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Exploring the experiences of adolescent migrants in South Africa through applied drama and theatre: A case study of Supreme Educational College, (Johannesburg)

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2014-07-25
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/15022

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Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 5

1.1 Area of Investigation 5

1.2 Rationale 5

1.3 Literature Review 6

1.3.1 Adolescence as critical in social interactions 7

1.3.2 The socio-cultural factors that may impact on migrant identities 7

1.3.3 Socio-Economic factors impacting on migrants' experiences 8

1.4 Theoretical Framework 9

1.5 Methodology 10

1.5.1 Case Study 11

1.5.3 Image Theatre 11

1.5.4 Hot Seating 12

1.5.5 Thought Tracking 12

1.5.6 Story as Pre-Text 12

1.5.8 Participant observer 13

1.5.9 Reflective Journals 13

1.6 Audio Recording and Photographs 13

1.6.1 Ethical Considerations: 14

CHAPTER 2: THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY 15

2.1 Introduction 15

2.1 Identifying and framing the research problem 15

2.1.1 Workshop Description 17

2.2 Workshop Analysis 17

2.2.1 Discriminating against locals 20

2.3 Conclusion 21

CHAPTER 3: STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL 22

3.1 Introduction 22

3.2 Narrative as Pretext: The Story of the Seal Girl 22

3.3 Workshop description 24

3.4 Workshop analysis: Group Solidarity 26

3.4.1 Mixed peer affiliation 28

3.4.2 Language adaptation 32
3.5 Conclusion 33
CHAPTER 4: BATTLING BETWEEN ALIENATION AND DESIRE 36
4.1 Introduction 36
4.2 Workshop description 37
4.2 Hostility and prejudice 38
4.3 Love and tolerance 40
4.4 Conclusion 41
CHAPTER 5: CULTURE SHOCK AND THE POLITICS OF SPACE 42
5.1 Introduction 42
5.2 Workshop description 43
5.3 Attitudinal Reactions 44
5.4 Adjustment and claiming of space 46
5.5 Conclusion 48
CHAPTER 6: GENERAL CONCLUSION 49
REFERENCES 52
APPENDICES 56
Appendix A: Participant Information sheet 56
Appendix Bii: Parent Consent form 57
Appendix B iii: Participant Consent Form 59
Appendix C: Consent Form for Audio-Taping and Photographs of the Drama Processes 60

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts in Dramatic Arts to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University.

Wendy Paidamoyo Zvakawapano ……

13 June 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the Grade 10 learners from Supreme Educational College for their dedication and willingness to participate in the workshops. The project would not have been a success if it was not for your support throughout the project, despite the challenges that we faced.

To the Supreme Educational College authorities for allowing me to work with their learners and to use the school premises. Thank you for allowing me to interrupt the busy school schedule.

My most profound gratitude goes to my Supervisor, Professor Kennedy Chinyowa whose undying passion for scholarship constantly encouraged me. Thank you for your patience and feedback. Thank you so much Prof Kennedy.

I would like to thank my family for ever believing in me and the continued support you have given me throughout this journey. To my husband Tinashe, you are the most priced gift God has given me. Thank you for holding my hand in good and tough times. God Bless you.

Finally to Drama for Life. You gave me an opportunity to experience my academic journey in the most profound way ever. Thank you for opening me up to wider possibilities in the use of drama and theatre for social transformation.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Area of Investigation

The presence of migrants in the diaspora is often characterised by various challenges as they integrate in the new cultural context. This research seeks to use applied drama and theatre strategies to explore specifically adolescent African migrants' experiences in South Africa. This angle is motivated by the fact that the adolescent migrants find themselves accompanying their families who are in search of greener pastures. It is this change of environment and culture that may pose a challenge to how they eventually negotiate their integration in the new social context. Migration, as Benmayor and Skotnes (1994: vi) argue, may leave the migrants confused about their sense of self. It is from this observation that I seek to investigate, through applied drama, the adolescent migrants' experiences in South Africa and explore the challenges that may exist.

The research question for this paper will be:

- How can applied drama be used to investigate the attitudes towards, or impact of migration on adolescent migrants in South Africa?

1.2 Rationale

Migration has a bearing on how one adapts to the social context of a new place and the effects of migration may pose challenges for adolescent migrants in particular. Blerk and Ansell (2004:450), argue that migration has implications on several areas of children's lives and these are shaped by the context in which migration takes place. There is a need for migration research to recognise children as social actors in their adaptation process and as foreigners in the receiving countries in which they find themselves (Blerk and Ansell, 2004:450). This study seeks to contribute to explore how the applied drama methodology can be used to advance the conversation around migration research that specifically places its primary focus on the adolescents' experiences of migration.

While parents and family members may make a deliberate choice to migrate in search of better economic opportunities, their children do not necessarily make this choice as they are compelled to join their families in the diaspora. Since parents and guardians have their own experiences of migration, their children are equally affected as they are at a critical stage of

development. While I acknowledge my personal subjectivity as a Zimbabwean migrant studying in South Africa, with my own experiences of the diaspora, I am interested in understanding how adolescent migrants experience life as foreigners in South Africa.

Language plays a critical role in the integration of the adolescent migrant in South Africa. South Africa is destination for many African nationals from countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola, to mention a few, (Landau and Wa Kabwe, 2009). They spend most of their time at school where they are exposed to local languages such as Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans and Sesutu. Everyday interactions between the adolescent migrants and the local nationals produce the knowledge that the adolescents may come to know, and it is in this light that language becomes 'the passive vehicle for… thoughts and emotions' (Burr, 1995:7). It is amidst this cultural diversity that I wish to employ applied drama strategies to explore the extent to which language may or may not be a barrier to communication and consequently how it impacts on the migrants' experiences in South Africa.

It is important that this study places the African adolescent migrants at the core of the migration experience. By virtue of being migrants together with their families, there is need to recognize their active agency as social actors in their integration processes, hence the use of applied drama strategies.

1.3 Literature Review

Research has been carried out on migrants in South Africa in general and their experiences around xenophobia, economic challenges, the psychological impact of migration and how these factors impact on their identities (Zar, 2011; Magodo, 2011, Takabvirwa, 2010 and Mahati, 2012). While these scholars have examined the impact of migration in adapting to the South African context from a sociological point of view, they do not specifically situate their inquiry in the applied drama and theatre practice. As such, I seek to advance the conversation through the use of the applied drama and theatre methodology to explore this impact in relation to the adolescent who is a part of the migrant population in South Africa. Drawing from these contributions, I situate my argument around the experiences of African adolescent migrants in the South African diaspora.

1.3.1 Adolescence as critical in social interactions

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage which propels and prepares the individual for adulthood. Erikson (1968) asserts that during this stage of development, the adolescent is mainly concerned with what they appear to be to the people around them (Santrock and Yussen, 1984:388). The need to create a positive image around peer groups and in society in general plays a critical role in how adolescent migrants negotiate and perhaps get to understand their identity in contemporary South Africa.

McCandless asserts that identity formation during adolescence is the most central point of development as the individual begins to integrate one's identity, goals, aspirations and personal ethics (1973:407). This integration is directly influenced not only by pubertal changes, but also by pressures for independence and perceived social responsibility for oneself and for others. In line with this, Jenkins (1996) argues that individual identity is not constructed in isolation, but rather, it is a social construct achieved through the process of social interaction. The individual begins to define and redefine themselves in relation to those around them. In this regard, adolescent migrants in their integration process may also be faced by cultural and social pressures in their various contexts. They may find themselves in a position of negotiating an understanding of their role as migrants. It is in this respect that the study seeks to explore through applied drama, to what extent and in what ways the cultural and social factors impact on their experiences of adapting to the social context of South Africa.

1.3.2 The socio-cultural factors that may impact on migrant identities

Landau and Wa Kabwe (2009) have explored some of the trends and tensions in migration experiences and how the mobility of migrants impacts on South Africa's migration policy. The study observes that controls on human mobility and efforts to undermine them continue to shape South Africa's politics, economy, and society. Policy reform is hindered by lack of capacity, misinformation, and anti-migrant sentiments within and outside of government,' (Landau and Wa Kabwe, 2009). Such factors have a bearing on the experiences of migrants in the country where anti-migrant sentiments are witnessed in the structures of power in various institutions and it is from these institutions that the general populace is informed and influenced. Landau and Wa Kabwe (2009) identify some of the major factors that often result in negative sentiments towards migrants such as poor implementation capacity of the set policies, endemic corruption among police and immigration officials (2009). Such

weaknesses in the structures of power have a direct impact on the experiences and integration of migrants as these are the support base of the general populace. Landau and Wa Kabwe however do not focus on the applied drama and theatre methodology, hence, its application in exploring how adolescent migrants are affected by such negative influences.

Doron Zar (2011) has carried out a study on the identities and experiences of foreign African students in South Africa. She explores the psychological impact that migration has on the international students who come to study in South Africa. In this study Zar (2011) looks at the factors that impact on the sense of identity of the African students such as language, hostility by the host nation and resistance to the host nation's culture. These often impact on the individual's experience of migration and so they may not easily adapt to the new cultural context. Although the study focuses on the broader aspect of foreign students studying in South Africa, Zar's (2011) observations are relevant to this study as these will be used in the context of the applied drama and theatre approach. The shift from a familiar environment to an unfamiliar one may have an impact on adolescent migrants and how they negotiate their integration processes.

In response to negative attitudes towards foreign nationals, Hungwe (2012) highlights that some Zimbabwean migrants construct counter-identities, which she terms a multiplicity of identities. Her main argument is in how South African locals and authorities create what she terms 'spoilt identities' through the 'makwerekwere' image, a derogatory name used by South Africans to refer to foreigners, who are mainly black Africans from other countries. The Zimbabwean migrants in turn create alternative 'South African identities' referred to as 'injiva' a term that refers to outsiders that have a different outlook to life because of their experiences in a foreign country Hungwe (2012:134), regards resistance to such terms as a form of resistance to the negative perceptions towards migrants. While Hungwe's study focuses on Zimbabwean migrants, this phenomena cut across all African migrant groups residing in South Africa and this is inclusive of adolescent migrants.

