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# In what ways did the integration of applied drama methods, used to teach arts, supported Grade 7 learners in the absence of therapists and social workers?: the case of Mulamula Primary School

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**Research Title**

In what ways did the integration of Applied Drama methods, used to teach Arts, supported Grade 7 learners in the absence of therapists and social workers? The case of Mulamula Primary School.



**2014 Grade 7 Learners of Mulamula Primary School in Dumela village, Malamulele, Limpopo Province South Africa.**

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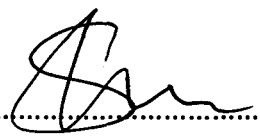
Signed  Date 29 SEPTEMBER 2017

**ABSTRACT**

This Practice as Research Report investigates the therapeutic role of Applied Drama methods for school learners dealing with social issues in Mulamula Primary School, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study investigates how the selected Applied Drama methods established by two founding scholars in the field, and apparently newly introduced to African countries, inform each other and provide a significant model when merged.

The study argues that the Applied Drama approach as a theatrical method can enhance theatre to help learners address issues of self-empowerment. As such, the Research Report focuses on Practice-based Research Project workshops and the extended findings derived from these processes. Chapter 1 looks at the research question, background to the study, the aims, rationale, methodology, participant observation, personal journaling and ethical considerations. In chapter 2 the Practice as Research (PAR) project is reported in detail. Chapter 3 looks at the central concepts, definitions and history of Applied Drama. Chapter 4 addresses the theories of Applied Drama and their integration into the literature review. Chapter 5 starts to introduce the analysis of the data collected in the practice when the merged methods findings are addressed and how facilitation plays an important role towards the learner's positive learning and transformation. Chapter 6 concludes the analysis. Chapter 7 comprises of a bibliography which concludes the study. Even though the study raises questions about the efficacy of the positive principles of Applied Drama methodologies, this Research Report affirms that the merging of the two selected methods from both Augusto Boal's "Theatre of the Oppressed" and Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" allowed participants to engage in reflection in a more positive way in dealing with social issues arising from Applied Drama processes.

The Research Report concludes that even though there is still more work to be done in a South African context in relation to the practices explored, the methods have proved to be successful in terms of safe therapeutic support and education for learners. Overall, the study documents and analyzes how I applied Boal's "Theatre of the Oppressed" techniques together with Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" in facilitating support and learning towards social change amongst school learners.

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## Chapter 1

### 1.1 Research question

In what ways did the integration of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed and Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed selected methods educate and support learners through processes in the absence of therapists and social workers?

#### Sub questions

How can Applied Drama methodologies such as participatory processes be safely used to help the participant deal with what had been unearthed within the process?

How can Applied Drama techniques be used to encourage authentic participation and create a space for liberation and education?

How can the sustainability of Applied Drama interventions be facilitated for learners within schools?

### 1.2 Introduction/ background/ Problem Statement

**Case study: Practice As Research (PAR) project amongst Grade 7 learners in Mulamula Primary School**

Inspired by both Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire's transformation education, my attempt to '*liberate*' the learners without their reflective participation, would be the same as treating humans like items or things that must be saved from a burning apartment.

In September 2014, I embarked on a journey back to Limpopo where it all started. This is a place where I was born and raised. The aim was to conduct a short research project as part of the Drama research course requirements.

Mulamula is the Primary School that I attended between 1991 and 1997. As such, it is a place very close to my heart. Despite the lack of exposure to arts education, this is the space where my

love for the arts was realized. While growing up in this school, I discovered that my art dream career was perceived differently. The hardest part was the realization that this dream was regarded as inferior. The battle to understand this inspired me to want to prove that one can make the best out of any career as long as there is total passion and determination, and my love for arts was no exception.

Mulamula Primary School is situated in Malamulele region, Limpopo Province, an area rich with culture and agricultural production. This is a place where most fruits and vegetables are grown in the backyards, and it is often nicknamed "Africa's Eden" by its residents. People from this part of South Africa are Xitsonga speakers and are still attached to their traditions and culture; this is one of the few areas where you can still find traditional rituals such as initiations and traditional marriage ceremonies. People still play an important role in participating in these cultural practices and take pride in them.

I was involved in a Practice as Research (PAR) project for my Drama Research course wherein I went to Mulamula Primary School to investigate if integrated Applied Drama methods can be used to instill value for the Arts with learners who were never exposed to arts activities. This is important because Christopher Joseph Odhiambo (2013) shows its importance when he writes that "Art is always educative." (Odhiambo, 2013, p. 97). Here I specifically used Augusto Boal's Games and Image Theatre (1979) together with Paulo Freire's Dialogue and Praxis (1968) methods. Within the process, I realized that the method had excavated different social issues such as questionable behavior and responses that in my opinion needed to be further questioned and cross-examined, but most importantly for me was to investigate how and if they supported learners who expressed these emotions and also to the learners who witnessed such feelings.

I have realized that the overall PAR process created a fun space for learners to be free, to learn, and to be liberally expressive (Freire's liberating pedagogy). However, in one of the sessions when I asked the learners to draw a representation of what they wanted to be in future, to my surprise, there was a learner who expressed what I have personally found morally and socially questionable. They stated that they want to cut off people's legs, which is, in my opinion, a demonstration of detrimental behaviour. Therefore, I thought that it was relevant for me to go back and investigate how Applied Drama methods worked further to support and empower learners during this experience in absence of Drama therapists.

What emerged for me was a need to investigate what happens to the learners (participants) after the method had created that new, first time freedom of expression: whether empowerment was instilled sufficiently for them to be able to independently deal with their feelings and experiences after I had left. The project revealed that it is not only good to come together in exploration but it is also very important to know how to deal with what emerges after the exploration has taken place.

Nevertheless, in this research, I discovered that the process had a huge impact on me as the Facilitator/Researcher, and also on the Participants/Learners and the Educators. I noticed that learners had not only consciously enjoyed the process but it has also unconsciously created a space for them to compare "my teaching pedagogy" to that of their educators: a learner explained that when I teach them, they are able to understand on the spot without even taking notes but when their educators teach them, they constantly take notes but still struggle to understand. With this said, I think that is because of the methods of facilitating/teaching that I used. But again, I wondered whether this impact is a positive or a negative one on a long-term basis because the learners were then left with their educators on my departure.

As I have mentioned above, some of the data revealed socially questionable responses, and I am interested in finding out how the methods used further supported participants' to deal with feelings created by the process, because they are all affected by the responses of others. Furthermore, how these methods can equip them to face the real world, after my departure. In other words, I became interested in the sustainability and the legacy of such Applied Drama interventions for learners within schools.

It shows that the method created a creative, provocative, fun learning space for them where social and personal issues became alive, hence the process of experiencing emotions, responses, reflections and feelings without therapeutic support is mostly challenging. From my own experiences within the realities of rural/disadvantaged communities, it is not easy or possible to access therapeutic services such as therapy or counseling, and I am therefore interested in investigating how Applied Drama methods can be further used to support and empower in a sustainable manner specifically in this context.

It is more important to identify some of the significances and inefficiencies inherited by current educational drama and theatre in order to gain a more insightful understanding of the critical issues that need to be addressed in the transformation of learners through cultural education. In the South African context, similar to cultural activism, Applied Drama has received a growing amount of attention in various fields of humanitarian studies in recent years, where participation and activist practices in the public space have been increasingly knotted together with drama and education.

Indeed, art is an influential tool for social change as it also allows spectators and communities to express different views, ideas and opinions. As Kushner, (cited in Nicholson 2005, p. 8) argues, art is not simply concerned with passively reproducing cultural values; it may also be actively engaged with cultural and social change. In her thesis abstract, Ayanda Khala (2012) discusses that these kinds of theatre performances have within them the capacity to transform the theatre performer and accordingly, the audience members and a larger society. Thus, for me, this creative way of sending the message across has stimulated my perception around arts education, to actually see the power of not only activism, but social change through educational drama and theatre. I notice that if used in other fields to address issues, educational drama and theatre can probably produce similar progressive outcomes.

### 1.3 Aims/Objectives

- This study aims to create awareness about the importance, the effectiveness and the sustainability of Applied Drama education both as a teaching pedagogy and the way in which it can work to tackle other issues not related to arts at all.
- To find possible ways in which Applied Drama methodologies can also be used not only to create dialogue, but to also equip participants in a way that they are able to contain themselves even after the process. Here, containing means the safe "holding" or controlling of the space. Participants will be equipped and empowered to safely control the actions that are generated by different environments both in the space and outside.
- Explore and interrogate ways that can be used to help learners/participants balance their reactions, responses and expressions with their further actions.

- To show the power of Applied Drama in the classroom as a teaching pedagogy.

### 1.4 Rationale/Justification

I was very eager to investigate this problem because I believe that the research report will educate, equip and inspire others to be thoroughly considerate of the wellness of participants especially learners after interventions, making them aware and thus encouraging them to take necessary roles towards positive transformation.

It is often said and taken for granted that drama and theatre is a powerful tool to evoke dialogue and to push conversations towards social change. I will argue that the practice that I have conducted certainly did. Boal (1992) and Freire (1971) clearly emphasize that these creative insights have the potential to transform our understanding by escalating the various descriptive, explanatory, and immersive systems of knowledge that frame individual and community as a whole. They have also shown that these forms of understanding are grounded in human experiences and interactions and yield outcomes that can be individually liberating and culturally enlightening. "It is an optimistic story, bearing witness to the power of drama to affect social and personal change." (Nicholson, 2005, p. 1)

The saying "charity begins at home" is also applicable here, as I am also using this opportunity to do something that will not only benefit the academic world with new knowledge, as well as my own growth as Master's Research student, but also the disadvantaged community where I come from. As a child, I was constantly discouraged to take Art (Indigenous and non-traditional) as a career by members of my rural community and educators, so I intend to show that Art can be regarded as a career and possibly create dialogue around the importance of Arts in societies and in the classroom. In doing this, I hope that my role will also create a positive impact about the significance of Arts activities in general.

I have chosen to engage in this research using Applied Drama methods because it is widely argued to be a form of education that can also be undertaken in spaces not usually defined as "Theatre buildings" or with participants who may or may not be skilled in Theatre Arts. This is especially applicable for the Mulamula context as there are no Arts spaces/facilities/education in the school/community.

## 1.5 Methodology

The previous section offered a validation for the topic of study. In this section I intend to discuss how I conducted my research, therefore ensuring that the research produces valuable and accurate results within the research area.

### Participatory Action Research

This is a process to convey social change. In societies and communities, people face different social and religious challenges. Effective social transformation requires both participants and facilitators' personal involvement in the actual process of participation, like teachers of music who could be seen composing songs alongside their students. I will refer to it here as a participant-researcher-observer process. Morgan and Saxton (2014) show that in participatory processes "the students are in the active mode: not only taking in, absorbing and being acted upon but working energetically, understanding that they have the right (and the responsibility) to contribute their ideas, experiences and feelings about the content and procedures of the lesson." (Morgan & Saxton 2014, p. 96)

Choosing this methodology was also motivated by Freire himself. He showed that in order for the oppressed to regain their sense of humanity and overcome their condition, they must play a role in their liberation, and I believe that in this investigation process, it is evident that the chosen methodology will not only work well with learners but it will also provide the platform for the learners to take part in their own liberation. As I was also affected or oppressed by the views and perceptions towards Arts, this will also give me the opportunity to play a role in the liberation of my own past oppression. There is "no pedagogy which is truly liberating if it can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption." (Freire, 1970, p. 54)

This study has primarily focused on qualitative research methods because I have examined a social phenomenon such as participation behavior and self-reflection. Data findings are

represented in words rather than numbers, although some of the data quantified is to support the overall qualitative approach.

Bryan, et al (cited in Nicholson, 2005), observed the importance of participatory theatre as it stimulates not only an analytical, but also an emotional response. Through participatory theatre, issues become alive. The participants are no longer talking theoretically about a future situation but are responding in an imaginative and creative way to their pressures and problems.

### 1.5.1 Methods

1. **Applied Drama**
    - **Theatre of the Oppressed (techniques)**

Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal's most legendary theoretical work is indisputably Theatre of the Oppressed, originally published in 1974 in Spanish and Portuguese and translated into English in 1979. (Babbage, 2004) Theatre of the Oppressed is a theoretical framework and a set of methods that are primarily experimental. Boal emphasizes that these techniques are created by and for the people so all could participate freely. (Boal, 1979, cited in Babbage, 2004) These are a series of techniques to tackle social transformation in a safe way. In societies and communities, people face different social, political, cultural or religious challenges. However, Boal says that spectators/oppressed/participants free themselves because, in this space, they think and act for themselves individually. (Babbage, 2004)

Similar to the Appreciative Inquiry method, Boal (cited in Khala 2012) shows that in this process, reality is shown not only as it is, but also, more importantly, as it could be, that is what people are conscious of, to become what we have the potential to be. Boal (1992) added in his Theatre of the Oppressed writing that this "vital element is entrusted to the creativity of the audience...substituting themselves with the protagonist, and trying to find viable solutions for real problems." (Boal, 1992, p. 6)

Game playing is the core of Theatre of the Oppressed. In these workshops, facilitated games are used to allow participants to stretch the limits of their imaginations, deconstruct and analyze societal structures of power and oppression. According to Boal, this is because game playing is

fun and builds strong relationships and community, making each person aware of their own body and its possibilities. (Boal, 1979)

Boal's Games for Actors and Non Actors (1992) shows that the system of games and techniques aim at developing, in the oppressed citizens, the language of the theatre, in order to help them fight against their oppression and to transform the society that causes those oppressions, in an effort to transform theatre from the "monologue" of traditional drama/theatre performance into a "dialogue" between audience and stage and between themselves. Boal (1979) experimented with many kinds of interactive theatre, based on the assumption that dialogue is the common, healthy dynamic between all humans and that all human beings desire and are capable of dialogue, and that when a dialogue becomes a monologue, oppression arises. This type of theatre then becomes an extraordinary tool for transforming monologue into dialogue. (Boal, 1992)

## 2. Pedagogy of the Oppressed

This is Paulo Freire's (1971) liberating method of education. It is the method of facilitation/teaching that he suggests is pertinent for learners in the classroom. In the conducted workshops, I used this method to assist me as a facilitator/researcher to direct, shape and control the way in which I conduct, teach and facilitate my research topic.

The use of problem-posing was also very useful as it is stated that it helps in provoking thought towards dialogue. It is widely argued that a better way of asking questions can play a very significant role in creating a better way of collecting required data. Morgan & Saxton's (2014) models and techniques for asking better questions were used to evoke profound answers around the questions generated from the issues arising from the Applied Drama facilitation. In my research methods of facilitating, I used Boal and Freire's Applied Drama methodologies of liberating education, audience intervention and problem posing not only to introduce, but also to enquire about and push dialogue towards the research topic, because the method provides the opportunity not only to engage but also to observe, reflect and analyze what the Arts can do for people living in rural communities.

