "improvisation, performance work, acting, responding to drama and use of play texts in the curriculum" (Fleming, 2000:34). However, essentialist definitions of 'drama as an art form' or 'drama for learning' (which is the foundations of Hornbrook's (1991) 'Drama in Education') have prevented some teachers from using useful techniques, such as mime, movement and dance as "they were not considered to be 'drama'" (Fleming, 2000:36). If one were to place theatre practices at the centre of a Drama curriculum it would help to highlight the public and cultural aspects of the subject. However, this could result in restricting the forms of practice if such "a narrow definition of [drama] is employed" (Fleming, 2000:36).

In the history of drama teaching the relationship between 'drama' and 'play' has been particularly important, but equally debated (Fleming, 2000:36). Slade (1954) feels that 'drama' and 'play' are synonymous, because he sees the "dramatic playing of young children as an art form in its own right" (Fleming, 2000:36). However, later on the term 'play' became one of denigration, for Bolton (1979) believes that students who are not seriously involved with drama at a level of depth, are "merely wallowing in meaningless playing" (Bolton, 1979:29). Similarly, Davis & Lawrence (1986) support the focus shift away from 'make-believe play', which was ironically "once regarded as the fundamental model and building block in educational drama" (Fleming, 2000:36). They felt that it had "too strong an emphasis on direct experiencing" (1986:13). This focus shift, or rather change, in emphasis in drama teaching is summarised by Fleming (2000:36) as "a move from a 'personal' to a

more 'cultural' justification for drama. The history of drama is more normally described in terms of the development of a cultural practice, but writers in educational drama have also given an account of a 'history' of drama in terms of the development of the individual".

Fleming (2000) describes education as "creating meaning or a web of practices … a form of life" (2000:36). He applies this 'form of life' directly to Drama education and teaching and states that "pupils need to be initiated into a practice which has its own rules, customs and conventions" (Fleming, 2000:37). By using the term 'form of life' and referring to general terms such as 'personal' and 'cultural' justifications, Fleming (2000) suggests that drama can equate with many forms of practice – it could easily embrace "process drama as traditional theatre work; the important aspect is that pupils are initiated into forms of knowledge (including for example drama conventions) which are in some sense external to them" (2000:37). He goes further by suggesting that the 'personal' justification for drama is based more "on what is 'given', and recognises that children have a natural propensity for dramatic playing which needs to be nurtured" (Fleming, 2000:37).

From my experience in Drama education I have dealt with two curriculums which embody these contrasting views in terms of 1) drama as an academic subject, 20 drama as a teaching method and finally 3) theatre as an educational tool. The Cambridge (CIE) IGCSE Drama curriculum (see 2.3.3.1) is very much focused on the performance of an own devised play. However, the drama learner should also be able to answer contextual questions based on one specific genre and style of play text. The questions vary from character analysis to the structure of the play, as well as the dominant themes and motifs evident in the play. In my opinion the emphasis of this course is firstly on the acquirement of theoretical knowledge, revising one specific style and its characteristics in terms of applying it to a specific play script, and then answering questions. Secondly, the focus on the practical aspect of the subject is divided. On the one hand, the learners have to perform a scene and a monologue, whilst on the other they have to write a script which they must perform. From my experience teaching this Drama curriculum (CIE), a great amount of time was spent on the theoretical content as well as on the script writing. As a result the time spent on the development of practical performance skills was very limited.

On the other hand, we have the RNCS 2007 and CAPS (2014) curriculums of South Africa (see 2.3.3), which similarly require learners to answer textually based questions, as well as perform extracts, in the form of monologues and scenes from published plays.   The difference here is that the Drama curriculum stretches over three years, which means that the teacher and learners have more time to work through the theoretical and practical components of the subject. However, this curriculum (RNCS 2007) does not require learners to write their own performance piece for their final examinations. When I first realised that the CIE learners had to write their own performance piece, I reacted negatively. I realised that the writing process would have a negative impact on the available dedicated time. However, the fact that I was busy with theoretical research on drama teaching enabled me to create an inclusive and integrated drama programme, in which I could use drama techniques to stimulate creativity for writing. The writing programme provided opportunities to develop not only writing skills, but also performance skills which were embedded in the theoretical 'theatre history' components of the subject. Consequently, drama provided me with many opportunities to ensure that learning and knowledge acquisition took place in my classroom.

Thus, the 'cultural' and 'personal' justifications of the subject should not be categorised separately as "…'drama for learning' (or understanding) and 'drama as an art form'… (when drama is taught as a separate subject discipline)" (Fleming, 2000:38-39). The inclusive and integrated approach to teaching drama, as suggested by Fleming (2000) demonstrates that drama is about "understanding human situations, the learning involved is embodied uniquely in the art form". Therefore, the separation of form and content in Drama teaching is not appropriate, for as Abbs (1992) aptly states "[t]he art created is the meaning; it does not have to be extricated to serve propositional knowledge" (1992:5).

2.3.2.2 Drama and its ways of learning and constructing knowledge and meaning.

"It is a curious thing that human learning is seldom seen as a dramatic happening" (Phillips, 1995:94), but what is even more curious is, that during this century where there has been a noticeable enquiry into the clarification of what learning is and how

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this could inform and influence the way we teach, "little notice has been taken of the developments in the dramatic arts" (Phillips, 1995:94).

From reading the few available (and dated) articles about drama teaching and education, it has become evident that writers about drama practice in the classroom try to dismiss the "… 'romantic', 'personal growth', 'self-expression' justification for teaching the subject based on the notion of 'drama as play'…" (Fleming, 2000:38). However, by denying the fact that learning in a Drama class occurs through play, is to deny "drama's origins in natural forms of activities which have practical implications for planning. It is also incidentally a reminder of the importance of such experiential qualities as 'engagement', 'delight' and 'ownership' which can easily be lost" in the constant quest by some theorists for the public accountability and objectivity of the subject" (Fleming, 2000:38).

2.3.2.1   *Drama and Development in Learning*

According to social constructivism (Salomon & Perkins, 1998), learning is an interactive event in which "knowledge, understandings, and meanings gradually emerge through interaction and become distributed among those interacting rather than (being) individually constructed or possessed" (Salomon & Perkins, 1998:59). Phillips (1995) builds on Stanislavski's definition of drama as "an art in which several persons are engaged in recreating the life of the human spirit" (Stanislavski, 1967:vi), and states that learning is essential to living:

> Living may be essentially characterised as being caught up in a sequence of events to which we adapt and where a great existential uncertainty must always hold sway about where we are going and where we are coming from (Phillips, 1995:95).

Henry (2000) investigated how different actors and theatre practitioners learnt through drama and the process of performance – "[t]hese actors considered their work as a study or search, which yielded both observable data on life and a mystical knowledge of Being" (2000:48).   Her research revealed that the two actors Siddons and Bernhardt went through a personal search whilst preparing for their roles and this search led to a type of 'transcendent knowledge' construction (Henry, 2000:48). Sir Laurence Olivier's process of preparation was to research the essence of human

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beings and then compare his findings to Cassirer's philosophy that "[t]he artist is just as much a discoverer of the forms of nature as the scientist is a discoverer of facts or natural laws" (Cassirer, 1953:29). Similarly, "Grotowski, Malina, Buber, Schechner and Ionesco connected acting with a deeper level of knowledge about life" (Henry, 2000:48). All of these perspectives point to what can be learnt from drama, "questions of Being, of life, of relatedness" (Henry, 2000:48).

Slade (1995) investigates and draws connections between drama and development. He identifies two processes of play which contributes to the development process, namely "Personal Play and Projected Play" (1995:3). Slade defines 'Projected Play' as the beginning stages of development where children are playing with external objects. As the child develops and grows, this type of play takes on the "form of intellectual play with the 'three R's" (Slade, 1995:3). This then develops, along with the child, into the more advanced stage of play, which is known as 'Personal Play': "which uses the whole body and self as in sports and performance and which yields the 'Experience' which can never be taken away" (Slade, 1995:3). Therefore, Slade's (1995) definition of the development of learning finds itself connected to "experience rather than intellect, in terms of the 'whole self' rather than cerebral activity, and in terms of interaction rather than isolation" (Henry, 2000:49). In his earlier works he coined the phrase of "Inflow/Outflow" in the learning process. This is closely connected to his later work of 'Personal' and 'Projected Play'.

In earlier years, Slade (1954) researched how drama impacted the learning process. He states that the early years is a time of creative self-expression, in other words 'Outflow', until the child enters the stage or rather "the Dawn of Seriousness" (Slade, 1954:73), where intellectual learning occurs. Consequently, the 'Outflow' precedes the 'Inflow', which means that the self-expression precedes the information gathering process, which is then once again transformed into 'Outflow' as the knowledge gathered must be tried out, exercised and experienced by incorporating the body and feelings through drama (Henry, 2000:49). Both of Slade's models (1954, 1995) outline a "child-centred constructivist mode of exploration and development through drama" (Henry, 2000:49). He also used the catharsis (originated from Greek theatre) as a tool for development through dramatic action. Slade (1954) states that the "training in the emotions is one thing that has been lacking above all else" (1954:73). Erickson (1972) suggests that dramatic play in the developmental years of children is

the "infantile model of the playwright's work" (1972:133). He further states that dramatic and socio-dramatic play offer opportunities for children through which they construct their knowledge differently than through games which involve fixed rules, competition and achievement.

Furthermore, Jungian therapy acknowledges the "dramas people naturally play from using 'theatrical logic" (Hillman, 1983; Henry, 2000). This 'theatrical logic' is concerned with understanding "the dreaming soul from within" (Hillman, 1983:50). In other words "tracing personal experiences as opposed to understanding them from the outside" (Henry, 2000:50). Theatrical logic means that the person is thinking as a character, in role. It is a "logic of Being, an ontology rather than an epistemology. Theatre after all, acts upon Being …" (Henry, 2000:50). As Geertz (1983) explains drama: it is "the enveloping movement of the whole drama on the soul of man. We surrender and are changed" (1983:28). Considering all of the abovementioned arguments drama is concerned with the teaching of and the "learning [of] how to Be, a learning for the sake of Being" (Henry, 2000:50).

Therefore, Drama is seen as a tool for learning and teaching which "expands the parameters of what can be seen as legitimate knowledge", and for freedom to "experience and explore the issues of human concern and intellectual inquiry" (Carroll, 1988:21). Drama also provides a learning site for "constructing subjectivity, which operates at the nexus of intelligences and emotion. Thought is charged with feeling, while feeling is refined and strengthened by thought" (Misson, 1996:11). Furthermore, Trinder (1977) argues that drama provides children with opportunities to explore and rehearse a repertoire of behaviours, which are part of developing and "constituting the self. Drama teaches empathy" (Trinder, 1977:38), and finally Bolton (1984) states that drama is "an unselfing – making the subjective objective" (1984:45). Considering all of these viewpoints, it is safe to say that in the learning process of drama, issues of affect and cognition, action and personal knowledge, Being and development, are engaged with each other. Consequently, drama techniques are wonderful tools for teaching and learning, as it helps with the holistic and not only academic development of the child.

2.3.2.2 *Drama as research in learning.*

When we consider the research process, it is mainly concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and researchers have compared this process of research with drama (Turner, 1974; McDermott, 1973; Courtney, 1990).

Henry (2000) states that "people's living dramas are the sources of knowledge" (2000:50). All humans experiment and learn from the events in their lives. We make choices based on our experiences, be it personal or impersonal. McDermott (1973) explains this connection between drama and research as the construction of knowledge through "[o]ur undergoings [which] are experiments varying the course of events: our active tryings are trails and tests of ourselves" (1973:63). Courtney (1990) supports this theory by affirming that "[l]earning from experience, like doing drama, entails constant hypothesising" (1990:9). LeDoux (1996) researched this notion of hypothesis testing by referring to the work of the cognitive psychologist Johnson-Laird and concludes that:

> If the human mind is a formal logic machine, it is a pretty poor one. People are rational. According to Johnson-Laird, they don't just achieve their rationality by following formal laws of logic. We use what Johnson-laird calls mental models, hypothetical examples drawn from our past experiences in real life or from imagined situations (1996:35).

The tools qualitative researchers use closely resembles skills that actors or drama students use in their preparation for roles or in their performances. Both these disciplines require a "sensitive and self-reflexive response to the environment, a willingness to improvise and to take risks employing multiple roles and changing settings" (Henry, 2000:51). Therefore, both draw on inferred knowledge involving intuition and affect, personal and/or social realities in which they try to find coherence in the many voices (of the participants/characters) while acknowledging and adhering to the script. Henry (2000:51) states that the "playwright's script is like the researcher's strategy. Both employ linguistic figures like metaphors and symbols, structures and communicative meaning". Consequently, both disciplines involve ways of knowing which people use to learn and construct meaning in their everyday lives.

When we consider the Drama classroom the way of learning can be considered as a way of research. Research, like drama is a way of constructing knowledge from an experiential experiment (Henry, 2000:52). Learners are expected to enact scenes to learn by "exploring the kinaesthetic and interactive possibilities of a given idea, expanding knowledge from an abstract starting point" (Henry, 2000:52). Research, like drama, reveals information about situations and participants as they unfold. Therefore, the "experience through which the qualitative researcher learns, and that through which the actor learns, are qualitatively similar" (Henry, 2000:52). Furthermore, the drama classroom provides teachers and learners alike with information and sources which facilitates their dialogue. The learners gain extra-cognitive knowledge through their own experience of action and feeling, drawing from their experience as they used their own bodies to "[inscribe] events in time and space, while gathering a multidimensional experience of an event" (Henry, 2000:52). But more importantly, the learners reveal their newly constructed knowledge in much more detail than they would have in mere short questions and answers. From my personal experience, I have also seen that learners discover aspects of their personalities and selves in these performance episodes. Henry (2000) has experienced the same phenomenon and states that this discovery of the self is "not the least of which is the significance of their individual perspectives and participation" (Henry, 2000:52).

Like Henry (2000), I have witnessed how learners discover and empower themselves in "action, through heightened awareness and through developing the courage to explore actions and interactions" (Henry, 2000:52). However, for research and drama there are also negative possibilities. Henry (2000) describes these as follows: there should not be too much control over the process, for this would undermine the results. The leader or facilitator of drama and research should be inconspicuous; otherwise the findings will only reveal this individual's personal perspective and little else. The drama experience can quickly transform into a situation where the actor is merely imitating and repeating the rehearsed line, likewise, in research, the researcher aims to "get it right … which generates no new questions … [and] the research questions [give] only a predicted outcome" (Henry, 2000:53). The environment in which these temporal forms take place cannot be overly controlled. Both processes require sensitive listening to the participants and

patience for the process which is taking place, in order to reap the richest knowledge from the experiences. Like research, drama provides a "study of experiences in the immediacy of its living ground, explicitly employing both an imaginary and an actual frame of reference" (Henry, 2000:52),

2.3.2.3   *The experience of learning through Drama.*

For this research in particular it is important to understand how an individual can learn through the experience of drama. Henry (2000) states that drama assists the learner in creating "personal and imaginary worlds, which serve as media for learning" (2000:53). My research strives to discover how drama techniques can stimulate creativity for the creative writing process. The created writing programmes (see chapter 4) will be implemented in the drama classroom and include drama activities and techniques in order to assist learners to 'learn' how to use their dormant creativity in their writing. Therefore, the principles of drama teaching and learning through drama activity will be invaluable.

Similar to Henry (2000) and Ross (1996), I will have to utilize the 'world-making' principle. This method of creating personal worlds is a learning process that moves "in a direction opposite to many kinds of learning, in that it begins with an idea, an analytic or abstract form of knowledge, and shapes it into contextual knowledge" (Henry, 2000:53). Drama provides learners to create worlds that enrich and cultivate meaning, but more so, the world-creation process invokes the tacit resources for recreating our own worlds. This transformation indicates learning from our experiences, dealing with them and transforming our knowledge about our worlds and how we function within them. The "creative art of world-making" (Ross, 1996:48) is a process where learners learn about both the objective world of form and the inner world of feelings. For example, artistic creations can outwardly occur on a stage or even a canvas, whilst the learning occurs inwardly in the mind and imagination (Henry, 2000:53). Of all of the arts, Drama uses the 'world-making' principle the most as it acts as a link between the inner and outer worlds of the learner; it "invokes the basic, world-making principles of the agon" (Ross, 1996:48).

Henry (2000) explains that a child's experience of the world-creation "renders the world tolerable and accessible – the child create imaginary worlds as a bridge to

experiencing the actual world" (2000:53). This shows that drama envelops and transforms its students. Henry (1999) mentions that this is most evident in the performance of self-scripted works, for drama becomes transformative and empowering "as a way of telling one's own story in one's own dramatic way. It is a means of replicating an overwhelming experience with one's own script" (1999:114).

The diagram on the next page indicates the world-creating process of how actor's (drama students) learn through their experience of performance (or in the drama classroom).
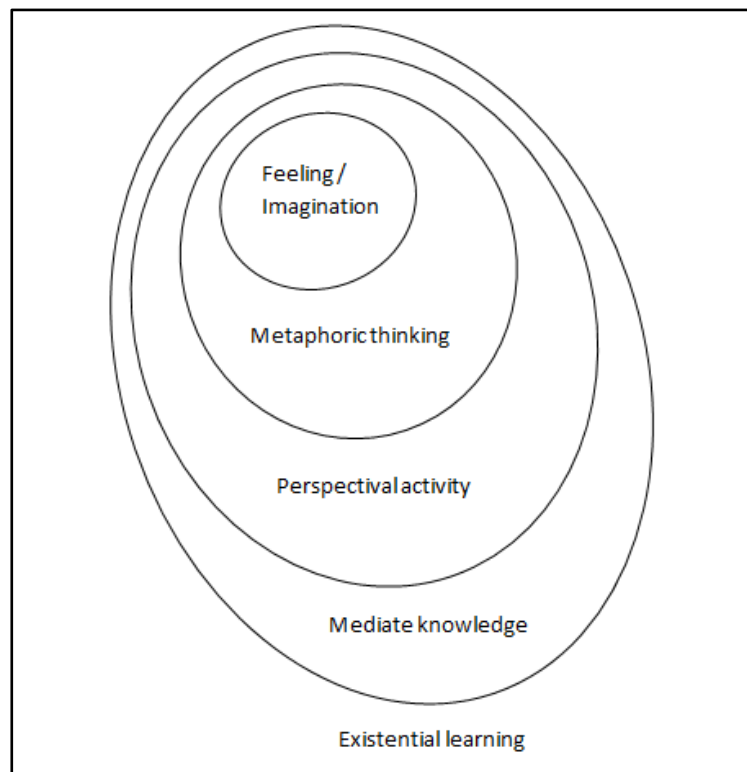
Figure 2: The experience of learning through drama (Henry, 1999:114)

Henry (1999) states that these concentric orbs are not static and that they radiate inwardly and outwardly influencing each other. The inner orb deals with feelings and imagination. As previously established, the process of learning through drama is both a passive and active process in the feelings and imagination of the learners. Feelings and imaginations "inform the personal world which one creates as a metaphor for reality" (Henry, 1999:114). Best (1989) states that in his research on the rationality of emotional experience through the arts and in all learning he found "feelings to be inseparable form cognition" (1989:41). Furthermore, he believes that the arts are "social and public and reflect one's 'philosophy of mind', and of

language" (Best, 1989:xv). Some might argue that these terms are too metaphysical and intangible to measure the cognitive learning process. However, scientific research and studies of epistemological development (Goleman, 1995; LeDoux, 1996) have shown that feelings are involved in ethical and sometimes higher cognitive thinking: similarly studies of emotions (LeDoux, 1996) have also found that feelings can be regarded as a form of cognition.

The second orb deals with metaphoric thinking which is fuelled by imagination and feeling. We need our feelings for cognitive apprehension in order to "generate metaphors to understand and know our worlds" (Henry, 2000:55) and in order to transform these 'worlds'. Burner (1979) states that in drama we use symbols and metaphors which "[defy] literal categorisation, … leap beyond, … explore connections" (1979:19) in order to reveal the deeper emotional meaning of an experience. Boal (1995) refers to a prominent metaphor used in drama as metaxis, which means "belonging to two different worlds" (1995:43). Evidence of the cognitive work required for metaphoric activity, is seen in the actor or drama student when they are performing (Courtney, 1995). An actor on stage creates and functions in an imaginary world, through an ordinary act which provokes feelings and ideas in the audience. The actor and audience use these double worlds to compare, contrast and conceptualise their ideas of fiction and reality (Henry, 2000:55). Therefore, learning is seen in this process of deconstruction, reconstruction and transformation of reality, "moving between the actual world and that of the imagination" (Henry, 2000:55).

The third orb of learning through drama is concerned with the perspectival activity of the actor or drama student. During the performance process, the actor enters the world of the Other. By doing this they learn about the perspective of the Other and by entering this world of the Other, they are constructing their knowledge by 'stepping into someone else's shoes'. With this type of freedom in drama comes creative responsibility as "actors must understand the deeply personal perspective of the characters they play, the perspectives of other characters and the total perspective being created by the drama as a whole" (Henry, 1999:252). The actors and learners alike, are taught to be able to switch their perspectives and to consider all of the different perspectives which constitutes to the meaning making process. Henry (1999) states that drama as a whole is perspectival and contributes to learning

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through perspectival activities. The stage acts as a lens which focuses on different perspectives in the same reality. In all learning, "wider and deeper perspectives are the hallmarks of wisdom and knowledge, while understanding many different perspectives comes from and contributes to maturity of feeling" (1999:252).

The fourth orb looks at how we mediate knowledge in drama. Props, décor, sets and different worlds (also known as symbols) are media for learning. Similarly the actor himself is also a medium for learning through his physical and inner experiences. The term 'mediate knowledge' is used to explain learning through media, like the arts. It acts as a bridge between the subjective and the objective. The stage becomes a world full of media in which the actor has to find and "create meaning out of the chaos" (Henry, 1999:27). The character, which the actor is portraying, "recurrently loses and re-establishes equilibrium with his surroundings. The passage from disturbance into harmony is that of intensest life" (Turner & Bruner, 1986:38). Therefore, the impulse for theatre comes from daily life where we constantly seek and struggle to make meaning of our perspective realities. Turner & Burner (1986) state that this developmental process of learning to make meaning "germinate[s] in the scenes and objects of human experience" (1986:38) and that theatre "embraces ideas and images of cosmos and chaos" which are derived from "mythic and heroic plots drawn from oral traditions" (1986:43). Furthermore, they state that "the restless need for meaning finds satisfaction in the concreteness of drama" (Turner & Burner, 1986:43). Therefore, by using media and symbols, drama becomes a means of "making inner meanings public" (Henry, 2000:58).

The last orb deals with the construction of existential learning. As previously discussed, drama is not merely concerned with the teaching and learning of 'drama as an art form" (Fleming, 2000:34) which deals with the theoretical underpinning of theatre history, but rather with the holistic development of learners (see 2.2). Louis Arnaud Reid (1985) sees learning in the arts as "personal interactions with the world, a natural form of learning insofar as learning is always personal" (1985:145). Artistic learning is concerned with the "processual. It does not come from a preconception, but rather emerges through processes both of the artist's interaction with materials, and of the viewer's personal encounter with the work" (Henry, 2000:58). Drama provides a form of learning that is closely connected to how we experience life on a daily basis.

If teaching and learning can occur through Henry's (1999) model of learning through drama, the learners will be encouraged to use their active imagination, connect with the feelings and express these emotions with perceptiveness. They, themselves become active role-players and constructers of meaning and knowledge which they can employ to transform their worlds, instead of being passive receivers. More importantly, through this experiential learning process "a space of freedom may open up … a power to choose" (Greene, 1987:48).

The United States of America called for a reintroduction of the arts in their schools for they believe that "to lack an education in the arts is to be profoundly disconnected". More importantly they urge the development of arts education in order to "secure a human future for [their and ultimately all of] our children" (Henry, 2000:47). Drama as a subject is supposed to be fun and a way to escape from the world. Imaginative thinking, the development of creativity and constructing knowledge and learning through play are the corner stones for a constructivist, inclusive and integrated education. All children should have the opportunity to experience this – "[t]he personal development of the pupil is really the whole raison d'être of the arts curricula" (Witkin, 1974:49).

This brings us to the curricula, which was briefly mentioned before. I will discuss The University of Cambridge Curriculum (CIE), as this is the curriculum I taught at the research site, and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) 2007 and CAPS 2014 documents, in order to establish if there are correlations between the two curricula and to ascertain if the creative writing programme would be able to function in a South African school system.

2.3.3   The Drama / Dramatic Arts Curricula

As stated before, I have taught Drama in the context of a two curricula. Luckily, the core values of the subject have remained the same; only the focus points and their importance have varied. The curriculum that formed the context for my research was The University of Cambridge International Curriculum (CIE). I did, however, at the time complete my honours degree in Education and I had studied and understood the Revised National Curriculum (RNCS 2007) . While researching and

devising the creative writing programme, I kept the RNCS 2007 in mind, to ensure that the research could be applied in a standard South African school as well.

2.3.3.1   The University of Cambridge International Curriculum (CIE)

Learners of The University of Cambridge International Examinations[2] Curriculum (CIE 2014) write the International General Certificate in Education (IGCSE) at the end of June in their Grade 11 year. Learners can then choose to further their studies with 'AS' levels (Advanced Subsidiary) and then 'A' levels (Advanced levels) before they go to University or College. Drama as a subject cannot be taken at AS or A levels. The end of Drama studies is thus in June of Grade 11. The aims of the Cambridge International Examination board (CIE 2014) are described as follows in their annual Drama Syllabus:

> Through practical and theoretical study, the Cambridge IGCSE Drama syllabus encourages students to understand and enjoy drama by:
> - developing their performance skills, both individually and in groups
> - considering ways in which ideas and feelings can be communicated to an audience
> - discovering the performance possibilities of texts and other stimuli
> - devising dramatic material of their own.
>
> (CIE, 2014)

It is the drama educator's responsibility to ensure that the learners have the theoretical knowledge to be able to answer numerous questions about an unseen text and the historical genre it comes from in these final examinations. The educator is thus not restricted by a set curriculum for the Grade 9 and Grade 10 years, but rather encouraged to teach as many theatrical eras and genres as possible in this time (more about this in 2.3.4.1 – 2.3.4.4 and 2.5.3). The learners and the teacher then receive an extract from a prescribed text six months before the Theoretical Examination (Paper 1) is written (CIE 2014). During this time, the teacher then revises the theoretical background of the genre of the text and conduct a full textual analysis of the prescribed text. The teacher and learners also receive the Coursework paper, or better known in South Africa, as the Practical Examination

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[2] From now on only referred to as the Cambridge Curriculum or CIEC.

(Paper 2). This paper requires the learners to perform one monologue, a scene[3] and an own devised piece[4]. The own devised piece was the initial inspiration for this research. I had to teach these drama learners how to write a dramatic piece, which should be performed in front of an audience. The learners were so anxious that it took them more than a week to conceptualize one idea. This is where the research was born, because I started to play improvisation and characterization games with the learners to stimulate their creative thoughts. More of this in chapter 4 where I discuss the drama techniques as they took place in the classroom.

However, what shocked me was that of the total 100 marks accumulated through paper 1 and paper 2, thirty of these marks were for the writing of the own devised piece.

		Assessment Objective	
Components	A: Understanding	B: Devising	C: Performing skills
1 Written examination	20	20	—
2 Coursework	15	15	30
Total	35	35	30

Figure 3: Assessment Objectives for IGCSE Drama (CIE IGCSE Drama 0411 2014:7)

Consequently 30% of the Drama curriculum was creative writing and expressing their understanding of the set work. However, the sources supplied to the learners shocked me even more - the learners only received an A4 page with three statements on it (see Addendum D1). There were no pictures or stimuli. It is subsequently, the responsibility of the Drama teacher, who is not necessarily a language teacher or creative writer him/herself to provide enough creative stimuli and leadership in the drama classroom without writing the text for the learners. The only guidance the teacher receives is in the syllabus is found below in figure 2:

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[3] Which is a dialogue or an extract from a published play with more than two characters interacting with each other.

[4] A piece of creative writing, in the form of a play, which will have to be performed in front of a live audience as well as recorded for the University of Cambridge's International Examination Board.

Figure 4: Guidance for Drama teachers on the devised writing pieces. (CIE IGCSE Drama 0411 2014:10)

If one studies the table above, it is evident that the learners should already be familiar with dramatic styles and techniques by this time. The ViaAfrika (then OBE for FET) textbooks[5] are generally used (in South Africa) to teach the numerous dramatic styles and genres in the Dramatic Arts, before we entered the IGCSE year. The table above changes each year, so the teacher should always be sure that the learners are theoretically prepared to adhere to the assessment objectives given by the Cambridge Curriculum (CIE) as follows:

A – Understanding

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate understanding of:

• the performance possibilities of text and other stimuli, and

• the differing roles of actor, director, stage manager and technician in its realisation.

B – Devising

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to devise dramatic material and reflect on its effectiveness.

C – Performing Skills

Candidates will be assessed on their performing skills in Drama.

(CIE IGCSE Drama 0411, 2014:10)

From the discussion one can gather that the Drama teacher has a lot of freedom in the CIE to teach the Drama curriculum, but when it comes to guidance for the own devised performance pieces, which carry a considerable assessment weight, this freedom can result in extreme anxiety for both parties. Consequently, the drama

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[5] OBE for FET and ViaAfrika textbooks are South African published textbooks which provides information on the major Dramatic Styles and techniques in the Performing Arts world. These were readily available and that is why I chose to use them – they are also prescribed by the government for the Dramatic Arts in the South African education system.

learners will have to use their knowledge and acquired skills form their language education to assist them in this task. However, this is where I encountered the lack of motivation and the negative attitudes learners fostered towards creative writing tasks. They did not know how to creatively explore the provided topics (see Addendum D1) in order to create an authentic text which they could use for their final performance.

The fact that the Drama curriculum of the CIE encourages inter-disciplinary use of acquired skills is a valuable experience for learners and teachers alike. However, these learners had never been required to do a task like this in any of their subject. Their anxiety was completely understandable.

I was fresh from university at the beginning of this project. Not only did I wish to create a creative writing programme that would encourage cross-curricular teaching (between drama and English), but could also wanted it to be used in other curriculums other than the CIE. As a result I now turned to the requirements for the drama course as stipulated by the RNCS 2007 and CAPS (2014) curriculums of South Africa.

2.3.3.2   *The Revised National Curriculum Statement 2007[6] (RNCS) and CAPS (2014)*

The RNCS 2007 was the curriculum followed in South Africa at the time of the research. As I mentioned in my discussion of the Cambridge IGCSE Drama curriculum (CIE IGCSE Drama 0411, 2014) in 2.3.3.1, I stated that the learner had to be theoretically prepared to answer questions on any dramatic genre, styles and techniques during their IGCSE examination. Being familiar with the RNCS 2007 curriculum, I decided to follow the basic layout of this curriculum, in order to ensure that the learners had theoretically sound knowledge of all of the theatrical eras, styles, genres and staging and performance techniques.

The RNCS 2007 required of learners to be able to answer a theoretical written examination (Paper 1) and produce a practical performance programme (Paper 2) at

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[6] Referred to onwards as RNCS 2007

the end of Grade 12. Consequently, all of the theoretical work covered in Grade 10 and Grade 11 prepared the learner for the theoretical work done in Grade 12. The learner could not attempt to understand the work in Grade 12 if they did not have the theoretical foundation of Grade 10 and Grade 11. In my opinion, this course was theoretically more rigorous than that of the Cambridge Curriculum (CIE). Similarly, the learners were required to perform an individual piece (be it a prose, poem or monologue), a scene and an own choice – all conceptualized around a selected theme. The learners were allowed to add songs and music or extracts (all based on the selected theme) to serve as bridges between the performance pieces. The learners were, however, not required to produce a piece which they have written themselves. (Department of Basic Education, 2011: 52)

Theoretically, in Grade 10 the journey in the Dramatic Arts in South Africa started with Ancient Greece, continued on to Medieval Theatre, explored Commedia dell' Arte (see 2.3.4.4 for detail on this theatrical era) and then ends with South African theatre, which at present is usually a film. I chose to omit this with the CIE IGCSE drama students, as the probability of the University of Cambridge setting a South African prescribed text was slim. The journey continued in Grade 11, when the learners discovered the theatre practitioner Konstantin Stanislavski and Realism in theatre (see 2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3 for detail on this theatrical era). They moved on to Elizabethan times with William Shakespeare's texts, learned more about Asian theatre (one genre could be selected) and then a last module on South African theatre, usually a Realist text. Then in Grade 12, the learners discovered 20th Century 'isms', Epic Theatre and Absurd theatre (with a prescribed text), they looked at Grotowski and his Poor Theatre as well as Post-Modernism as a genre (with a prescribed text). They ended with a compulsory South African Theatre text (Department of Basic Education, 2011: 8 – 12).

As one can gather, the teacher of the Dramatic Arts, especially in the Cambridge Curriculum, needs to ensure that the learner has a very broad understanding of theatre through the ages. As they enter the IGCSE course, time can only really be spent on revising certain genres, eras, philosophies and practitioners in order to assist them in the preparation process for the theoretical and practical examinations.

I chose to use three fundamental movements in Drama history (each which had been taught and studied) to assist the learners in unlocking their creativity in the drama classroom. This experience should then be applied in the creative writing process – be it in the drama or language classroom. As mentioned before, I opted to use one of the South African textbooks (Ciro *et al*., 2012: ViaAfrika), even though the learners were studying the CIE curriculum. The modules are categorized in different age groups for the South African curriculum, but because we had more freedom in the CIE Curriculum, I could use my discretion and, basically, pick and choose different movements from different year groups in order to prepare my learners fully for the CIE IGCSE drama examination, with particular focus on Paper 2 (own devised piece).

The grade 9 learners studied Commedia dell' Arte, Realism and Konstantin Stanislavski and Jerzy Grotowski and his Poor Theatre. These three movements form the foundation of my research, concerning the drama techniques used in order to unlock creativity for the creative writing process.

Beatrice Furner (1973) is an associate professor at the University of Iowa City in the United States and also conducted a study on the Dramatic Techniques used for Creative Writing. In her article she compares her model of the creative writing process (which I will discuss later) with the "creative dramatics experience" (1973: 407) and finds numerous similarities. According to Furner there are four fundamental steps to the "creative dramatics experience":

1. Warm-up exercises. (Preparatory physical and vocal exercises related to the topic.)
2. Individual or pair expressive activities.
3. Large group or class dramatization.
4. Reflection, discussion, and relaxation.
(Furner, 1973: 407)

I used this model to create the creative space for learners to engage actively with each other, in order to devise a piece of creative writing, in the form of a formal drama dialogue text. Beatrice Furner's research, however, is based on the creative

writing experience of primary school learners, ranging from Grade 2 to Grade 6. My research focuses on Grade 9 learners. I have adapted Furner's (1973) methodology of the "creative dramatic experience" to suit the needs of older learners. Their writing needs to be much more extensive and it has to be based on dramatic genres as stipulated by the Cambridge Curriculum (see 2.3.3.1, figure 4, CIE IGCSE Drama 0411, 2014:10).

In the next few pages, I will give you a very brief and concise summary of what the learners encounter in the Drama curriculum – this is very important in order to understand how and why theatre evolved the way it did. I will, however, focus specifically on the abovementioned movements which I taught in the grade 9 (preparing for IGCSE) drama classroom.

2.3.4   Dramatic Arts Philosophers, Principles, Techniques and their Historical Contexts

Before structured theatre emerged in the Ancient Greek times, storytelling was part of the everyday life of communities and tribes. We see this in archaeological drawings by ancient tribes where the migration patterns of animals as well as the hunting rituals are documented. Storytelling has never only had the sole purpose of entertainment and escape, but has also been part of the greater educational experience. Religious rites and rituals, cultural practices and tribal wisdom have been passed down from generation to generation and some of these stories still exist in the folk tongue of some African tribes. One example of this is found in the novel by Chinua Achebe (1958) Things fall Apart. In modern times, we do not draw on cave walls or dance around community fires telling our stories. We rather write them down in books, or encrypt them on blogs and clouds in the technological space. However, drama and the performing arts still form an integral part in the storytelling process (Nicoll, 1961; Ciro *et. al*, 2012).

2.3.4.1   Performing Arts Historical Context

The performing arts have always walked hand in hand with wonderful writers. In Ancient Greece we had Sophocles writing his bloody Orestes trilogy and Euripides with his famous Medea (Nicoll, 1961:51,69). Medieval times saw to the development of secular drama which told the stories of Christ and His miracles, but also created

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the famous 'Everyman' type character which has been adopted in many modern plays (Nicoll, 1961:164). We have laughed and cried at the spectacles and tragedies created by Shakespeare, who is understandably one of the most famous Elizabethan playwrights of all time (Nicoll, 1961: 268). We have the situation comedies which had their origin in Italy in the 14th Century during the Commedia dell' Arte era (Nicoll, 1961:180) and which gave birth to the 'sit-com' as we know it today. However, the thirst for addressing and seeing life as it really is, led to the emergence of Realism in the late 20th century. Practitioners and audiences wanted to see a "slice of life" mirrored on the stage and this also led to the emergence of the well-known structure of the "well-made play" invented by Eugene Scribe. As Realism as a genre developed, audiences were introduced to the works of Anton Checkov, George Bernard Shaw and Henrik Ibsen. All of these playwrights revolted against the neat and very formulated structure of the "well-made play" (Nicoll, 1961: 524, 559). They wanted the characters to tell the story. This is where the link between drama and creative writing lies – the stories told by characters and their motivations to make choices.

I referred earlier to Furner's (1973), methodological method of the "creative dramatics experience" (1973: 407). I used the following practitioners and their movements in theatre in accordance with her method.

For the initiating stage or in Furner's words the "[w]arm-up exercises. (Preparatory physical and vocal exercises related to the topic)" (Furner, 1973: 407), I utilized Jerzy Grotowski and his Poor Theatre techniques. To understand how this is appropriate, one needs to comprehend what his principles and philosophies entail.

2.3.4.2   *Jerzy Grotowski and his Poor Theatre*

Jerzy Grotowski (11/08/1933 – 14/01/1999) was a Polish theatre practitioner, who was focused on stripping theatre of all artifice and going back to the bare essentials of performance, hence the name of his type of theatre: Poor Theatre. Part of this experimental theatre movement was his Laboratory Theatre and Paratheatre. Once again, this explanation does not seek to discuss all the intricate details of Grotowski's method, but rather to give a basic understanding and insight to his methods. These methods were used in their simplest form in the school classroom

in order to activate creative thoughts, by means of warm-up exercises, which would later be used in a creative writing exercise.

As mentioned before, Poor Theatre (1993) strives to strip the actor of all external artifice. This means that the actor is completely dependent on his imagination, creativity and memory to create a character. Actors were not allowed to change costume or use make-up. They had to create their own music and sing their own songs, and no extra props were allowed on the stage; so what you start with is what you will end with. This type of theatre became like a laboratory which motivated actors to experiment and this is where "theatre mechanics" (as part of Laboratory theatre) came into being. This theatre technique, "theatre mechanics", implies that the actor should take certain objects and change their literal meaning to become figurative. Most people do this at a certain stage in their childhood, for example taking a hairbrush and changing it into a microphone or using a chair as a type of 'cave' to hide in. This technique forced actors to re-discover their 'inner creative child' and to play with objects and to add new meaning to these objects.

Like Stanislavski (see 2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3 for more on this practitioner), Grotowski emphasized contact with other actors and focused on developing greater spontaneity, interaction and receptiveness. Owen Daly who trained with Grotowski said:

> Grotowski's focus was nothing less than the foundations of human communication, the alphabet and syllables, the melodies and movements with which we communicate our inner selves to others. […] He was interested in the inner self at the level where we are all fundamentally the same – that we each recognize it as part of ourself when we come in contact with it. (Daly, 2014)

Grotowski's (1993) principles and techniques were integrated into the classroom by means of play. The learner started with an object and could only use his voice and body to give a different meaning to the object. This activity seeks not only to release the imagination and to help the learner think out of the proverbial box, but also to react quickly and instinctively – not to produce a reaction that they think the teacher will approve of, but rather to show something that feels right and appropriate for the situation. Drama teachers often refer to this exercise as theatre sports. It physically

stretches and exercises the imagination and creative ability and skills. After the activity a reflection opportunity is given, be this verbal or in the journals – and this is where the magic happens. The learner recalls his actions and then makes suggestions to him/herself, but also comments on the process as a whole and what they felt they learnt during the exercise. Grotowski's "theatre mechanics" are consequently part of the first and last phase of Furner's (1973) "Creative Dramatics Experience" (1973: 406).

> The first stage involves warm-up activities of an imitative and expressive form related to the topic to permit children to become involved totally, to unwind, to begin to sense the problem, and to be open to sensory input. […] Children's reactions are sought and they are guided to identify other emotions which they have experienced, to describe the feeling [-] how it sounds, looks, moves. This exchange of ideas can be intensified to create a need for self-expression by individual and/ or pair dramatic activity using mime or improvisation to create the emotion. After writing children can share, illustrate, and dramatize ideas… (Furner, 1973: 406 – 407)

With Grotowski's "theatre mechanics" the Grade 9 learners had now played with various objects and had released and stretched their imaginations and creativity. I continued with the second phase of the drama exercises. Furner (1973) calls this "Individual or pair expressive activities" (1973:407). This module of work was done individually and in small groups by the learners in class and these exercises was based on Konstantin Stanislavski's Method Acting System. I was aware that these activities would not only be used to improve their acting skill, but would also assist the learner when it came to the writing module in the course. Bearing this in mind, I considered Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) argument that in order to develop mature writers, we as teachers need to provide them not only with opportunities for *knowledge telling* but also *knowledge transforming*.

2.3.4.3   *Konstantin Stanislavski's Method Acting System*

Konstantin Stanislavski (17/01/1863 – 07/08/1938) was a Russian born theatre practitioner and actor who sought to change the acting methods used in theater during the late 19th and early 20th century. His work shaped theatre as we know it, "firstly through his legendary theatrical productions with the Moscow Art Theatre and

secondly through his subsequent writings (Phillips, 1995:96). His work has particular influence on "how acting is understood and practised in the 20th century in theatre, film and television and in the training of actors" (Phillips, 1995:96). Stanislavski's book "An Actor's Handbook" (1961a) is a compilation of his methods for actors, and hence the name for his performance process was born, The Method Acting System[7]. This Method, allows actors to use their personal histories to express authentic emotion and create rich characters. This is where I saw a link to creative writing, as all of the wonderful stories that I have read and watched are centred on characters. It is the antithesis of the wooden actor and uses techniques such as the senses and memory to achieve realism in acting. Actors who use the Method rely on their personal past memories and emotions in order to bring new depth to a role (Lefer, 2000:16). Lefer (2000) states that writers share problems actors also encounter, "developing characters and creating an imaginary reality vivid enough to convince an audience" (2000:16).

Method acting is thought to be one of the most difficult techniques to learn; there are not really any technical forms or lessons that can be followed to practise and implement it. The initial approach is to recall a past experience and immerse oneself in the emotion of that experience so as to apply it to the scene presently being undertaken. The reason why Stanislavski's methods are so effective for this research is that firstly, his writings are not based on only theorising, but "feature an arrival at theories and notions as a result of direct experience and may be accurately described as discoveries" (Phillips, 1995:96). Secondly, Stanislavski demonstrates a way of discourse in terms of a wide range of "human endeavours in the familiar terms of everyday experience" (Phillips, 1995:96). His writings are not burdened with literary criticism, philosophy and psychology. Finally, just like acting coaches, trainers and Drama teachers have been able to build on Stanislavski's ideas, so can teachers of other subjects, especially the languages incorporate and build his ideas of character creation and creative development.

Method Acting is mainly concerned with the intense understanding of human nature (Magarshack, 1960:82) and to be in touch with the emotional worlds of humans

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[7] From now on referred to as the Method.

(Phillips, 1995:104). In Stanislavski's words "[t]he fundamental aim of our art is the creation of this life of a human spirit, and its expression in artistic form" (Stanislavski, 1961a:13). In order to 'tell the story' the playwright wants to be heard, the actor will use 'units' and 'objectives' to communicate the rationale behind the scene or act. This means that each scene has a purpose within the whole play and each character needs to reach a certain place and emotional climax to justify the message of the play. Consequently, these techniques overlap and are all inter-related with each other, "[t]hey are the basic, organic component parts … necessary to an actor's creative state, and not just the intellectual side or the emotional side … They act simultaneously upon and supplement each other…" (Stanislavski, 1961b:82). For a discussion of the techniques refer to 2.5.3.

I decided to use these techniques in creative writing as the creative writer should seek to find the 'objective' for each chapter, ensure that these correlate with the super-objective of the book or essay. He/she should also create emotionally rounded and believable characters and situations, with which readers can identify and in which the reader can lose him/herself. Stanislavski's Method for actors creates the opportunity for learners to discover and understand characters, reactions, motivations and situations which are waiting to be explored. By playing with the given circumstance (2.5.3.2) and integrating the *Imagination* (2.5.3.6) technique, along with the *Magic* If (2.5.3.7) and *Emotion Memory* (2.5.3.8), the learner understands that they do not have to use stereotypical characters in stories. However, this means that learners will have to get out from behind their desks and become part of the story-making process.

After these smaller isolated exercises, the learners will enter phase three of the "creative dramatics experience", which is called the "[l]arge group or class dramatization" according to Furner (1973: 406). This module on Realism in theatre and Stanislavski's acting techniques (2.5.3), are used to create little scenes based on scenarios provided to the learners by the teacher. I listed scenarios which were commonly used in the Commedia dell' Arte genre (2.3.4.4), placed them in a hat and the learners sorted themselves into groups and drew a topic from the hat. The learners then share ideas and use the characters which they created by means of Stanislavski's Method. They will also incorporate the "theatre mechanics" from

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Grotowski, for they will have limited props and costumes. The process of devising a collective performance provides creative and critical opportunities for students to enter each other's worlds (Henry, 2000:54) as in Henry's (1999) perspectival activities where they can use conversation as real engagement with another's ideas, as this fosters the kind of "inquiry about life itself rather than the mastery of fragmented knowledge and skills" about which Berghoff and Borgmann (2007:22) argued. Commedia dell' Arte serves as the perfect vehicle to teach these dramatic and writing principles.

2.3.4.4   *Commedia dell' Arte*

Commedia dell' Arte, refers the comedy of "professional players" (Nicoll, 1961: 195). These professional actors formed acting troupes that travelled from town to town, performing comedy skits in town squares and in courts of the high classes. They used stock characters, which are fictional characters based on Italian stereotypes from different regions. These stock characters rely heavily on cultural types or names for their personality, manner of speech, and other characteristics. In their most general form, stock characters are related to literary archetypes, but they are often more narrowly defined (Nicoll, 1961: 194-197).

Each stock character would have a particular costume and mask and this made it easy for the audience to identify these characters and their specific traits and characteristics as soon as they stepped onto the stage.

> Stock characters are a key component of genre fiction, providing relationships and interactions that people familiar with the genre will recognize immediately. Stock characters make easy targets for parody, which will likely exaggerate any stereotypes associated with these characters (Fletcher-Bellinger, 1927:154).

Commedia dell' Arte is sometimes also known as Commedia al' Improviso. The reason for this is that the 'plays' originated from improvisation. Later some of the plays would be written down, but most of these improvised plays never saw paper or ink (Nicoll, 1961:197). However, these plays did not originate from thin air, they had a formula that they followed in order to construct these improvised plays and stories. This is also what I used in the classroom.

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> [In the Commedia dell' Arte] the subject was chosen, the characters conceived and named, their relations to one another determined, and the situations clearly outlined, all beforehand. The material was divided into acts and scenes, with a prologue. The situations were made clear, together with the turn of action and the outcome of each scene. When this general outline (called also scenario or canvas) was satisfactorily filled out there was left an opportunity for actors to heighten, vary, and embellish their parts as their genius might suggest (Fletcher-Bellinger, 1927:154).

The scenarios that the actors and troupe leaders usually performed were about love intrigues, mistaken identities, son and father falling in love with the same girl, the hero being mistaken for the villain in the dark of night, when he tries to rescue his damsel in distress. There were stories about long-lost children "stolen by the Turks, plotting maids, bragging captains, aged fathers and wily widows. Each gentleman had his parasite, each woman her confidante" (Fletcher-Bellinger, 1927:155).

These improvised comedies from the Commedia dell' Arte genre vanished almost completely and there is no remaining record of the original productions, other than the written dramas of the time (Nicoll, 1961:197). However, taking these stock characters of old and changing them into new stereotypes, with whom we and children are familiar, along with the typical scenarios used during this era and modernizing them, a perfect opportunity to create new stories arises.

I used these three movements in my Grade 9 Drama class, not only to ensure that they were theoretically prepared for the written aspect of the Drama IGCSE examination, but also to assist them with the writing of their compulsory 'own devised piece' for Paper 2 (the practical examination). I will discuss how I used these techniques in Chapter 4, but in a nutshell, Commedia dell' Arte provided us with numerous improvisational scenarios and stereotypical characters and Stanislavski takes those stereotypical characters and gives them depth, but also provides the actor and writer with a better insight as to how these characters' minds work. Grotowski's techniques were used to unleash the imagination and creativity and to help learners make it up as they go.

Taking the discussion of all of these dramatic arts principles into account one can clearly see that there are several links between the "creative dramatics experience" (Furner 1973) and creative writing. In order to create a space in which learners could document their creative process, I introduced a creative writing journal into the drama classroom. I will discuss the journal in some detail a bit later in the chapter (see 2.4.1). During the process I found that the journal becomes a vital part of the motivation period in "which children's attention is focused on a broad topic in order to generate interest, develop a mood, and create a need to write" (Furner, 1973: 405). Journaling is also the planning phase and also serves as a wonderful tool for reflection. The research conducted by Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) also makes special mention of the power of the journal during the creative writing process. However, before we can look at this tool in more detail, one needs to understand how the writing process works and what challenges exist in a postmodern classroom, where children are compelled to 'write creatively' without any real stimulation.

2.4   THE WRITING PROCESS

Creative Writing in language teaching classrooms has become an obligatory task prescribed by the Department of Basic Education. It has been part of language curricula for decades. In grade 12 the so-called Paper 3 is used in all FL and FAL curricula as the writing paper. It includes creative and functional writing, with the bulk of the marks being allocated for creative writing in the form of essays. Many studies (Furner, 1973; Walters, 1992; Lefer, 2000; Kruger, 2006, 2008, 2009; Wright *et al*, 2007; Lidvall, 2008; Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011; Kelman & Rafe, 2013; Perry *et al*, 2013) have been done in order to establish how writing, and in my case, the process of creative writing in the classroom, can be stimulated.

In various discussions (social and formal) with learners, parents and other teachers, I have encountered several troubling questions and opinions. Some asked if it is really that important to be able to write creatively? Should our children not rather focus their attention on reading and numeracy and technology? We live in a modern age, why waste time writing stories in a classroom that do not really add significant value to the masses in education. Rather teach them to read and count and type on

computers. One of the most alarming statements that I heard was: you are born creative or not. You are talented in creative writing or not – no teacher will be able to teach you creativity. In contrast, Furner (1973: 405) notes that "[m]any teachers have used creative writing as a satisfying, pleasurable experience or as a means to teach skills of written expression or control of various literary technique[s]" and Wright *et al*. (2007:396) confirms that "[c]hildren develop literacy skills, social skills, and creativity" through activities cantered around dramatization and writing. Taking these statements into account, one can teach children the literary techniques easily enough in a formal language class setting, without really requiring them to write something 'creative'. When we consider the postmodern classroom and learner, one can start to argue the importance of creative writing. We, the language teacher, can easily teach them the structure of a formal letter or an email and spend some time on how to write an argumentative or discursive essay – because this is something that they will *use* someday when they are grown up. Why teach them to write 'stories'?

Furner (1973) highlights the importance of creative writing in the classroom. She states that it is an "avenue for response in a language programme designed to help children make reality from experience…" (1973:405). Living in South Africa, our children are bombarded with numerous experiences; be they positive or negative. The writing experiences in a classroom, consequently, need to provide the child with the opportunity "to explore a *topic of significance* (my emphasis) to him and to realise his feelings, sensory responses, and experiences through language symbolism" (1973: 405). This "topic of significance" is possibly where creative writing pedagogy lost its purpose in the classroom. Some educational bodies and language teachers provide children with an impulse in the form of badly photocopied picture or a simple line reading for example "… it was a dark, dark night…". I discovered this in my IGCSE drama class, when they received these single lines from which they should produce a one act play. I did not know how to 'teach' my learners to write creatively, because ironically, I also felt that you are either creative or not and that will crystallise in your mark. However, embarking on this journey of finding creativity, with my learners, I discovered that there is a road along which one can travel, which will ease the creative writing process and will stimulate and evoke creativity, where I once thought there was none. The teacher will have to spend time with the learners and the topic; discover it, dissect it and help learners find the 'significance' in it, in

order to make the creative writing experience meaningful and transformative – only then will creative writing in the classroom fulfil its rightful purpose, helping learners "see themselves in the contexts in which they express their understandings, […] engage dialogically in the process of writing, […] imagine themselves into and create contextual sensitivity for worlds unfamiliar to them, and how they perform in a world can significantly shape their sense of mastery of language and communication" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011: 322).

