

https://dspace.org/

Play me! S A style! Utilising Gadamer to investigate the state of play in South Africa and the potential of play within the CAPS curriculum: two school-based case studies

Cammay, Stafford Raisley

2015

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24248

Cammay, Stafford Raisley (2015) Play me! S A style! Utilising Gadamer to investigate the state of play in South Africa and the potential of play within the CAPS curriculum: two school-based case studies, University of the Witwatersrand, <https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24248>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Play Me! S A Style!

Utilising Gadamer to investigate the state of play in South Africa and the potential of play within the CAPS Curriculum: Two school-based case studies

Stafford Cammay

A research report submitted to the Department of Humanities, Dramatic Art,

University of the Witwatersrand

in partial fulfilment for the requirements of a Masters Degree

March 2015

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT 3

DECLARATION 4

DEDICATION 5

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 6

Chapter One

1.1.1 Introduction 7

1.1.2 Aim and scope 7

1.1.2.1 Statement of intention 8

1.1.2.2 Research Questions 8

1.1.3 Literature Review 9

1.1.4 Theoretical Framework 14

1.1.5 Conceptual Framework 16

1.1.6 Methodology 18

1.1.7 Rationale 19

Chapter Two

2.1.1 Researcher Positionality at a Glance 22

2.2 Play as Social Consciousness 24

2.3 The Play within 'Play' 28

2.4 Re-inscribing the Past – Emerging Variations of the Games 33

Chapter Three:

3.1 Semiotic to Discursive: Playing with the Language of the Oppressed/ Oppressor 37

3.2 Subjectivity, (sex)Expression 39

Chapter Four: Play as Potential in 'Play Me! SA Style!

4.1 Play as 'Spaces of Potential' within the CAPS Curriculum 43

4.2 'Pedagogy and Play Praxis' within CAPS 49

Chapter Five: Conclusion 55

5.1 Limitations of the Study 56

5.2 Recommendations for Future Research 56

Reference List: 58

Play Me! SA Style!

ABSTRACT

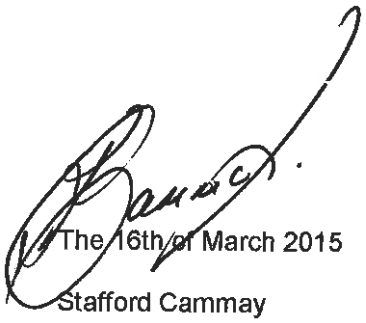
This research report examines the state of play in contemporary South Africa utilising Gadamer's concepts of the 'seriousness of play' and the 'relation between play, art and truth'. My investigation argues a more robust approach to Gadamer's thinking; that the investigation of play as it occurs within a particular historical moment in a specific social setting requires a more politicized understanding of the phenomena. To this end, viewing play as a 'psycho-social dialogic space' is proposed – a space in which a myriad of vibrant dialogic threads are woven to pattern subjective, social and political awareness. Drawing on memory, narrative, and my own historical data on play, the concept of the 'knowing archive' of apartheid is related to the investigation, to offer a richer understanding of the transitional socio- political space to post-apartheid contexts.

Finally, this study discusses the inclusivity of play as a liberative ethical praxis – as 'spaces of potential' of 'engaged voices' – as a tool for enriching the pedagogical objectives of the newly implemented CAPS curriculum (2014) by the Department of Education; and in so doing, attempts to illuminate how the concept of play can offer a space for holding the future together for learners.

Keywords: play, psycho social dialogic spaces, 'knowing archive', language, learning, learners, educators and education.

DECLARATION

I, Stafford Cammay, declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Dramatic Art. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university.



The 16th of March 2015

Stafford Cammay

DEDICATION

My children: Simone, for all your sacrifices and unwavering belief in me, especially those times when I stopped believing in myself; and Amery, for your understanding, and the ability to make me laugh at myself.

To my late mother- 'I know that you're smiling at me'.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND THANKS

To my supervisor, Professor Hazel Barnes, for her critical input and interminable patience in assisting me in bringing this research to full fruition; a mere 'thank you' undermines the depth of my gratitude.

To my supervisor, Warren Nebe, for his vision, caring attitude, and who truly embraces the dialogic imperative in his teaching of 'listening to the Other'.

To my initial supervisor, Professor Georges Pfruender, whose challenging and thought-provoking insight I remain indebted to.

To the former Headmaster at Missourilaan Senior Secondary School, for allowing me the 'space' to pursue this degree. May your future endeavours be fruitful and blessed.

To the staff and students at the school for their input, support and encouragement: It was a rewarding experience to observe that, pursuing this degree encouraged so many educators to also study further, and that learners too, were inspired to study beyond their matric.

To Esmeralda Carelse, Head Office: Department of Education for her encouraging WhatsApp spiritual messages, which carried me through many rough patches whilst compiling this research report.

Thank you to the 'girls' in this research, for always enquiring how far I am with this study, and their admiration at what I was attempting to achieve.

Chapter One

'If we wish to understand a child, we need to understand his play'. (Bettelheim 1987).

1.1 Introduction

I watch them stand in line – the Afrikaans speaking new Grade 8 learners. These are the ones we term the 'feeding scheme' bunch: The learners at the school who live in harsh realities in a highly economically marginalised area; a geo-social space beset with unemployment and poverty.

Vir vandag se les gaan ons opwarm sessies uitvoer – maar daar is nie genoeg spasie in die klas, so ons gaan sommer buite

For today's class we are going to do warm-ups – but given the insufficient space in the classroom, let's go outside.

Ja, Juffie, sekerlik! (Sure, Madam, definitely)

Ek weet, julle kan my dan wys watter nuwe speeletjies julle deesdae speel. Dit gaan my vreeslik help met my studies.

(I know, you can show me which new games you play nowadays. This will be of considerable help to my studies.)

Great excitement at the prospect of not sitting in class.

Oooh Juffie, ons ken baie 'games'!

Madam, we know loads of games!

1.2 Aim and scope

This research report aims to investigate the concept of play through engaging the debates around ethics to present South African socio-cultural and educational contexts. The scope of the case studies is limited to the interpretation and analysis of only two games: I deemed this sufficient, given the length and prerequisites of this report. Furthermore, these two games evidence clear similarities and differences which allows sufficient scope to engage in a comparative analysis, and in so doing, I attempt to illustrate the shifts of meaning within the differing social realities.

In reflecting on the relevance of the play situation within a specific historical moment, I explore the paradoxes of 'ethics' and 'play'. Through the con(text) and inter-textual analyses of the games '*Tamatie Sous'* and *'Skebereshe, woza la*', the journey of remembering 'the knowing archive', and how this relates to, and refracts in, play, is explored. Gadamer's (1975) theory of the 'seriousness of

play' is used to investigate the play context firstly, at a site specific senior secondary school and secondly, within the broader contexts of the dynamics of the subjects' living realities in their community.

Gadamer's (1975) second theory, the relation between play, art and truth, is analysed in relation to the broader landscape of education in South Africa with reference to the newly implemented CAPS Curriculum.

1.2.1`Statement of intention

This study aims to offer a more robust meaning to Gadamer's theory of the 'seriousness of play'. I firstly, concur with him, that the players 'play with serious intent' and 'lose themselves' in play'. This study argues that play occurs within a 'psycho social space', and that 'space' is both an energizing and yet highly politicized concept which predicates and shapes the social and political nature of play in South Africa.

Through Gadamer's theoretical interpretation of 'the relationship between play, art and truth', I attempt to outline a richer definition and understanding of this theory in my study: Play is therefore proposed to enrich the 'art' of pedagogy and 'truth' is related to the dialogic ethics of 'praxis' in teaching. I examine these expanded definitions within the framework of the newly implemented CAPS curriculum (2014) in South Africa.

1.2.2 Research Questions

The research questions posed in this research report are:

a) In which way has the theory of play within a specific socio-historical context allowed us to redefine ethical perspectives on play?

b) How can children inform us of present South African contexts, and how do they use play as a platform to shape and explore learning on issues of subjectivity?

c) Can debates on ethics enrich possible definitions of present educational and social South African contexts, and, what role can play 'play'?

1.3 Literature Review

The deep interest which literary critics, anthropologists, philosophers and cultural theorists express in the study of play is substantiated by the extensive theoretical input around and in this phenomenon. As a noun, play is defined as the conduct, course, or action of a game, or a recreational activity (Merriam-Webster 2012). As a verb, it means to engage in sport or recreation; to move aimlessly about; or, to perform music or to act in a dramatic production (Merriam-Webster 2012). Etymologically, the origins of the word play are unknown, but is surmised to have originated from the old English word *plegian* (verb), which means to exercise, frolic, perform music, and *plæga* (noun), recreation, exercise, any brisk activity (Online Etymology Dictionary 2012). Throughout this history, 'play' has been closely connected to the world of children and make believe and has generally stayed true to its primary meaning (Online Etymology Dictionary 2012).

These simplified, reductionist definitions are problematic, as is evidenced by the growing literature that the notion of play is difficult to define (Gaskins, Haight & Lancy 2007; Sutton-Smith 1997). This difficulty is proliferated by the ephemeral nature of play which stems mostly from the notion that during play established boundaries become fluid, dissolve, and soften. Confusing too, is that, given that it involves free choice and is self-organising, play often appears to the observer as chaotic and disorganised. To further complicate matters, the various *practices* of play pose further challenges towards definition: Largely recognised kinds of play encompass pretend play, body play, object play, outdoor play activities, rough and tumble play, and social play (Bergen & Fromberg 2009; Jarvis, 2007). 'Man, Play and Games' (Callois 1961) introduces a typology which provides a broad catalogue of the characteristics of games in any culture: However, here again, given the general difficulty in defining play and its associated complexity, further attempts to classify and categorise the different types of play have naturally emerged. Moyles (1989) suggests a stratification of identifying a specific form of play for every aspect of children's development. However, as stated earlier, given the 'slippery' nature of play' (Brown 1998), Gosso (2010) also attempts to distinguish different stages and levels in children's play, whilst Piaget described the levels of a child's play in accordance with his stages of cognitive development (Piaget 1962).

Distinctive theoretical approaches to the study of play within cultural contexts are evident viz. 'Play as culture' and 'Play and culture', 'Child culture', 'play culture', with each arguing a specific analytical frame in which to analyse the subtleties of children's play. Mouritsen (1998) extends the notion that children's oral culture and play culture are performed and produced within the settings of a unique type of social network amongst the children, their own unique 'child culture'. Ultimately though, all of these interactions are understood as embracing the aesthetic expressions of games, stories (tales and narratives) and songs.

Studies of play that use a cultural lens (Roopnarine & Johnson 1994; Sutton-Smith 1986; 2001) extend the view that children's play reflects cultural mastery, and that cultural values guide and shape the expression of play, time allotted for play, and attitudes towards play (Lancy 2002). Despite the illuminating account by Roopnarine et al. (1994) of the inaccuracies that arise when applying Western values and interpretations of play to non-Western situations, a lack of study of play in relation to the role of culture in interpreting and understanding play in non-Western settings persists (Gaskins & Miller 2009). This remains true, despite the fact that ample evidence exists to support the notion that children in every known society engages in some type of playful activity. (Gosso 2010) Contemporary literature on psychology largely acknowledges that the various kinds of play are broadly divided into five generic types, based on the development and learning of a child. These types are commonly referred to as physical play, play with objects, symbolic play, pretence/socio-dramatic play and games with rules. Psychoanalytical theories of play, such as Erickson (1963) argue that children communicate and eliminate anxieties and fears by bringing them to a level of consciousness through play. Coping with reality remains a difficult psychological barrier for children, more so than for others - and, it is through play that everyday problems can be reduced. Vygotsky's (1978) psychological contributions had a profound influence towards understanding the growth of children's abilities; firstly, the development of language (and other forms of' symbolic representation) and secondly; the role of play in developing children's abilities to control their own cognitive and emotional processes, or 'self-regulate'. The significance of this insight has become increasingly recognised, as is evident in the literature which support the viewpoint that these two abilities, language and self- regulation are intimately inter-related (Vallaton & Ayoub 2011). Moreover, it is contended that these two factors form the most powerful benchmarking criteria in assessing children's academic achievement and emotional well-being (Whitebread 2011).

A further body of research has highlighted the role of pretence/socio-dramatic play in the development of self-regulation. Berk, Mann and Ogan (2006) for example, report on several studies investigating how young children learn to cope with traumatic or stressful events through this type of play.
An understanding that 'pretence' as situated between reality and fantasy, is evidenced in Turner's (1969) construction of the concept of the liminal in play - which he defines as a 'threshold between reality and unreality'. Through further exploration on the interpretations of liminal, Turner argues that the cultural function of play lies in its capacity to mediate social conflict and presents us with ' a moment in and out of time' (1982:96). Norris (1999) aligns the liminal to studies of transition; she reminds us that the word is originally derived from the French word 'liminaire' or 'of the threshold'.