**Practice as Research: Art based workshops in Mulamula Primary School**

As a prerequisite for my MA Drama Research course, I was required to spearhead, conduct and research a topic of my choice. It was not surprising that my choice happened to be a research topic with Mulamula Primary school learners as the school is very close to my heart and nothing would have been as satisfying as this experience in my academic career. As much as this was my childhood passion, it has been also motivated and excavated by scholars of arts education pedagogy such as Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal, Cecily O'Neill, Helen Nicholson, Zakes Mda and others.

I was appalled by the way in which the Arts subjects were not prominent in an African context like other topics perceived as important and relevant to our country's new decolonized education after the apartheid era history. I believed that a further extension of this particular topic would not only benefit school learners and the education sector but also contribute to increasing the impact of this research.

This was very important for me to tackle as it presents educative challenges and potential transformation to benefit our country's education. As I ventured into this research, it was vital to select a method that will not only provide me with the best research findings but also be challenging to engage within the process.

> "Giving people long sermons on the need for them to get involved in change can often be patronizing and disempowering. Traditional campaigning tends to involve attempting to attract people to a cause by bombarding them with facts and fiery speeches...Cultural activism tends to move away from one-sided monologues, speeches and propaganda into porous forms that use dialogue and interaction." (Jennifer Verson, 2005, p. 175)

Applied Drama definitely became the most relevant method for this research as this paper demonstrates. It shows how the above method of engagement reveals its abilities to engage, to challenge and to transform learners' perceptions and viewpoints through participation.

**1.6 Participant-observer**

**The researcher, facilitator, participant/observer**

In my view, participation methodology as I will discuss in detail later in the paper, forces critical thinking and constructive re-imagination of the challenges we face in life, and also presents possibilities for positive transformation. Anthony Cohen (1989) articulated that community is an entity to which a person belongs, which overrides kinship. Here, people are held together by shared interest; therefore the learners are also viewed as an entity that may contribute to change. In recognition of humans' unique ability to take action in the world, while simultaneously observing them in action, Boal (1979) states that the human is a self-contained theatre, actor and spectator in one, because we can observe ourselves in action, amend, adjust and alter our actions to have different impact and to change our world. In Pedagogy of Freedom, Freire shows that whoever is involved in teaching learns in the act of teaching, and vice-versa. (Freire, 1971)

Freire (1971) stresses that to be "a good liberating educator...you need above all to have faith in human beings. You must be convinced that the fundamental effort of education is to help with the liberation of people, never their domestication. You must be convinced that when people reflect on their domination they begin a first step in changing their relationship to the world." (Freire, 1971, p. 62 cited in Khala 2012).

### 1.7 Personal Journaling

**Keeping a record/journal**

It is very important in my practice to stand aside from the self and critically reflect on my own personal feelings and experience from both the primary and secondary point of view. In this research, I am aware of my roles as the researcher, the observer, the participant and mostly, the self/person - myself, therefore this has made me conscious of how I needed to also focus on my own wellness within the research process.

In this process, I have been documenting the workshops/experiences through different methods, from journaling to recording, to help me track details of the practice. As I kept a personal journal, I had also asked the learners/participants to keep journals, so that I am able to know how they feel during and throughout the whole process. Here, I had asked them specific questions to answer in their journals and these questions were: 1. How did you feel about the process? 2. What part of the process did you like the most/least and why? 3. What did you understand about

Art before and what do you understand about it now? 4. If you were to be given another opportunity to attend similar workshops, would you attend, and why? 5. How do you feel about what happened in the workshop? These were to assist me in observing their feelings and thoughts about the whole process.

With this, I was able to observe how they felt and thought about their experiences during the whole process. I engaged myself in some of the following self-reflective thoughts as a facilitator before I went to facilitate:

- to be honest and ground initial response.
- to be conscious of myself in the space and how I adjust my embodiment in the space.
- to note any feelings and energies from the participants that can be projected onto me and to be aware of my own energies and shadows.

I have chosen a moment in the two days of facilitation to reflect upon in detail. I have a love for storytelling and I've realized that I often communicate feelings in the storytelling. I was telling the story of Njabulo, who was a traveler needing help from a resistant community, in order to emphasize the power of community and solidarity. In fact, I dreamt of how to tell the story because whenever I think of this story, I think a lot about what it means to me as the outsider who comes with nothing but manages to unite the community by storytelling. I went to my former school, this time as a facilitator (the outsider) and witnessed community (learners) issues from an outside/inside perspective. I then began to find ways together with the group towards solutions for their issues as a community.

## 1.8 Ethical Considerations

As an Applied Drama Facilitator and Researcher in this project, I have given attention to several considerations from my department (Drama For Life) and to the school (Mulamula Primary School), participants (grade 7 learners), educators and Dumela community members. I obtained informed consent from the principal, teachers, parents and learners. In requesting consent I provided information about what my study intended to do.

In this process, I have documented the workshops/experiences in different forms from photographs, videos and journals to help me track details of the practice. The information collected from my informants has been kept confidential, and if need be, participants will have access to the data, notes, and reports and, of course, with the approval of participants beforehand. In addition, the data collected will be used solely for academic purposes, such as this Master's research report, conferences, or academic journals and books. The respondents' identities will be kept strictly anonymous.

Informal interviews amongst some grade 7 learners (participants) were conducted during and after the research and this allowed me as the researcher to be able to see what aspects of the methodology are relevant to learners, and what to rethink during the practice. This helped in the data collection and analysis process for my intended investigation. Most importantly, I have made it clear to them what the study was about and that their participation in the study is voluntary. I made it clear that I will use the research findings for extended educational purposes during and after my master's program.

The question of ethics was very important for me in this situation. This is because I have found that:

> "...when we have been able to accept our own vulnerability and not defend against it, it has been a valuable experience both for us and our clients....we believe that we are only in a position to give when our own needs go some way to being acknowledged and satisfied" because in this way we will be in a position to give when we feel that "we have something to give, and not just when the client demands, or when we feel we 'ought' to." (Hawkins, 2003. p. 15)

## Chapter 2

### 2.1 Practice as Research (PAR) project

**PAR Research question**

How can Boal's Applied drama methods of Image theatre and Games together with Freire's liberating education method of Dialogue and Praxis work together as a tool to instill the value for arts amongst grade 7 Learners of Mulamula Primary School who have never been exposed to art education?

In this research, I investigated whether the abovementioned methods can be used/work together as a tool to educate learners and in the process instill value for the arts. I have successfully explored this amongst grade 7 learners at Mulamula Primary School as their first exposure to arts activity/education.

Specifically, I had consciously decided not to choose a specific art form that I thought the learners might be in need of but I allowed the group (me, educators and the participants, through the process where I have facilitated a series of workshops) to determine the art forms to be explored. This was done by initiating dialogue. Using the combination of Boal's image theatre and games through Freire's education of dialogue and praxis techniques was the main focus of the research.

When I arrived at the school, the creative arts teacher was so excited that as an arts graduate/student I would be of assistance to him in teaching the four art forms from the creative arts curriculum; Drama, Dance, Music and Visual Arts. Therefore, I have also discovered that the beauty of Applied Drama is enormous as it is possible to implement any art form into any session, and what I have done was to structure my session plans to be inclusive of these arts forms.

In this process I was conscious about what Paulo Freire (1996) argues as the key to participation; "conscientisation" which implies the awareness of the social forces that determine us. Here I have considered the inclusion of learners to be part of their own liberation by creating a space where they are constantly reminded of the importance of their thoughts and choices. On the other hand, Boal (1979) argues that theatre cannot be radical by virtue of its message alone, true

radicalism comes through direct participation in the processes of production and hence in the creation of meaning towards positive transformation.

In support of Boal and Freire, Byran, et al (1982) observed the importance of participatory theatre as an emotional response, and showed that through this participatory theatre, issues were not only dealt with, but became alive because the participants no longer talked theoretically about a future situation, but responded in an imaginative and creative way to their pressures and problems.

**Motivation**

It is often said and taken for granted that theatre is a powerful tool to change the world. In this research, I have considered this by looking at the after effects of the practice. Therefore the use of these drama techniques played a significant role in evoking answers not only around the research in the arts, but also about social change.

In this practice research, I went to my home community, Dumela village (Mulamula) in Limpopo province, and facilitated workshops for grade 7 learners of Mulamula Primary School where I myself attended school. This is a place very close to my heart, no matter the challenges we as the community are faced with on a daily basis in terms of lack of opportunities and a lack of basic services.

As a learner myself, I faced challenges in terms of my career choice and that has been my struggle in terms of understanding why I was denied the opportunity to choose a career within the arts and why it had to be something that I am not interested in, something that the community determines as the "accepted career fields". I really loved drama but I was denied the freedom of expression and choice especially in the classroom environment. In the long term, I have discovered that the main reason for specific career choices is because of the economic benefits associated with other careers, and this is because communities wish for assured success to help fight poverty in our country. However, I think that this is another potential investigation beyond the scope of this research report.

## Justification

With my involvement in Applied Drama activities, I discovered that Art has been globally used successfully as a medium to raise awareness around issues related to the social, religious, environmental, political and many others with the aims of possible transformation. There has not been much attention given to arts education as a whole in rural villages, even though studies have shown that arts activities have a very huge impact on both individual and community development.

I was constantly discouraged to take art as my career from both my teachers and "educated" members of my rural community when I was still at school, so I hoped that this research will also demonstrate that Art can be regarded as a career and hopefully break this chain through dialogue. Despite the discouragement I had in the past, I am passionate about Art. I love Art and intend to use Drama towards social change (Applied Drama). My choice of this practice as a research topic is purely determined by this commitment.

## Aims

My own personal experiences of lack of arts exposure in the community has been my motivation. With this practice I hoped to create awareness that can lead towards change not only in my community but in the world at large, because similar to Bill Drayton (2004) and his idea of the social entrepreneur, I am not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish but will not rest until I have revolutionized the fishing industry. (Drayton, 2004)

I have also observed that the processes of making Art help us see through new lenses. Similar to Robert J. Landy (2014) in his Theatre for Change writing, this model of action and observation also encompasses a critical element when the actors and observers reflect upon their experiences where such reflections can lead to transformational action in the world on the part of the actor and the observer (imagination and real life on and off stage).

"Performing and visual arts can serve as a therapeutic medium, providing a way of releasing and exploring feelings." (Cornwall, 1997, p. 2) On the other hand, they can set the tone for audience participation, and Theatre in Education controls the action, unlike other structures such as

inspirational speeches, because nothing the audience says can make a change to the next part of the speech regardless of the wishes of the audience. This would also be a valuable instrument to direct the audience to what the research wants them to reflect upon.

## Methodology

### Participatory action research

In my opinion, Applied Drama workshops are fun and quickly adaptable for learners; therefore, this was my choice of method to work with. In particular, Boal's (1979) methods engage people in discovery, critical reflection and dialogue in the process of liberation, where participants can better understand themselves, their communities, their environment and their world, through a process towards social change. However, Babbage (2004) shows that here, the spectator frees himself as he constantly thinks and acts for himself.

To choose the abovementioned methodology was also motivated by Freire and Boal as they showed that in order for the oppressed to regain their sense of humanity, in turn overcoming their condition, the oppressed individual must play a role in their liberation. Freire (1970) highlights that there is "no pedagogy which is truly liberating if it can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their mimicry models from among the oppressors...The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption." (Freire, 1970, p. 54)

### Methods

Image Theatre is designed to bring the audience into active relationship with the performed events (presented through games and images) and therefore, the workshops stand as a training ground for action in real life resulting from fun interaction, to dialogue, critical thinking, action, and imagination. I have investigated this by looking at some of the important after effects of the practice that will be reported in detail later in this paper. I have realized that the use of drama techniques have played a major role in the specific research data that I have collected.

Here, participants explored issues of oppression by using nonverbal expression and sculpting their own and other participants' bodies into motionless physical images that depicted anything from the concrete to the abstract, such as feelings, issues, or moments, initiating dialogue and interaction through (mostly) non-verbal communication and experience while engaging and reflecting. Like Boal, I believed that the one way in which learners could liberate themselves was through developing practical tactics (in the drama space) to fight oppression (outside the drama space).

These creative insights have shown the potential to transform participants' understanding by expanding the various descriptive systems of knowledge that frame individual and community awareness. These forms of understanding are grounded in human experiences and interactions and yield outcomes that can be individually liberating and culturally enlightening.

Boal (1979) showed that the system of games and techniques aims at developing, in the oppressed citizens, the language of the theatre, in order to help them fight against their oppressions in real life and to transform the society that causes these oppressions. Boal (1974) believed that communication in the form of dialogue is the healthy dynamic between all human desires and the capacity for engagement. He stresses that this therefore becomes an extraordinary tool for transforming monologue into dialogue.

**Dialogue**



Indeed, the interactive practice as research process with the learners validated Boal's (1979) views around dialogue - to enter into dialogue presupposes equality amongst participants, that each must trust the other, and that there must be mutual respect and love (care and commitment) amongst all participants and facilitator. Each one must question what he or she knows and realizes - through dialogue existing thoughts will change and new knowledge will be created. (Boal, 1979)

**Praxis (Action/Reflection)**

It is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must critically think and act together upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection. (Boal, 1979)

Praxis is at the core of The Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Praxis is rooted in "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it." (Freire, 1986, p. 36). This refers to Conscientisation: people's critical awareness of their conditions and their ability to act on them. Like Boal's contribution to the learning initiative, the practice relied on performance or engagement which gives people the capacity to learn through observing themselves in action and being able to change those actions.

**Reflection**

Reflection was very significant during and after the process because as Freire states, this stage is substantial; his Conscientization framework was useful as that process of developing a critical awareness of learners' social reality through reflection and action.

Similar to process drama, in this process participants learned about and learned through Drama because both form and content were always visible. Bowell & Heap (2014) demonstrate that "Process Drama is a genre of Theatre applied in an educational context, and essentially improvised in nature - the external audience is absent but the internal audience is essential and the teacher works in role within the drama." (2014, p. 58)

- **Framework (principles of process drama)**

Cecily O'Neill (1995) wrote in her framework for Process Drama that it "is a complex dramatic encounter" and this is because "it evokes an immediate dramatic world bounded in space and time, a world that depends on the consensus of all those present for its existence" (O'Neill, 1995, p. 47) She continues stating that "it proceeds without a script, its outcome is unpredictable, it lacks a separate audience, and the experience is impossible to replicate exactly." (O'Neill, 1995, p. 47) She shows that it gives access to "authentic dramatic experience for the participants and can be regarded as a legitimate part of the realm of theatre." (O'Neill, 1995, p. 47) She further shows that it does this clearly by its nature of sharing within itself "the key features of every theatre event ... articulated through the same kinds of dramatic organization." (O'Neill, 1995, p. 47)

**Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

The following information was shared with participants: **Participant Information Sheet**

You are invited to take part in a research study that will be exploring in what ways Applied Drama methodologies can be used to instill value for Arts in grade 7 learners of Mulamula Primary School.