Before I discuss how I understand the process of writing, I think it is important to look at journaling and how this process contributes to the development of writing skills, but also because the journal plays an integral role in the writing programme used in this research.

2.4.1   The Creative Writing Journal and Journaling: an integral part of the drama and creative writing classroom.

It is common practice for Drama teachers to ask their learners to use a journal in the drama class. This journal becomes a wonderful reflective tool that learners can use to plan a group improvisation exercise, write about different drama class activities as well as reflect about their various performances. It is not a requirement by the South African Department of Basic Education that all language learners should have a journal, but from personal experience and observing classes, I have witnessed that learners struggle to start with the writing process. Similarly, Chanderasegaran (2002: 14) states that a problem "expected in the writing classroom is that some students take much longer than others to write the required parts of the essay. Many never finish their writing in class."

Gallagher (2007) argues that part of what empowers teachers in the classroom is what they can receive from their learners, and that we "ignore that essential part of the equation at our peril" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 326). Booth (1998), too, has paid close attention to the ways in which drama makes it possible to hear students differently:

> Reflection offers a chance to be heard, an opportunity to express ideas and feelings, an occasion for language. While drama is an active, "doing" medium, the reflective

mode allows children to make meaning by examining and understanding their thoughts and perceptions both as spectators and participants (Booth, 1998: 30).

By considering this statement and understanding what the planning or motivational process in writing entails, the integration of the journal in the creative writing classroom could be a very useful tool which could be utilized to document the aforementioned processes. Mention is made of the journal, as part of the "creative writing experience" (1973: 406) by Furner in her article, as well as by Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) when they witnessed a journaling activity in a drama class as part of creative writing exercise. As the teacher in their study states: "There comes a point when you are creating drama when you know that you must stop writing because you have collected enough material" (2011: 325). This statement alone proves that drama is a wonderful source of inspiration and a stimulant for creative writing - the journal documents the journey on which the learner embarks and could become a personal resource that learners can use for further motivation and inspiration. Spaventa (2000) suggests that a writer and in this study, the learner, can develop their creativity by keeping a journal at home. These journals "are notebooks in which writers keep a record of ideas, opinions, and description of daily life. Journals help writers develop their creativity" Spaventa (2000: 168).

Tuan (2010) states that journalling "helps learners write better and better day by day since it provides learners with more opportunities to freely write about what they wish to whenever they feel like writing" (2010:82), similarly Hamp and Heasley (2006) advocate that:

> The most obvious way you can help yourself become a good writer is by writing. We strongly suggest that in addition to completing the tasks, you also keep your own personal journal. Buy yourself a notebook, and try to write down some ideas every day, in English, about anything that interests you (…). You will surprise yourself by producing pages and pages of writing (2006:5).

Through this process of continuous writing learners "are given more chances to write about what is relevant to them" (Tuan, 2010:82). Chickering and Gamson (1987) state that by keeping a journal learners can record their personal and academic lives and this is "an active learning technique" (1987: 5). This process of personal writing is according to Tin (2000: 49):

> ...a powerful tool to find our own untapped creative power, uncover our family history, learn to see the world more clearly, heal unsolved issues, understand our fears, and explore our motivation. Through personal writing, we can develop both writing skills and awareness, can develop greater awareness and interpersonal understanding, increasing the ability to relate to others.

Tuan (2010) states that learners find journal writing to be "an enjoyable experience" (2010:82) and White and Arndt (1991) concur by stating that the primary aim of keeping a journal is "to encourage students to become involved and interested in writing" (White and Arndt, 1991: 63) without being concerned about errors and time pressure (Spaventa, 2000: 168).

White and Arndt (1991:67) discuss the benifits of journal writing in their article by stating that:

> This technique has been found to be an effective and productive means of arousing interest in writing, which, at the same time, develops fluency of expression. It also helps students to become aware of why they wish to communicate their ideas and to regard writing not only as a means of personal expression, but also a dialogue in written language with the reader (1991:67).

Furthermore, Ngoh (2002) highlights the language development benefits of the journal by adding that "journal writing provides students with good opportunities to improve their writing skills individually and good chances to record their thoughts and feelings" (Ngoh, 2002: 27). Lagan (2000) reminds teachers that we cannot expect the first pieces of writing by an average student to be lucid and/or logical. The journal, however, provides learners with a space in which they can create as well as become engrossed in the process of writing. Tuan (2010) states that with the active writing process and teacher's facilitation, journal writing can eventually lead to disciplined thinking and increase accuracy. Moreover, Lagan (2000) affirms that "journal writing can show you how ideas can be discovered in the process of writing" (Lagan, 2000: 14), as it helps to remove the "embarrassing situation in which students often find themselves deficient in ideas, and thus encourages fluency" in writing (Tuan, 2010:83). Another benefit journaling can bring to the classroom, according to Ngoh (2002), is that it creates a supportive learning atmosphere and

environment. Tuan (2010:83) states that "in-class writing tasks are prone to make students nervous", whilst journal writing has the ability to increase the reciprocal trust between learners and their teacher. "A supportive learning atmosphere will thereby be created along with a high learning motivation, which students more and more integrate into their formal writing" (Ngoh, 2002: 27).

By using the journal in both the Drama and the language classes it becomes a source of inspiration and development – it also demonstrates the development and thought processes of the learner to teachers who need to assess learners on their planning phase of writing. This tool, the journal, becomes an integral link between the two subjects – it is a wonderful source that shows us the possibility to teach across curriculums in South Africa. For my learners, who studied the IGCSE curriculum, this was an essential tool because they had to write a play as part of the Drama curriculum. However, in South Africa (RNCS 2007), this is not a requirement, but will help learners to understand that no learning area stands alone – all of the subjects are part of their collective learning process.

Spaventa (2000:168) encourages learners to keep a journal, for "when you have finished the course, you will have a record of what you read, what you experienced and what you thought about during that time". Lagan (2000: 14) also encourages learners to write in journals for it will help the writer "develop the habit of thinking on paper and show you how ideas can be discovered in the process of writing. A journal can make writing a familiar part of your life and can serve as a continuing source of ideas" for essays or tasks.

2.4.2   The Process of Creative Writing.

Historically, creative writing has not been regarded as suitable for study in higher education, let alone an object of theoretical study. Some might argue that 'creative writing' is not 'serious' and encourages self-indulgence. However, Light (2002:259) states that at the root of this "resistance are issues of literary and aesthetic value and the assumption that creative talent is personal, natural and instinctive: something that is neither taught nor learned nor adequately assessed".

In this research, Flower and Hayes' (1981) hypothesis regarding writing and its practice, had a great influence on how I think writing should progress in the classroom. However, their research did not consider the context in which writing takes place in the classroom and this research is very much concerned with the classroom environment and its influence on creative writing of learners. Furner (1973) as well as Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) specifically investigate the effects of drama techniques, as multi-literacy, in a creative writing classroom. I will consequently consider these pedagogical approaches alongside Flower and Hayes's hypothesis about the process of writing.

Flower and Hayes discuss writing as a cognitive process within an intricate writing model (1981:370). Their theory brings new insights to how we view the writer and the writing process as a whole, explaining that we, as teachers should consider that "[in] the act of writing, people regenerate or recreate their own goals in the light of what they learn" (Flower & Hayes, 1981:381). If we look at how some teachers attempt to present creative writing in the classroom the process is task-based and very organized – the learners should plan their writing, and then they have to revise their writing without any real assistance from the teacher and then hand in the paper. However, Flower and Hayes (1981:377) states that the "writing process may seem unstructured, disorganized, chaotic", therefore, if we consider this statement many teachers of creative writing might have to go back to the drawing board in order to evaluate what we expect from learners and their assignments, by reflecting on our teaching practices as a whole.

Similar to Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) report on a range of research findings contrasting *telling* and *transforming* models of the process of writing, Light (2002) also introduces the range of distinctive types of conception which can be divided into two categories:

> [R]eproducing conceptions in which the student "uses meaning", memorises and reproduces material, *and* transforming conceptions in which the student "makes meaning", understands and transforms material" (Light, 2002:258).

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) define the main difference between the two models (telling and transforming) as lying in the relationship of the content "problem-space in

which problems of belief and knowledge are worked out, and the rhetorical problem-space in which problems of achieving the goals" (Light, 2002:258) of the composition are dealt with:

> The distinctive capabilities of the knowledge-transforming model lie in formulating and solving problems and doing so in ways that allow a two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text (Bereiter & Scradamalia, 1987:12).

In this research I will especially focus on these 'goals and choices' Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) and Flower and Hayes (1981) refer to because the process of planning, translating and reviewing is interlinked with the rhetorical problem which occurs in the writing process. "Writing processes may be viewed as the writer's toolkit. In using the tools, the writer is not constrained to use them in a fixed order and stages" (Flower & Hayes, 1981:376), but rather with freedom and creativity and this applies to classroom practice in order to establish a transformative and stimulating learning sphere.

2.4.2.1   Types of Writing

In his research on the writing process, Hounsell (1984) states that essay writing "is seen unreflectively and mechanically" (Hounsell, 1984:121). Later on Hounsell (1987) identified "three sub-component 'core elements' of essay-writing conceptions: *data* (the subject matter or material of the essay); *organisation* (the structuring of the essay material) and *interpretation* (the meaning given to the material by the students)" (Hounsell, 1987:110). According to Light (2002), Hounsell's 'core elements' provide the basis for two general groups of essay-writing conception: the interpretative which deals with: "'cogency' (psychology) and 'argument' (history); and the non-interpretative that is concerned with, "'relevance' (psychology) and 'arrangement' (history)" (Light, 2002:258). The non-interpretative group describes "a concern with the making of meaning: an essay is seen as a mode of discourse through which one makes sense of a topic or problem in a way which is individually distinctive" (Hounsell, 1987:112). The cogency and argument conceptions highlight the *interpretation* sub-component under which the two other sub-components fall and are integrated into the writing. While on the other hand, in the relevance and arrangement group of conceptions, a concern for "the establishment of meaning is

absent" and the learner's own "ideas, thoughts and opinions ... are seen as 'value added' rather than as the essay's main justification" (Hounsell, 1987:112). The *data* and *organisation* (structure) of the essay are not integrated with *interpretation* but are, so to speak, floating free, derived "almost incidentally" from the material and structures in lectures and books (Hounsell, 1987:112).

More recently Campbell *et al*. (1998) examined the relationship of the conceptual structure of essays using the SOLO taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982) with student accounts of essay writing. They found similar categories of "underlying conceptualisations" (1998:466) at every stage of the writing process.

> ... compared to students writing essays with simple conceptual structures, students writing more complex essays engaged in processes of reconstruction rather than "knowledge telling", used organisational systems for integrating their notes according to topics or themes, built "arguments" rather than "information" when structuring and drafting their essays ... (Campbell, 1998:466-467).

Light (2002) examines the process of creative writing in Higher Education, for this kind of writing "has often been conceptualised as qualitatively different from essay writing" (2002:259). This leads us to ask, how we differentiate between different types of writing. Britton (1970), for example, differentiates between three mature modes (functions) of writing which may be regarded as lying on a continuum, with 'expressive' writing in the middle flanked by 'transactional' (communicative) writing at one end and 'poetic' writing at the other. "It is a developmental continuum, the key dynamic of which lies in a movement out from its 'expressive' centre" (Light, 2002:259). In both directions this is a "move ... from an intimate to a more public audience" (Britton, 1970:83), in other words from the expressive self to the public other. Light (2002), however, highlights the "differing nature of the expressive self in the two roles" (2002:259). He states that as transactional writing moves out to meet the demands of audience, it increasingly "excludes the personal, self-revealing features" Britton (1970:83) mentions.

However, by moving out towards 'audience' in the poetic writing it places the focus on exactly these personal features: "the embodiment by the writer of feelings and beliefs becomes paramount, and what is included in the utterance may be highly

personal" (Britton, 1970:83). Similarly, Emig (1971) distinguishes in her work on the writing process by agreeing that "all student writing emanates from an expressive impulse and that they then bifurcate into two major modes" (1971:37) which she calls "extensive" and "reflexive" (1971:37). Light (2002) explains extensive writing as "active, focusing on the writer's interaction with his/her situation while reflexive writing is contemplative, focusing on what the experience means for the self" (2002:259).

2.4.2.2   *Creative Writing and Drama in the Classroom*

The process of writing in the English language classroom has been scrutinized by learners and teachers alike. Furner (1973) introduces five methodological steps to the "creative writing experience" in the classroom (1973: 406). She then compares these methodological steps with the steps of her "creative dramatics experience" and highlights the similarities between the two processes. The five steps to the "creative writing experience" according to Furner (1973:406) are as follows:

1. Motivation period in which children's attention is focused on a broad topic in order to generate interest, develop a mood, and create a need to write.
2. Exchange of ideas to crystallize each child's thinking.
3. Writing period.
4. Sharing of ideas.
5. Follow-up activities, if appropriate.

Kelman and Rafe (2013) call this process of integrating drama and creative writing, a "dramaturgical process" (2013:284). They state that the "role of the dramaturg in the mainstream theatre in the Anglophone world has a history of marginality" (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:284) and suspicion. Luckhurst (2006) supports this notion, by affirming that "[i]n the English speaking West the history of dramaturgy exposes persistent struggles over the control of creative territories" (2006:2). It is still, however, a term that resists definition and means different things to different people depending on the nature of their practice (Copelin, 2005; Turner and Behrndt, 2008). However, Allern's (2008) definition of dramaturgy is the most fitting for this research project: it is defined as "a concept that explains how drama is composed in order to have an intended effect on an audience" and "the art of telling and performing" (Allern, 2008:322-3).

The writing process in this research relies on the creative input from the drama techniques in order to stimulate creativity. Thus the writing which will emerge from this study could be called dramaturgy.

2.4.2.3   Creating a 'dramaturgy'

In order to create the dramaturgy, I used Furner's (1973) creative writing model as the foundation for the programme and adapted it to suit my postmodern classroom. The first step according to Furner (1973) is the motivation step which should be "designed to focus children's attention on a broad topic with which they have had some experience" (1973: 406). This correlates with what Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) argue in their research about developing mature writers – the "knowledge telling" phase, which is similar to Flower and Hayes's (1981) planning phase and the process of "excavation" Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011:324) mentions or "exploration" according to Kruger (2008, 2009). According to Flower and Hayes (1981) the writing process is mainly concerned with goals and choices and these two intricate aspects are the basis of the writing process. "[A] writer uses a goal to generate ideas, then consolidates those ideas and uses them to revise or regenerate new, more complex goals, [through this] one can see this learning process in action" (Flower & Hayes 1981:386), Bereiter & Scardamalia's (1987) "knowledge transforming" phase is then also realised.

Furner (1973) simplifies these "goals and choices" of Flower and Hayes' (1981) planning phase by introducing them as motivators or stimuli which create an impulse or need to write. The topic (goal) and stimuli (choices) should be interesting and challenging as they should provoke a "need for self-expression" (Furner 1973: 406, Henry, 2000:49). She suggests that this need to express oneself through writing will be generated through multiple stimuli varying from "discussion, use of literature, pictures, objects, films, records or tapes, reference to real and vicarious experiences of the children, and dramatic activity" (1973: 406). Kruger (2009) also makes use of these techniques in order to assist learners to use the multiple intelligences to find inspiration for the creative writing (2009:203). Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) similarly observe how a drama/English teacher took her class to see a play at the local theatre. This was could be seen as step 1/2 of Furner's (1973) model and

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along with journaling activities, discussion, role-play and sentimental, physical artifacts, brought from home by the learners, they were inspired to start writing creatively (2011: 326).

Step 1 and step 2 are interchangeable, according to Furner (1973). These two steps can happen separately, but also simultaneously – that is why she inserted an arrow between the two steps. "[T]he second stage, exchanging ideas, overlaps the first. In fact, the sooner and the more frequently children can be encouraged to react personally; the more successful will be the motivational sequence in developing a need for personal exploration and expression" (Furner, 1973: 406). The most important thing, however, is that the motivational stimuli and devices should be used to "heighten awareness, build perceptions, and to elicit response from each child" (1973: 406). Claxton (1997:149) calls this the "inventing stage", where learners are motivated to use the available resources for constructing inspiration (Kruger, 2009:196). Many teachers in South Africa, who battle with classrooms filled to the brim with learners, will state that there is simply not enough time or there are not enough resources to have classes like these. The drama/English teacher in Gallagher & Ntelioglou's (2011) study states that a great deal of her planning for these "projects happens on a class-by-class basis so there is plenty of room for students to direct the creative process. It is, in fact, ideal to have students directing the process spontaneously" (2011: 325).

The planning stage should be seen as one of the most significant processes in writing, as in this process young writers have to learn how to generate new ideas, organize those ideas, set appropriate goals for themselves and their writing, translate these new ideas and concepts and review this process which should then "lead to new cycles of planning and translating" (Flower & Hayes, 1981:372). Similarly, Weiss (2001) calls this the "choice and Implementation" phase (Kruger, 2009:129). Torrance (Baldwin, 2001) uses the Japanese concept called *Satori* to describe the sudden "aha"-moment, which could be considered as a type of catharsis or moment of insight, which writers should ideally experience during the planning and writing stage. This *Satori* occurs after a person has been interacting with the inspirational material for an extended and intensive period of time. In order

to achieve this state the writer needs to be determined, diligent, disciplined, eager, energetic, skilled and knowledgeable (Kruger, 2009:197).

When we look closely at the abovementioned we cannot deny the fact that many teachers underestimate the process of planning and writing and that some of us might be neglecting this fundamental development stage of the young writers in our classrooms. Flower and Hayes (1981) mention that at "the beginning of composing, the most important element is obviously the rhetorical problem itself [the topic], not a mere artifact; writers attempt to 'solve' or respond to this rhetorical problem by writing something" (1981:369).

The 'writing something' is usually where the problem for most learners arise and I would argue that this is the result of teachers not creating the environment and providing learners with enough stimuli to evoke the need to write. Furner (1973) suggests in her "creative writing experience" model that step 3 should be a "writing period" (1973:406). This is a time where learners should be motivated to write down their ideas, based on the topic, enriched by the stimuli. The writing process should not be something that is a mechanical process where they merely fill in the outline, which they created through play or drama activities (which served as stimuli) in the creative writing classroom. "[E]ach child should be actively generating ideas throughout the writing process" (1973: 406). Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) witnessed how a teacher used the journal for this third step. The learners attended a drama performance at the local theatre and were supplied with journals the day after the performance. She asked each learner to do a 'free writing' activity about the performance. The teacher's pedagogical road map for writing activities starts with a prompt, which we see in Furner's (1973) motivational stages. It continues on to the free writing section, which varies from two minutes to 20 minutes, depending on the focus ability of the group of learners. It ends with a reflective sharing stage, which mirrors that of Furner's (1973) methodological "creative writing experience" model. It is common classroom practice, and the learners are used to this, that they share something that they have written. The teacher states that she encourages students to share what they have written because it "gives purpose, incentive and immediacy to the writing." (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 324 – 325). She continues by saying

that "[w]hen students get an immediate peer response to what they have just written; they feel encouraged to write again and again" (2011: 325).

Reflecting on these statements and this practice in the classroom, I can with all honesty say that never in my personal schooling experience, did a teacher ask me to read something that I had written, except for orals (the purpose of which is public speaking). The implications of this are far reaching – I ask myself then, why they never asked me? Was my writing that bad? Why push myself to write something meaningful, when nobody is going to hear it? (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 325). Why write a story that will never be read? (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:286). If we as teachers don't ask our learners to reflect on their personal writing and to evaluate each other's writing critically in an empathic, sensitive and fair manner, how can we expect them to become better at creative writing? (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 324). How can we expect our learners to improve their language skills and build their confidence and character, when we do not provide them with opportunities to do so (Henry, 2000; Fleming, 2000)?

In the creative writing classrooms that I observed teachers required learners to hand in a few pages. These pages were to consist of a planning page (which is usually a rough spider diagram drawn in pencil, which was most probably done after the essay was written – I speak from personal experience here), a rough draft, where the teacher indicated concord mistakes, sentence construction difficulties and spelling mistakes (and in South Africa, most teachers do not have the time to assess the rough drafts as well, so it is usually up to the parent of child to find the mistakes) and then the formal 'neat' draft. The writing is then assessed by the teacher, handed out in class (usually at the beginning of the next term, because some teachers will argue that they only have time to assess these tasks during the examination time or during holidays) and then filed in the portfolio. Most teachers never go back to the writing and provide learners with the opportunity to read their work or to reflect on other's work (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 324) – the task is complete, let us move on the next one. Reflecting on this practice, I am forced to ask: What are we teaching? Where is the learning experience? Light's (2002:259) sentiments are echoed here: creative writing is "something that is neither taught nor learned nor adequately assessed".

What are the learners gaining from this experience? If we continue with this practice in South African schools, we might as well scrap creative writing from the syllabus, as it is meaningless if thought like this. This is why most learners and parents do not understand the profound impact creative writing can have on a child's learning experience and education, as it is task and assessment based. Creative writing has become something that we have to do, rather than something that we want to and need to do. Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) highlight the importance of engagement, enthusiasm, creating meaning and finding purpose which the creative writing process can entice in learners, for it shapes:

> "[h]ow youth see themselves in the contexts in which they express their understandings, how they engage dialogically in the process of writing, how they imagine themselves into and create contextual sensitivity for worlds unfamiliar to them, and how they perform in a world can significantly shape their sense of mastery of language and communication" (2011:322).

Considering all of the questions I have asked and statements that I have made and bearing the writing processes of Furner (1973), Flower and Hayes (1981) and the writing observations Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) witnessed, one should now look at the possibilities for evoking and developing creativity in writing.

2.4.3   The Development of Creativity in Writing

"The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct acting from inner necessity. The creative mind plays with the objects it loves"
Carl Jung (1958: The Undiscovered Self)

Before a transformative learning space can be established in classrooms, teachers should undergo a type of 'transformation' themselves. Julia Cameron is the author of *The Artist's Way* (1995), which focuses on the personal development of creativity for young and old alike. This popular societal text serves as a tool which could assist teachers in developing their own creativity as well as their learners' creativity and establishing it in the creative writing classroom. This text will be utilized in such a manner to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical creative

development in the creative writing classroom, because Cameron provides us with exercises and suggestions on how to stimulate our creative development and writing:

> [t]he process is supposed to be fun. For our purposes, 'the journey is always the only arrival' may be interpreted to mean that our creative work is actually our creativity itself at play in the field of time. At the heart of this play is the mystery of joy (Cameron 1995:154).

Cameron (1995) focuses on the nurturing of creativity, the unlocking of the imagination, the fostering of enthusiasm and the development of the creative mind of artists. Ambile's (1983) component model describes creativity as correlations between different creative elements. These elements include the domain related skills such as knowledge, technical skills and talent; the creativity related skills such as the correct cognitive approach and style, implicit and explicit discovery which generates new ideas, and productive work ethic, problem-solving skills, meaning and knowledge created from the discoveries, endurance and high personal energy levels. The last component is concerned with the motivation of the task, which includes the attitude towards the task and perceptions about personal motivation to take on the task (Kruger, 2009:198). Therefore, enthusiasm and engagement become fundamental building blocks in the creative writing classroom for all young writers need these components to practice and develop their writing skills:

> [e]nthusiasm is not an emotional state. It is a spiritual commitment, a loving surrender to our creative process. A loving recognition of all the creativity around us. […] But this event has more to do with a child's love of secret adventure than with ironclad discipline (Cameron 1995:153).

Sternberg (1988) acknowledges the creative person's ability to identify the potential and worth of unfamiliar tasks. More importantly Sternberg states that the creative person has the ability to complete these tasks by means of his/her innate motivated nature to overcome negativity and obstacles by working in cycles of opposition and acceptance to ensure the realisation of their ideas. Lateral and divergent thinking stands in opposition to linear thoughts – creativity is the ability to learn how to solve problems (Abdallah 1996, Malan 1996:72, Honig 2001: 36). Kurtzberg & Amabile (2001: 291) demonstrate in their research how group-creativity could be increased (in terms of more authentic results, more complex products and more divergent

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thought processes) if the group experiences conflict with the task and in the group itself. The different perspectives of group members lead to more creative outcomes.

Csiksentmihalyi (1997) similarly states that a combination of problems, skills, co-ordination and integration of individual and social contexts, could lead to a process of creation where there is interaction between the individual and the social-cultural symbol structures, transformation and stress. In his book, Csiksentmihalyi (1997) discusses the concept of creativity. His writing provides us with some insight into creativity as a concept but also into the worlds of writers and how they practice their craft. These writers explain how they go about their writing, where they find inspiration and what tools they use for stimulation when they are writing. Every teacher should remind themselves that each child is a unique individual and so will their process of writing differ from their peers. All writers are "involved in creating imaginary worlds that are as necessary for them as the physical world they inhabit" " (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:239). The fact of the matter is that we cannot underestimate the power of the creative writing class, for "what makes words so powerful is that they enrich life by expanding the range of individual experience. Without stories and books, we would be limited to knowing only what has happened to us or to those whom we have met" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:238).

Introducing journaling into the creative classroom allows young writers to practice their craft in their day to day living as "you don't know when you are going to be hit with an idea, you don't know where it comes from" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:241). Hopefully our learners will do the same as the writer Mark Strand who "starts writing without anything specific in mind. What gets him started is the simple desire to write" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:240). This once again reiterates the first and second step in Furner's (1973) "creative writing experience" – learners should receive enough motivation and stimulation based on a "topic of significance" (1973:405), which creates a profound need to write and inspires learners to write "again and again" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011: 325). All these theorists (Furner 1973, Flower and Hayes 1981, Kruger 2009, Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011) suggest that writers should

be allowed an incubation period[8] (1981:367), "free writing experience" (2011: 326) or "morning pages"[9] (1995: 9) for "writing often seems a serendipitous experience, an act of discovery" (Flower and Hayes 1981:377) and this discovery needs time and nurturing. As Cameron states, "morning pages are the primary tool of creativity recovery" (1995:11) and in most cases, especially in a school classroom context, it will be rather a discovery than a recovery of creativity, for too long have children been forced to sit behind desks and be quiet.

> The artists' brain is our image brain, home and haven to our best creative impulses. The artist brain cannot be reached – or triggered – effectively by words alone the artist brain is the sensory brain: sight and sound, smell and taste, touch. These are the elements of magic, and magic is the elemental stuff of art (Cameron 1995: 21).

Habens (2007), like many others asks one of the most prominent questions in the world of creative writing … "where do you get your ideas from? The starting point of our response may be inspiration as it was expressed in classical culture, embodied in the muses of ancient mythology" (Habens 2007:50). However, it seems as if our post-modern students are not interested in these ancient muses; they are not always inspired by these stimuli. Modern children appear to love television, PC games, Play Stations and their cell phone, they spend most of their time glued to these 'modern muses' and they seem to be their main sources of encouragement. Reading books, building puzzles, drawing and colouring might seem like ancient culture to them. We have to bridge this gap and supply them with material that they are familiar with and in which they are interested. This once again reiterates the "topic of significance" to which Furner refers (1973: 405). The creative writing teacher has to supply appropriate stimuli to help learners to discover their inspirations and overcome their limitations (Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011: 323). By providing dull topics and badly photocopied images to the learners (without talking about them), we are definitely going to receive that which we dished out – a dull and badly written text.

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[8] Part of the writing phase as in the Gordon and Britton Model (Flower and Hayes 1981:367). The writer is utilizing the tools gathered in the pre-writing phase (planning) to progress into the writing phase of the process. In the Flower and Hayes writing model however there is not a real 'model' or prescribed manner in writing; it is recursive for the process moves back and forth repeatedly.

[9] Julia Cameron (1995) uses "morning pages" as a writing exercise which she describes as a "stream-of-consciousness" – she encourages writers to write in their journals as soon as they wake up in the mornings in order to remove the "censor voice" from the mind which inhibits creative thought and writing.

The task that lies before teachers is to become enthusiastic about teaching creative writing and to demonstrate a definite purpose to the task of being creative – discovering their creative selves , "a Muse to call their own […] a sort of shorthand for creativity in the face of social conditions" (Habens 2007:51). Creative writing does not necessarily entail fairies, trolls and magical forests, but rather imagining "a world of one's own in which what's wrong with the 'real' world can be set right" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:264).

In the classroom observed by Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011), the teacher asked the learners to write a monologue for one of the characters they saw in a theatre production, these monologues were eventually put together to create a text. The monologue activity was done after the students had to do a free writing activity to the prompt: "[a] closed door is…" (2011: 325). The learner could write about anything they wished in this activity and then use this piece of 'rough' writing as inspiration for the monologue. The character became a mouth piece for the student's own words and one learner in particular wrote about the perceptions society has that "heaven's door is closed to gays and lesbians" (2011: 328). A significant and relevant topic where the learner addresses "a world of [her] own in which what's wrong with the 'real' world can be set right" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:264). When this learner's monologue was placed alongside the other monologues in the class she "came face-to-face with her imagined detractors, and she had to find a way through her story in dialogic relation to those voices" (2011: 328). This demonstrates how powerful creative writing can be in the classroom, not only to improve language skills, but also to speak about the world in which our children live and how they perceive it to be. This is proof of Bereiter & Scardamalia's (1987) *knowledge telling* and *knowledge transforming* for her monologue "exemplified a moment of transformation through writing; it articulated a combination of both self-discovery and social change" (2011: 328).

In the abovementioned classroom observed by Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011), we can see Furner's (1973) methodological steps to the "creative writing experience" in action. For the first step (the motivation phase), the teacher took the learners on an outing to see a theatre production. For the second step, the learners and the teacher spoke about the production and wrote about it in their journals. They then

continued to do a free writing experience (step three – the writing phase) about a spoken prompt and specific physical stimuli the teacher asked them to bring to class. The learners then listened to each other's free writing (step four – exchange of ideas), commented and reflected on it and then continued with a more 'formal' writing activity (step five – follow up activities) in the form of a monologue and then finally a collective performance piece in the form of a drama script. The teacher used her creativity along with that of the learners to create a meaningful creative writing activity, which had a purpose and influence the learners' educational experience as a whole.

2.5 FINDING THE BRIDGE BETWEEN CREATIVE WRITING AND DRAMA: CREATING A BELIEVABLE PERFORMANCE AND WRITING AN AUTHENTIC TEXT.

2.5.1 The Authentic Text

Before I discuss how dramatic performance principles can stimulate the creative writing process, I need to explain the concept of an authentic text. Duke and Hall (2006) state that writing activities are most effective when they resemble real writing done for real purposes. This once again touches on Furner's belief in the "significant topic" (1973: 405) – if children write about something meaningful and familiar to them, they will develop a need to write. Therefore, according to Lidvall (2008) "writing instruction in schools should closely model the writing found within real world situations. Authentic writing activities attempt to replicate the writing that students experience in the world" (2008: 3). Considering this statement one could describe an authentic text then as a kind of text which is true to life, genuine and original which originated from the spoken and written aspects we encounter in our daily lives within our target cultures. A teacher in South Africa, should not ask students to write a descriptive essay about country living in England during the 1800s. It is too far removed from their reference framework and experience in life (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011:324). This type of descriptive essays really should not have a place in the curriculum and is the main reason why our students have become resistant to creative writing. It is the result of writing being treated "as little more than a place to display- to expose- their command of spelling, penmanship, and grammar" (Calkins, 1994: 12-13).

If the same students were asked to generate a piece of writing describing the Oscar Pistorius trial, numerous possibilities for creative writing would arise. The writing activities can vary from a newspaper article, to an interview, to a monologue from Oscar Pistorius' perspective or from the point of view of a reporter – "authentic writing is often defined as writing on topics of one's choice, which can take the form of a personal narrative or story" (Duke & Hall, 2006: 345). Similarly Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011:324) and Furner (1973:406) refer to the topic of significance about the child's "modern muses" (Habens, 2007:51). So when I refer to an authentic text, it means that the student has produced a piece of writing which is personal, original and serves a purpose – be it for an audience (learners in the class or a formal audience) to watch this piece of writing in the form of a performance or for an IGCSE drama practical examination. It is a piece of writing that the learners devised on their own, with the teacher only serving as a facilitator to the activities, in the form of providing stimuli and using talk and other drama activities as inspiration for creativity in writing.

2.5.2   Drama techniques for Creative Writing

Richard Schechner (1988) investigates the interrelationships among theatre, performance in everyday life, play and psychotherapy to name only a few. He believes that performance arises out of the great variety of human activities and this links drama and creative writing as "[when] we work at our art, we dip into our experience and scoop out images" (Cameron, 1995:21). According to Schechner (1988) some of the fundamental building blocks of creating a performance are:

  1) a special ordering of time;

  2) a special value attached to objects;

  3) non-productivity in terms of goods [and]

  4) rules

(Schechner 1988:6).

I will take these performance building blocks of Schechner and discuss how these principles can be applied in the creative writing classroom in order to stimulate creativity so that creative writing can take place easily. When Schechner (1988) refers to the first step as "a special ordering of time" (1988:6), he suggests that the

actors take time, space and context of the piece into account. This will help the performer to create a believable playing field for the character they will depict. This concept also deals with character building, history and the overall development of the characters within the appropriate context and time. Along with Stanislavski's acting principles (1961b:101) that the learners study in the Drama curriculum, they now have a sound understanding in how to physically create a character within a specific context at a specific time in place. If learners understand the power the character has in a story, in terms of different characters becoming vehicles for different symbols, metaphors, perceptions and beliefs, they can easily use these characters to bring across different messages for the audience or reader (Henry, 2000; Fleming, 2000). In acting, understanding the character and effective characterization are the starting points for a good performance. If we apply this principle to creative writing, learners could easily start a writing activity by means of characterization. They could apply Stanislavski's "Magic If" to their writing and place themselves in the shoes of different characters, much like what Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) witnessed in the drama classroom. By taking these different stories of the different characters (with different histories, perceptions and belief systems) (Fleming, 2000:36) and using Stanislavski's principles (Stanislavski, 1961:100; Phillips, 1995:99) of the "units and objectives" and the "super-objective and through line of action", a story can be written.

Secondly Schechner (1988) discusses the notion of "attaching special value to objects". This concept is derived from Stanislavski's Method technique (1961), but here Grotowski's (1993) "theatre mechanics" come into play by attaching numerous meanings to one specific object. His theatre principle states that no other objects are allowed to enter the stage during the performance (1993:38); this means that the only objects on stage are those that were there at the beginning of the performance. The performer is thus forced to change the literal meaning of a chair (which you will mostly sit on) to a figurative umbrella (to provide us with shelter from rain). On the other hand Stanislavski incorporates the emotional value performers should attach to certain objects on stage. These objects become one of the main emotional triggers (*sense memory* as part of *given circumstance*, Lefer (2000:16) for the actors whilst they are playing on stage. Asking learners to bring specific objects to class and to write about them, as the teacher did in Gallagher & Ntelioglou's (2011:326) research,

we see that these items also inspired the learners to write about something – Stanislavski's "Emotion Memory", "Magic If" and "Imagination" concepts can consequently be directly translated for the creative writing process. This practice reiterates Slade's (1995) concept of 'Personal Play' in the classroom for the learner "uses the whole body and self as in sports and performance and which yields the 'Experience' which can never be taken away" (Slade, 1995:3).

The third phase of Schechner's performance model is "[n]on-productivity in terms of goods". This is a figurative concept which deals with the inner being of the character – the good and the bad actions of humans – the choices we make unconsciously which will necessarily affect the world we live in. On a literal level it means clipping our toenails, picking noses, inspecting our zits. These actions make characters believable as ordinary human beings (Stanislavski, 1967:xv). If we had to apply this technique of Schechner (1988) to writing, we would ask learners to physically look at objects objectively. What do you see and not what do you think you see – look at the unexpected detail and describe it, in other words Henry's (1999) 'Perspectival Activity' of learning through drama (1999:252). This makes the writing interesting and different, and ultimately has readers struggling to put the book down. If the figurative meaning of this technique is applied we could ask our students to consider literary techniques like the dramatic soliloquy for which Shakespeare is so famous – letting characters speak their minds and address their audience directly. The learner can compose a piece of writing which shows how a character battles to make a choice and literally battle with the little angel and devil on their shoulder. This empowers children by "giving them an alternate way to confront and defeat potential and real adversaries" (Wright *et al.*, 2008:367; Slade, 1954:73). This could also become transformative and reflective writing, where learners have the opportunity to speak about the ills in their societies or possibly personal issues, using a character as a mouth piece. "[T]hey describe a process of taking the events of the [activity] and relating them to their own lives to try and make them feel as authentic as possible" in their writing (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:287).

Finally Schechner (1988) refers to "rules" and in performance, as well as in writing, this is concerned with the genre in which the story is written (Light, 2000:258). This also includes performance techniques, performance rituals and analysing plotlines of

the different characters which are incorporated to tell a story (Schechner 1988: 6-9). In my experience, learners, like most people, like to disregard rules. However, if we explain to our students that the rules are the **FUN**danmentals to writing and that without them we would struggle to write – Fleming (2000) affirms the importance of learners being "initiated into a practice which has its own rules, customs and conventions" (2000:37), for then they can function freely and creatively within the parameters. Similarly, Turner & Behrndt (2008) explain that dramaturgy "inhabits the space between direction (creating a performance) and writing and encompasses both, combining the development of form and style with 'structural thinking', the emerging understanding of 'how shape or structure affects interpretation' (2008: 164).

If we do not know where the characters are going, why are we telling their story? If we do not know what we want to say, why write a story? These "rules" not only (Schechner 1988) link up with the planning phase Flower and Hayes (1981) mention, but also link with the exploration and evocation of thoughts and ideas, mentioned by Light (2002). If we know what the purpose and ground rules of the activity are, we can explore and develop the story more easily.

Considering all of the above, we will see that creating a believable performance and writing an authentic text walks hand in hand. When we look at how we create a text of writing we usually incorporate a time in which the story happens, valuable objects which create opportunities for descriptive creative writing. "Non-productivity in terms of goods" comes down to the living of 'ordinary' life and this is the foremost link between drama and creative writing. By incorporating these drama activities we are "[s]umming up the formal characteristics of play, we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious', but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly" (Huizinga 1970: 13). Schechner (1988) promotes the notion of play when theatre is created; this helps the players to understand their different roles and each other's roles in the story-making process. Erickson (1972) reiterates Huizinga and Schechner's (1988) statements by stating that "dramatic play … is the infantile model of the playwright's work" (1972:133).

2.5.3   Playing with Acting and Drama Techniques and incorporating them into the Creative Writing Process.

Diane Lefer (2000) is a published author who discovered that Stanislavski's Method Acting philosophy and technique assisted her in her writing process. She incorporated the most fundamental techniques of Stanislavski's Method Acting Technique[10] (Naturalistic Drama Performances) and adapted them to fit the writers profile and needs. She does, however, state that these exercises "aren't designed to be turned directly into stories. They won't do your work for you. They will help you break away from automatic responses and add the magic that comes of fresh and truthful observation" (Lefer, 2000:16). Similarly, Henry (2000) states that drama will not give learners the answers for creative writing, but rather present them with opportunities through which they can explore the "kinaesthetic and interactive possibilities of a given idea, expanding knowledge from an abstract starting point" (2000:52).

Due to the fact that my drama learners studied the Method Acting techniques of Stanislavski's, experienced Grotowski's (1993) object manipulation exercises and learnt about the Commedia dell' Arte period, the practical Drama activities were integrated with the theatre history and served as a starting point for their writing. Turner & Behrndt (2008) call this process a process of 'on-the-spot' dramaturgy:

> "(Dramaturgs) 'in their suggestions, beginning to link moments together and are thus in the process of 'writing' or, perhaps, 'wrighting' the dramaturgy inside the rehearsal process. Thus the dramaturg is a creative collaborator within the artistic process, engaged in on-the-spot dramaturgical composition" (2008:180).

This development of form and narrative closely relates to the three dramaturgies that Barba (2000) identifies in his play writing practice:

(1) *An organic or dynamic dramaturgy*, which is the composition of the rhythms and dynamisms affecting the spectators on a nervous, sensorial and sensual level.

(2) *A narrative dramaturgy*, which interweaves events and characters, informing the spectators on the meaning of what they are watching.

(3) *A dramaturgy of changing states*, which distils or captures hidden significances,

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[10] Here after referred to as The Method.

> which are often involuntary on the part of the actors as well as the director, and are different for every spectator. (Barba 2000, 60)

This weaving together of dramatic and narrative elements to create a performance 'text' is the essence of Barba's dramaturgy:

> That which concerns the 'text' (the weave) of the performance can be defined as 'dramaturgy' that is, *drama-ergon*, work, the 'work of the actions' in the performance. The way in which the actions work is the plot. It is not always possible to distinguish between what in the dramaturgy of a performance may be called 'direction' and what may be called the 'writing' of the author (Barba 1985, 75).

Here Barba is working from a very broad definition of 'actions' by which he means: the actions of performers, use of space, sound and technical elements that are the language in which the narrative is delivered (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:290).

I will now discuss the drama techniques and how one could integrate them into the creative writing process. Lefer (2000) used the *Sense Memory* (part of the *Given Circumstance* discussed earlier), *Emotion Memory*, the *Magic If* and *Imagination* techniques from Stanislavski's Method. In order to understand why and how this practitioner inspired me and Lefer (2000), one needs to understand how the Method works. I will only give a brief discussion of the 9 steps in the Method, which is desperately over-simplified, but necessary to comprehend in order to understand the reasoning for using it in the drama classroom for a creative writing lesson and experience. I will refer to Stanislavski's techniques and principles and justify how and why these principles are important to incorporate in the creative writing experience and process. For more on the writing process refer to 2.4.

Method Acting is mainly concerned with the intense understanding of human nature and to be in touch with the emotional worlds of humans (Phillips, 1995:95). In order to 'tell the story' the playwright intends to tell, the actor will use 'units' and 'objectives' to communicate the rationale behind the scene or act. This means that each scene has a purpose within the whole play and each character needs to reach a certain place and emotional climax to justify the message of the written play.

2.5.3.1   Action

The term *action* refers to the physical application of the text through actions by the actor. This means that the actor needs to understand the text in its entirety, playing with the subtext and giving the audience an understanding of the motivations behind the physical actions the characters have on stage. Every movement needs to be motivated, otherwise the character will lose credibility. If the character picks up the telephone, is it to make a phone call and if so, who are they calling and why? Hapgood (1968) summarizes action as the "expression of the inner life of [the] character, who is after all a complex human being" (1968:189). The reason why this technique is effective is that it enables actors, and in this research, learners to understand that "every pose, every gesture, will have an inner justification" (Hapgood, 1968:189) and through this a "sense of truth, which supervises all of [the character's] inner and physical activity" (Phillips, 1995:101) is created.   This is also where the 'feelings and imagination' (Henry, 2000:55) are physically portrayed and the learners come to new insights while their knowledge is constructed. Burner (1990), however, states that "the transformation of such inactive knowledge into language only comes later" (1990:85) and this correlates with the incubation period which is so important in the writing process (Flower & Hayes 1981, Light 2000, Kruger 2006, 2008, 2009).

An integral part of *action* is improvisation. Improvisation serves as the beginning stages for a performance. Commedia dell' Arte scripts were based on improvisations and Grotowski (1993) saw the rehearsal and improvisation session in actor training as more important than the physical performance. Stanislavski (1961a) believes that actors come to action through "three inner motive forces" (Phillips, 1995:102). The first and most important 'master' according to Stanislavski (1961a) is feeling, "the second master is the mind … your mind can be a motive power in … your creative process" and "our third master – will" (Stanislavski, 1961a:82-3). When we consider the writing process it can be closely related to that of the improvisation process in *action*. Westbrook (2004) states that sometimes the writing process can be serendipitous, "[d]on't think. Don't get logical … You just do it" (2004:134). If the writer uses Westbrook's (2004) philosophy of "just do it writing" (2004:130) and combines it with Stanislavski's (1961a) three masters, an authentic text can come from the experience. Lefer (2000) utilizes improvisation in her writing

process, as she feels that the writer and actor "look at the world and [are] in the world" (Lefer 2000:19) at the same time. This coincides with Barba (2000) and Turner & Behrndt's 'on-the-spot' dramaturgy (2008:180).

Both Gallager & Ntelioglou (2011) and Furner (1973) argue in their articles about Drama activities in creative writing lessons that if learners are encouraged "to react personally; the more successful will […] the motivational sequence in developing a need for personal exploration and expression [be]" (Furner, 1973: 406). In both studies the researchers found that a collaborative writing process occurs when the learners were compelled to write about the experience they had and to take the prior knowledge that they have, incorporate it with the experience they just encountered and then to transform this into something new (Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011:326). Part of the inspiration and stimulation stages of writing (Furner 1973, Flower & Hayes 1981, Light 2000, Kruger 2006, 2008, 2009) is the next step in Stanislavski's (1961a) method - the given circumstance.

2.5.3.2   *Given Circumstance*

The given circumstance is textually bound, Stanislavski identifies the "author as the origin of all that has to be organized within a play" (Phillips, 1995:99). Subsequently, all of the information the author gives to the reader, is the *given circumstance*. The internal characterisation (what the character says about him/herself to the reader and other characters) and the external characterisation (what the other characters say about the specific character), but also the location of the story, the mood and atmosphere of the local, the costumes and appearance of the characters are – all the details the reader needs to construct the picture in their imaginations. Stanislavski derives this notion of drama etymologically from "the ancient Greek theatre as, culminating action" (Phillips, 1995:98). Stanislavski (1961a) suggests that drama on stage is action culminating before our eyes, "with the actor as a participating element" (Phillips, 1995:98).

Kelman & Rafe (2013) state than in order to help learners create a text (part of the dramaturgy creation process), it is important that the topic is contextualized as this would help "the children … find meaning" (2013:285) and purpose (Habens 2007:52, Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011:325). The given circumstance is therefore closely

related to the topic of the writing task. Phillips (1995) suggests that if the learners have "succeeded in optimising their performance for the particular circumstance then the drama will justify itself" (1995:98) in the reflection of their own advancing understanding. The topics need to be of such a nature that they "entail[s] the application of knowledge and understanding[s] to the complex diversity of real world situations or a situation of the 'real world'" (Kalantzis & Cope, 2008:30). Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) found that when learners work with relevant and personal topics they "are more willing to invest themselves in their learning process" (2011:329). Therefore, the *given circumstance* plays an integral role, not only in performance, but also in writing.

Sense Memory is a sub-heading to the *given circumstance* as well as to emotion memory (see 2.5.3.8 for more on this term). This term is concerned with what we remember from sensory experiences. How did the coffee taste? How does a rainy day smell, how heavy was the suitcase you carried – every person's experience will be different, but all of us have sensory responses with which others can relate. Cummins (2006) writes that "[p]rior knowledge, skills, beliefs, and concepts significantly influence what learners notice about their environment and how they organize and interpret it" (2006: 88). By exploring the *given circumstance* with learners in the classroom it helps them understand what a reader needs to picture the scene or setting. Here we can lie down on a lush carpet and feel the fibres on our skins, or smell a jar with cinnamon and see what memories the smell evokes in our minds. They can also discover how to use adjectives aptly. This helps them to communicate their imaginary worlds and transfer it to paper (see table 4 for the integration of this technique into a lesson).

Sense Memory also focuses the actors mind on ordinary objects (as Schechner (1988) also mentions) and rituals which have become quite habitual (like Schechner's (1988) 'non-productivity in terms of goods'), for example making a cup of coffee. Lefer (2000) uses this exercise to focus the senses of the writer's mind on mundane acts which have the potential to capture the imagination of the reader:

> [t]he idea is not to write a long boring description of a coffee cup but to awaken your
> senses and get in the habit of paying attention … come up with an unexpected but

true detail, often experienced but usually dismissed from consciousness, that's what makes a reader sit up in self-recognition and surprise (Lefer, 2000:16).

This activity could be used as a stimulus activity in the creative writing classroom. Asking learners to firstly mime the process of making coffee and then jot down the actions. Provide enough stimulus and input to create an authentic narrative in terms of an extended writing activity, with the prompt, "I open my eyes and hear the kettle whistle…". This practice reiterates Fleming's (2000) description of drama as "creating meaning or a web of practices … a form of life" and allows the learners to integrate it into their writing where "[t]hey describe a process of taking the events of the [activity] and relating them to their own lives to try and make them feel as authentic as possible" in their writing (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:287).

2.5.3.3   *Circles of Attention*

This term can best be described as a pebble thrown into a still standing pool of water. The pebble's impact on the water causes concentric circles and this shows that each action by a character will cause an appropriate reaction from other characters or him/herself. This strengthens learners' understanding of cause and effect and nuance in a textual context (Henry, 2000:54; Fleming, 2000:33; Light, 2000:264; Cummins, 2006:88). Learners could start to draw similarities and conclusions from actions of characters and this assists them in finding numerous outcomes to situations (Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011, Kelman & Rafe, 2013).

By using this drama technique of 'cause and effect' and 'action equal reaction' in improvisation activities, learners are encouraged to find different outcomes to situations or solutions to problems. Learners can draw from these experiences and integrate these discoveries, made through acting and improvisations, into their creative writing. Similarly, Lefer (2000) suggests that a writer should start from "action rather than thought. Stand up and begin to act out … While you're doing this, think about the problem you intended your character to be musing about. Continue your physical actions … don't be afraid to speak out loud as you play…" (2000:19). This technique of circles of attention is closely linked to the education philosophy and process of learning, social constructivism (Salomon & Perkins 1998). Learning is an "interactive event in which knowledge, understandings and meanings gradually

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emerge through interaction" (1998:9). The drama and writing processes are stimulating and help each other. If the writer gets stuck, the drama can provide him/her with experience which could stimulate feeling and imagination (creativity) for writing (Furner, 1973:406; Henry, 2000:59; Fleming, 2000:33; Cummins, 2006:88). On the other hand, if the performer struggles they could return to the text, analyse it and come to deeper understandings which would then stimulate a response, action or motivation for the character (Furner, 1973:406; Stanislavski, 1961:100; Kelman & Rafe, 2013:285; Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011:326).

2.5.3.4   The Score: Units, Objectives, the Super-Objective and the Through-Line of Action

This concept looks at how texts are structurally put together, but also breaks down the circles of "circles of attention". In terms of playwriting, Stanislavski (1961) states that each profound choice/situation is a unit with a specific goal or objective. The author is the "origin of all that has to be organised within a play, particularly using their 'ruling idea' or 'super-objective' as generating all the tasks or 'objectives' to be achieved" (Phillips, 1995:99). The actor, on the other hand, must know "the nature of passion … how to cull (from the text) the component units, objectives, moments, which in their sum total add up to a human passion … all the remaining objectives converge, as it were, into one super-objective … the concentration of the entire score. For the actor the through action is the active attainment of the super-objective" (Stanislavski, 1961a:100).

The super-objective and the through-line of action is the ultimate goal of the play. Is it ultimately a love story like Romeo and Juliet or is it a tragedy like Hamlet, where his thirst for revenge dictates all of his choices and actions? (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:283; Turner & Behrndt, 2008:43). This is, what I like to call the 'big picture' when all of the puzzle pieces have fallen into place. The smaller objectives all build up to and basically forms a 'golden thread' laced through the story. Once learners discover that an occurrence at the very beginning of the story will have an impact on the story as a whole, they really start to enjoy taking the audience and reader on a journey with multiple outcomes (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011:328). As Stanislavski states "the score have has the power to attract … excite the actor [or writer] not only by its external physical truth but above all by its inner beauty" (1961:100).

2.5.3.5   Tempo-Rhythm in Movement

This term refers to the acting craft. It entails physical and vocal characterisation which gives depth to characters. Certain vocal patterns and movements will be used by characters in different scenarios. Stanislavski (1961a) explains in <u>An Actor's Handbook</u> that the actor has to use material from his/her own life in order to aid the characterisation process:

> The fundamental aim of our art is the creation of this life of a human spirit, and its expression in artistic form … It is only when an actor feels that his inner and outer life on the stage is flowing naturally and normally that the deeper sources of his subconscious gently open, and from them come feelings… (Stanislavski, 1961a:101)

However, the most important is that these characters act and respond in a truthful manner, "work on the development of … truth, which supervises all of his [the actor's]… activity both when he is creating and also when he is performing his part" (Hapgood, 1968:189). Similarly, writers also use Stanislavski's approach to breathing life into their characters so that they are truthful and believable. Edmiston & Wilhelm (1998: 31) state that drama "is a cognitive tool that concretizes the abstract, making it sensory and available". Lefer (2000) shows this to be true by using this technique in her writing and stating that when you, the writer "come up with an unexpected but true detail, often experienced but usually dismissed from consciousness, that's what makes a reader sit up in self-recognition and surprise" (2000:17).

By using this drama technique in the creative writing classroom, learners can see that human nature can be altered and that adds nuance, insight, imagination and creativity to their writing.