The concept of play as being surreal or suspended, was further propagated by Huizinga (1938) who suggested that one of the most important features of play is a 'spatial separation from ordinary life, realised either materially or ideationally' (Huzinga 1938:19). One often notices, in observing children play, their oblivion to time: The term 'liminality' has emerged to also be descriptive to this context so as to attempt to describe the state of being whilst playing on the threshold, 'betwixt and between' in time and/or space.
The sight of children playing is often a pleasure to behold, and this association of play to aesthetics lies in the understanding of play as possessing beauty: tension, balance, contrast, variation, solution and resolution. 'Play is invested with the noblest qualities we are capable of perceiving in things: rhythm and harmony (Huizinga 1938:10). In Huizinga's view, play is intrinsic to the nature of man. Within his analogy of play to poetry, the role of play as a bridge between primitive and civilized man is proposed given that it is man's ability to speak which differentiates him from animals: Gadamer (1960/1989) uses the concepts of conversation and play to describe the dialogical nature of understanding. In comparing understanding with acts of dialogue and play, Gadamer proposes that the process of question and answer, listening and speaking, and seeing others' points of view enable us to reach new understandings (Spence 2005). In a genuine conversation the concern is with the subject matter and with its possible truth (Warnke 1987). Neither participant claims to know the truth – rather, each is open to the other's point of view. 'Thus, being in play of different understandings makes possible a movement, on the part of the players, towards ways of knowing that extend beyond their current understandings' (Spence 2001:627).

From the time of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle the notion of dialogue has been closely associated with that of dialectic. Dialectic derives from the Greek verb meaning 'to converse', and thus might be synonymous with dialogue. However, whereas the emphasis of dialogue is on the exchange of ideas between two individuals through writing or speech, dialectics focuses on the dynamic of transformation through conflict and contradiction, whether in conversation or history or society (Gadotti 1996).

Attitudes which are shaped in the home and society impact greatly on gender roles in play which is noticeably evident in cultures which support a rigid separation between adult male and female roles. In these situations boys and girls are often prepared for these roles through the toys and games which their parents provide; for example, boys will often be given toys which will nurture and develop a more physical and dangerous attitude, and girls' toys will orientate them towards preparation in domestic roles (dolls, tea-sets and prams). Yet another theory emerges that, within a broader, historical time frame, toys reflect the 'zeilgeist' of a given era, as Warner (2009) notes:

> In one of the essays in Mythologies, Roland Barthes excoriated the toys of the time: 'French toys are like a Jivaro head' he writes, 'in which one recognizes, shrunken to the size of an apple, the wrinkles and hair of the adult.' For the toy industry, like children's publishing, always interacts with contemporary values and mores, instrumentalizing the psyche (Warner, 2009:15).

Harrop-Allin's (2014) study on the development of learner-centred teaching in South African music education explores the possibilities of children's musical games within the former context of the Arts and Culture educational framework. Given the unique dynamics of the musical, cultural and social content and value of township children's musical games, the benefits of situated cultural practices as potential resources for pedagogy are studied through an ethnographic method, which she states brings to '...education a deeper understanding of musical forms and practices in their socio-cultural context' .

There is strong literature which supports the physiological benefits of play as the building blocks to learning. We learn through repetition, and because the desire to repeatedly engage in play, all learning – emotional, social, motor and cognitive – is fuelled by the pleasure of play (Perry et al., 2000). Furthermore, the concept of play has been the focus of many research studies examining the effects on memory (Greenough & Black 1992). From the psychologist Piaget's (1962) perspective, learning occurs through the processes of 'assimilation' and 'accommodation'. Assimilation is

understood as the 'taking in' of new knowledge from the world changing this to fit with previously developed understandings or schemas. Learning is a continuing process of altering the environment and it is within this process that symbolic and representational play develops. Language, pretend play, and learning have a complex relationship. Social pretend play contexts provide unique opportunities for learners to communicate their ideas. Clarke (1983) explained that in pretend play, children acquire new words to convey meaning that is often beyond their existing repertoires. Because pretend play is representational, children learn how to use gestures and words to designate real events and/or persons (Pellegrini 1983). In pretend play, Pelligrini (1982, 1984, 1991) explained that children use elaborated language that is, they define pronouns linguistically, modify nouns with adjectives in order to make their imaginative ideas understandable to their play partners. Thus, social pretend play provides experiences for children to practice and master their communication skills. According to Halliday (1975) the meaning potential of a language, as well as the social semiotic expressed through language is constantly changing, since a child's environmental sociolinguistic capabilities develop and shape his identity. This is clearly evident amongst teenagers, who will modify their speaking to belong to a particular social group. Halliday explains this concept of as the 'context of situation - the relationship between the social environment on the one hand, and language on the other' (2004:87). Finlay-Johnson (1911) in extending the thinking of Vygotsky purports that 'children have a wonderful faculty for teaching other children and learning from them' (quoted in Bolton 1998: 11). Furthermore, Findlay- Johnson insisted that "play' *must* be the child's own' (Findlay-Johnson 1911: 19). Cook (1918: vii) proposed that 'boys and girls in the upper (senior secondary) school should have as much play as the infants in the kindergarten'. He believed that play was 'a form of practice, a preparation for adult life' in support of which he says 'It would not be wise to send a child innocent into the big world. But it is possible to hold rehearsals, to try our strength in a make-believe big world. And that is play' whilst Slade (1995) notes that play is an activity generated by the child himself in pursuit of doing and 'struggling' with life'. In conclusion, for an expansive insight into the philosophical perspectives on play, a broad overview is offered in the compilation of essays on 'The Philosophy of Play ' (Ryall et al. 2013) which explore the works of key-thinkers such as Plato, Satre, Wittgenstein, Gadamer, Deleuze and Nietzsche.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

My primary theoretical analysis for this investigation is based on two of Gadamer"s (1975) theories namely 'the seriousness of play' and the 'relationship between play, art, and truth' (Gadamer 1975). It is perhaps important to note, before further discussion, what Gadamer *meant* by play. Gadamer's work was written in German and later translated to English, and while *play* (the verb) and *game* (the noun), are different words in English, in German, it is the same word (e.g., play a game, *ein Spiel spielen*). Play, from Gadamer's perspective, is not about games per se, but rather more about what could be described as 'leeway' in that play is not played by a subject but rather absorbs the player into itself.

Gadamer's primary concern focuses on what it means to be caught up in the game in a way that allows the subjectivity of the player to be diminished. In fact, the subject of the game is not the player but the game itself that takes precedence - and it is this notion which he predicates as ' the seriousness of play'.

To Gadamer (1975:105) play is effortless, without strain and spontaneous, always enticing one into more play. The constant back-and-forth movement of play eludes the grasp and control of the player's will, and yet, at the same time, the player is seemingly full of initiative. Play succeeds when the player engages in it with ease and where the player is never awkward and that neither is the play excessively competitive. Gadamer's insistence of the 'contested' nature of such movement emphasizes the fact that one always plays with something or someone else. By 'contest' Gadamer means to suggest only that play is never the act of a lone individual—not that it is necessarily antagonistic or competitive. He states that while there is an initial confident and deliberate choice of entering into a game, once the game has gotten underway, being caught up in the game fully engages the player. To play, as Gadamer (1975) suggests, is to choose to give up our choice. In play, one substitutes one's 'free, individual choice', so to speak, for the experience of a new sort of freedom which involves losing oneself in shared play with someone or something else. Within the framework of this 'freedom', the player should remain isolated, in control, and 'choice' is replaced by the freedom found in surrendering oneself to the play of the game. To allow for further in-depth analysis of this study, I rely on the theories of Bakhtin (1984), Freud (1962), as well as the broader theoretical frameworks of Drama in Education to enrich my discussion

on play in Chapter Four in relation to the newly implemented CAPS curriculum.

Bakhtin's theories of dialogism (dialogue, polyphony and heteroglossia) create a foundation for interrogating the textual analysis of the games, and also to discuss the educational framework of South Africa. The rationalisation for using Bakhtin in this context, is that, from his perspective 'dialogism in education overlaps the concerns of the education (of the masses) through deconstructing the power of the teacher as 'knower', and rather, advocates that a multi-voiced education be created' (Robinson et al. 2010).

> This mono-logistic attitude of educators is an oppressive and inauthentic way of being, given that at its extreme, it denies the existence of another as having equal rights and equal responsibilities. (Bakhtin) understands speech, language and life itself as dialogic, using this term both as a descriptive and a normative category (Rule 2004:322).

To this end, I attempt to reveal that 'inclusivity' and 'mutuality' can become the over-riding focus within the curriculum. Freud's (1962) psychoanalytical personality theory creates a platform for investigating the id, ego, and super-ego in relation to the subjects in this investigation within the play situation: According to Freud, these three parts combine to create the complex behavior of human beings, and it is this viewpoint which I use and unpack later to build argument in relation to Gadamers' 'seriousness of play'.

For the purpose of this research report, the CAPS Curriculum is viewed as a theoretical enterprise. This thinking allows me to conceive the curriculum as a 'space yet to be realized' (theoretical paradigm) and discuss this in relation to play as 'spaces of potential' within the changing social spaces of learning. The theoretical origin of drama in education is indebted to two educational disciplines: Educational Philosophy and the Psychology of Learning, and, the concept of play is an integral component of drama, learning and education. As an educational philosopher, Freire (1972) extends the teacher-as-learner philosophy. I also draw on Buber's (1964) theoretical stance to shed philosophical light in relation to the dynamics of dialogic spaces between educators and learners. Several other educational theories are relevant, but for fear of 'theoretical overkill', I utilize the broad purview of Drama in Education as an overarching theoretical umbrella to investigate the potential of play within the specificity of the CAPS curriculum.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

This research report explores the concept of play as it occurs within a given space; historical, socio-political and subjective. An attempt to define this space raises complexities (Brown 1998; Callois 2001; Sutton-Smith 2001; Gaskins et al. 2007; Laubscher 2013).and arriving at a definition of space within these frameworks is complex and fiercely debated.

Shields (1997:186) states that 'we can no longer speak without confusion about 'space' or even 'social space': In aligning this concept to physics, Shields proposes that the notion of space should be understood as an empty vessel - the reader may note the conceptual resonance of the descriptive 'vessel' with Freire (1972) – a container, or 'place holder'. As this 'empty' space begins to take shape through social, cultural and cognitive imperatives, 'spacialization' occurs. Drawing from the thinking of one of the most influential theorists of social space, Lefebvre (1991), Shields further elaborates that space is produced, reproduced, mediated and transformed by social relations (1997). Lefebvre presents a compelling argument in '*The Production of Space*' (1991) that space is a social product - a complex social construction, based on values and the social production of meanings, which affect spatial practices and perceptions. Of particular interest to this study is that his argument emphasizes the contradictory, conflictual, and, ultimately, political character of the processes of production of space.

Tuan (1997:12) differentiates usefully between space and place: Space within this definition, is an abstract concept that implies movement and freedom; place, on the other hand, implies 'pause' rather than movement, and is a concrete object 'in which one can dwell'.

The association of space with freedom and movement in relation to the context of this research report supports the idea of 'spaciousness' as a valuable pedagogical feature. In a physical sense, spaciousness implies enough light and space for learning to occur – an aspect so often critically lacking in the overcrowded and cramped spaces of the classrooms in South Africa – (compared to playing on the playground) (Rule 2004:325) (Brackets are my own). On average, at the school, the primary site of investigation for this research report, there are on average approximately 47 – 62 learners per class (depending on the grade) in a classroom space designed for 35 learners. Hence,

one can genuinely 'understand' the exuberance (as per the narrative of the grade 8 learners in my introduction) when I invited them 'om buite te gaan speel!' (to play outside).

I employ the concept of the 'knowing archive' as a critical thematic concept in this investigation: For the purpose of this research report, this is defined as a space where experience, narrative and memory are related to one another. Probyn (1993:21) states that 'experience is always conjuncturial, (and is thus) located in the backwardness and forwardness of the historical present (Brackets are my own).

> Spoken or remembered experience is another matter altogether...to narrate experience is to organise it, codify it, to capture it in a moment and solidify it....Narrative is an essential resource in bringing experiences, including the past, into conscious awareness (Goldman 1990:27).

Barthes (1977: 79) offers a pertinent broader definition when he states that: 'Narrative is present in every age, every society. It begins with the very history of mankind and nowhere is or, has there been, a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives...Narrative is intentional, trans-historical, transcultural. It is simply there like life itself.' A further exposition on narrative is offered by Lawler (2008) in saying that this method 'can offer researchers and analysts important insights into the social world. Narratives, considered as cultural resources which people use creatively to situate themselves within worlds, show the complex ways in which people interpret the social world, and the ways in which they position themselves enmeshed in links of self and other, past and present' (Lawler 2008:74).

Memory is used as a conceptual framework at both an individual level (myself, as researcher; the subjects within the investigation; and the case studies) and at a collective level (historicity of apartheid; the trajectory of educational policy development in South Africa). In this way I attempt to reveal that 'the form and location of memory in everyday life intimately connects to the possibilities it has for us in engaging with our own historicity and fostering ...sensitive consciousness' (Keightley 2008:178).

Lapum (2008: 36) summarises this section in stating:

> And as for me, I have accepted and engaged with the complexities of (the play) phenomena by yielding to the epistemological nature of narrative. Stories allow for complexities to breathe without giving way to a disappearance of narrative understanding. (Brackets are my own)

1.6 Methodology

This research report uses a qualitative methodology to investigate and analyze two selected case studies. The data collected for these case studies was obtained from a field study of a group of high school learners aged between 14 - 16 years at a senior secondary school from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds.