1.3.3 Socio-Economic factors impacting on migrants' experiences

Negative stereotypes and attitudes are deemed to be the major causes of xenophobic behaviour towards foreign nationals. Freemantle (2012) argues that there is a widespread sense amongst South African nationals that illegal aliens flood the country and steal job opportunities and put a strain on the local resources that are supposedly meant to cater for

locals. This is regarded as a major threat and obstacle to the country's social and economic growth, hence, the hostile attitudes towards foreign nationals (Freemantle, 2012). Zinyama (in Crush, 2012) also echoes the same sentiments in his research on Zimbabwean economic migrants. He observes that Zimbabwean migrants are seen as a threat to the economic prosperity and security of the country and are considered to be a contributory factor to the high levels of unemployment in the country. The adolescent migrants may be caught up in the web of such perceptions, and this may then impact on the understanding of their sense of identity in the broader context of South Africa.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed will be the theoretical lens guiding this study. The theatre of the oppressed is hinged on dialogic participation which in Freire's terms is the 'encounter, in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized' (1972:61). Through image theatre, as a TO method, I hope to create a space where adolescent migrants can generate narratives of their experiences that are culturally relevant to their realities. By so doing, a space for the examination of these experiences is established, breaking the culture of silence that may otherwise oppress them. Through constant reflection, they may eventually transcend the negative perceptions against them. Through image theatre, they can begin to dialogue about their experiences in order to enable them to adapt to the South African social and cultural context.

Image theatre involves participants in creating images out of their own and other people's bodies. These images are based on personal experience, observations and imagination, Boal (in Babbage, 2004:124). Boal (in Chinyowa, 2011:4) says that image theatre seeks,

> 'first, to discover *what oppressions we are suffering* (The Real Image); second, to create a space in which to rehearse (or *find) ways and means of fighting against those oppressions* (The Transitional Image); third, to extrapolate that into real life so that we can become free – which means we can *become subject(s) not object(s) of our relationships with others* (The Ideal Image)'

In the case of the adolescent migrants, they become active participants in the exploration of their experiences of migration through the images they create.

Amkpa (2006) regards theatre of the oppressed as a liberatory framework and says that it becomes a symbol for aspirations for freedom and social justice. Through image theatre, 'the

moments of the reality of domination become starkly coherent for the adolescent migrants who consequently begin to imagine strategies of negotiating their adaptation processes, thereby, transforming themselves into a broader humanity within which they are subjects, not objects, of social reality,' (Amkpa, 2006:167). The migrants are able to create images which depict scenarios of their personal identities, and by so doing they begin to critically engage with the images as active subjects and not objects of their reality.

Central to the active participation of participants in theatre of the oppressed, is Boal's argument that theatre is a collaborative art, as such, people collaboratively make theatre as a tool for social change. Boal also argues that originally the theatre performance was created by and for the people hence, it was a celebration in which all could participate freely (Boal, 1979. Drawing from this argument, the theatre of the oppressed seeks to bridge the gap between the theatre experience and the spectator, to engage the spectator as part of a creative and exploratory process, as compared to the conventional theatre that alienates the audience from the stage where all the action takes place. In the context of using image theatre with the adolescent migrants to explore their identities, they took full ownership of the process and began to embody their experiences of the diaspora as a way of understanding their reality. Hence, they ceased to be passive recipients, but claimed their ability as active makers of art in the process of revolutionizing society (Babbage, 2004: 36).

1.5 Methodology

I used performance ethnography as the methodological approach to the study to explore the experiences of adolescent migrants in South Africa. The use of performance ethnography was critical to this study as a body-centred approach, critical to applied drama and theatre as it privileges the body as an archive for deeply seated experiences. Through the metaphor of storying and creation of images, it was my hope that the participants could find ways to understand their social realities as migrants, thus begin to explore ways of negotiating their adaptation within the South African social context.

Performance ethnography 'offered a vocabulary for exploring the expressive elements of culture…and consequently allowed for the tracing of the social rhetorical forces of particular expressions' (Hamera in Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Through image theatre, participants were able to explore their identities in a way that was culturally relevant to their experiences as they created the images based on their own frames of reference as adolescent migrants.

This was achieved through utilizing the experiential elements of performance ethnography, as it is a body-centred method of knowing, Alexander (in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:411). The adolescent migrants were able to draw from their personal experiences to explore and discover ways that could enable them to understand their identities.

1.5.1 Case Study

I combined performance ethnography with the case study method as a way of deepening understanding regarding experiences of adolescent migrants. I chose to work with a group of Grade 10 adolescent learners, amongst them South African students from Supreme Educational College, with the intention of creating a focus group for the research. This way of working with a selected group afforded me as the researcher 'a way of listening to people and learning from them,' (Morgan, 1998:9). This helped me to enter into an environment where I was seeking to understand how adolescent migrants negotiate their adaptation process, and consequently endeavoured to explore ways of enabling them to meaningfully adapt to the South African context.

The sample size included a group of 20, Grade 10 participants from Supreme Educational College who are between the ages of 15 and 16 years. The group of participants included South African, Zimbabwean and Zambian nationals. The intention was to include as many foreign nationals as possible including locals so that the conversation was balanced and not only biased towards the migrants.

1.5.3 Image Theatre

Image theatre makes use of participants' bodies as clay which they can use to create still images depicting a particular chosen theme (Boal, 1995). Using images was essential in tapping into the inner-most feelings and desires of participants without necessarily over relying on words as a way of expression. As such, 'all images became surfaces, reflecting what was projected on them, reflecting the emotions of the observer, that is, ideas, memories, imagination and desire' (Boal, 2002:175). Participants were thus provided with a democratic space to generate fictional realities of their experiences as migrants and locals. They created and used their imaginations to feel the images from their own frames of reference.

1.5.4 Hot Seating

As participants created images, they also embodied characters. A character was then chosen and asked to sit on a 'hot seat' where they were questioned by the group about his or her background, behaviour and motivations. The character had to respond truthfully to all the questions. This was aimed at enabling participants to express their understanding and begin to examine their perceptions from both inside and outside of their roles (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995: viii).

1.5.5 Thought Tracking

All characters in an image had to voice their interior thoughts at a particular moment in time, as would be instructed by the facilitator (Boal, 2002). Participants were asked to give a phrase or word of what was going on in their minds in that particular situation. As a control mechanism, I tapped each character on the shoulder and the character came to life to express his or her thoughts. This way of dynamising the image gave insight into how the characters were thinking thus externalising their thoughts and motivations. It also provided a way of deepening understanding which was relevant for participants to offer their feelings and opinions about the experience of migration.

1.5.6 Story as Pre-Text

The story of the Seal Girl, as an adaptation of an Irish folktale, was used as a pre-text, providing a metaphor from which the participants could draw material for exploration. O'Neil and Lambert (1982) highlight that the use of story as pre-text creates an imagined world and roles of participants with economy and clarity. In this way, the participants are able to work through the imagined world, creating a safe distance from the immediacy of their experiences as African adolescent migrants.

1.5.7 Story as Metaphor

Working with story as metaphor in dealing with a sensitive subject allowed migrants to interact freely with foreign nationals. Through reflection the adolescent participants came to an understanding of the story's possibilities and were able to marry that with their own realities. In this way, the participants felt more comfortable working through their stories from a safe distance that is non-confrontational.

1.5.8 Participant observer

I assumed the role of facilitator and participant-observer. This enabled me to immerse myself in the imaginative exploration together with the participants, without imposing my assumptions on them. This also helped me to interpret the cultural experiences produced in the workshop processes. Alexander (2005) argues for the positioning of participants in performance ethnography processes as a way of engaging them as agents in the production of cultural meaning. This provided a space for the adolescent migrants to engage in the imaginative creation of new possibilities. In this way, the participants took control of the exploration process. As the researcher I was simultaneously emotionally involved as well as objectively detached from the material being generated. As a Zimbabwean migrant I allowed myself to understand their experiences as adolescent migrants.

1.5.9 Reflective Journals

I used field notes that were gathered during the period of engagement with the participants. The field notes included reflective notes on the planning and implementation of the workshop processes. Documenting and constantly reflecting on the processes also enabled me to structure the workshops in a way that was relevant to engaging with the participants. Descriptive narrative accounts including reflective and analytical notes were also incorporated in the documentation process. These were in the form of a journal to help in reflecting on the experiences and themes that emerged in the workshop space. O'Toole emphasizes the importance of descriptive and analytical notes as they enable the 'ethnographer researcher to construct a written text inclusive of the researcher's own analytical and emotional responses to the experiences…' (2002:42). By constantly reflecting on the experiences and the emergent ideas in the workshop space I was able to locate my subjectivity as a Zimbabwean migrant staying in South Africa.

1.6 Audio Recording and Photographs

With the permission of the participants and their guardians, I made use of audio recording which enabled me to capture the participants' exact contributions and opinions during the drama workshop process. I also took still photographs of the images that they created. Recording the process in such a way enabled me to take time to reflect on them after the drama workshop process as well as to capture the participants' actual voices.

1.6.1 Ethical Considerations:

I submitted a written formal letter to the school authorities, participant information sheets to both the school and the parents or guardians of the participants, and parent consent forms that were submitted to the participants' parents and guardians for approval. As an ethnographer researching on the African adolescent migrants' identities in the diaspora, I had to take ethical responsibility for all the participants who attended the workshops. Soyini Madison defines ethical responsibility as 'a compelling sense of duty and commitment based on principles of human freedom and well-being…,' (2002:5). As such I had to take responsibility for my participants and the stories that they would share in the space, hence, their safety and consent had to be ensured. It was essentially important to the research process that the parent consent forms were signed as this served as an added assurance from the participants themselves to take part in the workshops.

As the facilitator I had the responsibility to ensure a safe environment for the participants by concealing how exactly I would select the participants. The parent consent forms provided the basis upon which all were given space to accept or decline the invitation.

Participants were also assured that strict confidentiality would be kept and that no real names would be used in the research analysis. The data gathered would only be accessed by me and my supervisor.

There was also need to create a working contract with the participants, which was achieved, as a way of establishing the rules of engagement throughout the process. Neelands argues that the learning experience is a constant negotiation between the facilitator and the participants, hence, the contract '…is a reflection (or meeting ground) of two influences: it's a contract that seeks to include the participant as a fellow-negotiator of what happens in the drama processes…' (2002:27). It was therefore, imperative that a relationship of trust, negotiation and confidentiality was established in the contract. This would enable me as the researcher to provide a safe space for the expression of participants' lived experiences.

CHAPTER 2: THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY

2.1 Introduction

This research process started off as a Practice as Research based class project with the intention of establishing a research area for my final master's thesis. A series of workshops marked the beginning of conceptualising what became the major objective for this research. At the initial point, the research sought to explore Zimbabwean adolescent migrants' identity construction in South Africa. Due to my nationality as Zimbabwean, I felt motivated to look particularly at Zimbabwean adolescent migrants as I had also recently come to study in South Africa. As an adult, I had my own personal experiences in adapting to a new cultural context. I therefore wondered how adolescent migrants would experience the very same cultural context that South Africa presented to them.

In this chapter I explored the initial phase of the research process which was the problem identification stage. I proceeded to explore Zimbabwean adolescent migrants in South Africa and how they construct their identity in the multicultural context that they find themselves in.