2.5.3.6   Imagination

Once again, this technique is applied in the acting craft. Luckily this is not exclusive to actors, for as we all know, writers have an endless pool full of imaginary characters and worlds. However, the investigative stage (see 4.3.1) of this study has

revealed that learners struggle to find their creativity and utilize this in their creative writing. What Stanislavski requires from his actors in this instance is that the actor should visualize the *given circumstance (2.5.3.2)*. If the text mentions a table for instance, the actor must visualise the table in its totality; is it an old table? Is the table painted? Is it a kitchen table or a table learners use in a classroom? Stanislavski (1961a) states that imagination is one of the fundamentals to acting and performance (Phillips, 1995:100). He goes further by saying that there "is no such thing as actuality on the stage. Art is a product of the imagination, as the work of a dramatist should be. The aim of the actor should be to use his technique to turn the play into a theatrical reality. In this process imagination plays by far the greatest part" (Stanislavski, 1937:54). This performance technique also forms one of the fundamental building blocks of the writing experiences (Kruger, 2006, 2009; Kelman & Rafe, 2013:285; Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011:326). Stanislavski (1961b) states that a better performance lies in the action of observation and imagination. I, however, would like to include writers in this statement because through …

> "the action of the imagination, which to a far greater degree is subject to the effect of conscious will. We cannot directly act on our emotions, but we can prod our creative fantasy and it stirs up our emotion or affective memory, calling up from its secret depths, beyond the reach of consciousness, elements of already experienced emotions, and re-groups them to correspond with the images which arise in us. These images of our fantasy flare up without the slightest effort on our part … [and] … that is why creative fantasy [i.e. imagination] is a fundamental absolutely necessary gift for an actor [and writer]" (Hapgood, 1968:200).

Imagination plays an integral role in the drama and writing classroom. According to Henry (2000) drama activities encourage the learners to different worlds in which they can function (2000:53). Henry further states that when learners take on these imaginary realities, they enter a creative world which has the potential to "envelop and transform" (2000:53). This is true for the writer as well, where they could use writing as a means to healing themselves (Wright *et al.,* 2008:364; Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011:328) or to put right "what's wrong with the 'real' world" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:264; Henry, 2000:56).

2.5.3.7   *Magic 'If'*

The *magic 'if'* is probably one of the most used principles in the performance world, but is not exclusive to drama. Humans do this daily and this technique could be used cross-curricular in school between numerous subjects; from the drama classroom to languages to Life Orientation to History.

Stanislavski wrote in his notebooks (1937), which were published as <u>The Actor Prepares,</u> that the director he worked with stated: "You know now that our work on a play begins with the use of IF as a magic lever to lift us out of everyday life on to a plane of imagination" (Stanislavski, 1937:54). So in essence, the *magic 'if'* technique basically asks the question 'IF I were that person, what would I do?' or 'IF I were in that situation, how would I react?' This technique opens the actor's mind to the numerous possible reactions of the character, based on the socio-political and historical background of that character. This opens the mind of the creative school-writer, by placing him/herself in the 'shoes' of their characters (Henry, 2000:56; Fleming, 2000:43), and to find new unexplored reactions instead of using the tried and tested results that have become the scapegoat in their writing, for example ending their essay with "and then I woke up". Whilst reading Stanislavski's work (1937, 1961a, 1961b, 1976) on the *imagination* and *magic 'if'*, I found that he suggests that writers use these techniques as well. "[T]he play, the parts in it, are the invention of the author's imagination, a whole series of IFS and given circumstances thought up by him" (Stanislavski, 1937:54). However, these techniques are not commonly used by teachers who teach creative writing.

2.5.3.8   *Emotion Memory (or Sense Memory in some cases)*

Once again this is a technique employed by the actor, but could easily be adopted in the creative writing process. *Emotion Memory* can best be described as the actor directly transferring their own personal emotions to that of the character (Stanislavski 1961; Phillips, 1995:101; Henry, 1999:114; Henry, 2000:56). This technique focusses on the recalling of the emotional response one experienced in a specific situation. For example, if the character loses a parent, the actor may recall their personal response to a similar situation in order to convey the emotion in a believable manner. If the actor has not experienced that exact emotions, they should use "imagination" and the "Magic If" to simulate the emotional response. If the actor for example lost a very special friend, but not a parent, that emotional

memory may also be used. This is a very difficult technique and I refrain from going too deep with younger learners. They need to have dealt with the specific issue, before it can be used. However, the emotion memory technique could be applied to something as simple as drinking very hot coffee. Most of us have burnt our tongues in the process, and this is something that we can recall. We can remember how it smells just after it has rained or the bite of the cold during winter months. This technique should be used with responsibility and care and the teacher should know the learners very well in order to assist them if something very painful might arise. Lefer (2000) states that for her as a writer, the emotion memory technique was effective because she could "approach deep feeling only indirectly. Your personal experience does not have to be dealt with autobiographically; it is there to be used and transformed" (Lefer, 2000:17).

> [D]rama is located in everyday life […]. Living may be essentially characterized as being caught up in a sequence of events of which we become adapted and where a great existential uncertainty must always hold sway about where we are going and where we are coming from. When within any sequence, a pattern of events may build up that results in a change in our understanding of those events or through them of something else, we can speak of learning taking place (Phillips 1995:95).

Lefer (200) goes further by incorporating *Emotion Memory* and the *Magic If* in her writing by becoming more aware of sensory details. When these details "have a strong emotional resonance to you, you will have enlisted the help of your own subconscious in bringing a heightened emotion to your words" (Lefer 2000:17). Henry (2000:56) states that this becomes a valuable learning process for learners, for they gain different perspectives about the world they live in ("perspectival activity" as seen in figure 2).

2.5.3.9   *The Method of Physical Action*

The *method of physical action* is the (crux of the matter). This is where the actor (and in this case, the writer) would combine all of the above listed techniques into their performance (or writing). This is where the ordinary meets the extra-ordinary

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and life is breathed into two-dimensional characters and situations to flesh them out and make them believable in order to tell the story (Stanislavski, 1967:84; Phillips, 1995:103).

This could also be seen in terms of Barba's (2000) three dramaturgies for the writer: (1) An organic or dynamic dramaturgy, (2) A narrative dramaturgy, (3) A dramaturgy of changing states (also see 2.4.2.3). The actions of performers, use of space, sound and technical elements are the language in which the narrative is delivered (Kelman & Rafe, 2013:288). This approach encompasses narrative theory, in which there is a strong relationship between a narrative sequence and its meaning. Bruner (1990) refers to this as the "rule of sequence", which holds that it is "sequentiality that is indispensable to a story's significance" (Bruner 1990, 44). The 'reading' of a particular performance text concerns the interplay of dramatic form and narrative to generate meaning:

> . . . a story is understood not only in terms of what happens, but in terms of the ways in which we recount it, order it, negotiate it, structure it. The 'narratives' of all these works are not merely structures of linked events, but forms that encapsulate questions, affects, emotions, stories and discourses (Turner and Behrndt 2008, 29).

All of these considerations of narrative and form could lead to the creation of an authentic text.

2.6   CONCLUSION

Through acting, improvisation and play children will be stimulated and gain insight into the inner lives of characters, their motivations, conflicts and different situations. When journaling is used to transcribe these new ideas and insights the 'play' in the drama classroom will become a great source of information which could stimulate the creative writing process, as children will physically see how a story is constructed by being an integral part of the story making process.

Gallagher & Ntelioglou's (2011) research about dialogue and performance in youth writing served as a wonderful inspiration for this study. They found that "drama practices can provoke creative and critical forms of literacy that suggest new modes

of theorizing the multiple acts of literacy that take place in schools." (2011: 322) Teachers are encouraged to get up from behind their desks littered with assignments, assessments and rubrics, and to become actively involved in the learning and writing process of their learners. We should create a classroom atmosphere where it is okay to be different and to speak out. We should incorporate different subjects and modes of literacy in the language classroom and not stick to the tried and tested formula – it is boring and mundane and learners tend to be uninspired in these dull classes (Boulter, 2004:135). We need to be motivated to interact with our learners and really listen to what they have to say. Drama practice provides all of these opportunities. By combining these principles of drama with the creative writing lessons of the Language classroom, wonderful surprises can occur. As Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) state "using drama to flesh out ideas through story, abstract language, and concepts such as metaphors and symbols often produces results that surprise both teacher and students" (2011: 329).

Therefore, using drama principles to stimulate creativity, while exploring a "significant topic" (Furner 1973: 405; Gallagher & Ntelioglou 2011; Light, 2000) in the creative writing classroom, along with the journal to document the experimental and creative journey, an authentic own devised piece can emerge. However, this is not the only goal. If we give our learners the opportunity to produce writing which is inspired by personal or cultural narratives we are actually guiding them through Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) *knowledge transforming* process. When learners' prior knowledge (*knowledge telling*[11]), identity and culture are utilized and validated, not simply as background story or as forms of inclusion, but also as the main context for their work, students are more willing to invest themselves in their learning process and move beyond what they already know. Learners are now critically engaged with the world and through their writing they can create "a world of [their] own in which what's wrong with the 'real' world can be set right" (Csiksentmihalyi 1997:264).

> "Using this social power of drama to help students encounter ideas and experiences different from their own is an imaginative way to raise fundamental issues of difference in classrooms and to challenge the constraining social roles so often ascribed to high school students" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 329).

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[11] Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)

Consequently, drama can help learners find their own creativity and stimulate the creative writing process, but more so, help learners find themselves and transform their way of thinking about themselves and the world which they inhabit. Therefore, language Educators need to emphasize the creative process and the arts as "central aspects of the educational experience, […] the intense passion and investments of the teachers, their delight in the progress and also the individuality of their students" (Nussbaum, 2006:386).

The drama techniques of Stanislavski (1961a, 1961b, 1967) and Grotowski's (1993) techniques of 'object manipulation' and the improvisation possibilities and stock characters of Commedia dell' Arte integrated with Schechner's (1988) fundamental building blocks of creating a performance, Furner's (1973) creative dramatics writing model and Henry's (2000) modes of learning through drama provide the learner with the possibilities to find creativity which could serve as inspiration and stimulate ideas for creative writing tasks in the classroom.

This brings us to the next phase in this research, the discussion of the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This research seeks to establish what drama strategies could be incorporated in the drama or language classroom in order to stimulate creativity in the process of writing. The research was conducted at an independent private school in the Western Cape Province, South Africa which uses the Cambridge Curriculum. The name of the school will be withheld in order to protect the school, its teachers and learners.   As part of an honours final research assessment I did a pilot study in order to test the research instruments which I used during this research project. The pilot study took place in the IGCSE[12] Drama classroom in which there were three female learners who were 16 years old. At the beginning of 2009 these learners chose the subject Drama as one of their matric subjects. The IGCSE Cambridge Drama curriculum stipulates that the learners should write a one act play and perform it for their final practical examination (refer to 2.3.3.1 for detailed information about the curriculum). I noticed that the learners struggled to conceptualize and formulate their performance ideas in writing and this is how the research question manifested; how can drama stimulate creativity in writing?

3.1.1   A Qualitative Approach to Data Collection

According to Punch (2009) the point of a qualitative study is to look at "something holistically and comprehensively, to study it in its complexity, and to understand it in its context" (2009: 161). The three abovementioned issues often criticize quantitative research in education and social research – as qualitative researchers feel that it is too "reductionist in its approach to the study of behaviour, thereby losing sight of the whole picture; that it over simplifies social reality, in its stress on measurement; and that it strips away context from the data" (Punch, 2009:161). However, for the qualitative researcher, the "'truth' about human behaviour is not independent of context; it is not context-free" (Punch, 2009:161).

Rather than aspiring to "statistical generalizability or representativeness" (Harding & Gantley, 1998:76), qualitative research usually aims to "reflect the diversity within a given population" (Kuzel, 1992:31). The question that this research project asks can be answered solely by means of a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. The fact that it grapples with the concept of stimulating creativity, which in

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[12] IGCSE – International General Certificate in Education

itself cannot be measured and with teachers (who have their own personal perceptions and opinions about originality and creativity) assessing this creative writing, makes it very difficult to find quantifiable results. This research is also primarily concerned with the empowerment of the participants, by assisting them with the creative process for writing in the classroom. However, Lazaraton (1995) reiterates the value of the qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis by stating that they are "clearly important for the types of questions asked in applied linguistics research" (Lazaraton, 1995:456). If we do not ask the questions, we will never know if there is a need for change. This leads us to ask what exactly qualitative research is. Patton (1990:7) answers this question succinctly:

> Statistician try to measure IT.
>
> Experimentalist try to control IT.
>
> Evaluators value IT.
>
> Interviewers ask questions about IT.
>
> Observers watch IT.
>
> Participant observers do IT.

As researchers we constantly try to decipher "IT". According to Jacob (1987:1) there is a "variety of alternative approaches" in qualitative research which will assist the researcher in collecting the desired data in order to convey the "full picture" of the context in which the research takes place (Punch, 2009:161). Of course, each of the qualitative approaches has its "own philosophy, literature, and guidelines for conducting research and reporting outcomes; obviously, the researcher who adopts any such approach needs a firm grounding in the literature and procedures" (Lazaraton, 1995:456-457). Punch (2009) explains that the qualitative researcher uses a "think description" to convey the context of the research. There are two parts to this "think description": firstly the description (of the case, or the group, or the event or phenomenon) must stipulate everything "a reader needs to know in order to understand the findings" (Punch 2009:161). Secondly, Punch (2009) reiterates that the "research report needs to provide sufficient information about the context of the research so that a reader can judge the transferability or generalizability of the findings" (2009:161).

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

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Le Compte and Preissle (1993:30) state that a research design entails a process where the researcher must decide what strategies will be most effective for obtaining the objectives and questions of the study. Based on the above argument I decided to follow an Action Research method, gathering the data needed by means of qualitative research tools in the form of interviews and participant observations as well as process journals written by the learners. As I am doing research in education and the human sciences, more specifically social sciences, the methodological positions to be taken was based on the paradigm of post-positivist and interpretative inquiry, following the processes of understanding, deconstructing and emancipating (Le Grange 2000:194).

3.2.1   The Process of Understanding

The term understanding can be used in two different ways; the first being "Verstehen" (or empathetic understanding) and the second, predictive understanding. Frankfort-Nachmias (2007) argues that if social scientists want to understand the behaviour of individuals and groups, they must "put themselves into the place of the subject of inquiry" (Frankfort-Nachmias, 2007:11). This means that they must comprehend the other's subjective view of reality, the way that reality is expressed in symbols as well as the values and attitudes that underline that view.

For the purpose of this study emphasis was placed on the paradigm 'understand'. According to Mouton (2001:114) there are basically three types of reasoning that one could employ when interpreting data, namely: deduction, inductive generalization and retroduction. For the purposes of this study, the focus was on retroduction because the purpose was not to draw conclusions from certain premises (deduction) or to generalise from a sample to a bigger population (induction). According to Mouton (2001:118) retroduction refers to another form of inductive inference that involves using inferences from observations or data in order to construct or "infer" an explanation of such observations. Mouton (2001) further states that it is also referred to as "inference to the best explanation" (2001: 118). On the basis of observations that researchers make, and the perceived patterns and trends in the observation, they 'think up' an explanation or hypothesis that would explain the

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observed events. The creation of a hypothesis that provides plausible accounts and explanations of observed events and data, is called retroductive inferences.

This brings us to the next process of the acquisition of knowledge and epistemology for this research – it is the deconstruction.

3.2.2   The Process of Deconstruction

We live in a postmodern era where asking questions have almost become more important than getting answers and a "loss of certainty in what is known and in ways of knowing" (LeGrange, 2000:194). The fact that I have labelled this research as post-positivist reflects the post-modern philosophy that there is a decline of absolutes, but also the belief that universally defined rules and methods in research will guarantee true results. According to Hargreaves (1994:39), adopting a post-modern position means denying the existence of "foundational knowledge on the grounds that no knowledgeable social reality exists beyond the signs of language, image and discourse". In other words this means that post-modern theorists deconstruct "the existing representations of social reality" (LeGrange, 2000:194) and give a voice to other versions which are normally marginalised or suppressed.

This has shaped my understanding of the research question, but also of the participants that will be part of the research project. I had to deconstruct my perceived ideas of 'good' creative writing and drama pedagogy in order to construct a writing programme which stretches across curriculums and focussed on the stimulation of creativity and the construction of knowledge by the participants themselves. By involving the participants and providing them with opportunities to deconstruct and construct their ideas, views and knowledge, they are provided with opportunities for growth and independence and this brings us to the process of emancipation.

3.2.3   The Process of Emancipation

LeGrange (2000:193) distinguishes between positivist and interpretive research as follows: positivistic research is usually associated with control and prediction whilst interpretive research is associated with enlightenment, understanding and

communication. However, neither of these research traditions has an interest in how research can change the world in terms of the "direction of freedom, justice and democracy" (LeGrange, 2000:193). Therefore, a third type of 'knowledge-constitutive interest' has been identified by Habermas (1972), the emancipatory interest.

According to Usher (1996) the emancipatory interest is actively involved in unmasking specific ideologies that have maintained the status quo, which has in turn denied individuals access to "knowledge and awareness about the material conditions that oppress or restrict them" (Usher, 1996:22).

> The issue then for the emancipatory research paradigm is not how to empower people but, once people have decided to empower themselves, precisely what research can then do to facilitate this process. This does then mean that the social relations of research production do have to be fundamentally changed; researchers have to learn how to put their knowledge and skills at the disposal of their research subjects, for them to use in whatever ways they choose (Oliver, 1992: 111).

This research thus strives to empower the participants not only by means of their experience in the classroom, which will assist the participants to change their ideas about creative writing, being a creative individual, the knowledge construction process, but also that one can have fun while learning.

It is necessary to understand that this research deals with a specific group of learners, from a specific socio-economic background with a specific type of teacher. In an attempt to measure the development of creativity (which is by no means a concrete or measurable entity), I utilized a research methodology, as Creswell (2003:12) mentions, which allows for "many approaches in collecting and analysing data, rather than subscribing to only one way". My aim was to create activities and tasks, and to encourage participation in these tasks by giving learners suitable cues and stimulation for the creative processes. I observed the learners' processes and strategies while they were busy with the tasks and activities, I evaluated their progress and helped them to improve their performance and reflect on the success or failure of the tasks in order to empower the participants.

Action Research, as a design, makes it possible for the researcher to address specific problems or challenges in a particular local and social setting, with the aim to socially uplift and empower the participants. In the next section this research design will be discussed in more detail.

3.2.4   Action Research (AR)

Parkin (2009) states that Action Research has the ability to bring about "change in a specific [context]". There are two reasons why I decided to use this methodology. The first reason that Action Research is regarded as the appropriate methodology for this specific study is that it brings change into the creative writing classroom. McNiff & Whitehead (2006) state that there are two critical purposes in choosing to conduct Action Research: the first is a practical outcome or action involving a real world occurrence and secondly, a contribution to knowledge (2006:12). Stringer & Genat (2004) further add to this statement by pointing out that, Action Researchers "engage in careful diligent enquiry not for the purpose of discovering new facts or revising accepted laws or theories, but to acquire information having practical application to the solution of specific problems related to their work" (2004:3).

The second reason that Action Research is a suitable methodology for this study is that it is participative in nature. This means that both the researcher and the participants are actively involved and taking part in the research. Action Research is consequently focused on "finding a solution to a local problem in a local setting" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:108). This being said, McNiff & Whitehead (2006), encourages teachers to be in a constant dialogue with themselves asking, "What am I doing? What do I need to improve? [and] How do I improve it?" (2006:7). By reaching this state of professional awareness and discourse, the teacher is also actively learning by and through teaching his/her class. (This aspect is discussed in the practical implementation of the Action Research cycles in chapter 4).

Action Research works in cycles of planning, implementation, observation and reflection. These phases provide the researcher with the motivation to "implement the required changes" and to "reflect critically" on the on-going process (Wallace, 1998: 12). The fact that Action Research is cyclical and allows for change makes it a malleable methodology which is valuable for research in an educational

environment. If the teacher-researcher becomes aware that the learners are struggling with a specific phase in the research, they can revisit and revise, in other words "act on, observe, reflect on and re-plan" (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000:595), in order to improve the identified problem in their practice. Subsequently it empowers educators to "become aware of what is really happening" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002:157) in their classrooms.

Even though Action Research has become one of the most encouraged and utilized methodologies, Waters-Adams (2006) contends that "educational research through [A]ction [R]esearch does not produce understanding that has universal truth […] [A]ction [R]esearch can produce generalizations about practice, but such generalizations are only part of a wider search for understanding" (2006: 3). With regard to my own study, the abovementioned reasons imply that the results achieved through Action Research cannot be applied or generalised to the greater educational context of South Africa. However, Hamilton (1981) suggests that the researcher's "ideas and conclusions can be tried out by someone else in their own practice". McNiff & Whitehead (2009: 13) confirm this by stating that AR "is about finding ways to improve your practice, so it is about creating knowledge. The knowledge you create is knowledge of practice".

The cyclical and changeable nature of Action Research and how the process develops successively, can be seen in the graphic illustration below.
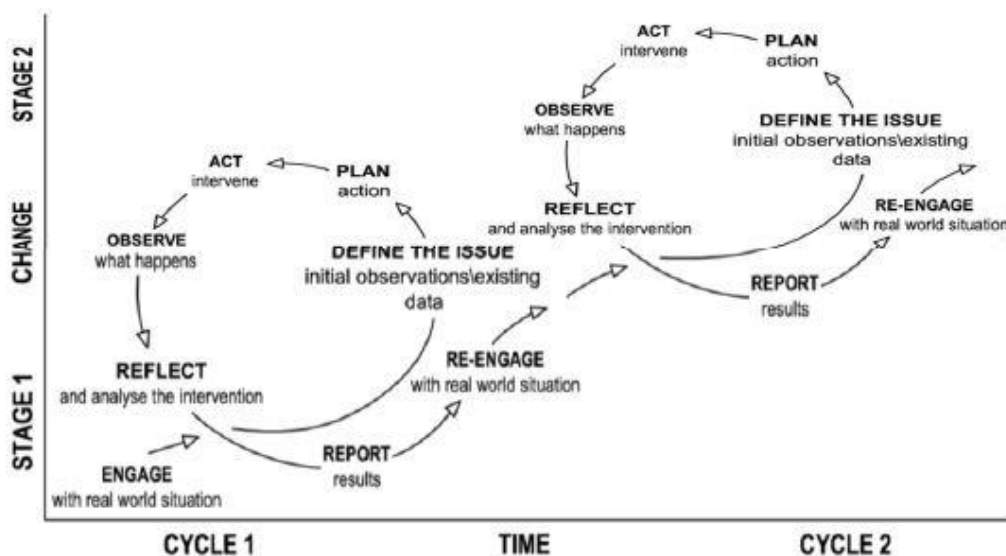
Figure 5: A Model of Action Research
(Adapted from: RMIT University educational media website)

Within this paradigm, the following methods were selected as techniques and procedures in the gathering of data for inference and interpretation.

3.3   RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The research will be qualitative and of an experimental nature, which will strive to open the creative research field for further enquiry and investigation. I will follow an Action Research methodology in the classroom by using unstructured interviews with the learners, participant observations of the class activities and interpreting the process journals of the learners. From the data themes and trends will crystallize which will be discussed in terms of the research question and the aim of the research. This follows the classical Action Research model for collecting data according to Sanger (1990):

> "It follows a classical pattern of data collection from the classroom and elsewhere, by interview observation, and documentation analysis. The data is then analysed as a whole. This may lead the teacher to an action hypothesis, which involves effecting a change in his or her classroom" (1990: 174).

To gather qualitative data I made use of three instruments, namely 1) participant observations during the implementation of the two cycles of the research activities, 2) process journals (see copies of their journal entries Addendum I) of the participants as well as the journal of the researcher, and lastly, 3) the interview which I have sub-divided into the 3.1) unstructured reflective classroom discussions and the 3.2) individual semi-structured interviews. Herewith a discussion on each of the data collection instruments:

3.3.1   The Participant Observations

In order to understand how the participant observer works we need to investigate this central data collection technique of ethnography. Punch (2009) explains that the term ethnography comes from cultural anthropology – "'Ethno' meaning people or

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folk, while 'graphy' refers to describing something" (2009:24). In other words, ethnography is concerned with describing a culture and understanding the way of life from its participants' point of view – "ethnography is the art and science of describing a group of culture" (Punch 2009; Fetterman 1989; Neuman 1994). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 1-10) go further by saying that the ethnographer participates, "overtly, or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time", where we are "watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions and collecting any other relevant data" (Punch, 2009:125).

This means that the participant observer does not observe from an objective point of view alone, but that he/she could be actively involved in the activities with the other participants. Punch (2009) states that "human behaviour is based upon meanings that people attribute to and bring to situations" (2009: 125), this means that behaviour, like knowledge is continuously constructed and reconstructed. Therefore, to understand behaviour, an approach that gives us direct access to these created meanings for behaviour is needed – it is the "capacities we have all developed as social actors – the capacity of the participant observation – which can give us that access" (Punch, 2009: 125).

The participant observations will take place in a classroom with a specific group of learners who have known each other for the past two years. They were taught by me, once a week for a year and consequently, I am not unfamiliar with the participants, but I would not say that we 'know' each other well. Hammersley and Antkinson (1995) state that this should not be problematic if the researcher can turn the familiar culture or group of people into an object available for study; for even when the researcher is "researching a familiar group or setting, the participant observer is required to treat this as anthropologically strange, in an effort to make explicit the presuppositions he or she takes for granted as a cultural member" (1995: 910).

As I am the teacher I cannot merely sit and observe the lessons. I have to be not only actively involved in the lessons in order to teach my learners, but also as the Action Researcher intentionally making use of the situations and activities in my class. I need to observe what happens, in order to "gather information" (Murray-

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Thomas, 2003:60) concerning the progress of the participants during the implementation of the activities and to find solutions if needed.

Participant observation has its advantages because the researcher can instantaneously observe what is happening and ask questions during these observations which could range from the very general to the very specific. However, during these participant observations, the researcher should be incredibly focused and also aware of what to look for and why she/he is looking for it. Yet, Leedy & Ormrod (2005:146) warn the researcher that she/he should not confuse their personal interpretations (and hopes) with the actual happenings of the research for two reasons: firstly, the initial interpretations at the beginning of the study will change during the course of the research, and secondly, the researcher should try to be as objective as possible. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 910) support this notion by stating, "the participant observer is required to treat his [familiar culture or group of people] as anthropologically strange".

However, there are some concerns regarding the researcher being both participant-in and observer-of the research. Gold (1958) cross-classifies participant and observer in his analysis of the typology of naturalistic research roles as shown on the next page in Figure 6:
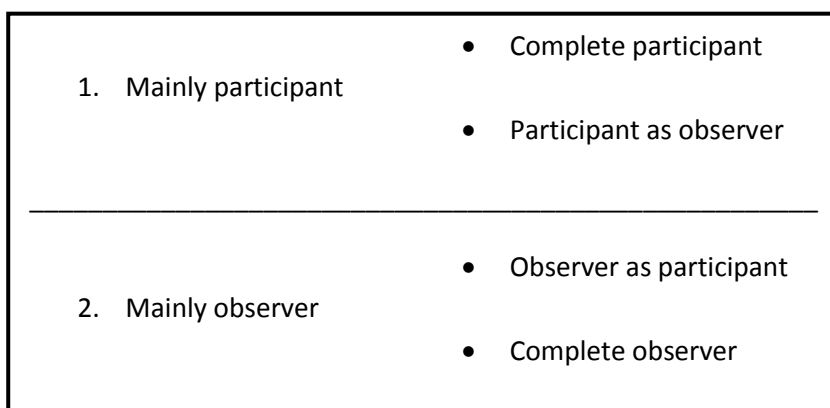
Figure 6: Typology of naturalistic research roles (Gold, 1958:223)

Adler & Adler (1994) modified Gold's theory and describe three membership roles for the participant observer-researcher, they are: (1) the complete-member-researcher,

(2) the active-member-researcher, and (3) the peripheral-member-researcher. Whichever classification the participant observer-researcher chooses this will have a direct influence on the data as well as on the data collection.

For this research, I would describe my role in terms of Gold's model (1958 – Figure 6) as the *mainly observer – observer as participant*. In terms of Adler & Adler's (1994) modified theory, I would be classified as the peripheral-member-researcher (which is the Participant as observer and Observer as participant in terms of Gold's (1958) theory). I observed my participants for two terms – excluding the examinations at the end of each term as well as the holidays. This amounted to approximately 10 weeks of active participant observations. What I observed at every stage in the research will be fully discussed in chapter 4 when I discuss the cycles of Action Research.

3.3.2   The Process Journals of Learners

Csiksentmihalyi (1997) noted during his research of creative writers, that all the writers whom he interviewed had a journal in which they jotted down their thoughts. One writer in particular commented that "when I leap out of bed in the dark, the thing I want to jot down is a set of words in a certain order, which will be the nucleus of whatever is going to come" (Csiksentmihalyi, 1997:251). This is the essence of a journal and even if some might argue that they do not necessarily want to become writers, I really see this as valuable in the fostering of creativity in writing. "The written word allows us to understand better what is happening within ourselves… thus [to] understand more accurately how *we* feel and what *we* think" (Csiksentmihalyi, 1997:238).

Spalding & Wilson (2002:1396) stress that journals serve as a "permanent record of thoughts and experiences". For Williams & Wessel (2004) the purpose of reflective journals is to "deepen students' understanding of experiences" and to help develop and nurture "thinking skills" that actively engage them in learning. At the beginning of the research process each grade 9 learner received a journal in which they had to write about the activities we did in class that day. This was used as a reflective tool for the learners, but the journals were not limited to class activities and assignments alone. The learners were encouraged to use the journal creatively and for whatever

means they saw fit, while bearing in mind that it should focus on their creative development in performance and writing. Many of the authors, Csiksentmihalyi (1997) refers to, agree that inspiration is everywhere – "you don't know when you're going to be hit with an idea, you don't know where it comes from", sometimes you just have to "start writing without anything specific in mind. What gets him[13] started is the simplest desire to write" (Csiksentmihalyi, 1997:240).

These journals would provide evidence of the learners' individual processes and development, which would once again be compared with the data that was gathered in the unstructured interviews and the observations. Copies of some of my participants' reflections from their journals are available in Addendum I. I believe that by keeping a journal the research participants had an opportunity to document their personal experiences of class activities, their thought processes, their fears and their triumphs throughout the research project. But most importantly, I believe that after the learners became comfortable with writing in their journals, they started to develop a need to write.

As a participant observer, keeping an own personal process journal in AR had enormous benefits. Not only is journaling a tool that enables the researcher to document valuable information regarding the research; it also becomes an invaluable reflecting tool, aiding the researcher in her/his reflection on the progress and the effectiveness of the project. The journal provides the researcher with a space to reflect on what is happening in the project and strengthens attempts to obtain a degree of objectivity. It is a space where the researcher can play around with ideas for new activities, plan activities, read and re-read personal thoughts, write about the daily experiences as a participant observer and by doing so the act of writing and actively reflecting becomes a thinking tool whereby "knowledge is created by the transformation of experience through observation and reflection" (Phelps, 2005:38).

3.3.3   The Interview

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[13] The writer, Mark Strand in an interview with Csiksentmihalyi (1997:240)

The interview, as a research tool, has wide applicability due to its great variety and flexibility. Punch (2009: 144)) states that it is a "very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and construction of reality" as they know it to be true. As qualitative researchers, we are always in trying to understand particular situations and we are constantly in search of answers to specific questions. Jones (1985: 46) states that in order to "understand other persons' construction of reality, we would do well to ask them … and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and a priori by ourselves) and in depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings".

According to Silwerman (1993), different types of interview are suited to different types of situation and scenario and consequently, interview data can become problematic, because it is never raw, but is always situated and textual.

> [T]he interview is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. It is not a neutral tool, for the interviewer creates the reality of the interview situation. In this situation answers are given. Thus the interview procedures situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes. This method is influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer, including race, class, ethnicity and gender (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 353).

Patton (2002) distinguishes three main types of interview: firstly, the informal conversation, secondly the general interview guide approach and thirdly, the standardised open-ended interview.

In this particular study a nondirective, unstructured interview was used with the learners which allowed "the agenda to be set by the interviewee" (Le Grange, 2000:193). The reason for this was to provide the participants with the freedom to express their thoughts freely and to provide the researcher with more in-depth data than they would gather with a very structured interview. Two interview methods were used in this study namely, the unstructured group interviews or reflective classroom discussions as well as the unstructured individual interview.

Unstructured interviews (Frankfort-Nachmias, 2007) and reflective classroom discussions were conducted with the grade 9 learners and their language teachers in order to establish their perceptions of the research intervention. The discussions with the learners were used to discover how the learners experienced the stimulation provided by the teacher-researcher and if this eased their creative writing process at all.

3.3.3.1   The Unstructured Reflective Classroom Discussion

The group interview, or sometimes known as the "focus group interview" (Punch, 2009:146), allows the researcher to work with several people at once. However, the role of the researcher/interviewer changes in the group interview scenario – the interviewer will function more as a moderator or facilitator of the conversation than the traditional interviewer who alternates between question and answer. (Punch, 2009; Merton *et al.*, 1956; Fontana & Frey, 1994). Morgan (1988) points out that "the hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group" (1988: 12). The group situation allows for participants to feel safe and to air their "views, perceptions, motives and reasons" (Punch, 2009: 147) which they would not necessarily do in an individual structured interview. It also allows the researcher to collect data they would not expect to gather, whilst they are probing aspects of people's behaviour. However, Fontana & Frey (1994) remind us that problems associated with achieving balance in the group interaction as well as in group culture and dynamics can arise.

Another issue that needs to be discussed is the hierarchical relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees. Fontana & Frey (1994) point out that the respondent can see themselves in a subordinate position and this can lead to moral, ethical and methodological objections, for better data is at stake. Punch (2009: 149) suggests that the status between the two parties can be minimized by "developing a more equal relationship based on trust that includes both self-disclosure by the researcher and reciprocity". Through this 'hierarchical pitfall' (Reinharz, 1992) can be avoided and will enable greater openness and insight, a greater range of responses, and therefore richer data.

For the classroom environment, this style of interviewing allows all learners to air their views. However, the teacher-learner relationship needs to be established before the research is conducted. Owing to the fact that I had not only spent a year with these learners, getting to know them on a personal level in the classroom, but also at extra-mural cultural activities, I had the necessary knowledge and understanding of their personal worlds which enabled me to create a safe and comfortable environment, where there was no hierarchical tension. The learners respected me as their teacher, but were comfortable enough to air their views openly and honestly, as they knew (from experience) that I would not hold it against them or penalize them in assessments. This relationship was established with time and nurturing. The small class size also enabled us to have personal interaction and form relationships based on mutual trust. As a result the participants felt comfortable enough to have individual interviews after the activities in both cycles of the research.

3.3.3.2   The Semi-Structured Individual Interviews

The unstructured interview is sometimes also called the ethnographic interview. This type of interview is used in order to understand the complex behaviour of people, without "imposing any prior categorization which might limit the field of inquiry" (Punch, 2009: 147). Owing to the fact that it has roots in ethnography, this interviewing tool explores "people's interpretations and meanings of events and situations, and their symbolic and cultural significance" (Punch, 2009: 148). Even though, this interview is unstructured Fontana & Frey (1994) suggest seven aspects, which can be used as a checklist by interviewers, when planning data collection by means of the unstructured interview:

1. Accessing the setting.
2. Understanding the language and culture of the respondents.
3. Deciding on how to present oneself.
4. Locating an informant.
5. Gaining trust.
6. Establishing rapport.
7. Collecting the empirical materials.

The nature of each situation as well as the participants will be handled in a unique manner – there is no clear cut formula for this type of interview style. The interviewer should be flexible and adaptable in order to mitigate any situation which may arise.   Douglas (1985) calls this style 'creative interviewing', which is essential when the researcher is gathering data concerning oral history and life history. Punch (2009) reminds us that skill in this type of interviewing, "and especially in probing meanings, interpretations and symbolic significance, does not come naturally" (2009: 148). Most researchers need training and guidance in order to develop these skills.

Reading about this style, conversations with my study leader and other researchers, as well as teaching full-time, prepared me for this task. However, I am still learning and developing these skills daily. These interviews were unstructured. I made appointments with the learners after school as the lessons did not provide enough time or privacy for the individual unstructured interviews. (The interview schedule can be seen in Addendum E).

The subject matter addressed during the interviews particularly focused on how the learners experienced the practical activities that were done in class, the creative impulses which were provided by the teacher to aid the creative writing process, the physical act of writing, their personal attitude (likes and dislikes) towards the activities and if they felt the particular activities actually helped them in their creative writing process.

As this is a small scale qualitative study I am not aiming to retrieve statistical or generalizable results. This research's value lies in providing unique insights into an experimental learning experience. It also aims to bring about change in learners' attitudes towards creative writing and to help them understand that they can create their own creative environment (like the journal), apart from their teacher and language classroom, in which they will find stimulation that will assist them in the creative process of writing.

According to Kolb (1984), drama can be perceived as experiential learning and reflection is also a major part of this type of learning. Drama techniques such as improvisation and characterization are incorporated in the classroom by means of

the Action Research cycles, to provide stimulation for the creative writing tasks at hand. These exercises provide the 'experience'. The journals create the space for the learners to reflect in and this becomes a great source of data because the learners notarize their process of writing in these journals. It is my belief that this research's value lies in providing unique insights into a constructivist (Kruger, 2009) and experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) experience.

3.3.4   The Creative Writing Programme

I will discuss the implementation of my programme based the research of creative writing conducted by Furner (1973), Flower and Hayes (1981) and Kruger (2006) in chapter 4. Here is a summary of the stages of the creative writing programme on which both AR cycles are based:

> *Stage 1: The Inspiration Stage*
> *Stage 2: The Interchange Stage*
> *Stage 3: The Brainstorming Stage*
> *Stage 4: The Sharing Stage*
> *Stage 5: The Writing Stage*
> *Stage 6: The Production Stage*
> *Stage 7: The Aftermath*

These stages include writing tasks and activities that employ multi-literacies and drama techniques and activities which should stimulate creativity that should be used in these writing tasks.

3.4   RESEARCH SITE AND PARTICIPANTS

The research participants who were chosen to participate in this study were grade 9 IGCSE Drama students. These learners elected to take the subject at the end of Grade 8 to ensure there was no inconvenience to the other educators' schedules or of any disruption to the daily routine of the school, whilst the research commenced, as the research formed part of their IGCSE Drama syllabus (as discussed in Chapter 2 section 2.3.3)

3.4.1   The School

The School was chosen as the school for this research project. The choice was influenced by the following reasons: (1) the researcher was an active and fulltime member of the staff at the school; (2) the school offers a course in Dramatic arts; (3) the researcher is qualified to teach Drama as well as English FL to high school learners, and (4) the school is multicultural, including learners from all walks of life. Some of the learners are from an affluent background, but other learners are attending the school with full bursaries based on their individual excellence in sport, culture and/or academic results. Some learners are foreigners and attend this school due to the fact that they follow the University of Cambridge Curriculum. However, the majority of the learners are born and raised in South Africa. Some of the parents are professionals who excelled in their line of work and/or own their own companies, whilst other parents are middle-class earning a moderate salary and then there are parents struggling to make a living. However, all of these parents have one thing in common and that is that they value education.

The school is moderately new. It was only 10 years old when the research was conducted. The School is a non-profit organisation. Its sole purpose is to provide excellent education and extra-mural activities to its learners. It has a board of trustees that manages the financial and business side of this private school. The school is funded by school fees. In terms of the hierarchy at this school, the senior management team (SMT) of the school consists of the Headmaster, two deputy principals, head of departments and the heads of culture and sport. The headmaster is contracted to the board of the school. One deputy principal manages learner affairs (sport, culture, discipline) while the other manages academics.

Space has always been a problem at this school, as this school caters for learners from Grade RR to Grade 12. The campus is separated into two schools: the Junior School and the High School. However, both these schools are in the same building, with the exception of the Nursery (Grade RR to Grade 1), which is in another building on the same grounds. Understandably, negotiating break times, classroom space and sport field space has always been a headache at the School. The classrooms are neat, but not furnished with state of the art equipment that one would expect in a private school. A few teachers are forced to 'float' from one classroom to another,

due to the fact that there is simply not enough space for these teachers to have a classroom. I was one of the teachers who moved from one classroom to another. I had a little office (which was actually a converted storeroom) in the back of an English classroom. The drama lessons took place in this English classroom.

The whole school comprises of approximately 800 learners, of which 350 are in the High School. More than half of the learners in the High School are white, English speaking learners. The other learners are Asian, Coloured and African. The teachers are all white, and speak English and Afrikaans and dominantly female.

3.4.2   The Learners

The University of Cambridge Curriculum is followed at the High school. The primary school follows the British General Education Curriculum. However, the grade 8 and grade 9 curricula is elected by the subject specialists at the school, in order to ensure that the learners are fully prepared for the IGCSE[14] examinations at the end of their grade 10 year. In grade 11 the learners enter the AS[15] levels which they complete at the end of grade 12. This is another reason why the research could be conducted at this school, as the curriculum in grade 9 allows more flexibility in Drama. The teacher-researcher created a curriculum based on the RNCS[16] of South Africa with the fundamental requirements of the University of Cambridge Curriculum for Drama. This ensured that the learners would be able to complete the IGCSE examinations, but would also be able to enter a state school in South Africa.

Thirteen (13) grade 9 learners took part in the research. These learners chose the subject at the end of their grade 8 year. They had the option to choose between the three Art forms (Drama, Music and Visual Art) offered at the school as part of their Arts and Culture curriculum. These three of the subjects are separated into two groups, namely the Basic course and the pre-IGCSE course. This means that the learners who chose the pre-IGCSE course decided to possibly continue with the subject in grade 10 and would take the IGCSE examinations at the end of that year. The thirteen research participants were part of the pre-IGCSE Drama course. I

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[14] International General Certificates in Education.
[15] Advanced Subsidiary Levels
[16] Revised National Curriculum of South Africa (2007)

discussed the pre-IGCSE curriculum with the learners and their parents at a parent evening. I explained that the research would be done during class time as it would aid the learners in their completion of the IGCSE examinations at the end of grade 10, but that the activities would also form part of their assessment for the subject. The learners and parents received a letter, which again explained the details of the research and here they could state if they wanted their child's work (journal) to be part of the data for this research project.

I also explained to the parents that I am also a qualified English teacher and that I found that learners struggle to write creatively and to create an authentic text from scratch. The research took place in the Drama classroom, one a week for 30 minutes from June to December (excluding the four weeks at the end of each term which is dedicated to examinations). The research spanned a period of ten weeks. Other teachers and extra-mural activities were not inconvenienced in any way.

3.5   DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This research study finds itself in the interpretive and experimental research paradigm. It employs qualitative research methods within the Action Research methodology. In order to analyse the qualitative data different methods of analysis is needed.

3.5.1   Analysis of Qualitative Data

Various researchers have developed methods in order to analyse qualitative data. McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 462) define qualitative data analysis as a "relatively systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest". On the other hand, researchers, Fraenkel and Wallen (2008: 476) state that while a researcher is processing qualitative data the researcher has to have a "holistic view" of all of the gathered data before the data is segmented and reassembled into different categories. Creswell (2003: 191-195) suggests that, while analysing qualitative data, the researcher should organize and prepare the data by typing up field notes, transcribing interviews and sorting the data into different types and categories.   Rossman and Rallis (1998:171) recommend that researchers organize

the material collected into "chunks" in order to identify and generate "themes" for analysis. Boyatzis (1998: vi) is in agreement with Rossman and Rallis (1998). He feels that thematic analysis is a process for encoding qualitative data and argues that a good theme is able to capture the qualitative richness of the research phenomenon.

In order to analyse and interpret the qualitative data in this research study the interpretative data analysis method was used. In this process, the data from the field notes, participant observations, entries in the research journal, transcriptions from the interviews, and samples of the learners' work were closely examined in order to find constructs and identify themes and patterns which occur. The aforementioned suggestions by Creswell (2003: 191-195), Fraenkel and Wallen (2008: 476) and Rossman and Rallis (1998: 171) were employed for the analysis of the data gathered. In both phases of the AR cycles, qualitative data was gathered and interpreted in order to construct and understand the bigger picture of the research project in terms of qualitative research.

3.6   MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

Validity and reliability in research is of the utmost importance. Creswell and Miller (2000) state that validity is seen as the strength of qualitative research and terms that speak to this idea include 'trustworthiness', 'transferability' and 'credibility'. Bush (2002:60) on the other hand states that there is no widely accepted definition of reliability or validity. Bell (2005:50) argues that reliability is the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions – "[A] factual question which may produce one type of answer on one occasion but a different answer on another is" unreliable. To determine the reliability of an unstructured or semi-structured interview is complex, "because of the deliberate strategy of treating each participant as a potentially unique respondent" (Bush, 2002:63). Therefore the reliability in this project cannot be properly tested or evaluated as interviews will differ from one participant to the next in this research. The only thing reliable about these interviews is that the two main leading questions remained the same. Bush (2002:61) stresses the importance to ensure

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that all interviewees are asked the same question in the same way if the procedure is to be reliable. For this research I will not focus on this type of reliability, because my interviews are unstructured and open-ended in nature.

Validity according to Bush (2002:65) refers to the concept of which it is used to judge whether the research accurately describes the phenomenon which it is intended to describe. Bell (1987: 51) states that:

> Validity … tells us whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe. If an item is unreliable, then it must also lack validity, but a reliable item is not necessarily also valid. It could produce the same or similar responses on all occasions, but not be measuring what it is supposed to measure (Bell, 1987: 51).

I sought the advice and opinion of my colleagues to determine if they were in agreement with my interpretation of the data and conclusions drawn from it or not (see McNiff & Whitehead, 2006:157-161). They acted as a panel to do member checking for the participant observations, unstructured interviews and discussions with the participants during the study. The findings and constructions that developed as a result of the data collected and analysed, were confirmed with my research participants in order to check if they agreed with the conclusions. Agreeability, in terms of the context of my study, was perceived in terms of very specific power relations. I was the teacher of the participants and they would have the tendency to agree with me, in order to please me as an authority figure. I believe that using member checks aided me to ensure the validity of the data, as I had to confirm my interpretations with the participants. In order to ensure the credibility of my research I worked closely with my supervisor who posed searching questions to help me confront my own values and to guide the next steps in my study.

3.7   ETHICAL CLEARANCE

"Researchers are unconditionally responsible for the integrity of the research process. Ethics is foundational to all research; with power comes responsibility" (O' Leary, 2004: 50). Therefore, according to Merriam (2001: 214) the fact that qualitative researchers are "guests in the private spaces of the world, their manners

should be good and their code of ethics strict". In order to ensure ethical practice Burgess (1989:5-6) draws our attention to four Ethical Dilemmas:

3.7.1   Research Sponsorship

When a researcher applies for funding for the research to be conducted, the financial donators could possibly influence the research activity. This research is not of such a nature that it needed financial support and so this is not be an ethical dilemma. The researcher was, however, an employee of the educational institution when the research was conducted. However, as the institution's name is a pseudonym, the researcher is not compelled to embellish facts to satisfy the needs of the board at the School.

3.7.2   Research Relations

The relationship between researcher and subject is looked at in terms of access, power, harm, deception, secrecy and confidentiality (Burgess, 1989). Some of these aspects could arise whilst the research is conducted. The power relations in this research could become a problem because the teacher is the researcher, a participant observer as well as the interviewer. However, the learners were open-minded and opinionated and I would like to believe that the personal relationship between learner and teacher was of such a nature that no intimidation or fear influenced their opinions. None of the learners would be harmed, for the research was conducted in a safe school environment. The questions were asked openly and the learners were aware that I was observing their personal and creative development.

3.7.3   Informed Consent

The individual gives voluntary consent to participate in the research. Due to the fact that this research study took place in a functioning school, the following procedures were followed to ensure ethical practice whilst conducting the research:

- Permission for performing my research study at the research school was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) (see Addendum A).

- Ethical clearance for the research project was obtained from the Stellenbosch Research Ethics Committee.

- Permission to perform my research study at the research school was obtained from the headmaster and teachers (Addendum B). I described the nature of my study to him and highlighted the purpose of it. He freely admitted that my study would benefit learners in terms of the Drama curriculum as well as their creative writing practice for the language learning areas.

- Seeing that the participants were minors, written consent (Informed Consent Form, Addendum C) had to be obtained from the parents to allow their children to participate in the creative writing programme. The learners also signed the consent form and could indicate if they would like to be participants in the research or not.

These Informed Consent forms (Addendum C) explained the research purpose and methods of the study. It also gave them information about their rights as a participant in the study and contact information if they wished to speak to somebody about their participation/ and or refusal to take part in the study.

3.7.4   Data Dissemination

This concerns confidentiality, reporting back on data, reports used by policy makers and for educational practice. The information gathered in this study was treated with the utmost respect and with confidentiality. The participants' names as well as the School's name were changed. Photographs which are included in this document, were intentionally taken in such a manner to avoid identification of the participants.

With the instance that an ethical dilemma might arise, two routes were chosen to resolve this; namely, collaboration and following guidelines, codes and laws set by the University of Stellenbosch and/or the school/parents concerned as described by Burgess (1989:6-7).

3.8   CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided the reader with a description of the research design, the qualitative research approach and methodology of this study. The various qualitative instruments used to generate data were discussed, in terms of the chosen methodology, namely Action Research, and the underpinning assumptions of Action Research. The chapter concluded with a discussion on how the data would be analysed in terms of the qualitative research paradigm, measures to ensure trustworthiness of the research, followed by the a discussion of possible ethical dilemmas as well as the ethical measures implemented as required for this research study. We will now move on to chapter 4 in which the analysed results of the gathered data will be discussed and according to Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit (2004:101) the "true test of a competent researcher comes in the analysis of the data".

The description of the execution of the methodology follows now in Chapter 4, with the data analysis and results.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results and findings of the interpreted qualitative data which were gathered during the research project will be discussed. The reporting of data will be presented in the following manner: Firstly, the qualitative data collected *before* the creative writing programme was implemented, will be analysed and discussed. Secondly, the implementation of the drama techniques during the cycles of the creative writing programme will be discussed. This will be followed by the interpretation and analysis of the data collected during both cycles of this research

project. Lastly there is an analysis and interpretation of data *after* the creative writing programme was done. Observations of the participants during each stage of the research are included in this chapter. Factors that have influenced the implementation will also be mentioned. The chapter will conclude with a summary of how the research question and the aims were addressed in this study.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 47) aptly state that the "heart of the research project is the research problem". Many learners struggle to write creatively when they enter high school. Creative writing has become a formal task that these learners only do, because they have to pass the grade. These observations and realizations in my first years of teaching, were the reality that drove my research project. The curriculum[17] I taught at the time, required learners to physically perform a piece of theatre that they had created from scratch – an own devised piece. This means that they had to write their own play and their IGCSE[18] certificate hung in the balance.

Herewith an explanation of the aims for this research study:

The research aim

The development of creativity for creative writing by means of drama techniques of the play-making process, within the framework of Action Research cycles, in an attempt to design and implement a creative writing programme which will contribute to increased creativity during the creative writing process as well as to encourage learners to write creatively just for the fun and love for it. The research also aims to help language educators understand the process of creative writing and to encourage them to implement new techniques in the language classroom which will stimulate the creative process for both learners and teachers.

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[17] The University of Cambridge Curriculum
[18] IGCSE (International General Certificate in Senior Education)

Describing the research aim has led to the collection of qualitative data before the creative writing programme could be implemented in the classroom. I observed creative writing classes (see 4.3.1.1) of English language teachers in the same school as well as conducted unstructured interviews (see 4.3.1.2) with the learners about the creative writing tasks and their feelings towards creative writing in the classroom and their personal lives. In order to address the research problem, AR seemed to be the appropriate method to implement the creative writing programme, since the cycles allowed me to:

> ➢ identify the extent of the existing problem in my practice;
> ➢ identify possible limitations that may hamper the planning on how to address the problem(s);
> ➢ execute the plan and describe how the plan was executed;
> ➢ observe what transpired during the implementation of the plan; and
> ➢ reflect on possible ways to improve the actions taken (if any), based on what was observed during the implementation of the creative writing programme.

This sequence makes up a cycle of AR (see 3.2.4 and figure 5) which is subsequently repeated with the purpose of constantly improving it.

4.3   ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

4.3.1   Investigative stage of the research problem (Identifying the problem)

As part of an honours final research assessment I conducted a pilot study in order to test the research instruments which I used during this research project. The pilot study took place in the IGCSE Drama classroom in which there were three female learners who were 16 years old. At the beginning of 2009 these learners chose the subject Drama as one of their A level subjects. The IGCSE Cambridge Drama curriculum stipulates that the learners should write a one act play and perform in it for their final practical examination (refer to 2.3.3). However, when these learners had to start creating their written piece, I noticed that the learners struggled to

conceptualize and formulate their performance ideas in writing and this is how the research question manifested itself: how can drama stimulate creativity in writing?

In accordance with the AR cycle depicted in figure 5 (see 3.2.4), this is the "investigative stage", of the research problem which corresponds with the term "define the issue", where the researcher explores the 'real life' situation in order to gain a wider insight and reach a deeper understanding of the scale of the research problem. At this stage I observed the language teachers' class specifically when a creative writing activity had to take place.   Afterwards I conducted a short semi-structured group interview with the class in order to establish how they felt about the lesson (see 4.3.1.2). After this discussion, I decided to ask my drama students how they felt about creative writing activities in the English language classroom (see 4.3.1.3) and this led to the planning phase of the Action Research model.