Qualitative research is situated activity in that it locates the observer within the context of the enquiry and entails a 'systematic, subjective approach to describing life experiences in order to gain insight into the complexities of phenomena. In constructing sets of interpretations of the material practices that make the world visible, representations of these phenomena are fashioned' (Kohlbacher 2005) This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln 2000:3).

According to Yin (2003:2) 'the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena' (because) 'the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events'. Yin (1981: 59; 2003: 2, 5-10) furthermore states that 'case studies seem to be the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context '.

An understanding of socio-semiotic ethnography explicates why I have selected this method of enquiry in this research report: This process of investigation is often referred to as a form of critical analytic ethnography which 'seeks research accounts (to be) sensitive to the dialectical relationship between the social, structural constraints on human actors and the relative autonomy of human agency (Richardson 2000).

In addition, the critical analytical aspect of socio-semiotic ethnography embraces a research method which 'looks towards combining (exploration) and theory in an attempt to understand and interpret social processes (Vaninni 2007:121). Of significance to my investigation is that 'socio-semiotic ethnography is changing meanings to, and within, the critical practice that emphasizes

praxis (Vaninni 2007).

Further justification for this method is that the socio-semiotic ethnography embraces the notion of 'the researcher-as-*bricoleur*' - that the researcher is grounded within, and by extension, expresses his/her emotions, passions, personal history, gender identity, race, class, and ethnicity (in the research) (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:9).

Despite this method's attempts to be 'analytical and systematic, it never loses view of its critical, humanistic, moral, and richly descriptive engagement with lived experience' (Vaninni 2007:121).

Bakhtin (1981:67) expounds a notion of this method which suits this investigation fittingly in that he states that socio-semiotic ethnographers recognize that their tales of the field are always interpretive political narratives functioning as 'processes of decentralization and dis-unification' .

> Socio-semiotic ethnographers must openly acknowledge that their texts and discourses are but interpretive practices selected amongst a multiplicity of perspectives. Because the methodological scope of socio-semiotic ethnography revolves around a three-dimensional concern with discourses and texts, experiences, and social, historical, and geo-political circumstances.... socio-semiotic ethnographers must be prepared to embrace a multi-dimensional approach that is liable to 'hold different perspectives in creative tension with one another. (Saukko 2003:32).

Bakhtin (1981) offers clarity on the semantic/linguistic focus of socio-semiotic ethnography when he outlines that this method of analysis refers to the multiplicity of voices, codes, meanings, discourses, and values that inform signification.

In order to offer an in-depth insight into the manner in which processes of signification occur within differing social realities, this research report uses a 'double narrative' format – a 'to and fro movement' between apartheid and present day contexts, indicated in bracketed format - to reveal how language within the play situation is appropriated and transformed to reflect/mirror the changing South African landscape of the country's social and educational scene.

1.7 Rationale

Aligning Gadamer, as a Eurocentric theorist, to present South African socio-political conditions may seem an anomaly: Given the space imitations of this research report, there is however insufficient space to fully engage in a lengthy discourse on the euro-centric/postcolonial debate.

To outline why the scope of these debates are too extensive, I use the following quote to explicate:

> The expansiveness of the 'postcolonial' has given rise to lively debates. Even as some deplore its imprecision and lack of historical and material particularity, others argue that most

> former colonies are far from free of colonial influence or domination... Still others caution the selective tendency within Western scholarship (to be) more receptive to postcolonial discourse that are compatible with postmodern formulations (e.g. hybridity, syncretization) while (choosing to) ignor(e)ing the critical realism of works that are more interested in the specifics of social and racial oppression (Harun 2015 ndn.).

It is admittedly, precisely for this reason that I have often been asked 'Why have you selected Gadamer? Are you certain about your choice?' On investigation and further study, and on deeper reflection, one is able to discern that his theories are immensely rich, multi-layered and traverse a wide range of issues for which I share a passion: His written work and teachings include, and expound on a diverse range of topics; from theology, political and social philosophy to education. Furthermore, his insistence that the researcher include and focus on the importance of language resonated with the theoretical framework that I envisaged for this research report. I find Gadamer's concept of a 'fusion of horizons' significantly relevant - perceptively so – to the concept of South Africa as 'a rainbow nation'. Moreover, he places considerable importance of language in shaping our experiences, and also, our interpretations. To this end, he frames dialogue as a meeting of respectful difference – a critical issue in relation to the socio-political contexts of South Africa at this historical moment.

> This era, which some call the crumbling of foundations and others, a time of foundations in contention, provides, ironically, one major foundation for this work – learning. Learning is the anchor in an era that rebels against universalistic foundations. Difference opens the door to learning. Dialogue opens the door to other persons and ideas. (Arnett, 2009: 81)

As a fledgling democracy, South Africa lies, according to Laubscher (2013) 'within a psycho-social transitional space.' Laubscher acknowledges the struggle of defining the term 'transitionality' when he states that: 'Transitionality, whether we understand the term as connoting the slipping boundaries of ostensibly 'self-contained' identities; as referring to the complex bridge between inner and outer territories; or indeed, in the sense of historical rupture, can be viewed as a core psychosocial problematic'. (23)

The strength of this investigation lies in the comparative analysis of empirically grounded data on play collated during, and post-apartheid: Case studies of the play situation from my unpublished previous research report titled: 'Black Children's Games as Social, Political and Cultural behaviour: An analysis of how the socio-political and historical matrix of South African society provides the springboard for an examination of the dance-games, and the social and psychological functions they

serve for the children' (1984)[1].

To offer a brief synopsis, 'Black Children's Games as Social, Cultural and Political Behaviour' included a comparative study of urban and rural environments of apartheid contexts and offered a detailed description of the historical, sociological and other extenuating factors which had influenced the conceptualisation of games such as 'Silla,silla', 'Tamatie-sous', 'Skebereshe', 'Tsweni' and 'Why bona, bona'.

This former investigation serves as a place-holder to evaluate how re-configurations and/or re-inscriptions of the same social phenomena have occurred in changing socio-political circumstances. Subsequently, it is through re-investigating these games as they were played, and are presently being played that the authenticity of the play phenomena as performing the 'knowing archive' as dialogical spaces is explored.

I do so through Gadamer (1975) from a theoretical perspective , Bakhtin (1981) a performative and Freud (1962) a psychological stance.

[1] Cammay, S. 1984. *Black Childrens Games as Social, Cultural and Political Behaviour.* Honours Long Essay. University of the Witwatersrand.

Chapter Two

2.1 Researcher positionality at a glance

The angle from which I approached this investigation and how I attempted to create a dialogic space between myself, the subjects of this investigation and the analytical method utilised to communicate this process, speaks to researcher positionality. Any given processual analysis begins with an understanding of the 'self', and the nature of the investigation inevitably is grounded within that subjective space. Therefore, as a researcher, I am compelled to be cognisant that I am bringing to the investigation a great deal of my own self, my values, my beliefs about the world, past experiences as well as personal associations (cf. Vaninni 2007; Saukko 2003; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003).

Furthermore, it is about recognising and understanding that these experiences 'colour' your analysis, and that you are constantly driving and feeding an archival space of self-reflection, understanding and interpretation.

Gadamer (1975: 360) states that 'understanding and interpretation are indissolubly bound up with each other ...that the concept of interpretation can be applied not only to scientific interpretation, but to artistic reproduction too. Furthermore, he states that any form of understanding can only be achieved by placing human expression in their historical and cultural context. 'Understanding' lends itself to researcher agency: Agency, also termed 'interactivity', is a term often used in philosophical and dramatic circles to indicate the human ability to make choices – a conceptual moral and ethical 'play' of options.

> Subsequently, by 'play' I mean '... that movement in the mind between ideas and images, values and experiences, facts and emotions, that is marked by being a free flow of mutual influence, adjustment and transformation (Kovach 1993: 1).

Articulating, or communicating these images and ideas leads one to another important point, since,

> ...texts do not ask to be understood as a living expression of the subjectivity of their writers...What is fixed in writing has detached itself from the contingency of its origin and its author and made itself free for new relationships. Normative concepts such as an author's meaning...in fact represent only an empty space that is filled from time to time in understanding. (Gadamer 1975: 356–57).

I identify with Hall (1997), who acknowledges that writers 'struggle with their texts, and by implication the researcher's writing of her dissertation, (when) re-inflecting them into (her) own understanding of history', and, given that I deem writing to be 'reflexivity as enactment', I too, acknowledge this struggle. (Brackets are my own). Let me explicate why:

The process of writing represents a struggle of creating a dialogue within a trialectic space between myself, the reader and this investigation. Thus, whilst writing, I was often struck by the creative tension of *what* I needed to say, and *how* it should be stated; that the words were somehow there, and simultaneously not there – elusive and illusive: The framing of sentences, language and playing around with words so as to precisely illustrate what I mean, were, on occasions, profoundly challenging. I knew what to say, but remained in perpetual struggle as to *how* – leaving me in a suspended 'liminal' area, – a notion widely associated with the play concept.

The act of writing, like the word 'play' is deceptively simple and ordinary: When one thinks of play, images of children, games or a dramatic performance are more than likely spring to mind. Yet almost one hundred definitions and idioms exist in reference to this word. We can play (a game, sport, musical instrument) and be played (deceived); be at play or come into play. We can watch a play, play with words, play around, make a play for, or play along. In short, play is in fact 'complex and slippery' (Brown 1998: 242). Subsequently another struggle emerged in finding a definitive meaning of the topic of my investigation.

> In the social sciences the lore of objectivity relies on the separation of the intellectual project from its process of production. The false paths, the endless labours, the turns now this way and now that, the theories abandoned, and the data collected but never presented – all lie concealed behind the finished product. The article, the book, the text is evaluated on its own merits, independent of how it emerged. We are taught not to confound the process of discovery with the process of justification (Buroway 1991:8).

In an earlier draft (rough, one of many which had been written and re-written) I recall referring to the 'amorphous' nature of play - how one can conceptualise play as a surreal dance of imagination and reality, flowing freely between the sacred and the profane. This imaginary continuous dance, mirroring the 'to and fro movement of play' (Gadamer 1989) now seemed to echo my oscillation of tension and creativity in compiling this report. This dilemma was further exacerbated in that I was 'living within' the geographic space of this investigation as an educator, and yet compelled to observe

the concept of play in that same space 'with a strangeness', so as to justify its academic sonority. In a nutshell, I struggled with how to write about unpacking a network of paradoxes.

> It is one thing to assume that the primary purpose of communication is to get a message across to shape other's behaviour, or to teach new information, as dominant traditions of teaching and research about the topic often appear to suggest...Understanding the potential for dialogue complicates any study of communication, because it necessarily widens our conversations about value, ethics, relations, reflexivity, mutually engaged performance, community and responsibility. (Anderson et al. 2014:1)

I venture so far as to state that my researcher positionality inhabits its own 'psycho-social dialogic space' given the trajectorial nature of investigating the same phenomena within two diametrically opposing social contexts. This process of re-investigating, or re-searching implies a re-evaluation, a re-viewing – a re-new-al of an enquiry. Gadamer (1975) describes and associates repetition, or as is my case, a re-investigation, as this renewal. A richer explication of re-investigating a topic is perhaps forthcoming from Bakhtin (1986) who extends the notion that the way in which each generation of scholars re-visit and re-interpret textual fragments broadens and deepens the dialogic space of reflection.

Through a comparative examination of the concept of play from my own historical data on the topic, as stated earlier, my 'own archival space' - my subjective interpretations are foregrounded in 'remembering the knowing archive'.

> '....'the very act of re-engaging and expanding the apartheid archive in itself opens up the possibilities for a liberative praxis to emerge, in the creation of potentialities for re-examining and understanding racialized histories, making sense of their propagated impacts upon the present and considering how such alternative readings of history may highlight different possibilities for an imagined future (Laubscher 2013:22)

This explanatory section on researcher positionality is an appropriate cue for the following section, where the 'alternate readings' of play contexts as they had occurred during apartheid, and how they are played today are analysed so as to further illuminate the 'seriousness of the play'.

2.2 Play as Social Consciousness

The following section offers a visual description and linguistic analysis of the case studies as they had occurred during apartheid: Relying on a socio-semiotic enthnographic analysis and my own historical data, I attempt to outline how the social meanings within this context provide the critical information to draw a comparative analysis with the newer versions presently played. It is in this manner that I aim to reveal a richer understanding of how the girls negotiate and redefine their subjectivities within

play in differing social realities.

My former theoretical engagement (Cammay 1984) of this investigation included the following observation:

> Because black childrens' games are a means of expression of their attitudes towards their environment, it is 'purposeful behaviour'. As we will later observe, due to the broader socio-political influences, the children lacked other means of expression to voice their feelings. In these games, they have discovered a manner in which to organise, categorise and communicate their emotions. Through the conceptualisation of these games, they have shaped rhythms of feelings: It is organised movement and energy: We can observe and witness how it embodies and, more importantly, reflects the universal dance energy patterns of release, contraction, gesture and movement from one body attitude to another. As a dance form, black childrens' games therefore reflect the values,attitudes and beliefs of township society, and is a cultural form which is unique to a particular cultural situation-and has to consequently be observed and appreciated within this cultural framework.