2.1 Identifying and framing the research problem

The initial intention of the research was to create spaces for dialogue through image theatre in a bid to explore Zimbabwean adolescent migrants' learning experiences in South African secondary schools. Having introduced myself as a student from The University of The Witwatersrand and carrying out a study on Zimbabwean learners, the rest of the students began to disburse including some Zimbabwean learners. As they left the room, the remaining Zimbabweans were shouting 'Proudly Zimbabwean' as if to prove a point to those who had left. The girls who were part of the group of Zimbabweans who remained were however quick to correct that they were not 'Proudly Zimbabwean' but rather just 'supporting Zimbabweans'. I then realised that by singling out Zimbabweans, perhaps I had perpetuated binary divisions in the school. If the adolescents were not comfortable being called out Zimbabwean, I felt that perhaps the research focus had to examine the impact of migration that was likely to generate such reactions.

The first two workshops explored the participants' perceptions of first, 'the school' and then 'Johannesburg' which is the larger context. This exercise served as the baseline survey to ascertain the topic that would be relevant to the group. The first image of 'the school' showed an individual who was sitting down miserably and trying to concentrate on school work but

clearly distracted. The sculptor of the image explained that it was a representation of a Zimbabwean student who was being discriminated against by other students and teachers as well at the school. She went on to explain that, that is how she feels inside because she was transferred from a Zimbabwean School and had to repeat Grade 8, and now she was learning with younger students and it made her feel uncomfortable. The outcomes of this first workshop were important as they were indicative of some of the experiences of adolescent migrant participants. It was also important to note that the sculptor was also a case in point of the impact of migration that is initiated by parents or guardians, hence the need to explore this through further research.

On the day of the second workshop, while mobilising participants, we found one of the girls sitting in a classroom with her friends. TK (*pseudonym)* asked the girl if she was not attending the workshop and she denied that she had never been part of the group of participants. When TK reminded her that the workshop was for Zimbabwean students, she would not budge and her response was that she did not want to identify with the Zimbabwean group. On another occasion, while we waited for the rest of the participants to come, TK being the joker he is, teased one of the students from his class and asked her to come for the workshop. The girl was offended and her response was, 'What makes you think that I'm Zimbabwean? Do I look like a Zimbabwean?' Observing all these encounters I realised that they were all indicating towards a direction of a crisis of identity as most of the Zimbabwean learners did not want to openly announce their nationality.

As I had taken an ethnographic approach as a researcher, I allowed myself to be observant and listened to all the interactions that occurred in my presence, both inside and outside the workshop space. The process of research for me became 'open-ended, subject to self-correction during the process of inquiry itself' (Hymes, 1996:7). This initial phase was, therefore, left open for insights that could lead to the identification of the problem of inquiry, as the intention was not to impose a topic on the participants. As already pointed out, I had consciously decided to ignore the remarks by the students, but the very same issues that I had shoved under the carpet seemed to be the real issues that needed to be addressed in the workshops. These observations changed my perception altogether and I decided that it would be more relevant to explore the Zimbabwean adolescent migrants' identity construction in South Africa since the initial encounters pointed towards a sense of identity crisis.

For the purposes of this chapter, I will make reference to *Workshop 5*, which was also the final examination process for my Practice as Research project before embarking on this study. In this workshop we explored the Zimbabwean adolescent migrants' identity construction. The workshop investigated the various factors that influence the adolescents' construction of who they are. The workshop also interrogated how these notions of identity can be challenged in the context of the images they created.

2.1.1 Workshop Description

Participants played the Expectations, pressures and insecurity exercise. They walked around with the identity titles on their foreheads and they had to respond to each other accordingly. The identity tittles were: The leader: follow me, the expert: ask me advice, the insignificant: ignore me, the looser: good for nothing. The idea was for the title holders to not know what status they had on their foreheads as they interacted with the rest of the participants.

Reflection questions:

What problems did you encounter trying to be yourself? What did 'being you' actually mean in this situation? Have you found yourself changing your behaviour in reaction to the treatment the group was giving you? From this exercise, participants were then asked to create images of the situations that the exercise could possibly reflect for them as Zimbabwean migrants with reference to their school.

2.2 Workshop Analysis

Participants were invited as individuals to volunteer to sculpt images out of other participants' bodies. The major reason why I decided to have the group present images using other people's bodies was for them to begin to situate themselves in their individual experiences of how they perceived their presence as migrants in South Africa. According to Boal, image theatre 'presents themes not as is in all cases, but as is understood from within one's own frame of reference and experience' (1992:166). This initial engagement with personal accounts was important for the exploration of the factors that influence the adolescent migrants in the construction of their identities.

Precious *(pseudonym)* created an image to represent what happens to the Zimbabwean immigrant student when first entering a new school. The image depicted a learner who was

surrounded by a group of other learners. The group of learners corrected the way the learner wore his uniform. In the image the learners loosed the learner's tie, tucked out his shirt and disapproved of his trousers. The sculptor said that some students often find themselves having to change the way they dress up so that they look like the rest. In this regard, Precious was able to capture some of the experiences she has witnessed in the school environment.

The creation of images according to Boal (1992) is the initial phase of exploration of the particular problem under inquiry. This also helps to break the ice for participation. Boal points out that, 'During this first stage, one by one, each of the four or five members of each small group constructs their own individual image…' (1995:77). This allowed the participants to have a chance to capture their personal experiences and to begin to look at them in relation to the other situations presented by the rest of the participants.

As Jackson in Boal, (1979) rightly puts it, 'a picture paints a thousand words', the image showing the local learners altering the foreign learner's enabled participants to identify experiences of discrimination that they had gone through. As they reflected on the image, one of the participants recalled an incident where Zimbabwean learners often find themselves feeling alone while other learners group themselves according to their nationalities such as the Portuguese, the Angolans and South Africans. Another participant also said that there can be name calling. For example, other students may say, 'Oh you are from that poor country' once they realise that they are from Zimbabwe.

The image of the foreign learner being shown how 'best' to wear the uniform became a universal language that was shared by all participants as an embodiment of the various experiences that they often encounter as Zimbabwean adolescents immigrants. This affects how they begin to shape who they are in relation to other African nationals. They were able to speak back to the image through what Boal calls a process of identification and recognition (1995). For Boal, when the participant begins to recount an incident that the situation portrayed in the image reminds them of, they begin to relive their own emotions and a part of them is brought into play. It is in this recognition and identification that participants began to generate stories of how identities are imposed on them by their local peers.

The idea of imposed identities seems to stem from fixed perceptions regarding connotations about the Zimbabwean migrants and their country of origin. This way of looking at the adolescent migrants by their peers often negates the recognition of difference which consequently alienates them as they may not necessarily identify with an image that makes

them feel inferior. In circumstances where they can change their fate, they would rather not identify with Zimbabwe in a bid to evade these negative perceptions as well as to belong to the context which they find themselves in.

It is in this respect that one participant, making reference to the image of 'the school' said that some Zimbabwean students also alienated fellow Zimbabwean students. He mentioned that if one was to bring a lunch pack that is not necessarily considered 'fashionable' by other students; they would laugh at the person. From this account I drew parallels between the adolescent immigrant's personal image and the image of Zimbabwe that other people have as a result of the political, social and economic environment that has led people to flee from the country into South Africa in search of favourable economic opportunities. The perception of 'that poor country' seems to be fixed as a universal reality that then influences people's conceptions of Zimbabwe. When adolescent migrants are then faced with such a situation, they feel compelled to distance themselves from the 'poor country' image. This labelling has a bearing on how Zimbabwean adolescent migrants adapt to the diasporic space

Jenkins's ideas on social identity also clarify the effects of imposed labels in society as they often impact negatively on the social experience of the individual. Jenkins argues that 'authoritatively applied identities effectively constitute and impinge upon individual experience' (1996:23). Labels that impose a universal truth that is contrary to that of the individual's experience, always have an impact on how the individual consequently constructs their identity in relation to others. In the same token, some of the adolescent migrants would rather distance themselves from the image of 'that poor country'. They opt for options which work in their favour in order to adapt to the cultural context.

When the participants created an ideal image that depicted what they would want to see in their school, the image showed learners in a school where all learners shared books and read together in groups. The sculptor highlighted that this was the ideal situation that she envisioned for the school. All students as different African nationalities share knowledge without looking at who comes from where.

Stuart Hall argues for the emergence of a new Africa. He says this new Africa is,

> …the juncture point where many cultural tributaries meet, the empty land where strangers from every other part of the globe collided. None of the people who now occupy the islands-black, brown, white, African, European or American

> originally "belonged" there. It is the space where the creolisations and assimilations and syncretisms were negotiated (in Mongia, 1996:118.119).

According to Hall, the original Africa is no longer in existence because it has been transformed throughout the history of colonisation and slavery (1996:117). Likewise, the Zimbabwean migrants and the other African adolescent migrants have also been displaced from their countries of origin through migration, hence the need to negotiate new identities that recognise their origins, and at the same time looking into the future that seeks to embrace difference in the South African diaspora.

2.2.1 Discriminating against locals

Although there was othering and labelling from the other African migrants and locals in the school, Zimbabwean participants also had their own prejudices towards other African nationals. One image showed two students who were busy studying, while there were two other students who looked on in wonder. The image was a depiction of Zimbabwean learners as hard workers while their South African counterparts were not really interested in school and so they wondered what it is the Zimbabwean students found interesting in the books and they mocked them. As the participants reflected on the image it seemed to be the general consensus amongst the participants that they found South African students in particular, disinterested in school work. The notion that 'we are hard workers and they are not' began to create negative stereotypes of their peers and this had a negative bearing on how they eventually perceive other nationals.

The idea that Zimbabwean learners are always better than other African nationals, seemed to be dominant in the discussion. One participant pointed out that 'For example, the Angolans speak Portuguese and they can't speak English properly. You then find them seated in one corner, how are you supposed to help them when they are always by themselves?' At this point, I realised hidden forms of discrimination that the Zimbabwean students themselves perpetuated against other African nationals. As such their conception of their difference in this multicultural and diverse social context rendered their attitude towards other African nationals negative while they regarded themselves as 'superior'. There was need for Zimbabwean adolescent migrants to also take cognisance of the differences that exist amongst all African nationals, in a bid to create an environment where they are able to work through the differences and discard the binaries that separate them

However participants began to break the binaries that they had created when they referred to Angolan and South African learners as disinterested in school work when they created a follow up image. In this image, the two students who had been reading alone began to move towards other learners who were looking at them and mocking them. As they did so, they stretched out their hands as an invitation to study together as a group. The learners who had been mocking them accepted the invitation to share knowledge with other learners. While these learners began to share knowledge learners came to realise the good that is in embracing difference. This marked a critical reflective moment in the processes of engaging with the participants as they began to acknowledge their differences.