4.3.1.1   *Observations of Language teachers' classrooms*

At the research School the teachers are highly qualified and specialists in their subjects. The English First Language teachers are well equipped to teach literature and the grammatical science of the subject. The class I observed consisted of 17 English First Language (FL) learners. These learners are all English FL speakers and the language of teaching (ToL) in this school is English. The learners are allowed to choose a specialization in English for the IGCSE levels. They may choose between Cambridge IGCSE First Language English 0050[19] or Cambridge IGCSE Literature (English) 0486[20]. Both of these courses require learners to complete several portfolio tasks, which include creative writing assignments in the form of descriptive and argumentative/discursive essays.

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[19] This course aims to develop the ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively when speaking and writing; learn how to use a wide range of vocabulary, and the correct grammar, spelling and punctuation; develop a personal style and an awareness of the audience being addressed.

[20] This course aims to develop learners to be able to read, interpret and evaluate texts through the study of literature in English; develop an understanding of literal and implicit meaning, relevant contexts and of the deeper themes or attitudes that may be expressed; Recognise and appreciate the ways in which writers use English to achieve a range of effects; present an informed, personal response to materials they have studied; explore wider and universal issues, promoting students' better understanding of themselves and of the world around them.

The teachers invest a lot of time and energy in the preparation of the learners and tasks for the two perspective courses. However, when learners had to write creatively they were handed a task sheet with the topic and two badly photocopied images on it (figure 7), an extract from an article (figure 8) as well as the writing objectives according to The University of Cambridge Syllabus (CIE). My observations led me to believe that the observed teachers did not invest a lot of energy into the creative writing tasks or lessons – I am not sure if this due to a lack of time for preparation or if this is because the teachers are not equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge to teach creative writing. On the next page is a copy of the task sheet developed by the teacher.
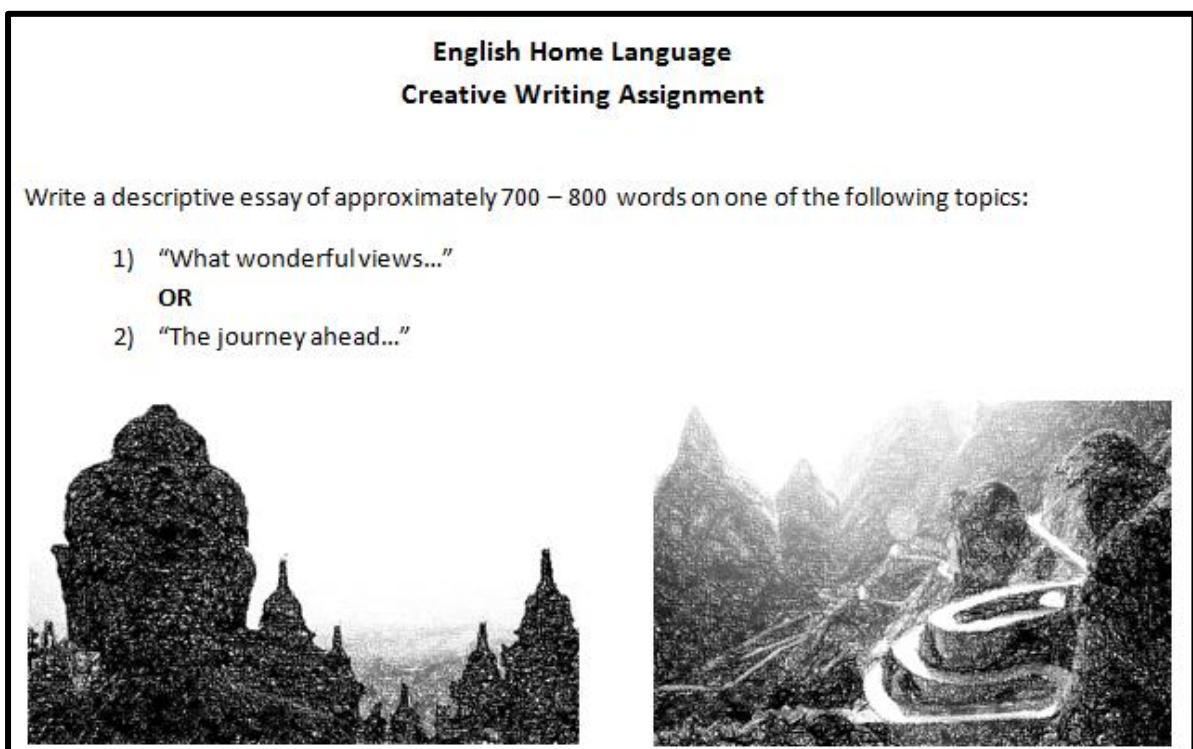
Figure 7: Copy of task sheet handed out in an observed English Language Classroom.

As the learners passed the task around the teacher, Mrs A, started to explain what she expected of them:

- o She wanted them to write a descriptive essay of approximately 700 – 800 words on one of the following two topics: 1) "What wonderful views…" or 2) "The journey ahead…"
- o The essay had to have descriptive images, a logical plot, a character narrator and be centred around the topic.

- Structurally the essay had to consist of an introduction, paragraphs and a conclusion. Mrs A told the learners that she would not accept a conclusion which ended with someone waking up from a dream.
- The learners had to edit their work. Mrs A told her class that she was not a "walking, talking dictionary", the learners were more than welcome to use the dictionaries on the bookshelf at the back of the classroom.

She stated that they had to use the images to loosen up "the spider webs" in their minds and use the images as creative stimuli for the writing activity. She then handed out a second piece of paper on which there was an article. This article (figure 8) could also be used as inspiration for the learners to write their descriptive essay.

A Trek in the Andes

The pain was worth it, I decided, as I heard my husband Alfred groan, roll out of bed, and stumble like a wooden soldier towards the bathroom. I knew that as long as I lay there, motionless, I would not suffer likewise. Our problem was that our muscles were unimaginably stiff after one of the most stimulating experiences of our lives, for we had spent the last couple of days 'on top of the world' – trekking in the Andes.

*　　　*　　　*

We had left Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, three days before, and taken an 11-hour bus journey overnight to Mérida, a university town 1,500 metres above sea level in the lower region of that great mountain range. After a day to acclimatise in this lovely old city, we organised ourselves for the object of the exercise – to take the longest and highest cable car in the world to the top of the beautiful Venezuelan Andes.

With clear skies on a crisp January morning, we were transported gently upwards for 30 minutes in four stages to almost 5,000 metres. From the base of the *teleferico*, each stage had taken us approximately 1,000 metres higher; by stage three, we were beginning to feel the effects of the altitude, breathing more rapidly as our bodies demanded more oxygen than our usual breaths would provide. Although we could have stopped there, we had opted for the final cable car run, an extremely steep climb. We disembarked on top of Pico Espejo (Mirror Peak), only about 70 metres below the highest peak in Venezuela, Pico Bolivar, which then faced us.

Figure 8: Supplied resource for Creative Writing task

She reminded them that they had to hand in the planning draft, a rough draft as well as the final formal draft. She did, however, state that the learners were allowed to hand in the rough draft for assessment, that she would 'mark' it, hand it back to them and that they could then hand in the final corrected draft. She highlighted the importance of the task by stating a few times that this task will be included in the learners' portfolios for the end of year moderation.

Mrs A then continued to discuss the Writing Objectives (AO2: Writing) according to The University of Cambridge Syllabus (CIE) for First Language (FL) with the class. I have inserted these objectives below in figure 9:

AO2: Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:
W1 - articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
W2 - order and present facts, ideas and opinions
W3 - understand and use a range of appropriate vocabulary
W4 - use language and register appropriate to audience and context
W5 - make accurate and effective use of paragraphs, grammatical structures, sentences, punctuation and spelling.

Figure 9: Assessment Objective 2 (AO2): Writing

As one can see AO2: W1 (figure 9), focusses on how the learner articulates and expresses what is thought, felt and imagined; in other words, the creative thought process of writing. The other Assessment Objectives for Writing (AO2: W) focus on how the writing is presented in terms of structure, facts, ideas and opinions (see 2.4.2.1 for literary insights on writing creatively).

This discussion of the task took approximately 10 minutes. The learners were given the opportunity to ask questions after the task was introduced and discussed with them. No learner had specific questions about said task. The teacher asked one of the learners to hand out folio paper on which the class could start planning and writing. Once everybody had a piece of paper and had settled down the classroom was enveloped in silence. The teacher went to sit behind her desk and started to work.

For the next approximate 20 minutes, the learners worked quietly on their own and only twice did two learners get up, on separate occasions, to go to the teacher's desk to ask a question; the one question was if the learner might be excused to go to the bathroom, the other was if they may listen to music through their headphones, the reply was "no". During this time, I watched the learners write and I studied the marking guidelines the teacher would use to assess the writing assignment:

Band 1: 5	The language of the response has character and sounds convincing and consistently appropriate. Ideas are firmly expressed in a wide range of effective and/or interesting language. Structure and sequence are sound throughout.
Band 2: 4	Language is mostly fluent and there is clarity of expression. There is a sufficient range of vocabulary to express ideas with subtlety and precision, and to give an indication of the personality of the character. The response is mainly well structured and well sequenced.
Band 3: 3	Language is clear and appropriate, but comparatively plain and/or factual, expressing little opinion. Ideas are rarely extended, but explanations are adequate. Some sections are quite well sequenced but there may be flaws in structure.
Band 4: 2	There may be some awkwardness of expression and some inconsistency of style. Language is too limited to express shades of meaning. There is structural weakness and there may be some copying from the passage.
Band 5: 1	There are problems of expression and structure. Language is weak and undeveloped. There is little attempt to explain ideas. There may be frequent copying from the original.
Band 6: 0	Sentence structures and language are unclear and the response is difficult to follow.

Figure 10: Guidelines adapted from The University of Cambridge English First Language Syllabus.

The lesson was scheduled just before second break and I asked the teacher if she would allow me to discuss the activity with the learners at the end of the lesson for approximately five minutes. She granted me permission, but asked what I wanted to hear from the learners. I informed her that I would like to know how they felt during the assignment, if they thought activities like these were necessary, and if they thought creative writing should be part of the school curriculum. Mrs A then stated that I was more than welcome to ask the questions and if I would be "okay if [she] went to grab a cup of tea, while [I had] this discussion". I agreed to this blessing in disguise, as I thought the learners would be more open and honest if their teacher were not present in the classroom. Just before Mrs A left, she informed the learners that they would have the next lesson available to continue writing and that the rough draft should be handed in by Monday and the final draft the following Friday. She informed the class that I would like to discuss the creative writing activity with them as part of my research study at Stellenbosch.

The following crystallised from the short, semi-structured group interview.

4.3.1.2   *Semi-structured group interview with the language class*

Mrs A announced that there were five minutes left and that she would now allow me to have a short discussion with the class. She left. The learners started to pack away their books and pens. Some stretched and yawned, others started to chat to their friends. A slow and quiet buzz filled the room. I cleared my throat and went to sit on the teacher's desk, facing the class. I asked the class permission to record the conversation. The learners nodded in agreement. I laughed at the learners and said that the recording wouldn't mean much if they didn't speak. The response was reserved and only a few learners chuckled. These teenagers did not know me; we did not have a relationship and all they understand and knew about me was that I was the Drama teacher at the school. I ensured the class that I would not use their names as "I don't know any of you, so don't worry about getting into trouble when saying something – you'll be the only ones splitting on each other" – to this I received a few smiles and I could see a collective sigh extend from the learners. I am not sure if this was because the learners were concerned that they might get into trouble if they spoke their minds, if they were concerned about what the teacher thought about them if they did speak their minds and if they thought negative comments would influence their marks. Throughout this research the theme of honesty of the learners was at the forefront of my mind, for this would influence the data which would be collected and therefore, one of the main aims was to reassure the participants and to gain their trust.

What follows is the actual example of the discussion between me (R) and the language learners:

> R: So, do you like creative writing?
>
> (No response from the class)
>
> R: Okay, let me rephrase. Did you like the activity that you did now?
>
> (The learners look at each other, reluctant to answer the question. A learner in the front row raises her hand and answers)
>
> Learner 1:   Well, I like writing, so this was a nice topic because I like to travel as well.
>
> Learner 2: Yes, but you (L1) always do well in essays. You're good at writing.
>
> (The rest of the class nod and mumble in agreement)
>
> R: (asks L1) How did you get good at writing?
>
> Learner 1: I just write a lot and I love to read books and stuff, so ja…

(Quiet follows response. The class looks at me.)

R: Right, so excluding (L1), do you guys like writing?

(The whole class start to speak simultaneously – the following responses were heard in this discussion.)

Learner 3: Not really…

Learner 4: I do it 'cause I have to…

Learner 5: It's a waste of time…I'd rather watch a movie.

R: (addresses L5) So you don't think Creative Writing should be part of the curriculum?

Learner 5: Well… like… yes and no… like, it's okay if you, like, have to write stories when you're like in primary school, but in high school it's just so boring and the topics suck…

Learner 6: Yeah, what would ma'am do if we wrote like about skateboarding and extreme BMX-ing or a house party…

(The boys start snickering)

Learner 2: (addresses boy by his name) L6, no-one wants to know what you do weekends…

(the boys create an "oooooooe" sound)

R: Okay, okay. Settle down. So, basically, you guys don't like creative writing?

Learner 4, 5 & 6: No.

R: And you would prefer if it wasn't part of the curriculum?

Learner 4: It's not like all of us are going to become writers.

Learner 5: Yeah, and if you want to be one, then you'll like writing at school and it will be easy for you. For the rest of us, it's just something we have to do.

Learner 1: But I don't want to become a writer, I just like it.

Learner 6: Okay, but you have talent to write. I have talent to play hockey and cricket…

Learner 2: (Laughs) Ball sense

(The class starts laughing and the bell for break sounds.)

R: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Enjoy break.

(The learners stand, greet me and leave the classroom).

This discussion left me reeling. I realised that having a group discussion like this would have its draw backs and that it proved to be more complicated than I expected. I will discuss the meaning of this interaction and my findings in detail at the end of this section (see 4.3.1.4).

I gathered that most of the students in this class did not particularly enjoy the creative writing process. I decided to have a one on one discussion with one of the participants in the study. This learner was taught English with a different teacher and I wanted to see if this was her experience as well. From my experience in the class, this learner is creative and talented in script writing; I wanted to determine if she shared this point of view and if she enjoyed the creative writing tasks the English teachers had set. I also felt that this interview would give me insight into how a creative student, who takes drama, understands her own creative writing process.

4.3.1.3   Unstructured interview with a research participant

I made an appointment with the learner[21] to meet me after school and we met the following day. We met in the primary school's staff lounge, as this space was comfortable, reasonably private (even though the door was open) and my status in this room was not the same as it would be in my classroom. The learner also had to collect her younger sister afterwards in order to walk her home. I had taught this learner for two years and we had a good relationship. The conversation was very informal and relaxed and took place over a cup of tea. Here follows an excerpt from our conversation which focussed on her experience of creative writing in the English classroom:

> R: Abby, do you enjoy creative writing?
>
> Abby (pseudonym): May I be honest?
>
> R: Absolutely!
>
> Abby: Not particularly, ma'am.
>
> R: Why?
>
> Abby: Because, it's pointless.
>
> R: Why do you say that?
>
> Abby: It just is.
>
> R: So you don't like it.

---

[21] The pseudonym for this female learner will be Abby.

Abby: No.

R: Do you do any activities before you start writing?

Abby: Yes. My teacher gives us the task sheet … uhm… and she tells us what she wants us to do… and… and then we get the pictures and maybe a reading piece… and ja…

R: Okay. Do you ever read your writing to the class?

Abby: No, ma'am. (giggles)

R: So you never read it to the class?

Abby: No ma'am… we just like get like … we just have to hand it in and they mark it and stuff like that.

R: But do you ever go back to it, like after they've marked it, your English teachers now? Do they give it back to you and talk about it?

Abby: (thinking) … they give it back to us, but they don't give us… they don't give any feedback on the… uhm… the… final one… the…

R: So what do you get?

Abby: We just get it marked… ticks, ticks, ticks…

R: So you get the mark?

Abby: Ja.

R: You don't get any feedback?

Abby: No, … (silent)

R: So how do you know…

(Abby starts speaking, researcher stops)

Abby: But normally when we do rough.

R: Okay, so when you do rough?

Abby: When we do our rough, then they'll check it out … and they'll say 'okay maybe that way you'll have to change the way you said that'. Not on the actual piece itself, on what we've written, but like the way we've written it, they maybe kinda write down something.

R: So they look at grammar and spelling and stuff.

Abby: (nods) … and then … once we've finished it off with that then they just like check it.

R: And what do you do before you start writing and essay for example?

Abby: (silence) Mind-map automatically…

R: Okay

Abby: (sighs)… ja

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R: So you just mind-map, that's all that you do? Do you listen to music or something else?

Abby: No, we're not allowed to listen to music. I mind-map and then we do the rough.

R: Okay, and do you have a space where you do this in? Do you have like a creative writing book or something? (Abby looks clueless) Like a journal or something?

Abby: (Assertive) No, no. We normally just do it on folio. (paper handed to learners)

R: Just normal folio?

Abby: And then we put it in our file afterwards.

R: Okay.

Abby: With all our other marks.

R: All the other marks. So the tests and the creative writing and everything is in this one file?

Abby: Yes – it helps my teacher, because she then has everything she needs for moderation.

This conversation established that the same practice for teaching creative writing took place in both English classrooms, which had two different teachers. Reflecting on these discussions highlighted the fact that creative writing and the teaching thereof have not changed dramatically since I was at school. We were also handed paper, also had to do a mind-map planning of the essay and we were also not allowed to listen to music or interact with each other or with objects for stimulation. From my observations in South African schools, that follow the NCS, I saw exactly the same. Not in one of the Language classrooms I observed was the creativity of the learners stimulated to help them write creatively. At the school I am teaching at currently, learners receive topics, have short class discussions about the tasks and then starts writing the essay, no creative stimulation whatsoever. I will now discuss the conclusions I have drawn and my understanding of how creative writing is taught in schools, but particularly at the research School.

4.3.1.4   *Findings and Understandings Deducted from the Investigative Stage in Action Research which Defined the Aims for Research.*

The observation of the English classroom highlighted several obstacles in the creative writing process. The physical space, the classroom, in which this activity took place, was very structured with the tables in rows and a few black and white posters on the wall stipulating language rules. The walls are painted grey and the

desks face a white board. The only real colour in this room was the bookcase with the dictionaries and a few other set works in it. No visual media was used in this lesson, even though the classroom was equipped with a computer, projector and audio speakers. This is a private school and funding for resources is available, but from my experience of teaching in high schools, I have gathered that some of the teachers feel that decorating a classroom is "a waste of time". Other teachers do decorate their classes, but it is not necessarily with the aim to assist in teaching and stimulate creativity, but rather focussed on decorating the space. Many of these posters and pictures remain on the walls for years at a time and subsequently also lose their purpose. Therefore, one of the goals in this research is to provide learners with a space in which they can move and think freely, but also where they will find stimulation and inspiration for their tasks.

The next issue I identified was the manner in which the lesson was taught. The teacher only discussed the activity with the learners. No discussion about the topic in order to activate prior knowledge occurred. If we consider Furner's (1973: 406) work on the methodological steps to creative writing (see chapter 2 in 2.4.2.2), special mention is made of the first two steps namely; 1) "The Motivation Period: in which children's attention is focused on a broad topic in order to generate interest, develop a mood, and create a need to write", and 2) "The Exchange of Ideas": where children and the teacher share "ideas in order to crystallize each child's thinking". Not one of these techniques was employed in the classroom, and this research is not new or 'up-and-coming'. Boulter (2004) argues that teachers should not stuff a simple topic paper in a learner's hand and expect that child to write a vivid, powerful and authentic text (Boulter, 2004:135) which can then be assessed in terms of a standardised rubric.

Similarly, Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) found in their research on multi-literacies in the language and Drama classroom that when a "teacher's pedagogical practice activated students' prior knowledge and built upon their personal and cultural narratives", the learners found the literacy practices in their classrooms more purposeful, and they "consequently appeared more willing to invest themselves in their learning process" (2011: 236). These teachers confirm what Gallagher (2007) had argued that "part of what powers teachers in the classroom is what they receive

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from their students, and we ignore that essential part of the equation at our peril" (2007: 20). The classroom environment did not provide any creative stimulation and the learners were left to fend for themselves. One might argue that at high school level, this is acceptable; learners should be able to generate ideas and express these ideas in a creative way. However, when we look at the response of the learners, I understood from our conversations that they do not really know how to stimulate or find their own creativity. Were these learners ever taught or shown how to activate their creative thoughts? And what was the whole creative writing experience in this class about – learning or assessment?   Therefore, another goal of the research will be to introduce a writing programme where learners will be taught how to find motivation, stimulation and inspiration for their writing.

The learners' response to the activity handed to them in the English classroom was worrisome. They found the activity "*boring*" and "*pointless*", and they did not experience any real joy from the experience. I felt that the learners were detached and task driven. All of them mentioned the marks and no-one really paid attention to the learning experience. Abby even referred to the tasks in her file as "*all our other marks*".

> *Abby: And then we put it in our file afterwards.*
>
> *R: Okay.*
>
> *Abby: With all our other marks.*
>
> *R: All the other marks. So the tests and the creative writing and everything is in this one file?*
>
> *Abby: Yes – it helps my teacher, because she then has everything she needs for moderation.*

The themes and trends which crystallised from the class discussion, was that creative writing is not really about learning or enjoyment; it is a task that they have to do and some will be good at it, because they are "talented" and others just do it, because it has to be part of their portfolio. Another issue identified was that learners do not have a space to play around with ideas. The tasks are completed on folio paper and these end up in the file with the tasks. The fact that tasks need to be moderated externally, in order to establish if the teacher's practice is pedagogically sound, is unavoidable. This educational practice is in some cases necessary and

will benefit learners. However, due to this checking and cross-checking of work, our learners are losing out on the creative experience.

Consequently, what transpired from the observations, the semi-structured group interview and the unstructured, informal interview with a participant, was a) that learners find creative writing, the topics and the creative writing activities, "*boring*" and "*pointless*". That b) the classroom environment and the teacher do not provide stimulation for creative thought and activity. Learners only do creative writing for c) assessment; they do not do it 'just for fun' and finally, d) the learners do not have a space, like a creative writing journal, in which they can play around with ideas, paste pictures which inspire them, reflect on activities and track their process of personal creative development. Therefore, armed with a deeper understanding of the creative writing culture and situation at the School, it was now time to move to the next phase in the AR cycle: the planning phase.

4.4   PLANNING PHASE

In the previous section certain practices and issues were identified that needed to be addressed in order to achieve the goals of improving the stimulation of creativity for the creative writing process at the School. Consequently, drama techniques had to be designed and implemented in order to mediate the situation. What was required at this stage was to launch the planning phase of the AR cycle – on the schematic representation of the AR cycle (figure 5, in section 3.2.4) the planning phase is described as "Plan action". In order to ensure that the implementation of the creative writing programme progressed smoothly, I had to focus on the outcome (what goals I wanted to pursue and realise) as well as the limitations that could occur and influence the implementation process.

4.4.1   Defining the Outcomes

Considering the research problem and the interpretation of the data of the creative writing process as it occurred in the school, I was compelled to compile a detailed plan (with flexibility and movability to accommodate required change) of the way forward. In order to keep focus on the study at hand, I found it necessary to continuously revisit the goals of this study as set out in Chapter 1. They are:

➢ to break down barriers and inhibitions in creative thinking, and to find drama techniques that can stimulate creativity for creative writing which could be incorporated in English Language classrooms;

➢ to monitor and assess the impact of the creative writing programme;

➢ to implement appropriate methods and techniques based on insights gained from the literature review;

➢ to critically reflect on each step of the implementation;

➢ to implement a revised strategy if needed; and

➢ to supply teachers with deeper understandings and insights (provided by the qualitative data), which could encourage a sustained change in their creative writing pedagogical practice and finally

➢ to create a writing programme that was flexible and adaptable in which I could incorporate drama techniques to stimulate creativity for creative writing.

In order to realise these outcomes I had to implement strategies which would assist me, the teacher and researcher, to teach creative writing and to stimulate creativity for creative writing. I developed a 7 stage writing programme (see 4.5.1.1 – 4.5.1.7) in which I use multi-literacies, like objects, mind-travel activities, character development activities, imagination, improvisations and role-play to assist learners in finding their creativity for creative writing.

4.4.2   Methods of Implementation

Based on the findings and understandings highlighted in the Investigative Stage of the AR cycle, I gathered from my observation, semi-structured group interview and unstructured interview with a participant that the attitude towards creative writing activities were quite negative, that there was not real teaching of creative writing occurring in the classroom and that creative writing is seen as a means to an end

concerning filling a portfolio and accumulating marks for a report and/or certificate in education. Due to the experimental nature of this study, I implemented two phases with several strategies for stimulating creativity for creative writing. I will describe and discuss the strategies and the implementation of these strategies extensively in the acting phase of the AR cycle.

By defining the outcomes and limitations of the research project and the strategies selected, it was time to move on to the next phase on the AR cycle, namely "Act / intervene" on the diagram (figure 5, 3.2.4). I will therefore proceed by describing in detail how each of the strategies in the study had been implemented.

4.5   IMPLEMENTING THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME: CYCLE 1

4.5.1   Establishing the Process for Implementing a Creative Writing Programme

The "Methodological steps in a Creative Writing Experience" is discussed by Furner (1973:406) also see chapter 2, section 2.4.2.2. Similarly, Flower and Hayes (1981) and Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) discuss the importance of creating a programme for creative writing that focusses as much on the process as it focusses on the end result. I will discuss what I did and how I implemented these strategies by means of my field notes which were taken during my participant observations. At the end of the discussion of the strategies and implementation, I will analyse the qualitative data gathered by means of interpreting the observations and unstructured focus group interviews and individual interviews as well as studying the creative writing journals of the learners.

I will discuss the implementation of my programme based the research of creative writing conducted by Furner (1973) Flower and Hayes (1981) and Kruger (2006, 2008):

4.5.1.1   Stage 1: The Inspiration Stage

According to Furner's model (1973: 406) this is step 1, the "motivation period in which children's attention is focused on a broad topic in order to generate interest, develop a mood, and create a need to write". Flower and Hayes (1981) call this the

"sensation phase" and Kruger (2008) labels it as the pre-writing phase, which is concerned with intra- and interpersonal exposure to the media along with the awareness of humour, feelings, associations and memories. This phase is also concerned with activating pre-knowledge about a topic and show learners how to access this knowledge and express it in a creative manner, dialogue and laughing together. Kruger (2008) makes special mention of the fact that learners should be comfortable enough to discuss their ideas and to laugh at themselves and each other in a positive way. The motivational stage (see table 1) in writing plays an integral role in the whole process of creative writing, for in this stage a desire or a 'need to write' (Furner, 1973; Flower and Hayes, 1981; Gallagher, 2007; Csiksentmihalyi, 1997), as discussed in chapter 2 section 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 is born.

4.5.1.2   Stage 2: The Interchange Stage

This second phase is closely linked to the first phase and could in effect be seen as part of it or as an extension of phase one. Furner (1973) links step 1 with step 2 in her "methodological steps to a creative writing experience". What makes this phase incredibly important is the fact that there is dialogue. A creative writing classroom should not be enveloped in silence. It should be an active room where we are constantly constructing, evaluating and have meaningful dialogue about ideas concerning the topic. This falls under Flower and Hayes' (1981) "exploration and manipulation" phase and is still part of Kruger's (2008) pre-writing phase, whilst Furner (1973) calls it the "[e]xchange of ideas to crystallize each child's thinking". This phase involves the following facets of writing – exploration of the topic, search for information, play with ideas, thinking together, mind-maps, multi-intelligence activities and other little tasks (see table 2 also in chapter 2).

4.5.1.3   Stage 3: The Brainstorming Stage

This stage is based on Furner's third step, which is the "writing period" (1973: 406). Similarly, Kruger (2008) calls this the writing phase in her creative writing programme, whilst Flower and Hayes (1981) call this the incubation period. This phase is concerned with silence, meditation, time in/between lessons, involvement with the mechanics of writing in which the writer can work unconsciously and consciously with the product. It also allows new combinations and knowledge to develop within the writing process. This phase is of critical importance for it places

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"emphasis on the inventive power of the writer, who is able to explore ideas, to develop, act on, test and regenerate his/her own goals; we are putting an important part of creativity where it belongs – in the hands of the working, thinking writer" (Flower & Hayes, 1981: 386), as discussed in chapter 2, section 2.4.2.

Learners may take their journal home and work through their story or activities (see 4.5.4). During this time in class, I usually play music to ensure that it is not too quiet in the classroom. The music is usually light classical or instrumental music – I prefer not to use words, as it could interfere with learners who are verbally inclined. They should be focussed on their personal writing and the task at hand.

4.5.1.4   *Stage 4: The Sharing Stage*

The fourth step in Furner's (1973) creative writing model is the "sharing of ideas" period. This still forms part of the writing phase in Kruger's (2008) programme, but it could also be seen as part of the post-writing phase. Flower and Hayes (1981), aptly describe it as the "evaluation" phase. This evaluation can be done by the teacher or by peers. I chose to use the learners, as I see this form of assessment as a valuable learning experience for high school learners. During this phase the class is divided into groups. During the group time, the learners read what they have written and then the members of the group will 'assess' each other's work (see 4.5.5). This form of peer assessment includes the structural and grammatical value of the work, but more importantly, what they think of the story and the characters. I prepare my learners mentally for this stage. I inform them at the beginning of the programme that this is where we are heading and that they should always keep in mind 'how they would feel' if the same thing were said about their work. The learners are not only developing skills to evaluate and deconstruct work (Blooms taxonomy, level 7) but they are also developing sensitivity and mindfulness. I will discuss the results of this phase later (4.6). The learners demonstrated all of the abovementioned characteristics in their feedback session.

4.5.1.5   *Stage 5: The Writing Stage*

This is the last step in Furner's (1973) creative writing experience and she calls it opportunities for "follow-up activities" (1973: 406). Due to the fact that the writing programme of this research project is for high school learners, who are obligated to

hand in formal assessment tasks in the form of creative writing activities, this stage focusses on the private writing time the learner will use to write. This is another "incubation period" (Flower & Hayes, 1981) where learners can reflect on what has been said about their writing and find possible solutions to problems which might have been identified. This leads to Flower and Hayes' (1981) "organization" phase in which learners can incorporate the constructive criticism into their work and complete the final task. Kruger's (2008) post-writing phase also allows for restructuring and organization of information.

4.5.1.6   *Stage 6: The Production Stage*

The "production phase" according to Flower and Hayes (1981) is when the final piece of writing occurs. This is the final product towards which the learners have been working (see 4.5.7). The journal becomes an integral part in producing this final product, for it can serve as a wonderful source full of inspiration (see 4.6.3).

4.5.1.7   *Stage 7: The Aftermath*

Flower and Hayes (1981), as well as Kruger (2008), label this stage as the "evaluation" phase. This is part of the post-writing stage where we evaluate what we have done. Not only do we reflect on the final product, but we also look critically at the process upon which we embarked. We can look at where we started and where we ended and also reflect on what we have learnt during this process of creative writing. This most important aspect for my research is to evaluate the attitudes and how the learners experienced the process.

This leads to the first creative writing programme that I developed for this study. I called it "Bring on the Magic" and I will discuss the lessons and activities which I conducted with the participants in the Drama class as part of preparation for their final production for their IGCSE examinations. The writing programme stretched over several lessons and I divided these lessons into the stages I have discussed earlier. The outcomes of the lessons adhered to the IGCSE examination requirements as well as to the RNCS 2007. The reason for this is that I would like to demonstrate that these creative writing lessons are not only applicable to the University of Cambridge examinations, but that they are appropriate for the South African schools and for language teaching generally.

4.5.2 "Bring on the Magic" – Stage 1: The Inspiration Stage

This lesson started with a short video of the M-Net tooth-fairy which was being aired on television at the time (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi9Mso7NEzI). This is material that the learners were familiar with and it also helped to initiate concepts of parody, storytelling, crisis or problem, and character. All of these elements would be discussed and worked with in the course of this programme. In this lesson I focussed on the sensation phase – this phase is concerned with intra- and interpersonal exposure to the media along with the awareness of humour, feelings, associations, memories, dialogue and laughing.

Lesson plan 1:

Content and Topic	Description	Activity	Process	Outcomes		
				IGCSE	NCS	Holistic
Discussion of advertisement. Storytelling: Discuss the value of storytelling.	Evaluation of thoughts and attitudes towards the advertisement. This is an introduction to the process of writing a story within a specific genre.	Introduction of the Creative Writing Journal		**AO 3: Speaking and listening** *S1 understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions *S2 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined	**LO 1: Speaking and listening** **LO 3: Writing**	Intuition. Group work. Self-reliance. Tolerance with the process. Discovering media. Reflection Fluency of ideas. Expansion of ideas.
What constitutes a 'good' or 'poor story'?	Opinions of learners. Why do we like stories? What type of stories do you like?	Class discussion	What is your favourite story and WHY? Favourite book?	*S3 communicate clearly and fluently *S4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context		
What are the elements of a story?	Elements: Beginning, middle and end. Characters, situations, settings, problems, climax.	Learners should discover and discuss the elements.				

				*S5 listen to and respond appropriately to the contributions of others.		
Discuss the term genre.\n\nDiscuss the different types of genres.	Genre:\nProvide a definition and use pictures in magazines which could prompt different genres.	Distinguish between different genres.\n\nGroups pick films from hat and sorts them into different genres.	Group Work\n\nWrite in journals.\n\nMake tables in which you sort the genres.\n\nJustification of choice of genre.			
Genre and Character	Create a character for a specific genre	Create a new character and write a short character description based on the music.	Writing in the journal.			

Table 1: Example of Lesson Plan for lesson 1.

Each learner received a creative writing book, which was called their creative writing journal. These journals were supplied by the researcher and were funded by the researcher. The researcher, as the teacher, explained the purpose of the journal and reminded the learners of the consent forms they signed along with their parents. Only 9 learners and their parents consented to the use of their journals for data analysis and interviewing.

The learners were divided into groups. The desks in the classroom were arranged to accommodate group work and soft pillows were placed in circles in the open area where learners were also allowed to sit in their groups if they chose to. A class discussion on the structure of stories followed. In this discussion we also addressed the concerns learners had with the formal essay structure and how to articulate and express their ideas within the prescribed structure (see 4.6.1).

The participants had to draw different genres from a hat; they had to define the genre and find pictures in magazines which reminded them and further explained the

genre. Each picture had to be pasted onto a separate page and learners then had to write down words that came to mind, about the picture and the genre it represented. During the next activity I asked the learners to listen to the music and create a character based on that music. The character had to be placed with the genre the learner felt they suited. The character description had to include the name of the character, his/her personality, the clothes they wore and their occupation. All of this had to happen very quickly; 2 – 3 minutes for 5 characters and the participants did not have time to spend thinking. This practice is based on Westbrook's (2004) philosophy of "[d]on't think. Don't get logical … You just do it. This is how we write. Not asking why … We shouldn't think" (Westbrook 2004:143) (also see chapter 2, section 2.4.2 and 2.4.3). After this activity the learners could choose their favourite character and read the character description to the class. They also had to explain why they had placed the character into a specific genre.

Usually when I give learners homework, the response is a big "*aaah*" or "*NO!*" However, after this lesson the learners looked eager when I started to explain what I would like them to go and do at home. The following task was given to the learners and served as an extension of the activities we did in class. Learners had to go home and decorate the front page of their journal with a black and white photo of themselves. They then had to take this photo and turn themselves into a specific character which fell into a specific genre. They were allowed to paste pictures from magazines on it, which highlighted their likes and dislikes as well as demonstrated something about their personality. They had to paste words that said something about them as a unique person. By doing this activity, learners were exposed to visual information and hopefully they would realise that pictures can prompt words and vice versa.

This lesson focused on sensory involvement. Visual prompts, as well as audio stimulation, were used in this lesson to help stimulate creativity for creative writing. The next stage took place over a double lesson. We had an hour and a half to work on these activities and I would have like even more time for Stage 2.

4.5.3 "Bring on the Magic" – Stage 2: The Interchange Stage

In this lesson we will move into the "exploration" and "manipulation phase" (Flower & Hayes, 1981) of creative writing (as discussed in 4.5.1.2.). This phase involves the following facets of writing – exploration, search for information, play with ideas, thinking together, mind-maps, multi-intelligence activities and little creative tasks.

Lesson plan 2:

Topic and Content	Description	Activity	Process.	Outcomes		
				IGCSE	NCS	Holistic
Introduction of mind-travel. Introduction of the topic.	Learners lie down on the carpet and listen to a story the teacher tells them – the story should be about travelling. **MEDIA:** Show pictures on the projector of travel destinations	Class discussion about how they felt during the activity. Class discussion	Speaking and listening Exchange of ideas	**AO 3: Speaking and Listening** *S1 understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions *S2 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined	**LO 3: Writing** **LO 1: Speaking and Listening**	Visualization, Observation, Imagination, Intuition. Self-reliance. Choice and chance, Courage to take risks,
Storytelling: Travelling in a distant and magical land.	This is the process of writing a story within a specific genre.	Learners will write a story about travelling.	Write in journal.			Tolerance with the process. Flexibility and improvisation.
The teacher should guide the learners through the story they will write, by giving appropriate stimulation and prompts. **MEDIA:** Music Magical Objects (i.e, toilet roll, a ballpoint pen, a pair of sunglasses, a water bottle, an empty plastic container)	The learners should pick a collage which is provided by the teacher. **MEDIA:** Collages of countries and travel destinations. The teacher also provides bowls with sand, water, dry plants, herbs and other stimuli, like jars with spices and food which will evoke thoughts. Spelling and grammar mistakes are not important at the time. The learners should write what they think and feel at that moment in time.		Individual writing in journals. This is a personal and individual journey, guided by prompts	*S3 communicate clearly and fluently *S4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context **AO 2: Writing** *W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined		Discovering media. Sensory experiences. Originality. Using metaphors and symbols. Reflection and meditation. Inquisitiveness, serendipity, play, and movement.

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Story situation:			Mystery and intrigue.
(Any story may be used – give clean, clear instructions) When the teacher starts with the story, the learners are taken on a mind travel. Open their minds and imagination; give them enough information to carry on with the story. *"You are on a group hiking tour in the Namib desert" (expand on the story, make it rich in detail.)* - How does it smell? - What do you see? - How does it make you feel? *"It is night and you can see the stars – that is how dark it is. Suddenly you hear rumbles of thunder and the clouds start rolling in…" (Use a recording of thunder)* - What does it sound like? - What do you smell? - How do you feel? *"That morning you wake up and the sky is clear blue, the sun is not very hot and you decide to take a bath in the river as you have not bathed in a week…"* - How does the water feel on your skin? - How does the water taste? You have only drunk water from bottles. *"You go back to camp, expecting to tell everybody about the river a few miles away. When you get to the camp everybody is gone. You are stuck."* - What are you going to do? - How do you feel? - What do you hear? *"You are walking towards the sun and you see vultures flying in a circle in the air. You see footprints in the sand, but the wind is obliterating them as it blows. The sun is starting to set and you realise that either you have to find the group or find shelter for the night. Not far away you see a cave…"* - Learners should keep on writing while you prompt them. They should make choices and discover the story within. By creating crisis the learners learn how to solve-problems. Provide the learners with an object which will 'save them' – this object is magical…	*W2 order and present facts, ideas and opinions *W3 understand and use a range of appropriate vocabulary *W4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context *W5 make accurate and effective use of paragraphs, grammatical structures, sentences, punctuation and spelling.		Fluency of ideas. Expansion of ideas.

Table 2: Example of lesson plan for lesson 2.

This process is part of the pre-writing phase (Kruger 2008) and helps learners explore the possibilities of creative writing and to show them that creative writing can be fun, because you never know what is going to happen next.

After the learners went on a mind travel they were asked to come to my desk and to look at the sensory objects on the table. On my desk I had the following sensory stimuli: sand, water, mud, a vase with a red rose in it and succulent plants. There were also little containers with spices for example, cinnamon, chili flakes, ground pepper, cocoa powder, garlic and dried turmeric. On another desk I had collages of different destinations, objects, clothing and foods (all linked to the theme of the

setting). The participants could chose a collage and two sensory objects. After they made their selections they had to take a seat, open their journals and wait for the prompts I would give them. They were allowed to interact with their objects and to inspect these until the physical act of writing started. I told the learners that I would 'drop off' a magical object on their table which would have the ability to save them. They could decide what this object's super power was. However, the created character should have no hope left when they discovered the item. The item could also not turn into a helicopter which would transport them to safety – the journey to safety had to be incredible and defy all the odds.

The following images were taken during this lesson:

The collages I used were all centered on exotic landscapes like deserted islands, the Skeleton Coast, the Fish River Canyon, the Sahara Desert and the Namib Desert. I chose to play light classical music in the background as I started to tell the story. The learner was the lead character in the story and they were on a vacation with four other people (it was up to the learners to decide who was with them) and a tour group. The group was exploring the setting (collage) and you wandered off. Here follows a little extract of the story I told in class:

"*You are surrounded by beautiful*

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plants, landscapes and animals and you lose track of time. You suddenly hear an owl and realise that the sun is setting at quite a speed. You start walking towards the sun and then you see vultures flying in a circle in the air. You see footprints in the sand, but the wind is obliterating them. The sun is starting to set and you realise that either you have to find the group or find shelter for the night. Not far away you see a cave…”

The learners started to write immediately once I stopped speaking. I placed a copy of the introduction to the story on their desks along with their magical item (which were ordinary household items as listed in the lesson plan, table 2). The learners spent the rest of the lesson writing in their journals. Their homework for this lesson was to complete their story at home and to read and re-read it. They were allowed to work on it until we saw each other again. They were, however, not permitted to ask someone to help them. The homework for this task formed part of the next stage in the creative writing programme, the Brainstorming Stage.

4.5.4   “Bring on the Magic” – Stage 3: The Brainstorming Stage

Homework from lesson 2:
The homework adhered to the "incubation period" of Flower and Hayes (1981), which is concerned with silence, meditation, time between lessons, involvement with the mechanics of writing in which the writer can work unconsciously and consciously with the product. This is also to allow new combinations and knowledge to develop within the writing process (see 4.5.1.3). Learners had to take their journals home and work through their story. They edited and proof-read their work and re-wrote their story until they were satisfied with the product. They were allowed to change the beginning or the whole story that they wrote in class, but it always had to be their own, individual work.

The learners were asked to bring their final 'rough' draft to me during the register period at the beginning of the day of their next lesson with me. I made photocopies of the drafts and removed the names of the learners on the copies.

4.5.5   “Bring on the Magic” – Stage 4: The Sharing Stage

Lesson 3:

At the beginning of this lesson, I had a quick conversation with the class and asked them to tell me about the experience and how they felt about it. I will discuss the attitudes and insights which surfaced during the conversation later in 4.6.1.

After the discussion I asked the learners to divide themselves into groups of three and to find a space in the class where they would be able to work without being disturbed by the other groups. In these groups the learners evaluated the work of each other in terms of the Assessment Objectives[22] (Writing = AO 2) as stipulated by the University of Cambridge Examination (CIE) board (also in figure 9 in 4.3.1.1). During these group sessions the learners focussed on AO 2: W1 – W4 (refer to table 3). After this session, I took all of the journals and studied them. The learners each received a copy of one of the other learner's work. (I removed the name of the participant from the work, in order to help them assess each other's work critically and objectively). They had to assess the copy they received in terms of AO 2: W1 – W5 of the IGCSE syllabus – I gave them a description of what they had to assess.

Assessment Objectives 2: Writing	Elementary 0 – 2	Adequate 3	Moderate 4	Substantial 5	Meritorious 6	Outstanding 7	Marks 100
W1: Articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined	0 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 15	16 – 20	(20)
W2: Order and present facts, ideas and opinions	0 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 15	16 – 20	(20)
W3: Understand and use a range of appropriate vocabulary	0 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 15	16 – 20	(20)
W4: Use language and register appropriate to audience and context	0 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 15	16 – 20	(20)
W5: Make accurate and effective use of paragraphs, grammatical structures, sentences, punctuation and spelling.	0 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 15	16 – 20	(20)

Table 3: Assessment Objectives as stipulated by The University of Cambridge examination board.

[22] Assessment Objectives - AO

After the learners assessed each other's work they handed it back to me and I handed it back to the learners, along with their journals. The learners now had an assessed copy of their work along with the feedback they received from their group in terms of their creative ideas in the essay. The learners could now return to another "incubation phase" and consider the contributions made by other participants. After this session they were allowed once again to work on their own writing in class and at home.

4.5.6   "Bring on the Magic" – Stage 5: The Writing Stage

This "incubation period" is the bridge into the new phase in creative writing namely "organization" (see 4.5.1.5). In this phase of writing the learner uses/processes the information provided on their writing and incorporates or disregards these opinions in order to keep on fine-tuning their work.

During lesson four, the learners were allowed to use class time to work on their final draft. Incidentally, this day the lessons were shortened as an educational psychologist came to speak to the high school about study methods before the test series. The lesson was approximately 20 minutes and the learners were granted time to work on the final product. If the task had not been completed it automatically became homework, as it had to be handed in the next lesson.

4.5.7   "Bring on the Magic" – Stage 6: The Production Stage

The final product, the story about travelling, was completed in the creative writing journal and the marks that the learner obtained for this task were used as Class Work for Drama. This was handed in at the beginning of lesson five.

During this lesson we started with a new planning phase for the final creative writing assessment task for the term. Flower and Hayes (1981) argue that we should be aware of the fact that even if you are in the composing phase, planning and revising will occur and that the initial planning you did could change in the writing process.

As part of the Drama curriculum the learners are required to perform an own devised piece. Due to the fact that grade 9 allows for flexibility concerning the curriculum, I decided to incorporate the creative writing with their performance task, as I would be assessing stage craft and performance skills and not necessarily the content.

The genre of parody is one of my personal favourites and this genre also allows for a great deal of creativity and freedom. Learners can also create wonderful characters and use this opportunity to write from the perspective of the character, and voice their concerns about certain topics, without it becoming too personal. The learners also had to cover a certain amount of theory for the Drama curriculum and this term's focus was on Stanislavski and his acting methods. Due to all of these contributing factors, I decided to develop the following lessons.

Lesson 5 (double time-slot):

Topic and Content	Description	Activity	Process	Outcomes		
				IGCSE	NCS	Holistic
Part 1: Parody **MEDIA:** Three different songs. Part 2: The learners are provided with the words and they can use the beat of the song to ensure that they keep the rhythm. The songs are modern and familiar to the learners.	Take the lyrics of an established song and make a parody of that song. The teacher should have the songs on a CD in the classroom in order to play it to the learners. The lyrics to most modern songs are freely available on the internet.	The learners should change the lyrics of the song: the intended audience is children of 8 – 9 years old. Pictures and words from magazines may be used to help with inspiration for the characters in the song and for the parody.	Write in journal. Each learner is provided with the lyrics of the song. The lyrics of the song are re-written to suit the genre of fantasy / children's stories. Activity occurs in the journal.	**AO 3: Speaking and Listening** *S1 understand order and present facts, ideas and opinions *S2 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined *S3 communicate clearly and fluently *S4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context **AO 2:**	**LO 1:** Speaking and listening **LO 3:** Writing	Intuition. Imagination, flexibility and improvisation Group work. Self-reliance. Tolerance with the process. Discovering media. Reflection. Fluency of ideas. Expansion of ideas.
This process will introduce the genre of parody even further. The learners will also enjoy this task, because it is recognizable media that they are working with. The song will be presented to the rest of the class at the end of the lesson. This provides room for play and laughter in the classroom.						

Part 3: Learners are introduced to the 10 steps of Acting as set out in Stanislavski's Method Acting System	Action Given Circumstance Circles of Attention The Score: Units and Objectives, the Super-Objective and the Through-Line of Action Tempo-rhythm in movement The imagination Magic 'If' Emotion Memory (or Sense Memory in some cases) The method of physical action	This work is done in the Drama workbook. The teacher's focus should be on the Drama curriculum, however, links to creative writing may be made.	**Writing** *W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined *W4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context *W5 make accurate and effective use of grammatical structures and punctuation.		

Table 4: *Example of lesson plan for lesson 5*

Lesson 6:

The teacher briefly re-capped the content taught in the previous lesson and then moved on to the next activity by starting to tell the story of "The three little pigs" to the class. However, this is the parody version of the story from the perspective of the wolf. The teacher then showed the class clips from the animation film, Shrek. These activities served as Stage 1 (4.5.1.1) and Stage 2 (4.5.1.2) for the writing process.

In this lesson the learners started to conceptualize the planning for their own parody. The learners drew a simple mind-map in their journals as they embarked on the journey of the planning phase. The learners were expected to work through the sensation, exploration and manipulation, and incubation phases on their own. They experienced the necessary exposure and by starting with this task on their own, they would hopefully become confident writers.

After the learners had decided which fairy-tale they would like to write about in

Creating Your Character

Remember that you have to provide the "Given Circumstance", as set out by Stanislavski in his Method Acting System. You will receive a Facebook profile which you should paste and complete in your journal!

Have fun and think outside of the box! Anything is possible in a world of magic...

SO, BRING ON THE MAGIC!

CREATE THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCE BY COMPLETING THIS LIST...

1. Insert a picture of your character.
2. Insert the full name and surname of the character.
3. Where does this character live?
4. What is the relationship status of your character?
5. Place a dot on the world map of where your character lives and all of the places your character has travelled to.
6. List four 'people' your character are friends with.
7. List the school and work place of your character.
8. Write two wall posts the character had made during his/her time on Facebook.

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the parody genre, they had to create a Facebook profile page for one of the characters. Through this the learners could discover the value of character work and this would also help them with their planning process – this can also be seen as part of Stage 3 (4.5.1.3). This activity was also a direct link to the theory content of the Drama curriculum, for the learners had to work on the "Given Circumstance" (2.5.3.2) of their selected character. An example of the task can be seen in Addendum F.

Figure 11: *Questions for creating the Facebook profile for a fantasy character.*

These tasks were all completed in the learners' journals. They really enjoyed this activity for they were working with content that they are familiar with. This also allowed them to create a detailed character biography in a manner with which they are very familiar.

On the next page is the broad outline for the lesson plan of lesson 6. The activities in table 5 served as inspiration for the creative writing process for the duration of the term.

Topic and Content	Description	Activity	Process	Outcomes		
				IGCSE	NCS	Holistic

				AO 3: **Speaking and Listening**	LO 1: **Speaking and listening**	Intuition.
Parody: Learners should write a parody of one of their favourite fairy-tales. MEDIA: Clips from the film "Shrek".	The teacher tells the parody version of "The three little pigs" to the class. Shows clips from the film "Shrek" to the class.	In this process the learners should tell the teacher how the original story of the three pigs goes. While the learners tell the story, the teacher should draw a mind-map in the board.	Learners should draw their own mind-map or copy the mind-map in their journals. The learners and teacher now use the mind-map of the original story and insert the parody parts to the story in different colours.	*S1 understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions *S2 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined *S3 communicate clearly and fluently *S4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context	LO 2: **Reading and Viewing** LO 3: **Writing**	Imagination flexibility and improvisation Group work. Self-reliance. Tolerance with the process. Discovering media. Reflection. Fluency of ideas. Expansion of ideas.
The teacher refers to the movie 'Sherk' and has a discussion about the elements the writer used in this parody.	The learners now decide on their own fairy-tale and they can draw a mind-map/ synopsis of a possible parody for this fairy-tale.	A3 poster. The learners may use pictures from magazines and coloured pens to create this story.		AO 2: **Writing** *W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined *W4 use language and register appropriate to audience and context		
By doing this the learners understand how the process of mind-mapping and planning can assist them in their writing process. The learners should then do a presentation to the class on their story. Through this the learners can hear each other's ideas, discover new possibilities and understand why certain choices work and why others don't. This will then serve as an introduction to the genre of parody writing and the elements we use in order to change the 'real' story. Characterization is also an important part of this process and this process should also be discovered. *Other possible Creative Writing tasks:* A day in the life of Robin Hood – writing diary entries. Writing a newspaper article about the 'real' story in Fairyland.						

Table 5: Example of lesson plan for lesson 6

The learners discussed their mind-maps with the class and during this process the floor was open to discuss the elements of the story – Stage 4 (4.5.1.4). The homework for this lesson was to complete the character Facebook profile and to go and think about and plan more on the parody which they had started in class. This means that the learners are within the "incubation period" (Flower & Hayes, 1981)

and that during this time they are consciously and sub-consciously busy with the planning and formulation of their story.