From the above excerpt, it seems evident that even then, the 'seriousness of play' alluded more to than just the girls playing with such 'a freedom that the nature of the game overtook them'; already visible are the 'serious' undercurrents of the prevailing socio-political environment ('township society') in which play occurred then. Furthermore, the level of organisation, creativity and artistry outlined in the above excerpt defines it as more than just mere 'play', and alludes to the powerful exponential aspects of the concept of play.

> Play is ...characterised as a type of activity which is essentially unimportant, trivial and lacking in any serious purpose. As such, it is seen as something that children do because they are immature, and as something they will grow out of as they become adults. However, as this report is intended to demonstrate, this view is mistaken. Play in all its rich variety is one of the highest achievements of the human species, alongside language, culture and technology. Indeed, without play, none of these other achievements would be possible. (Whitebread et al. 2012)

The following case study, although no longer played by the girls, I remember as the most dynamic and energizing performative piece of 'street township theatre' if I could use that term!

- Case study 1: *Tamatie Sous*

Tamatie sous, sous, souse sous (2x)	*(Tomatoe sauce, sauce, sauce, sauce)*
Ubitsamang?	Who are you calling?
Nna?	Me?
A ke battle	I don't know
Onkisakai?	Where are you taking me?
Na?	Me?

Kô lavatory	The lavatory (toilet)
Otho nkestang?	What are you going to do to me?
Na?	Me?
Jovi-jovi!	Play with me!

This game was played in a wide circle, with all the players standing in a relaxed upright position. As the girls began singing the tune and rhythmically clapped their hands, one individual moved to the centre, and walked slowly around the inside of the circle. After the '*Tamatie-Sous*' rhyme was sung twice, the individual chose whom she wished to address and then faced her directly: The dialogue, although spoken by everyone, was fully acted out by the individual in the circle using only gestures and facial expression. When the words '*jovi-jovi*' were chanted, the girl would jump, with her legs apart, towards the other girl; the latter moved forward into the circle whilst the first individual occupied her place. These movements were repeated, and usually continued until every individual in the group was given a turn to 'play' inside the circle.

Now that have I offered a descriptive 'performance' of how this game was played, I unpack the explicit sexual references, the repetition of the '*na*' (me), and the context within the framework of Freud's (1962:41) idea of 'psychic conflict'.

Freud proposes that human beings are bio-social individuals' - the 'id' represents the biological aspect – the instinctive and instinctual base which is the realm of appetites, desires, and passions. The 'id' constantly demands, cannot say 'no', nor accept 'no' for an answer. He further explicates that aspects, or perhaps the whole, of the make-up of the 'id' is either inherited or repressed – all seeking a way to escape or be released.

The 'ego' signifies the 'social' part of the human being, his/her relationship or connection to a group of individuals in a concrete sense, or social norms and values on an abstract plane. The 'superego' is constructed around attitudes towards authority figures, who, unconsciously or consciously, have power and control over an individual. Freud summarizes that the 'ego' is the 'psychological cognitive' which constantly fights for a space between these two; the ego then, has to find a space for 'me', the subject who is negotiating the demands of the inner and outer worlds, trying to find, and maintain, a psychic equilibrium.

One could, upon reflection and within the context of this investigation, conceive this to be an

interpretation of the girls 'inner psycho-social dialogic space' – an internal constant dialogue manifesting and assuring the 'ego' (the *na*) of its validity and importance as a being, a repetitive negotiation with the super-ego of its existence..

If we are to analyse the 'Tamatie- Sous' game within this framework, multi-layered interpretations of the language in the game emerge: The 'id' could be the appetite (and here I reference Tomatoe Sauce as it would be a condiment on a hamburger and chips) as well as the innuendos towards sex in the 'play with me'. This theoretical stance of Freud, relates, in my opinion, aptly to Gadamer's notion of play as a 'to- and-fro movement': The girls in the play situation are not only moving between the 'real and unreal' space of play, but within their psychological mind-set, between the 'id' and the 'superego'.

From this point of view, the constant repetition of the 'na' might allude to a desire to affirm the 'self' – the me – 'fighting for a space for a 'me', an acceptance of identity and subjectivity in relation to their situation at home, within the play context and potentiality in relation to the broader oppressive structures of apartheid.

> The single adequate form for verbally expressing authentic life is the open-ended dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly…with (her) eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit and with (her) whole body and deeds. (S)he invests (her) entire self in the discourse (of play), and this discourse enters the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium (Bakhtin 1984:293) (Brackets are my own).

In my previous investigation, I illuminated the hegemonic Calvinistic notions embedded in society at that time: Tomato Sauce was also a metaphor for menstruation, an issue which was considered to be a 'taboo' issue, only to be secretively discussed between mother and daughter (or between the girls themselves only). When girls receive menarche (begin menstruating) this indicates an important transition in their personal development: It marks a new emotional and physical space in their lives. To fully understand responses to transition, it is important to understand how perception of the transition processes affects that particular transition. For a positive transformation during adolescence, a sense of 'belonging' is a driving social and psychological impetus as it encourages a space for open communication within that group: Sharing secrets for example, created this sense of importance to them. Play and playing provided (and continues to provide) the girls with a platform for constructive expression of these issues. Transition is a critical element of a 'psycho-social space' as Laubscher (2013: 23) explains:

> The idea of transitional space, in the sense expounded by Winnicott (1971), connotes a creative domain of play and experimentation, in which difference and identity may be suspended. A location of reactive and renewing...experience.

Moreover, during play, the girls created a situation they had under their control. Piaget reinforces this concept when he defines play as 'pure assimilation of the world to the ego. Play is behavior in which the external world of the child is completely transformed to coincide with the internal world of the child, and involves no accommodation of the child to the external world.' (Piaget 1962: 42).

In the confines of a game, there can be all the excitement and uncertainty of an adventure, and yet learners can comprehend the whole; can recognize their place in the scheme; and, in contrast to the confusion of real life, can determine for themselves that their actions are valid.

One cannot ignore the fact that each of the girls, irrespective of their play during Apartheid, or whether tomorrow on the school grounds, possesses their own individual sense of identity, and each brings into the play situation their own sense of subjectivity. This game reflects a competitiveness of subjectivities: Through dramatic expression of the *'na'* – each girl attempts to infuse an embodied essence of her perception of herself. She is reaffirming her own identity as unique in relation to the other girls in the group. But expanded discourse around the *'na'* follows in the next section.

2.3 The play within 'play'

> Freud regarded play as the means by which the child accomplishes his first great cultural and psychological achievements. (Bettelheim 1987)

This section examines how the girls 'played' at play; their presentational attitudes, exhibitionism and how they tested the boundaries of the 'ego' in play; to accomplish this. Given that some of these elements are still present in the play within this historical moment, I use brackets to evidence the similarities.

> It is worth recalling here what we said about the nature of play, namely that the attitude of the player should not be seen as an attitude of subjectivity, since it is, rather, the game itself that plays, in that it draws the players into itself and thus itself becomes the actual subjectum of the playing. (Gadamer 1975:446)

I concur with Gadamer's statement, that the game is the subject of play; however, in the following exposition, I demonstrate that the subjects consider themselves to be the 'play' – that they 'play within play, thereby outlining an argument that the 'seriouness of play' relates to more than mere absorption in play. In order to do this, I focus on how individuality of the players 'become' the play.

Individuality within the games was (is) achieved through the ability of the girls to improvise around the perceptions and ideas built into the games. Thus the emphasis lay (lies) on the girls' intuitive imagination and creativity, rather than their ability to merely imitate the actions of the game: Imagination in the context of the case studies is largely dependent on recombining aspects of the games in novel ways, rather than just imitating or mirroring movements in exactly the same way, or sequence, that they occurred (occur).

Creativity was (is) explored in different ways of using the body and creating intricate rhythms – however, expertise of 'play' was (is) determined by the ability to make these innovations (seemingly) as spontaneous and natural as possible. Often, girls were (are) ostracized from the game for moving beyond the framework of the rules of the games.

Gadamer highlights this aspect of play as 'presentation', which is what ultimately allows us to understand his notion on how play becomes transformed into art: Gadamer insists that human play is always marked by self-presentation: in play we present ourselves as something/someone else. While there is self-presentation in nature, according to Gadamer, human play-as-self-presentation is different:

> The self-presentation of human play depends on the player's conduct being tied to the make-believe goals of the game, but the 'meaning' of these does not in fact depend on their being achieved. Rather, in spending oneself on the task of the game, one is in fact playing oneself out. The self-presentation of the game involves the player's achieving, as it were, his own self-presentation by playing—that is, presenting—something. Only because play is always presentation is human play able to make representation itself the task of the game. (Gadamer 1975:108)

Therefore, irrespective if a girl was timid or shy, within the confines of the game, she could be the most confident individual ever – exuberant and confident, achieving her 'own self-presentation' as it were.

Popularity bias is deeply embedded in the nature of playing these games. This 'ideology of competition' adds a second dimension to the 'seriousness of play' given that, as evidenced above, the objective of the individual is to foreground herself thereby evidencing issues of the 'ego' (Freud, 1962). A newcomer to the game therefore soon realized (s) two things: Firstly, the more creative she was (is), the greater the likelihood that she will be selected as the most popular girl, and thereby, achieving the highest social standing within the group. Paradoxically, if she was (is) 'over-creative' and steps outside the boundaries of the game, she was (is) quite likely to be expelled from the group.

Subsequently, there is a narrow line of distinction between being creative and ostentatiously creative. What is of considerable importance, is that this distinction was (is) often biasedly decided upon by the group: So, if a particular individual whom the group does not favour, attempts anything creative, she was (will) immediately (be) reprimanded for over-stepping the limitations of the game, without the other girls even acknowledging the originality of those movements. If however, a popular individual quite drastically and totally unnecessarily altered (alters) the sequence of the game through her improvised actions, the others often undisputedly accepted (accept) and copied (copy) this – thus consequently altering the entire sequence of the game.

A further understanding of the 'seriousness of play' can be built in from this evident 'ideology of competition'. If we extend the understanding outside the framework of the subjects, one can conclude that this also alludes to the 'to- and-fro movement' between the conceptual differences of 'narcissistic play' and 'communitas of play'. 'Communitas of play' highlighted (s) the importance of the need to understand why there is a powerful driving force for the girls to belong to a group and participate(d) in the games. Belonging presupposes a 'bonding with', and relates to the girls sense of identity and subjectivity of feeling a sense of worth. Bettelheim, (1987 npn) in a magazine article in which he draws on Freudian psychoanalysis (1962) states that:

> Again, we must remember that...a game is not 'just a game' that (a player) plays for the fun of it, or a distraction from more serious matters. For (her), playing a game can be, and more often than not, is a serious undertaking; on its outcome rests (her) feelings of self-esteem and competence. (Brackets are my own)

The latter play situation examined the game from a psychological perspective, with the focus of investigation relating to the psychological aspects of the girls at play. The following case study focuses more on the 'performative' manner in which the girls provocatively use their bodies and facial expressions whilst at play.

Case Study 2: *Skebereshe, wozala*

Skebershe, woza la	
Skebereshe, woza la	You bitch, come here
Namingya funa	I also want
E konfyt	jam
Koop 'n blikkie vis	Buy a tin of fish
Maak hom oop	Open it

Gooi hom in die pot	Throw it in the pot
Eet hom op	Eat it up
As hulle vra	If they ask you
Sê dis klaar!	Say it's finished
Ou Don Mattera	Old/That man, Don Mattera
Hy vat my sterre	He grabs my behind
Ek sê nie 'no" nie	I don't say "NO"
Maar nie vir jou nie!	But not to you!

The use of 'resources in (African) settings as toys, comparative to American children who utilized manufactured toys' is a critical argument presented by Nwokah and Ikekeonwu (1998 npn) in their cross-cultural comparison focussing on children's games in Nigeria and the United States. In this game, the players each had two 'groovy- tins' (usually collected from the rubbish bins, or picked up in the streets) which were systematically hit together in order to sustain a rhythm. All the individuals of the group stood in a straight line, holding a can in each had; the body attitude was upright and relaxed. The rhythm of hitting of the cans did not happen simultaneously with the rhymes; they were an echo, in a sense, of the spoken word. Thus, after the first line was chanted, the girls would bend slightly forward, lift their right legs, hit the cans first underneath - then above their thighs – and then immediately step onto that leg. With the second line of the rhyme/song, the pattern was repeated to the left – until the dialogue completed. The girls then continued hitting a complex 5/4 rhythm, moving the cans from underneath and above their thighs and then to the sides of their hips: The skill of the game focussed not only in maintaining the intricate rhythm of hitting the cans, but also the ability to swing the hips and twist the body simultaneously and rhythmically.