2.3 Conclusion

The outcomes from the Practice as Research project made me feel that this was just the beginning of the long journey which I had envisioned. This initial phase served as the main baseline survey for the current research. I began to realise that singling out Zimbabwean learners from a whole spectrum of adolescents in the school created unnecessary binaries among their peers and amongst the Zimbabweans themselves. This was signalled when some of the Zimbabwean learners were not willing to participate in the project. This brought me to the realisation that perhaps, in continuation, there was need to come up with a group of mixed African nationalities including local South Africans. This is what then shaped this current research process. The intention as was mentioned in the methodology section was to present findings from both the adolescent migrants and their local peers in a bid to examine their relationships and identities.

It is from these preliminary workshops that I developed the second research process which centres on the story of the Seal Girl. Chapter 2 introduces the story and how it was used as a metaphor to generate narratives on the experiences of African adolescent migrants in South Africa. Although the initial focus had been on the adolescents' identity construction, the focus changed to experiences of migration.

CHAPTER 3: STRATEGIES OF SURVIVAL

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the strategies that adolescent migrants in South Africa employ and the implications of those strategies on their adaptation process. Social relationships play a critical role in enabling the individual migrant to create a support base, as being a migrant may present challenges such as discrimination, disappointment, bewilderment and emotional turmoil (Benmayor and Skotnes, 1994: v). In such cases, migrants find the need to set up support structures that may possibly help them to cope with the new environment. I therefore argue that adolescent migrants employ various strategies that have a bearing on the relationships that they foster in the new context in which they find themselves. Moreover adolescence is a stage associated with the development of one's individual identity in a particular social setting. At this stage the adolescent migrants also feel the need to create strategic social relations which may enable them to search for new identities.

Image theatre provides the oppressed social groups a distanced space to confront and explore their experiences. The adolescent migrants were considered to be the oppressed as a minority group bearing the experiences of migration as foreigners. Their experiences reflect a microcosm of the macro migrant community in South Africa. Through the metaphor and story of the Seal Girl, I employed image theatre and thought tracking to explore the adolescent migrants' experiences in South Africa.

3.2 Narrative as Pretext: The Story of the Seal Girl

Brief background to the Story

The story is an adaptation of an Irish folktale, the Seal Wife. The story of the seal wife has been cited as an example of stimuli and pretext in process drama, (O'Neill, 1985 and Taylor, 2000). As such the story has been used to generate conversation around identities, gender and other topical themes that emerge from the story. I therefore found it relevant to adapt the story and make it relevant to the participants' context as adolescents. I also took the liberty to narrate the story as a way of introducing a new dramatic world into the workshop space. The narration was also supported by some reflection questions that I filtered in the story so as to help participants to begin to contextualise the story. More on how this was done is discussed below.

The story of the Seal girl (Adaptation)

Long ago, there lived a beautiful young seal girl. She always came out of the water, sat on a rock, and enjoyed the sun. Just across from the sea there was a village and as she sat on the rock she watched the people from the village go about their daily activities.

Every time she sat on the rock, she took off her seal skin and would look like a human being and only put it back when going back into the sea and became a seal again. As she sat on the rock, she always wondered what it would be like to live on land like the people from the village.

One day she decided to embark on a journey to the village and begin a new life different from the sea where she had lived most of her life. She took with her the seal skin and disguised it as a bag.

When she reached the village she was welcomed by an old woman, Magogo, who welcomed her in her home. Magogo also lived with her grandson Patrick and they lived together for a long time. Time passed and the seal girl and Patrick became very close.

The seal girl, Patrick and Magogo lived in a small cottage and the seal girl carefully hid her seal skin in the thatching in the roof. As we all know thatching needs to be replaced every seven years.

Patrick was replacing the old thatching for Magogo and as he was working on the roof, he threw down the old thatching and with it the seal girl's skin.

Patrick picked it up and took it to her to ask what it was…..

Analysis

We all gathered together in a circle as I narrated the story to the participants. The circle in this instance was a technique for creating a sense of group solidarity. The circle thus enabled me to establish equal status and equal visibility among the participants.

My role was constantly alternating between facilitator and story teller. As I narrated the story, I also included some leading questions to enable the participants to begin to contextualise and internalise the story. Some of these questions were: Do you all know what seals look like? Participants gave different impressions of what the seals look like. Some of the feedback was, 'Oh you mean those slimy creatures that live by the sea? Seals are ugly!!' Another participant

exclaimed that she actually thought seals were beautiful and sweet and so the debate was back and forth. The other question that I asked was, 'Do you all know what a thatched roof looks like?' One participant acknowledged that she did not know. I then asked a volunteer who knew what a thatched roof looks like to explain to the entire group. The participants seemed more familiar with the idea of a gazebo as an example of a thatched roof. It was important for the participants to begin to make conversations with the story as this helped them identify and clarify the concepts in the story linking them to their realities. The participant's answers were deliberately accepted as correct because the idea was to work with the narrative from multiple perspectives and to encourage various views and opinions.

In an attempt to provide a critical distance to the experiences of the adolescent migrants, I adapted the Irish folktale, The Story of the Seal Woman (O'Neill, 1985; Taylor, 2000). Boal explains that a metaphor includes symbolic language, including the word, the parable and the allegory as well as all the arts which seek to represent rather than reproduce reality,' (2006:26). As such, the story of the seal girl provided a metaphoric context for the experiences of migrants which was not directly linked to the real experiences of participants. The intention was to make the subject matter of migration as comfortable as possible to talk about without making participants feel exposed. Hence, the story was meant to provide the context in which the participants could re-story their personal experiences based on their diasporic environment.

As an adaptation of the Irish folktale of the seal woman, the story of the seal girl was left with an open ending which leaves out most of the detail in the original text. This was meant to keep to keep the story relevant to the target group. Moreover, the flexibility of the story also allowed participants to work from the stimuli provided as a distancing mechanism. The story's dramatic context helped participants to 'journey inside the story garden so that they could construct the symbols, images and narrative sequence in action, thus enabling them to re-examine the story's ideas and experimenting and playing with them' (Taylor, 2000:46). The ability to examine the experiences of the seal girl as a foreigner in the village was a critical element in the exploration of the participants' own experiences as migrants.

3.3 Workshop description

The workshop sought to explore the participants' feelings of being foreign. The major activity for the workshop being the bombs and shields exercise which I used as pretext to the

theme of foreignness. The bombs and shields exercise was symbolic to the idea of foreignness as the context simulates an atmosphere of prejudice and discrimination. The participants were asked to secretly choose a bomb and a shield but the choices would not be revealed to anyone. The game is described in detail below. The context and environment that was provided by the game is synonymous with the idea of entering a new cultural context where one has to make choices on whom to and not to associate with, and these decisions are similarly only known to the individual. Having contextualised it in such a manner, I found the bombs and shields exercise relevant to explore the adolescents' experiences of migration.

Description of game

Everyone stands in a defined playing area. There is a bomb that will explode in 2 minutes and the only way to avoid the blast is to have a shield between you and the bomb. Each participant secretly chooses someone else that will be the bomb and another one that will be the shield. On a 'Go' signal, every participant attempts to run for protection so that his/her shield is between himself or herself and the Bomb.

The guiding questions for participants' reflection were: What was your experience of the exercise? Do you think you were a bomb or a shield to someone else? What did that mean for you to be either the bomb or the shield? Does the exercise in any way resemble similar scenarios that you have witnessed around you? What do you think are the bombs or shields in such scenarios?

The exercise was meant to explore and identify some of the experiences of adolescent migrants through an experiential process. The exercise also allowed for play to take place and for participants to let go of their bodies and all inhibition that could hinder self-expression.

a. Creation of Image 1

Participants were instructed to move around the space slowly, making eye contact and acknowledging those that they met in the space. They were divided into 2 groups. They then worked in these groups to create images.

They were made to create an image of a moment from the seven years of the seal girl's life in the village.

Guiding questions for reflection: What was life like for the seal girl in the village? What was the relationship like between her and Magogo or Patrick over the seven years? What did Magogo think of the seal girl when she was with them?

The main reason for the creation of image 1 was to allow participants to begin to externalise their understanding of the experiences of the seal girl as a foreign national in a new land.

Creation of Image 2

Participants were again instructed to move around the space. As they moved they began to embody imagined community members of village. As facilitator, I would filter in leading statements that provided context for the participants' actions in the game. The leading statements include: 'You are now marked off by your attitude to the seal girl. Share your attitudes, thoughts, rumours, something you heard, and something you saw, or perhaps even something you personally made up. Who are you in this village? What kind of a person are you?'

Having issued the statements, participants began to interact with each other according to the characters that they chose. After the interaction, participants selected a word or phrase that struck them during the exercise. They created an image based on what they emerged from the community.

3.4 Workshop analysis: Group Solidarity

The participants exhibited a high level of group solidarity amongst the migrants themselves, including those who share the same cultural background as well as nationality. Group solidarity was also exhibited between the migrants and local South Africans. These relationships became critical for a better adaptation process to the social context of South Africa. As migrants, the adolescents began to establish friendships and affiliate themselves with strategic groups in a bid to gain recognition. Understanding the social and cultural context became critical as the adolescent migrants were at a stage where they were battling with their sense of identity.

Through the bombs and shields exercise the participants had a living through and experiential process that enabled them to express the nature of their relationships. In the game, participants had to secretly choose a bomb and a shield, where the shield had to constantly be between the individual and the perceived bomb as the bomb would explode at any one time.

In the process of chasing after their shields, the participants quickly got used to the idea of playing and letting loose some of their inhibitions (Boal, 2002:165). A pattern of networks began to emerge. 'Migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship and shared community origin' (Massey, 1997:264). Such networks of kinship and friendship amongst migrants helped to create a sense of belonging and solidarity as these were established on the basis of trust. Through the various bombs and shields that were chosen, at the end of the game there were distinct groups of those who had randomly chosen each other as shields. It was from this sense of solidarity that the adolescents began to be integrated into their new environment. Group solidarity thus became a source of identity formation which adolescent migrants could identify with.

For instance, group solidarity was evident amongst Zimbabwean migrants who grouped together and distanced themselves from the one group of mixed nationalities during the bombs and shields game. When the anticipated bomb was about to explode, participants quickly huddled up in two distinct groups. What was interesting about the two groups was that one was of mixed African nationalities while the other was made up of predominantly Zimbabwean participants. Zimbabweans were the majority in the group of migrant participants and so they easily formed a cluster. As immigrants, they formed a network where they could relate on a much closer level. However, such grouping also displayed a sense of exclusion. Zimbabwean participants had chosen each other as shields, through the formation of a separate group. While the participants scrambled to stick close to their shields, trust and support were critical due to the belief that their shields were capable of protecting them from the exploding bombs. Experiencing the social context of alienation and exclusion showed how participants adapted to into the environment of the migrant experience,

The bombs and shields game also brought another dynamic of friendship that created relationships based on mutual understanding. In reflection on the game, one South African participant mentioned that although he had to choose a bomb and a shield at school they do not see each other as different. He said, 'We are just students, we don't see each other as either bombs or shields' Although the participant was speaking from a 'privileged' position of being a South African national who could regarded as a potential oppressor, he indicated that it is not always the case that locals discriminate against foreigners. Forming friendships based on non-recognition of cultural differences between locals and migrants became necessary for adolescents as they are at a time when they needed to explore and experiments

with different identities in search of one's own. By so doing the social networks created a conducive environment for adolescent migrants as they adapted to the South African context.