Lesson 7:

During this lesson we enter Stage 5 (4.5.1.5.), which is concerned with the process of writing and composing. The learners now had to start to compose their children's story in the fantasy genre by means of the style parody. They also had to write a short monologue for one of the characters, which would be performed for formal Drama assessment. The learners were allowed to ask questions, look at props in the props chest in the class (to help with inspiration if they experienced a "writer's block"), and use some of the fairy-tale books which were provided at the beginning of this stage. Throughout this lesson light classical music was played. The 'planning' and 'rough draft' of the writing was all done in the creative writing journal, the learners were, however, asked to complete the final draft on loose folio.

The last five minutes of the lesson were dedicated to a short class discussion. I wanted to understand how the learners experienced the process thus far and how they felt during the experience. This will be discussed later in the chapter, see 4.6. Once again, the learners were instructed to bring their completed parodies and monologues to the teacher at the beginning of the day of their next lesson.

Lesson 8:

The learners brought the completed parodies and monologues to me early on the morning of their next lesson. I would like to mention that none of the learners asked for an extension or came with excuses that the work had not been completed. I asked the class about this phenomenon at the end of their lesson. Once again the copies of the nameless parodies were distributed among the class to be evaluated by the other participants. After this process of evaluation the learners could reflect about the contributions and revise their work. This is also where the organization phase came into play again, for the learners could correct their work (the language and structure of the writing piece W5, see table 3) after they had received the recommendations. The final descriptive 'essay' had to be handed in the next day for formal assessment by the teacher. This concluded the second last stage of the "Bring on the Magic" writing programme.

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At the end of this week we had a performance evening where the learners performed their own devised pieces; the monologues. The performance of the pieces were fantastic and I would like to believe that it is because the learners wrote their own work and understood the context that their stage craft and performance skills were directly influenced.

4.5.8   "Bring on the Magic" – Stage 7: The Aftermath

This was the last lesson of this specific cycle and incidentally the last lesson of the term. During this timeslot we had to discuss the term marks the learners achieved in terms of the goals they had set for themselves at the beginning of the term. (The School encourages learners to set an assessment goal for themselves at the beginning of each term and to see if they can realise that goal at the end of the term). During this lesson I asked the learners to hand in their journals so that I could look at their creative journey. However, before I took in the journals, I asked them to write down a few words which would aptly explain their experience of the creative writing activities we had done that term. They were not required to write an essay or even sentences. The only requirement was to write down descriptive words. The words included "*fun*" and "*hard*", whilst other learners wrote "*challenging*", "*exciting*" and "*stimulating*". What can be derived from this is that even though the participants found the activities and tasks "*challenging*" and "*hard*" that a certain amount of joy was generated from the process and from my personal experience I have found that when children have fun, they learn the most. The fact that the word "*stimulating*" was used demonstrates that active learning took place, the "*fun*" and "*exciting*" elements are generated from the "stimulating" activities and therefore their attitude towards creative writing changed.

I had to hand in three portfolios for internal moderation. The head of department selected three students and I had to prepare the portfolios of these learners. In the portfolio I provided the moderator with the term test the learners wrote, the drama notes (which were in the drama workbooks) and the creative writing journal. I inserted the final formal writing task in the section of the journal where the planning and brainstorming had occurred. The feedback on these portfolios was very positive. We were not allowed to hand in the physical book (journal) of the learner.

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If I were to do this again, I would make photocopies of the journal and attach it to the formal writing tasks.

The table (figure 12) on the next page indicates the term marks of the learners for term 3. Even though this research does not strive to make quantitative assumptions, it is still interesting to see how these learners gained confidence and improved their creative writing in the tasks set. These tasks were by no means standardised and only a very specific and small group of learners completed these tasks, therefore, these marks cannot be used as statistical proof.

IGCSE Drama	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4a	Task 4b	Task 4	Task 5	Task 6	TOTAL			
Pseudonym	Characters, Genre & Music	Descriptive Essay (Travelling)	Character's Facebook Profile	Children's Story	Monologue	Parody	Term Test	Performance	All assessments combined	Unrounded total	TOTAL = TERM 3	Goals
	10	30	10	50	50	100	100	100	350	100.00	100	
Deanna	7	23	7	43	35	78	82	84	281	80.29	80	80
Daisy	6	24	7	44	36	80	84	83	284	81.14	81	80
Lily	6	22	7	42	32	74	92	75	276	78.86	79	70
Nico	8	21	9	32	40	72	88	86	284	81.14	81	80
Eric	7.5	22	8	34	40	74	92	84	287.5	82.14	82	80
Arnold	7	20	8	36	38	74	82	80	271	77.43	77	80
Charlie	6.5	23	7	38	40	78	85	80	279.5	79.86	80	80
Violet	8	25	9	41	39	80	94	84	300	85.71	86	90
Desiree	5	19	8	42	32	70	60	72	234	66.86	67	65
Abby	7	21	8	37	35	72	65	77	250	71.43	71	70
Dexter	6	22	7	33	39	72	70	75	252	72.00	72	70
Donald	6	20	6	36	38	74	66	65	237	67.71	68	68
Rose	7	18	7	41	39	80	abs	78	190	76.00	76	80
											77	

Figure 12: *Mark Sheet of IGCSE Drama learners for Term 3*

Each task the learners completed in their journals was awarded marks. The reason for this was to add 'purpose' to the tasks, for every time I introduced a new task, the learners asked: "Is this for marks, ma'am?". Once again, the theme of task driven learners and their concern with assessment is apparent. It seems that some of the learners are not motivated to complete tasks just for the joy of writing – they will invest time and energy if they know that the tasks are intended for assessment or 'marks' (see 4.7).

Each task had a rubric which specifically focussed on the creative writing of the learners. The highlighted columns add up to a final mark of 350 which was then calculated to generate an average mark out of 100. The practical drama task was moderated by an external moderator (who is also a Drama teacher) and the tests were moderated by the academic head of the school. When one considers only the creative writing tasks, the marks of most of the learners indicate a gradual increase during the course of the term. It could be that the creative stimuli provided helped with the creative writing, but also the topics, the increased conversation as well as the peer assessment and the re-writing activities. Compared to the practice of creative writing activities in the English class, most learners would not have the opportunity to improve their marks and actively learn through their own and their peers' mistakes. It could also be that because the learners related to and enjoyed the topics that it increased their commitment to the tasks at hand. However, the drama theory component, which was assessed in the term test, proved in most cases to deliver better results. The practical performances of the learners also delivered very good results. Considering the fact that the drama assessment of the learners delivered better results, I was motivated to include more of this in the second cycle (see 4.7).

4.6   ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA: CYCLE 1

The data of the "Bring on the Magic" creative writing programme were gathered by means of the participant observations, classroom reflections and semi-structured interviews with individual participants, done by the researcher / teacher. The creative writing journals of the learners also served as sources to map the process and creative journey on which the learners embarked. In this section I will discuss the findings, my interpretation and my understanding which crystalized during this process. I identified issues and themes during the investigative stage of the research, which I will discuss rigorously in terms of the data gathered.

The following table lists the themes/trends which were prominent during cycle 1 of the research:

Theme / Trend in Cycle 1	Definition of Theme / Trend in Cycle 1
4.6.1. Confidence and Trust	• The trust learners have in the ability of their teacher to teach them skills and guide their learning process. • The development of trust in themselves. • Respect for peers and teacher: facilitates creating a feasible environment for learning and creative thoughts. • Confidence in their abilities to create a creative piece of writing which adheres to the formal structures as stipulated by examining bodies.
4.6.2. The Importance of Assessment	• Task driven learners and teachers who are more concerned with the outcome than with the journey and process of learning and writing. • The fear of assessment which causes anxiety with some learners and inhibits them to write creatively. • Assessment as Motivation: Learners complete tasks and invest certain amounts of energy and commitment to tasks based on the weight of the assessment. • Purpose of task: Learners do not view tasks as important if the tasks are not used for formal assessment. • Pleasing the teacher.
4.6.3. Engagement and Enthusiasm	• Negative attitude towards Creative Writing tasks. • Enthusiasm generated through the TOPIC of the task. • Enthusiasm generated through creative stimuli provided for writing. • Activation of prior-knowledge leading to activation of creativity for tasks. • Engagement with the tasks brought on by physical interaction, stimuli, performance and multi-literacies.
4.6.4. Assessment versus Engagement and its effects on Enthusiasm	• The manner in which these two concepts influence each other. • Cross-curricular links and interdisciplinary benefits.
4.6.5. Co-operation	• Individual and group work in class whilst busy with a creative writing task.
4.6.6. A Space to Create	• The classroom environment. • The creative writing journal. • Relationships in the classroom.
4.6.7. Gender Differences	• How the girls and boys respond to the different tasks, be it drama or creative writing. • Pleasing the teacher

Table 6: *Themes identified in Cycle 1*

An important aspect to consider is the flexible nature of the development of knowledge and creativity. What I found was that all of these themes are interrelated and connected with each other, for example 4.6.4. and 4.6.3. Some of these themes are dependent on each other (for example 4.6.3 with 4.6.5), whilst others exist on their own. The themes will be discussed in terms of a comparison of the gathered data from the three data sets, namely participant observations, classroom discussions and reflections and creative writing journals of the learners. However, not all of the themes were equally prevalent in the different stages of the writing programme or in the data sets. The first and very prominent theme which crystallised from the data is Confidence and Trust.

4.6.1   Confidence and Trust

Most teachers would confirm that grade 9 is one of the most challenging groups to work with in high schools. These learners are still discovering their own identities, they are incredibly sensitive towards criticism of any kind, they are going through puberty and they are not quite sure if they like or dislike the opposite sex. Basically, in a nutshell, I chose to conduct research with turbulent and searching teenagers – a daunting and challenging task. However, these learners had been in my class for the past two years and we have a special relationship. I would like to believe that I understood and grasped these individuals and that we had a relationship which was built on mutual respect and trust. Therefore, in my opinion, this was the perfect group with which to do experimental research, as they had learnt to trust me and they understood that there was 'method in the madness'. However, I had never taught Creative Writing and the learners struggled to view me as a Language teacher. Consequently I had to gain their trust concerning Language assessment. Another factor I had to consider was that some of the learners had only started their Drama education that year and were fairly new to the class and school. Subsequently relationships had to be established and trust gained in this regard.

As the creative writing tasks were introduced in Stage 1 (4.5.2) the hesitance of the participants could be detected. One learner in particular asked why we were doing creative writing in Drama and as I explained that these tasks were preparing them for

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their IGCSE examinations and the own devised piece they were going to write and perform, the anxiety increased in the class.

> *Nico: But isn't Creative Writing part of English?*
>
> *R: Yes.*
>
> *Nico: Can you teach it ma'am?*
>
> *R: Yes. I am a qualified English teacher as well.*
>
> *Nico: Oh. Okay. (Doubtful)*
>
> *Daisy: You mean that we have to perform a piece that we wrote?*
>
> *R: Yes.*
>
> *Abby: (laughing) Ma'am, we've never done that and you always say that the quality of the piece will influence the performance of the actor.*
>
> *R: You have performed your own devised pieces. (class look at each other) Your improvisations.*
>
> *Abby: Not the same, ma'am. We didn't have to write those and they are not for marks. Only for fun.*
>
> *(The rest of the class nod in agreement)*

The fact that the one learner questioned my abilities and skill indicated a lack of trust. I suspect that this was due to the fact that in this school, with its small classes and wide subject choice, specialist teachers do not teach other subjects. In other South African schools the Drama teacher would usually teach another subject as well and, therefore, learners find it easier to see the versatility of teachers. At Griffon International the learners categorise their teachers and struggle to understand the versatility of teachers, but also the possibility of cross-curricular teaching (see 4.6.4 for more on this theme). Regardless of the established relationship we had developed, the trust of the learners had to be gained and this was a process in itself.

Another issue that became evident from this conversation was the lack of confidence the learners had in their own writing. As the topic was introduced during Stage 1 (4.5.2), their confidence increased, for they were familiar with the subject matter. This was evident from the class discussions, for all of the learners wanted to share their ideas and insights. Another instance where one could see the confidence of

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the learners increasing was in their rigorous writing in the journals. However, when the learners were asked to share they would rather speak about the character than read their writing. They would only read their character sketch if they were instructed to do so. Once they read it and saw that the class received it well, the confidence grew, as the focus was not as much on the structure and grammatical aspects of writing (see 4.6.2), but rather on the content. Consequently, the participants became confident in personally reading their work due to the positive response it received from the listeners.

During <u>Stage 2</u> (4.5.3), the learners interacted with physical stimuli. Owing to the fact that this activity relied on their personal memories, the learners were once again familiar with the subject matter and topic and had confidence to converse and write freely. Several learners commented that it was getting easier to write, because they felt that the activities had started to unlock their creative juices.

> R: *You said in class that you feel it is getting easier to write.*

> Violet: *It gets easier every time I work with something that gives me inspiration. Like the music and the jars … spices … and ja… At the beginning I didn't really see the purpose of these things, but I used them and now I can feel that it's getting easier … and like … I'm enjoying it. Like today, in Afrikaans … we like, had to write an essay and I was staring at the wall … it's grey ma'am (giggles) … and then I looked at my pen and the paper and then I like, looked at the wall…*

> R: *Why do you think that is?*

> Violet: *It's too quiet, it's … it's dead … I like the music. It's not like I can remember what I listen too, or even if I liked it, but it's there… and it helps me.*

However, one of my learners, Desiree, struggled particularly with writing and creative writing. Here follows a short conversation we had after the smell and touch activity.

> R: *So, does it get easier for you to write or is it still difficult?*

> Desiree: *I don't have such a big imagination. Clearly not.*

> R: *No, you do!*

> Desiree: *No, I don't.*

> R: *But does this make it a bit easier, or not really?*

Desiree: It does a little bit, ja.

From these conversations I gathered that some learners were accessing their creativity more easily through the stimuli, whilst others still found it difficult. The confidence and trust that the learners had in their own abilities seemed to have a profound impact on their creativity in writing. Violet is an academically strong learner, she trusts her intellectual abilities and, consequently, she knows that if she practices she will improve. On the other hand we have Desiree who is not as accomplished academically as Violet. This does not mean that Violet is more creative and will necessarily write more creatively, but the fact that she has confidence in her abilities has a profound impact (see 4.6.1). The challenge here is to find the correct stimuli for Desiree in order to help her develop her confidence and thus assist her in writing more creatively (see 4.7). The conversation with Desiree highlighted another occurring sub-theme, 'pleasing the teacher'. I am not sure if the stimuli in Stage 2 really made it easier for Desiree to write and if she just 'pacified' the teacher by agreeing with the statement, more on this in (4.6.6) the discussion of the theme, A Space to Create.

Stage 2 and Stage 3 focusses on the exchange of ideas with others and what I had observed from the participants were not only the shaping and re-shaping of ideas as the activity progressed, but also how the learners felt free to express their ideas, personal experiences, take and give criticism and construct their own knowledge and creative thoughts. An interesting occurrence was that the learners trusted their peers enough to integrate their suggestions into their writing (also see 4.6.1), but still felt the need to confirm this with the teacher (sub-theme of pleasing the teacher).

Lily: Are we allowed to use these things (the comments and suggestions of the class) in our pieces, ma'am?

R: Absolutely. You may pick and choose what you would like to use.

Lily: Like, when Daisy said that I should rather fall into a magical cave … can I use that?

R: Yes, you may.

Lily: Okay. So you think, it will make the piece better?

R: What do you think?

Lily: I think so.

> R: Okay. Now go and write it.

> Lily: Thanks, ma'am.

This learner was trying to see if I liked the idea. I felt that my approval was more important to her, than her own and this could indicate a lack of confidence in her ability/judgement, but also in what she regarded as a good idea. I was not sure if this was also because she thought that if I liked the story I would give her better marks. This learner specifically was very concerned about the assessment of the work (see 4.6.2 for more on this theme). During Stage 3 (4.5.4) and Stage 4 (4.5.5) the learners were forced to assess each other's work to assist by brainstorming ideas. The overwhelming response was: "*we don't know enough to do this, ma'am*". The lack of confidence in their linguistic abilities was evident. They were allowed to use dictionaries and 'Google' to assist them in the assessment process, but what was remarkable was that when the learners discussed the 'assessed' work with each other, they readily accepted the advice and sometimes they would disagree with statements without being rude. I was impressed with the mature manner in which these learners behaved and conducted themselves, and I would like to believe that it was due to the fact that they took responsibility for their own learning, but also for each other's learning. This was confirmed when the participants started with Stage 5 (4.5.6) and enquired if they were allowed to use the comments and "tips" they had received from their friends. The confidence they had gained from the out-loud reading sessions and the "tips" they received on their writing in Stage 4, demonstrates increased trust in their friends as well as in their own abilities (4.6.1) and assisted the learners with the *organisation phase* (Flower & Hayes, 1981) of writing. If the learners were not invested in their own learning, they would not have integrated the comments and "tips" from their friends.

The initial introduction to Stage 6 (see 4.5.7) indicated that the participants still doubted their abilities. When they heard that they had to perform a piece that they had written, the class erupted in 'protests' like "*no, ma'am!*" and "*how are we going to do that?*" and a final dejected comment from Desiree: "*I am going to fail this*". The lack of confidence is apparent, but the trust in the teacher is in question here, for Desiree's comment indicated that she assumed that she would have to rely only on herself to complete this task. I also assumed that she would not do well, due to her

obvious lack of confidence in her abilities and skill (4.6.1). The journal of this learner also provided evidence, for this learner did not write, but rather drew pictures and jotted in the top corner "*I just wanna go home*". I was not sure if her attitude towards the task was negative, because she did not like the task, or because she had to perform her writing or if it was because of the assessment issue – more on this in 4.6.4 (Assessment versus Engagement and its effects on Enthusiasm).

I observed that some of the participants struggled through these lessons (see 4.7) and when the learners started with the evaluation phase, in other words peer assessment (see 4.6.2 for more on this theme), the lack of confidence in their language proficiency was once again evident. However, Violet's confidence inspired confidence in the other members of her group as well. She stated that she would be able to evaluate the spelling and vocabulary of the other members and then she continued to identify the strengths of the rest of the group. Even though she was the strongest academically, she conveyed her trust and confidence in the other members of the group and this proved to have a very positive effect. Desiree and I were equally surprised at the marks she achieved (see figure 10). It seemed that the sharing of ideas and group work aspect of the task (during the evaluation phase) played an integral role in the development of confidence in creative writing.

This brings us to one of the most prominent themes identified in this research project: the importance of assessment.

4.6.2   The Importance of Assessment

Assessment has always been a topic of debate in education. It is a way we as educators establish if our learners are familiar with the content we have taught and we also establish if they are equipped to move on to the next year or phase of education. However, during my short teaching experience I have discovered that many learners have become so obsessed with assessment and their performance that the joy of learning has gotten lost. Some of the learners were so concerned with the marks they were awarded, that they did not realise how much they had learnt. Consequently, one of the most prominent themes in this research was concerned with the reaction to and with assessment.

Sub-themes that crystallised were:

> ➢ the task-driven nature of learners;
> ➢ assessment as motivation;
> ➢ the fear of assessment.

During the stimulation stages (Stage 1 – Stage 3) the learners constantly asked me if the tasks were for assessment. I tried to change the topic or steered the conversation away from assessment as I did not want the creative process to be overshadowed by assessment. The fact that the learners were so focussed on the assessment process indicates their task-driven nature but also that they found purpose in the task if it were for assessment. Numerous teachers would be overjoyed with this attitude in their learners, but I have found that it is not always necessarily positive, especially in a creative subject where the focus is not always so much on the end result, but also on the process and journey of development.

When we entered Stage 6 (see 4.5.7), one of the learners was brave enough to ask why they were doing creative writing in Drama. I explained to the class that these tasks are part of a creative journey, as when they had to take the final IGCSE examinations, they are required to perform an own devised piece.

Daisy: So we're practicing for next year?

R: Yes.

Daisy: And all of these tasks we did are being marked?

R: Yes.

Dexter: I like it. It's fun.

Daisy: But ma'am. We have to do a lot of creative writing for English and we don't practice in English.

R: You are. By doing all of the creative writing tasks the teachers are giving you.

Violet: So basically what you're saying ma'am … is that we can use these … like … these…

R: Inspiration methods?

Violet: Yes. We can use these inspirations … that we do here … and use it for English and Afrikaans?

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R: Yes, Violet. Then you won't have to stare at the wall.

(Violet, the class and researcher laughs.)

From this conversation one could see that the learners were starting to understand that they could find inspiration for writing in numerous places and that they would be able to use the knowledge that they had gained in one subject in another. This was also evident in Violet's journal (see 4.6.5). She started to add her Drama notes to her Creative Writing journal. I asked her why she did this and she replied: "*I love drama and I like creative writing. I want to start loving creative writing as much as I love Drama, so I put everything in one place*". The purpose of the journal for this learner became multi-faceted. She was starting to make little notes in the margin, next to the drama notes, which she thought she could use in writing. She also highlighted vocabulary which she intended to use in her writing. This practice had a good effect on her writing and I could see that the creative writing process did not solely revolve around marks for her, but in finding inspiration and purpose in the most unlikely places.

The class discussion above also highlights the concern the learners had with the assessment of tasks. I also noted that when I told the learners that the tasks were for marks that it served as extra motivation to work hard. I also realised that if the tasks were not assessed some of the learners did not see the purpose of the task. For example, the collage activity they had to make in the first lesson (see table 1) delivered mixed responses:

R: Did you all complete the collage activity?

Daisy: Yup! Ma'am, I had so much fun … I found SO many pictures and words that describe me and my character… and …

(Interrupted by Dexter)

Dexter: I liked that I could change myself into someone different.

Arnold: Ma'am, was this for marks?

R: Why?

Arnold: I just wanna know, 'cause I didn't really have time for pictures and stuff…

R: Did you complete the task, Arnold?

Arnold: Of course, but I didn't do … like… mine's not pretty and stuff like the girls' collages….

> R: That's okay, as long as you did it.
>
> Nico: But how are you going to mark it, ma'am? Like on how nice it looks and so on?
>
> R: Don't worry about the marks for now.
>
> Rose: So it's not for marks?
>
> R: Guys, not everything is about marks. What's important is if you did it and if you had fun doing it.
>
> Arnold: I don't like stuff like this, that's why I didn't take art.
>
> R: So, do you think this task was unimportant and please be honest.
>
> Arnold: (silent for a while) … I just don't see how this is part of drama or creative writing…
>
> R: Okay, just trust me, you'll see it eventually.

The issue with purpose in tasks based on the weighting of marks attached to it is evident from this conversation. The gender differences (see also 4.6.7) were also highlighted as well as the building of trust (see 4.6.1). This conversation was difficult to manage and I realised that I would have to be very clear in my instructions to tasks, but also provide the learners with more information about the end results (see 4.7).

During Stage 4, *The Sharing Stage*, the response of the learners was very interesting. The fact that assessment was going to take place dampened the spirit in the classroom and the participants repeatedly asked if I would subtract marks for spelling and grammar. Others were concerned about the quality of the story and if they were on the topic. The focus shifted from the 'fun' we had in the previous lessons to that of fear and anxiety of producing an end product. A noticeable change in the attitudes of some of the participants could be seen (also see 4.6.4). They started to over-think the writing and some learners, who did not struggle to "get ideas" sat staring at the walls. It was as if the notion of assessment had erased all of the stimulation and 'finding of creativity' that we had done in the previous sessions (see 4.6.4). The learners who were academically strong were not affected negatively. They attacked the tasks with vigour, however, when assessment groups had to be chosen, most of the 'strong' learners gravitated towards each other. Two of the learners explained why they had chosen specific people to work with:

> R: Eric, how did you decide who was going to be in your group?
>
> Eric: Well ma'am, I am good friends with Arnold and Nico, so we decided to be together…

(Arnold interrupts)

Arnold: Yeah, but we also do well. I want to keep my average good and I don't want to be in a group where I have to do all of the work.

Eric: And, we are friends with Charlie. We all play soccer during break and we're on the same team.

R: So you know each other very well?

Arnold: Yes and Charlie usually does what we tell him to do.

R: Do you listen to Charlie if he tells you what to do?

Arnold: Sometimes, other times he just makes jokes and doesn't take his work so seriously, but he's a good actor.

R: Did you also decide to be in the same group because you get the same marks?

Eric: Yes and No. You said that we had to pair up with people who we know are better than us at certain things. Nico is freaking smart, Arnold is a grammar Nazi, I'm good with language and stuff and Charlie has rad ideas.

R: Sounds like you guys are going to work well together.

Arnold: Yeah!

R: You don't think you should have taken the opportunity to work with people you don't know?

Eric: I'll do it next time when it's not for marks.

What is striking about the conversation is that these boys (also see 4.6.7 for more on the theme gender differences) were some of the top achievers in the grade. The concern with their marks was noticeable, even when Eric tried not to make it too obvious; Arnold on the other hand was brutally honest. They did decide to work with their friends, but the fact that the decision was also made from a strategic point of view was evident. The boys demonstrated confidence in their abilities and knew that they would succeed in the task due to the selection of their peer assessors and their abilities. This group work rigorously and sometimes I had to step in when the tension became too much – this group was honest and very critical of each other's ideas and the focus on grammar and language was so intense that they neglected to consider the logical development of the story as well as the element of magic.

With some of the girls (also see 4.6.7 for more on the theme gender differences) the fear for assessment was apparent. When they were informed that they had to assess each other's work, they were very hesitant and stated that they did not feel

that they knew enough to do this. Here follows a short conversation in one of the groups.

> *Deanna: But ma'am, I'm like, really bad with spelling.*
>
> *R: What do you think you are good at?*
>
> *Deanna: I don't know.*
>
> *Desiree: You are good with abstract thoughts.*
>
> *Violet: I'm good with spelling.*
>
> *Desiree: And you use like … big words and stuff…*
>
> *R: Vocabulary.*
>
> *Desiree: That thing.*
>
> *R: Desiree, what are you good at?*
>
> *Desiree: I'm not good with language.*
>
> *Deanna: You like to read and you always have good ideas for stories.*
>
> *Violet: And you have a little sister, so you know what like… little kids would like.*

Violet and Deanna are academically strong. Violet's confidence correlated with (4.6.1) her abilities inspired the rest of the group. This group also chose to work together because they were friends. The focus here, however, was not so much on the marks, but more on how they could help each other, but also about working with the strengths of their friends. What was interesting here was that this group did better than the boys who chose each other based on academic achievement (refer to 4.5.8, figure 10, Parody column). This group succeeded in writing a story for their target audience, whilst the grammatical structures were in place as well (see 4.6.4).

Both of these the conversations demonstrated how the learners identified specific skills in each other and how they gave each person a particular role in the assessment process. As this evaluation session continued, the learners taught each other and explained difficult concepts, especially in Language Structure and Use (IGCSE – AO 2: W5; and NCS LO 4). In most cases the learners were sensitive and empathetic towards each other's weaknesses, but they also celebrated their classmates' strengths. This part of the creative writing programme surprised me and

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I was proud of these learners. I am not sure if the same would happen in all schools and situations, but in this case, I would say that this was one of the triumphs of the research.

This engagement with the content, like I saw in Violet's journal led to interesting discoveries (more of this in 4.6.4). I realised that with increased engagement and enjoyment the participants were not as focussed on the assessment of the tasks and became more enthusiastic about creative writing and drama. This leads us to another prominent theme: Engagement and Enthusiasm.

4.6.3   Engagement and Enthusiasm

One of the goals in this research project was to increase the engagement of learners with creative writing tasks. From my experience I have seen that with the increased engagement of learners' enthusiasm for tasks also increases and eventually results in enjoyment and mastery of tasks. During Cycle 1 the main objective was to engage learners in the creative writing process by means of sensory stimulation and writing activities.

At the beginning of *Stage 1: The Inspiration Stage* (4.5.1.1), I told the learners that we would do some creative writing. The overwhelming response was an "*aaah*" and an "*ag no, ma'am*". The negative attitude (see 4.6.5) towards creative writing was evident from the response of the participants and this confirmed the observations during the investigative stage of the research (see 4.3.1). However, as the explanation of the activities progressed, I could see interest being sparked into action. Subsequently, the enthusiasm of the learners increased not only because they understood what was expected of them, but also because they were familiar with the topic of magic and fairy-tale characters. By using a video clip from an advertisement, familiar content was used to activate prior knowledge and the enthusiastic sharing of opinions and laughter indicated interest and enthusiasm for the task at hand.

Another activity which the learners found engaging and entertaining was creating characters by means of music (table 1). When I would play a song, some of the

participants would comment "*this is such a cool song, ma'am*" and others would chuckle as they wrote furiously. When they spoke about the characters afterwards, the characters seemed three-dimensional, relatable, believable and very entertaining.

During *Stage 2: The Interchange Stage* (4.5.1.2), the learners became increasingly excited when they were allowed to touch and interact with the objects on the table. One learner stated that she remembered her grandmother when she smelled the cinnamon and another boy joined the discussion by stating that his grandfather loved succulent plants and that his "oupa" called his "nanna" his little "vetplantjie"[23]. These observations confirm what Gallagher & Ntelioglou (2011) observed in their research that when learners are engaged with activities and their prior knowledge about the activity is activated "the students found the literacy practices in their classroom more purposeful, and they consequently appeared more willing to invest themselves in their learning process" (2011: 326) also see the theme about Co-operation (4.6.5).

During the Inspiration, Interchange and Brainstorming phases of writing the learners mentioned how much they enjoyed the process. When the learners were asked about their experience of creating the characters by using the music as an inspiration issues regarding expression surfaced:

> R: How was the activity?
>
> (Several participants respond simultaneously that they liked it.)
>
> Charlie[24]: It feels like we are not doing work.
>
> Dexter: It was amazing to physically see the character walk on the page before you write details about him down.
>
> Deanna: It was difficult.
>
> R: Why do you say it was difficult, Deanna?
>
> Deanna: It didn't come out … everything didn't come out immediately. I couldn't write everything down.

---

[23] Oupa = Afrikaans word for grandfather, "Nanna" was reference to his grandmother and "vetplantjie" is the Afrikaans word for little succulent plants.
[24] Pseudonyms for participants

Abby: Yes, ma'am, I feel that way too.

Desiree: I blocked with some of them.

R: Okay.

Abby: Like the moment the song goes … I had this picture in my head of the person and I have everything, but I don't know how to exactly put it on paper…

Dexter, Deanna, Daisy, Desiree (all respond): Yes

R: Just quick words. You struggle with expressing the words only?

Dexter, Deanna, Daisy, Desiree (all respond): Yes

Abby: I can work in here (referring to the Drama class), I can like act it out, but I can't … (pulls up shoulders)

Daisy: I can literally see the character walking in front of me, I listen to the music, and I like have … and then I just … (searching for words)

Dexter: Ja, it's just … (searching for words)

Charlie: It's amazing what you mind can unlock when you listen to the music, cause I never thought I would think of any of these characters.

What is evident from this conversation is that the learners understood the topic, they enjoyed the musical inspiration and stimulation, however, they struggled with the expression of thought. This could be due to a lack in vocabulary, but it could also be because of the character sketches had to be written in only 90 seconds (see 4.6.4).

The experience of touch and smell also delivered interesting results. The class was once again excited and enjoyed working with the stimuli. During these sessions I also played soft background music (light classical music) and it seems that the musical effects were noticed.

R: Was it easier for you to write something here in class? (Desiree does not reply) Let's say I asked you to write something in the English class, would you be able to do it?

Desiree: With everything we had here?

R: Like the music and the smells and other items?

(Desiree nods)

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R: Do you usually have those in the English creative writing lessons?

Desiree: No.

R: No. Would you be able to write like we wrote here, without the music and ….

(Desiree interrupts)

Desiree: Definitely not.

R: Okay, so no?

Desiree: I like the music and everything, but it's difficult to like … go … like, write abstract stuff…

From another conversation about why the learner found it easier to write in this class than in the English class, the same results crystallised:

R: Why do you think that is?

Violet: It's too quiet, it's … it's dead … I like the music. It's not like I can remember what I listened to, or even if I liked it, but it's there… and it helps me.

The music had a noticeable effect in the journals as well. One of the boys drew music notes and even 'wrote' a musical scale on one of his journal pages. When I asked him why he did this, he stated that he did this was while he was thinking about something to write. In the discussion of the theme; A Space to Create (4.6.6) I discussed the journal in detail, but what was evident was that the engagement with the journal demonstrated increased enthusiasm. At the beginning stages of the writing process the participants would constantly ask if they were allowed to use colour in their journals. I encouraged the learners to use all colours in their journals, except for yellow and I explained to the learners that I struggle to see yellow pen at night. They laughed at this and none of the students used a fine yellow pen in their journals – this just highlighted the respect I had gained from my students (interrelated to sub-theme in 4.6.1). Due to the increased engagement and enjoyment the learners experienced in these classes, they also seemed to cooperate (see 4.6.5) with ease and out of free will. These books became conversation pieces. The learners would explain why they used certain colours for certain characters and why they wrote certain words in other colours and so forth. It became a free space

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(see 4.6.6) where learners felt they could experiment and have fun – exactly what we expect learners to do when they are being creative.

When asked what they enjoyed, the learners stated that the topics were easier than those which the English teachers gave them. What is interesting about this is that the subject matter of Lesson 2, dealt with travelling and the assignment the teacher gave the learners in IGCSE English was also focused on exotic places and journeys.

> *Dexter: Please ma'am. Give these topics to the English teachers.*
>
> *R: Why? Because they are easier?*
>
> *Dexter: No. I just enjoy these topics more.*
>
> *Daisy: Ma'am, why aren't you an English teacher?*
>
> *R: I am qualified to teach English, Daisy.*
>
> *Daisy: Right. We'll have English here.*

I do not think that the topic in this case is the issue. What I have observed in the Investigative stage (4.3.1) was the lack of activation of prior knowledge and no real interaction with the topics. Due to this, the topics seem unfamiliar to the learners, even though these learners know a lot about travelling and exotic landscapes. The fact that some of the learners were detached from the task and that they saw the sole purpose of the task as an assessment task, meant that most of them weren't personally involved with the writing and learning activity. Therefore, the learners were not personally invested in the creative task and learning and creative development could not really occur. The fact that these lessons provoked thought and pushed learners to use their creativity, while using foreign objects (which are actually very familiar, but not in a classroom environment), made the lessons intriguing and fun. I believe that the moment learners are having fun, they become invested in their learning and consequently, their marks will improve.

The investment in the task and in their own learning process was also evident in the fact that the learners met the due dates and handed in all of the assessment tasks (also see 4.6.5). The fact that the learners were required to engage with each other and their peers' work enhanced the enthusiasm the learners demonstrated towards the tasks. The participants actively shared opinions and made suggestions which

they believed could improve the story. I believe by allowing the participants to share their work, but also their ideas and opinions made the tasks more meaningful – they were actively engaged with the learning content, but also in the learning and teaching process. The tasks also had added purpose, for the learners knew that they would engage with each other's work and that the tasks would not merely end up filed in a portfolio. Because of the added meaning and purpose through engagement, the enthusiasm of the learners also increased. However, each time assessment was mentioned the spirit in the classroom dampened – this brings us to the next theme up for discussion.

4.6.4   Assessment versus Engagement and its effects on Enthusiasm

As mentioned previously, the various themes sometimes overlap: they are never isolated entities. This can clearly be seen in this theme. From the themes above I learnt that increased engagement with the topic by means of stimulation and other activities eased the creative writing process and that there was noticeable enthusiasm about creative writing and the activities. But as I mentioned, the moment I informed the learners that I would assess the tasks, the focus shifted from 'having fun and creating something authentic' to "*is this okay ma'am*" and "*do you think I will get good marks if I do this, ma'am?*" (inter-related to the sub-theme of pleasing the teacher).

When the learners had to assess each other's work, the increased task-driven nature (see 4.6.2) of the academically strong learners kicked in and incidentally the participants placed themselves in groups where they thought they would get the best results, rather than pairing themselves with people with different strengths than their own. The result was, as seen in the parody activity (4.5.8, figure 10), that the group of boys (Nico, Arnold, Eric and Dexter), who were very focussed on achieving good marks, in fact only achieved moderately with marks in the 70s. Whilst the group of girls (Deanna, Desiree and Violet) who chose to identify specific roles for each other and focussed on their strengths maintained or increased their marks. The result here is that the group who focussed on the assessment in effect lost some of the joy of the task and process of writing.

>   *R: So, did you enjoy the task?*

Nico: Not really ma'am.

R: Why?

Nico: We just had a lot of conflict in the group.

Eric: Ja, what do they always say… don't mix business with pleasure.

R: Okay, you'll have to explain this to me.

Nico: We just disagreed a lot and some of us had specific ideas about language rules and grammar, while others didn't. So what happened was that I tried to explain why a sentence doesn't work and then, like… like Arnold would just refuse to change it, 'cause he feels that he wrote it right.

Eric: But you were also like very … like … strict. I don't think we worked well, because everybody kinda wanted to be the leader.

R: Do you think it's because you were friends?

Eric: Not really. I just think we're all smart and wanted to prove it to each other.

Nico: Not Dexter so much…

(The boys share a look)

R: Right, tell me what each person did during the peer assessment of the creative writing.

Nico: I was supposed to look at spelling and vocab.

Eric: I had to look at sentence construction and Arnold had to look at like the logical flow of the story.

Nico: And Dexter … (starts laughing) what did Dexter do?

Eric: (Also laughing) I think he was supposed to look at the whole story and if it worked for little kids.

R: Do you think everybody did their job?

Nico: I think everybody did everybody else's job, except their own.

R: Okay. So if you could do it differently, what would you do.

Nico: No offense bro… (looks at Eric) I would probably be in a different group.

Eric: Me too. I think we were all good at the same thing.

The above conversation shows how this specific group struggled with the role division of the evaluation process, but also that they experienced power struggles in their group. I am not sure if this is a male dominance power struggle or if it was solely based on stress brought on through the fear of assessment (see 4.6.2). The other groups had a very different experience from the one above, as can be seen from the following.

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R: Ladies, how was the assessment part of the activity?

Deanna: I can't believe that I actually enjoyed assessing everybody's work.

Violet: You were a real teacher. Red pen and everything.

Desiree: She was really in character, ma'am. (laughs)

R: Was she very strict?

Desiree: No, she was cool. We laughed a lot.

Violet: We worked hard and played hard, ma'am!

Another group:

R: So how did you experience the assessment part of the activity?

Daisy: I liked it. I never thought Rose knew so many grammar rules.

Rose: Huh-uh. Google knows rules! (laughs)

R: So, you liked the activity.

Abby: Like is a strong word ma'am, but I wouldn't say that it was bad. It was hard, because we didn't always know if we were right, but it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be.

R: Did everybody have a specific job in your group?

Rose: Yes. I had to look at grammar, spelling and vocab.

Daisy: I looked at focus group and logical flow.

Abby: I checked if the ideas came through clearly and if there was enough … like 'magic' and 'drama' in the story.

R: Did you help each other or did everybody just do her job?

Daisy: No, we kinda helped each other if like someone wasn't sure, but otherwise, we kinda stuck to what we had to do.

Rose: We worked in a circle and passed the writing around. So when I was busy with Abby's grammar, she would look at Daisy's creativity and Daisy would look at my logical flow… it worked well.

R: Do you feel the fact that you were lying on the carpet helped?

Abby: Yeah, it didn't feel like we were marking each other's work and when I remembered something I wanted to tell them from break, I would.

R: So you liked choosing where you wanted to work.

Daisy: I sit the whole day, so it was nice to change the scenery a bit.

It seems from these conversations that peer assessment and engagement with assessment activities could lead to increased engagement and possible enjoyment. By being active role players in the evaluation process it seemed that the learners

took responsibility for their own learning, but also for the learning of their peers. Another observation was that during this evaluation phase the learners used the dictionaries in the classroom actively. They used their cell phones to 'Google' words and they made suggestions on how a sentence or paragraph could improve. In Daisy's journal, I could see how she jotted down little rules of direct and indirect speech using the specific situation she was in as an example to explain these structural rules.

Daisy's creative writing journal was no longer only a creative space, but also a space in which she wrote language rules (see 4.6.6), this increased engagement with the assessment process and demonstrated to the learners that assessment is in fact a learning and teaching process. This manner of engagement of participants in the complete process of creative writing also adds purpose and meaning to the tasks, because once again, these writings are not merely filed, but become active learning and teaching tools. I observed that all the learners were engaged with the task, not necessarily enjoying it in all cases, but this was a step in the right direction. This brings us to the theme of co-operation in the classroom and with tasks.

4.6.5   Co-operation

All teachers want the learners in their class to co-operate and work with enthusiasm and rigour. This is a sweeping statement that I am prepared to make, however, this is not always the case in classrooms. In my opinion this is due to the practice and methodology of the teacher, but also the tasks set by teachers or examining bodies.

This theme became more prominent as the creative writing programme progressed. The fact that the learners chose Drama at the beginning of the year indicates a certain amount of interest in the subject and when humans are interested in something, we usually tend to invest some time and energy into these interests. However, from my observations in the investigation phase of the research, I gathered that the interest of most learners does not lie in creative writing and that most of them do not find it particularly enjoyable (see 4.3.1). I knew that the success of the creative writing programme, but also the research would lie in the co-operation of the participants.

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During Stage 1 (4.5.2) and Stage 2 (4.5.3) the participants were bombarded with stimuli and engaging activities. These activities were enjoyable and different to what the learners had experienced in their English classes. Consequently, when the learners received homework as part of Stage 3 (4.5.4), an "incubation" phase (Flower & Hayes, 1981), the learners received the homework task remarkably well and I would view this as a triumph for any teacher, for no learner is really excited about homework. All teachers encounter difficulty with specific learners and the submission of tasks. One could argue that this group in particular is dedicated to the subject and chose it out of free will, and consequently they would hand in the tasks. However, during my teaching experience I have had top academic students who have neglected to hand in tasks. I would like to believe that the tasks were submitted in a timely fashion because the learners enjoyed the tasks and because they understood the methodology the teacher chose.

> R: I am so proud of you guys. Thank you for handing in the tasks! I did not have to beg anyone!

> (The class laughs along with the teacher)

> Donald: It doesn't feel like work ma'am.

> Daisy: I know!

> Abby: So what are we doing next ma'am?

None of the learners could explain why they thought everybody submitted the tasks in a timely fashion and consequently, this phenomenon is left to the researcher to investigate further. I will return to this finding in chapter five. However, the last comment made by Abby, is the most exciting for any teacher. This learner is looking forward to the next activity. This does not only indicate enthusiasm, but also co-operation. Subsequently, increased engagement and enthusiasm (4.6.3) also leads to enhanced co-operation of learners.

The journals of the learners also indicate increased co-operation. The learners knew that they were not receiving marks for how the journals looked, but for the content of the written tasks. The fact that some of the participants decorated the journals and invested time and energy into the journals indicate increased engagement and co-

operation which was not driven by the marks they would receive, but solely because they wanted to do it (see 4.6.6).

Another phenomenon which indicated increased co-operation was the eagerness with which the learners shared their experiences, be it in a private conversation or in a class discussion. From my observation in the Investigative stage of the research (see 4.3.1) the learners did not want to share their opinions. I had to coax responses from these learners in order to establish what their attitude was towards creative writing. This could be because the learners did not know me personally or that they were scared of the response their teacher (Mrs A) if she discovered that they did not like or enjoyed the creative writing tasks they received.

However, when the learners, in my class were placed in groups and asked to play with genre and physically interact with the learning content, excitement (and noise levels) started to rise. Because of the increased enthusiasm, the co-operation of the learners also increased. They demonstrated commitment to the tasks and encouraged each other to think "out of the box". The co-operation of the learners is also evident in the evaluation phase of the creative writing programme (see 4.6.2, 4.6.3 and 4.6.4) when they were actively learning from and teaching each other. I also noted that as the participant's confidence in their own abilities grew (see 4.6.1) they were more likely to co-operate in assessment activities. However, one of the most noticeable factors that played a role in the co-operation of the learners was the fact that the classroom space allowed for physical movement and had a more relaxed atmosphere in which the learners could communicate and interact with each other and the teacher.

4.6.6   A Space to Create

The creative writing journals served as a multi-faceted tool to evaluate the creative process of each learner. I felt that the journal provided the learners with a space where they could write down their personal thoughts about activities and also in some cases their personal feelings. The learners were aware that I was going to read this book and I felt that everything that the participants wrote in this book was intended for me to see. Some of the journals became very personal objects where some of the learners wrote personal poems and insights, added work from other

subjects, pictures of their favourite movie stars and food, whilst for others the journal was only a space which they used for the creative drama writing tasks. The journals with all of the personal touches could indicate an increased sense of trust in me (also see 4.6.1), the teacher, as they knew I would read and look at it. It could also be that they only decorated the book because they wanted to please the teacher (sub-theme), but I would like to believe that it was not as superficial as that. The girls (see 4.6.7) in particular spent a lot of time on the decoration of their journals. When I asked them why and when they did this, one of the ladies replied "*I decorate my book when I'm watching T.V. 'cause I have to keep my hands busy and I like it when things are pretty*". Subsequently, for this visual, tactile and physical learner, the journal became an object into which she could invest energy and see a product. Another learner, who wrote quotes from films as well as from discussion in class in her journal, stated:

> *"Since we received the journal and you said we can use it for anything, I just hear these things that I want to remember and then, I just started to write them down in my journal. Sometimes, I just page through the book and then I read a quote and I can remember the whole scene from the movie or of what happened in the class".*

The increased engagement with the content of the creative writing lessons extended to their lives outside the classroom and this transforms writing in the classroom into something that they could do on a daily basis, which would in turn become something that they feel they have to do – as Furner aptly states: "create a need to write" (1973:406)

I mentioned the obsession the learners had with "*may we use any colour pen, ma'am*" in 4.6.3. Eventually they stopped asking this question, but at the beginning they were very excited because they were permitted to use colour. I asked the learners if they were allowed to use colour in their other subjects' workbooks and the learners said that the teachers allowed them to underline with colour, but they were not allowed to write in colour. Engelbrecht (2003) states that from "psychological reactions to learned cultural interpretations, human reaction and relationship to colour is riddle with complexities. The variety of nuances, however, does not dilute the amazing power of colour on humans and its ability to enhance our experience of learning" (2003: 2). During the beginning stages of a child's education, they are allowed to use all colours in their workbooks. However, once they start in the

Intermediate phase in education, we tend to prescribe blue and black as the dominant colours they should use. However, when these learners highlight in their textbooks, they use different colours in order to aid the learning process. By depriving colour from the workbooks and classroom spaces, the learners' work becomes dull and does not stimulate any engagement with the learning process. By allowing learners to use the journal as they like and to use any colour pen or medium to work with, they became increasingly engaged in the writing process. A difference between the two genders became apparent. More on this in 4.6.7.

The classroom was also very lively and colourful. This added to the stimulation of the learners. In the space they encountered stimulus which they could touch, feel, see and smell. The engagement with the learning content was piqued and as a result the writing became layered and more detailed, for the learners used the experiences and memories in the writing activities. Apart from the available stimulation in the class, the space was also not organised in terms of desks in rows. The desks were placed in group formation and in the corners of the classroom I had placed pillows and beanbags on the floor on which the learners could sit or lie. Each of the corners was decorated in a different manner. I had a blue, red, yellow and green corner – this was owing to the colours of the pillows. Interestingly enough, the learners did not want to sit in one specific corner every time: "*We were yellow last time, would you guys go to yellow, then we can be red?*". I am not sure why the learners did this but I think it was part of experiencing something new every time. During individual work, most of the boys rushed to 'dibs' the pillows, whilst the girls preferred to work at the desks. During group work, most of the groups chose to work in the corners of the classroom. In one particular case (the evaluation phase) we had five groups in the class, the one group preferred to take a pillow from each group, move the desks and lie on the floor in the middle of the class, instead of working at the desks. When I asked why they chose to do this, the group responded that they sat the whole day and that they could interact more easily this way. They also felt that they were not working if they were lying on pillows.

I do not feel that the work conducted on the pillows was of a lower standard, I also do not feel that the class was disorganised or undisciplined. In fact, they were very well behaved and completed all of the tasks that were set for the lessons. However, this class was quite small and I was privileged enough to be able to organise the

space in this manner. I am not sure how this approach would work in a bigger class and it would be interesting to see if the learners in a big class behave in the same manner. Therefore, I feel that if the classroom space is a colourful and relaxed environment, where learners can find visual and sensory stimuli and feel free to move around that greater creativity could take place. On the topic of colour, the differences between pink and blue were apparent during the research and the class interactions, this brings us to the theme of gender differences.

4.6.7   Gender Differences

The battle of the sexes is an age-old phenomenon which we still encounter on a daily basis. The fact that the research took place in a co-educational school opened my eyes to the different approaches the sexes take when it comes to learning or organisation in a classroom environment.

The first thing I observed was that the genders preferred to work in single sex groups. The learners would only mix if they were explicitly told to do so. I asked a girl and a boy why they did this:

> R: So, guys. Tell me why the boys only work with each other and vice versa.
>
> Dexter: I don't know, ma'am. It's just easier and I just feel that I can be myself. (Nico nods). Also the girls are sometimes so serious and bossy.
>
> Nico: I would work with some of them, but … they just think differently and what we think is funny, they think is gross (squeals mockingly).
>
> R: For example?
>
> Nico: Uhm… like in Harry Potter, when Harry sticks his wand in the trolls nose and finds troll boogies (both boys laugh)
>
> Dexter: The girls see that as disgusting, while we think it's funny.
>
> R: I see what you mean.
>
> (The boys laugh)

The female opinion on this topic:

> R: Rose, why do you think the girls only want to work with each other?
>
> Rose: Some of the boys are silly ma'am. They make stupid comments and like they don't always take the work seriously and they constantly have to play with something and move around and are noisy. I'll work with some of them, but not like with all of them.

> *R: Who would you work with?*
>
> *Rose: Nico and Eric. They take the work seriously, but then they always want to work with Arnold and Dexter and Arnold is like so bossy and Dexter is just… he's hyperactive ma'am. Can't sit still for one moment… drives me crazy.*

At this age, what I can gather is that the girls do not find the male sense of humour funny, whilst the boys experience the girls as too serious. There is also an element of impressing each other. Dexter states that he does not feel that he can be himself and Nico confirms this. They mention that the girls are 'bossy', but Rose also states this of a boy. This is more about personalities than gender. However, none of the parties could give me a clear explanation of why they prefer to work this way. I think it is just that they are still getting to know and understand the other gender.

In the assessment theme (see 4.6.2) the boys chose their evaluation and peer assessment groups based on performance. The girls chose to work with their friends despite the fact that one learner in particular struggled a bit with writing. In these groups and their interactions with each other, the boys were competitive and tried to establish who the leader was going to be in the group, whilst the girls were more concerned with completing the task and fulfilling their individual roles. One should just bear in mind that these learners are 14 – 15 years old and the class is female dominated. It could be that the boys are trying to establish their roles in the class, but also to prove that even if they choose to take Drama, it does not necessarily mean that they are less male or effeminate.

Another case where the difference between female and male was apparent was in the creative writing journals. The girls used glitter pens, coloured paper and pens, pictures and stickers to decorate the books, whilst the boys did not invest as much time and energy into the decoration of the book. They did cut out pictures, but were not concerned with making a little frame around a picture. The girls used different colours for different characters and genres of the stories (see 4.5.2, lesson 1, table 1), but the boys did not use as many different colours. When I questioned this phenomenon the response was that their parents do not want to buy coloured pens, because they lose them. But even when the girls offered coloured pens to the boys, they would only take one different colour and use it. I chose to view this, as the boys in my class were very functional and not decorative. When I asked the some of the boys why they did not do extra work or writing in their journals they expressed that

they do not like writing so much and that they would prefer rather just to act. The boys did, however, enjoy the Facebook character profile very much and they did do all of the work in the journals – the only difference was that they did not invest as much energy into the books as the girls did.

The one thing that I wanted to accomplish with this programme was to inspire the learners to write and to fall in love with the process of being creative. The journal helped the learner to witness their own creative process and it placed "emphasis on the inventive power of the writer, who is able to explore ideas, to develop, act on, test and regenerate his/her own goals; we are putting an important part of creativity where it belongs – in the hands of the working, thinking writer" (Flower & Hayes, 1981: 386).

Therefore, the themes which crystallised from cycle 1 of the Action Research was the issue of Confidence and Trust (4.6.1), the Issue of Assessment (4.6.2), Engagement and Enthusiasm (4.6.3), the Effect of Assessment on Engagement (4.6.4) and how it effects Enthusiasm, Co-operation (4.6.5) of the learners, a Space to Create (4.6.6) and finally the Gender Differences (4.6.7). These themes are all inter-related and are all concerned with the development of creative writing skills and finding creativity and stimulation in the world around us, but most of all to highlight the needs learners have in the classroom and what would help them in the creative writing process.

4.7 CONCLUDING EVALUATIVE THOUGHTS OF CYCLE 1

The previous subheadings (4.6.1 – 4.6.7) refer to the phases of Action Research Cycle 1 as set out in figure 5 (3.2.4). This cycle of the creative writing programme enabled me to determine and monitor my progress while working through the AR phases as precisely as possible. Therefore, to report the findings before moving on to cycle 2 is consistent with the final order on figure 5. By reporting the results, I am tying up the threads of the research conducted so far, and consequently paving the way for the second cycle to commence, whilst considering all of the facts highlighted in the first cycle. Before I am going to report on the findings of cycle one, I would like to briefly touch on the external incidents (school attendance, meetings and lesson times) which influenced the programme up to this point.