This research will consist of a series of Applied Drama based workshops. If you choose to take part in this research, but change your mind at a later stage, you can pull out of the research at any time. This participant information sheet will help you decide if you would like to take part and participate in the research or not. It will outline what the purpose of the research is and what will be expected of you.

If you agree to everything on this document, you will be required to sign a consent form. If there are some things you would still like clarity of, you are more than welcome to ask questions. You do not have to agree to this immediately, but can seek advice from a person you trust such as your parent, guardian or educator.

**Purpose of the research:**

This study aims to create awareness about the importance, the effectiveness and the sustainability of Applied Drama education both as a teaching pedagogy and the way in which it can work to tackle other issues not related to arts at all.

To find possible ways in which Applied Drama methodologies can also be used not only to create dialogue, but to also equip participants in a way that they are able to contain themselves even after the process (sustainability). Here, containing means the safe "holding" or controlling of the space. Participants will be equipped and empowered to safely control the actions that are generated by different environments both in the space and outside.

Explore and interrogate ways that can be used to help learners/participants balance their reactions, responses and expressions with their further actions and to investigate the power of Applied Drama in the classroom as a teaching pedagogy.

**What will your participation in the study involve?**

You will be required to fill in a pre-workshop questionnaire and a post-workshop questionnaire. You will be required to attend a series of Applied Drama based workshops that will take place once every day for five days a week, within school hours. This information (dates) will be discussed during our initial meeting. The workshops will be interactive and will require you as a participant to take part in discussions/reflections, games & exercises. This research project will involve data capturing: taking notes, images and videos and they may be used for further research and education purposes.

**Possible benefits and risks of this research:**

Through this research, you will get an opportunity to explore Arts activities by shaping your imagination towards who you want to be in life. You will also begin to think about the relationships you have with your classmates and discuss ways in which you can better your interaction and relationship with them. You will learn positive imagination, communication skills, critical thinking skills, listening skills, self-development skills and self-empowerment abilities.

Through the workshops, you may come across memories or discussions that trigger painful memories. You may be required to express your feelings; which may be uncomfortable for some

learners. The facilitator will exercise appropriate measures when faced with emotional breakdowns and may refer you to a social worker/therapist or clinic should the situation require.

**What are your rights?**

You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. You have the right to disclose anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. You have the right to ask the researcher questions at any time. You have the right to not talk about anything you are not comfortable with.

**What will happen after the research?**

The researcher will compile all the data for the purposes of an MA research report. All the data will be stored in a lockable cabinet and password protected laptop for as long as the researcher finds necessary and will be discarded (burnt/deleted) thereafter. The researcher will make the final research report available to the participants should they require access.

**Payments for the research:**

Participants/learners will not need to pay for anything to take part in the research. Therefore, there will be no payments or reimbursements for any learner/participant taking part in the research.

**Who can you contact for more information?**

If you have any questions, concerns, complaints or comments about the research at any time, you may contact:

Susie Maluleke (Researcher)

079 593 0902 (mobile)

sessydumela@yahoo.com (email)

You may also contact: Warren Nebe **(PAR supervisor)**

011 717 9999 (warren.nebe@wits.ac.za)

**Drama research Practice As Research (PAR)** Masters in Applied Drama

Drama for Life, Witwatersrand University

**Consent Form**

For participants under the age of 18

Please tick box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐
4. I agree to take part in group and/or individual interviews/discussions ☐
5. I agree to complete the necessary questionnaires (pre & post workshop) ☐
6. I agree to take part in 5 Applied Drama workshops. ☐

| _____ | _____ | _____ |
|---|---|---|
| Name of participant/learner | Signature | Date |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Name of Researcher/facilitator | Signature | Date |

**Practice As Research (PAR)**

**Pre-workshop Questionnaire**

1. Are you male or female? (please tick)

   ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What would you say is the biggest issue in your class, school or community?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. What would you say causes problems of communication between learners and teachers?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. What habits do you dislike most about yourself?

   _____
   _____

5. Are there habits that you dislike most about your community/school? If yes, Explain.

   _____
   _____

6. If yes, what would you change about them?

   _____
   _____
   _____

7. What do you think needs to be done about Arts education in schools?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

8. Any other comment?

_____

_____

_____

**Practice As Research (PAR)**

**Post-Workshop Questionnaire**

1. Are you male or female? (please tick)

   ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Did you inform your guardian(s) about these workshops? (please tick)

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Would you say there is a change in the way you perceived Arts? If so, what are the changes?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. What did you specifically learn about the different Arts Activities?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Which parts of the workshops were valuable/interesting to you? Why?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. What did you learn about yourself?

   _____
   _____
   _____

7. What did you learn about your classmates?

_____

_____

_____

8. Do you think the Applied Drama workshops worked in exploring possible ways towards transformation? If yes, explain.

_____

_____

_____

9. Any other comment?

_____

_____

_____

## Chapter 3

## Conceptual framework

It is unwise to deliberate on learners in the education system without considering the facts that constitute the ways in which education policy structures are arrived at. The research project used Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed* and Boal's processes as a base to try and provide a framework of understanding for how transformation can be achieved in a South African context. In order to understand the oppression within the education system in South Africa, one need to research apartheid systems in depth because the tool of education that was used to ensure oppression and exclusion and the deep scars that these policies have left are still visible in the current South African education systems. Although apartheid (our history) is of significance for this research, I do not explore it in detail because it is a topic beyond the proposed topic. However, I have included some background on the history of South African education as discussed by Tasneem Ebrahim (2010).

She debates that education in South Africa impacts on every family and constitutes the basis for the wealth of the economy. An example to show how the education system was structured in apartheid South Africa would be Mbongeni Ngema's *Sarafina* film. Education was structured and created to support the political situation of that time and the film depicts how education is interconnected to other forms of development in South Africa. (Ebrahim, 2010)

The following are some of the factors that need to be considered when looking at our country's current education system as discussed by Ebrahim (2010). **Economic factors**: This is one of the major factors that the democratic government is challenged with in the education systems for we cannot run away from this if we are looking at the effects of apartheid. **Socio-cultural factors**: Apartheid created barriers for the majority of people therefore these factors were also looked at in order to determine the kind of strategies to be used within higher education systems. **Political factors**: There were also political motivations behind the way in which education policies were made. **Educational factors**: There was also a huge challenge in restructuring education systems themselves because education was used as a platform to resolve some of the issues created by apartheid. (Ebrahim, 2010)

Education policy designers focus only on equal access and participation. Ebrahim (2010) suggests that the problem-posing approach should not only be used within the context of 'teacher-student' situations but also in the policy making situations where she says that instead of creating curricula for learners, they can involve them in the policy making, by asking them what they want within this system. Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects that must be saved from a burning building. Even policy makers should be inclusive. (Ebrahim, 2010)

Despite the criticism of Freire's theory, (Ebrahim, 2010) it does demonstrate how to link education and transformation in an attempt to overcome oppression. Welfare programs as instruments of manipulation ultimately serve or act as anesthetics, distracting the oppressed from the true causes of their problems and from the concrete solutions of these problems. Social grants were constructed to close the gaps that were a result of this segregation. Leaders who do not act dialogically, but insist on imposing their decisions, do not organize the people, but they manipulate them. They do not liberate, nor are they liberated: they oppress. (Ebrahim, 2010)

### 3.1 The history of Applied Drama

Applied Drama has been considered a very powerful tool in community interventions: "Applied theatre, be it community theatre or theatre for development, has for many years been acclaimed as one of the most successful approaches to reaching out to disadvantaged rural and urban communities." (Samba, 2013, p. 47) This has been considered as an "appropriate medium to reach out to communities, both urban and rural, that are challenged by social, cultural and economic issues...through this medium, communities have had the chance to become aware of their very essence through reflection, dialogue, story-creation, and performance." (Samba, 2013, p. 47)

### 3.2 Conceptual definitions

- **Applied drama**

An umbrella of different Art techniques used to teach, facilitate towards development or social change.

> Warren Nebe (2014) states that "Applied Drama and Theatre practices offer a powerful symbolic entry point and therefore less threatening way of communicating feelings, conflicts and fears." Showing that its practices "offer teachers, trainers, theatre makers, director-teachers and performer-facilitators methods that engage people on experiential and reflective levels, helping ensure that learning and change become sustainable... In this sense, it can be used as a social resource and a way to facilitate positive growth and healing within communities and across communities." (2014, p. 4)

Emelda Ngufor Samba (2013) further shows that "...through this medium, communities have had the chance to become aware of their very essence through reflection, dialogue, story-creation, and performance." (2013, p. 47)

- **Participant**

This is an individual who takes part or participates in a practice or who is part of the research and contributes something. In this view, participants "are in the active mode: not only taking in, absorbing and being acted upon but working energetically, acting upon their initiatives, acting upon others" (Morgan & Saxton, 2014, p. 96) showing that this is done by "asking questions and understanding that they have the right (and the responsibility) to contribute their ideas, experiences and feelings about the content and procedures of the lesson." (Morgan & Saxton, 2014, p. 96) In this particular context, participants are the learners from Mulamula Primary School and all other persons who contributed in the research project.

- **Student/Learner (in the educational process)**

In this context, the learner is framed as the main focus of the research project because...."we all know that education is concerned with the development of the whole student and the whole student is divided into three parts: ...what the student thinks and knows (the Cognitive Domain)...what the student feels about what he thinks and knows (The Affective

Domain)...what the student does as a result of his knowledge (The Psychomotor Domain)." (Morgan and Saxton, 2014, p. 95)

- **Facilitator**

Evans (2014) describes the role of the facilitator as someone who must negotiate "the discourse which will define their role in the specific context they find themselves operating in...they may acquire pedagogic, therapeutic, and artistic dimensions to their role." (Evans, 2014)

- **Conscientization**

This is the process of developing a critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action. Action is fundamental because it is the process of changing the reality. Paulo Freire says that we all acquire social myths which have a central tendency, and so learning is a critical process which depends upon uncovering real problems and actual needs. This is trusting that those learners can work together as grade 7 learners of Mulamula Primary School and successfully overcome their oppressions.

Freire (1971) in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed argues that this is the key to participation because it implies "awareness of the social and political forces that determine us." Freire, (1971, p. 49), like Boal (1979) underlines that theatre cannot be fundamental by the superiority of its message alone - true radicalism comes through direct participation.

- **Dialogue**

To enter into dialogue presupposes equality amongst participants. Each must trust the others; there must be mutual respect and love (care and commitment). Each one must question what he or she knows and realizes that through dialogue existing thoughts will change and new knowledge will be created. In my engagement with learners I believe that it was also the beginning of a dialogue with social issues.

- **Praxis (Action/Reflection)**

Praxis is understood in relation to Boal's (1995) "aesthetic space" idea, which is merely defined by the fact that it is a place where an act or action is performed as well as observed. This clearly means that "theatre" need not take place in "...an auditorium with special lighting and theatrical sound effects." Boal (1995, p. 18)

It is widely argued that asking reflective questions can play a very significant role in creating a better way of collecting required data. The facilitated intervention process also embraces significant space and time where change can be instilled.

**Intervention Theatre**

Intervention theatre as activism according to Christopher Odhiambo (2013, p. 99) is categorized as the use of the medium of theatre for meaningful transitive purposes.

> "Intervention Theatre will refer to any theatre that is deliberately designed to effect direct change in the circumstances and conditions of a target group: i.e. a theatre form that desires to effect transformation, to educate, and, such, to create new awareness in the group targeted" (Odhiambo, 2013, p. 98)

**Activism**

Odhiambo describes activism by showing that;

> "Activism, for its part, has been described as the policy of taking direct and militant action to achieve a political or social goal. It is an intentional action to bring about social, political, economic, or environmental change. This action is usually in support of or in opposition to one side of an often controversial argument...the practice of using action to achieve a result..."(Odhiambo, 2013, p. 98)

**Education**

> "...not easy to define...critical awareness on the part of an individual as a result of encountering new information, ideas, or knowledge...transformation in the individual who receives it; education involves development of consciousness in individuals" (Odhiambo, 2013, p. 98)

On the other hand, former South African president and freedom fighter, Mr. Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela famously defined education as the key to success.

**Therapy**

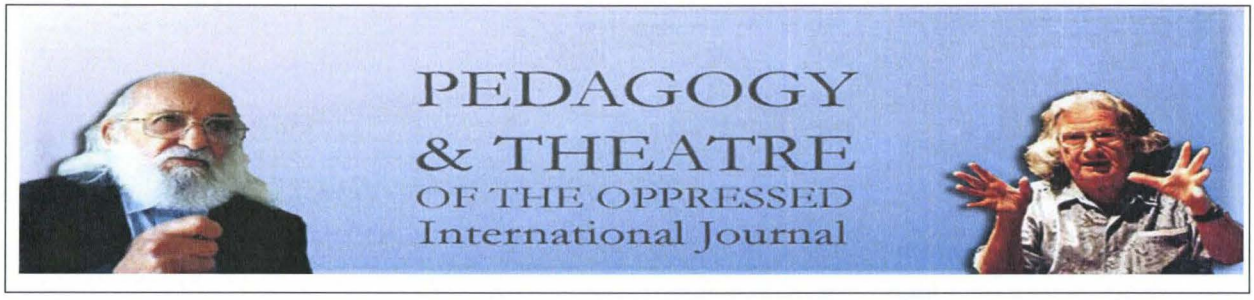
The therapeutic process consists of the ways in which performance is reached within the framework of Dramatherapy. Jones (1996) illustrates that;

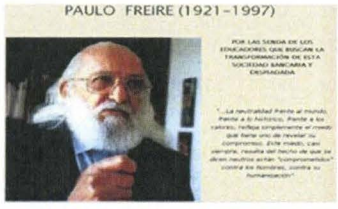
> "The drama is the therapy...becoming involved in a relationship which might become healing." (Jones, 1996, p. 162). "Therapeutic performance is the process of need identifying, rehearsal, showing and disengagement within Dramatherapy...there are two therapeutic effects within this performance structure...the process allows the client to find expression for the material...for some clients the process itself may be therapeutic...for example, merely by creating or taking part in an enacted myth or story which has connections to a problem they are encountering, a client may gain insight into their life experience." (Jones, 1996, p. 177)

## Chapter 4

### 4.1Theoretical framework and Literature review

### 4.1.1 Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed and Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed.




| PAULO FREIRE | AUGUSTO BOAL |
|---|---|
|   |  |
| **Background**<br>#born in 19 September 1921 – 02 May 1997 in Recife, Brazil<br>#1947, worked with adult illiterates in North-East Brazil<br>#1964, Professor of History and Philosophy of Education in the University of Recife | **Background**<br>#born in 16 March 1931 - 02 May 2009, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil<br># Brazilian theatre director, writer and politician<br># founder of Theatre of the Oppressed, a theatrical form originally used in radical popular education movements |
| **Aim is Social change** | **Aim is Social change** |
| Social intervention | Stage actor as an agent of social change |

| **Education** as praxis | **Theatre** |
|---|---|
| Problem-posing and Dialogue | Empowers the audience ('Spect-actors') |
| Learner's consciousness to take an effective action | Aesthetic space |
| Liberating education | Games and Image theatre |

The two scholars portrayed above show the significance of bringing together practice and theory through action and reflection, to bring about solutions to human issues; their practices raise critical awareness to consciousness of participants in engagements and encourage transformation.