The dynamisation of Image 1 and 2 illustrated how adolescent migrants establish relations with fellow migrants which make the adaptation process more bearable. In the image depicting the seal girl's life in the village, a group of villagers welcomes an outsider, while the outsider in turn welcomes the seal girl who is also foreign to the village. While the villagers ignore the seal girl in favour of the woman, who had visited the village, the visitor was willing to associate with the seal girl. The image thus captured the immediate responses of all participants as migrants as well as locals interacting with foreigners. The image became a metaphor of how the migrant community creates social networks in an attempt to assert their presence and make life manageable in the diaspora. At the same time the migrants were maintaining relations with the locals as was the case with the foreign woman. While the rest of the village openly welcomed the migrant villager and excluded the seal girl

3.4.1 Mixed peer affiliation

The participants also revealed that their friendship was either based on affiliation to a clique or mutual friendship. The social groups often made it easy for foreign peers to adapt better to the South African context. Friendship is a typical form of social networking that is crucial to one's social interactions. Friendship can be characterised as 'strong ties' which provide individuals with emotional and expressive support (Dominguez and Watkins, 2003:113). While creating a friendship with someone may appear innocent, it can also be viewed as a relationship of convenience that is influenced by pressures in one's social circumstances. The nature of such friendship can thus be determined by the conditions upon which it is fostered and created, particularly in the context of migrants. Peer group solidarity which is another survival strategy in mixed peer relationships has been identified as a defence mechanism in adolescence where young people identify with a group of people as a way of coping with discomforts in their social interaction (Candless and Evans, 1973:408).

Image 1, which was created to depict the experiences of the seal girl in the village over the seven years that she lived there, showed Patrick and the seal girl sitting comfortably together, Patrick's friend who strokes the seal girl's hair with so much admiration, Magogo and Patrick's friend move towards the group paying their attention on Patrick. As a foreigner from the 'sea world', the seal girl needed to establish strong ties with someone whom she

could trust to give her the support she needed to adapt and learn about life in the village. The seal girl became a reflection of adolescent migrants who find themselves seeking social support from friends. Ability of the seal girl as a foreigner to affiliate with locals was a key survival strategy that she employed during her adaptation process as it helped her to cope with the demands of the new environment (Dominguez and Watkins, 2003:113).

The fundamental principle governing image theatre is that while the images capture the moment in time, the image itself does not remain static (Boal 1992). As such, hot seating the seal girl was done to allow the image to come to life thereby providing a platform for all internal thoughts about the seal girl to be externalised. In the hot seating exercise, the seal girl was asked why she looked so happy and her response was,

> I am happy to be in Patrick's company and I am so thankful that Patrick and Magogo as well as his friends have accommodated me for the past seven years that I have lived in the village. I have perfectly blended into the family. I am happy to be a part of Patrick's friends because they are also considered as family (Extract from participant, 01/10/2013).

The creation of a social support network through friendship between the seal girl and Patrick indicates the way the participants have come to view the relationships between migrants and the locals. Migrant literature reveals that migrants are often confined to negative notions by receiving countries as deviants who cause disruption (Benmayor and Skotnes, 1994:4). Through the creation of such an intimate friendship, Patrick and the Seal girl find ways of making meaning of their co-existence as young people despite their different cultural backgrounds. Hall (in Storey, 1994:460) argues that ordinary people are not cultural dupes, they are perfectly capable of recognising the way realities are reorganised, reconstructed and reshaped' by the dynamics of migration. The existence of migrants is therefore defined by social interactions. The ability of the Seal girl and Patrick to consciously break the binaries between the local and the foreigner is reflective of how adolescent migrants and locals have opened themselves up to each other. Appreciating each other for who they are and not where they come from is therefore a survival strategy that allows them to create relationships across cultures.

In image 2, Patrick stands close to the seal girl and shows her something that she seems curious about while a group of villagers look on with surprise. While the image was telling one story, participants had an opportunity to reflect on the image and generate their own

stories, based on their experiences either as migrants or as locals. Reflecting on the image, one participant said, 'Patrick likes the seal girl and is asking for her phone number and the other girls are like damn, how can he do that?' As an observer, the participant's contribution was influenced by 'situations lived or desired ….swayed by everything he knows and also by everything that dwells obstinately in his unconscious' (Boal, 1995:22). The participant's contribution could be reflective of how the adolescents relate to each other as they engage in intimate friendships. The participant could have been drawing from a real class situation where one of the South African boys was dating a Zimbabwean girl and everyone in their class was aware of the relationship. As such, the participant was able to express the possibility as well as reality of intercultural relationships that may be existent in the school from a distanced point of view.

Amidst all the negative perceptions towards the seal girl by the other girls, she and Patrick take the chance to befriend each other. This became a survival strategy for the seal girl as she had the opportunity to take advantage of her relationship with Patrick. Patrick seemed to willingly avail himself to help by introducing the seal girl to the way of life in their village as she was not conversant with the social context of the village. This relationship was bound to make the seal girl's adaptation process manageable as she had support from Patrick.

However, to take all friendships as built on mutual understanding would be to ignore the inherent cultural differences between migrants and locals which may be viewed with negativity. Another participant presented a counter argument challenging the notion that most friendships are based on equality as had been mentioned by the other participant. Drawing from the context of the bombs and shields game, where one's shield was running away, either chasing after their own shield or thinking the person pursuing them is the bomb, the participant explained that at times while one may consider themselves as a good shield to someone, that person or shield may be viewing them as a possible bomb. The game itself served to liberate the participants' bodies such that there was room for creative imagination and evocation of memory without having to place the participants in the spot light regarding their real lives. Such liberation of memory and imagination was important for the exploration of the migrants' lived experiences in the diaspora. The game also reflected the South African locals' experiences of their migrant counterparts within the school environment.

While it may be strategically convenient to consciously do away with differences between adolescent migrants and locals, it is also critical to note that, 'Every individual is different

and that we should respect and honour everyone's difference equally' (Boler and Zembylas, 2003:112). While it may be a good thing that adolescents may not consider cultural differences in friendships, the differences between the migrant and local peers need to be equally acknowledged for the creation of a healthy base that will sustain the social group. Appreciating the existence of differences would work positively towards countering the insecurity that migrants may experience at the hands of locals. Friendship can then become a positive strategy where no one party is held with suspicion because of their nationality, either local or migrant.

In as much as friendship has become a critical strategy of survival for adolescent migrants, it has also become a manipulative tool by those whom they consider to be friends. Reflecting on the bombs and shields game, one Zimbabwean participant presented a scenario where some friendships were created because someone wants to benefit from it. She likened the scenario of having to choose a shield so as to be protected from the bomb with how some people can manipulate friendships for their personal gain. As a result the need to associate and make friends with local people to aid one's adaptation process may trap the migrant into a relationship that is governed by hidden status and power. As such, power becomes central to how the social network of friends is constructed as a way to either ameliorate or assimilate the migrant who may find themselves vulnerable due to the condition of being foreign.

The bombs and shields game also provided an atmosphere of freedom and spontaneity through participants' response to the game's stimuli. By allowing space for participants to openly express their experiences in the creative world of the game, it laid fertile ground for critical dialogue to ensue and the silence around such oppressions was broken. The participants were freed to relate and to discover themselves in the social context of the game (Spolin, 1999:4).

When the bombs that the participants had secretly chosen had exploded, participants desperately clung to their shields trying to protect themselves from the bombs. This was shown by two distinct groups that were considerably set apart from each other. In reflection, participants mentioned that it was important that they all had shields, or else when the bomb exploded they would have died. Clinging to one's shield, whether foreigner or local, revealed how the participants identified each other as potential peers with whom they could easily form 'cliques' that are helpful in times of need.

Candless and Evans (1973:408), point out that, 'Adolescents may help each other through much developmental discomfort by forming cliques and stereotyping themselves, their ideals and their enemies.' One of the groups had a number of foreign nationals mixed together with locals. For migrant adolescents, this kind of mixed grouping showed the conveniences of identification with a group considered to be their own. This was a way of ensuring one's acceptability in a social context different from where they originate. As such, social networks can play a positive role as they allow individuals to access opportunities in tightly knit communities where a migrant may experience isolation and possible discrimination. The peer group phenomenon thus provides the adolescent migrant with an opportunity to identify and conform to a particular group.

3.4.2 Language adaptation

Language adaptation is another survival strategy that the migrants exhibited. As migrants it is inevitable that they would have to learn and embrace the values of the new environment in order to fit into it. Adapting to local languages becomes one way of learning about the receiving country's cultural way of life. Rex asserts that, 'ethnic minorities have to accept as part of an implied contract into which they enter with the host nation, that there is an official language which they would have to use in their day to day activities with authorities and the locals at large' (1997:287).

The adolescent migrants begin to learn the local language of expression as shown in the image of the seal girl making friends with Patrick. While the participant used local language to make the point that he thought Patrick liked the seal girl because he was taking her number on his mobile phone, the girl acting the role of the seal girl missed the interpretation. A Zimbabwean participant addressed the seal girl saying 'Wena', which is a Zulu word meaning 'You' and she referred to the Seal girl. Local languages are also taught in the school and as foreigners, this is part of the implied contract which migrants would have to recognise and accept (Rex, 1997: 281). Although the participant did say the Zulu word, it was clear that she knew no more than that, and so infusing one or two words of the local language becomes a survival strategy.

However, 'certain rituals and customs which are often carried in the languages of the host nation have the effect of binding its subordinates to the social order, which may be marked by enormous inequalities of status and power' (Storey, 1997:5). As such, the migrant's attempt

to speak the local language was a means of gaining recognition and a way of embracing the local culture only within their circle of friends. Otherwise most of the participants were comfortable communicating in English during the workshops. Adolescent migrants were only able to express their partial knowledge of the local Zulu language, as a result of the safe space that had been created to allow intimate conversations to take place without fear or inhibitions.