One can deduce from this graphic visual description that the players, during their play were absorbed, and engaged in several tasks simultaneously and that their semiotic activity was multi-modal in its blend of kinetic movement, dance, language and gesture. The 'kinetic movement' evident in this game was visually intensified through the hitting of the 'groovy- tins' – which were struck with rhythmical precision between the legs, around the waist and in front of the body. The inclusion of the 'groovy- tins' evidenced how children 'made meaning' of objects in their environment, and how, as semiotic resources, they enhanced the artistic/musical dynamics of play. The tins, though, were

often hit with such astounding force that it could easily have been construed as a physical expression of anger; an anger projected towards all the spaces of their daily lives - subjective, economic and political – here aptly relating to the 'slippery nature' of play and the 'ostensible slipping of boundaries between the personal and political space. Expressing creative anger within the sancitity of play became a mechanism for the girls to cope with their reality, and also afforded a sense of power and control. Lefebvre's dialectic definition of everyday life encapsulates this notion of extended expression profoundly when he states that

> Everyday life as the intersection of illusion and truth, power and helplessness, the intersection of the sector man controls and the sector he does not control and is where the perpetually transformative conflict occurs between the diverse, specific rhythms: the body's polyrhythmic bundles of natural rhythms, physiological (natural) rhythms, and social rhythms (Lefebvre & Régulier 1985: 37)

In playing the 'Skebereshe' game, the movements of the body; striking of the tins and so forth, were all simultaneously fluidly performed whilst 'jumping' into the air. Since Plato (360 B.C.) first observed children and animals playing, the 'leap' (or 'jump' which I have described) has been the central metaphor to describe play. The image emphasizes the sense of exuberance and freedom at the centre of play as well as its boundary crossing nature. We leap out of constraints in order to obtain freedom; we leap for joy to celebrate achieving freedom, and we leap across frames because we are free to explore. Gadamer explicates this as the 'to and fro movement of play' that is, that the transformations of play occurs through interactions across boundaries in the back-and-forth movement of encounter and exchange that characterizes most of life, but which is heightened in play (1975). The player 'leaps' out of the conventional frame of the self, and in so doing, both the player and the playground are transformed and integrated through the communion of play. Laubscher (2013:23) adds a deeper meaning to this 'leaping in and out of frames' when he asks? 'Why so? Because it focuses on (crossing between) that indeterminate space, simultaneously an area of anxiety and creativity, in which boundaries (subjective, physical, historical) cannot be clearly drawn'. Evidence of resistance is expressed through an ambiguity of language within the ambiguity 'seriousness of play': The language structure is neither 'white' nor 'black' but float(s) ambiguously in some unstable, dangerous, hybrid zone of indeterminacy in-between (Stallybrass & White 1986). I unpack issues around language within the contexts of the games later in this research report in Chapter Three.

These games continue to be played – however, some variations have simultaneously evolved

amongst the younger generation of players, which leads us to the following section on examining how the past is re-inscribed in the present. In these recent games, 'groovy tins' are no longer used: This can possibly be on account of the diminished novelty of 'groovy tins' (during the 1970's a rave had been created around the production and use of tins rather than bottles). Socio-semiotics explains that the usage of resources alter: Even though the 'groovy-tins' are no longer used, vocal onomatopoeic sounds replace the tins, as will be observed in the examination of the newer versions of the games in this research which was conducted amongst the younger generation of players.

2.4 Re-inscribing the past: Emerging variants of the games

> Like other forms of representation, we can recognise an intimate relationship between memory and lived experience but rather than seeking to measure this in terms of an objective, verifiable truth-for-all-time, we can consider the transactional potential of memory, and its capacity for transformation in the present and the future (Keightley 2008:178).

So as to examine which elements of the case studies under discussion continue to linger, remain constant, and which have been completely reconfigured, I enquired from a group of Grade 8 learners, aged between 12 – 13 years old, of similar demographic background (race and age) of the subjects in the first study. These emergent games are usually played during break periods at school, and that *'Wanneer ons dit by die huis speel, speel ons so skemertyd se kante.' (when we play them at home, it is around sunset time).*

Needless to say, they demonstrated great exuberance in 'showing off' their agility with the newer versions of the games (possibly to impress? This again alludes to the dire need for belonging, and a sense of recognition not only amongst the girls at play, but within the broader context of the school as well).

> Watching the girls in conversation (strategizing their positions for play), the cadence of their dialogue having a visible, almost predictable 'back and forth-ness' to it, draws attention to Gadamer's analogy of play having a dynamic and influx nature. The naturalness of the movement, the immanently dialectical relationships and the process of playing out possibilities has me play with the possibility that that is exactly what was really happening with these girls. Perhaps they were playing with possibilities, trying on each other's views, listening to hear if what the other was saying was true of something for them, or coming to new understandings. Whether their conversation was 'genuine' or 'hermeneutic' in nature I cannot be sure. I can be sure, however, that in the back-and-forth, and to-and fro-ness of their dialogue, something was at play. (Laing 2012: 5)(Brackets are my own)

So, with their assistance, I was able to identify two variations which appear to have evolved around the 'Tamatie Sous' game: The first has retained the core phrase, Tamatie-Sous as well as the formation and movements of the previous version; the dialogue in the rhyme, however, has

completely transformed.

Variant 1 Tamatie Sous

Tamatie Sous sous sousa souse (2x)	*Tomatoe sauce, sauce, sauce, sauce*
Ek het vir jou gesien met 'n ander man,	*I saw you with another man*
Toe maak hy so, en so, en so so so	*And then he did this, and this, and this this this*

It is interesting to note that two versions/variations of the 'Tomato Sauce have emerged, possibly attesting to its former popularity.

Variant 2 Tamatie Sous

Sele Sele Siyane, siyane the best.

To the East, to the West.

To the (in) my boyfriend

Did you see the peachie[2], standing in the corner?

Eating maltabella[3], saying taps, te taps, teratatatata taps?

The newer version of the above game, like its predecessor, sustains the thematic explicitly sexual inferences: The girls stand in a circle, and begin chanting the rhyme, clapping their hands rhythmically. This seemingly innocent action continues till the last phrase, when, whilst saying 'taps, te taps, teratatata taps' that the game adopts a 'serious turn'. On each 'te taps' (perhaps meaning 'to touch?), each girl uses over extended gestures to the breasts, genitals and face to construct a visibly graphic suggestive invitation towards a sexual encounter. Previously, this game, as discussed, was played with 'groovy tins' – in present contexts, even though the 'beat' emitted from the groovy tins is no longer present, an onomatopoeic resonance to the groovy tins is *vocally* produced by the girls.

[2] A colloquial term for 'darling'; the sexual inference of 'peaches' as more than a mere soft, succulent fruit can also be considered in this context.
[3] 'Maltabella' is a traditional soft porridge.

Variant 1: Skebereshe, Woza La

Ting a ling, my door, my door (2x)

Maak oop jou kas (kus)	(Open up your cupboard)
En wys my jou ding!	(And show me your 'thing')
Ek lus vir 'n stukkie appel en 'n ui	(I'm craving an apple and onion)
Met 'n stukkie kaasie daarby	(With a piece of cheese too)
Ouma kom slaap vanaand by my	(Grandmother come and sleep with me tonight)
Want die spoke gaan my kry	(Because the 'ghosts' are going to catch me)
Hoera, hoera hoeps	(Hoera, hoera, hoera hoeps)
Want die spoke gaan my kry.	(Because the 'ghosts' are going to catch me)

The girls themselves insist that the above game developed from the 'Skebereshe, Woza la' and the appropriation of elements from that game are clearly visible; however, so too are the differences. The major difference lies in the rhythmic structure of this newer version of the game. On account of the fact that the game is no longer played with the 'groovy tins', the game has subsequently evolved to be spoken/sung at a faster, almost staccato like pace – perhaps the 'staccato' is indicative of the hitting sound of the missing 'groovy- tins'. This rhyme parallels the 'Skebereshe Woza' la' game given that, in both instances, references to food are made: In the previous version of the 'Skebereshe Woza la' game, specific reference to the tin of fish was made. This newer version highlights food as well in referencing apples, cheese and onions. The 'memory' facets in the reconfiguration of the games are discernible in not only the lyrics of the game, but the assimilation of some contexts of the 'Skebereshe' game.

The 'ting a ling, my door, door' in a literal sense bears testament to grave sarcasm, considering the conditions which the learners live in; metaphorically, when viewed within the dialogic context of the rest of the rhyme, the reference to (and overt sexual legs opened wide bodily movement, which, oddly, mirrors the 'jovi jovi movement of the 'Tamatie Sous game) informs us that the rhyme is addressing issues of sexual arousal. Grandmother, as the proverbial custodian of chastity and virtue, is then invoked to 'keep away these ghosts', albeit, sexual feelings. Rather than the robust graphic sexual dialogue evidence now emerges of the manifestation of symbolic references (metaphors). Vygotsky (1978) relates the development of language (and other forms of 'symbolic representation') to the developing abilities of the players to control their own cognitive and emotional

processes, or to 'self-regulate' within the play situation. In other words, processes of learning at an abstract and conceptual level is emerging.

The 'seriousness of play' in these case studies reveals that the play addresses 'serious' issues. To illustrate the gravity of the 'seriousness ' in this context, I conclude this chapter with a statement from Bettelheim on Freud's (1962) thinking:

> The dream is the 'royal road' to the unconscious, and this is true for both adult and children. But play is the 'royal road' to the child's conscious and unconscious inner world (Bettelheim 1987 npn).

The notion that play journeys' along such a serious path, reveals that Gadamer's theory that the 'player plays with serious intent' falls short of the hidden depths that are revealed in play.

Chapter Three

3.1. Semiotic to Discursive: Playing with the language of the Oppressed/Oppressor

> Semiotic approach is concerned with the how of representation, with how language produces meaning. Discursive approach is more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation – its politics. It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse connects with power (and) regulates conduct (Hall 1997:6) (Brackets are my own).

A key component of social semiosis is the examination of the nature of communication in contemporary situations of 'meta-communication'. In order to investigate the meta-communicative structures within play so as to further understand the deepening of 'seriousness of play', we need to pause and reflect on the meta-communicative implications within the dialogic space of the play situation in the case studies.

Meta-communication refers to what lies 'outside' discourse – irony, sarcasm or implied meaning. Subsequently, by implied meaning, play is more than just a frivolous activity. Meta-communication refers to the unsaid within the said: Bateson coined the renowned saying of 'the nip denotes the bite' to explicate meta-communication – that the notion revolves on a play of words which denotes the semantic fluidity of words and meaning. In continuing my train of thought around linguistics, Bakhtin (1981) shares similarities with Bateson's thinking around the 'meta' of language. The latter coins this prefix in his theoretical approach - but in addition, stipulates two additional terms: meta-linguistics and 'trans-linguistics. This distinction is significant as 'the focus of study (of language) is not only on an isolated text or language system but on language in *its psycho-social context* of use in discourse' (Rule 2004:322). *(Italics are my own).*

My recent observation of the games on the school playground revealed that the games continue to be played in both English and Afrikaans. This linguistic *heteroglossia* was also evident in my earlier observation of play in South Africa during the apartheid era; however, I arrived at a different conclusion at that time: During apartheid, the *heteroglossia* (which stems from the Greek word meaning 'other' and 'glot' from the Greek for 'tongue' or 'voice') and polyphony of language in the context of play was a creative bridging space of the visible demarcation between black and white races. At that time, Afrikaans represented, and was synonymous with, the concept of oppression. Paradoxically (or perhaps by fate?), it was on account of Afrikaans being an official language that sparked the uprisings of June 16th 1986, one of the most violent social uprisings in South Africa. The irony is that Afrikaans remains an official language in contemporary South Africa – and continues to

possess the power to shape positive and negative political agendas, and is still clearly visible in play.

Let us unpack the state of play in the light of the above statement further: Of significance in these current versions of the games is the trajectory towards keeping the symbolic boundaries, the language within play is 'pure' (except for Variation 2). When interviewed, the younger (new group) of girls expressed less interest in this second variation of the 'Tamatie Sous' game; this seemed mostly due to the combination of both English *and* Zulu. Furthermore, the girls prefer playing games which are spoken purely in English, Afrikaans, Sotho or Zulu and so forth: A form of *'non-heteroglossic'* of languages is favoured. The emerging perception of including vernacular languages into the games speaks to 'a sign of pollution, of symbolic boundaries being transgressed. The retreat of many cultures towards 'closure' against foreigners, intruders, aliens and others' is part of ...(a) process of purification' (Kristeva (1982)quoted in Hall, 1997:236).

As the focus of this research report is to examine the impact that the broader social society has on the play situation, one discerns that questions of language are a critical issue in relation to affirming and defining 'self'. Individuals of other ethnic races, particularly non South Africans, are exempted from being included into the creative creation of newer versions of the games. Gadamer's (1976) perspective is that bias within individuals and society is a necessary and critical catalyst for 'understanding' the Other and Ourselves, and his thinking around dialogic engagement admits that bias is central to human understanding. Biases guide our unique insights and shape our attitudes in everyday life. Subsequently, he rejects the assumption that we can or even should eliminate bias (Gadamer 1976). This admission of bias and its importance is the most controversial element of Gadamer's work, but, in a time of difference, as in the historical moment in South Africa, his comments bear profound relevance to the current South African socio-political context, and are particularly significant within the context of learning and education: That we should accept, in fact embrace difference, as it allows for critical introspection of the self, and a deeper understanding of the Other in society.