"Theatre of the Oppressed" is a theoretical framework and set of techniques developed by Brazilian director, artist and activist Augusto Boal. The "Theatre of the Oppressed" was developed by a "Brazilian activist, Augusto Boal, also as a director and artist; he was definitely one of the most influential contemporary theatre practitioners." (Babbage, 2004, p. 1). Boal (1979) expresses the Theatre of the Oppressed as a system of games and techniques that aim at developing, in the oppressed citizens, the language of the theatre, in order to help them fight against their oppressions and to transform the society that engenders those oppressions, drawing from the pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire's principles of dialogue, interaction, problem posing, reflection and conscientisation.

Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed focuses on significant participatory forms and the transformation of the spectator into a "spect-actor". These forms allow them to explore situations of oppression in order to try out various alternatives for liberation. Boal (1992) defines a spect-actor as a figure who deliberately and self-consciously inhabits both worlds, observes and acts. In spect-acting, the audience works towards finding alternatives for liberation from their existing oppressions by giving them space to explore alternatives to release their frustrations from the confinement and control of their environment through safe and creative methods.

For Boal, the stage is a representation of the reality. He shows that the "spect-actor" exists in the scene and outside of it, in a twofold reality. By taking possession in the fiction of the theatre participant acts; not just in the fiction, but also in their reality, by transforming fiction, they are transformed into themselves where they act as subjects in both worlds, in their fight against the oppression of the imaginary world, they are actively practising themselves in preparation for the future fight they will undertake against the real oppressions when they "really" come across them (Boal, 2000).

Boal's (1979) theatre games and exercises act as the organizing tools designed to develop individual skills of observation and self-reflection, and cooperative group interactions. From his work, Boal developed various forms of theatre workshops and performances which aimed at meeting the needs of all people for interaction, dialogue, critical thinking, action, and fun. While the performance modes of Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, and others are designed to bring the audience into active relationship with the performed event, the workshops are virtually a training ground for action not only in these performance forms, but for action in life even after the staged event. In the project, this was a preeminent experience for me and the learners because when the learners were sharing stories with me and their peers, what really resonated in my mind was the power of theatre and how, through it, we make connections with our own lives and societies or communities.

Freire (1971) in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed writing argues that the crucial thing is participation as the first step towards transformation, "conscientisation." (Freire, 1971, p. 49).

Freire (1971) shows that to be a good liberating educator one needs above all to have belief in human beings. You must be convinced that the fundamental effort of education is to support the liberation of people, never their domestication. (Freire, 1971) Here it was discovered that as an educator, I was convinced that when the learners "reflect on their domination they begin a first step in changing their relationships to the world." (Freire, 1971, p. 25)

### 4.1.2 Literature review

First and foremost, both Boal and Freire's theories attempt to show the ability to link educational drama, theatre and transformation in an attempt to overcome oppression and social issues discovered in the practice. They also show that in order to resolve the problems within our societies, a broader more purposeful approach and more comprehensive strategies of raising awareness are required to empower audiences (learners/community members). There are a great number of exercises designed with the objective of making each person aware of their own body and its bodily possibilities. (Boal, 1979)

One of the most important points Babbage (2004) raises is that Boal shows that the theory recognizes that "practice informs theory; theory refines practice in the process of transformation and liberation." (2004, p. 1) This is significant because it clearly shows the importance of putting what we read into action. Theatre of the Oppressed was born out of Boal's desire to make the theatre a stage of life-affirmation and engagement of people in their social spheres. (Babbage, 2004)

In my understanding of Boal's theory, it stresses that theatre encourages investigation where the facilitator and the participant meet in the fictional or dramatic world to highlight and discuss real issues by providing a platform for interaction between and through education, theatre, community development and social action, a learning initiative towards social liberation and transformation.

On the other hand, Freire was greatly concerned with education as a tool for liberation. Freire interrogated the genuine culture/tradition of oppression in education systems. His pedagogy draws upon a number of components about consciousness and liberation rooted in dialogue and self-actualization. The banking concept refers to using students as deposits of knowledge without giving them the chance to be agents of their learning. This becomes a self-empowering process of dialogue that helps to instill critical thinking. (Freire, 1971)

Hence, Boal in The Rainbow of Desire (1995) shows that it is not enough for people to come together in discussion in order to gain facts of their social reality. At this point, he shows that they (community members/participants) must take action together upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection. (Boal, 1995)

Freire (1996) argues that the key to participation is Conscientisation and this line of thought gave birth to participatory theatre techniques. Additionally, Bryan, et al (1982) observe the importance of participatory theatre, in stimulating not only an analytical, but also an emotional response. Through participatory theatre, they emphasize, issues become alive. The participants are no longer talking hypothetically about a future situation but are responding in an imaginative and creative way to their pressures and problems.

Boal realizes the potential of participatory theatre in liberating the sidelined individual. He shows that the audience must not just liberate their critical conscious, but the whole body too. He explains his concept of the liberation of the body as follows: "the body speaks the oppression that we consciously or unconsciously hold within us," that once we have become aware of the customary "and oppressive patterns of the body then we can begin to practice theatre as a language that is living and present." (1996. p. 126)

Morgan and Saxton (2014) highlight significant points regarding the facilitator. They show that the facilitator must act as the negotiator through audience participation. In support of Morgan and Saxton (2014), Bryan et al (cited in Nicholson 2005) stress the importance of participatory theatre as they show how it brings about an emotional response which is regarded as one of the important steps towards transformation.

On the other hand, Robert Landy (2014) indicates that much research in the field has been limited to descriptions of practice and theory, and his Theatre for Change writing came in with an attention to praxis, a commitment to methodologies of critical analysis and performance ethnography as well as evidence-based research. Therefore I have also been reflecting on and analyzing my practice and this has meant that the planned investigative process has taken on a different direction dependent on the discoveries during the research.

In conclusion, Cornwall's (1997) idea of the power of arts is very relevant here. He strongly states that "Performing and visual arts can serve as a therapeutic medium, providing a way of releasing and exploring feelings." (Cornwall, 1997, p. 2) In support of Cornwall's idea, Phil Jones wrote on drama as therapy. He shows that drama is not only used as an imaginary escape but also as a therapeutic space for the individual/participant through active participation within the dramatic world.

Through the above literature review, I have discovered that even though each and every scholar who contributed to this particular topic has a different focus towards transformation, they all show that their major aim is positive change and transformation, whether it is through the facilitator, participation, teaching pedagogy, techniques or methods.

## Chapter 5

### 5.1 Fundamental Principles of Facilitation

The role of facilitation is highly dependent on contexts related to participants. Apart from this, I think the role of facilitator is a multipart role. The responsibilities of a facilitator are associated with other roles, and I think facilitation in drama is different from directing and teaching, yet it is derived significantly from these roles.

As much as facilitation draws on pedagogic and artistic roles in education, it is informed and influenced by a range of roles from multiple fields. However, it should also be noted that there is a fine line between teaching and facilitation. And I strongly think that Freire's pedagogy has proved how it has enabled learning in this study.

In my understanding of the principles of facilitation, facilitation relies not only on the facilitator, but on a working alliance between both the facilitator and participants. It is highly dependent on collaboration. In the study, I have realized that there is a clear line between teaching and facilitation. I am stating this because I have experienced both teaching and facilitation as a learner/participant myself. Carl Rogers's (1983) take on facilitation and learning is that "the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal relationship between facilitator and learner." (Rogers, 1990, p. 305)

I noticed in the workshops that as much as I was insistent that the participants expose their feelings, especially when I asked them to openly share their dreams with each other, this was done in a safe way that did not aggravate judgments and discouragements because facilitators must be explorers of the participants' background, culture, tradition, histories of their past and present experiences.

Before I started working with the learners, I noticed that facilitation would be new in the group, and this meant that I had to actively consider how to apply and introduce facilitation in a less threatening and accessible way. I was able do that by facilitating freedom which gave learners a platform to learn. "The facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal relationship between facilitator and learner." (Rogers, 1990, p. 305) It

was important for me to see learners not as "participants" of my research project, but rather to understand the personal relationships that we managed to create and keep.

### 5.2 Agents of change

Reading Landy's (2014) article titled "The helper" reminded me again that I am not omniscient and all knowing. It opened me up into viewing my own shadows without any judgments but rather acknowledging that they are there. I appreciate what he emphasizes in the article about being the channel or vehicle of help. Accepting that I am merely the channel of guidance that is there to remind the learners of their own dignity, strength and ability to take care and help themselves. I was also willing to know that it is not always easy to accept that I am only a helper and no more than that.

Sometimes we want to be accredited, appreciated, acknowledged and thanked for our help and so forth, however, it was the key for me in this research process to remember that I am a helper who is, in service, humble enough to know and remember that. I am also realizing daily that this facilitation work is not easy but for me it is through God that I am able to do it.

> "...when we have been able to accept our own vulnerability and not defend against it, it has been a valuable experience both for us and our clients....we believe that we are only in a position to give when our own needs go some way to being acknowledged and satisfied" because in this way we will be in a position to give when we feel that "we have something to give, and not just when the client demands, or when we feel we 'ought' to." (Hawkins, 2003, P. 15)

As a facilitator, it is important to believe that we are equipped with something to support us when facilitating change. I have realized that with my tertiary education and training I have gained something valuable as a facilitator. I was not only able to impart the knowledge to the learners but I was also able to instill its value safely (with the Applied Drama methods that I used).

Similar to the famous stone soup story (see Appendices) where the traveler only goes into a community with a stone), the traveler takes their stone (catalyst) and moves on to another community, and hence, I also move forward to another group/community. So from this

metaphor, I as the facilitator can only take away my stone but cannot necessarily take with me the social issues of the learners. This is very interesting for me because at the beginning of the process, I so hoped and thought I was going to solve issues through the process but I have discovered and learned that it is not a quick process and that transformation is not entirely my responsibility alone but it is a community's responsibility.

When I was headed for the project, I was so excited to go home and looked forward to add a layer of experience to my academic belt. Even though I was aware of creating false expectations, I was constantly finding myself picturing how the learners will respond to my facilitation and I believe that these were my own personal expectations that can either work well or against the experiences we look forward to as we embark on facilitation journeys as agents of change. However, I realize that my feelings were merely because I had gone into the space with too much personal experience.

From this process, I was reminded of Freire's argument in his liberating education theory that children are not just empty vessels in which information should be banked, but rather they too have a lot of knowledge within them. The children's daily experiences of the theme in their homes/communities make them able to speak back to this theme. Again I was also educated and deeply moved by the learners' courage to dream big even though they are unlikely to be exposed to these kinds of circumstances. (Freire, 1971)

## Chapter 6

- **Analysis of data collected**

### 6.1 The importance of Drama therapists in the space

As someone who has been introduced to both Applied Drama and Drama Therapy, I can say that even though they both aim at change, they are distinct. I think that Applied Drama focuses more on social change and education (community), whereas Drama Therapy aims at change on a deeper emotional healing level (personal). However, both forms reflect each other and draw from each other. "One of the simplest definitions of therapy is that it is a form of intervention aiming to bring about personal change." (Jones, 1996, p. 169) Below are the nine core processes of Drama Therapy explained by Phil Jones. They are included here to give a clear understanding of the importance of therapy in classroom environments and workshop spaces.

- **Nine core processes of Drama Therapy**

1. **Dramatic projection**

This process is very important in workshop spaces because, through materials, it interrogates the two most important states (the inner state and the external dramatic form) within a participant and their relationship:

> "Dramatic projection within Dramatherapy is the process by which clients project aspects of themselves or their experience into theatrical or dramatic materials or into enactment and thereby externalize inner conflicts. A relationship between the inner state of the client and the external dramatic form is established and developed through action." (Jones, 1996, p. 101)

And this allows learners/participants to "...identify with the characteristics of one of the personae on the stage either through motivation, experience or attitude." (Jones, 1996, p. 101)

## 2. Therapeutic performance process

The interesting aspect I found about this particular process is that the significant part of the process is the preparation of the performance, as it is entirely therapeutic. "Therapeutic performance is the process of need-identifying, rehearsal, showing and disengagement within Dramatherapy." (Jones, 1996, p. 102) This particular process "...consists of the ways in which performance is reached within the framework of Dramatherapy." (Jones, 1996, p. 102)

## 3. Dramatherapeutic empathy and distancing

Dramatherapeutic empathy and distancing might sound as if they are opposite to each other but they really complement each other. "Dramatic empathy refers to the creation of a bond between actor and audience." (Jones, 1996, p. 104) This is "emotional engagement and disengagement". (Jones, 1996, p. 105) Distancing on the other hand refers to "a way of approaching drama and theatre related to Brecht's Verfremdungseffekt." (Jones, 1996, p. 104). Jones (1996) continues to show that here, the actor "...does not allow himself to become completely transformed on the stage into the character he is playing". (Brecht, 1964, p. 137, cited in Jones, 1996, p. 104)

All in all, both processes can refer to "clients whether in an active engagement with the dramatic material or as witness/audience to the material." (Jones, 1996, p. 106)

## 4. Personification and impersonation

Personification is the "...act of representing something or some personal quality or aspect of a person using objects dramatically." (Jones, 1996, p. 107) Impersonation refers to "...the processes such as the impersonation of one person by another." This is important because each and every individual possesses qualities that allow them to relate and express themselves towards healing.