The ability of adolescent migrants to penetrate the culturally controlled domain of their local peers was a sign of resistance and power against the hegemonic structures that enforce binaries between locals and migrants. Although the peer group as a cultural field may be a site of resistance, Hall (in Storey 1994) argues that in these groups are also found moments of supersession. Hall goes on to argue that,

> This is the dialectic of cultural struggle…. In our times it goes on continuously in the complex lines of resistance and acceptance, refusal and capitulation….which makes it a constant battlefield…where no once-for-all victories are obtained, but where there are always strategic positions to be won and lost….the relations of dominance and subordination are therefore the process by means of which some things are actively preferred so that others can be dethroned…. Cultural struggle thus must be looked at dynamically, as an historical process' (Hall in Storey, 1994:460).

By the very act of creating intimate groups of friends, the social groups of migrant and local peers were brought together through constant negotiation which altered the way they viewed the world around them. The different social groups were able to negotiate an understanding that suited their relationships and by so doing, diffused the difference of cultures for their own good.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that adolescent migrants employ strategies of survival which are instrumental in their adaptation process to the South African context. As the perceived oppressed in a foreign land, the metaphor of the seal girl as well as the bombs and shields game illustrated the extent to which the seal girl and the local villagers fostered relationships based on mutual understanding even though the locals were bent on manipulating the seal girl. Chapter 3 will explore the sense of alienation and desire that the adolescent migrants experience as foreigners. The chapter will examine the manifestations of these opposite

attitudes as migrants seem to occupy an ambiguous position where they attract attention while at the same they are also faced with rejection.

CHAPTER 4: BATTLING BETWEEN ALIENATION AND DESIRE

4.1 Introduction

The migrants' presence in the diaspora implies an ambiguity which denotes a desire to fit into South African society. At the same time, their presence is regarded with much contempt as the foreignness they represent may attract some sense of rivalry and suspicion from locals. Such prejudiced attitudes then alienate the migrants and relegate them to a minority category as foreigners. This chapter explores the ambivalent condition of battling between alienation and desire that the adolescent migrants experience and the extent to which the prejudiced attitudes generate feelings of inferiority as well as heightening feelings of estrangement from their home countries and from the local culture. I also discuss the extent to which the diaspora becomes a site for negotiation of identities premised on the desire for or alienation from the local way of life.

The prejudiced attitudes are an indication of a process which alienates migrants to the point of silencing their voices as a minority group. While there may be indications of the locals' aspiration to be like the migrants, that desire is always running parallel to an alienating attitude that often results in oppressive practices towards the foreigner. Freire argues that in as much as humanization is the vocation of the people, this right is often 'thwarted by injustices, exploitation, oppression and the violence of the oppressors' (1993:44). The biased attitudes towards foreign nationals generate oppressive tendencies and in some instances, tendencies that deprive migrants of their basic right to voice out their grievances and opinions in the diaspora, as they fear for their safety.

Migrant experience is synonymous with Thompson's idea of freakery discourse. Those who are considered to be physically different seem to 'excite both anxiety and speculation,' (Thomson, 1996: 205), that is, they are considered as both familiar enough to desire an association with, while at the same time they are treated as aliens. For Thomson being different physically attracts attention from those who consider themselves to be 'physically normal'. This then results in them making a spectacle of those with physical anomalies, or freaks in Thomson's terms (1996), where the freak body is not always desired by the spectators but can only be watched from a distance. On the same token, the adolescent migrants, as foreigners who are considered culturally different, can be likened to those people with the 'anomalous body'. They are viewed with the same familiarity as peers from another land, while at the same time their foreignness is considered to be alien, and so they are

excluded and distanced from the South African way of life. The adolescent migrants thus become freaks who battle between parallel conditions of being desired and being rejected. This may directly or indirectly have an impact on their adaptation process.

While they may experience different forms of alienation and exclusion by virtue of being outsiders, adolescent migrants also come to desire the South African way of life which may seem more acceptable than their own. They are then in a position where they have to live and manage the ambiguity of their presence in the diaspora which is often seen in creating relationships of convenience. There may be indications of yearning to belong to the new environment which may be limiting at the same time. This desire by migrants to belong and claim equal space as their local counterparts is what is implied in Freire's words when he says, 'being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who made them….,' (1993:44), in a bid to regain their humanity. According to Freire, the oppressed realise the need to regain their humanity from oppressive conditions and this realisation results in a strong desire to assert one's presence in relation to the oppressor.

However, the desire that may be exhibited by migrants to regain their humanity from the prejudicial attitudes they may encounter, can be contrary to what is implied by Freire. This desire is often a yearning to become part of the South African life as this may be the more acceptable way. However, this becomes an internalization of the oppressor's image which may also result in the migrants becoming oppressors.

4.2 Workshop description

The workshop focused on exploring the participants' attitudes towards the feeling of being foreign in South Africa. This was done through the use of the metaphor of the seal girl. To give context to the image making exercise, I narrated the story of the seal girl which was also guided by some reflective questions for the participants.

Participants were then asked to create an image of a moment from the seven years of the seal girl's life in the village. The images were then meant to give form to how the participants had contextualised the story.

The guiding questions for this image were: What was life like for her in the village? What was the relationship like between her and Magogo/Patrick over the seven years? What did Magogo think of the seal girl when she was with them?

Creation of Image 2

Participants moved around the space and as they moved they began to embody the imagined community members of village. The creation of characters was guided by the following words from me as facilitator: *You are now marked off by your attitude to the seal girl. Share your attitudes, thoughts, rumours, something you heard, and something you saw, or perhaps even something you personally made up. Who are you in this village? What kind of a person are you? Participants begin to interact with each other according to their characters.*

Participants were then asked to select a word or phrase from the interactions and this was meant to guide them when creating the image. The chosen word or phrase was assumed that it would be reflective of the attitudes of the community towards the seal girl.

4.2 Hostility and prejudice

This section critically examines the hostility and prejudiced attitudes that the adolescent migrants have to contend with as they adapt to the South African context. Through the metaphor of the seal girl, the section explores the experiences of the adolescent migrants in terms of how she struggled between experiences of alienation and desire.

Migrant communities often become the focus of oppressions such as hostility and suspicion in the countries of settlement (Rex, 1997:269), and from hostility comes xenophobia, either physical or non-physical. The experiences of the seal girl as a foreigner in the village illustrate some of the alienating and hostile attitudes from locals during the process of her integration. Image 2 showed Patrick and the seal girl standing apart from one group of girls. The seal girl peaked at what Patrick was holding in his hands, showing it to her as she held her belongings in a protective manner. A group of girls watched them in surprise. While reflecting on the image, a participant said that Patrick was probably asking for the seal girl's phone number and the other girls became jealous of the seal girl.

The cultural difference between the seal girl and the local village girls became a threat. The local girls are convinced that the seal girl does not fit in as one of them. Rex describes xenophobia as, 'reactions to immigrant communities which involve demands for their expulsion, physical attacks, racial and cultural abuse and racial and ethnic discrimination which gives the immigrants fewer rights than those of full citizens,' (1997:279). According to Rex's definition of xenophobia, the seal girl as a foreigner is seen to be different. As such,

her presence seems to be imposed in their lives. While she has drawn Patrick's attention in the village, the other girls do not see her as deserving of Patrick's attention. As such, the seal girl has to negotiate her being in the village between these two contrasting camps of both hatred and love.

The village girls' repulsive attitude confines the migrant girl to an insignificant category, not worthy of recognition in the village because she is a foreigner. Homi Bhabha, in his writings on colonial discourse, speaks against the marginalisation of the 'other' as this tends to negate the positivity of difference in society. Bhabha argues that, 'the disavowal of difference turns the colonial subject into a misfit…the stereotype is not a simplification because it is a false representation of a given reality' (Bhabha in Mongia, 1996:45). The disapproving local girls' attitude towards the freak, the seal girl, confines her to an inferior category which alienates her from them and serves to remind her of her foreignness. For adolescent migrants such experiences are bound to silence them to the extent that they may not feel safe to articulate their feelings.

The adolescent migrants are therefore not an exception when it comes to xenophobic attacks from their local peers as is the case with adult migrants. McConnell, (2009:34), citing a South African Migration Study (SAMP, 2006), highlights that 'South African nationals are particularly intolerant of non-nationals especially African migrants.' In this regard, while the migrants may be battling with their adaptation to the new context, they simultaneously have to deal with the xenophobic hatred that can be a hindrance to their survival. Image 2 was also interpreted by another participant who said, 'the girls look surprised because it is the first time that they see the seal girl…. Humans are scared of other human beings who are different from them…and her nakedness makes her different.' Fear of difference therefore becomes a fertile breeding ground for xenophobia against the seal girl in the village. The metaphor of 'nakedness' and the fear and hatred towards the seal girl implies that 'minority cultures and minority identities threaten local cultures and identity….there should be no intrusion of minority culture and values…' (Rex, 1997:280).

In as much as the seal girl had been accommodated by Patrick, other locals still viewed her with hostility. This placed the seal girl in an in-between space, where she had to deal with conditions of alienation and desire simultaneously. Chinyowa asserts that 'there is always a disturbing distance 'in-between' which creates a feeling of not yetness…' (In von Maltzan,

2003:140). While the seal girl may have been appreciated by Patrick, she still had to deal with the local girls who served as a constant reminder that she was not a part of them.

The condition that Chinyowa (2003) refers to as the feeling of not yetness where the seal girl could have felt she was an outsider despite being appreciated by some members of the village, is synonymous with what the postcolonial discourse also implies in relation to colonized people. Innes (2007:2) asserts that the postcolonial discourse is concerned with the interaction between the cultures of the colonial power and the culture and traditions of the colonized people. As such, power relations are always important in that cultural exchange. While the seal girl had been appreciated by Patrick and his friends, the village girls' alienating attitude towards her was an exercise of their power and control as the locals over her as a foreigner.

4.3 Love and tolerance

While there was noticeable hostility towards the seal girl as a foreigner by the other girls in the village, she nonetheless aspires to learn the life of the village as this is one way that can enable her to adapt and become a part of the village. Another interpretation to the same image was that Patrick was showing the seal girl how to use a cell phone and what happens on Facebook. Facebook is a website which allows users who sign up for free profiles to connect with friends, family and those they do not know. As such, the gesture by Patrick to introduce the seal girl to social networking platforms reveals his openness to help the seal girl to mingle with different people in the village. This would become one way towards a healthier adaptation process for the seal girl and the village people as well.

Thus far, the image produced different meanings for the participants who had an opportunity to reflect back on it. These interpretations of the same image were dependant on the 'multiple mirrors of the gaze of others, a number of people had to look at the image, offer their feelings, and what is evoked for them' (Boal, 1992:175). It was important to allow participants to offer their own views on what they were seeing in the image. This gave another dimension to the seal girl's strong desire to learn about the culture of the village. Such knowledge would gradually minimise her status of being foreign, enable her to blend more with the village life, and perhaps help her to make connections much quicker.