Some of the learners, as well as the researcher, fell ill with swine flu and the creative writing programme was postponed for a week, whilst everybody recovered. This is why the writing programme did not stretch over ten weeks as was proposed in Chapter 1. Overall the attendance of learners at the School is very good and no child was absent unnecessarily. The test series falls in the third term and this means that all lessons are shortened to accommodate the hour dedicated to writing the tests. Two afternoons, which I had made appointments with learners for unstructured interviews had to be cancelled, owing to an unexpected emergency parent meeting. The participants were informed and the meetings were cancelled in a timely manner.

One of the aspects that makes Action Research such a rewarding methodology is that the researcher is able to change her methodology to suit the situation. I used my own personal journal to reflect on my practice in order to establish what had worked and where I would have to adapt my practice.

During the investigative stages of the research, I realised that I would not be able to jump into the proverbial deep-end and bombard the participants with drama techniques which they could integrate into their creative writing, when these learners were not even positive about creative writing as a whole (4.3.1). I realised, that the first stage of writing would be to get the learners to actually write. The main purpose of the first cycle was to engage the learners and to create a need to write by means of sensory stimuli as well as drama techniques (4.5.2 and 4.5.3). I did, however, not integrate enough drama techniques in this first cycle and this meant that I was not completely sure as to how the learners would receive and respond to these types of activities.

After Stage 2 (4.5.3), we embarked on *Stage 3, The Brainstorming Stage* (4.5.4), where the learners started to devise their own story. The topic was similar to the travelling topic the English teacher had used, but the learners did not comment on this. I am not sure if they could see that I did this intentionally or if they would use the inspiration they received in this class and apply it to their other essay. (In hindsight I should have delved into this a bit deeper.

The other factor was that during this term, I focused so much on getting the learners to write and enjoy the process, that I did not cover as much drama theory as I would have liked to have done. The idea was to integrate the theory with the drama

activities, like I tried to do with Stanislavski's Method Acting technique in lesson 5 (see table 4). The scope of the activities introduced in cycle 1were limited by time constraints and also getting the learners to be more positive about creative writing. One of the challenges for cycle 2 would be to maintain the positive learning environment and atmosphere which had been created in during the first phase of the research and to integrate the theoretical drama content with the creative writing lessons and activities, in order to ensure that the learners are completely prepared for the examination at the end of the fourth term.

Another issue I discovered was that I had focused a great deal on individual writing in the first cycle, whilst I should in actual fact have been preparing the learners to create an own devised piece, in a group which would be used as the performance piece of the group during the IGCSE drama examinations. I do not think that it was necessarily bad practice to have the learners working individually, but for the end product, I should probably have focussed more on collaborative group work, than on the role of the individual. However, during this individual writing process, the learners were given the opportunity to discover their strengths and to identify their weaknesses. I believe that this awareness of their own skills and creative processes would make them better writers.

With regards to group work, I should have played a bigger role in the grouping of the learners. I should have encouraged the two genders to interact more and I should have grouped specific individuals with each other, in order to show the learners that proper role division and organisation would assist any combination of people (see 4.6.2) to produce a good and authentic piece of writing.

The successes of this cycle were the development of a positive support system in the class (4.6.6) and the learners discovered how to give and accept criticism gracefully. The learners also discovered that if they practised their writing, they would get better at it and that they could recall sensory experiences and incorporate those into other activities and learning areas (4.6.1 – 4.6.3). In the evaluation phase of writing, the learners discovered that they have strengths in certain areas and that these strengths can not only empower them, but also their peers (4.6.4). The participants were actively learning from and teaching each other – they were compelled to use dictionaries outside a language classroom and enjoyed the

process of peer assessment. This form of 'assessment for learning' was one of the triumphs in this cycle of the writing programme. Learners were actively involved in their knowledge acquisition. They discovered their creativity and embarked on a journey of development and they became mindful of their own weaknesses and strengths. This will hopefully help the participants develop greater confidence in the English Language learning area, but also in themselves.

This part of the AR model enabled me to reflect on my own practice, by means of referring to my personal research journal, and to identify issues that I would like to change, develop and/or keep during the next phase of the writing programme.

4.8   IMPLEMENTING THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME: CYCLE 2

For cycle 2, I used the same creative writing programme, Stage 1 – Stage 7 (4.5.1.1 – 4.5.1.7) and the same strategies, e.g., participant observation, classroom reflections and discussions, and interpreting the creative writing journal in order to gather qualitative data. At this stage in the research study the intention was to refine and develop the writing programme in order to assist learners in creating an own devised performance piece.

These creative writing tasks had to support the theoretical content the learners had to study for this term in Drama, as well as prepare them for the IGCSE examinations that they would be sitting in approximately 10 months. Therefore, I decided to use the theatre era Commedia dell' Arte (2.3.4.4) as the vehicle to teach theatre history, but also to serve as the topic for their own devised piece. Jerzy Grotowski's performance (2.3.4.2) principles would also be incorporated to assist with improvisation and object manipulation activities for performance and creative writing tasks. By taking this course of action, the teacher can ensure that the learners will have the theoretical underpinning necessary for the IGCSE examinations, the researcher will be able to use these same drama practices and techniques to stimulate the creative writing process, and consequently the learners will be able to create, submit and perform their own devised piece for their final IGCSE examination.

I created a detailed term plan which developed chronologically during the term. As schools are changing environments, I could not stay exactly within the prescribed lines of the planning, however, I did not stray that far from it either.

4.8.1   The Term Plan for Cycle 2 (Term 4)

This term plan focusses on how the content was covered during the 10 weeks of teaching time in the fourth term. I have discussed the different curricula and their requirements for the Drama and English FL learning areas in chapter 2, section 2.3.3 and 4.5.5. A discussion of the specific lessons will follow after table 7.

Lesson	Content and Description	Drama Activities	Creative Writing Activities
Lesson 1: 45 min	*Historical background to theatre era. Show video clips: Television series, "Modern Family" & "Charlie Chaplin's Physical Theatre" *Discussion of High and Low Comedy.	Divide into groups of 3 and create a short interview based on "Coping with teenagers at home". The learners are the parents and you have to use elements of high and low comedy. Create a short skit, using no verbal language and only physical gestures and movements. Use the physical slapstick elements of Commedia's low comedy	Planning and making a short synopsis of the interview in the CW journal. *All activities in the CW journal.* Write a short paragraph of one of the most embarrassing moments in school. Slow motion description.
Lesson 2: 45 min	*Stereotypes *Commedia dell' Arte Characters part 1	Class discussion about stereotypes and how we see them in our society. Discuss the Commedia dell' Arte Italian stereotypes. Teaching the 'Master' characters of Commedia.	Take the 'Master' characters that we studied today and find a match for them in modern South African society. Use pictures and descriptive words from magazines to aid comparison.
Lesson 3: 45 min	*Commedia dell' Arte Characters part 2	Discuss the Commedia dell' Arte Italian stereotypes. Teaching the 'Servant' characters of Commedia.	Take the 'Servant' characters that we studied today and find a match for them in modern South African society. Use pictures and descriptive words from magazines to aid comparison.

Lesson 4: 90 min	*Improvisation	Hot Seats: In this activity learners had to use the knowledge they acquired of the characters and perform a modern life stereotype, based on the Commedia stereotypes, whilst the rest of the class asks the character questions.	Write about your experience in the hot seat. How did you feel while you were doing the activity? Was it easy or not? Do you think your performance was effective or not? Discuss your strengths and weaknesses and give yourself some advice for your next performance.
	*Commedia dell' Arte topics for performance	Discuss the stereotypical topics the acting troupes used for Commedia performances.	Make up 5 topics, adhering to the Commedia era, for a modern audience.
Lesson 5: 45 min	*Jerzy Grotowski *Laboratory Theatre *Show Video Clips: Whose Line is it Anyway? *Playing with objects	Introduce theatre practitioner, Grotowski and discuss his 'Poor Theatre' briefly. Discuss the elements of Laboratory theatre. Ask learners to select an item from the props chest on the table and to manipulate the object twice, like they saw on the video clips.	Draw a picture or paste an image of your selected props and explain how you manipulated each prop every time the teacher clapped her hands. Then write the stage directions for a movie scene in which the character is held captive and tries to pass the time.
Lesson 6: 45 min	Introduce the "Own Devised Piece" as stipulated by the IGCSE Drama syllabus. Discuss the requirements and allow learners to choose their groups.	Hand out the "Commedia dell' Arte task" the learners would use to devise their own scene. Groups draw a phrase from the hat which should be included in either the dialogue or the title of their scene. Groups select the setting from the hat. Groups select characters from the provided list.	Each member in the group writes THEIR individual idea for the story, the title as well as how they would include the phrase in their story, in their journal. Each member of the group select one or two characters which they would like to perform. Brainstorming session in the group.
Lesson 7: 45 min	Improvisation of scenario.	Groups work separately and improvise their story. Physically acting out their scenes.	Writing and re-writing their scenarios and story in their creative writing journal.
Lesson 8: 90 min	Improvisation of scenario. Include props, décor and costumes.	Groups work separately and improvise their story. Physically acting out their scenes, whilst using props, costumes and décor.	Writing and re-writing their scenarios and story in their creative writing journal.

	Last 20 minutes: Hot Seats for characters	Group sit in front of the class and other groups ask the characters questions. Integrating / ignoring comments about characters by other groups.	
Lesson 9: 45 min	Script writing. **Prepare for performance on Friday.**	Re-conceptualize certain ideas in story, if needed. **Prepare for performance on Friday.**	Start with script writing. May use phones, cameras or video cameras to record their stories and to help with transcribing their script.
Lesson 10: 45 min	*Prep learners for examination *Reflection about practical examination *Reflection about Creative Writing	Learners have to study: Stanislavski's Acting techniques Grotowski's Poor Theatre and Laboratory Theatre Commedia dell' Arte Theatre Genre Class Discussion and final class interview.	Hand in creative writing journals. (Teacher must give the journals back to the learners to study from for the examinations.)

Table 7: Term planning for lessons for term 4

4.8.2   Discussion of drama and creative writing activities in the lessons.

A detailed discussion of the drama lessons will follow. Some of the tasks and activities have been included and a detailed discussion of the findings will be available in 4.9.

Lesson 1:
During this lesson the learners were introduced to the historical theatre era, Commedia dell' Arte (2.3.4.4). The learners were not eager to start with the theoretical component for they thought that we would continue with the creative writing activities. The terms of High and Low comedy were introduced to the class by means of the video clips. After the learners were familiar with the content and saw physical examples of these two terms in modern television and film, they had to create a short improvisation in which they had to conduct an interview. Two of the learners were the parents who were interviewed, by another learner, about coping with teenagers at home. The learners are familiar with this topic and chuckled when they heard what they had to do. For the creative writing component of the lesson,

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the learners had to plan the interview and write a short synopsis of what would occur during the interview in their journals. High comedy focusses on verbal wit, puns, satire and parody. All of these elements had to be incorporated in their interviews. The second drama activity, which served as inspiration for creative writing was that the learners had to act out a physical 'embarrassing' moment. They were not allowed to use words or sounds, only facial gestures and body language. They then had to compose a paragraph in their creative writing journal which described this 'embarrassing' moment in slow motion.

Lesson 2 & 3:
These lessons were firmly set on acquiring the knowledge of the Commedia dell' Arte Italian stereotypical characters. Discussing stereotypes in terms of modern society at the beginning of lesson 2, helped the learners to see the familiarity of the content. By incorporating the creative writing activities in the journal, the newly acquired knowledge is further embedded, but also becomes even more familiar to the participants. This pre-writing activity will form an essential part of their final composition, for the practical task required learners to use stereotypes, who have their roots in the Commedia dell' Arte's Italian stereotypes.

Lesson 4:
The hot seat activity is a very effective activity for actors and actresses alike. During this activity the learner has to transform into the character (this is possible by using Stanislavski's prescribed techniques). For performance, this allows the actor to start thinking like the character and to respond accordingly. The actor can now say and do things that are unique to the character and not to the person who is performing the character. The journal activity takes on the form of a diary entry, for the learner has to write about his/her personal experience. This becomes a reflective tool for actors, as they can reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for their next performance. For the creative writer this could be a wonderful activity, because the writer can become more familiar with his/her characters and understand his/her characters, by physically placing himself/herself in these character's shoes. By incorporating this activity with the theoretical content, the learners are forced to remember certain characteristics of the Commedia characters and to transform that knowledge and adapt it for a modern audience. By

doing this, the learning content is internalized and the learning experience becomes fun, unpredictable and interesting.

Lesson 5:

This was once again a lesson based on the theoretical practices of theatre practitioner, Jerzy Grotowski (see 2.3.4.2). The learners practiced the term 'Theatre Laboratory' by manipulating a given prop / object in numerous ways. This drama activity is important because it ensures that the learners understand how this theory is applied in practice. Similarly, this technique formed part of the creative writing process, by showing learners that all does not have to be as it seems. They could incorporate an element of surprise in their writing, by taking an object the reader is familiar with and transforming that object. This drama activity was transformed by using the technique to write the directions to a movie scene. The character is held captive in a room and tries to pass the time by doing this particular activity. The learner is required to create context as well as entertainment for the reader by using this technique.

Lesson 6:

The learners are introduced to the syllabus of the "own devised piece". Each learner received a hard copy of the task which stipulated what they had to do. A copy of this task is available in Addendum G. During this lesson the organization of the groups and the pre-planning for the task was very important. The learners had to know exactly what they had to do, in order for the task to be successful. I decided to allow the participants to divide themselves into groups. The groups then had to draw a phrase from the hat and that phrase has to be incorporated into their task. After each group selected their phrase, the groups had to select a setting for their play in the same manner – drawing the setting from a hat. If the whole group was dissatisfied with the phrase and setting, they were allowed to swop it for another one in the hat. The task then sets out different characters from which the learners could choose.

This task focusses on using improvisation along with script writing in order to generate a text for performance. The learners were required to submit their scripts as well as perform their final piece for their formal practical assessment. The rubrics

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used for practical assessment as well as for the creative script writing are attached to the task in Addendum D2 and Addendum H.

Each learner had to write a short synopsis for their phrase. They had to decide on a topic as well as on the characters they were going to use. After each participant completed this task in their journals, they had to re-connect with their group and read their synopsis to the group. The group then had to decide which story or which elements from the stories they would like to use for their script. The characters and their individual plotlines and context were also included and discussed and the casting for the roles also had to be done during this lesson. The learners decided to continue to work on their pieces even when the bell had rung for break. They evaluated each other's work and generated a new storyline.

The homework for this lesson was to ensure that the groups had established their title, plotline and characters. If they had not completed a character biography in class, they had to complete it at home. They would start working on the improvisation and script-writing during the next lesson.

Lesson 7:

For this lesson the participants had to bring their journals to class and physically start to act out their 'one act play'. The activity of improvisation helps the learners to conceptualize their ideas further, but what makes improvisation so incredible, is that new ideas pop up during the performance. I introduced five rule of improvisation to the class and they had to adhere to and use these techniques whilst they were devising their performance. I handed out a small piece of paper which the learners pasted in their journals. I have attached a copy of these rules on the next page:

THE FIVE CARDINAL RULES TO IMPROV...

i.   <u>Point of focus</u> – Give focus to the important things happening on the stage. Don't steal the scene from what is important for the audience to see and hear.

2.   <u>ACCEPTING ONE ANOTHER</u> – DON'T REFUSE OFFERS. IF ANOTHER ACTOR IS MOVING THE ACTION INTO A SPECIFIC DIRECTION, MOVE WITH IT, WHILST KEEPING YOUR EYE ON THE FOCUS OF THE SCENE AND 'GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCE'.

3.   <u>Physicalize it</u> – Stop talking about what you are going to do and "just do it"™.

4.   <u>Listen and React</u> – Don't steal the scene by just talking over others. Work with your partners by listening to what they say and responding in an appropriate manner. Justify all of the offers that are made: If you are offering someone a cup of coffee – make sure that you have one and that it is important to the message of the scene.

5.   <u>Use side-coaching to direct others</u> – you know more about acting than you think you do. Direct each other in order to ensure that the scene stays on topic.
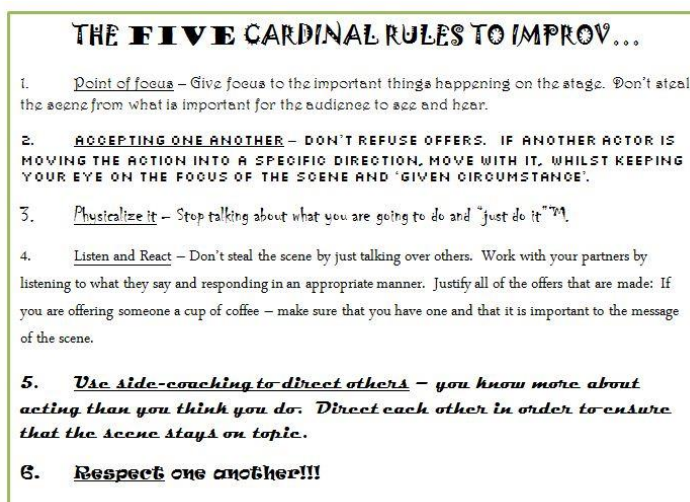
6.   <u>Respect</u> one another!!!

Figure 13: The five cardinal rules   to

improvisation.

Lesson 8:

The participants had a double session in which they had to continue with the improvisation of their scenes. During these lessons the learners were allowed to use props, décor and costumes to improvise their performance. At the end of the last lesson, the last 20 minutes, the groups would have a hot seat session. The whole groups would sit on chairs and the rest of the class were allowed to direct questions at the group. Afterwards the groups were allowed to make changes to characters and scenes, bearing in mind that they would start the writing process in their next lesson.

Lesson 9:

Learners were allowed to record their performance and then use the material to transcribe their scenes. No limitations were given as to how the learners had to write their scenes, the only thing that they had to do was to hand in their final script, along with their journals at the end of performance night.

Lesson 10:

This lesson focussed on the preparation for the theoretical examination, but also as a reflection period of the term's work. During this lesson we spoke about their experience of the improvisation activities as well as their creative writing journey.

4.9   ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF QUALITATIVE DATA: CYCLE 2

During cycle 1, the most prominent recurring themes were identified, see table 6 in section 4.6. During the second cycle of the creative writing programme, I was now aware of these themes and could observe these more closely. As these learners have been actively writing some of these cycle 1 themes became less prominent and other themes became more apparent. I will discuss the themes by referring to the data collected by means of participant observation, reflective classroom discussions and unstructured interviews as well as the creative writing journals of the learners.

As I mentioned in the discussion of the themes in Cycle 1 (4.6), one needs to consider that these themes are all inter-related and all concerned with the process of

finding creativity for the creative writing process. The recurring sub-themes or trends from cycle 1 are in a smaller font, whilst the new additions to the themes are in a bigger font.

Theme / Trend in Cycle 1	Definition of Theme / Trend in Cycle 1
4.9.1 Confidence and Self-esteem	• The trust learners have in the ability of their teacher to teach them skills and guide their learning process. • The development of trust in themselves to help their peers and instincts. • Respect for peers and teacher: facilitates in creating a feasible environment for learning and creative thoughts. • Confidence in their abilities to create a creative piece of writing which adheres to the formal structures as stipulated by examining bodies. • Pleasing the teacher. o Collaboration and group work. o The development of positive self-esteem through writing tasks.
4.9.2 The Importance of Assessment	• Task driven learners and teachers who are more concerned with the outcome than with the journey and process of learning and writing. • The fear of assessment which causes anxiety with some learners and inhibits them to write creatively. • Assessment as Motivation: Learners complete tasks and invest certain amounts of energy and commitment to tasks based on the weighting of the marks or assessment. • Purpose of task: Learners do not view tasks as important if the tasks are not used for formal assessment. • Pleasing the teacher. o Making theory fun. o Cross-curricular advantages. o Organization of the journals. o The subject of TOPIC. o The effects of Absenteeism.
4.9.3 Engagement, Enthusiasm and Commitment	o Negative attitude towards Creative Writing tasks. o Enthusiasm generated through the TOPIC of the task. o Enthusiasm generated through creative stimuli provided for writing. o Activation of prior-knowledge for enhanced engagement. o Engagement with the tasks brought on by physical interaction, stimuli, performance and multi-literacies. o Drama techniques encourage engagement with task. o Drama techniques create enthusiasm and encourage commitment to

	tasks.
	• Integrated theme from Cycle 1: *Co-operation*
	Individual and group work in class whilst busy with a creative writing task.
4.9.4 Stimulation through multi-literacies	○ Creative stimulation through Drama techniques.
	○ Creative stimulation through sensory stimulation.
	○ Cross-curricular links and its benefits.
	○ Development of problem-solving skills.
	○ Development of Creativity.
	• Integrated theme from Cycle 1: *A Space to Create.*
	The classroom environment.
	The creative writing journal.
	Relationships in the classroom.
	• *Integrated theme from Cycle 1: Gender Differences*
	How the girls and boys respond to the different tasks, be it drama or creative writing.
	Pleasing the teacher
	The creative writing journal.

Table 8: *Themes identified in Cycle 1 and new themes in Cycle 2*

I will now continue with the discussion of the themes as they occurred in cycle 2. The method of observation, proved to be very useful in this cycle and the findings were confirmed with the data gathered from the reflective discussions and the journals of the learners.

4.9.1   Confidence and Self-esteem

During cycle 1 a lack of confidence of the participants in their own abilities was identifiable. The fact that the learners did not have confidence in their writing abilities influence their initial attitude towards tasks (see 4.9.2 and 4.9.3 for more on negative attitude). However, as the learners came back after the holidays I could see that their approach and attitude towards tasks were different. During lesson 1, the learners were introduced to the historical theatre era, Commedia dell' Arte (2.3.4.4), they were disappointed that we were going to do theory and one of the learners commented that they thought that we would be writing again. What I gather from this was that their increased confidence in writing, but also the joy that they associated with the writing and writing activities stimulated enthusiasm (see 4.9.3) which they lack when they have to do theory.

However, when the learners were informed that they would have to produce their own devised 'one act play', they were hesitant and the overall positive atmosphere in the class dulled. However, once I had discussed what the task entailed and that they were going to work in groups the learners looked more confident. From their experience of the writing stages in cycle 1, the learners not only trusted their peers, but also the collaborative process of group work. Another factor that I think helped to boost their confidence was that they interacted a great deal with the Commedia dell' Arte theatre genre during this writing cycle. Consequently, the learners had enough pre-knowledge to be able to generate an authentic text (see 2.3.4.4). It is evident that the participants' confidence in their abilities is dependent on the nature of the topic, their pre-knowledge of the content and the topic as well as the collaborative process of group work.

During lesson 1, the learners were introduced to a new theatre era and had to integrate the different components of comedy into little performance skits. The first skit had to be planned within the interview format. What I found was that the physical performance and group work stimulated the creative writing process (inter-related to theme 4.9.4). The participants gained insight into the character creation process and also mentioned that each character thinks and reacts differently to the same situation.

> R: Did you enjoy the drama activities?
>
> (Whole class exclaims that they enjoyed it and start to chatter about what they did and saw.)
>
> R: Okay. Did you enjoy the writing you had to do for these activities?
>
> Dexter: I enjoyed the interview.
>
> Abby: Me too.
>
> R: Why?
>
> Abby: I think it's because we were like … chatting and everybody like had great ideas…
>
> Desiree: … and we all know "Modern Family"…
>
> Abby: Ja… so it was easy, cause you know like what you parents would say and then you just change it a bit.
>
> R: So you found it easy to plan the interview?
>
> Douglas: Yes.

> R: What would happen if you had to write the whole interview without being able to perform it?
>
> Douglas: I don't think it would work that well.
>
> R: Why?
>
> Nico: 'Cause people just say things that are funny and it's gonna be super hard to like think like three different characters at once. (The whole class agrees)

By utilizing pre-knowledge about their own personal lives and giving these participants a topic (see 4.9.2) with which they are personally familiar, the need to write can be created. By combining the learners and using collaboration (see 4.9.3), the participants gather information and develop skills to demonstrate, but also describe different characters. Hopefully this activity will have stimulated enough creativity and understanding that the learners' confidence and skills increases and that they are be able to write an interview with three different characters on their own in future.

The second task gave the participants the opportunity to write individually. They were not allowed to use any dialogue in their performances and had to use only their physicality and facial gestures to express thought and feeling.

> R: How was the second task? The one where you couldn't speak?
>
> Daisy: Hard.
>
> R: Why?
>
> Daisy: Like we had to think in slow motion and then there is like so much detail …
>
> Deanna: Ja, I struggled to write everything down.
>
> R: Why?
>
> Deanna: I couldn't find … the … I … I couldn't find the … all the words.
>
> Abby: But it was funny when you did it.
>
> Deanna: I don't think it's going to be as funny when you … like read it…
>
> R: But don't you ever laugh when you read a book?
>
> Rose: I do! But the writer describes everything so good.
>
> R: Do you think you'll be able to do that?
>
> (None of the learners reply)

The learners obviously had problems with expressing thought and feeling through descriptive language (also see 4.9.2). This could be due to a lack of vocabulary and because the learners do not always read books for personal enjoyment. It is, however, evident that this lack of expression as well as lack of language structure and use had a profound impact on the confidence learners had in their own writing. Even when drama techniques (see 4.9.4) were incorporated into the creative writing classroom and programme, some learners struggled immensely with the task and could not find creative stimulation from the drama techniques to inspire their creative writing.

> R: Desiree, tell us about your scene.
>
> Desiree: I really struggled with the scene ma'am. I like… I wrote what I did with the props and so and then I just like used myself as the character and pretended that I'm home alone and no one can see me, … and then just described what I do with the objects.
>
> R: That's a good start. Would you go home and re-write your scene?
>
> Desiree: Is that like homework, ma'am?
>
> R: No. Just if I told you, you could, would you?
>
> Desiree: Not really.
>
> R: So you didn't like the activity?
>
> Desiree: I liked it, but I just … I just don't always know what to write about.

From this I gather that some learners had developed such low self-esteem in their writing and personal creativity, that they struggled to produce a product. I am not sure if this is due to a lack of teaching creative writing skills and if this learner, simply just do not enjoy creative writing tasks and activities. During this research I had made a conscious decision to avoid the topic of talent. I did not want the participants or the readers to think that producing a good piece of writing was dependent on talent; however, it would be irresponsible of me to ignore talent completely. Desiree is not a linguistically strong learner and she does not possess the 'talent' to become an award winning author one day, however, that does not mean that she should not be able to produce a strong piece of creative writing. This research aims to assist learners in developing creativity and to find their inner voices so that they will be able to express their thoughts in a creative manner. The fact that some of them do not

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have the skills to write is worrisome, for the final examinations are all focussed on the clear expression of thought through writing (see 4.10). Consequently, in particular this learner will not realise her full potential in any subject, for she struggles to communicate; and this has a snowball effect. She has low self-esteem about her academic abilities and her lack of confidence in her writing will influence all of her marks negatively.

This focus on marks and how all subjects are connected leads us to the next recurring theme – the importance of assessment.

4.9.2   The Importance of Assessment

During the first cycle of this research, the learners were very concerned with the marks attached to the tasks. It seemed as if the importance of the tasks was measured by the total marks of the task and consequently, this would serve as the motivator for the task. During cycle 2, the question "*is this for marks, ma'am*" was asked less frequently. This could be because the learners knew, from their experience in cycle 1, that everything was for marks, but it could also be that their focus had shifted and that they were now doing the tasks because they wanted to succeed and learn, instead of achieve good marks.

One of the prominent sub-themes that crystallised during cycle 2, was the integration of drama theory into the creative writing programme. The response towards the theory was not surprising. The practical nature of the subject drama allows for fun and interaction, so the moment most learners hear that they are going to do theory, some of them assume that they will have to sit and listen to the teacher and follow in the notes. However, for this creative writing programme, the theory was an important role player, for the theory in itself would serve as inspiration and stimulation for creative writing tasks. Using the stereotypical nature of the Commedia dell' Arte characters and relating these characters to South African stereotypes made the theatre history more accessible (more on this in 4.10). The creative writing tasks assisted the learners in their understanding and studying of the theory of theatre history:

> Violet: *The character activity was like a summary for the Commedia characters. When I think of Ill'Dottore, I see the guy form "The Doctors" T.V. show and I remember what I wrote next to his photo.*
>
> Desiree: *I like Columbina the most. She's like Lindsay Lohan in Mean Girls.*
>
> R: *Why do you say that?*
>
> Desiree: *She's smart and nice, but not like super rich and … she teaches the … the … like… Capitiano? (upward inflection)*
>
> R: *Yes, I'll Capitano.*
>
> Desiree: *She teaches I'll Capitano and the other bosses a lesson. Just like Lindsay Lohan teaches the girls in her school.*

The theory is now, not only something in a book that they have to study, but something familiar, recognizable and interesting, which could be used in other learning areas (like their English FL creative writing tasks) to enrich their overall learning experience. These activities were extended even further in the next lesson, where the participants physically had to 'breath life' into these adapted historical characters (also see 4.9.3. and 4.9.4.).

> R: *Do you feel that the hot seat helped you with the diary entry you had to do?*
>
> Violet: *Absolutely, ma'am. I really love hot seats and I feel that it helps me act better.*
>
> R: *And for the writing?*
>
> Violet: *Yes. I could remember what I did wrong, because I could feel it and I could see when everybody was looking at me.*

Another learner, who in particular struggled with expression in writing, had a similar experience:

> R: *Do you feel that the hot seat helped you with the diary entry you had to do?*
>
> Desiree: *The hot seat of the other kids helped me with my diary entry, cause I could see what they were doing right and wrong … and then I would think back about what I did… and ja … so then I could like… write what I think and remembered.*

The structure and format of the diary entry was utilized in this activity – this demonstrates how we as teachers can teach across curriculums and subsequently, minimize the assessment activities learners have to do, which will in effect open up more time for the learning experience to take place and to practice the necessary skills for creative writing tasks. From personal experience I can remember that writing a diary entry for creative writing was a mundane task. By incorporating drama activities (see 4.9.4.) with the diary entry exercise, we could also use it as not

only a creative writing task, but also as a type of personal reflection about the experiences and learning activities in class.

> *R: Do you think if I asked you to write a character biography after you did a hot seat that it would be easier?*
>
> *Dexter: Yes, ma'am.*
>
> *R: Why?*
>
> *Dexter: When you do a hot seat, you ARE (learner emphasised the word) the character. You say things that you would never say… like I would never mix my languages… I just don't speak that way… (researcher nods and affirms statement) … but when I did my hot seat as Arlecchino, I remembered that I made him a Cape coloured 'gaardtjie ' in my journal. So then I had to use the coloured slang… like I said "Hello merrim, give us your fooitjie"…*
>
> *R: So how would this influence your writing?*
>
> *Dexter: I would use the slang in my writing… and I would explain how he sits on the chair and how he walks, because I can remember from seeing it and from performing it.*

The personal involvement in the task, as well as the utilization of personal knowledge and experience led to the 'knowledge transforming' (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) phenomenon. The theoretical content of drama, as well as the structural rules of English FL, transformed and played an integral role in the learning experience of the learner. I mentioned during cycle 1 that the learners did not see the connection between the creative writing task of English and the task set by me in Drama (see identifying the problem in 4.1. and table 2). However, the subject of topics did arise in the class discussion. Here follows a short extract:

> *Dexter: Why can't I write like this in English? It takes me about three periods to just come up with an idea, and here, it happens like that (snaps his fingers). You should give the topics to the English teachers.*
>
> *R: Do you think it's the topics or the drama activities that make the writing easier.*
>
> *Dexter: I think it's the topics – they're fun and I always know stuff about them.*
>
> *Violet: I think it's the drama stuff we do.*
>
> *Nico: Definitely the drama stuff.*

The discussion shows that the drama activities helped the learners find creative impulse which stimulated their writing. I do think that the topics also played an integral part, for as Dexter mentions "I always know stuff about them". By using topics that were familiar to the participants and allowing learners to physically play

with the topics through drama performance, the creativity used for creative writing was stimulated. The cross-curricular benefits are also evident, for the language teachers and the other subject specialists can discuss the specific content that is being taught and use that to their advantage. The learners will not have numerous assignments, for some could also be used in other subjects and the teachers will know that the learners will have a foundation of knowledge from which they could work. However, when I encouraged the participants to integrate their drama workbooks with the creative writing journals, like Violet did during cycle 1, some of the learners, especially the boys (more on this sub-theme in 4.9.4), preferred to keep the work separate. When I asked why they preferred this, Douglas replied: "Then I know what to study for the exams, ma'am" and Dexter stated that his work feels disorganized when everything is "all over the place". I think that this is personal preference and that different learners would find it beneficial and for others it might just be too confusing.

Another phenomenon I witnessed was that the learners started to fall into specific patterns when it came to their writing. Lesson 5 focussed on the 'manipulation of objects' or Grotowski's 'Laboratory Theatre' techniques (see 2.3.4.2). Most of the participants used characters which they had created in previous activities for this task. The journal had become a source in which the learners could find inspiration (also see 4.9.4). Some learners imagined completely new characters in a specific situation, whilst others used their previously created characters' contexts and then wrote a movie scene based on the task they had received. Most of the learners created a little mind-map on which they planned their scene. They had consequently fallen into a pattern of planning their writing, which was something that I have always encountered learners not do. The mind-maps showed the thought process of the learners as they had scratched on it and re-planned their scene as they were writing it. During cycle 1, I explained to the learners that we were practising their writing for the final task. It was evident in cycle 2 that the learners had not only developed positive writing habits, by planning their work, which would help with clear expression, but also that they started to use their own created resources in their journals (also see 4.9.4). A process of learning and a development of language skills was evident in their journals and this positive practice found its way to their other subjects as well (more on this in 4.10).

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However, the most important sub-theme I witnessed here, was the fear of assessment and how it became less prominent as the creative writing programme and learners developed.

> R: Do you think you would have been able to write a whole script without doing the improv?
>
> Desiree: NO!!! Ma'am, when you said … (thinking)… like, when you said at the beginning of the term that we, like, had to write a whole script, I was like … so scared… I knew that I couldn't do it and then I would like fail and then … so ja, I didn't think I could… and then we did. The improv helped SO much … and like, I know I'm better with acting than with writing … but I felt that it helped me a lot…

The lack of confidence (also see 4.9.1) is evident from Desiree's speech, as well as her fear of failing. But the positive effects of the stimulation and inspiration techniques, along with the collaborative work assisted this learner to conquer her fear. When I asked her if she would be able to write a whole one act play on her own, she replied:

> Desiree: I don't know, ma'am. But I'll give it a go.
>
> R: And if I told you it was for marks?
>
> Desiree: (laughs) I'll probably worry about it, but I will still try to remember what we did and use it for the writing.

In conclusion, assessment has played a very important role in this creative writing programme. It was as if the learners saw the assessment as the purpose of the task, whilst during cycle 2, the task and performance was the purpose, even though they would use it for their final practical performance. During cycle 2, the learners did not group themselves in terms of academic achievement, but rather in terms of what skills the people possessed and how that would benefit the group. The theory became not only an important role player which assisted in the construction of thoughts and ideas for the creative writing, but also the creative writing assisted the learners in acquiring and remembering the theory. The topics were relatable and interesting and based on the foundation of learners' own knowledge, which meant that the learners felt that they always had something about which they could write. But most importantly is the fact that assessment was not at the centre of the activities. It was no longer a means to an end, but rather an end to the means. The stimulation and inspiration the learners experience during this process assisted in dethroning assessment and learners wanted to complete tasks because they were engaged and enthusiastic about them.

4.9.3   Engagement, Enthusiasm and Commitment

During the course of cycle 1, increased enthusiasm about the creative writing tasks was visible. This was brought on because the learners were given opportunities to engage with the learning content through multiple tasks, activities and stimulation. The atmosphere in the class was positive and relaxed and due to the increased engagement and enthusiasm there was also a noticeable increase in commitment. Learners handed tasks in on time and also participated and co-operated in the activities.

The challenge in cycle 2 was to maintain the positive atmosphere in the classroom, whilst simultaneously encouraging the learners to interact and become engaged with the theory component of the course. I observed that the moment I mentioned that we would be doing theory, that most of the learners immediately sighed or responded with an "*aaahh*". However, when I taught the Commedia dell' Arte stock characters (cycle 2, lesson 1, table 8) in conjunction with creative writing tasks, the learners received the content with more enthusiasm. The content became even more relatable and relevant when the learners could identify modern stereotypes and compare them to the historical ones. The result was that the classroom filled with an excited buzz and every learner wanted to share their views, opinions and ideas. By using creative writing to incorporate Drama theoretical content (also refer to 4.9.2.), the learners were engaged with the activities, but more so, they were enthusiastic and the completed homework tasks in the creative writing journals of all of the learners, indicate commitment to the tasks. The following extract of a class discussion demonstrates how these learners not only became familiar with the content, but also how they could discuss the work in an enthusiastic and committed manner:

> Deanna: *When I think about La Ruffina, I see Queen Latifa! She's funny and loves all the young guys and when the young girls come in, she like speaks over them.*
>
> Desiree: *I like Arlecchino the most. He's that wimpy guy in all the movies that tries to impress the girls, but all he does is make a fool of himself. I pasted a picture of Ashton Kutcher next to Arlecchino – I think they're like each other.*
>
> Deanna: *Imagine La Ruffina and Arlecchino together!*
>
> Desiree: *Oh my word! Queen Latifa and Ashton Kutcher!! I would so see that movie!*

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These activities were extended even further in the next lesson, where the participants physically had to 'breath life' into these adapted historical characters. The hot seat activity delivered enthusiastic responses from the participants. As this is a Drama class, I did not encounter any problems with learners who did not want to participate in the physical performance of the task. I suspect that this could be problematic in an ordinary language class. However, even in Drama classes we often have to encourage learners to participate in certain tasks. The fact that the learners created new characters from the old Italian stock types and modernised them, allowed them to become personally involved, familiar and engage with the content. To perform these characters physically indicated increased enthusiasm, but also showed commitment and increased engagement with the creative writing tasks.

> R: Do you feel that the hot seat helped you with the diary entry you had to do?

> Arnold: I love hot seats! It doesn't only help me with my acting, but it also helped me with my writing!

> R: How did it help you?

> Arnold: I think because I experienced it, I had more to write. I could remember how I felt and what I thought when people asked me, well the character questions.

Another learner, who in particular struggled with expression in writing, had a similar experience:

> R: Do you feel that the hot seat helped you with the diary entry you had to do?

> Desiree: The hot seat of the other kids helped me with my diary entry, cause I could see what they were doing right and wrong … and then I would think back about what I did… and ja … so then I could like… write what I thought and remembered.

The structure and format of the diary entry was utilized in this activity – this demonstrates how we as teachers can teach across curriculums and subsequently, minimize the assessment activities learners have to complete, which will in effect open up more time for the learning experience to take place and to practise the necessary skills for creative writing tasks (links with the assessment theme discussed in 4.9.2.).

Another activity which indicated increased engagement with the content as well as a great deal of enthusiasm about the tasks from the learners was the "Theatre

Laboratory" or in other words, the object manipulation activities. The learners had to manipulate ordinary household items and give them different uses and purposes. For example one of the participants manipulated a toilet roll to become a "telescope" and acted out a little skit of a pirate spotting another ship on the horizon. As I clapped my hands, to indicate that the object should change again, the participant immediately transformed the toilet roll into a 'champagne flute', pretending to deliver the best man speech at a wedding. This is not only evidence of a creative process and the development of problem-solving skills (see 4.9.4.), but also of engagement with content, an enthusiastic attitude as well as commitment to the tasks.

The stereotypical turning a hairbrush into a microphone and pretending to be a singer is something that some people do and which we see in many films. This inspired me to take the drama activity and transform it by using the technique to help learners write the directions to a movie scene.   The participants expressed their excitement when they received the task and immediately started to write. Owing to the fact that they had physically played with the objects and saw what other participants had done with their objects, the learners stated that they did not struggle to write their scene.

> R: Okay, Rose. I can see that you want to tell us about your scene.
>
> Rose: I loved the task ma'am. I told you that I want to see the movies in my head.
>
> R: So was it easy for you to write this task?
>
> Rose: Yeah! I just saw this poor girl and how she was trapped and how she had to get out and have fun…

The fact that this learner, in particular responded so positively to the task, shows engagement with the task. There was a Cinderella-type feel to her scene, and I will discuss this further in 4.9.4, but her enthusiasm was infectious and the rest of the class also shared their experiences freely, engaged with each other's work, by suggesting alternative endings or sub-plots to the stories. However, some of them stated that they did not find it as easy as Rose to contextualize the situation of their scenes.

> R: Desiree, tell us about your scene.
>
> Desiree: I really struggled with the scene ma'am. I like… I wrote what I did with the props and so and then I just like used myself as the character and pretended that I'm

> home alone and no one can see me, … and then just described what I do with the objects.
>
> R: That's a good start. Would you go home and re-write your scene?
>
> Desiree: Is that like homework, ma'am?
>
> R: No. Just if I told you, you could, would you?
>
> Desiree: Not really.
>
> R: So you didn't like the activity?
>
> Desiree: I liked it, but I just … I just don't always know what to write about.

This indicates that even when learners enjoy a task and are engaged with the content they do not necessarily know what to write. Once again the factor of talent in writing sticks its head out, as well as the concept of creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Because this particular learner struggled to conceptualize her scene, there was an obvious decrease in commitment when she stated that she would not necessarily complete the task for homework. What I draw from this experience is that commitment to tasks are closely linked to the difficulty level of tasks, but also to personal preference – as my mother always said, we cannot please everybody and in this case, even if Desiree had been engaged with the task, she was not necessarily enthusiastic about it and would not really practice these skills on her own at home.

During lesson 6 the learners were introduced to the final performance and creative writing task. Some hesitance could be detected in the group (discussed in 4.9.1), however, when we discussed what the task entailed and that they were going to work in groups the learners looked more confident. As they had had a lot of interaction with the Commedia dell' Arte theatre genre (see 2.3.4.4), the learners had enough pre-knowledge to be able to generate an authentic text (see 2.5.1).

The learners grouped themselves according to friendships. I did tell the participants to ensure that at least one girl or one boy had to form part of their groups. They were not allowed to form single gender groups. The reason for this is that I did not want the girls to perform boys and vice versa. Also that during cycle 1, it was evident that the different sexes approach tasks differently; I wanted the learners to learn from each other and experience this as well (see sub-theme of gender differences in 4.9.4). But more importantly, in the development of performance it is

important for learners to master the performance skills of their gender, before they embark on performing another gender. The participants accepted this readily and well balanced groups were formed.

During the individual planning phase, I could see the proverbial wheels turning. Some of the academically stronger learners immediately started writing, whilst other learners stared into space. Even though the learners were provided with a phrase (which indicates action and intention), with a setting and with characters, it still seemed that they were struggling to generate a story. The noise level in the class rose considerably when the learners had to share their ideas and evaluate the ideas of others. During these activities I could see that the learners were completely engaged with the activity – I am not sure if it was because they enjoyed the task or if it was because they knew that they would be receiving marks for the task (interrelated to the theme of assessment, 4.9.2).

What surprised me was that when the bell for break rang, the learners decided to continue with their work. Some of the learners asked if they were allowed to eat and drink whilst they were working (interrelated to the theme of a comfortable space to create) and I agreed whole heartedly. When I returned from a quick break, the learners were still hard at work and were having little picnics in their groups. Some groups were chatting about characters, whilst another group was busy selecting 'theme songs' for each of their characters. They were using some of the tasks that we had done in previous lessons to inspire their writing in this new task (also see 4.9.4).

My understanding of this phenomenon was that even if this started out as merely a task for assessment, it transformed into a fun project. I would like to believe that learners would not sacrifice their breaks to work on their academic tasks, consequently the participants viewed this activity as fun enough to work on even if break time was going on outside – this is a true testament of increased commitment to a task in this group and this was brought on by engagement as well as enthusiasm about the task, with the slight possibility of a fear of assessment (interrelated to the assessment theme in 4.9.2). When I asked some of the learners how they felt about the task and what the effects of assessment were, the replies were as follow:

R: Can you explain why your group decided to stay in during break?

Violet: Well, our group wanted to finish our rough planning. We were on a roll and we thought that if we broke it, that we would lose it.

Nico: We did not get everything done during the lesson, (looks guilty) we chatted a bit too much…

R: About what?

Nico: About the characters and why they were funny and how some would work and others would confuse the audience. Mostly we also chatted about which characters would challenge us as actors while they made the story interesting.

R: Are you guys stressed about the marks you will get at the end of this term?

Violet: We didn't really talk about it. But ma'am, you know that I always stress about my marks.

R: Why? You always do so well.

Violet: I think it's like… it's like, almost like a motivator for me. I want to do well.

R: And you Nico?

Nico: We did chat about it a little, but not a lot. We were too busy with the story and characters.

R: So did you stay behind because you felt that it would guarantee good marks?

Violet: No - we did not even talk about marks when we decided to stay in.

Nico: Ja ma'am and it's not like it was a punishment or something. We were chilling on the floor and eating and chatting. It didn't feel like work…

(Violet interrupts)

Violet: I know, the more we spoke about what we wanted to do, the more excited I got and I just wanted to do it.

This conversation shows that learners do consider the assessment aspect of tasks, but more importantly was that Nico and Violet mentioned that "*it didn't feel like work*" and that they were enjoying the tasks. This increased enjoyment and enthusiasm led to engagement and ultimately to increased commitment to the tasks. What makes this phenomenon even more important was that the learners were not

motivated by fear for assessment, but that they viewed assessment as a necessary extra and not the purpose for the task (interrelated to assessment theme, 4.9.2).

For lesson 7 learners were instructed to improvise and physically act out their stories. The noise level in the class escalated to such an extent, that one of the neighbouring teachers offered her room for an extra space in which the groups could practise. I had to move between the spaces, but these learners were so entranced with their task, that I did not encounter any disciplinary problems (links with theme of co-operation 4.9.1 and commitment 4.9.3). During this lesson the learners were actively performing and also integrated their journals (engagement), 4.9.3) by constantly writing in them. One group had decided to use only one journal to track the process of their story. This group had more boys than girls and I suspect that the boys were a bit lazy (interrelated to the theme of gender differences, 4.9.4). However, this practice proved to be very effective as all of the notes were in one place and as one of the boys stated: "*We can all read Violet's handwriting, ma'am*". I asked them what would happen if she would be absent the next day, to which they replied: "*She doesn't look sick*". Lucky for them, Violet was not ill and they did not encounter problems here, but I would not advise learners to do this in future.

At the end of the term, I asked the learners what their personal favourite tasks were. The noise levels in the class rose considerably and it was difficult to ascertain what each individual enjoyed, however, because of this 'loud' response, I gathered that there was enthusiasm, engagement and most importantly enjoyment during this process of creative writing in the Drama classroom.

> *R: What do you feel helped you most in the writing process?*
>
> *Rose: We knew, like, all of the characters. They were all stereotypes and because we did them in Commedia and made summaries of them in our journals, we could use that to help with the new characters.*
>
> *Nico: I like the Grotowski activity the most.*
>
> *R: Why?*
>
> *Nico: Our topic was "all is not as it seems", so the objects that could change into different things and have different purposes, was really cool.*
>
> *Dexter: The hot seats were amazing. I laughed so much! … When we did it in class, it was amazing to see, like the people you know, and then like, they transform, right there, in front of you.*

Arnold: And you don't know them…

Eric: And then they say things … (exclaims aaah) and I just wanna laugh the whole time! (laughs) So funny!

R: So you guys enjoyed that part?

Eric: (still laughing) Yes ma'am.

R: Do you think it helped you with your writing?

Eric: I don't really know, ma'am. Maybe, but it was fun.

Nico: It definitely helped me. I came up with ideas that I never had and it was basically from watching other people perform and … also remember what I did.

R: Just from the Grotowski activity or from others as well?

Nico: From everything. Like when Rose read her scene about the evil aunt, I used what I remembered about that character for my own in our play.

Rose: Aaah! Nico, you're so sweet!

Dexter: But ma'am?

R: Yes, Dexter?

Dexter: Why can't I write like this in English? It takes me about three periods to just come up with an idea, and here, it happens like that (snaps his fingers). You should give the topics to the English teachers.

R: Do you think it's the topics or the drama activities that make the writing easier.

Dexter: I think it's the topics – they're fun and I always know stuff about them.

Violet: I think it's the drama stuff we do.

Nico: Definitely the drama stuff.

Once again, the 'subject of topic' came up (also see 4.9.2). From my experience, observed during my time as teacher, but especially during the course of these two creative writing programmes, the subject matter of a task has particular significance. The topic is in essence the first 'taste' the learners have to a task and if this topic does not engage or excite the learners, the commitment to the tasks will be questionable. The pre-knowledge learners have of a topic, also plays an integral role in the creative writing process, for if they are familiar with the content or topic, they find it easier to engage with the tasks. However, in my personal opinion, the most important aspect to engagement, enthusiasm and commitment for creative writing is in the stimulation of creative thoughts. This brings us to the next prominent theme of cycle 2, stimulation through multi-literacies.

4.9.4   Stimulation through multi-literacies

The research question of this project is: how can drama techniques *stimulate* creativity for creative writing? During these two creative writing programmes I have paid special attention to the stimulation of creative thoughts for the creative writing process. However, during cycle 1 I could not integrate and incorporate as many drama techniques in the creative writing programme as I would have like to done, as I had to change the attitudes of the participants towards creative writing as well as almost 'convince' the learners to write creatively. I have highlighted a lot of themes and issues that became apparent during the course of the research, but I feel that the true power of this research lies in the engagement of learners by means of the types of stimulation activities and techniques used for creative writing.

The following sub-themes crystallised and I would like to highlight the most prominent ones on which I will focus during this discussion:

 ➢ Stimulation of creativity through drama techniques
 ➢ Stimulation of creativity through sensory engagement
 ➢ Stimulation of creativity through other resources (creative writing journals)
 ➢ Development of problem-solving skills
 ➢ Development of Creativity

As previously discussed (in 4.9.3) the hot seat drama improvisation activity was a great source of enjoyment and engagement.   The learners were extremely excited when they saw the chair in the middle of the room for they knew what would be coming as we had been working with characters – I usually introduce the hot seat activity in grade 8 drama. The participant's experience of writing about this activity proved to be as successful. When the learners had to start writing not one of them looked up from their journals. The participants made columns in their journals in which they summarized the character description of the Commedia dell' Arte (see 2.3.4.4) character and next to that they did the modern stereotype. One of the learners pasted a picture of a male model in her journal, she then added pictures which added familiar characteristics to the character and drew arrows to the other Commedia dell' Arte column to show similarities. The theory served as inspiration

for modern characters, which could be used in later tasks, as discussed in 4.9.2 and 4.9.3. What was very interesting here was that even the male participants used resources like pictures and different coloured pens to distinguish between the characters. This was a completely different occurrence than what I had experienced in cycle 1. I would like to view this not only as increased commitment to the tasks (see 4.9.3), but also that the learners had gained trust (theme form cycle 1, also see 4.9.1) in the methods used in the classroom. They could see that the resources and multi-literacies were making their process to finding creative stimulation for creative writing easier and therefore they 'bought into' the concept and co-operated (see 4.9.3 for incorporated theme) more willingly.

The learners had to take their hot seat experience and use it for inspiration for a diary entry. From personal experience I can remember that writing a diary entry for creative writing was a mundane task. By incorporating drama activities with the diary entry exercise, we could also use it as not only a creative writing task, but also as a type of personal reflection about the experiences and learning activities in class.

> R: If I asked you to write a character biography after you had done the hot seat, would be easier?
>
> Eric: Yes, ma'am.
>
> R: Why?
>
> Dexter: During the hot seat you have to become the character. While I perform I can feel what comes naturally and what works. So when you write, it is from experience and not just in your mind, like how you imagine it to happen. I try to remember how I felt and then I use it in my writing.

The personal involvement in the task, as well as the utilization of personal knowledge and experience, led to the 'knowledge transforming' (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987 – chapter 2 in section 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.4.2) phenomenon, the theoretical content of drama, as well as the structural rules of English FL, transformed and played an integral role in the learning experience of the learner. This shows the benefits of cross-curricular teaching practice and this should motivate teachers to use this wonderful tool to our benefit, rather than as Gallagher and Ntelioglou (2011: 326) Have argued that "part of what powers teachers in the classroom is what they receive from their students, and we ignore that essential part of the equation at our peril".

The Grotowski task of the manipulation of objects provided evidence of the development of creativity, the development of problem-solving skills, and the integration of resources to stimulate the thought process. Most of the participants used characters which they had created in previous activities for this task. The journal had become a source in which the learners could find inspiration, be it from multi-media, their own writing or drawing on their own experiences. Some learners imagined completely new characters in a specific situation, whilst others used their previously created characters' contexts and then wrote a movie scene based on the task they had received. Most of the learners created a little mind-map on which they planned their scene. They had consequently fallen into a pattern of planning their writing (also see 4.9.2), which was something most learners had not done previously. The mind-maps showed the thought process of the learners as they had edited it and re-planned their scene as they were writing it. This also indicates increased commitment to tasks, for the learners had become active role players in their own learning and writing process.