## 5. Interactive audience and witnessing

Jones, (1996) states that "One of the fundamental condemnations he makes of this situation is the absence of audience," because in the process "...'audience' refers to a role, 'witnessing' to an action." This is equivalent to what Freire termed the banking system of education where participants, or learners, are treated as "blank slates" incapable of asserting their own agency. (Jones, 1996, p. 110)

Jones, (1996) argues "...against Brook, proposing that the function of the audience, or witnessing, is present and crucial within Dramatherapy group work, but that it manifests itself differently, and has a different function than it does in theatre." (Jones, 1996, p. 110)

## 6. Embodiment: dramatising the body

"The way the body relates to an individual's identity is an important element in Dramatherapy work." (Jones, 1996, p. 111) Here, learners are not just raising their hands behind the desks, but actively use their bodies in the space and this has made me realize the difference between doing and imagining. Learners were given an opportunity to embody the action thus creatively putting their imaginations into action through drama.

When sharing stories with me, what really resonated in my mind was the power of Boal's (1992) Image theatre processes and how, through images, we make connections with a community. This denotes that how we express images will impact on participants' willingness to engage us successfully. The images must resonate with the community; they need to be interesting images that encourage exploration.

## 7. Playing

As Boal mentions in his Games Theoretical framework, playing allows participants to be free and learn. "Play in Dramatherapy refers to processes which involve both children and adults..." (Jones, 1996, p. 115)

In this context, these kinds of playing consist of: "Playfulness...The use of play as an expressive form...Development model of play within the process of therapeutic change...and the creation of play space in the Dramatherapy session. (Jones, 1996, p. 115)

### 8. Life-drama connection

Jones, (1996) wrote that in Dramatherapy there is "...an intimate connection between life and drama. This is intentional and is essential to the process of change in Dramatherapy." (Jones, 1996, p. 115)

With the process, I have realized that even in Applied Drama there is indeed a similar connection between life and drama because the way in which learners reflected was not removed from their own personal experiences. When enacting a story in the third session, a learner demonstrated how people are allergic to onions. This is but one example of how learners are making connections between life and drama.

### 9. Transformation

I strongly think that Transformation is the core aim, not only amongst all these other processes, but also in the fields of both Applied Drama and Drama Therapy, because it is not only the main aim of Drama Therapy but also the aim of each and every Applied Drama process and this Practice As Research is no exception. "A number of authors and practitioners point to transformation as central to any theatre or drama event." (Jones, 1996, p. 119)
In one of my 2014 MA classes, it was stated that the most potent and intoxicating oppressor is the mind of the oppressed, that once the mind of the oppressed is transformed, the oppressor is left with less chances of oppression and most unlikely to succeed.

## 6.2 Introduction to the Applied Drama space

### The School/Workshops

The workshops showed that, the "spect-actors", as suggested by Boal, were indeed entrusted to be the contributors to their own education and transformation. They were creatively engaged in the facilitated participatory workshops. These workshops gave learners the confidence to take responsibility for their own education and transformation.

In the school project, participants learned about and learned through drama because both form and content were always visible. In their presentation, Bowell & Heap (2014) showed that it is similar to the expressive forms of Drama Therapy, where "the use of created and scripted roles and characters, or playing oneself in a fictional reality" was used "in order to explore life experiences." (Jones, 1996, p. 166)

In the facilitated workshops, learners took up roles in the action, where they volunteered to go "on stage" and take up characters' roles by acting out/imagining how they would respond or act in relation to a problematic situation that was presented in the story and this participatory theatre utilized the principles of Boal's Forum Theatre. This is similar to Drama Therapy's use of "the connection between fantasy and reality to intervene in the way people live." (Jones, 1996, p. 168)

Parallel to Image theatre, participants explored issues of oppression by using nonverbal expression. For example, participants sculpted their own and other participants' bodies into static physical images that depicted anything concrete or abstract, such as a feeling, issue, or moment.

Space was also a problem because the floors were not ideally clean for the learners to sit comfortably. On the first day I noticed that learners were not entirely willing to sit on the dirty floor; however, I was shocked to see that learners were all ready to sit down on the second day and surprisingly the floors were even dirtier than the first day. The methods introduced enabled the learners to forget about the dirt by shifting their focus to the fun they were about to have.

### 6.2.1. Session one (Introduction; Creative arts: DRAMA)

The first session was the most challenging as this is where the success of the project is normally implanted. I didn't know what to expect despite the preparations beforehand and the trust I had in the Applied Drama methods.

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, Boal's Game playing is the core of Theatre of the Oppressed, and I had many games lined up. In this research, I discovered that games have the potential to create a space for learners to be free, to play and have fun but most importantly to learn through these processes. Games are not just games for playing but they are designed to educate and instill different skills to participants. In this session, the "*Onay-onay-O*" (see Appendices) game/exercise was perfect as a warm up and/or an icebreaker because it allowed the participants to shed any distractions that they might have brought into the workshop space. This game was also a buildup exercise and successfully encouraged participation and team work, cooperation and concentration which are needed in the first session.

The introduction was designed to accommodate the learners' insights, so I carefully planned a "Contract" exercise. This is the most important part of the whole project because the discipline of learners can be constructed here. I chose a contract because of my personal experiences working with school learners. It works well in terms of creating rules amongst them and this enabled me as the facilitator to "control" the space/environment and learners' behavior. This worked because as much as "good conduct" is expected of them, it did not impose rules on the learners., However, it allowed learners to feel like they were in charge of creating their own rules and this prevented them from breaking them in most cases.

With the contract, I was able, as the facilitator, to add my own expectations, but I also discovered that the learners are capable of knowing what is right and acceptable in the classroom space, as they came up with almost all of the "rules" we included in the contract and no learner objected to them. The most precious discovery was that as I asked them to keep that contract in their classroom and always refer back to it even when I am gone, I was thrilled to hear from an educator who asked me about the contract. He expressed that since I had left, the learners always refer to the "contract paper" on the wall when one of them has a negative attitude or behaviour contrary to the contract. This shows the power of drama as pedagogy in the classroom - it is not that they were not taught about good behavior, but the power was in the way in which they were taught.

### 6.2.2. Session two (Dance)

This session gave me a better feeling than the previous session because here I already observed and "knew" what to expect even though I must state that the outcomes of Applied Drama facilitations are never known.

Recapping of processes was very important in the sessions because it allowed me to understand what the learners learned, what they liked or disliked and what they thought. To my surprise they were excited about the previous session and were ready to take off with the second one. I have discovered that drama allowed them to learn but most importantly to look forward to the next session because as much as learning can be hard for some learners, through drama it is fun.

It was exciting for me as a facilitator to see that learners were ready to teach each other the games that I had asked them to prepare the previous day. What was important was that it was easier to let learners play the games that they were familiar with as this created a space for teamwork, independence, ownership and leadership. I also discovered that games were able to connect them to each other and made them value each other equally, because some of the games that they came up with needed equal contributions from each and every one of them for the game to be playful and educative.

This was the session where I read them a story. Story narration was not new to the learners and I didn't have to ask them to be attentive - as soon as I said "*Garingani wa garingani*", which is a Xitsonga way of saying that I am about to narrate a story, they became quiet and attentive. An educator who was observing the lesson expressed that they thought we had left as the learners were never that quiet and attentive. After narrating the story, I asked them to create images in small groups. I realized that through images, they were able to recreate and tell the story from their own individual point of view, which is an indicator of learning.

The story narration exercise allowed learners to connect with different personal experiences aligned to the story. They were able to identify aspects of the storytelling from their own cultural experiences. I went into the process with what I have picked from Robert Landy's take on role theory. My role and character in telling the story extended these two roles. Considering these multiple roles, I also played the role of a negotiator/facilitator between the learners and

imagination. I also played the role of a traditional storyteller that was further reflected by the emotional attachments that the learners brought into the story engagement. I discovered that indeed I embodied different roles but most importantly these roles were derived and drawn from my own personal experiences.

In storytelling, the imaginative meets reality especially when we draw from personal and community experiences. I would also argue that being in role brings up a lot of things in the conscious mind that one is not aware of, perhaps some memories that were not easy to deal with and were hidden somewhere in the sub-conscious. With this experience I am also realizing how our bodies in the process are archives of life experiences and that everything we encounter leaves something stored within our memories. These memories are often tapped into when embodying a certain role such as that of the storyteller. I also discovered that I narrated the story from memory and perhaps this is why I didn't struggle with the lines of the story. I worked from what I felt the first time I listened to a story.

It's only with experiential learning that as both participants and facilitators we make meaning of the occurrences around us. In this case, as the Applied Drama facilitator, I was able to help the community realize and reimagine the power of working together and caring for one another. Furthermore, I was able to address the disintegration that was experienced by learners in relation to arts education. In doing this, I was able to create a space where they were able to learn/realize and identify all stakeholders as responsible for the growth of their community. As Julius Nyerere emphasized during his leadership period: people cannot be developed, but they develop themselves.

### 6.2.3. Session three (Creative arts: DRAMA)

This was the continuation of the image theatre exercises, however, recapping and games were always included at the beginning to prepare learners for the image exercises. I noticed that these particular exercises made the learners eager to engage and learn more. Unlike the previous session where I had to explain to them in detail the rules of the image exercises, they were actively reminding each other what is expected from them and even willing to share with each other before I even asked them to.

This was when I noticed that some learners who were regarded as "troublesome" were amongst those who kept order within the small groups and this made me think of the power of these methods in the classroom space. The methods allowed the learners to be children in the space. I think that very often learners are not just "troublesome", they sometimes lack activities that are capable of engaging them not just on a teaching and learning basis, but also challenging their thoughts and actions in and outside the classroom space. The introduction of Applied Drama created a space for them to be consciously active and have fun with learning taking place at the same time.

This was one of the warmest "spaces" that I have ever imagined to be in - I felt at home. I think that when there is an inviting environment that allows for a satisfactory state of mind within the facilitator, then there is a greater chance for the facilitator to produce a productive process. This is to say that when I as a facilitator go to a community, I still hold my personal experiences and cultural beliefs, and as such they play a role in how we do what we do; which "borders" we are not prepared to "cross" because we are still individuals within communities. However, both participants and facilitators play an equal role in creating a safe space for dialogue. "Without community, there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression" however "community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist." (Giroux, 1992, p. 168-176)

Freire suggests that this should never be an attempt to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation. To do this without their participation would be the equivalent of treating them as objects - such an imposition, as he suggests, does not liberate. On the contrary, the absence of their participation perpetuates oppression. (Freire, 1968)

### 6.2.4. Session four; Visual arts (Creative arts)

One of the games that I prepared for this session was "Bosso ke mang" and learners participated actively and enjoyed it. The game in itself has elements of music, song and dance and allows learners not just to engage in a new game but also to engage in familiar principles from earlier

experiences. Here, learners did not only have fun - some of them were able to take up leadership roles unlike those in a "normal" traditional classroom space.

Singing together has played a significant role in creating a safe space amongst the learners. According to Pavlicevic "music is a happening that involves people...connects people to one another...to time and place...a commodity that we use and discard in everyday life...we all 'do music' as part of our expressive and communicative acts." (2013, p. 69)

It is an embodied form and experiencing it moves us as human beings "...music offers an invitation to be fully human, to resonate with one another, and to share lives." (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 82) During this session, I realized that "When music happens around us, it also happens within us..." (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 72). The process created an experience that has become part of my life since I now sing and dance the songs played and sung with the learners. And with that, it shows that "Humans have always needed to dance together-which generates powerful bonding experience of shared participation and belonging together with others in time and place" (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 73) This has played a very significant role in instilling sustainability amongst learners because these memories are tapped into whenever they remember and engage in the songs that we sang together in that Applied Drama space/classroom.

In the reflection space at the end of the session, learners expressed their love for the game without judging each other. What was encouraging for me was when I met a group of the learners after school in the community singing songs from the sessions and that showed me that what I did with them in the classroom did not just end there but also extended to their community and homes. In my mind, I immediately thought of the significant role of the Applied Drama methods used to teach learners in the classroom space, which showed not only influencing learners in the classroom space at that particular time but also outside the classroom and in the community. This to me also showed how the methods can certainly be sustainable even after I had left.

### 6.2.5. Session five (closing and reflection)

The educators at the school are not trained, nor are they expected to continue with the teaching pedagogy that was introduced to the learners. This was a disappointing session for the learners because at the beginning I had explained my time frame to them and they were not happy for me to leave on this day. As much as the learners expressed their disappointment at my departure, they participated whole-heartedly.

At the end of the process I realized that the learners were very strong individuals and I respect them very much for still holding onto their dreams no matter the circumstances. They taught me a lot about life and surviving in difficult situations and I don't think I would have developed as a person/facilitator if it was not for both the learners and the experience. It made me think deeply about myself as a facilitator and the energies I can choose to bring to any space no matter the circumstances. But most importantly, it showed me how Applied Drama methods are capable of supporting both learners and facilitators in an emotional process, especially in the classroom space.

### 6.3 Understanding the Concept of reflection

This to me was the core of the research because here, learners engaged "...in a form of internal dialogue in which they critique the experience at the very same moment in which they are submitting to that experience." (Chipatiso, 2013, p. 264)

Chipatiso (2013) shows that reflectiveness encompasses looking back at oneself in the process of being engaged in an action, and that the crucial "...quality of the self is that it is reflective." (Chipatiso, 2013, p. 263) I think this was the most important part of all the sessions in terms of learners' feelings and thoughts being recognized because this was the space where learners sat down and critically thought of what they have been engaging in and sharing what they honestly thought. What I discovered is that the methods have indeed supported learners as they showed in the reflection space that they care for each other, that they trust each other, that they are conscious of each other's feelings. Furthermore it became clear as to how feelings can be dealt with in a safe manner rather than avoiding what are moments of productive communication.

In one of the reflection spaces, I had asked learners to draw their dreams or what they want to be in the future and a learner expressed that he wanted to chop off people's legs. This really baffled me. So even though I am not a qualified therapist, I had to engage with the learner on a personal level to try to understand the learner's point of view around this "morally unacceptable" behaviour. So as I asked all the learners to express their thoughts, all of them expressed not only disagreement but also support for the particular learner.

At the end of the workshops, the learner came to me and stated that they wanted to be a doctor rather, as they realized that they were wrong and that they were redirecting their anger of repeating that grade for a couple of years towards what they want to be. The learner felt little hope for the future because they were failing at school. "This must not be merely about the spectators surrendering their capacity to think, rethink, and reflect on the nature of experiences they are having. The spectators must not merely experience but must actively contemplate and critique the nature of the experience." (Chipatiso, 2013, p. 265)

Without these methods, I don't think it would have been possible for any educator to know how the learner truly and honestly felt inside but with the methods used, the learner had both unconsciously and consciously expressed how they felt through drama. What was very interesting was that I met the learner in early March 2015 and they said that after the process, they were able to study and they managed to pass. I was encouraged to hear that they were interested in becoming a doctor. This again encouraged me because the methods had not only allowed the learner to express themselves honestly but also allowed them to critically think and analyze their feelings. They were able to take informed action and choose the good from the bad. Chipatiso (2013) shows that with the spectators going through this experience and getting to know the self and the other, a better understanding can emerge in different communities. With this said, I think that in the absence of Drama Therapy and social support, the methods successfully supported the learner because of their therapeutic nature as highlighted by Cornwall (1997).