The ambiguity of the seal girl's presence as a foreigner who attracts fascination in as much as she evokes feelings of anxiety dominates the attitudes of the locals in the village. Image 1

showed a boy and a girl sitting and talking to each other comfortably. A girl from the village was listening to the conversation while she stroked the hair of the girl sitting down. Having created the image, the characters were tapped on their shoulders to bring them to life for a brief moment. The characters were asked to say what was going on in their minds at that particular moment. The thought tracking exercise revealed the identities of the characters in the image: the two who were sitting together were Patrick and the seal girl, while the girl who stroked the seal girl's hair was one of Patrick's friends from the village.

The seal girl, although foreign and alien, seemed to draw the attention and fascination of the village to herself. During the thought tracking exercise the girl who was stroking the seal girl's hair said, 'You are so beautiful, where do you come from?' While the local girl admired the beauty of the seal girl, this could blur the lines between the hostility of the other villagers and the hospitality she shown to the seal girl. However, the question remains whether it is the seal girl and what she stands for that she admires or just the beauty of her hair. Thomson articulates this ambiguity with reference to the exhibition of the freak body, 'Bound together by their purchased assurance that they are not freaks, the fascinated onlookers perhaps longed in some sense to be extraordinary marvels…,' (1996:214). Although the local girl is clearly not a migrant, she perhaps for a moment wishes she had some of the qualities symbolised by the seal girl's beauty which seem to have attracted her attention. Although being a migrant carries with it negative connotations, the seal girl is nonetheless desirable, which would also obscure any hostility.

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter has explored the ambivalent presence of the migrant in a foreign land. The metaphor of the seal girl has revealed in a safe and embodied way the extent to which adolescent migrants have to negotiate their ambiguous presence in the South African context. Given that they are coming from countries outside of South Africa this raises hostility and suspicion towards them. At the same time there were moments of hospitality, which enabled the adolescent migrants to be desired by local peers. Chapter 4 furthers the conversation by exploring the crisis of identity and the politics of space impacting on adolescent migrants in South Africa.

CHAPTER 5: CULTURE SHOCK AND THE POLITICS OF SPACE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the condition of culture shock that may impact on adolescent migrants in the receiving country of South Africa, as they migrate from their various countries of origin in the company of their families. Adjusting to a new cultural context can be regarded as a major stressful life event (Ward et al, 2001). This may also result in the possible rejection of the local culture and even of one's own. As such, this chapter will explore the extent to which the contact of various cultures impacts on the acculturation process of adolescent migrants. The cultural context is also defined by the specific place and space of contact influencing the parameters of adolescent interaction. I will explore culture shock and how the politics of space impact on the adaptation process of the migrants through a critical analysis of a series of Image theatre workshops which were based on the story of the seal girl. The story of the seal is used once again as the metaphor upon which possible migrant experiences in relation to culture shock will be examined.

Having entered a new country as adolescents, the migrants are exposed to a different cultural context which may or may not cause behavioural discomfort, depending on one's adaptability to the new environment. One's negative reaction to this new environment is what is then considered as culture shock. Pedersen defines culture shock as,

> a more or less sudden immersion into a non-specific state of uncertainty where the individuals are not certain what is expected of them or what they can expect from the persons around them (1995:1).

This is the case with some of the adolescent migrants who migrate to South Africa in the company of their families who are often in search of greener pastures. As children, they do not necessarily make the decision to migrate and so often have to deal with adapting to the new cultural context. This process is also marred with much uncertainty because the adolescent migrants may not be sure whether they will be accepted or denied particularly in schools that they will spend most of their time.

Furthermore, the sudden immersion into a new spatial context takes away most of the familiarity that one is commonly used to, and so the new environment exerts its own authority as one adapts into the context. The demands that the new cultural context presents were reflected in the metaphor of the seal girl which was explored through image theatre.

The theatre of the oppressed emphasizes the de-mechanization of the body to free it from 'social distortions imposed on it by the oppressors' ideological discourses' (Auslander in Shutzman and Cohen Cruz, 1994:124). As such, working through the metaphor of the seal girl the image theatre exercises were intended allow participants to explore the dynamics of culture shock as it may emerge in their day to day lives within the South African diaspora.

5.2 Workshop description

Once again, the bombs and shields exercise was used to explore the understanding around the experiences of adolescent migrants. The game was pre-pretext to the entire series of workshops as it laid the basis upon which the image theatre workshops were based. This allowed for a holistic approach to an experiential process. Participants began to explore the relationships formed during the game with their cross-cultural relationships in their lives. Use of the game as pre-pretext was instrumental in enabling to characterize the nature of the subject matter.

In the theatre of the oppressed, the use of games and exercises puts much emphasis on the de-mechanization of the body as this is the only way of getting the body ready to become expressive in performance. In this instance, the exercise was a way of de-mechanizing the body and in the process giving an experiential context where it would be safer to express one's ideas through the body, rather than merely vocalising one's thoughts.

The metaphor of the seal girl continued to be a major reference point as it was used to explore the participants' attitudes towards the feeling of being foreign.

Images 1 and as described in Chapter 2 will also be referred to in this chapter. While the image brought out the themes on alienation and desire, the same activities also reflected the themes of culture shock and the politics of space which will be dealt with in this chapter.

Creation of image 2

Once again the metaphor of the seal girl was used to explore peer attitudes towards interacting with foreign nationals. The attitudes imbedded in the images reflected some levels of culture shock from the villagers. The responses of the participants during reflection also revealed some sense of discomfort when different cultures come into contact.

The image depicted two villagers sitting down comfortably at a distance from the seal girl. At the same time there were two villagers standing behind the seated villagers still far apart

from the seal girl. One villager stood crossing her hands across her chest and looked with curiosity at the seal girl, while the other villager stood with a surprised face. On the other end of the space, the seal girl and Patrick were together. The seal girl held her belongings tightly to herself and looked with amazement at the mobile phone that Patrick showed her.

5.3 Attitudinal Reactions

One's presence in a new country can pose serious challenges for both the migrant and the locals. Oberg (1960) mentions that once an individual enters a strange culture, most of the familiar cues are removed and this is often followed by a feeling of frustration and anxiety. The frustration that develops in reaction to the new environment can result in hostile attitudes as the adolescent migrants try to engage with their peers in the schools that they attend. However, hostile attitudes do not only come from migrants but can also be witnessed in the local nationals in the receiving country. The metaphor of the seal girl clearly outlines the impact that the contact of cultures between the seal girl and the villagers can bring about.

Culture shock often has a significant impact on the migrant who enters a new environment as feelings of uncertainty are bound to surface. This was the reflection from the bombs and shields game. In reflection on how they chose and interacted with their bombs and shields, one Zimbabwean participant mentioned that 'someone just wants to be your friend if there is something in it for them. For the participant, having to choose a shield to protect her from the perceived bomb only reminded her of experiences where some of her local peers only want material benefits that the foreigner seems to have. As such, the Zimbabwean migrant openly expressed the suspicion that she harbours towards local peers who take advantage of foreign students in the school.

The Zimbabwean participant also revealed possible regression that could be surfacing as a result of her negative attitude towards local peers due to previous experiences. When the bomb 'exploded' and everyone had to make sure they had their shields protecting them, there were two distinct clusters. One cluster had a mixture of different nationalities and the other was made up of a group of Zimbabweans. The grouping was reflexive of the extent to which adolescent migrants banded together with fellow nationals and criticized the host country and its people Oberg (1960). The adolescent migrants found emotional support when they grouped with their country peers during the game. The game became a symbol for the South African context. However, Oberg (1960) warns that it is in such groupings that migrants tend

to develop emotionally charged labels known as stereotypes. The participant's remarks point towards the possibility of developing negative stereotypes where locals could be looked at with suspicion since they may be viewed as manipulative when establishing friendships with foreign peers.

While culture shock may be evident among newly arrived migrants, the workshops also revealed symptoms of culture shock among local nationals. There may be feelings of violation of the others' space and this often results in the locals becoming defensive and protective of their space. In the re-enactment of image 2, while the seal girl and Patrick are engaged in a conversation, Patrick shows the seal girl the gadget that he holds in his hand. From a distance, there are four girls from the village who are watching the two. Speaking back to the image, one participant said that 'Patrick is asking for the seal girl's mobile number and the four girls are not happy and they are like oh damn, how can Patrick do that?!' The participant went on to say that the girls were jealous that the seal girl had been chosen over them, since she is not a part of their village.

Boal asserts that theatre is,

> The capacity possessed by human beings to observe themselves in action. Humans are capable of seeing themselves in the act of seeing, of thinking their emotions, of being moved by their thoughts (1992: xxiv).

In the act of being a spect-actor, the local participant was able to identify the possibility of other locals feeling threatened as was the case with the four girls from the village. The image thus enabled this experience in the participant, and possibly the other participants, to identify with the interpretation.

The four girls from the village become a symbol of the way local nationals may react towards new arrivals as this may signal the competition for space and scarce resources which may be regarded as a serious threat. Competition for resources has been highlighted as one major cause for the 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa (McConnell, 2009). This bears testimony to the extent to which people can go to protect their own spaces. Law and Lawrence-Zuniga argue that 'as a result of the spatial aspects of behaviour such as intimate and public spaces, actors usually become aware of the boundaries only when they are violated, often in culture and contact situations' (2003:4). The four girls from the village

quickly came to their guard as soon as they realised that the seal girl was becoming a threat to them.

Intolerance of difference in a context where foreign nationals settle in a particular host nation is often characteristic of cultural conflict and resistance. The metaphor of nakedness imposed on the seal girl as she comes to the village bears testimony to the conflict of identity that is imposed on the seal girl as she faces rejection and suspicion from local village girls. The threat of difference is magnified as the ways of the seal girl do not match those of the village culture. In image 2 the girls stared at the seal girl with surprised looks on their faces because it was the first time that they had seen someone as different from them as she was.

A case in point is Kymlicka's observation.

> The British government's migration policy avoids any use of the term 'multiculturalism'. British citizens are expected to tolerate newcomers only if their own identities are secure… They will not be expected to make any changes to their own cultural habits, practices or identities (2003:205).

Likewise, the local village girls could only be tolerant if they were assured that their own identities were not under threat hence, the naming of the seal girl as different and naked. The power dynamics operating between the seal girl and the locals was that the locals would claim more authority.

5.4 Adjustment and claiming of space

While culture shock may lead to so much anxiety, Oberg (1960) also mentions that there are various reactions that may be developed by an individual towards the new environment. These reactions move from negative to positive and include rejection of the environment, regression, recovery and eventually adjustment. Although the adolescent migrants and their local peers may go through the negative aspects of culture shock, they also reveal that in some ways they are beginning to look at the diasporic environment differently as they embrace and adjust to the South African context.