The contexts of the characters and scenes had a 'Cinderella' feel to them (as referred to in 4.9.3). Most of the learners wrote about a teenage girl who wanted to go to a dance and had a villain who kept her from it.

> *Rose: Ma'am, I used one of the characters we created last term for my scene!!!*
>
> *R: Did you remember your character that well?*
>
> *Rose: (rolls her eyes and sighs) No ma'am. Duh… I used my journal…*
>
> *(The class and teacher laugh at Rose and she smiles)*
>
> *R: And the rest of the activity? Was it as easy as using a character you created previously?*
>
> *Rose: I just knew what happened to her. Like… when I like read what I wrote… I saw the place that she was in… and like she had a horrible aunt… and her parents are dead… and she wants to like… like go to the prom… so then her aunt locks the door… and she has to stay in her room the whole night…*
>
> *R: Does she escape?*
>
> *Rose: No ma'am… it's not like… a fairy-tale, you know…*
>
> *R: So how does the scene end?*
>
> *Rose: She just falls asleep on her bed with like… a wig on her head and scarves and strange clothes and so on… and then… like when she wakes up, she sees everybody's photos on Facebook and she's all depressed and then her aunt come to unlock the door and then she (the aunt) like … grins in … an evil way…*

> *R: Wow. That's a sad ending. Great idea though… (continues to ask the rest of the class to discuss their scenes).*

The learners used elements of modern society and their own experiences as inspiration for their scenes. The American Prom is a phenomenon we encounter in the tween[25] movies seen in cinemas and on television. Elements of the fairy-tale Cinderella are also evident. The learner had, consequently, used both of these elements in her creative writing. The participant also has a very strict aunt (this was conveyed in a personal discussion after class) and she used her aunt as inspiration for the 'evil stepmother' character in her parody of the Cinderella fairy-tale. By not giving the story a happy ending, she breaks the expected conventions of stereotypical fairy-tale synopses, which readers have come to expect. All of this serves as evidence of a creative thought process. She was also solving the problem of finding a topic to write about by using her existing knowledge about stories, her journal and her own experiences to stimulate her creativity and inspire her story (interrelated to sub-theme of topic in 4.9.2).

One of the male participants used a prison context. His character was caught 'drunk driving' and this intoxicated character felt threatened by the other inmates, so he entertained the inmates by transforming the ordinary objects he found in the holding cell. A truly inspired idea, which was fuelled by the object manipulation activity; incidentally, he had selected handcuffs as one of his objects. He manipulated these into a pair of glasses and played a stereotypical 'nerd' and then pretended that the handcuffs represented a ring which he used to 'propose marriage' to one of the girls in class. Interestingly enough, the original object stimulated the context for his scene none of the other learners used the objects in such a manner. This could be seen as evidence of creativity as well as problem-solving skills developing.

The tasks discussed above were all focussed on the initial planning and activation of creativity for the final creative writing task. When learners were asked about the physical writing of the text for the final creative writing task the responses were:

> *Dexter: Hard.*

> *Daisy: It was intense ma'am, because I couldn't write as fast as the people spoke.*

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[25] According to the Oxford on-line dictionary the term tween is short for tweenager, which is a child between the ages of about 10 and 14. (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/tweenager)

R: So the re-writing of the dialogue was a bit complicated?

Deanna: Yes, but it was fun. I just think that you had to be very organized.

R: Do you think you would have been able to write a whole script without doing the improv?

Desiree: NO!!! Ma'am, when you said … (thinking)… like, when you said at the beginning of the term that we, like, had to write a whole script, I was like … so scared… I knew that I couldn't do it and then I would like fail and then … so ja, I didn't think I could… and then we did. The improv helped SO much … and like, I know I'm better with acting than with writing … but I felt that it helped me a lot…

Violet: Yes, and also because we could work in groups. I don't think that I would have been able to write a whole, like, script without my friends…

R: Why not?

Violet: Uhm… everybody has their character and they used all of the characterisation things that Stan-the-man[26] said, and then like, the characters were like so individual. Every person had a unique voice and style of speaking.

Douglas: Yes, I think only really good writers, like Shakespeare can write different characters, … on his … their own.

R: But don't you think that after you wrote this as a group, that you would be able to do it on your own?

(The class look around at each other)

Violet: I think that I will be able to do it. It would take longer and I would have to plan everything, like the storyline and characters VERY well, but I think I would be able to.

Desiree: I won't.

R: Okay. Let's put it to a vote. If you think that you would be able to do this on your own, raise your hand. Remember, this is not a right or wrong question, guys. I just want to see how you feel about it.

(The class raise their hands)

More than three quarters of the class felt that they would be able to write the dialogue and script on their own (interrelated to theme of confidence and growing independence in 4.9.1). The rest of the learners, who did not raise their hands, stated that they would rather work in group format. They felt that they got more inspiration from the collaborative process. The discussion shows that the drama activities helped the learners find creative impulse which stimulated their writing. I do think that the topics also played an integral part, for as Dexter mentions "I always

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[26] Reference to theatre practitioner, Stanislavski.

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know stuff about them". By using topics that were familiar to the participants and allowing learners to physically play with the topics through drama performance, the creativity used for creative writing was stimulated.

In conclusion, the stimulation of creativity throughout these two creative writing programmes was the main intention of the research. Cycle 1 specifically focussed on the sensory stimulation, but also on the stimulation of creativity by means of resources, be it resources the participants found (multi-media) or created on their own (creative writing journals). Cycle 2 showed that the drama techniques utilized in this creative writing programme ensured stimulation of creativity. The drama techniques increased the physical engagement of the learners with the theoretical drama content and the creative writing activities and tasks. The nature of the topics, as well as the activities, lead to increased enthusiasm and enjoyment of the tasks, but more so allowed space for the learners to develop their problem-solving skills and become truly creative in their approach to the tasks.

Teachers should be motivated not only to teach across curriculums, but also to incorporate multi-literacies and familiar resources in their classes. This does not only make our job of teaching new content easier, but also helps learners to retain the content so much more easily. The benefits to cross-curricular teaching is that the learners become aware of the fact that stimulation, creativity and inspiration is all around us and that we should not compartmentalise our subjects and learning, but that we should use all of our knowledge at all times. This leads us to the concluding thoughts of cycle 2.

4.10   CONCLUDING EVALUATIVE THOUGHTS OF CYCLE 2

This cycle focussed in particular on the activation and stimulation of creativity by means of drama activities and techniques for the process of creative writing.

In cycle 1 of the AR cycles, I developed a writing programme which had found its roots in the theory of creative writing according to Furner (1973), Flower and Hayes (1981), and Kruger (2008). The prominent themes identified during cycle 2 were: 1) Confidence and self-esteem, 2) the importance of assessment, 3) engagement,

enthusiasm and commitment, and 4) stimulation through multi-literacies. I will discuss and evaluate the findings of cycle 2 in terms of the writing stages as set out in cycle 1.

4.10.1   Stage 1 in Cycle 2: The Inspiration Stage (4.5.1.1)

In the Inspiration Stage the learners became acquainted with the theatre era Commedia dell' Arte and its historical background (2.3.4.4). They had to work with the elements of High Comedy and Low Comedy by utilising descriptive language to describe the drama activities. The learners had enough stimulation and motivation, as well as ample knowledge of the topic, to assist them with the creative writing process. Due to the fact that the learners were so well acquainted with the subject of "coping with difficult teenagers" and "embarrassing" moments in lesson 1, the need to write about these were created.

> Daisy: *I could just like,… imagine how this is happening, so it wasn't difficult to write about it, cause I saw it happen.*

> Abby: *Ma'am, I hope that never happens to me, because when I wrote it in slow motion, I could just see how everybody was thinking.*

What made these activities more effective than those in cycle 1 was that the learners were physically more engaged in the activities. They had to show their understanding by physically incorporating the newly acquired knowledge with the creative writing tasks (cross-curricular benefits, see 4.9.2 and 4.9.4). The engagement (4.9.3) with the tasks were also more because the learners did not only use the content to form their understanding, but also utilized their pre-knowledge and own personal experiences to demonstrate their knowledge. They not only had to create a skits which were relatable to them personally, but also to their audiences – this highlights the engagement of the learners with the task as well as enthusiasm and commitment (see 4.9.2 and 4.9.3) to complete the task.

The journals also provided evidence of increased involvement with the tasks as the interviews and descriptive paragraphs were engaging to readers. It also showed that the learners were reflecting on their own personal behaviour (activity 1, lesson 1, cycle 2) and relating the current activity to knowledge that they had gained during cycle 1 of Stanislavski's Method Acting system (see 4.8.1, lesson 5) by integrating the "*emotion memory*" and "*what if*" drama techniques (see chapter 2 in sections

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2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3). Stage 1 and stage 2 in cycle 2 shows that the learners could find their own creativity by using their pre-knowledge of a topic, and also write about their own experiences after the performances. Subsequently, the drama techniques in this stage of the writing programme provided enough stimulation of creativity to write creatively.

4.10.2 Stage 2: The Interchange Stage (4.5.1.2)

The whole process of writing in cycle 2 has elements of the interchange stage. The learners were constantly formulating and re-formulating their ideas by sharing with the class or with their groups. This process of interchange was more effective in cycle 2, for most of the activities were based on collaborative group work and this provided the learners with more opportunities to share their ideas, views and opinions. What was evident was that the learners were more comfortable to share their views – this could be that they knew the other participants better, that their confidence had increased since cycle 1 (see 4.9.1), and that the focus was not so much on the assessment factor of the task, but rather in the creative process of experiences, performances and writing (see 4.9.2 and 4.9.3).

The commentary the learners gave each other after the 'object manipulation' activity in lesson 5, proved to be very helpful, for the learners used their objects, observed other learners and used that experience to crystallise their own thoughts and express those thoughts in their movie scenes (see 4.9.3 and 4.9.4). The participants learnt from each other's experiences and developed their creative thoughts as well as problem-solving skills during this stage of the writing. The beautiful 'prison movie' scene comes to mind when we look at the interchange stage. This learner used his own and classmates feelings of nervousness ("emotion memory" and "magic If" as set out by Stanislavski in 4.5.7 and chapter 2, section 2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3) and incorporated that into his character. He then used his selected object, the handcuffs as inspiration for his story and he used the physical activity we did in class to dictate the activity of the character. The drama theory and practice along with an object served as enough inspiration and stimulation to produce an authentic creative writing piece. This is evidence of growing confidence in writing (4.9.1), engagement and commitment to the task (4.9.3) and the development of creativity (4.9.4) through the

stimulation of drama techniques which made the writing piece complex, interesting and engaging for its readers. Cycle 1 did not deliver these results. This could be because the learners had not become as engaged with the writing process, that their trust and confidence were still lacking and that the fear of assessment over-powered the creative process. I would, however, like to believe that it was because cycle 1 did not have enough drama activities to stimulate the creativity for the creative writing process.

4.10.3 <u>Stage 3: The Brainstorming Stage (4.5.1.3)</u>

The writing session of their own synopses for the one act plays could be seen as an active brainstorming stage. Here the learners were busy devising their own ideas for the play and characters and it served as a type of incubation period in which they could express their personal ideas without it being clouded by other's ideas. Flower and Hayes (1981) make special mention of the fact that the writer should have time to formulate their own ideas. When learners are working in groups, I feel it is especially important that all ideas are penned down in order to prohibit one learner to take the lead and enforce their ideas, just because they think faster on their feet. I do think that the brainstorming phase during the drama activities was successful during cycle 2, but the learners did not have enough time, like in cycle 1, to brainstorm their own personal ideas. In certain groups specific learners still took the lead and some ideas were not heard. This could be due to some learners' lack of self-esteem (4.9.1) as well as their fear of assessment (4.9.2) their personalities and personal desire to please the teacher and not "*make a fool of themselves*" could also have played a role:

> R: *Do you feel that you could voice your opinions and ideas during the brainstorming sessions in the group?*
>
> Douglas: *Because I am shy, I find it difficult to always say what I want to. (pauses for quite some time) It also sometimes happens that … like ma'am, I take time to think about what I want to say and then when I have the right words, someone, like Rose would have started to speak as I was about to say something.*
>
> R: *So people interrupt you when you want to voice your opinion?*
>
> Douglas: *Yes.*

> *R: Why do you think that is?*

> *Douglas: My mom and sis also do it. I don't want to sound like … like stupid and then I take time to find the right words to … (another long pause) I think it's also that sometimes I just don't want to say something and then I just stay quiet. I don't want to fight for my idea. If they like it, then we'll do it, but I could see in the group that they preferred Rose's ideas and I don't want to be the cause of bad marks for everybody.*

In cycle 1, Douglas did not have the opportunity to take a back seat and not voice his opinion or brainstorm his individual work, but in cycle 2, the collaborative group work could provide opportunities like these for the shy and introverted learner. In hindsight, I would have monitored the brainstorming session more and ensured that each learner had to opportunity to voice his/ her ideas.

4.10.4 <u>Stage 4: The Sharing Stage (4.5.1.4)</u>

An example of the sharing stage could be seen in the hot seat drama activity (see 4.9.4 and lesson 4 in cycle 2). The learners share the characters they have created and by doing this they are opening themselves up to the thoughts of the audience. This takes confidence and self-esteem. The commitment of the learners to this activity shows a definite development in these very important aspects, also refer to 4.9.1. The other learners now have not only the opportunity to share their thoughts about their personal experience, but also about the performances of others. The participants are active partners in the learning experience and process and this makes the assessment process less daunting. Cycle 1 did not always present evaluative opportunities like this and I feel that the sharing stage also played an important role in the engagement with the tasks (because of the increased responsibility learners felt towards each other), it helped learners to solve performance problems in a creative manner and this had an effect on the writing of the activities as well as they would attack problems in unconventional ways (4.9.4).

The planning session in lesson 6 and the improvisation sessions in lessons 7 and 8 also show the active sharing stage. Here learners were forced to interact with each other and to listen to and hear their group members' thoughts. The whole cycle was concerned with the active sharing of ideas process and that made this writing

programme so valuable, for we learn from others on a daily basis from the day that we are born.

4.10.5 <u>Stage 5: The Writing Stage (4.5.1.5)</u>

Like cycle 1, cycle 2 this stage also offers many opportunities for creating authentic texts. The learners had to complete several tasks of writing from lesson 1 onwards. All of the creative writing tasks before lesson 6 served as inspiration and stimulation for the final writing task. The writing during this cycle was focussed on collaborative group work and not as focussed on individual writing as in cycle 1. Learners had to write descriptive character biographies, use the format of an interview, they had to write a reflective piece in the form of a diary entry and create a movie scene by means of descriptive synopsis writing and stage directions. This all led to the final one act play that the groups had to create. In cycle 1 the writing activities and tasks also led to a final piece and a monologue which the learners had to write and perform. I feel that the focus in cycle 2 was on the integration of the drama techniques (see 4.9.3 and 4.9.4) into the creative writing and not so much on the development of individual writing. Cycle 1 on the other hand gave the learners more opportunities to develop their individual skills.

During cycle 1, the groups assessed the individual work of each other. The assessment process consequently occurred after the writing stage, whilst during cycle 2, the learners were constantly busy with the construction (4.9.2 and 4.9.4) of their texts in terms of language use, grammatical use, structural formats of writing and creative expression of ideas. I felt that this collaborative knowledge construction process should have occurred during cycle 1, for I think that the individual writing tasks would have been better if the learners had started this way round. I would say that I should have started with group writing and then progressed to individual writing.

However, during cycle 1, the learners were very concerned about assessment (4.9.2) and the marks that they would get for tasks. By assessing each other's work in cycle 1 I think the learners discovered what constituted a good or bad piece of writing and also that assessment was not intended to be a negative process, but

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rather a knowledge construction process. I feel that we changed the way the learners viewed assessment in cycle 1 and consequently the effects in cycle 2 were visible as the learners were not as concerned with the assessment of the final task, but rather on the quality of the performance and text and if the audience would enjoy it. Consequently, cycle 2 was successful in terms of changing the view learners had of assessment as motivation or purpose for creative writing and that it is actually about the learning process of the performers and writers, and also about the engagement and enjoyment of the audience.

4.10.6   Stage 6: The Production Stage (4.5.1.6)

All of the pre-writing activities, inspired and stimulated by drama techniques, contributed to the final writing piece the participants had to produce. The learners had to create a one act play by adhering to script writing conventions. This task required the learners to integrate their knowledge of devised writing techniques and conventions with their newly acquired knowledge concerning the Commedia dell' Arte theatre style (see 2.3.4.4), Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre (see 2.3.4.2) and Stanislavski's Method acting system (see 2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3). By working with their peers and completing drama activities, the necessary creativity for creative writing was stimulated. The concept of play, improvisation, telling stories, being a critical and evaluative audience member and becoming engaged with the learning content and ultimately enjoying the task are all techniques Drama teachers use to communicate ideas for performance and to inspire creative approaches to tasks (see 2.3.1 and 2.3.2).

According to Bloom's revised taxonomy (Anderson, 2000) creativity is at the top level of critical thinking skills. The activities the learners had to do, especially in the Grotowski object manipulation task, challenged the learners to use their creative and problem-solving skills to create new story. In the hot seats, the learners had to select information and inspiration from their peers, journals, as well as from the stimulation activities. They had to evaluate the information and select what they would use to communicate the character in order to tell the story. During the improvisation activities of the final task the learners had to select information and inspiration from all of the stimulation activities in order to create the story. According

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to the revised Bloom's taxonomy creating is defined as "[b]uilds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure" (Anderson, 2000). The participants in this research were able to do this and if we only base the success or affectivity of the research on the revised Bloom's taxonomy of critical thinking skills, then creativity was stimulated through drama techniques which served as inspiration for creative writing tasks.

4.10.7 <u>Stage 7: The Aftermath (4.5.1.7)</u>

During both cycles the learners had the opportunity to reflect about the drama activities and creative writing tasks numerous times. The reflection periods did not only include reflective writing tasks, but also active dialogue about their process. At the end of the production stage the learners had to perform their authentic own devised piece of writing. The performance in itself served as a reflective activity, for learners would see which strategies worked and which ones did not. The learners had to write a short essay during their theoretical examination reflecting not only on the performance, but also on the physical act of writing. During the last contact session, lesson 10, the learners also had a discussion with the teacher/researcher. They reflected about their personal performance as well as the writing task, and subsequently, this reflection session started another "incubation phase" of sharing and planning for the reflective essay the learners had to produce during the examination. This confirms Flower and Hayes' (1981) statement that we should be aware of the fact that even if you are in the composing phase, planning and revising will occur and that the initial planning you did could change in the writing process.

In my opinion, cycle 2 had more opportunities for reflection than cycle 1. After cycle 1 I felt that I did not have a clear understanding of how the participants really felt about the creative writing tasks, the overall experience and how they felt the activities had stimulated their creativity for creative writing. The reflective essay task which was set during the examination of cycle 2, brought many insights. Some of the learners felt that the drama improvisation techniques provided them with more possibilities for creative writing because they were actively involved in the creating

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process. Some stated that the fact that they could share their insights and ideas with the group helped them to look at situations from different viewpoints (evidence of creative and critical thinking). Another learner commented on how enjoyable the process had been for her. Here is a short quote from her essay: *"There were many funny moments because some of them were dramatizing. Overall, I had such an enjoyable experience"*. The drama techniques and creative writing activities did not only help the learners to develop their creativity, but also brought other insights to the participants. One learner wrote in her essay:

> with her when she is killed. I have learnt that one can never escape bearing responsibility for your actions, no matter how long it takes. I have learnt a lot about working with a group of people and the importance of a strong character that takes responsibility for one's own actions in life. I know that it is easy to destroy someone else's life as easy as my character has if we don't take care of one another.

Figure 14: *Extract from a learner's reflective essay*

When we consider this statement we see that the final stage did not only serve as a reflective period, but also helped the learners to shape their ideas about the experience and come to other deeper realisations. This stage, consequently, was also a learning experience by which the learners integrated the theoretical and practical work done in class and made it part of their personal development.

Throughout cycle 2 the learners had many opportunities for the development of creativity and creative thinking skills. One of the successes of this cycle is that the learners shifted their focus from the importance of assessment to creativity, their creative development, and also become aware of their creative process whilst writing creatively. This brings us to the final part of the research and that is to ascertain if I answered the research question.

4.11   ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTION: Reflecting on the Creative Writing Programme and Strategies

The main research question of this study is as follow: *How can drama activities contribute to the stimulation of creativity in writing?*

The themes and sub-themes that crystallised from the analysed data showed that both of the creative writing programmes helped the learners to change their attitude towards creative writing tasks, activities and process of writing. The dominant themes in both cycles were; the development of confidence and trust, the issue of assessment, engagement and enthusiasm, commitment and co-operation, gender differences, a space to create and stimulation by means of multi-literacies. Other important sub-themes that occurred from the data were the benefits of cross-curricular teaching, how the different genders approached tasks as well as the importance of a creative space in which learners are able to write creatively, but also in which they have the opportunity to develop their creative thinking skills.

Reflecting on the seven stages of writing in the created creative writing programme (4.5.1.1 – 4.5.1.7) has been done in the first cycle 4.5.2 – 4.5.8 and in the Concluding evaluative thoughts of Cycle 1 (see 4.7), as well as in the Concluding evaluative thoughts of Cycle 2 (see 4.10), but it is necessary to link them directly to my research question.

Stage 1 (4.5.1.1) focussed on the initial introduction of the topic and stimulation of creativity through various activities. Stage 2 (4.5.1.2), which is about the interchange and crystallization of ideas, is closely linked to stage 1 and Furner (1973) mentions that the two stages can walk hand in hand and do not necessarily need to happen in succession of each other. I feel that the answer to the research question lies in these two stages. Evidence of the development and stimulation of creativity for creative writing in cycle 1, was when the learners used the sensory stimulation activities in combination with Stanislavski's method acting system (a drama technique). The physical experience of smelling, touching, seeing, hearing and interacting with objects helped the learners to understand the theoretical principles of Stanislavski's "Emotion Memory" (2.5.3.8), "Imagination" (2.5.3.6), "Magic If" (2.5.3.7) and "Action" (2.5.3.1) techniques. By using these sensory experiences (also see 2.5.3.2) in combination with the theoretical principles the learners

expressed that creating a character around which the action of the story revolves became easier and this also made the writing about the action in the story easier. The sensory experiences also allowed the learners to explore descriptive language and to use it in their creative writing. The descriptive language made the writing pieces multi-layered, interesting and relatable to the reader. I encountered that the learners not only used various resources (the journal and multi-literacies) to stimulate their creative thoughts, but they also opted for unconventional endings (especially visible in the writing activities of lesson 2) which indicates creative thinking as well as problem-solving skills. According to Bloom's revised taxonomy (Anderson, 2000) the above practice of the learners point to the highest cognitive level of knowledge (level 7), creating and creativity (Anderson, 2000).

As I reflected on cycle 1, I realised that there was a lack of dramatic arts theoretical content. I also realised that I did not incorporate enough drama techniques into the first writing programme and that the creativity was not necessarily stimulated by drama techniques for all of the activities. After extensive reading and a type of 'incubation' stage (Flower & Hayes, 1981) for myself, I realised that the style of Commedia dell' Arte (2.3.4.4), integrated with Grotowski's 'laboratory theatre' (2.3.4.2) and the already taught Method acting system of Stanislavski (see 2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3) offered numerous opportunities for the stimulation of creativity for the creative writing process.

In cycle 2, the focus was placed on the physical performance. The performances required the learners to take the knowledge acquired in cycle 1 and to apply it to the activities in cycle 2 in order to further stimulate their personal creativity. Once again this practice is evidence of level 7 in Bloom's revised taxonomy (Anderson, 2000). The fact that the learners were constantly in dialogue with each other and themselves, by means of using the journal as a reflective tool, proved that the interchange stage was actively at work and that this stage was developing their critical and creative thinking skills.   The planning of their tasks, in their journals as well as in the improvisations, demonstrate that with the active sharing of ideas, that new ones crystalize and that the creative writing experience does not remain a process to merely produce a final task for assessment, but that it formed an integral part in the learning experience. The journals (2.4.1) served as evidence of a creative process, not only in the colourful decorations and pictures that most of the

participants added, but also in the writing and re-writing of activities and stories in the books. The reflective work that the learners did after the tasks, were not only recalling what had happened in class, but also showed creativity in how some of the learners approached the reflective writing. Some participants chose to write in the voice of the character, some used an email format, others used 'sms'-language and emoticons (smiley faces) to indicate how they physically felt. Others used the diary entry format and some learners even added photos and colours to their writing in order to make it "fun for the reader". Subsequently, the journal in itself was also a resource full of inspiration and creativity which stimulated creativity for the creative writing process and tasks.

Other important aspects also influenced the creative writing process and contributed to and complimented the stimulation objects and techniques which were used to inspire and stimulate creativity. The classroom space and atmosphere played an integral role in the stimulation of creativity. This space did not have fancy equipment or expensive resources. The space was not painted another colour. I simply added pillows and a few posters to the wall along with a few household items, smell-jars and a few props. As the classroom was not my personal space, I had to be able to set up and remove all of these objects quickly. The learners commented on how they felt that they were not working when they were not confined to their desks. The participants even decided to stay in the classroom voluntarily during break so that they could work on their drama and creative writing. Consequently, creating a comfortable space with a creative, flexible and relaxing atmosphere also contributes to the development of free and creative thoughts. However, most of all it becomes a safe space where learners want to spend time and ultimately learn while they are there.

Another aspect which contributed to the stimulation of creativity was the topics. The topics were familiar and relatable and the drama activities allowed the learners to integrate their and their peers' pre-knowledge on the topics and use them for the creative writing. The learners used Stanislavski's "magic IF" (2.5.3.7), "emotion memory" (2.5.3.8), "imagination" (2.5.3.6) and "action" (2.5.3.1) techniques during the performance part of the task and integrated their personal experiences into the written part of the task (see 2.5.2 and 2.5.3).

The interchange stage of the creative writing programme allowed the learners to interact physically with the stimuli by means of play, touching, hearing, smelling and to use these experiences in their performances and writing within an unrestricted environment. The environment, topics, stimulation objects, but most of all performances inspired and stimulated creativity which the learners could use for their creative writing.

The third and fourth stages are also concerned with planning and sharing. I had decided that these two stages walk hand in hand, but that the third stage has room for an "incubation period" (Flower and Hayes, 1981), by means of personal and group reflection periods. During cycle 1, the participants had to produce a travelling essay which they had written and brought back to class. The sharing stage, stage 4, was when the learners read their work to the class and the class had an opportunity to discuss what they thought. In cycle 2, these stages are visible in the improvisation activities. The participants had to act out their one act play and use their experience as well as improvisation techniques, like side-coaching, in order to improve the quality of the piece. When the participants were asked how they experienced the activities in both cycles, some of the learners indicated that the activity in cycle 1, was more difficult than the one in cycle 2. It is apparent that collaboration with group members as well as the drama techniques which were incorporated in cycle 2, provided stimulation and inspiration for the creative writing tasks.

Stage 5 is mainly concerned with the physical writing period. During cycle 1, the writing period was solely an individual act, but cycle 2, asked the participants to work together in order to produce the authentic one act play. Due to time constraints this was the only option to complete the task. It would have been very valuable to see the participants write their own plays based on the improvisation activities they had done in class. By utilizing the journals during this stage in the writing process, the participants had all of the activities, the drama techniques and the theoretical drama content, in the form of creative writing tasks at the tips of their fingers in their journals. They could use these as inspiration and stimulation for the physical writing which had to occur. At the end of cycle 2, most of the participants felt that they would be able to produce a script from all of the activities that they had done during the sessions in cycle 1 and cycle 2. Not only did the learners learn how to create

their own creative stimuli and resources, but their confidence in terms of creative writing also improved in cycle 2.

However, a quarter of the class did not feel as confident. As I understand it, it was not due to a lack of inspiration or stimulation, but rather because the participants felt unable to express their thoughts and feelings in words on a page and even in some cases, verbally.

This has been brought to the attention of the perspective English teachers and these learners were taken for extra lesson in order to help them improve their expression skills. The writing programme, consequently did not only stimulate creativity for writing, but also provided learners with the opportunity to speak about their strengths, weaknesses and struggles. What was however, very interesting was that when the learners who struggled to express themselves verbally had to take on a character, the character was able to express vocally. When they also wrote in the characters voice, the expression was also better. This is not part of the research, but the cross-curricular benefits of Drama and Creative Writing opens other doors and interesting avenues for research.

During the writing stage of the creative writing programmes there were numerous opportunities for 'organization' and 'evaluation' (Flower & Hayes, 1981). The learners were asked to evaluate each other's work during cycle 1 and to evaluate their group work in cycle 2. After this evaluation period, learners could organize their ideas and, consequently proceed to the final stage of writing, the production stage. Some would ask where there is creativity in 'evaluation' and 'organization' (Light, 2002:257). But if we consider that the learners not only had to identify the problems but also provide possible suggestions or solutions, they were combining critical and creative thinking skills.

The evaluation and organization of thoughts and opinions lead to the final product that the participants had to produce. In cycle 1 this was the travelling story, the parody as well as a short monologue, and in cycle 2 it was the authentic one act play which they had to write and perform. During this stage of writing the participant may return to the work done in stages 1 – 4 for inspiration. The drama activities in combination with the creative writing tasks all serve a purpose, which is to provide the writer with the stimuli and inspiration for creative thoughts in order to produce

and authentic text. The one act play relied heavily on the improvisation activities of the groups and the monologue that the learners had to perform in cycle 1 was also inspired by drama techniques and activities. Both of the final products produced by the learners in the creative writing programmes were based on drama activities which were complemented by other resources and multi-medias.

The aftermath, provided the facilitator, teacher and/or researcher with the opportunity to introduce other activities. This could be in the form of reflection about the process, or this could be used as an introduction to another stage 1 for a new creative writing activity. Flower and Hayes (1981) mention that the writing process cannot be separated into clear cut stages or processes, but that the writer is constantly busy devising and revising their writing; this was evident in both stages.

4.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided insight into the discussion of the interpretation and analysis of the qualitative data gathered for this research project. The drama techniques, strategies to implement these in a Drama and English classes were discussed as well as what had transpired during the implementation of these techniques and strategies and the factors which had influenced the instruction of the creative writing programme and drama techniques.

Correlations were drawn between the 'identifying of the problem' phase (see 4.2 & 4.3.1) and the different creative writing programmes of each cycle, which were implemented. Analysis of qualitative data that was gathered during both AR cycles, has shown that the intervention lead to positive results in terms of the participants' experience of writing, their understanding of the creative writing process, but also how their personal creativity was activated the best. The physical creative writing tasks also showed that there was an improvement in terms of writing style and structure, grammatical structure, spelling and creative expression of thought in their creative writing. The conclusion was reached that several sensory and drama techniques could be utilized in the Drama or English FL classroom to stimulate creativity, which would enhance the creative writing process, and also improve the writing skills and performance of the participants.

With these positive findings and thoughts, I would like to end this chapter. This now leads us to the final chapter where the conclusion, recommendations and limitations of my research project will be discussed.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Learning, educational practice and educational development have always been of primary of importance. South Africa is an incredibly diverse country and owing to our collective histories and social contexts, no other domain has undergone as much change as the educational sphere.

In order to become a society where everybody is equal and respectful no matter what their background, language, race or creed; special emphasis has to be placed on the education of our children. "Only by respecting the language, culture and knowledge of the learner can we together build literate, schooled and educated societies, where lifelong learning is the norm" (UNESCO, 2008).

Increased emphasis has been placed on numeracy and literacy, as our educational leaders have become aware that South African learners are not on par with their peers from other countries. However, with the increased emphasis on literacy, numeracy, technology and the sciences, the arts and creative development of learners is being neglected. This neglect initiated my research project, as my learners struggled to use their creativity to create an authentic text. The reason for this inability is that educators do not emphasise the value of creativity and the development thereof enough. Nassbaum (2006) calls on all educators to emphasize the creative process and the arts as "central aspects of the educational experience, […] the intense passion and investments of the teachers, their delight in the progress and also the individuality of their students" (Nussbaum 2006:386). Learners need to be encouraged to be creative within a purposeful context in order to develop their own creativity. The arts should be integrated into all aspects of their education, for the arts "offer children opportunities for learning through their own creative activity […]. The arts are great sources of joy – and this joy carries over into the rest of a child's education" (Nussbaum 2006:391).

The foregoing chapters dealt with the theoretical framework (Chapter 1) and provided insight as well as a comparison of two curricula in the South African context

at the time (the RNCS 2007 and The University of Cambridge Curriculum). It is, however, important to note that the RNCS 2007 is not in effect anymore, but was the state curriculum at the time the research was conducted. The chapters also dealt with the ever-changing structure of the writing process as well as the creative impulses which could stimulate creativity for the creative writing process and provided a theoretical synthesis for stimulating creativity through drama activities for creative writing tasks (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 discussed the research design and especially focussed on and discussed the methodology of Action Research, where the analysis and discussion of the qualitative data gathered was dealt with in Chapter 4. The following aspects will be discussed in more detail in the subsection that follow:

- ➢ the purpose of the study;
- ➢ general comments on the research project;
- ➢ factors that influenced the implementation of the creative writing programme;
- ➢ factors that influenced the stimulation of creativity in order to instruct creative writing tasks;
- ➢ results and findings of the creative writing programme;
- ➢ limitations of the study; and
- ➢ recommendations for further study.

5.2   THE PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTION OF THE STUDY

The intention of this subsection is to revisit the research question: "How can drama contribute to the stimulation of creativity in writing?", and to highlight the main aims and specific objectives of the study as set out below:

- Observe a creative writing class in order to understand creative writing pedagogy of English teachers and to get insight into the writing process of learners (see 4.3.1. for results).
- Create and design a creative writing programme based on theoretical synthesis of drama practice and techniques (see chapter 2 section 2.3.4 and 2.5.3) in combination with writing pedagogy (see chapter 2 section 2.4).

- Implement the first creative writing programme by using the 7 stages of writing practice (see 4.5.1.1. – 4.5.1.7 for the discussion of the stages of writing) in order to establish if the drama techniques stimulated creativity for drama by means of participant observations (see 4.6.1. for results), unstructured interviews and class discussions (see 4.6.2. for results) and interpreting the creative writing journals of the learners (see 4.6.3. for results).

- To reflect critically on the creative writing programme in search of a better understanding of the educational practice (see Concluding thoughts of Cycle 1 (4.7.) for results).

- Implement the revised creative writing programme with new drama techniques (see table 7 in cycle 2 of the AR methodology).

- Reflect critically on the second creative writing programme to establish if the new drama techniques stimulated the necessary creativity for writing (see 4.9.1. – 4.9.3. and in the Concluding thoughts of Cycle 2 (4.10) the for results).

- Supply other language and Drama teachers with creative writing programmes to encourage a sustained change in their methodology of teaching creative writing and stimulating creativity in learners.

The following section will discuss the general comments of the research project followed by a description of how the creative writing programmes stimulated creativity for creative writing in the classroom, as indicated by the results found in the writing programmes as they relate to the goals mentioned above.

5.3   COMMENTS ON THE RESEARCH PROJECT

5.3.1   General Comments

Being a teacher, fresh out of university and at the beginning stages of my career, I was able to observe the educational practices and methodologies of teachers, who have dedicated their lives to education, and compare them to the theoretical synthesis I had gained during my tertiary education and especially my honours year in Education. As the relatively new Drama teacher I became aware of the fact that the Drama learners were struggling to create an authentic text for performance for the IGCSE examinations. I saw how these learners spent numerous lessons just

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trying to come up with an idea. As a result I developed a very small scale research study for my final honours dissertation, in which I tried to understand what motivated learners to write and how they generated creative ideas for their writing. I gained permission from the headmaster and the board of the school to conduct the research for my honours dissertation and eventually this project served as a pilot study for this research study.

During the honours dissertation I became increasingly familiar with The University of Cambridge Drama and English First Language syllabi and this knowledge made the selection of participants for this research project very easy.

After I had discussed the triumphs and limitations of my honours research study with the headmaster and explained that this was a pilot study for my masters research project, he decided to stream the learners in grade 9 Arts and Culture in the three different Art disciplines the school offered. They are Drama, Visual Art and Music. Each stream was further divided into Basic and IGCSE courses. The learners who took the Basic Drama course would not be part of the creative writing programme, but the learners who indicated that they might take drama in grade 10 with the purpose to complete the IGCSE Drama examination in the middle of grade 11, would automatically form part of the research project.

For all of the parties involved in the research (the research subjects, their parents, my peers, the headmaster and me, as the researcher) the research project was an exciting new avenue in which we could discover the development of creativity in learners. The pilot study had only tested the waters and created a need to further and deepen my understanding of the effect Drama had on creative writing.

Action Research (AR) was the chosen methodology to encourage change by incorporating drama techniques into the writing process. Van Daalen and Odendaal (2001) highlight an important advantage of AR in their research, by stating that it "provides a scientific methodology for managing planned change" (2001: 412). By using Action Research as methodology I was given the opportunity to focus on the problem (how can drama stimulate creativity for writing?) and try to bring about change by incorporating a creative writing programme infused with drama techniques which could stimulate creativity for the writing process for the drama practical task. Action Research further gave me the opportunities to reflect critically

on the implemented techniques, to re-evaluate and re-implement these and other techniques which would further stimulate creativity for writing. During any undertaking and project that is based on human interaction behaviour problems might arise, especially when one tries to implement change in educational practices. During the research I always tried to remember not to "overlook the laws of human nature" (Heydenrych, 2001: 6), even though some limitations, as mentioned in (4.2.1. and 5.5), threatened the project. The writing programmes were always managed in a positive manner, which allowed for flexibility and change, with the main focus on educational change.

This research did not set out to determine the quantifiable results of the writing programme. It rather focussed on determining what the problem is and allowed me to have a deeper insight into the writing process of learners and to understand what techniques helped to stimulate creativity which enabled them to complete prescribed tasks. Punch (2009) advises researchers to use a "pragmatic approach" to research, which entails the researcher to start "with the research question (see 1.4) and then choosing the methods for answering them" (Punch, 2009:19). By following this "pragmatic approach" to research, I support Creswell (2003) who describes the pragmatic research approach as not "obligating to one system of reality but one that agrees that research always occurs in social, historical, political and other contexts" (2003: 12).

The following subsections describe the limitations and challenges which were experienced during this research project.

5.3.2   Factors that influenced the stimulation of creativity in order to instruct creative writing tasks

When we consider the language classroom in South Africa a I great deal of emphasis is placed on reading strategies, comprehension skills and, acquisition and improved proficiency in language. Adding this to the fact that most classes are filled to the brim, the teachers are overloaded with administrative duties, inadequate resources, constant changes in curricula and daily time constraints. They are in most cases unable to deliver quality education in languages. The teaching of basic language skills is becoming challenging and subsequently many will argue that there

is simply no time for creative exploration and creativity stimulation activities in the language classroom.

However, Gersten *et al.* (1997: 467) argues that teachers will "accept and implement effective ways of teaching once they know what they are" – this means that teachers want evidence before they will implement change in their instructional pedagogies. Therefore, the aim of this research project was to provide teachers with qualitative results about the creative writing process, provide them with deeper insight into the learners' experiences of the creative process. Although the results cannot be generalised, they may serve as an example of what can be done.

Teachers, especially language teachers, are aware that learners must write creatively for their assessment tasks. However, many of the teachers struggle to stimulate creativity for writing or teach and implement strategies for creative writing. Pressley (2003) argues that when teachers are not professionally prepared to deliver instruction, these teachers do "not understand the instruction or they are not committed to deliver the instruction" (2003: 68). In some cases, creativity development and play is seen as the task of the pre-school and primary school teachers and consequently some high school teachers have neglected this part of development in teenagers (see 2.4.3). Some high school teachers almost expect these learners to walk into their classes equipped with the tools and skills to write wonderful, enticing and creative stories and essays. Subsequently no creative stimulation occurs. Like teaching ordinary language skills like reading, spelling, grammar and comprehension, teachers also need to invest time and energy in teaching learners how to stimulate their creative thoughts. In order to teach these skills, teachers need to possess the knowledge of *how* to teach creative writing. From my personal experience as a teacher of Drama and English FL/FAL, I am well aware of the lack of guidelines to implement new concepts and strategies in education and this can affect the goals that need to be achieved. Consequently, language teachers need a refresher course in teaching creative writing, as these creative writing activities (Cycle 1 (tables 1, 2, 4 & 5) and Cycle 2 (table 7) do not only have to focus on the production of written tasks, but could have a positive effect on the instruction of speaking, reading and language structure skills.

5.3.3   Factors that influenced the implementation of the creative writing programme

The participants for this research study were selected based on their selection of the subject. All of these learners are passionate about performance and already had some experience of drama instruction. The fact that these learners were confident in their physical expression of texts made the process of implementing other drama techniques much easier. If this research project were to have occurred in an English Language class, I am not sure if the learners would have interacted and reacted in the same manner.

The class size was intimate and small – another factor in favour of the project. Only 13 learners had elected to take the extended IGCSE Drama course and owing to this, the instruction of theory, as well as creative writing strategies, was not problematic. The fact that the Drama class took place in an English classroom (due to a lack of space on the campus of the School) made the connection with the English learning area much easier. However, this classroom did not have visual stimuli on the walls and the English teacher (whose classroom it was) did not want me to put up permanent posters and pictures on the walls, as the "presstick" would peel the paint from the walls and it would draw the attention of her learners away from her and her instruction. The space was subsequently not very colourful. The classroom had a projector, speakers and the teachers are equipped with laptop computers with internet access. This internet access helped with the creative stimulus in the class and brought the lessons to life.

The learners also had not ever received instruction in creative writing. They found the activities exciting and, owing their dramatic nature, and the learners' predisposition towards the subject, interesting, challenging and meaningful. Acquiring stimuli, props and costumes proved to be complicated in some instances. The school did not have an allocated budget which allowed me to purchase some of the stimuli and consequently, I had to borrow props from the primary and pre-schools, bring items from my home and use ordinary household objects where I would have preferred to use proper props which were intended for stage and performance. However, through this experience I learnt that these writing programmes could take place in any environment without any funding and still be

effective and meaningful. The technology resources, however, made the process of stimulating creativity and activating pre-knowledge much easier.

Conducting research in a school environment is always subject to unexpected situations as I were dealing with "real life situations" and people and the research school was no exception. Although I had done everything in my power to accommodate for factors that might influence the smooth implementation of the creative writing programme, absenteeism of participants, lesson time alterations, as well as impromptu educator responsibilities, had a negative impact on the writing programme and I had to shorten the time spent on some activities, give more homework than intended or postpone activities, interviews and class discussions to later stages.

After this report and discussion on what had influenced the implementation of the creative writing programme, it would be appropriate to turn our attention to the results and findings of the creative writing programmes.

5.4   RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME

I have discussed previously that I found that learners and teachers alike were not passionate about creative writing as a whole and that the process of writing had become task-based and assessment orientated. The development of creativity and enjoyment of the writing and learning process had taken a back seat and this finding was worrisome, for as Nussbaum (2006) reiterates in her research: "[t]he arts are great sources of joy – and this joy carries over into the rest of a child's education" (Nussbaum 2006:391). This is the central aim and objective of this research and I have tried to realise this by trying to ascertain how drama techniques can stimulate creativity for the creative writing process.

Two creative writing programmes consisting of seven stages each (4.5.1.1 – 4.5.1.7), were implemented to 13 IGCSE Drama learners over a period of two terms (20 lessons) during which qualitative data was gathered through participant observation (see 4.6.1 and 4.9.1.), reflective classroom discussions and individual interviews (see 4.6.2. and 4.9.2.) and the interpretation of the learners' creative writing journals (see 4.6.3. and 4.9.3.) using two AR cycles. A classroom

observation and unstructured class discussion (before the creative writing programmes were designed, see 4.3.1.) were conducted to establish the problem which I had already identified in my honours dissertation, which served as a pilot study. The final production of the authentic text and a reflective class discussion (see 4.9.2. and 4.10.7.) served as the final insight and understanding of the creative writing process and its effectivity. Chapter 4 discussed the results and analysis of the data gathered during the creative writing programmes in detail.

The participant observations of the two writing programmes (see 4.6.1. and 4.9.1.) highlighted the experience of the learners and how they interacted with the stimuli and each other, during the seven stages of writing. The unstructured interviews and class discussions (see 4.6.2. and 4.9.2.) focussed on understanding the attitudes of the participants, bringing deeper insight into their thought process, their personal experience of the activities and their reflection on the activities. The creative writing journals (see 4.6.3. and 4.9.3.) served as a good reflective tool for participants and researcher alike, as the creative journey and development could be tracked in these books. In retrospect, the learners' use of drama techniques to stimulate creativity during the creative writing process, revealed mixed success.

The first stage and second stage of writing in the designed creative writing programmes proved to be successful in both cycles. In terms of the use of objects to activate a sensory response in order to stimulate creativity was successful for all of the learners. The integration of the theoretical principles as set out by Stanislavski (see 2.3.4.3 and 2.5.3) with the creative writing activities proved that the learners could create stories and characters for creative writing tasks (see Concluding thoughts of Cycle 1, 4.7). The creation of characters by means of hot seats, improvisations and the manipulation of objects (see Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre in 2.3.4.2) and implementation in table 7, 4.9.1, 4.9.2 and 4.9.3), activated creative thoughts and interesting responses from the learners, which they could integrate into their writing (see Concluding evaluative thoughts of Cycle 2, 4.10). The interchange of ideas during this stage of writing helped the participants to evaluate their initial ideas and to find new ones.

Stage 3 and stage 4 was still concerned with the activation and stimulation of creativity of writing. The learners actively brainstormed their work, be it individually

or in a group. The collaboration of the different mind-maps during the final task (see table 7, lesson 6) allowed the participants to actively share their ideas and to brainstorm a new story, incorporating most of the ideas generated from the initial brainstorming session. The improvisation activities (hot seats, interviewing, mime and performing scenarios) also showed success as the learners, created a one act play from scratch, by using all of the stimuli provided in stages 1, 2 and 3. Stage 4 was very meaningful, for here not only the integration of stimuli into their writing was evident, but also the confidence of the learners, in their own writing seemed to improve. The fact that learners were encouraged to read their work and to share their ideas with each other provided learners with the opportunity to reflect on their work, to re-plan, revise and re-work their writing. The writing tasks became meaningful, as the participants knew that they would read them to an audience and that they would not only end up in a file.

The writing stage (stage 5) shows evidence of all of the creative stimulation provided through drama techniques. The participants stated that the journals were a very valuable tool during this stage, for they could seek inspiration if they came to a cross-road or experienced 'writers block' (see concluding thoughts of Cycle 1 in 4.7. and Cycle 2 in 4.10.). The strength of this stage in the writing programme is that the opportunity exists for 'organisation' and 'evaluation' (Flower & Hayes, 1981; also see 4.5.1.5.) by the learners. The learners had to peer assess the tasks and this meant that they were actively teaching and learning from each other. This would constitute the 'rough draft' of the creative writing process as stipulated in schools. The individual strengths and weaknesses of learners came to light during this stage and the participants were forced to use dictionaries and other technology (like tablets and cell phones) to correct each other's work.

Stage 6 is concerned with the production of the final piece. The learners had an 'incubation period' (Flower & Hayes, 1981) in which they could incorporate all of the comments they had received from stage 1 up to stage 5. This proved to be very successful, for the quality of the physical text was much better than the first text that the learners produced in lesson 1 (see table 1). In cycle 2, the production stage of writing is closely connected to the physical performance of the text. All the authentic texts were up to standard and could have been used as the final performance pieces for the learners' IGCSE Drama practical examination.

The seventh stage, the 'Aftermath', was used for reflection in both cycles. This stage did not really come to into its own during this research project, owing to time constraints and looming examinations and end of term activities. This stage could be used in conjunction with stage 1 (4.5.1.1), where the learners could use the final product as inspiration for the next activity. This confirms Flower and Hayes' (1981) statement that the process of writing does not follow logically or chronologically, for the writer is constantly busy devising, revising and rewriting his/her stories. What is clear from the developmental trajectory of the research participants, is that they demonstrated "emergent interactive agency" (Bandura, 2001: 13) during the course of both writing programmes. They attempted to use the techniques and strategies which I demonstrated in class (the social aspect of learning), whilst building on their own experiences in order to make meaning, create new knowledge, gain insight into their own process of learning and come to new understandings about their personal development (the cognitive aspect of learning).

- The first objective was to *break down barriers and inhibitions in creative writing by using* multi-literacies like familiar texts, video clips, music, sensory, tactile and visual stimuli as well as *drama techniques* such as improvisation, hot seat and object manipulation activities *to stimulate creative thoughts and ideas*. The techniques were effective in that the learners did not struggle to generate ideas for their creative writing tasks. More importantly, their overall expression improved as they could express their thoughts, ideas and opinions verbally and in the creative writing tasks. All of these techniques can be implemented by any English language teacher in order to support the planning phase of writing of their learners and also to increase the engagement and enthusiasm of their process of finding and developing their creativity.

- The second aim was to *monitor and assess the impact of the creative writing programme*. This was done by means of the research instruments, which were the participant observations, the process journals of the learners and the semi-structured interviews and unstructured reflective class discussions. The researcher's journal also played an invaluable role during this process, as I could write down interesting phenomena which occurred during the lessons

and reflect on these occurrences. This again enabled me to assess the strengths and weaknesses in the creative writing programme and to adjust my teaching methodology throughout the course of the writing programme. The influence of the programme was especially visible in the changed attitudes of the learners (4.6.1 and 4.9.1), the engagement, commitment and enthusiasm (4.6.3 and 4.9.3) the learners demonstrated whilst busy with the tasks, and can also be seen in the process journals of the learners. The process journals show how the learners developed over two weeks and the final written piece and the performance of the one act plays displayed how the learners had integrated the drama techniques as well as the various resources which were used to stimulate creativity with the prescribed language curriculum of the CIE in their creative writing. The creative writing programme and drama techniques did not only have an influence on their writing skills development, but also on how they perceive themselves in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. Another valuable contribution the research made, in my opinion, is that the learners realized that they could have fun while learning and constructing their own knowledge.

- Another aim of the research was to ensure that the *classroom methodologies were based on findings made by other theorists, academics and teachers* alike. By doing this I was not only constantly aware of breaking 'old' teaching creative writing habits, but I was also challenged to implement new and sometimes difficult techniques. I found new and old articles on the development of creative writing as well as on drama techniques which had previously been incorporated in language classes. This allowed me to select, organise and evaluate principles, methodologies and techniques and to redesign them in order to incorporate them into my practice and lessons. Personally, I experienced that this practice bridged the gap between academic findings and theories and the reality of school life and teaching. Some teachers accuse academic researchers of having lost touch with the realities of teaching. However, many of these teachers are not actively contributing to the curriculum development process. Language and Drama teachers should be encouraged to read more about new teaching methodologies as this will allow them to write about what is happening in their

classroom in order to contribute to the development of language education in South Africa and the world.

- To *critically reflect on implementation of each step of the creative writing programme* was also an aim of this research. In chapter 4 I discussed in great detail what I had found and come to understand during the research project. The reflection process was especially valuable when I had to redesign the creative writing programme for cycle 2. Once again, the teacher's focus should be shifted away for assessment and transferred to the process of learning, the construction of knowledge and the engagement of their learners. The teacher-researcher journal assisted in the reflection process. This journal played an invaluable role during this process, for I could write down interesting phenomena which occurred during the lessons and reflect on these occurrences. This enabled me to assess the strengths and weaknesses in the creative writing programme and to adjust my teaching methodology throughout the course. It also helped me when I had to create the second creative writing programme, in order to ensure that I did not repeat topics and activities. This type of journal could be used by all language teachers in order to assist them in understanding the learners and their response to activities in class better. The journal could also assist the teacher on a diagnostic level, as the teacher would be able to pick up on trends and themes in the classroom and with specific individuals. Thus the correct remedial steps could be taken.

- The *implementation of a revised strategy* of the creative writing programme as well as drama techniques which should stimulate creative thoughts and ideas, was another objective of this research project. The fact that the Action Research methodology allows for flexibility and change enabled me to do this. During the first cycle of the research I was so concerned with changing the attitudes of the learners towards writing that I did not have enough time to implement as many drama techniques as well as drama content into the programme. I felt that creating a need to write (see 2.4) was more important at this stage of the research. However, during cycle 2 I implemented and integrated numerous drama techniques as well as a lot of drama history and

content into the writing programme. This was effective for I discovered the numerous hidden benefits of cross-curricular teaching and I have since tried to integrate this philosophy of cross-curricular teaching in my personal practice on a daily basis. Another reason why this revised strategy implementation was effective was that I could see the impact the drama techniques had on the finding and development of creativity. The drama techniques proved to be more effective than the other stimulation techniques for the learners were dependant on themselves and their groups to inspire creativity for the writing process. I also observed that during this cycle the learners developed confidence and cast aside their inhibitions (possibly because they were comfortable with the teacher and other participants) and this allowed for more effective role play, dramatization and creative thoughts which could then be used in their writing. These are all techniques that language teachers can employ in their classrooms which could assist in creating a creative and stimulating learning environment.