I cannot deny that a drama therapist would have been helpful in the space, because she/he would have interrogated the issue deeper than I did and maybe this would have produced different

findings. But given the fact that a qualified drama therapist was unavailable I am happy that the Applied Drama methods were at least able to give the learners the opportunity to reflect safely, not only vocally but also internally, which allowed them to critically think and revisit their feelings and reconsider actions and thoughts. The fact that this particular learner took on the responsibility to come back to me and share their positive shift and change in thinking is enough for me to conclude that the methods supported them even after I had left. "We experience ourselves in the same way as we experience other objects and people." (Chipatiso, 2013, p. 263) When we engage ourselves critically, we get to know parts of ourselves that were hidden consciously or unconsciously.

All in all, this was an emotionally challenging and also an eye-opening learning experience. I came in as a student/facilitator but also as a community member, and the opportunity has really awakened me as a human being and also as a scholar. My interest in community development and social change has been deepened by my experiences at Mulamula Primary School. With the whole process, it showed how the methods successfully empowered learners to open up and share their feelings. At the same time the learners were also empowered to think critically about their actions and to support themselves to act wisely. Boal (2005) stresses that art imitates life; he argues that the theatre creates a space of actualization for the participant, in which capabilities can be developed.

- **Language role in the process**

Language is the most important tool for a facilitator/teacher. As I was able to speak fluently to them in their first language (Xitsonga), it encouraged many of the learners to articulate themselves freely.

For example, when I was facilitating at Mulamula Primary School, I encouraged participants to use their choice of language including Xitsonga as it's their first and home language, and that had not only allowed me as the facilitator to be comfortable, identify and connect with the learners culturally but also permitted them to articulate how they felt without anything being lost in the translation.

However, I discovered that this was different when it came to the storytelling. Here, learners did not show any disengagement even though the story was narrated in English. This proved the power of storytelling and hinted at its global quality.

### 6.4 Overall Conclusion

Applied Drama, Musical or Arts activities are considered to have a particular power in community interventions: "Applied theatre, be it community theatre or theatre for development, has for many years been acclaimed as one of the most successful approaches to reaching out to disadvantaged rural and urban communities." (Samba, 2013, p. 47)

The above mentioned activities according to Samba, (2013) are considered as an "appropriate medium to reach out to communities, both urban and rural, that are challenged by social, cultural and economic issues...through this medium, communities have had the chance to become aware of their very essence through reflection, dialogue, story-creation, and performance." (p. 47)

Therefore the integrated methods were able to work as communication and cultural commodity in supporting learners, (in this context, cultural commodity as the unique ideas and skills of this particular community that are useful in their own transformation) they substantiated what Pavlicevic (2013) argued to be "...an extraordinary accurate, immediate, and powerful medium for helping all kinds of people in all kinds of places." (p. 77)

This whole process was an emotional, challenging but an eye-opening experience. The main question I had asked myself was: how are Arts processes not only used to enhance positive learning and social change but also to support learners in the absence of therapists and social workers? However, I was very conscious of understanding "...the community as a mystery to be discovered, not as a problem to be solved." (Samba, 2013, p. 59)

Here, Drama and/or Theatre methods worked very well to allow the participants to critically engage with real life situations through the created action (imaginary life). "Theatre is the production of a performance, and Drama is the entry into a special state where individuals, the space they use and the things they do, exist in a pretended reality." (Barrault et al, cited in Jones, 1996, p. 171)

Like Process Drama, Applied Drama exercises its principles in an unscripted manner: "it proceeds without a script, its outcome is unpredictable, it lacks a separate audience, and the experience is impossible to replicate exactly...it gives access to authentic dramatic experience for the participants and can be regarded as a legitimate part of the realm of theatre." (O'Neill, 1995, p. 47)

Cecily O'Neill (1995) shows that Process Drama does this clearly by its nature of sharing within itself "the key features of every theatre event and is articulated through the same kinds of dramatic organization." (p. 47). She explains her framework for Process Drama as being "a complex dramatic encounter" that works successfully because "it evokes an immediate dramatic world bounded in space and time, a world that depends on the consensus of all those present for its existence." (O'Neill, 1995, p. 47)

In Mulamula Primary School, participants learned about and learned through Drama because both form and content were always visible. In their presentation, Bowell & Heap (2014) showed that "Process Drama is a genre of Theatre applied in an educational context, an essentially improvised in nature, the external audience is absent but the internal audience is essential and the teacher works in role within the drama." (Bowell and Heap, 2014, p. 58) Drama Therapy on the other hand also uses "the connection between fantasy and reality to intervene in the way people live." (Jones, 1996, p. 168)

Similar to the expressive forms of Drama Therapy, "the use of created and scripted roles and characters, or playing oneself in a fictional reality" was used "in order to explore life experiences." (Jones, 1996, p. 166) Learners took up roles in the action, and volunteered to take the lead in both the games and story enactments.

- **Problem-posing towards dialogue and interaction**

In the study, I discovered that the problem posing method played an important role in interrogating socially questionable issues amongst the learners as they created a platform for them to open up and think. Freire (2009) states that it supports participants as beings in the process of becoming, "...problem-posing education regards dialogue as indispensable to the act

of cognition while it unveils reality. Banking education treats students as objects of assistance; problem-posing education makes them critical thinkers." (Freire, 2009, p. 12)

This worked productively when excavating the issues expressed by the learners. It allowed them to question their answers and thoughts because it posed problems within what they were expressing to give them a better view from others' point of view.

This is similar to what Verson (2005) framed as cultural activism: "the campaigning and taking direct action that seeks to take back control of how our webs of meaning, value systems, beliefs, art and literature, everything, are created and dispersed." (2005, p. 173) It is an important way to question the dominant ways of seeing things and present alternative views of the world. (Verson, 2005). I agree with Verson (2005) when she says that this is the "creativity that dares to dissolve the boundary between dream and reality, believing in the unlimited power of the people's imaginations, which is the key that opens the door to their freedom." (p. 176)

**Border crossing**

When I as a facilitator go to a community, I still hold my cultural beliefs because we are still individuals within communities and so are the participants. Giroux (1992) extends his argument on community and liberation, and the relationship between an individual and her oppression. However, he also stresses the importance of acknowledging our differences. Therefore I argue that allowing learners in the classroom to be themselves will contribute in building a diverse and strong community and this creates a safe space for learners to learn.

Nevertheless, in the overall intervention/workshops, I discovered that the process (Applied Drama and other Theatre activities) had an important impact for both myself as the Facilitator/Researcher and the Participants/Learners. Exploring the process' final day observation and feedback from participants, I noticed that learners had not only consciously enjoyed the process but it had also unconsciously instilled value for learning. A learner explained how he wished his other teachers were teaching them like I did.

From my readings, engagement and classes and most importantly my practice as research project, I have realized that the methods were able to liberate the learners. Like the aim of Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, it had the capability to give a "...voice to the

marginalized...liberates the oppressed and challenge power structures; like his participatory techniques." (Boal, 1979, p. 141-142)

The abovementioned methods allowed learners to find/discover their own transformation within their own strengths and allowed them to realize that they do not need an outsider to bring them change. It also helped them to understand the importance of the outsider who creates a new/different lens for them to find ways that can be used towards transformation. As such, there was also a degree of sustainability instilled in the learners.

In his writing, Samba (2013) shows how Appreciative Inquiry principles are useful to introduce a project. I had Xitsonga music playing when learners were busy clearing up the space and when they were presenting tasks to the group. This positively affected their attitudes and the way in which they engaged in the project. (Samba, 2013)

I realized that it is indeed "When music happens around us, it also happens within us..." (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 72) This is an embodied form and experiencing it moves us as human beings (similar to Drama Therapy's dramatic embodiment). I was interested in how the project proceeded not only for the learners in the space but also for me as an observer/outsider/facilitator. "...Music offers an invitation to be fully human, to resonate with one another, and to share lives." (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 82) It shows that "humans have always needed to dance together-which generates powerful bonding experience of shared participation and belonging together with others in time and place." (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 73)

Like Appreciative Inquiry, the intervention aimed at "...modeling the shift from focusing on the problems to focusing on the desired results." (Samba, 2013, p. 59) "Appreciative Inquiry proposes a focus on the community's discovering its' strengths and potentials." (Samba, 2013, p. 55). Instead of me tackling the issues within the community, some workshops were dedicated to illustrating what the community is capable of. For example, allowing the community to be physically creative and create their own dreams. This served as a confirmation that the community is indeed capable and I was not there to impose or to impose my own dreams. I was there to create a platform or a bridge with the two merged methods that created a space for the community to transform themselves.

Similarly to music, Applied Drama methods enabled us to work together because "When we talk, walk, connect with others, we are also 'doing music'—whether or not we know it." (Pavlicevic, 2013, p. 71)

Instead of me imposing the value of Arts education, I decided to allow learners to find/discover their own interests within themselves and I believe that it allowed them to realize that they do not need an outsider to bring positive change into their community. However, it was very important for the outsider to stand as a bridge between them and their transformation. "Acknowledging that something works in the system despite all else could act as a driving force to motivate self and others in similar or worse conditions." (Samba, 2013, p. 51)

**Personal journal**

The following will be a detailed journal of my analysis and experiences of the research workshops and experiences that I facilitated with the grade 7 students at Mulamula Primary School.

Working with a group of learners is always a challenge for everyone because they all have different views as individuals but I think I worked with a learners who were considerate when it comes to working with one another because they all valued each other's ideas but critically analyzed each and every one of them and be able to come to a final understanding or an agreement if not compromising on what they can pursue. Apart from all the challenges that we can encounter in group work, this was successfully done better (through the methods used) because they created a space where we listened to each other's views and that makes me believe we had achieved what I wanted to present and I am very satisfied with how they assisted me in portraying one vision for the research aims.

One of the undercurrents with this group was to be able to express myself but at the same time to acknowledge each one of them, and give them an opportunity to contribute. This whole experience reminded me of how my mother used to tell me that God gave you two ears and one mouth showing you that you need to listen more than you talk, and in this way you allow yourself to learn from other people, no matter who they are. This, however, should never hold you back from expressing your views and feelings.

The biggest challenge for me was to ensure that I did not offend anyone, as this is possible in such processes. We unconsciously say things that we think are not offensive but sometimes tend to be offensive to others. But what I did was to try to research in advance the kind of learners that I was going to work with so that I was able give myself enough background of the particular group's cultural values, traditions and social norms and fortunately for me in this case, I was born and raised in the same community and attended the same school.

When I started with the workshop processes, I was a little bit nervous but I was very excited that I was going to explore new things that were going to add more experience to my career. I made a point to do my best.

When I first learnt that there was a series of violent protests in the area, I was disappointed because I had imagined this as the year that I pushed myself to the limits and I wanted to go back home for my research. As they say "charity begins at home" and this was where I wanted to start. Fortunately for me, the protest faded and I was still able to go and conduct my Practice As Research even though it gave me less time than as I had planned. I know that to work with learners was going to be a challenge, but I was more than prepared to face all the challenges. Little did I know that working with Mulamula Primary School learners would give me the best experience of my life. This was one of my lifetime moments that I will always embrace, because with this experience, it was not just me facilitating theatre workshops but us coming together to create these theatre experiences and memories.

For me to be able to know what I was going to deal with and what to expect, I went to the school before the workshops started. This helped me a lot in terms of determining what kinds of workshops to facilitate and what kind or issues to tackle.

The proposal was to instill value for Arts within these learners, but when I was observing, I noticed that even though I would be working with grade 7 pupils, there were serious issues to be addressed rather than providing them with theatre games for entertainment. This is when I realized that identity issues would be very relevant to this age group.

On the other hand, I was a little bit concerned with the way in which other educators handled situations with learners. I cannot deny the fact that learners can sometimes be very wild and

disrespectful but I think people should realize that there is a very big difference between being feared and being respected. I didn't want to be feared - I wanted to be respected.

As I was observing, I reminded myself that the teachers were not "the issue" - I had to focus on the pupils. This was when I realized that identity and self-confidence issues would very relevant to this group.

From primary to secondary school, I was the only person with an interest in the Arts. This was a challenge for me because unlike Science and Engineering, I had to prove that Art is also a powerful career tool and I felt like I had never accomplished this to my satisfaction until this research project. "It is an optimistic story, bearing witness to the power of drama to affect social and personal change. (Milling and Graham, 2000, p. 1)

Recognizing that humans have a unique ability to take action in the world while simultaneously observing them in action, Boal (2006) believed that the human was a self-contained theatre, actor and spectator in one. Because we can observe ourselves in action, we can amend, adjust and alter our actions to have different impact and to change our world.

One of the activities, (such as the fruit salad) that I facilitated was not only great fun, but also allowed us to really play with the *Theatre of the Oppressed* ideas and develop them. Even though we were all given the basic structure, we were given the freedom to develop something unique and different from something that started in a simple fashion. This led us to explore as deep as making television commercials within the process, driving us into creativity, participation and working together.

The give and gain concept is a useful practical tool when creating a participatory based event because it means that everyone is able to voice their involvement whether it is specifically performance based skills or the more technical side of things like writing down points in a group discussion. It's an approach that means everyone can contribute and feel part of the bigger picture, which is definitely a project towards a better society and a better living environment for all.

**Lesson One**

When I facilitated the first workshop, it was very unfortunate that educators could not stay for the rest of the workshop. I wish that they had seen what I saw and what a memorable experience the group created.

When we finished the lesson, one of the learners asked to make a speech and she thanked me for encouraging them to talk about issues that they would never have talked about. She noted how the lesson had encouraged listening and had showed that we care. The learner continued stating how grateful they felt with my presence and requested extended engagements.

When we started with the soup pot exercise, I saw that the students were interested in the workshops and they were willing to participate. This interest was demonstrated by the choice of words that they "poured" inside the pot, such as energy, participation, openness, and more.

When we played the "*Bosso Ke Mang*" game, everybody engaged and participated; I think this worked very well as an introduction. As we proceeded with the lesson, the students started to open up with issues that I thought they would avoid in front of their peers. They started talking about how their peers crush them and how they criticize one another, saying that no matter how hard they work, they will never be appreciated. The first thing that came into my mind was that there is always another side of the story, but still as an artist working towards oppressed free communities, I thought of how to make these people come up with solutions to their problems or issues themselves.