> The heteroglossic nature of language arises from its social use by various speakers and speech communities. At the same time, at the level of the individual, the development of self-consciousness is dependent on interaction with others through language. Bakhtin refers to his theoretical approach as meta-linguistics' or translinguistics': the focus of study is not an isolated text or language system but on language in it psycho-social context (Rule, 2004: 322)

3.2 Subjectivity and (sex)expression'

> A child, as well as adult, needs *spielraum*. This means not only 'room' to play, but also room to explore and experiment with new territories, cross boundaries (Bettelheim 1987 npn)

Children exist within a network of meaningful social relationships; what is important to them, and what they know, derives largely from the interactions within these relationships. This is significantly true of the girls within this investigation. They rely on this web of relationships for social action which extends beyond the boundaries of the classroom and school. A large percentage of their social friendships at home, are usually forged with peers from their school.

Winnicott (1972), states that it is crucial to allow an individual a space in which exploration is encouraged and made safe; the type of exploration that involves not just intellectual, although the importance of this component should not be underestimated; it is not even 'emotional' in the sense of trying out new states (of subjectivity). Rather, it involves taking parts of the inner world, its pain and its struggle, and allowing them to become linked with something new in a space which is tolerant and containing. At its most prosaic, this involves experiencing what was once previously inexpressible, as now available to articulation (Frosh 2002: 77). Laubscher, (2013:73) further expounds on Winnicott's thinking as 'a transitional space (which) connotes a creative domain of play and experimentation, in which difference and (of) identity are suspended, a location of creative and (re)new(ed) experience. (Brackets are my own)

Foucault's (1980) work, particularly on power, sexuality and the body serves as an ideal platform to investigate other ways of 'playing' by the girls at school. He reasons that sexuality is not an innate or natural quality of the body but rather the result of a series of historical forces of power acted upon the body. He argues that sex, far from being the culmination of natural bodily desires, is in fact a cultural construct: In his view, the body as socially constructed by and through power structures, are pertinent when relating the perceived meaning of 'play' in South African society. The following narrative is a discussion I recollect between myself and a group of girls (15 – 16 years old) prior to invigilating an examination session. The purpose of this inclusion is intended to highlight how the girls 'play' within the play in an attempt to manifest a sense of sexual power and knowledge within their personal lives:

June 2013…and as per the norm, I am scheduled for the tedious duty of invigilating. This task entails walking up and down amongst cramped school desks for three hours, to ensure that the learners

don't copy – either from each other or in any other form. On account of my early arrival at the designated classroom I am to invigilate in, I strike up a conversation with a group of girls. If memory serves me correctly, I taught them…last year?....the year before?.....or before that?[4] *This hazy recollection perturbs me…To pass time, we strike up a conversation (girls are quite chatty at this transient stage).*

Madam, how's the studying going?

Fine. I offer a brief overview of what I had been studying, Drama in Education, Gender Performance…

*Madam, I tell you now, says Farieda**[5]*, girls kiss better than boys.*

Pardon?

A group of girls have enthusiastically gathered to contribute to the conversation. Yes, the group chorus together. We practice with each other so that we can kiss the boys better.

Pardon? So you practice kissing girls *in order to kiss the* boys *better? The momentous realization of the scant knowledge that I in essence possess of my own learners pales the paradox into insignificance. I also realize how desperately we need new educational/educator contexts which can represent new ways of interacting with, and teaching learners.*

Ja, but now we're realizing boys are just 'gomless[6] *They all nod vigorously in assent.*

Contextualising the above narrative to the play situation one 'reads' the girls perceive 'kissing' each other a *game:* In so much as the play situation on the playground created the platform for them to enact or dramatize issues considered 'taboo' in the community, so too, playing at this game affords them freedom of expression around questions of sexuality. If I may be allowed to briefly recap on the newer versions of the games, which, although seemingly have less sexually charged movements than the previous games, are through metaphorical/symbolic meaning, even more explicit than the games played during apartheid. Perhaps one can attest this to the 'freeing' of the psyche, the body, the self and intellect within the democratic contexts of post-apartheid non-racial contexts. It offers the girls a sense of power (Foucault 1980).

---

*[5] Not the learner's real name.

[6] 'gomless' is a colloquial word signifying stupidity or 'cluelessness'

Engaging with Foucault's notions of power in this context reveals richly expanded thinking around the notion of play the body and power, and his thinking crystallises the discussion in this research report around play, sex, sexuality and learning. Foucault (1980) states that the power that dictates the actions and also the formation of the social body is in fact, responsible for the production of knowledge surrounding it. Consequently without certain forces of *power in play*, particular pools of knowledge would not exist.

In addition, far from preventing knowledge, power produces it (Foucault 1980:59) which furthermore attests to the 'freeing' of the psyche, the body, the self and intellect which bears testament to the democratic contexts of present South Africa.

As previously stated, the play situation allows the girls to write, create and perform their personal narratives; this is clearly evident in the manner that the games are constantly evolving and being reconfigured to mirror/reflect the changing social situations of the girls. In a country with a historically racialized past of sexual and gender discrimination, play offers a space of 're-storying' subjective and social realities.

The games, in their present contexts, will again be remediated and re-created by the girls, relegating both versions discussed so far to the archives of 'memory' and temporality. We have furthermore, witnessed the 'collective memory' of play as they occur in two differing socio-political eras. Bruner states that 'we constantly construct and reconstruct a self to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears of the future (Bruner, 2003:210). At the same time, Bruner also attributes relevance to narrative/telling: '... our self-making stories need to fit new circumstances, new friends, new enterprises (210).

And yet, even memory has ethical implications, as Drew (1998:295) states:

> In the (interactional) circumstances in which we report our own or other's conduct, our descriptions are themselves accountable phenomena through which we recognizably display an action's (im) propriety, (in)correctness, (un)suitability, (in)appropriateness, (in)justices, (dis)honesty, and so forth. Insofar as descriptions are unavoidably incomplete and selective, they are designed for specific and local interactional purposes. Hence, they may, always and irretrievably, be understood as doing moral work – as providing a basis for evaluating the 'rightness' or 'wrongness' of whatever is being reported.

As a researcher, my 'moral stance' throughout this investigation has, given that I have selected Gadamer as my primary theorist, attempted to synchronise with his philosophical thinking of being embedded in 'the Good'. Subsequently, any ethical implications in respect of how the girls are

'playing' with sexuality, is not intended as a moral value, rather, the focus is more on how the girls recreate and redefine their own moral or ethical subjective stance as mechanisms for coping with the realities of their lives (you may recall how it was earlier outlined how the play situation provides them with a platform for coming to terms with issues around menstruation, sexuality and sex) at home, school and in their community: And most importantly, how they engage with the play concept as a catalyst for engendering personal enrichment, growth and learning.

To conclude this brief chapter, let me recap: I have, firstly, attempted to outline how the 'memory' of apartheid still seems to linger in the play situation through language. Secondly, I highlighted the power that play offers the girls in providing them with the space to push boundaries; not only creative, but psychological, ethical and subjective boundaries as well. I have in this manner attempted to further offer a more nuanced and richer understanding of the 'seriousness of play'. Although succinct, this section's discussion is a necessary placeholder for the following chapter which expands and develops a shift in emphasis, in investigating the potential that the play context holds for developing the girls academically and intellectually as well.

Chapter Four: Play as Potential in 'Play Me! SA Style!

4.1 Play as 'Spaces of Potential' within the CAPS Curriculum/s - Dialogic Ethics

> The teacher in a state school is an executive of state policy. They are the mediators between the state and the self. Historically, the quality of that mediation is a reflection of a society's worldview, from education as product to education as process, from the individual as passive attender of traditional learning to the individual as creator and negotiator of meaning in a group. Bolton calls this way of learning 'self-spectator', Boal calls it the 'spectator' and Freire calls it the 'spectator as actor'. It parallels the Looking-Glass View of self (Cooley, 1912: 152) , where one sees oneself clearly in the reflection of others. In each, the learner is at the centre of his own transformation (Hefferon 2000:4).

In this chapter, I attempt to relate Gadamer's thinking around 'play, art and truth' to South African pedagogical frameworks. I have extensively dealt with the concept of 'play' in the previous chapters; and for the purpose of my argument, 'art' is related to the art of teaching. I firstly relate the notion of praxis as a practice guided by moral and ethical underpinnings which creates the shift from 'learner voices' to 'engaged voices'; and lastly, frame the seeking of 'truth' in learning within Arnett's (2008) concept of dialogic ethics.

The implementation of the CAPS curriculum, theoretically, aims to re-orientate and align its objectives towards, as stated in the above quote, developing a teaching/learning culture in which the learner is at the 'centre of his/her own transformation'. This paradigm shift in the pedagogical focus of South African education has serious ethical 'mediatory' practise implications; so, to this end, this section examines the possibility of a play-ethics-praxis and the merits that such an approach would have in enriching the curriculum. I furthermore attempt to investigate the opportunities that such an approach offers as 'spaces of potential' for creating restorative narratives for both educators and learners.
At this point I would like to briefly recap on the concept of 'spaciousness' as outlined earlier in this research report; that 'in a physical sense, spaciousness implies enough light and learning to occur'.

The concept of 'spaciousness' was discussed earlier. In this section, I highlight this notion of the 'spaciousness' of play as an implication of an ethical pedagogical ethos which allows participants to explore new social and intellectual spaces to expand their horizons. In this respect, the concept of play must be made 'meaningful through connecting the private troubles (of learners) and public concerns, extending its critical, performative, and utopian impulses to address urgent social issues in the interests of promoting social change (Giroux 2001:11). Lastly, I relate Gadamer's concept of the 'relation between play, art and truth' and offer a more robust interpretation of this theory within the

framework of CAPS.

This Chapter 'mirrors' my discourse of the play concept, as I give an overview of the trajectory of the policy development by the Department of Education. One cannot deny the struggle which has occurred in the South African policy formulation to produce a framework of education through which learners will be in a position to transmit their knowledge into the broader world, and in so doing, make a constructive difference to society. To explicate this struggle that the Department of Education has undergone, a brief trajectory of the changes which have occurred within the structuring of education in South Africa is offered here: In 1997, Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) was introduced in South Africa to overcome the curricular divisions of the divisive past of Apartheid, but the experience of implementation prompted a review in 2000.

This occurred on account of the fact that research suggested that the implementation of learner-centeredness, as well OBE principles and policy, generally fell short of the curriculum's ideals of OBE (Enslin et al. 1981, Jansen,J., 1997). Several academics at the time clearly stated that many of the curriculum's teaching and learning goals were not being achieved. Research findings demonstrated that while there was support for OBE and that the curriculum 2005's principles had generated a new focus on teaching and learning, implementation was confounded by, amongst other factors, a skewed curriculum structure and design; inadequate orientation, training and development of teachers; policy overload and limited transfer of learning into classrooms (Chisholm et al. 2000). Following this, the first curriculum revision was introduced: the *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9* and the *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12,* which came into effect in 2002.

Despite this revision, continuing implementation challenges resulted in another review in 2009.

> From 2012 the two National Curriculum Statements have been combined in a single document and simply be known as the *National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12.* This curriculum, which came into effect in 2014.comprises of the following: (a) Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) ; (b) *National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion and* (c) *National Protocol for Assessment Grades R-12.* (Source: Creative Arts; National Curriculum Statement. 2011).

Having offered the reader a brief overview of the trajectory of policy development of the Department of Education since a new democracy was ushered in in 1996, for the purpose of this research report, the proposed learner objectives and achievements are where the importance of play is envisaged, which I unpack in detail further on:

The CAPS Curriculum 'aims to produce learners that are able to (amongst others):

> • identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking;
> • communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes; • and • demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation.
> (sic) (e) Inclusivity should become a central part of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school. (Source: Creative Arts; National Curriculum Statement. 2011: 5).

The typesetting and outlay of the above' aims' perturbed me, and subsequently compelled me to question why the 'inclusivity' clause is annotated differently: In an attempt to understand the thinking proposed by the Department to this concept of 'inclusivity' , my attention was drawn to the thinking of Reitz's (2011) discussion on leadership, which offers a more robust meaning to the term namely, that 'inclusivity' embraces a sense of mutual sensitivity and compassion, or mutuality.

> Mutuality requires an openness to change, to learning, to really understanding another's perspective. Inclusion of the other is not the same as empathy, which implies one abandons one's own thoughts and feelings in preference for the others. Inclusion means being the subject of someone's undivided attention. The first orientation therefore is a general belief that the other is unique, of importance and very much worth listening to. (Reitz, 2011:10)

Reitz's thinking in this respect, resonates with Buber's dialogic ethics of I–Thou relation: Buber maintained that although living in social alienation, man can heal society by entering into the interpersonal dialogue that is conditioned on presence, true intention and opening of hearts' (Ish-Shalom 2010 npn). It is from this premise that my discussion fruitfully engages dialogic ethics to further unpack the objectives of CAPS. A fundamental principle of dialogic ethic begins with understanding the self, and the notion of the 'good' first:

> The works of Buber, Gadamer, Freire and Arendt urge us to meet what is before us, to learn from difference, to be attentive to difference... In ethical communication, we recognize that persons, narrative ground, and the historical situation shape, guide, and restrain our actions...Dialogic ethics *listens* to what is before one, *attends* to the historical moment, and seeks to *negotiate* new possibilities (Arnett 2008:93).