- The final objective of this research was to be able to *supply other teachers with a deeper understanding and new insights* (provided by the qualitative data retrieved from the creative writing programmes)*. This would hopefully encourage a change in their approach to teaching creative writing*. This research did not strive to provide quantifiable results that are statistically sound which could be implemented in every classroom across the country. One of its aims were to provide language and Drama teachers with guidelines to and recommendations for cross-curricular teaching, which would not only minimise their and their learners' workloads, but also provide them with new ideas on approaching tasks which are specifically focused on the development of creativity and enable learners to become active partners in the knowledge construction process. I have showed in chapter 2 how closely related the CIE is to the revised NCS (2007) and the new CAPS (2014) documents. Teachers should be able to select from these drama techniques and approaches to teaching creative writing and implement it into their curriculum. This could bring sustainable change to language teaching as a whole.

Considering the abovementioned aims and objectives, and bearing the findings and deductions made from the gathered data during both cycles of the AR methodology, I would like to believe that these creative writing programmes (based on the seven stages of writing, see 4.5.1.1. – 4.5.1.7.), which incorporate drama techniques that assist in the activation and stimulation of creativity, was successful. The research question asks *how drama techniques can stimulate creativity for the creative writing process* and I have found that the drama techniques in combination with multi-literacies and cross-curricular (English language) teaching techniques did stimulate creativity. Proof of this is evident in the process journals of the participants, the changed attitudes towards writing activities, the improved confidence of most of the learners in terms of the language skills and the overall engagement and enthusiasm concerning the writing and learning process.

However, no matter how successful any project may be deemed, there will always be limitations to studies that are rooted in human behaviour and experiences. I will now discuss the limitations to this study in particular.

5.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research study was conducted at one school with 13 grade 9 pre-IGCSE Drama learners. These learners had selected the subject voluntarily and had expressed a profound interest in the performing arts and Drama education. Including English First Language learners, who did not chose the Drama stream in the Arts and Culture course, would have created the opportunity to collect valuable data for comparison, in order to establish if an interest and talent for performance influenced the physical act of writing during this creative writing programmes. The English teachers and their experience (which stretches over 20 years in practice in both cases), could have assessed the writing from a purely academic and writing task for assessment point of view. This would have indicated if there had been a profound difference in the quality of the writing of the participants. It would also have eliminated the possible subjective view point of the researcher.

The fact that the research was conducted in a private school, which follows The University of Cambridge curriculum (CIE), and in which most of the participants

came from financially sound families and had received a good quality of education thus far, could also be seen as a limitation to the study. Had the research been conducted in a previous model C school or in a school based in a township, other areas for investigation might have turned up. The lack of or under development of language proficiency and language skills, could have hampered the implementation of the creative writing programme. It could also have provided evidence for the inter-disciplinary nature of this programme; I will discuss this statement in 5.7.

The teacher-researcher had a personal relationship with all of the participants and had pre-knowledge of what these particular learners' strengths and weaknesses were. This could have influenced the design of the programme and the difficulty level of the tasks, and also the subjective opinion of the teacher-researcher about the learners and their work. I would like to believe that this is not so and I will discuss this statement further in 5.7.

Being a teacher-researcher could be viewed as another limitation. Besides teaching, a great deal of administrative duties, extra-curricular activities and meetings are part of a teacher's responsibilities. As a researcher, I found that these responsibilities had an impact on the instruction time of the creative writing programme, and also on the writing of the thesis. My personal academic needs and goals had to take a back seat during instruction and preparation times, and also when I had to organize or participate in school events.

Another limitation of this study is the fact that all of the data was gathered by means of qualitative research methods. Quantitative methods, like descriptive essays for examinations or formal assessment, establishing if grammar and spelling improved as well as the overall structure of the writing improved could have been implemented, but I feel that these statistical measures do not address the research question, which is solely focussed on establishing how drama techniques could stimulate in creative writing tasks.

The last possible limitation to the study is that of the teacher, the teacher's education and in practice teaching experience. I feel that the chances of success of this research project depended on my personal experience as a teacher. Personally, I was trained as an actress during my first three years at University and had received Drama education since the age of five. I love languages and read and write

profusely. I am also a qualified language teacher who has experience in teaching language structure, and creative writing. Consequently, my theoretical and practical experience enabled me to teach the content and strategies, across curricula, in such a manner that my learners could integrate them in their own development and construction of knowledge. Although the creative writing programme is learner-centred, it is very teacher-dependent. This means that the effectiveness of the programme is in the hands of the teacher / facilitator, based on their personal epistemology, methodology and pedagogy. This by no means excludes other teachers of language. I do, however, think that teachers should assist each other in order to ensure that we uphold the best teaching practice. This brings us to the recommendations I would like to make for teachers, for curriculum planners of language and drama curricula, for teacher educators, and for professional development.

5.6   RECOMMENDATIONS

This research study endeavoured to stimulate creativity, by means of integrating drama techniques in order to assist learners in writing creatively for assessment. It was conducted on a very small scale in a private school, which follows The University of Cambridge curriculum. In light of the aims and objectives of this study, I would like to make the following recommendations for teachers, for curriculum planners of language and drama curricula, for teacher educators, and for teachers and their professional development. These recommendations are focussed on the South African education system and could be used by all who are involved in the language curriculum of this country (NCS, 2007 and CAPS 2014), in other countries that follow the CIE.

Here are a few recommendations for language teachers which they can integrate into their creative writing lessons:

- o *Make writing relevant*: Chose the topics carefully and ensure that it is something that your learners would want to write about. Shift the focus away from the assessment of tasks and add purpose and meaning to the activities by allowing learners to read what they have written aloud and not only for the purpose of a file.

- o *Be clever and use a theme*: If the creative writing programme could form the centre of the term planning, the teacher could base all of the language learning activities around the central theme, which would give learners more knowledge about the topics, make the tasks more meaningful and create a more flexible programme in which learning could take place. But most importantly, we will have more time which we can spend on the development of expressing creative thoughts verbally and non-verbally.

- o *Mix it up*: Integrate instruction of language principles and structures with creative writing tasks.

- o *Use what you have*: Encourage learners to use their personal and cultural experiences in writing activities. When learners' prior knowledge, identity and culture are validated, "not simply as background story or as token forms of inclusion but as the main context for their work, students are more willing to invest themselves in their learning process and move beyond what they already know" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239).

- o *Make it personal*: Providing room for learners to share their personal/cultural stories is always a risky but worthwhile practice – take the risk. Scaffold this practice by providing learners with a model: share your own experiences and brainstorm with you class the ways that your story could be rewritten or performed by using verbal and nonverbal language, sound effects and props.

- o *Help them do it themselves:* Use multimodal sources to inspire your learners' writing. Allow learners to "bring artefacts to class such as objects, pictures, stories, poems, drawings or music about a specific theme, topic, or event of interest" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239). Use these to extend learners' interest in the topic (or to create their own sub-topic) and create a sense of the individuals who were part of their collective.

- o *Select and integrate:* Language teachers should use drama techniques and strategies to stimulate and develop creativity, and link them to language learning content as well as other learning areas, so that the programme can function separately from the Drama syllabus.

- o *Drama, drama, drama*: By using drama or role-playing it makes it possible for learners to step back and examine the motives and the psychology of the characters in their story. Using this "explicitly to add dimension to student

writing of character and context is always fruitful" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239).

o   *Play more*: Create opportunities for role-play and improvisation in which learners use their own personal or cultural narratives, which can invite learners to critically engage with the world in order to bring "thought and action together to reimagine their relationship to others" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239).

o   *Really listen*: Listening and responding to learners' written/oral responses seems obvious but is easily lost in the management of classrooms. Learners always notice when their teacher listens. This shows that we are interested and the effects of this on the child's education is immeasurable, for we all want to count and have our opinions, insights and ideas heard.

The following recommendations focus on the professional development of teachers:

▪   *Experience it for yourself:* Attend a creative writing course in order to broaden your understanding of teaching creative writing pedagogy, but also to physically experience the writing programmes for yourself.

▪   *Keep it local*: Brainstorm in your department on possible creative writing activities and tasks, which could assist you in teaching language principles and structures. This could also lessen the workload for you and your colleagues and learners.

▪   *Understand what is happening in your school:* Try to find other subjects to link with your creative writing tasks – inter-disciplinary and/or cross-curricular teaching opens wonderful opportunities for professional development. Teachers need to plan and work together, draw from each other's practice and encourage learners to make linkages between subjects. This definitely decrease your workload and assessment tasks could be used for more than one subject, which means that learners will have enough time to do their work properly.

▪   *Reach out:* Make contact with language teachers in other schools. They might have tasks or activities which you could use in your classroom. One of my professors at university once said, "sharing is caring". We can adapt tasks to suit our learners, but we will also be able to standardize and ensure that

our learners are equipped with the proper skills. By doing this, we are not only looking after the educational well-being of *our* learners, but of *all* learners.

▪ <u>*Provide a space in which you can create*</u>: Providing a classroom atmosphere and different modes of communication in which students give respectful and productive feedback directly to each other, is "not only good for the social health of a classroom but also makes the work of revising writing more meaningful. This practice improves considerably the work that students ultimately produce" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239).

▪ <u>*Always learn:*</u> Teachers are so busy creating tasks, assessing these tasks and moderating each other's tasks, that we do not find the time to stay connected and aware of new research in our subject fields. Teachers should create time in which they read academic literature and research in order to ensure that they are using the best practice possible for their learners.

▪ <u>*Respond and write:*</u> When teachers are up to date with the current research in their perspective fields, they should write about which techniques work in classrooms and which ones do not. Teachers should bridge the gap between academia and practice in order to ensure that the research which is being done is relevant and not idealistic and based solely on academic theory and generalizations.

Here are a few recommendations that curriculum planners could consider assisting teachers to make the learning and knowledge construction process easier for learners, but could also lessen the workload of all parties involved:

➢ Some teachers often view curriculum planners as people who have lost touch with the realities of school life. My recommendation for curriculum planners would be to <u>*visit*</u> as many diverse schools as possible in order to ascertain what the situation in language classrooms really is.

➢ Develop a questionnaire which could measure the attitudes of all learners and teachers concerning creative writing tasks. This would provide the curriculum planners with a deeper <u>*insight and understanding*</u> as to how learners feel about creative writing, but it could also about the teaching practice of teachers and their creative writing pedagogies.

- ➢ Use the data and *collaborate* with academics, theorists and teacher training institutions in order to create *effective training programmes* in which teachers can develop professionally.

- ➢ The training programmes should provide in-service teachers with the opportunity to broaden their understanding of teaching *creative writing pedagogy*, but also to *physically experience* the writing programmes themselves.

- ➢ Curriculum developers should *encourage teachers to use the creative writing programmes (of this study)* as part of the English First Language or even English First Additional language programme, and *not exclusively in the Drama classroom*. The fact that a lot of schools in South Africa do not offer drama as a learning area limits the change that these writing programmes could introduce in the acquisition of language in Language classrooms, but also because of the fact that creative writing is an integral part of any language learning area.

- ➢ Encourage *inter-disciplinary / cross-curricular teaching*. "Drama is a cognitive tool that concretizes the abstract, making it sensory and available" (Edmiston and Wilhelm, 1998:31). In other words, using drama to flesh out ideas through story, abstract language, and concepts such as metaphors and symbols often produces results that surprise both teachers and learners. Consequently, curriculum developers in South Africa should consider *integrating a few drama principles and techniques into the language curriculum*, especially when learners are busy with verbal and non-verbal expression activities.

- ➢ Curriculum developers should *encourage language teachers to use collective writing* (such as collaboratively creating a script) as a prompt or source for what Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) call transformative writing opportunities which is novel for many teachers and learners. Here, "learners' subjectivities and experiences are taken into account so they can engage in multiple modes of meaning making and extensive dialogues about genre, character development, audience and mood. These dialogues provide opportunities for scaffolding or the transformation of solo ideas into communal ones" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239).

The last few recommendations are for teacher educators, who could utilize these in their FET courses in order to train future teachers to become more aware of how learners learn and how to teach familiar content in creative ways.

- Teacher educators should _lead by example_ and show future teachers how to use inter-disciplinary teaching.

- If the _teacher trainers understand that drama and/or role-playing is a performing and an exploratory art form_ which can "make possible an exploration of the complexities and multiple layers of meaning and interpretations embedded in texts" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239), and use it in their own practice, future teachers will also do this when they are teaching children.

- Encourage student language teachers to reflect about their creative writing experiences when they were at school and allow them to create their own creative writing programmes. These students should then also do some of each other's activities in order to help them understand how the creative writing process works and how they could assist each other to improve their practice.

- _Encourage student teachers to also do a collective writing activity inspired by personal or cultural narratives_. By making the future teachers 'high school' learners again they are invited to critically engage "with the world in order to bring thought and action together to reimagine their relationship to others. Using this social power of drama to help students encounter ideas and experiences different from their own is an imaginative way to raise fundamental issues of difference in classrooms and to challenge the constraining social roles so often ascribed to high school students" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239).

- Teacher educators should become more _active role-players in the South African school education community._ Constant discourse with in-service teachers as well as visiting diverse schools in the surrounding environments will assist these tertiary trainers to prepare their students for the realities of school life.

- Teacher educators should _encourage in-service teachers_ to implement new techniques (from research articles) in their classrooms, do in-service Action

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Research in their classrooms and co-author articles in order to provide other academics, theorist and teachers with a deeper insight into the realities of teaching language and creative writing in diverse South African schools.

These recommendations are by no means exclusive to the CIE, but could be implemented by all language teachers, trainers of language teachers and language curriculum creators, as creative writing is an essential part of all language learning curricula. Bearing all of these recommendations in mind I will discuss a few possibilities for further research.

5.7   POSSIBILITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Since this research study was conducted in a small scale school with only 13 participants, the writing programmes could be implemented into the language learning area in order to establish if it stimulated creativity for writing in other learners.

Possibilities for further study would be to implement the writing programmes into several schools in the South African educational sphere and to observe the response of the learners and teachers, from all walks of life, to establish if the same findings are reached. Quantitative statics could also be gathered during this possible study in order to measure the improvement in student writing.

Since the research has been conducted, I have been offered a position at an IEB[27] private school in the Western Cape. This means that this school follows the curriculum as set out by the Education Department of South African, but that the learners take examinations that are set by an Independent Examination Board (IEB). The syllabus for each learning area has minimal differences from the previous NCS (2007) and the newly implemented CAPS (2014) documents. I have integrated the creative writing programmes, which were designed for the CIE, for the past three years in the new school, with three different groups. The findings were the same. The learners commented on the lack of creative writing teaching in the language learning areas and their lack of confidence in the expression of their thoughts. They

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[27] IEB school - Independent Examination Board school.

did not know where to find inspiration for their creative writing tasks and minimal stimulation of creativity occurred in the classrooms. By implementing the creative writing programmes of this study into the Drama class and using drama techniques to stimulate creativity for writing, the learners became enthusiastic about writing activities. They taught each other language skills and their understanding of the drama content, which I taught in conjunction with the writing programme also increased. This shows that these writing programmes could stretch across curricula (CIE, NCS 2007, CAPS and IEB) with minor adjustments. I perceived a difference in creative thought and expressions in the learners who embarked on this creative journey.

5.8   CONCLUSION

This research was born from the profound struggle learners at the research school experienced when they had to produce an authentic and own devised piece for performance. The lack of creative ideas and the struggle to write a script was evident from my observations and this led to the birth of the research question*: How can drama stimulate creativity for the creative writing process*. The findings in this research indicate that a creative writing programme, that consist of drama techniques and activities can activate creativity, which can then be applied to and implemented in creative writing tasks.

The research had set out to assist learners to find their own creativity and to use this newly acquired knowledge and skills to improve their creative writing. However, through this programme the participants developed their verbal, non-verbal and written expression as well as became compassionate listeners and speakers. The learners assessed each other's work and assisted their friends in understanding some language structure principles – they learned from each other, but also on their own and this made the educational journey so rewarding, for every task created space for conversation and growth. But most importantly, these learners discovered their "modern muses" (Habens, 2007:51), learnt how to find and stimulate their own creativity and to use it in other tasks which were not part of the Drama curriculum.

All language teachers should be encouraged to read more about the creative writing process, to attend courses and to experience the process for themselves; for only then will they be able to look at the process through the eyes of a child and discover how difficult it can be to produce a text without guidance or stimulation. The most important thing, however, is that teachers become enthusiastic about teaching and especially about developing the creativity of learners, because "[e]nthusiasm is not an emotional state. It is a spiritual commitment, a loving surrender to our creative process. A loving recognition of all the creativity around us. […] But this event has more to do with a child's love of secret adventure than with ironclad discipline" (Cameron 1995:153). The inner child of every teacher should be unleashed in creative writing lessons, for even if we work with teenagers, they are still children who have a thirst for creativity and play in the classroom.

The creative writing programme was designed to allow learners to speak and interact with each other and with the teacher – it was an active sharing and caring programme which led to the development of creativity and deeper insights and understandings about each other. The youngsters in the classes need to develop their own voices; they should be given the chance to express their thoughts about the wrongs and rights in their worlds and also to speak their creative truths. Using this social power of drama to help learners "encounter ideas and experiences different from their own is an imaginative way to raise fundamental issues of difference in classrooms and to challenge the constraining social roles so often ascribed to high school students" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011: 239). Teachers, especially teachers of creative subjects, have the ability and the responsibility to assist learners in the journey of discovery of their creative selves. Why would we not want to be partners in this process?

I would like to conclude my research with a last insight: This research study challenged me in unimaginable ways, but it has been an incredibly inspiring and rewarding process. My personal learning experience was tremendous and I embarked on a journey in which I had once again discovered new things about myself, my knowledge, my teaching practice and personal creativity. I hope that the contribution of my research would not only be of practical significance to my peers, but that it would also inspire them to embark on their own creative journey and to reignite the flame of passion for Language and Drama education.

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http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-method-acting.html

http://www.biography.com/people/constantin-stanislavski.html

ADDENDUM A – WCED Permission

Western Cape Government
Education

Directorate: Research

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Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
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REFERENCE: 20100311-0073
ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Phoebe-Marie Jordaan
Bosbus, 4076
Durbanville
7551

Dear Ms Phoebe-Marie Jordaan

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: FINDING CREATIVITY: INTERGRATING DRAMA TEACHING TECHNIQUES IN CREATIVE WRITING LESSONS

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:
1.   Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2.   Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3.   You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4.   Approval for projects should be confirmed by the District Director of the schools where the project will be conducted.
5.   Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
6.   The Study is to be conducted from 01 March 2012 till 28 September 2012
7.   No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
8.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
9.   A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
10.   Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
11.   A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
12.   The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
            The Director: Research Services
            Western Cape Education Department
            Private Bag X9114
            CAPE TOWN
            8000
We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Audrey T Wyngaard
for HEAD: EDUCATION
DATE: 10 February 2012

ADDENDUM B – Teacher Informed Consent

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Finding Creativity: Integrating drama teaching techniques in creative writing lessons.

Research Question: How can drama techniques contribute to the stimulation of creativity in writing?

Teacher Consent Form:

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Phoebe-Marié Jordaan, B.Dram, PGCE, B.ed. Hons Language Specialization, from the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University. The results found in this research will contribute to my Masters thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because I am investigating the use of drama techniques in creative writing and if these techniques can make a significant change in the creative writing exercises of children/learners. This study cannot be successful without children/learners, because it focuses on improving their enjoyment of the subject Languages, their creative writing and learning experiences. Your participation is imperative to this study, for you have the necessary knowledge of the children and their academic abilities.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

When I was still being trained to be a teacher, I observed some teachers' classes and no real attempts were made to stimulate creative thinking. If the teacher did provide some sort of stimulation it was usually a badly photocopied picture which was impersonal and uninteresting. The learners were not challenged to discover their own inspiration (bearing in mind that not all people are precisely the same) and ultimately their writing was dull, bleak and uninteresting. This is when I asked myself, what could happen to these learners' writing when they are intrigued and challenged to think creatively and eventually express their creativity in writing and enjoy the process?

With this research I am aiming to discover how drama can contribute to the stimulation of creativity in creative writing.   My own training in drama made me aware of the hidden opportunities and possibilities that drama and acting could provide to break down barriers and stimulate creativity which could be incorporated into Language classroom activities. I believe that through acting, improvisation and play learners will be stimulated and gain insight into the inner lives of characters, their motivations, conflicts and different situations. In order to document the learners' growth, discovery and development process, I will incorporate a creative journal in the classroom, which will create a space where they can reflect on the activities, their learning process and transcribe new ideas and insights they discovered in the learning period. The 'play' element that drama will bring to the classroom will become a great source of information and inspiration which could stimulate the creative writing process; for the learner will physically see how a story is constructed, because they will play an integral part in the story making process.

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2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Firstly, this research will occur while the learners and I are busy doing Drama in class each week. I will sometimes ask the learners to go home and complete a writing assignment in their creative journal, but I am aiming to make this as enjoyable as possible.

Procedures:
We have one drama lesson each week for 30 minutes in their assigned classroom. These classes will continue for the rest of the year (2010), we will not have drama in examination times in June and in December.

Your participation as a teacher:
Assessment: For the assessment I will look at the learners' performance and participation in the drama classroom as well as at their journals. You, the English teacher will also look at their creative writing in order to give me insight about the learners' writing in your Language classroom.

Interviews: I will conduct an informal and unstructured interview with you about the journals of the learners and the results, if any, you have noted in your subject field. I will make an appointment with you to schedule a time that is appropriate and comfortable within your program. I will also supply you with the questions before I come to speak with you. The interview will be at the end of the research process.

Observations: I would also like to come and observe one of your creative writing classrooms in order to gain insight into your teaching techniques of creative writing.

Data: I will ask you to show me some of the work the learners did in your classroom for creative writing, what techniques you used and how the work in the creative journal (used in the drama classroom) compares to the writing the learners do for you.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

This study and your participation will not be harmful in any way to you personally. The possibility that you might feel uncomfortable with me observing your classroom does exist, but I urge you to speak to me as soon as this happens.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The expected benefits for subject (the learner) are that he/she can start to understand the writing process, further develop their creativity and imagination and they will hopefully realize how they can use this in their daily lives of writing. The learning experience will also improve; the participant (learner) will discover new ways to express his/her thoughts as well as learning more about their classmates' opinions. The participant (the learner) can also benefit on a psychological level by improving their self-esteem and self-confidence.

The potential benefits of this study to this school society is that children will learn to understand the importance of expression through writing and that this is a very powerful tool, which must be developed for their adolescent, adult and professional lives in the future. Hopefully this research will contribute, in the future, to the wider population in South Africa in order to improve the learning and writing experiences for all children alike. I am not sure if you (the teacher) will benefit from this study, but I would appreciate any feedback on this matter. This research aims to develop a teaching program for creative writing to make this process more enjoyable and lucrative for the teacher and learner alike.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

No participant will receive payment for their participation and involvement in this study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of enforcing anonymity of the participants work. Each participant will receive a code, i.e. participant A1/teacher A, and this code will only be known by the researcher. Each participant has their creative journal, but they are not required to reveal this journal to any person who is not immediately involved in the research. Random examples (chosen by the researcher) from the journals will be used and the raw data will be kept in a safe; only the researcher will have access to this raw data.

Whilst the thesis is being written my supervisors, Prof. Christa van der Walt and Dr. Estelle Kruger will guide and assist me to ensure confidentiality and they will have access to the interpreted data (not the raw data). The interpreted data will be published as research done for a Masters in Education thesis. Only the University of Stellenbosch will have access to the completed thesis and there will be no referral to a specific individual. The name of the School will also not be revealed, in order to reinforce and ensure confidentiality, anonymity and protection to all of the participants involved.

The unstructured interviews with the Language teachers will be audio-taped and these participants will have the right to review/edit the tapes. These unstructured interviews will be transcribed by the researcher and any referral to a specific individual or to the school will be edited in the transcriptions. (This means that if a name of a participant is mentioned, the researcher will change it to the appropriate code given to the participant at the beginning of the study. If the name of the school is mentioned, it will be edited to "The School".) The recordings will be kept with the transcriptions and the raw data in a safe and only the researcher will have access to these documents.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Phoebe Jordaan (drama teacher at 'The School' and researcher at 082 795 1091/ pjordaan@sun.ac.za) or Prof. Christa van der Walt (supervisor, cvdwalt@sun.ac.za) at (021) 808 2000 (Department: Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Stellenbosch).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

The Headmaster of this school has granted permission for the research to be conducted at this site.

_____

The Headmaster[28] of The School

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SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

</div>

The information above was described to [*me/the subject/the participant*] by Phoebe-Marié Jordaan in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] and [*I am/the subject is/the participant is*] in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to [*me/him/her*]. [*I/the participant/the subject*] was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to *[my/his/her]* satisfaction.

[I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.] I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject/Participant

_____

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative   Date

<div style="border:1px solid black">

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

</div>

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant]* and/or [his/her] representative _____ [*name of the representative]. [H*e/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/*English/*Xhosa/*Other*] and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

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[28] The name of the Headmaster has been omitted in order to ensure that the identity of the school is protected.

ADDENDUM C – Learner Informed Consent

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Finding Creativity: Integrating drama teaching techniques in creative writing lessons.

Research Question: How can drama techniques contribute to the stimulation of creativity in writing?

Learner Consent Form:
You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Phoebe-Marié Jordaan, B.Dram, PGCE, B.ed. Hons Language Specialization, from the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University. The results found in this research will contribute to my Masters thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because I am investigating the use of drama techniques in creative writing and if these techniques can make a significant change in your creative writing exercises. This study cannot be successful without children, because it focuses on improving your enjoyment of the subject Languages, your creative writing and learning experiences.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

When I was still being trained to be a teacher, I observed some teachers' classes and no real attempts were made to stimulate creative thinking. If the teacher did provide some sort of stimulation it was usually a badly photocopied picture which was impersonal and uninteresting. The learners were not challenged to discover their own inspiration (bearing in mind that not all people are precisely the same) and ultimately their writing was dull, bleak and uninteresting. This is when I asked myself, what could happen to these learners' writing when they are intrigued and challenged to think creatively and eventually express their creativity in writing and enjoy the process?

With this research I am aiming to discover how drama can contribute to the stimulation of creativity in creative writing.   My own training in drama made me aware of the hidden opportunities and possibilities that drama and acting could provide to break down barriers and stimulate creativity which could be incorporated into Language classroom activities. I believe that through acting, improvisation and play learners will be stimulated and gain insight into the inner lives of characters, their motivations, conflicts and different situations. In order to document your growth, discovery and development process, we will incorporate a creative journal in the classroom, which will create a space where you can reflect on the activities, your learning process and transcribe new ideas and insights you discovered in the learning period. The 'play' element that drama will bring to the classroom will become a great source of information and inspiration which could stimulate the creative writing process; for you will physically see how a story is constructed, because you will play an integral part in the story making process.

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2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

Firstly, this research will occur while we are busy doing Drama in class each week. I will sometimes ask you to go home and complete a writing assignment in your creative journal, but I am aiming to make this as enjoyable as possible.

Our Drama Classroom:
All of the tasks that we will do in the drama classroom can contribute to your creative writing process. This subject is compulsory for all of you, so even if you do not want to be part of the research, you will still have to do the assignments, because they will contribute to the mark on your report card at the end of the year. Being part of this research is by no means a punishment, it will hopefully change the way that you think about writing and about being creative. If you agree to be part of the research it only means that I will use your journal as evidence of the activities we did in the drama class.

The Drama Activities:
I will ask you to use your imagination and to place yourself in someone else's shoes in different scenarios.
We will do improvisation: This means that we will pretend to be someone else and act out their actions and reactions to certain situations which occurs in daily life.
We will do 'hot seats': In this activity you will sit on a chair and your classmates will ask, the character you are playing, questions about himself/herself in order to help you understand your character better.
We will create scenes from movies: In these activities you will act , alongside your classmates, in a scene that you created/invented.
We will discover how to use our bodies: Here you will discover how you can use your body to send messages to other people – body language – and how we can use this in acting and drama.
We will work with objects: These activities will help your imagination blossom – you will receive objects, like a hair comb or a balloon, and you will have to find different way to use this object.

Your Creative Journal and Writing Activities:
For these activities you will use a creative journal. This is your creative space and you may use your journal to write in, about our class or whatever else you like.
Most of the drama activities will be written about in your journal. This journal will hopefully help you to understand how you write and become a source of information that you can use for all writing you do during your school years.
We will write poetry, short stories, parodies, dramas, diary entries, letters and longer stories in your journals.

Procedures:
We have one drama lesson each week for 30 minutes in your classroom. These classes will continue for the rest of the year (2010), we will not have drama in examination times in June and in December.

For your assessment I will look at your performance and participation in the drama classroom as well as at your journals. The English teachers will also look at your creative writing to give me insight about your writing for them in the Language classroom.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

This study will not harm you in any way; it aims to improve you creative writing and learning experience. It might occur that you are shy or feel uncomfortable with some of the activities we do in class, but this could be because you doubt yourself or your abilities. I hope that this process will

boost your self-esteem and self confidence. If you feel, at any stage, that you are not comfortable or that you are shy, I urge you to speak to me and I will help you as much as I possibly can.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The expected benefits for subject (the learner) are that he/she can start to understand the writing process, further develop their creativity and imagination and they will hopefully realize how they can use this in their daily lives of writing. The learning experience will also improve; the participant (learner) will discover new ways to express his/her thoughts as well as learning more about their classmates' opinions. The participant (the learner) can also benefit on a psychological level by improving their self-esteem and self-confidence.

The potential benefits of this study to this school society is that children will learn to understand the importance of expression through writing and that this is a very powerful tool, which must be developed for their adolescent, adult and professional lives in the future. Hopefully this research will contribute, in the future, to the wider population in South Africa in order to improve the learning and writing experiences for all children alike.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

No participant will receive payment for their participation and involvement in this study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of enforcing anonymity of the participants work. Each participant will receive a code, i.e. participant A1/teacher A, and this code will only be known by the researcher. Each participant has their creative journal, but they are not required to reveal this journal to any person who is not immediately involved in the research. Random examples (chosen by the researcher) from the journals will be used and the raw data will be kept in a safe; only the researcher will have access to this raw data.

Whilst the thesis is being written my supervisors, Prof. Christa van der Walt and Dr. Estelle Kruger will guide and assist me to ensure confidentiality and they will have access to the interpreted data (not the raw data). The interpreted data will be published as research done for a Masters in Education thesis. Only the University of Stellenbosch will have access to the completed thesis and there will be no referral to a specific individual. The name of the School will also not be revealed, in order to reinforce and ensure confidentiality, anonymity and protection to all of the participants involved.

The unstructured interviews with the Language teachers will be audio-taped and these participants will have the right to review/edit the tapes. These unstructured interviews will be transcribed by the researcher and any referral to a specific individual or to the school will be edited in the transcriptions. (This means that if a name of a participant is mentioned, the researcher will change it to the appropriate code given to the participant at the beginning of the study. If the name of the school is mentioned, it will be edited to "The School".) The recordings will be kept with the transcriptions and the raw data in a safe and only the researcher will have access to these documents.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Phoebe Jordaan (drama teacher at 'The School' and researcher at 082 795 1091/ pjordaan@sun.ac.za) or Prof. Christa van der Walt (supervisor, cvdwalt@sun.ac.za) at (021) 808 2000 (Department: Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Stellenbosch).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

The Headmaster of this school has granted permission for the research to be conducted at this site.

_____

The Headmaster[29] of The School

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to [*me/the subject/the participant*] by Phoebe-Marié Jordaan in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] and [*I am/the subject is/the participant is*] in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to [*me/him/her*]. [*I/the participant/the subject*] was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to *[my/his/her]* satisfaction.

[*I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.*] I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject/Participant

_____

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative   Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant*] and/or [*his/her*] representative _____ [*name of the representative*]. [*He/she*] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/*English/*Xhosa/*Other*] and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into _____ by _____*].

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ADDENDUM D (1) – IGCSE Supplied Stimuli

Please visit http://www.cie.org.uk/images/153844-june-2012-pre-released-material-12.pdf to view the full document.

This is the stimuli the drama learners receive from which they have to devise their performance piece.

STIMULI

You are required to produce a short piece of drama on each stimulus in preparation for your written examination. Questions will be asked on **each** of the stimuli and will cover both practical and theoretical issues.

1   The pen is mightier than the sword

2   A matter of judgement

3   Jump for joy!

The learners are also asked theoretical questions, based on their performance in the final written examination.

Section C

Answer **one** question in this section.
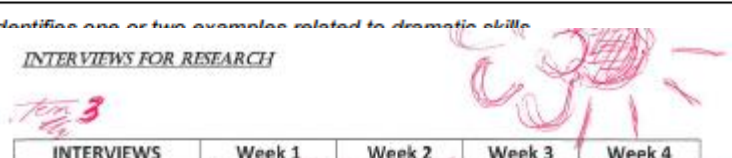
Questions 12–14 are based on the pieces of drama that you have devised from the stimuli.

12   What set design would be best for your piece based on *The pen is mightier than the sword*, and why?   [25]

13   In your piece based on *A matter of judgement*, what dramatic skills did you use to create the role you played, and how effective were these in your performance?   [25]

14   What was the directorial concept for your piece based on *Jump for joy!*, and how successful were you in communicating that concept to an audience?   [25]

ADDENDUM D(2) – IGCSE Supplied Stimuli Marking Guidelines

These are the marking guidelines for the questions in Section C of their final written examination.

23–25	**Shows a sophisticated practical understanding of the application of dramatic skills and their effect in performance** • A comprehensive discussion of the range of dramatic skills, showing sophisticated understanding of the role within the whole piece. • Excellent, practical understanding of how effective the dramatic skills were in performance, with sustained and detailed reference to the devised piece.	Upper band – application
20–22	**Shows a perceptive practical understanding of the application of dramatic skills and their effect in performance** • An assured discussion of the range of dramatic skills, showing perceptive understanding of the role within the whole piece. • Insightful practical understanding of how effective the dramatic skills were in performance, with frequent and well-selected references to the devised piece.	
17–19	**Shows a detailed practical understanding of the application of dramatic skills and their effect in performance** • An effective discussion of the range of dramatic skills, showing detailed understanding of the role within the whole piece. • Well-formulated practical understanding of how effective the dramatic skills were in performance, with consistent and appropriate references to the devised piece, although there may be scope for further refinement.	
14–16	**Shows a secure understanding of dramatic skills and how they can be applied in performance** • A consistent response that considers the range of dramatic skills. • A good level of understanding of how effective the dramatic skills were in performance, with some appropriate references to the devised piece.	Middle band – understanding
11–13	**Shows some understanding of dramatic skills in relation to performance** • A variable understanding of dramatic skills. • A focus on the more obvious aspects of why the dramatic skills were effective in performance.	
8–10	**Shows an undeveloped/superficial understanding of dramatic skills in relation to performance** • A few partially formulated ideas about dramatic skills. • A superficial understanding based more on description of character(s) than on dramatic skills; occasional reference to the devised piece.	
5–7	Identifies one or two examples related to dramatic skills	Lower band – identification
2–4	S	
0/1	N	

ADDENDUM E

– Interview   Schedule

INTERVIEWS FOR RESEARCH

INTERVIEWS	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
1. Monday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30
2. Tuesday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30
3. Wednesday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30
4. Thursday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30

INTERVIEWS	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
1. Monday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30
2. Tuesday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30
3. Wednesday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30
4. Thursday	15:00	15:00	15:00	15:00
	15:30	15:30	15:30	15:30

ADDENDUM   **F – Facebook**

Task

Creating Your Facebook Character

Remember that you have to provide the "Given Circumstance", as set out by Stanislavski in his Method Acting System. You will receive a Facebook profile which you should paste and complete in your journal!

Have fun and think outside of the box! Anything is possible in a world of magic...

SO, BRING ON THE MAGIC!

CREATE THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCE BY COMPLETING THIS LIST...

1. Insert a picture of your character.
2. Insert the full name and surname of the character.
3. Where does this character live?
4. What is the relationship status of your character?
5. Place a dot on the world map of where your character lives and all of the places your character has travelled to.
6. List four 'people' your character are friends with.
7. List the school and work place of your character.
8. Write two wall posts the character had made during his/her time on Facebook.

You may:

♦ Use different colours
♦ Use pictures and other media
♦ 'Sms' – language
♦ Emoticons ☺   HAVE FUN!!!!!
♦ Your JOURNAL!!

ADDENDUM G – Commedia dell' Arte Task

This task was set as the final performance task for the grade 9 IGCSE Drama learners.

They had to select a character, a setting and a title which they could use to devise their own one act play.

activity 6   Playing with comedy

Below are some suggestions for characters, settings, titles and comic elements. In groups of four or five, select characters, a setting and a title, and work out a comic scenario involving action, mime and dialogue. The scenario needs to have a clear beginning, climax and ending. Incorporate some of the comic devices you have read about.

Characters:
- schoolboy, servant, worker, taxi driver (Arlecchino)
- gardener, dreamer, petrol pump assistant (Pedrolino)
- schoolteacher, shop-owner, politician, employer (Pantalone)
- headmaster, inventor, judge, scientist (Il Dottore)
- policeman, businessman, soldier (Il Capitano)
- street vendor, cook, shebeen queen (La Ruffiana)
- cheeky schoolgirl, waitress, pop-star wannabe (Columbina)

Settings:
- School, township, petrol-filling station, factory, airport, park.

Titles:
- 'Copycat'; 'Crime Sometimes Pays'; 'All is Not as it Seems'; 'Who's the Real Master?'; 'Revenge is Sweet'.

Comic elements:
- Mistaken identity, confusion, slapstick, verbal wit, disguise.

You will perform your piece for the class and then make notes on the following in your journal:
- how you communicated your character using your voice and body
- the link between your character and the original commedia character on which yours was based
- the challenges your group faced when incorporating and performing comic elements (for example, comic timing, use of exaggeration in behaviour/speech).

dramatip

Have fun creating characters who are larger than life – you may need to overemphasise certain words or exaggerate some actions. Why not incorporate moments of slow motion or action replay – you'll be amazed at the comic results!

dramafact

Sometimes comedians work in pairs, called a 'double act' or 'comic duo'. One plays the 'straight man' (reasonable and serious) and the other the 'funny man' (pretending to be funny, crazy or stupid) and usually delivers the punch-line. The actor who bears the brunt of the joke at the end of the humorous exchange is commonly known

ADDENDUM H – Performance Rubric

Performance Rubric for IGCSE Drama
Gr 9   Commedia dell' Arte One Act Play

Performing a Scene / Character

LO's	**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC** • Achievement of Outcomes • Assessment Standards	Not Achieved/ Elementary (0 – 3)	Moderate (4)	Adequate (5)	Substantial (6)	Meritorious (7)	Outstanding (8 – 10)
2. Create, Make and Present	**Character work:** *PHYSICAL: posture physicality, gesture, facial expressions *INTERPRETATION OF CHARACTER: effective, appropriate, *EMOTIONAL CONNECTION: connect and convey *SUBTEXT/MOOD/ATMOS-PHERE: understand and convey *BELIEVABILITY within context *IMPACT: memorable engaging						
	Voice work: *VOCAL Characterization: modulation, accent *VOCAL CLARITY: audibility without strain. Pitch, Pace, Inflection, Pausing *Articulation and Assonance *Characterization in Voice *RELATIONSHIP TO LISTENER: interact respond						
1. Apply Personal Resources	**Overall Approach to piece:** *USE OF SPACE: motivated, logical, apt *UNDERSTANDING: context and motivation *STRUCTURE of piece logical development to climax *RHYTHM/SHAPE of piece, variety						
	Overall Impression: *EMOTIONAL CONNECTION: connect and convey *SUBTEXT/MOOD/ATMOS-PHERE: understand and convey *BELIEVABILITY within context *IMPACT: memorable engaging						
	Group: *GROUP WORK: works well together *COMMUNICATION: group communicates and keeps focus during the performance						
						TOTAL: _____ / 50	

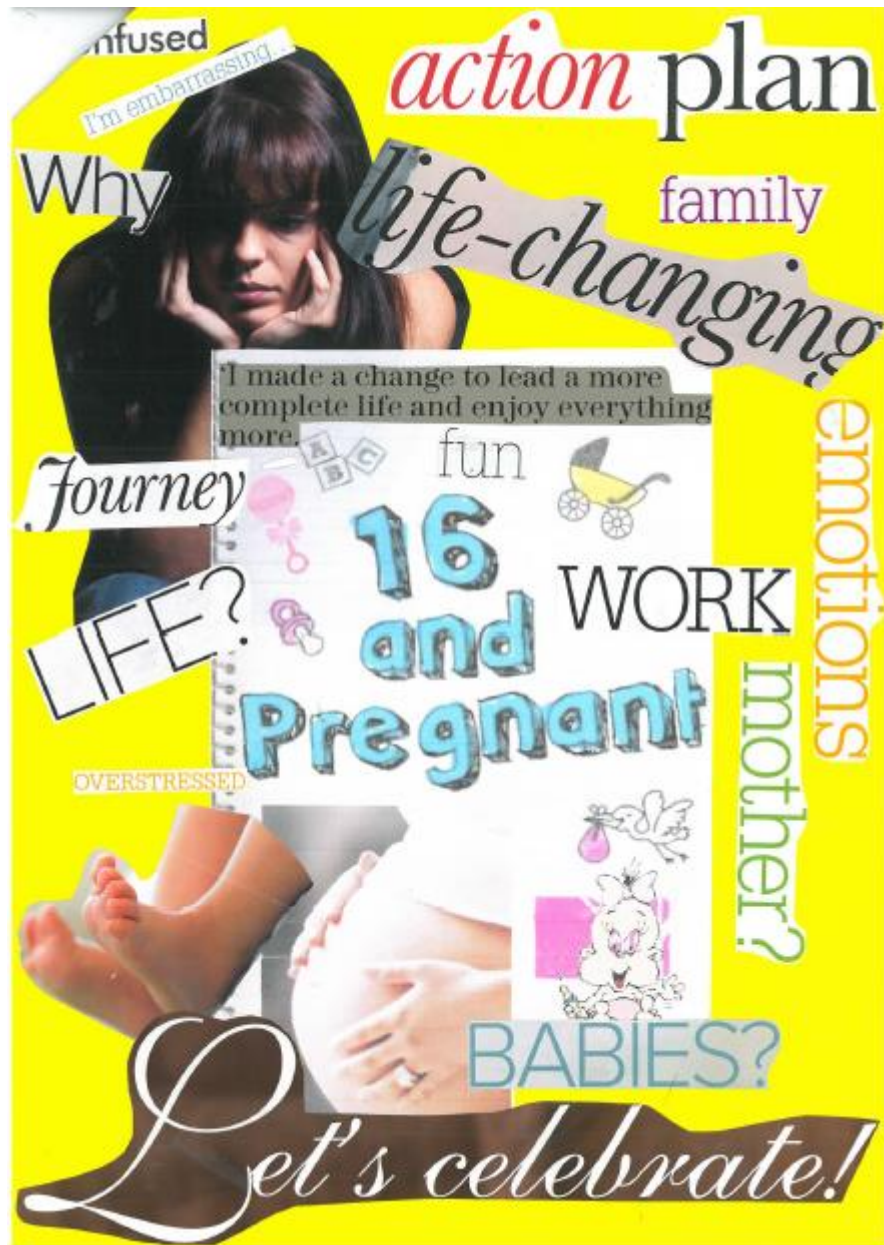Performer: _____   Group Name: _____

Assessor: _____

ADDENDUM I – Journal Entries of Learners

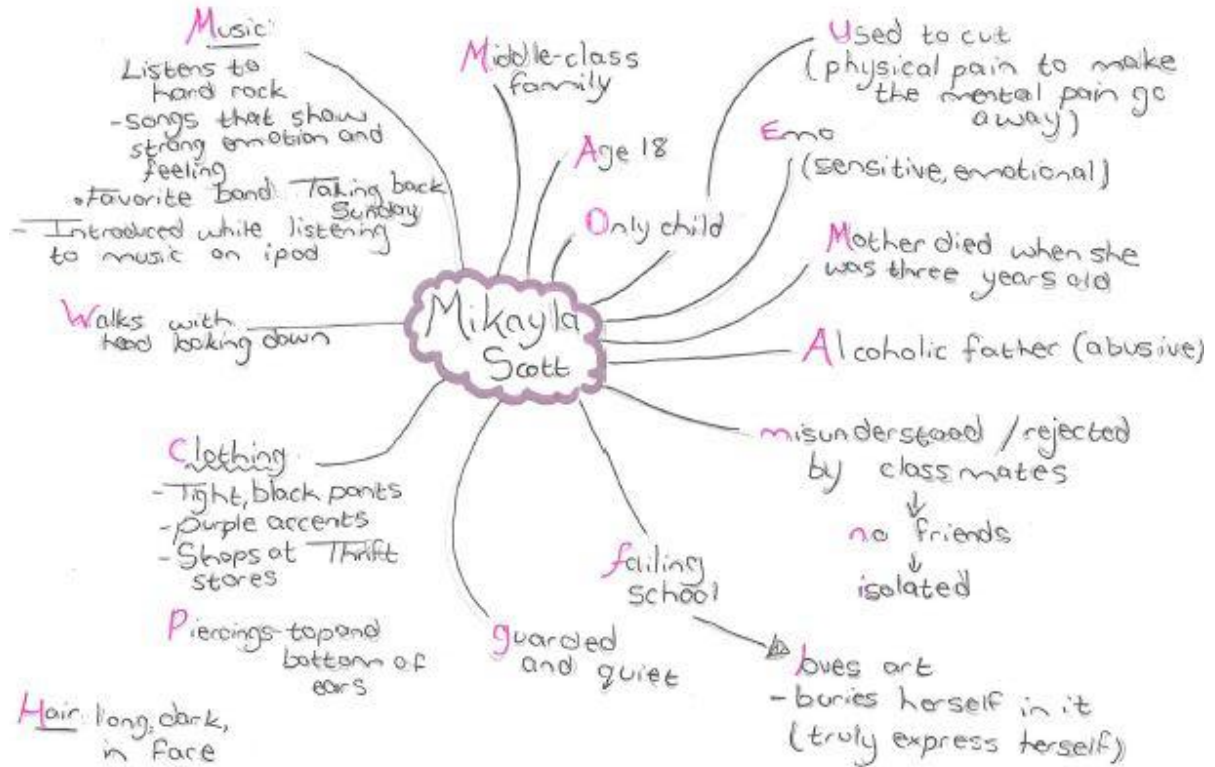## Addendum I:1 – Character Collage

An example of a character mind-map in a learner's journal

Activity: The learners listened to music and made a quick summary of a character which was inspired by the music. They then had to create a collage in which they depicted the character.

Addendum I:2 – Character Mind-Maps

Example 1: Character Mind-Map (female participant)

Example 2: Character Mind-Map (male participant)
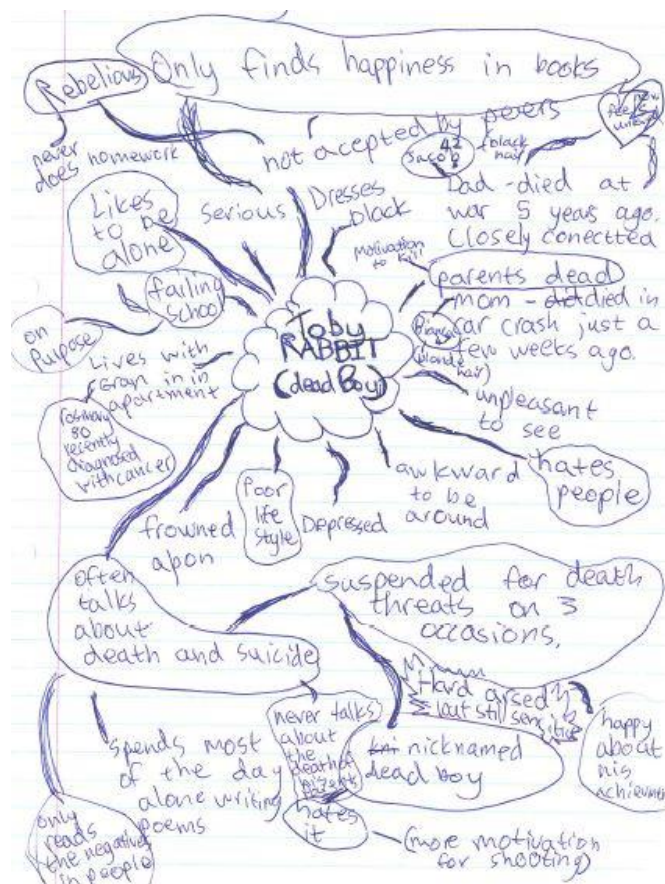
Addendum I:3 – Genre Activity

<u>Activity:</u> The learners had to describe / classify different genres

Example 1: Romance

Example 2: Mystery
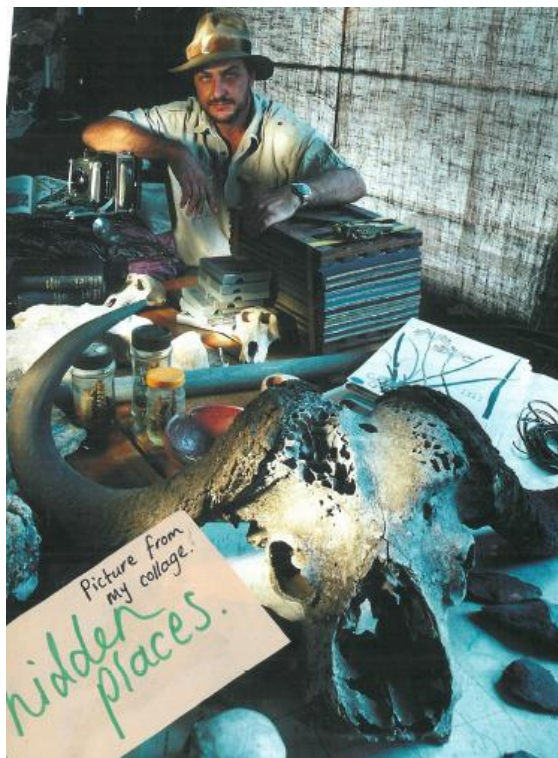
Addendum I:4 – Reflections

Reflection on "Interview" improvisation activity:

For our group we got things done. We focused on both important and not important topics. We were given topics obviously each person was given one and everything went as planned.

The time working with this group really entertained me, no one fighted, nor arguing and no threats were made if we had a task we did it and got it done.

One thing we could have focused on was to get proper communication because some people were at practice and some were not so it set us back quite a bit.

If there is a topic in the future i look forward to working with them

Example 1 of Reflection Essay[30]:

reflection essay.   Liam: taxi driver.
We are doing Our play is ab▮▮▮ shop owner who stee starts and kills. His cruel and just wants money. At the end he eventually get caught "red handed" stealing somebodies bag.

My job was just to make the ▮▮▮ sound funny with all the actions that ▮▮▮ and myself were going to do.
& Oar ▮▮▮ and my jobs were just to get scenes which would intro preh make audiences laugh.

▮▮▮ took all of our Ideas and produced the play, Because she was the leader.
Each time we practised we came up with new ideas to make the play better.

I was a taxi & driver. I think I used a pit bit of wit in my play.
I would get myself out of difficult situations

---

[30] Participant names are hidden.

Example 2 of Reflection Essay:

The play that our group did was Crime sometimes pays.
It started in a restaurant in a township when the restaurant owner
committed a murder by shooting his employee. The waitress then
phoned the police officer who quickly came to the restaurant.
He interviewed the people one by one until the last person who
told him it was the restaurant owner who had committed the
murder. The restaurant owner was then arrested.

I learned from this play how and when to use master and servant
character in a play. I enjoyed working on the play the play is
mainly focused on to find out who had committed the murder. The
play is set in a township where a murder could happen at any time
which made it harder to find out who had done it.
I learned from this play how to compare the difference between the
Commedia dell'arte characters like Pantaloon and the play
character the restaurant owner.

I would agree with the title of our play Crime sometimes pays
because even no one would suspect you like the restaurant owner
who does not seem to have committed murder eventually gets
caught in the end so its true crime does pay in the end and pays the
price for what they have done.

The play is more detective because the plot of the play is to find
out who had committed the murder and how it was done which was
spotted quickly eventually by the police officer.

I was the restaurant owner in the play my
favourite part is when I shoot ███ (the
It was also a great opportunity to understand [employee])
the people in our group better.

Example of Journal Entry:

From this play, I learnt how to work with
people who might not be your closest friends.
I also learnt how to co-operate and work
effectively outside of the school enviroment.

I enjoyed doing the play because I like
to act and I got to know the people in
my group alot more.

Example of reflection about Hot Seat activity in a learner's journal:

My character is a dreamer which doesn't really suit me because I'm not
much of a dreamer. Then again none of the other roles really suited me
either. I didn't change my voice much to suit my character, because I
have no idea what a dreamer sounds like. So other then speaking calmly
and quietly I didn't change my voice. In terms of body language I just
tried to act relaxed, calm and uninterested.