The realization of the need to adjust to the host country's cultural demands and expectations was key in the story of the seal girl. This line of thinking was reflected in the images that were created. To generate a deeper understanding of how the village responded to the presence of the seal girl and how she could possibly have reacted, image 2 was re-created and

re-enacted after replacing the seal girl. Initially the image showed four girls looking at a timid and shy seal girl and Patrick, with Patrick holding out a gadget in his hand. The re-created image showed a confident seal girl who stands up tall as she engages in conversation with Patrick. The sculptor who was a participant from Malawi had an opportunity to explain the image. She said, 'The seal girl has so much confidence because she knows she is not so different from the village people. As she sat on the rock she always saw people dressed up, so she also made a plan to dress up likewise.'

The sudden change in the attitude of the seal girl as was portrayed in re-created image 2 bears testimony to the power that foreignness in itself holds, once the individual realises their ability to change their situation of oppression. Bhabha argues that,

> 'however much one is politically and ethnically convinced of the imbalance and inequality of power, there are always strategic ambivalences and ambiguities and so those who are oppressed are actually empowered by being able to use these ambivalences and ambiguities, instead of representing power as a kind of homogenous, hegemonic block' (in Lavie and Swedenburg, 1996:183)

Through the recreation of the image, the participant demonstrated her ability to challenge the hegemonic notions of foreignness which only serve to oppress migrants by the locals. Rather than bemoaning her condition as a migrant, she rises above these challenges and paints a completely different picture of confidence and possibility.

Furthermore, Freire makes a critical assertion in line with claiming one's position as a subject rather than restricting oneself to objectification when he says,

> The struggle for humanization… for the overcoming of alienation, for the affirmation of men and women as persons: is only possible because dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny, but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors (1993:44).

Thus, by re-creating the image to a more just and balanced situation, the Malawian participant had an opportunity to show that indeed, feeling inferior in a foreign country is not a given destiny, as this is only made manifest by fear and negative stereotypes. As such, the seal girl was reconstructed to reveal the possibility of adjustment to the local context and claiming space in a way that protects one's own identity, while at the same time embracing the local culture. Although migration for the adolescent migrants may result in intercultural

problems perpetuated by the differences between them and their local peers in South Africa, attempts to eradicate these differences often encourage them to assimilate into the host culture. However, this may mean abandoning one's country of origin's values in some instances, (Ward et al, 2001:17-18).

The image that the participant created thus set in motion a process that was to transform the situation of oppression for the seal girl, and by extension, for them as adolescent migrants. The main objective of theatre of the oppressed was then to stimulate transformative creativity and to change spectators into protagonists (Boal, 1992). Through this active participation, the participants became active subjects in the creation of a transformative process which sought to make them agents of their own liberation through interrogating and exploring the possibilities.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined the manifestations of culture shock and how spatial dimensions of the diasporic environment impact on the adaptation process of adolescent migrants. The chapter revealed that a sudden immersion into an unfamiliar cultural context causes a sense of uncertainty and anxiety which may lead one to not fully appreciate the local cultural demands of the host country. It is however important to note that adolescent migrants have also come to appreciate and embrace the local cultural context while retaining a sense of their own identities. It is this cultural adjustment that is essential to the adaptation process of adolescents as this only helps them to make meaningful relationships and get rid of anxieties that may cause discomfort.

CHAPTER 6: GENERAL CONCLUSION

Summary of study

In this research I have examined the impact of migration on African adolescent migrants in South Africa. The major argument at the core of the research is that adolescent migrants are caught up in migration as their families search for greener pastures in South Africa. As such, they are faced with the daunting task of having to negotiate their identities in the diaspora at a crucial developmental stage of adolescence, which is also characterised by a crisis of one's identity. Since the adolescents migrated to South Africa in the company of their families, they did not necessarily make this decision. As such, the research found that migration in this way has a direct impact on the acculturation processes of the adolescents in the South African context.

Chapter 1 gave an overall background of the study and how the research question was conceptualised. Chapter 2 is an exploration through the beginning of this research journey as a Masters Practice as Research course. It is from this initiative that many questions were left unanswered and so gave birth to this paper. The chapter traces the initial focus of the study which was focused on Zimbabwean adolescent migrants in South Africa, until the final decision to become more inclusive to engage other African adolescent migrants and their South African peers.

Chapter 3 examined the strategies of survival that the adolescent migrants employ as a means of negotiating their presence in a foreign country. The chapter highlighted that these strategies are essential to the migrants' adaptation processes as they integrate in the South African society.

Chapter 4 explored the ambiguity of the presence of the adolescent migrants in the South African context. The chapter highlighted that often time the migrants find themselves in an in-between condition where they have to battle on one hand with their desire to become a part of the South African society, as well as being desired by the South African locals. On the other hand, they have to deal with hostile attitudes towards them which end up alienating them as undesirable foreigners.

Chapter 5 looked at culture shock and the politics of space. The chapter concluded that once an individual enters a new cultural context they may either reject or embrace the changes and this directly impacts on their acculturation process.

As migrants in South Africa, adolescents often have to deal with hostility from their local peers, while at the same time they may also be desired for the material benefits they might have. Hostile attitudes were clearly spelt out in the metaphor of the seal girl that was used as a medium to explore the experiences of migrants. Although the adolescent migrants may be desired for one reason or another, the study revealed that the locals may always feel threatened by the presence of the foreigners in their country. This is where the migrants begin to employ various strategies of survival that are clearly spelt out in Chapter 3. As such, the presence of the adolescent migrants always attracts an uncomfortable ambiguity where they constantly have to find the balance between desire and alienation from their local peers as well and their own attitudes towards the South African cultural context that they find themselves in.

The use of the metaphor of the seal girl which was embodied in images, the seal girl became a symbol of resistance. The participants were able to depict some of their aspirations of a victory over discrimination and possible discomfort of the migrant, while exploring the journey of the life of the seal girl in the village. The participants revealed that although as foreign adolescents they may suffer from discriminatory attitudes that emphasize their foreignness as inferior, they have also come to the realisation that being foreign is not inferior and should not remain so. As such they are beginning to assert their presence in the different cultural terrain of South Africa. As they do so, they open up to different cultural contexts making their adaptation process more bearable.

Implications and recommendations for the study

In the rationale of this paper I argue for child centred migration research. In light of this, migration research in drama based approaches has great potential in helping the adaptation process of adolescent migrants. During the workshop, the group of participants who were also mixed with South African locals, were able to open up and began to explore their experiences of migration. The metaphor of the seal girl provided a safety net through which the participants braved the environment and began to interrogate their circumstances without necessarily attacking each other. The use of drama based approaches to investigation thus has a great part to play in furthering the agenda of child centred migration research as well as enabling communication between migrants and locals.

As I mentioned earlier, the research faced some unforeseen challenges during the data gathering workshop processes. As such, the focus of the study leant more on the general

experiences of adolescent migrants in South African diaspora. Although it had been the intention to interrogate in depth the construction of identities by these adolescents in the diaspora, this was only partially interrogated. The use of image theatre through story and metaphor thus bears testimony to the power of dramatic encounters to bring about transformation in migrants and locals. However, the research could not go through with the transformative elements of image theatre, but this becomes a gap that is yet to be filled and explored through more research. It is my hope therefore, that this research contributes to the conversation around identities of adolescent migrants through the use of drama methodologies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Information sheet

Good day.

My name is Wendy P Zvakawapano and I am a student registered for a Masters in Applied Drama and Theatre by Coursework and Research Report at the University of Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting a research study to explore young Zimbabwean Migrants identity construction. The research topic is as follows: Exploring narratives of identity through Enhanced Image Theatre. The case of young Zimbabwean migrant students at Supreme College, (Johannesburg).

I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary and there is no reward for participating or penalty for not participating. Involvement in the study requires your participation Five (5), 1 hr. 30mins drama workshops, at a time which will be availed by the school authorities. You will not be obliged to answer any questions with which you are uncomfortable and therefore have the option to decline or to respond to any questions ask. You will also have the option of terminating your participation at any stage that you choose.

With your permission the drama processes will be photographed, audio recorded, and you will also be asked to keep a journal to record your personal reflections on the drama processes. All data collected through the journals, photographs and audio recordings will be treated within the strictest confidentiality. The tapes, journals and photographs will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Please note that participants' names will not be used or known by anyone, nor appear in the dissertation.

Please feel free to ask questions regarding the study. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted on email wzvakavapano@gmail.com or mobile 076 446 3880. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study an abstract will be made available.

Thank you for taking time to consider participating in the study.

Yours sincerely

Wendy P Zvakawapano

Appendix Bii: Parent Consent form

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Supreme College

We wish to inform you that your child has been invited to participate in the DFL Masters Research, which involves participating in a series of 5, 1hr 30minutes workshops at Supreme Educational College.

Research Topic: Exploring narratives of identity through Enhanced Image Theatre. The case of young African migrant students at Supreme College, (Johannesburg)

Wendy Zvakawapano as the researcher will be in charge of administration and schedules. She may be contacted if you have any queries. Her contact details are:

Tel (w): 0764463880

Email: wzvakavapano@gmail.com

If you consent to the learner participating in this project, please confirm your acceptance by signing in the spaces provided below and signing the attached indemnity form.

Kindly note that the attached indemnity form is a legally binding document that deals with the extent to which the University of the Witwatersrand's liability will be limited in the event of any harm to the learner whilst participating in the project.

I, the undersigned _____ (parent/guardian) of
_____ (the learner) hereby agree to the foregoing.

I, the Participant and/ or guardian have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand that strict confidentiality will be observed to protect any personal information. I know that no information will be published without the participant's or my permission.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Cell: _____

Tel (w) _____

Tel (h) _____

Physical Address: _____

Alternative Contact Person: _____

Alternate Contact Tel No: _____

Appendix B iii: Participant Consent Form

Research Tittle: Exploring narratives of identity through Enhanced Image Theatre. The case of young Zimbabwean migrant students at Supreme College, (Johannesburg).

Name of Researcher: Wendy P Zvakawapano

Email Address: wzvakavapano@gmail.com

Mobile Number: 0764463880

I, the undersigned, _____ (the learner/participant), have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand that strict confidentiality will be observed to protect any personal information.

I know that no information will be published without my permission or my Guardian's permission.

I know that I am free to ask and choose not to answer questions during the drama workshops.

I know that I can withdraw from the workshop when I feel like I cannot continue.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signed By: Wendy P Zvakawapano

Date:_____

Appendix C: Consent Form for Audio-Taping and Photographs of the Drama Processes

I hereby consent to tape-recording of the interview. I understand that my confidentiality will be maintained at all times and that the tapes will be destroyed two years after any publication arising from the study or six years after completion of the study if there are no publications.

Name: …….

Date: …….

Signature: ……

Signed by: Wendy P Zvakawapano

Signature……