We can discern embedded within, or, the 'thinking behind' the objectives stipulated within CAPS that there is a purposeful pragmatic trajectory towards encouraging dialogue between learners, and to open the grounds for exploring the 'Other' amongst them: Sensitivity to race, gender and religion are strongly foregrounded, and demonstrates how communication ethics can work as a learning model based upon self-reflection and accountability amongst both educators and learners alike. The Other-I imperative, the content, and the historical moment matter, each point to the importance of learning. Dialogic ethics stresses the situated-ness of ethical communicative interaction between persons...The key is not to tell, but to learn from the Other, the historical moment, and reflective

understanding of communicative action. (Arnett 2008:93)

But how would one achieve 'reflective understanding of communicative action' when activating the theoretical frameworks to learners? How do I (or others), as educator(s) create an ethical I-Thou relationship? In other words how do we 'talk' to them?

The first step of this process would necessitate a paradigm shift away from the 'telling to' - which Buber coins as 'technical dialogue': The latter decries 'objective understanding' as 'monologue disguised as dialogue', which he explicates is a situation where 'participants meet but, rather than speaking with each other, each speaks with himself' (Buber 1964:37). Authentic dialogue subsequently is not envisaged to be simply a meeting but rather, a 'turning towards each other', which entails a 'movement' or a 'break through'. It requires an acknowledgement of the Other as a particular, concrete, existing person; an attentiveness to him or her; and responsibility, in Buber's sense (1964: 34) of 'real responding to what happens to one, to what is seen and heard and felt.' Buber's dialogue is about authentic relationship with others and the world, and it is life-giving – 'the work of creation'.

For Freire (1993) dialogue is not merely an educational technique; it is something fundamental to the process of becoming a human being (Rule 2004:323). Like Buber, he sees it as an act of communication as a relationship that shapes one's orientation to others and the world

'Dialogue is not a moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality in as much as they make and remake it' (Freire & Shor 1987:98). Here, Rule (2004:323) notes the difference between Buber and Freire in stating that:

> Unlike Buber, (Freire) emphasizes the relation between dialogue and political action; dialogue is not simply talking for its own sake. It is part of a praxis of transforming the world. Through dialogue and reflecting together on what we know and don't know, we can then act critically to transform reality (Freire & Shor 1987: 99). Thus, 'Freire links dialogue, and the changed consciousness that arises from it, to an explicit political agenda of liberation from oppression.

Having discussed issues of dialogue, I, at this juncture, offer a more robust meaning to Gadamer's thinking around 'play, art and truth': I have extensively dealt with the concept of 'play' in the previous chapters; here, I firstly relate 'art' to pedagogy as the art of teaching.

Secondly, given the complexity of a definitive meaning of 'truth', I frame the seeking of 'truth' in learning within Arnett's (2008) concept of dialogic ethics. Lastly, I relate the notion of praxis as a

practice guided by moral and ethical underpinnings which creates the shift from 'learner voices' to 'engaged voices.'

Within the framework of the CAPS curriculum, a paradigm shift from 'pupil voice' to 'engaged voices' of learners and teachers emerges: Such a shift opens spaces for educators and researchers engaged with learners to negotiate shared social meanings within the discursive space of the classroom/playground towards further understandings of themselves and their community. Bakhtin's thinking, his theories of 'metalinguistics' or 'translinguistics', holds serious relevance here, in that the 'focus of study is not the isolated text or language system but on language in its psycho-social context of use in discourse. In Cruddas' (2007:479) paper, 'Engaged voices – dialogic interaction and the construction of shared social meaning', a robust meaning of 'pupil voice' is offered:

> The notion of 'pupil voice' reproduces the binary distinction between adult and child, pupil and teacher and therefore serves to reinforce 'conventional constructions of childhood. The concept of 'voice' invokes an essentialist construction of self that is singular, coherent consistent and rational.

The concept of 'engaged voices' on the other hand, is the creation of a dialogic space where the educator's role is secondary – the educator facilitates the communication within the space. Learners are allowed the space to voice their opinions, and constructively 'engage' in and with the class and their fellow classmates.

> To this end, one cannot, though, ignore the role of the educators within this construction. 'Buber advocates dialogic education, but acknowledges that the fundamental difference in social roles between teacher and students makes mutuality difficult or impossible'. Particularly important differences are the expertise held by the teacher, the formal assessment of the students by the teacher, the traditional role (Reitz 2011:15)

Whether knowingly or unknowingly, many educators are involved with praxis – acts which shape and change the world – but often it isn't part of their vocabulary (Lindeman, cited in Smith 2011). Gadiotti (1996) articulated that in pedagogy, the practice is the horizon, the aim of the theory. He felt it important that the educator should live the instigating dialectic between his or her daily life – the lived school and the projected school. These focuses are critical towards inspiring a new school, with a new vision and dialogic practice. Practice in pedagogical terms is often depicted as the act of doing something whereas theory is the abstract ideas of phenoma. Theory is perceived then as 'real' knowledge while practice is the application of that knowledge to solve problems.

> Reflection is the first step in attentiveness... Second, what is the communication ethics position from which I work, and how does it inform my interaction? This question highlights

> the call to reconnect word and deed, saying and doing consistent with my ground or narrative that offers ethical guidance... Learning hinges upon this (Arnett 2008:93)

'Deed' in my interpretation is not merely the doing of something - Freire's notion of activism and Aristotle's as '*poiesis*': The latter is about acting upon, doing to – it denotes working with tangible objects. Praxis however, is creative: it is other seeking and dialogic.

> Throughout one's educational experience, one encounters diversity—economic, racial, social, religious, and national, to name but a few domains of difference. Encountering someone different permits dialogue; one begins with understanding the narrative ground and commitments that anchor one's own life and learning those of another. Difference is one key to learning, inside and outside of the classroom... Dialogic ethics makes us aware of differences that occur in our day-to-day lives with others (Arnett 2009:81).

Gadamer describes how play becomes 'art' when the presentation is aimed at the absence of the 'fourth wall'—that is, the viewer. Whereas in games the presentation is self-contained, in art, play-as-presentation does aim at something beyond itself. The playful gets transformed into pure presentation in art, demonstrating a potential for truth. However, Gadamer (1975) warns that

> ...when we speak of play in reference to the experience of art, this means neither the orientation nor even the state of mind of the creator or of those enjoying the work of art, nor the freedom of subjectivity engaged in play, but the mode of being of the work of art itself (Gadamer 1975: 101).

To Gadamer, 'truth' is understood as the unconcealment that allows things to appear, and that also makes possible the truth and falsity of individual statements, and yet which arises on the basis of the ongoing play between unconcealment *and* concealment—a play that, for the most part, remains itself hidden and is never capable of complete elucidation.

> What we mean by truth here can best be determined again in terms of our concept of play. The way in which the weight of the things that we encounter in understanding disposes itself is itself a linguistic event, a game with words playing around and about what is meant. Language games are as we, as learners-and when do we cease to be that? (Gadamer 1975:446)

In dialogue, there is no attempt to win or prevail in a discussion. The main goal of dialogue is to suspend opinions and examine the opinions of others. All participants must learn to listen to what is on someone's mind and suspend judgment without coming to a conclusion. Hence, active listening such as listening with feeling and listening to interpret are encouraged. Dialogue requires an 'empty place' to give all participants the necessary space to talk. Swidler (1990: 34) states that the American theologian Knitter argues that dialogue is 'always a second step' and that the first step is

'some form of liberative praxis'. To this end, our understanding of dialogue should be viewed not only 'for its own sake, but in the course of efforts to liberate ourselves or other or our planet from whatever form of oppression we agree to be urgent in our immediate context.' Knitter's position in this context, and within the broader scope of this investigation, resonates with Freire, who campaigned so fiercely against the 'antidialogue of banking education'. Freire (1970), quoted in Cahn (1997: 465 in reference to the 'banking system) states that this is an 'exercise of domination' which regards learners as empty vessels to be filled by the teacher with the intent of indoctrinating them to adapt to the world of oppression. In its place, he advocates a dialogic 'problem-solving education' which transforms the teacher-learner relation (Cahn 1997:466). The merits of dialogism within pedagogical practises in a country of a historically racialized past, is indisputable, and it is this notion which leads us to the pursuant section.

4.2 'Pedagogy and Play Praxis' within CAPS

> Society talks to the self through the social discourse of education. In this way the self is inculcated into society. To be an accepted member of the group the self needs to be educated in the values, attitudes and beliefs of that group. The way in which a group inculcates values and attitudes in order to inform and control behaviour is critical ..... What behaviour is expected will dictate not only what is taught to the young of a society but, pertinently, how it is taught. Teaching methods, if inadequate or mishandled, can undermine the learning of even the most attractive subjects. (Hefferon 2000:3)

Play principles can serve as a vehicle of practical intervention for both social and personal trajectories, particularly through their effective implementation at school (both primary and secondary) levels This section discusses how the 'process of praxis' can be activated through incorporating play through utilising socio-dramatic and play techniques – in other words, process drama.

Play is a prime context for the educative, social and emotional development of a learner; and through enhancing the agency of learners within school contexts, and by extension, the CAPS curriculum, repercussions of learning will become visible within broader society: By ways of enriching learning experiences, educators can create conversations through play, correct curriculum planning and activities which serve to confirm a learner's understanding or feelings, and also extend that understanding to their broader community. Learner's CAPS textbook provide comprehensive exercises, as well as brief theoretical expositions, to assist both learner and educator on how to 'demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation.' (NCS Policy Document 2011:5). The question here, though relates to the praxis of these said objectives, the execution. One method could be in

recognising that creative narratives enables children to create a meaningful personal and social world – that is, through play, a 'tool for thinking' can be created. Fantasy should be encouraged, so as to address the emotional confusion so evident in 'transitional' stages of learners: Creating 'psycho-social dialogic spaces' which allow for open dialogue, learners can explore, come to terms with and challenge their own subjectivities. Incorporating the critical component of the play concept will then assist learners to, as stated in the CAPS policy document, 'identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking' as well as teaching them to 'demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation' (NCS Policy Document 2011:5).

Although the CAPS document does not explicitly outline the dynamics of the proposed nature of the relationship between the Creative Arts educator and the learner, essentially, one discerns from the given objectives and aims that there is an implicit emphasis of 'engaged voices' rather than 'pupil voice'. The notion of 'pupil voice' reproduces the binary distinction between adult and child, pupil and teacher and therefore serves to reinforce 'conventional' constructions of childhood. The concept of voice invokes an essentialist construction of self that singular, coherent, consistent and rational. It is arguably more useful to reflect on self and identity as a socially constructed and complex concept:

> Dialogic ethics demands learning that makes ongoing efforts at communication ethics literacy possible: Listening without demand and attentiveness: What are the coordinating grounds upon which stand the self, the Other, and the historical moment?... The ground of self: the ethical/narrative commitments that guide us...The ground of Other: the ethical/narrative commitments that guide the Other....The ground of the historical moment: the question announced by a given moment (Arendt 2008:82)

In a country with a historically racialized past and a future not yet realized, the cathartic potential through play to create spaces of 're-storying (which) as Winnicott (1972) emphasizes is crucial so as to allow the individual a space in which exploration is encouraged and made safe. The type of exploration that is involved is not just intellectual, although the importance of this component should not be underestimated; it is not even just 'emotional' in the sense of trying out new states. Rather it involves taking parts of the inner world, its pain and its struggle, and allowing them to become linked with something new in a space which is tolerant and containing. At its most prosaic this involves experiencing what was previously inexpressible as now available to articulation and hence alteration. (Frosh 2002:77).

Play-based pedagogical techniques can assist both educators and pupils to be aware and receptive to issues of self-esteem and inclusion. This can occur in the context of the inclusive interaction between the individual and the educator, the other pupils, and the lesson at hand, thereby creating the conditions for the effective functioning within a 'psycho social space' between society, school, learner and educator.

Each school has its own unique 'social space' which is defined by the dynamics of the personalities of the staff and learners –its own psychological and social make-up, so to speak. Through engaging with play, a lucrative opportunity exists for incorporating play-based pedagogies. Given the marginalised economic conditions of the majority of schools in the surrounding areas of the site of this investigation, this method of teaching requires a limited amount of resources, and at most, a mere 'space'. As educators gain a comprehensive, richer understanding of the dynamics of play-based pedagogy, and the prolific opportunities that it poses within the CAPS syllabus, space limitations cease to be problematic. In as much as the Department of Education is constantly re-evaluating broader policies and objectives around pedagogical imperatives, this method of teaching for the various components (areas) can create space for such amendments in the policy without breaking the 'thread' of their lessons. The key here is 'awareness' and 'knowledge' of both systems and processes of CAPS and play processes.