What stood out for me was when learners, at the end of the session, asked to keep the charts as a positive reminder of the experiences they had had throughout the session.

**Lesson Two**

I also feel like the contract exercise worked very well for the second session, because this is where the students hold themselves liable for all the negative energies they can bring to the group and this exercise worked as a reminder for them to stick to what they have promised and not to 'break' that. In particular, this worked very well when I was facilitating one of the exercises where students embodied their role models where one of the learners reprimanded

another about a behavior that challenged their group 'contract' and they immediately apologized and positively continued.

Mehl-Madrona, L (2010) suggests that stories provide intellectual reasoning, in her own words; she states that stories give…

> 'cognitive and emotional significance to experience; stories are amusing, memorable and absorbing, they are also instructive, informative and orientating. Through the hearing and telling of stories, children learn how to be a child and how to relate to their parents and other adults who populate the world around them. We construct and negotiate our social identity through the stories that we tell other people (and through the stories that get repeated about us) stories assist us in developing a moral sense, as they give moral weight and existential significance to actions and events.' (2010; p. 58)

This storytelling environment allowed learners to sort out the 'glitches' that affected them all, where everyone had a voice in attempting to find a common experience or story that everyone is able to own once they have left the space of the initial storytelling. As they listened, they imagined the possible, enacted solutions and believed in themselves again. This is comparable to Playback Theatre, developed by Jonathan Fox (1975), where ordinary people acted out their stories of their community in a different vision of what theatre might be.

**Lesson Three**

Image theatre

The first time I came into contact with image theatre, I was captivated because of the way in which it opens people's minds. From his work Boal (1979/2000) evolved various forms of theatre workshops and performances which aimed to meet the needs of all people for interaction, dialogue, critical thinking, action, and fun. While the performance modes of Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, Cop-In-The-Head, and the vast array of the Rainbow of Desire are designed to bring the audience into active relationship with the performed event, the workshops are virtually a training ground for action not only in these performance forms, but for action in life.

This is where I was slowly getting to what I aimed to achieve at the beginning of the workshops. When the students reflected, I could see that it was no longer about attacking each other but

realizing that life is not just about being what they want to be, but the whole process of how they are going to work hard in order to get to where they want to be. They showed that instead of expecting too much from the people around them in order to reach their goals, they had the power to believe in themselves and promise themselves that they held the key to their own destiny and that no one could take that from them.

One thing that I realized from these workshops was that not everything goes as planned all the time, such as the "Go game". When I planned it, I thought it would be eye contact first. But when I facilitated the game I saw that the learners struggled to show the person that they were making eye contact, so I quickly improvised and asked them to start by pointing using their hand, and to my surprise, that was when they excelled in the exercise, they were focused and concentrated in a very potent way. This shows how Applied Drama methodologies provide platforms in teaching and learning spaces because it is not every time that the planned exercises will work, as different groups require different methods but mostly require on-space observation and improvisation as the session goes on.

Another exercise that was very powerful was the "Role model stories". When I asked students to embody their role models and tell their partners a story of a struggle or a painful situation that they had come across (in character), one of the students became very emotional while telling that story. This moment demonstrated the power of Applied Drama and Theatre as it penetrates into the inner self of a person and makes you imagine what you can be. Linking the above moment to Freire's theories of education, I recall how his participatory tools are designed to develop individual skills of observation and self-reflection, and group interactions.

Image Theatre is the ideal starting point for training in Theatre of the Oppressed techniques. In Image Theatre, leadership- and imagination-building, games and techniques are used to explore relations of power and group solutions to concrete problems of oppression through "imagery" discussions being taken through the language of images, offering a fresh approach to the analysis of power and new opportunities for the exchange of ideas.

**Lesson Four**

This was an extension and continuation of the previous lesson and here I continued with Image Theatre even though we were short of time as I was left with only one session. Judging from the

feedback during this reflection time, it felt like we covered a lot and fortunately, I had already in my mind started planning for the last session. I was determined to have more time in reflection than any other activity - reflection was often the most important activity during the research project. As I collected the data, I immediately knew that my sessions were able to manipulate and encourage participants to reflect and thus help us respond to the stated research questions.

The whole process, similar to Forum Theatre reminded me of how my mother used to use a similar kind of 'forum theatre' for me and my siblings. She used to make us see our faces in the mirror whenever we cried. This was a very effective technique that made us see ourselves and how we looked when we cried, and we did not continue crying after we saw how we actually looked or what people were seeing. The image projected in the mirror was powerful enough to make us stop crying as our own lives were reflected back to us. With this I want to illustrate that the power to defeat the mind is indeed in the mind of the oppressed, therefore we should further work on changing the minds of the oppressed in other for us to successfully create oppression free communities.

**Lesson Five**

This was our last lesson with the learners and as I was developing the session plan, I wanted the learners to have achieved 'imaginary' solutions to all the challenges or the issues that they have raised in the previous workshops. Here I wanted to demonstrate the possibilities in overcoming their own challenges.

With the time that I had, I decided to do an energizer and then move straight to the reflective session. One of the moments that defined research achievement and success to me was the responses of the learners. When I was about to leave they were literally all over me, with hugs and kisses until their teachers called them to say : " come, come grade 7s, we are running out of time". When we started these workshops, I could not wait for the last workshop to come so we could get over it because of the workload I had but when that day came, I was so willing to extend the process until the end of the year at least, because I believe that theatre workshops do not propose change only for participants but also the facilitators. This was also portrayed by my state of mind at the end of the workshops, I was realizing that the project was no longer only for

the course requirements but for changing learners' lives, thus I decided to pursue and extend the research projects into the MA research report.

The one thing that I am very proud of from this project is that with the methods of Applied Drama I was able to contribute to making the learners imagine and believe in themselves. They began to realize that they were capable of transforming their lives for the better.

With these workshops, it clearly confirms what one of my friends stated in an unofficial gathering that the most potent oppressor is the mind of the oppressor, therefore if the oppressed change their minds, then they have successfully defeated the oppressor.

When the script is performed, it is surprising how we all hate the antagonist to a point where we think and imagine how we could respond and tackle the challenges positively and differently, but are unable to think like that when we are facing similar things in real life. Therefore these Applied Drama methods give us a constant reminder that we can possibly transform ourselves and situations, only if we can start by imagining what we think we are - or can do.

During one of the reflections, one of the students said that it was something they took for granted that they are capable of becoming anything that they want to be. But because it was shown to them in Applied Drama, which mirrored them, they understood these situations from their daily lives and understood their capabilities and abilities to overcome them.

In inclusive conclusion, these practices were shaped in assumptions and expectations about audiences' behavior through active participation, learning, reflecting, acting upon and emancipation. This is an argument for an engagement with learners that initiates learning and reflecting. At the same time, there is a need for collaborative methods because these methods have shown to be therapeutic, sustainable and supportive.

The research that I conducted at Mulamula Primary School has had a modest impact on the learners apart from the gaps of therapy support that still need focus. I have discovered that the merged methods used together with the principles of other methods such as music, process drama and drama therapy played an important role in the overall results.

With the integration of these methods, the imaginative was able to meet the reality, especially when I drew from my own personal experiences. I would also argue that being in this role

brought up a lot of things that one is not aware of; perhaps some memories that were not easy to deal with and were hidden somewhere in the sub-conscious. With this experience I am also realizing how the body in the process was an archive of life experiences. As I have left memories in each and every learner, they have also left something with me stored in my body, mind and thoughts through acting together towards social change; these memories are often tapped into when embodying future roles.

From this research process, I was reminded of Freire's argument that indeed children are not just blank slates upon which information should be banked, but rather they too have knowledge within them and are able to speak back to different issues. "...When one links the positive core to any agenda for change, changes never thought possible are suddenly and democratically mobilized." (Whitney and Cooperrider cited in Samba, 2013, p. 47)

When I decided to use Applied Drama methods, it was because I didn't want to forcefully make the learners like the Arts, but I wanted to create a learning space for them to be able to choose if they like it or not. In the group, there was a learner who stated with confidence that he is not interested in the Arts. This might sound strange, but this is when I realized that the methodology worked because the aim was not for them to say that they love the Arts, but to show that they have learned to make their own personal choices without fear of being judged so that they are able to approve and accept those who choose the arts. "If I was given an opportunity to study arts in university level I would not take it because it is not what I want to do, it is not my dream, but I would not judge anyone who chooses to study the arts because it would be their dream" (learner).

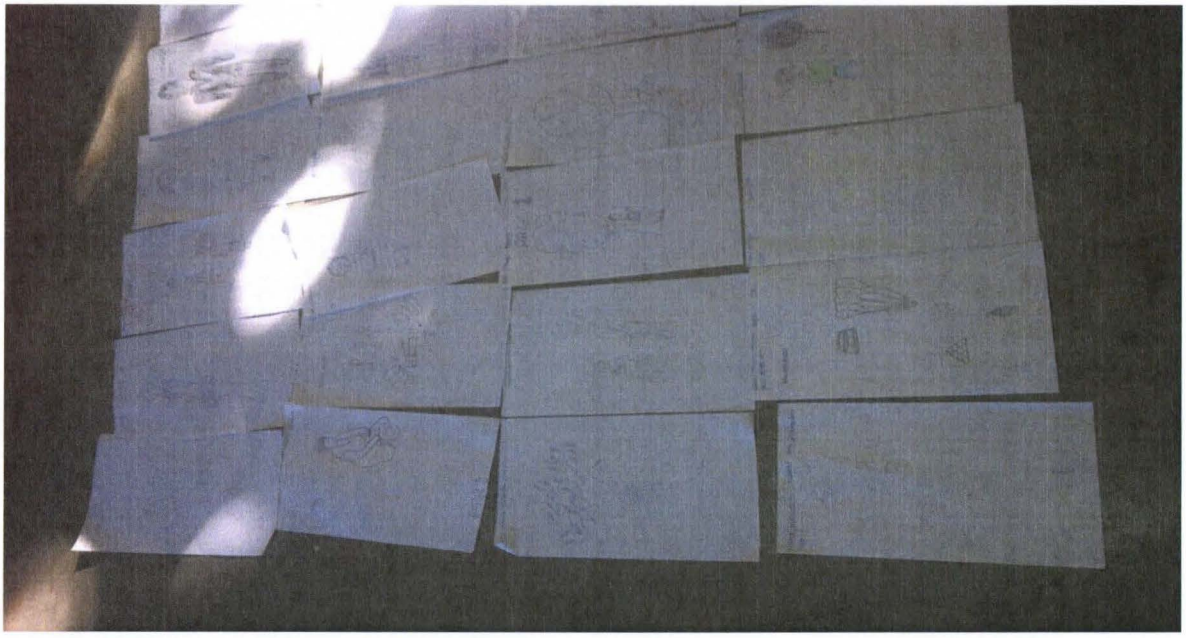
Arts activities do not only allow participants to have fun but they educate them and touch a part of their inner self that determines their conduct and behavior. When I got to the school, I was warned of particular "troublesome" learners who were supposedly going to give me problems but during the process, I also realized that the "troublesome" learners I was warned about were the ones who initiated participation and would take up roles first whenever I needed volunteers.

The process has led me to consider my future facilitation and research. I have learned that apart from the assumed "negative behaviour" of school learners, there are stories behind them and judging them does not help or support them towards positive change, however, giving them a

chance to be themselves through Applied Drama activities and play can be very powerful and encouraging for them to transform themselves.

The learners were excited about the session. I realized that the power of the Applied Drama methods made them feel happy, comfortable and they looked forward to the session.

The principal was also excited to see the learners participating in a safe and fun way and he requested that I come back again because clearly my "teaching method" worked very well for the learners where he even suggested I facilitate workshops for the teaching staff (educators).



When one of the learners drew a picture of someone cutting the legs off a person I was worried that at this point that I have only an honours' level Introduction to Drama therapy research qualification and I am not a fully trained Drama Therapist trained to safely interrogate the issue without endangering the learner and the group. At the same time, I understood that the process that I facilitated had the power to evoke hidden feelings and to allow participants to be comfortable to express their inner selves. However, with the integrated methods, I have safely pushed the learner to unpack, interrogate and deal with his feelings by asking him to discuss why he feels like this and show him that it is not the only way we can treat other human beings.

When the learners were participating in games and image exercises, I realized that these methods have the potential to give participants the platform to discover that they are capable of different talents, and capable of working together and caring for each other. It seems that some educators felt that this behavioral change in the learners was impossible. I remember one incident when we were playing the game called "Bosso ke mang". Some learners suggested on behalf of their classmates that the learners who had not had a chance to be in the middle/to lead the exercise should also be given an opportunity. This indicated an important shift in responsibility and classroom power relations.

The one last thing that amazed me was when one of the learners gave me a stock sweet as a present to send me off on behalf of the class. This is an area where it is not easy for a learner to afford a R2.00 sweet and the thought of this learner sacrificing his R2.00 for me was astonishing. This made me think of not only how the process impacted me as the researcher and for the learners as participants in education, but also the impact it made on them as human beings. Above all I am humbled and honored by the experience.

With the above mentioned example, Boal's "theatre of the oppressed should be the initiator of change, the culmination of which is not the aesthetic phenomenon but real life." (Boal, 1992; p. 245) I believe that I am now able to reflect on the successes and gaps of not only the research, but also reflection towards my own personal life, with reference to theory.

Paulo Freire's method on the other hand showed that in order for this to happen/occur, the oppressed individual must play a role in their liberation. He continued by saying that there is "no pedagogy which is truly liberating if it remains distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption." (Freire, 1970, p. 54) Here education and theatre were used as the platforms for this social upliftment by determining the underlying causes of the challenges that learners might be facing in their day to day living.

I discovered that some of the important issues that I termed as morally questionable behaviors at the beginning of the report might be because the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors...the oppressed want at any cost to resemble the oppressors. (Freire, 1970) He suggests that educational art organizers, creators and makers

should never be "leaders who do not act dialogically, but insist on imposing their decisions, they manipulate them as this does not liberate, nor are they liberated but they oppress. (Freire, 1968) To end this paper, I can confidently state that apart from the gaps to be filled by therapists in the Applied Drama workshops, this creative process was able to support learners in and out of the space/classroom therefore it was indeed "an optimistic story, bearing witness to the power of drama to affect social and personal change." (Nicholson, 2005, p. 1)

This project has showed me its potential for sustainability because I had the privilege to meet some of the participants outside the school and they all showed positive attitudes towards the future and they expressed how happy they became through the process and assured me that it is just a matter of time before they live those dreams that they shared in class. This has not only made me humble in my research project, but it has also made me see the power of the methods used. Here, active participation has also proved its power to change not only the thoughts in the space but also the thoughts in real life. A learner who thought interior designing was not good enough to be regarded as a career in class also stated that they have already enquired about the subjects that they must take in high school for them to advance and study this form of art at tertiary level.

Even though drama therapists are extremely relevant in these spaces, with this project, I realized that the methods with their therapeutic nature were able to support learners in the absence of social workers. I have also discovered that game playing is not just fun and educative but in the space, it was therapeutic as learners managed to face and resolve their own social issues through games. A learner stated that when they play games, they are able to deal with whatever is troubling them. They showed that game playing helped them not only in the space but also in their homes, community and real life.

The integrated methods allowed learners to articulate their feelings in a safe way because some were shy to vocally share their thoughts and feelings but as soon as these activities were introduced to them, they even took up leadership roles in sharing through image, drawing and other arts activities. In addition, I discovered that the integrated methods only worked well when merged with the principles of other drama and theatre activities and this is because every space is different. In this context, the methods needed extra support to help learners quickly catch up in

the workshop space. I also discovered that different contexts/spaces/environments demand different methods and in space improvisation.

All in all, even though these methods have the ability to support learners in the classroom space, it is very important that learners are provided with social support when introduced to Applied Drama pedagogy and activities because the methods unearth different feelings.

I, as an Applied Drama Facilitator, similar to Freire's idea of the relationship between teacher/educator and student/learner, have discovered that I also love being a teacher, but what I try not to be, and never want to be is a;

> "...traditional teacher, a dominating teacher, a teacher who has the illusion that he or she knows and the students don't know and then, because of this, the students come to us in order to be taught, and I come in order to teach them. This is the kind of teacher I am not. But there is another kind of teacher, the teacher", who experiences strongly, "...that it is impossible to teach without learning. It is impossible to dichotomize teaching from learning, educating from being educated." (Freire cited in Kearney, 1982, p. 45)

With this work (the methods used), I never intended on imposing positive change but I aimed at presenting the possibility of change towards the learners - showing them that they are capable of bringing change themselves, not my transformation. I do not need to go back now and force positive change. The work will always be a reminder to those learners that change is all up to the one who wants to see change.

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**Appendices**

**Workshop plans**

**Lesson plan : No.1 Introduction**

**Theme : Art Introduction (Creative arts: DRAMA)**

**Time : 2 hours**

**Place : Mulamula primary school**

**Participants : Grade 7 learners**

**Facilitator : Susie Maluleke**

In his writing *The Arts and Institutional Change in South Africa*, Mike van Graan stated that "*Music, dance, theatre, visual arts, literature and film are creative means through which individuals and communities explore, interpret, challenge and celebrate the human condition within particular material realities. In doing so, the arts reflect certain ways of looking at, thinking about, and understanding the world, and the ideas, beliefs and values which shape that world.*"

| **Activity** | **Exercise description** | **Aim/motivation** | **Materials** | **Theory and/or Research question/s** | **time** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Introduction | I will introduce myself and let the learners introduce themselves<br><br>Here , I will ask the learners to share the music genre they like or share a song they love | To know each other and make them feel comfortable and start to discover their individual desires.<br><br>This will also help and ascertain the participants' understanding of their participation role in the project. | | How can we introduce ourselves through music appreciation? "*Music is both communication and cultural commodity...an extraordinary accurate, immediate, and powerful medium for helping all kinds of people in all kinds of places.*" (Pavlicevic, p. 77) | 15 minutes |
| Contract | We are going to write positive behaviors that we as individuals bring with to the process (these are | To create a safe space for learning but also to create something that can | Flip chart Paper, Markers | What are the positive behaviors individual can allocate to themselves? | 15 minutes |

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| | positive behaviors that we need in our process) | help me hold/control the space | And prestick | What positive behaviors can learners bring into the process? | |
| "Onay-onay-O" Exercise | Learners are asked to stand in a circle and be taught to sing the song "Onay-onay-O" and the 1st and 3rd persons will gaze at each other while the middle/2nd person bends down | Warm up<br>Here an icebreaker is necessary for allowing the participants to shed off any distractions that they might have brought into the workshop space. This game will also build and encourage participation. It is also good for working together, cooperation and concentration. | | How can learners work together as a group?<br>In Boal's theatre, there has always been an element of "*Warming up*" of spect-actors, but in reality the function of these exercises are not only warming up but forging a 'group' out of a bunch of people, a sort of 'communion'- if we do something together we become a real group, rather than a mere juxtaposition of individuals. (Boal, 2002). | 15 minutes |
| "*Arts and Culture*" Competition exercise | Learners will be divided into two groups and each group will select a representative. The groups will each get a turn to answer by naming an art activity in 5 seconds and the group that gives more after 10 rounds wins | To identify the level in which they are familiar with different types of arts activities in a fun and harmless way | Flip charts and markers | How can game show be used as an incorporation of the theme?<br><br>How much do the learners know about arts? | 18 minutes |
| "pikinini sthandwa" exercise | As learners sing pikinini sthandwa in a circle two people will walk around the circle and choose a person that they will ask to choose a person of their choice between the pair and ask them to join whoever they choose and walk together in a circle to choose another person | To encourage game playing and participation | | How can game playing be used as a method to create fun/play amongst learners? | 15 minutes |
| Reflection | Learners will be asked to write what they have learnt. They can write a | To encourage participants to express their feelings | | What is it that the learners have learnt in the lesson? | 20 minutes |

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| | sentence, a word, an image/drawing and I will stick them on a paper where learners can read and later reflect on what stood out for them from the paper. | about arts and the session | | How can the learners use drawing as a method of reflection and expression without words?<br><br>Freire stated we must be convinced that the fundamental effort of educating is to help with people's liberation, never their domestication. You must be convinced that when people reflect on their domination they begin a first step in changing their relationship to the world. (Freire. 1971) | |
| Closing | I will thank learners and ask learners to go think of games that they would like to play in the next session | To encourage them to prepare and look forward to the next session | | How can I encourage the learners to look forward to the next session? | 2 minutes |

**Lesson plan : No.2 Art Introduction**

**Theme : Dance (creative arts)**

**Time : 2 hours**

**Place : Mulamula primary school**

**Participants : Grade 7 learners**

**Facilitator : Susie Maluleke**

| Activity | Exercise description | Aim/motivation | Materials | Research questions | time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recap | I will ask them to recall what we did the previous time | To see if they do remember what we did and how they value it | Flip chart and markers | How can learners' memory of previous session be used as a first step to thoughtful engagement and dialogue? | 10 minutes |
| Two games from participants | I will ask the two learners who have prepared to teach games to present them to everyone | To create a safe space for learning but also to build confidence for learners | | How can this be used as an encouragement for self-confidence and participation for learners | 20 minutes |
| Story | Learners will sit down in a circle and I will narrate a story of a traveler who travelled all over the world to teach and learn new traditional dances | To create a fiction world that can creatively generate imagination | | Can story create enough imagination world for them to create their own?<br><br>Can traditional storytelling work exceptional in the classroom | 15 minutes |

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| | | | | space? | |
| Enactment of the story | I will group the learners into small groups and ask them to choose one dance type that they have heard/listened from the story and then rehearse the dance and present to their peers | To allow them to learn through practice and also engage in the creative arts dance theme | Flip charts and markers | Can the learners work in groups and engage equally?<br><br>Can the exercise work as a platform for the learners to show their performing talents and skills? | 30 minutes |
| Reflection | Learners will be asked to write what they have learnt from their peer performances/dances/ presentation. They can write a sentence, a word, an image/drawing and I will stick them on a paper where learners can read and later reflect on what stood out for them from the paper. | To encourage participants to express their feelings about arts and the session | | 1. What did you see from the dances presented by your peers?<br>2. How do they make you feel?<br>3. Can you relate? | 20 minutes |
| Closing | I will thank learners and ask learners to go think of games that they would like to play in the next session | To encourage them to prepare and look forward to the next session | | How can I inspire them to prepare for the next session? | 5 minutes |

**Lesson plan** : **No.3**

**Theme** : **(Creative arts: DRAMA)**

**Time** : **2 hours**

**Place** : **Mulamula primary school**

**Participants** : **Grade 7 learners**

**Facilitator** : **Susie Maluleke**

| **Activity** | **Exercise description** | **Aim/motivation** | **Materials** | **Research questions** | **time** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| recap | I will ask them to recall what we did the previous time | To see if they do remember what we did and how they value it | Flip chart and markers | Can learners work together in agreement of important words from what they have learnt? | 10 minutes |
| Two games from participants | I will ask the two learners who have prepared to teach games to present them to everyone | To create a safe space for learning but also to build confidence for learners | | Can this exercise be used to encourage learners to participate and boost their self-confidence? | 20 minutes |
| Image theatre | Learners will sit down in a circle and I will remind them of the story I have narrated to them the previous time and divide them into 5 groups where each group will create 5 | To make them engage in image theatre | | How can Image theatre be introduced to the learners? How can the learners use their bodies to tell stories and how they | 20 minutes |

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| | images of any part of the story. | | | feel? | |
| Reflection | Learners will be asked to write what they think about image theatre and what they have learnt from their peer images presentation. | To encourage participants to express their feelings about arts and the session | | 1. What did you see from the images presented by your peers?<br>2. How do they make you feel?<br>3. Can you relate? | 20 minutes |
| Closing | I will thank learners and ask learners to go think of games that they would like to play in the next session | To encourage them to prepare and look forward to the next session | | How can I structure the end of a session to prepare leaners for next lesson? | 5 minutes |

**Lesson plan** : **No.4**

**Theme** : **Visual arts (Creative arts)**

**Time** : **2 hours**

**Place** : **Mulamula primary school**

**Participants** : **Grade 7 learners**

**Facilitator** : **Susie Maluleke**

| **Activity** | **Exercise description** | **Aim/motivation** | **Materials** | **Research questions** | **time** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| recap | I will ask them to recall what we did the previous time | To see if they do remember what we did and how they value it | Flip chart and markers | How recap be used to identify where learners are at in terms of thinking and understanding ? | 10 minutes |
| "Bosso ke mang" | I will ask the two learners to stand in a circle and ask one learner/volunteer to start the game by singing "Bosso ke mang" and creating dance movements that we all copy | To create energy and to build confidence for learners | | How can this game encourage learners in a fun and safe way to take charge of leadership within a group without blocking others? | 15 minutes |
| Visual exercise | Learners will sit down and I will ask them to draw an image on how they feel and on the other side of the paper, I will ask them to draw an image of what they want to be in future | To engage in visual art as an art form, to allow encourage creativeness and also to inspire positive dreaming for the future | A4 plain papers | How can visual arts be used as a way for learners to express themselves but also importantly as a way to encourage them think | 45 minutes |

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| | They will also be asked to share with the group | | | about their own personal dreams? | |
| Reflection | Learners will be asked to share with the whole class and reflect on their peer's presented work | To encourage participants to express their feelings through visual arts and the session | | 1. What did you see from other learner 's work?<br>2. How do they make you feel?<br>3. Can you relate? | 20 minutes |
| Closing | I will thank learners and ask learners to go think of games that they would like to play in the next session | To encourage them to prepare and look forward to the next session | | How can the closing inspire learners to continue thinking about their future even beyond the facilitation space? | 5 minutes |

**Lesson plan** : **No.5**

**Theme** : **Closing and reflection**

**Theme** : **Art Introduction (Creative arts: DRAMA)**

**Time** : **2 hours**

**Place** : **Mulamula primary school**

**Participants** : **Grade 7 learners**

**Facilitator** : **Susie Maluleke**

| **Activity** | **Exercise description** | **Aim/motivation** | **Materials** | **Research questions** | **time** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| recap | I will ask them to recall what we did from Monday to Thursday | To see if they do remember what we did and to reflect | Flip chart and markers | How can learners review what we have done from the first day until today? | 15 minutes |
| "Bosso ke mang" | I will ask the two learners to stand in a circle and ask one learner/volunteer to start the game by singing "Bosso ke mang" and creating dance movements that we all copy | To create energy | | How can this game encourage learners in a fun and safe way to take charge of leadership within a group without blocking others? | 15 minutes |
| Game from 2 participants | | To encourage leadership responsibility that can hopefully create positive sustainability | | | 20 minutes |
| Reflection | Learners will sit down in a circle and I will ask them to name and discuss different | To engage and reflect in different careers, to allow encourage them and | | Reflection will be very significant during the | 35 minutes |

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| | career fields | also to inspire positive dreaming for the future | | process because as Freire stated that this stage is substantial; his Conscientization framework would be useful as the process of developing a critical awareness of participants' social reality through reflection and action. | |
| An energizer | I will ask one more learner to come up with a game to play | To keep them awake | | | 5 minutes |
| Reflection | Learners will be asked to share with the whole class and reflect on their experience from the beginning | To encourage participants to express their feelings about the whole process | | 1. What did you see differed from other learning experiences?<br>2. How do feel about arts? | 20 minutes |
| Closing | I will thank learners for participating in the whole process | To encourage them to think positive and to support each other | | How can the last words of the facilitation be constructed in a way that they inspire, encourage learners to think and | 10 minutes |

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| | | | | engage in arts? | |

### 7.3 The Famous Stone Soup story

Once upon a time, there was a man who loved travelling. One day he woke up and decided to travel around the world in order to learn people's diverse cultures.

As he was travelling, after a long journey, the traveler comes to a village, carrying nothing more than an empty cooking pot. Upon their arrival, the villagers are unwilling to share any of their food stores with the hungry traveler. As he entered, the villagers moved towards their homes locking doors and not offering him food - and then the traveler goes to a stream and fills the pot with water, drops a large stone in it, and places it over a fire. One of the villagers becomes curious and asks what he was doing. The travelers answer that they are making "stone soup", which tastes wonderful, although it still needs a little bit of vegetables to improve the flavour, which they are missing. The villager does not mind bringing a few carrots to help them out, so that gets added to the soup. Another curious villager walks by, inquiring about the pot, and the traveler again mentioned their stone soup which has not reached its full potential yet. The villager hands them a little bit of potatoes to help them out. More and more villagers walk by, each adding another ingredient. Finally, a delicious and nourishing pot of soup is enjoyed by all.



**Photographs credit: Grade 7 learners of Mulamula Primary School, September 2014**

Images were taken during the PAR Research process by the Researcher with assistance from volunteer learners. These photographs are portrayed in this paper with the consent and approval from both the learners and the School.

To end this paper, I would like to endorse that Education is the key to success; it is with great honour to have contributed to such a social caliber. Only when we know and understand the factors to consider in the classroom environment, can we begin to come up with comprehensive solutions for leaners.