Further possibilities emerge in that the linguistic focus within the contexts of the games could be constructively utilised within pedagogical frameworks and the various learning areas. Such an approach can be aligned with the English educator's term planner, so that a synergy of teaching across the learning areas can be created. Bruner (1983) substantiates my suggestion in that he advocates that the most complicated grammatical and pragmatic forms of language appear first in play activity. Learners (particularly at the school of the site of this investigation) face profound language challenges. In using language in their socio-dramatic play, children develop linguistic skills through 'playing' with language. Using real (social) life experiences as a basis for the development of themes and topics which align with CAPS, and contextualising it for the learners (such as covering a topic on 'Standing in the Feeding Scheme Queue' or other creative topics around social ills - drug abuse, sexual violence and so forth) can create spaces of transparency, trust and true spaces of dialogue. In this manner, the educator can personalise the lessons and enrich the outcomes and objectives of the curriculum. The role play of incidents which occur in the community or at school can

be incorporated into Creative Arts classroom activities. Play spaces allow for the safe expression of feelings (as we had discussed earlier), thereby offering learners a wider perspective on individual and social problems. Thus, as participants (both learner and educator) move from 'talking about' into 'action', opportunities arise to heal the past, clarify the present and imagine (and hold) the future together.

The exponential benefits of play-based pedagogy expand beyond the physical 'space' of the school: Play activities can illuminate personal issues (at home, peer pressure and so forth) which are having a traumatic effect on the learner, and impacting negatively on his/her academic development. In this case, educators can approach (which I have done in the case of an adopted learner who had starting using drugs excessively) SANCA, The South African National Council for Alcoholism/ and Drugs. This institution is in walking distance form several primary and high schools in the area. Creating this 'dialogic space' between educator and government institutions is critical, in that extending the need for learners to be assisted from government institutions outside the 'space' of the school ensures two things:

Firstly, that professional assistance can be offered to the learner. I am aware that the social workers personally visit the homes of the cases/learners recommended to them, and have often assisted the grandmother or guardian with their applications for Government economic assistance so as to ensure that they receive their monthly grant or pension money – thereby easing the financial burden on the family. Secondly, the statistics compiled at local level is used at provincial and national level to compile national statistics on social grants. Therefore, in so much as drama-in-education can create a synergy amongst the educators at school (as discussed earlier), so too, can the issues which are excavated within the context of a play-based lesson, open a dialogic space up to national level. Here, one evidences the exponential richly beneficial repercussions that could be triggered by one play-based Creative Arts lesson.

In fulfilling the role as interlocutor (as the opening quote to this chapter outlined) the educator embraces the notion of being an 'engaged voice': Subsequently, 'engaged voice' takes on a multi-layered meaning in that this notion therefore relates not only to the 'engaged voices' within learner/educator dynamics, but as a relevant dialogue within educator/state frameworks. Evidenced here is how the 'seriousness of play' within play-based pedagogy realises not only the 'engaged voices' of learners, but foregrounds the responsibility of educator as 'engaged voice' as well.

This perspective also has serious implications relating to 'praxis': Accepting the responsibility of being an 'engaged voice' necessitates that the educator should 'take action' outside the framework of geo-space of one classroom only. I have previously offered the suggestion of how the inclusivity of play can enhance the pedagogy of both the Arts and Culture and English classes towards the linguistic development of the learner; that the synergy between educators of different learning areas can be created through collaborating together and 'playing around' with their lesson planning so as to enhance the holistic development of learners. In the case of the adopted learner too, the educator, in conjunction with the efforts of the Life Orientation educator, can investigate the matter further. These examples of synergy can be activated and energized within the geo-space of the school.

One evidences in this exposition that a pattern of 'praxis' and 'synergy' emerges, suggesting a further meaning to 'praxis': From the above expositions, the 'action' of relating praxis with synergy denotes not only the 'act of doing' within the theoretical contexts of pedagogy, but also the 'act of doing with' or 'sharing with' between learner and educator, educator and educator, and educator and state– thus denoting a togetherness, which (within the South African spirit) means embracing a true sense of 'Ubuntuism'. Therefore, in summary, I would have written on my classroom board: 'Praxis = 'Ubuntuism'. In the final analysis, embedded within this notion of sharing are the ethical implications of, to revert to the philosophy of my primary theorist in this investigation, Gadamer, focussing on 'the Good'.

All of the above are mere pragmatic suggestions based on reflection of some of the narratives, and findings of this research report, which are offered from my perspective as a Creative Arts facilitator. These suggestions do however attempt to highlight ways in which 'praxis' of the CAPS curriculum can be activated towards envisaging a community of 'engaged voices'; and in so doing, develop inclusivity' and 'mutuality' of subjectivity, self, and the social consciousness of learners. And this is how I envisage that the concept of play can offer 'spaces of potential' to the CAPS curriculum' in 'Play Me! SA Style! And to conclude with another thought by Green (1997 npn) which I have formatted into a poetic style so as to foreground and highlight the impact of the message:

> Teachers concerned about
>
> illumination and possibility
>
> know well that there is some profound sense

in which a curriculum in the making

is very much a part of

a community in the making.

In conclusion: This chapter outlined the trajectory of the scope of the South African educational policy to the present implementation of the CAPS curriculum to reveal the constant re-evaluation by the Department of Education to ensure that the objectives and aims of the broader educational policy in South Africa aligns to and with, the changing needs of learners. I discussed the CAPS curriculum in fair detail to offer insight into this theoretical educational framework which is still in its infancy, provides opportunities for play-based pedagogy as 'spaces of potential' within this curriculum.

I have in this chapter attempted to present a more expansive meaning to Gadamer's theory relating to the relationship between play, art and truth: In arguing pedagogy as an art, I attempted to outline the ethical ramifications within teaching as truth. Through the inclusivity of the play concept within the newly implemented CAPS curriculum, I revealed that the notion of 'engaged voices' rather than 'pupils voice' can be realized within the framework of the aims and objectives envisaged by this policy document, so as to build true mutuality between educators and learners. Interestingly, this argument overlaps, and connects to the other proposed argument of offering a more robust meaning to the 'seriousness of play', weaving together both proposed aspects argued in this research report: The role of the educator, through the implementation of process drama as a method of orientating the focus of learning towards listening to the 'engaged' voices of the learners, presents the opportunity to become an interlocutor between the 'dialogic space' of learner and the state:

Through 'listening' with a, for want of a better expression, 'inner ear', educators will be able to discern deeper issues troubling learners, and assist them through eliciting support either from within the school, or other state departments, to address these problems. This holistic approach can be activated at each school where a deeper synergy between educators with regards to the curriculum, can further enhance each learners academic interest and development. And, as this research report has presented, interrogated and argued, the catalyst for these processes, begins with play.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

> ...while Gadamer's philosophy seems rigidly dualistic in that he values or prioritizes verbal language as the basis for understanding without acknowledging similar merits in other forms of communication, Vilhauer believes that this is too narrow. Much to my pleasure, she argues that games and sport (play) rather than discourse ...may be among the best ways that we can open ourselves up to others and facilitate the type of dialogue that leads to real, genuine truth. (Carlson 2013 npn).

In this concluding chapter, I begin by summarising the study thus far: In Chapter One, I orientated and mapped out the methodological and theoretical focus of this research: The literature review provided a background to the study of play, where a particular focus was placed on theoretical positions around play. Following this was an outline of the methods employed in this study. Chapter Two offered an overview of the subjects involved in this investigation, and researcher positionality. It highlighted the shift in the discursive contexts of play during Apartheid, and how the games have unfolded in present contexts. Here I attempted to answer the question: In which ways has the theory of play within a specific socio-historical context allowed us to redefine aesthetic/ ethical perspectives on positions on play?

This analysis created the entry point to Chapter Three, where it was revealed that, within the discursive practices of play, the fine unspoken subtleties of Apartheid are still being perpetuated and present within the games that children play. In this way I addressed the question on how children can inform us of present South African contexts?

Secondly, in examining issues of subjectivity which surface during play, I attempted to highlight the play concept as a 'space' for exploring sexual awakening. I observed that linguistically, through body movements and within the con(text) of the games, how the girls use the play situation as a platform to shape, and explore learning on the issues of subjectivity and sex.

In my concluding Chapter Four, I proposed that educators need to listen to the 'engaged voices' of learners, rather than 'pupil voices'. A play-ethic-praxis within the changing social spaces of learning was proposed as a catalyst to propel new mobilities within CAPS. To this end, that chapter analysed how this curriculum can provide the space to explore play as an indicator of the future in South Africa. Furthermore, the investigation focus in Chapter Four attempted to evaluate the possibilities of play as a 'potential space' within the geo-space of the classroom (space) and the broader pedagogy of the CAPS Curriculum (spaciousness). The argument for the inclusivity for process drama as a method for

achieving inclusivity and mutuality was presented as a response to the question: Can the debates on ethics enrich possible definitions of present educational South African contexts and what is the role of play therein? This research report concludes this study where the conceptual and methodological limitations are outlined. In addition, this chapter will also provide recommendations for future research and practices.

5.1 Limitations of the study

Conceptual limitations of this study may include anything from gaps in literature to problems with theoretical constructs of phenomena. More specifically, it was evident that the concept of play was difficult to define and that this study investigated play from a rather broad perspective where more ambiguous viewpoints could perhaps have yielded results that were more detailed and nuanced This study favoured only one method of analysis. The findings were thus limited by the socio-semiotic ethnographic method which yielded information from one particular angle only.

This study did not engage in a Eurocentric/Postcolonial debate on account of space limitations; however, further thinking around these dynamics could enrich and broaden the study.
The sample of this study was limited to only the analysis of two games within the province of Gauteng region. A wider sample from wide-ranging locations (rather than one area alone) would have yielded more breadth and may have been more favourable. However, the richness of the results would have been compromised somewhat for a larger range, given the stipulated limitations of a research report. This study focussed predominantly on play amongst a group of young girls. This field of enquiry is rather specified in that an investigation into other forms of play (electronic devices, competitive play) were excluded, as well as boys of the same age group. Furthermore, this study only explored play amongst young girls within a restrictive area of a school-ground; other observations, such as play activity in public spaces/places, were unexplored.

5.2 Recommendations for future research

> If situations cannot be created that enable the young to deal with feelings of being manipulated by outside forces, there will be far too little sense of agency among them. Without a sense of agency, young people are unlikely to pose significant questions, the existentially rooted questions in which learning begins (Green 1997 npn).

Given the limitations of this research report, I have not explored the possibility of viewing the shift, or 'spatial turn' within the South African educational policy to the CAPS Curriculum as a 'third space' in which play can occur.

> Bhabha's unwillingness to offer a clear and concrete definition of third space leads this enigmatic and elusive concept to trigger off a range of new interpretations and ideas....in areas as diverse as inter- or transcultural communication, spatial turn, theorising the third space 'literizing' the third space and locations and negotiations (Dala 2010 npn).

To this end, given the infancy of the CAPS Curriculum in South Africa, this report has merely opened the 'playing field' for firstly, exploring and evaluating this new curriculum from other epistemological perspectives; and secondly, investigating how learners can engage with this inquiry to embrace different ways of 'knowing' and 'knowledge'. Further research could explore methods whereby the policy recommendations of CAPS can be encouraged to support teachers in becoming more confident and competent practitioners in working within the context of play. Such a level of a deeper awareness of play-based pedagogies will require further debate and evaluation so as to recognise the value of the play concept within the framework of this new educational policy. In this regard, further thinking around the concepts proposed in this research report can comply with the ethical and educative benefits of enhancing the holistic development of learners in South Africa.

In conclusion, the role of the media as mass communication has not been explored in this research report. It is evident the media plays/will play a major role in shaping future variations of the games that children play in South Africa, and this area of investigation offers a lucrative and significant research opportunity for excavating a richer understanding of play and its remediated meanings within the contexts of contemporary South Africa.

Reference List

Anderson, R. et al. (2004) Texts and Contexts of Dialogue. In: Anderson, R., Baxter, L. & Cissna, K. (eds.) *Dialogue: Theorizing Differences in Communication Studies.* London: Sage.

Arendt, H. (2008) Dialogic Ethics: Meeting Different Grounds of the Good. In: *Communication Ethics Literacy: Dialoge and Difference.* London: Sage.

Arnett, R. et al. (2008) *Communication Ethics Literacy: Dialogue and Difference*. London: Sage.

Bakhtin, M. M. & Holquist, M. (1981)*The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Todorov, T. & Godzich, W. (1984) Mikhali Bakhtin:*The Dialogical Principle*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Barthes, R. (1994) *Elements of Semiology.* New York: Hill & Wang.

Bettelheim, B. (1987) *The Importance of Play.* [Online] Available from: www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1987/03. [Accessed: 22 February 2014].

Bolton, G. (1998) *Acting in Classroom Drama: A Critical Analysis*. Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, England: Trentham Books in association with University of Central England Press.

Bruner, E. (1986) Experience and It's Expressions. In: Turner, V. & Bruner, E. (eds.) *The Anthropology of Experience.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Buber, M. (1965) *Between Man and Man.* London: Collins Publishers.

Burawoy, M. (1991) *Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cahn, S. (1997) *Classical and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Carlson, C. R. (2013) *Book Review: Gadamer's Ethics of Play: Hermeneutics and the Other.* [Online] Faculty Research and Creative Activity. Available from: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/kss_fac/19. [Accessed: 4 November 2013].

Cruddas, L. (2007) Engaged voices – Dialogic Interaction and the Construction of Shared Meaning. *Educational Action Research, Special Issue: Young Peoples Voices*. 15 (3): 479 – 488.

Dala, S. (2010) *Book Reviews: Communicating in the Third Space*. Available from: http://fhrc.flinders.edu.au/transnational/home.html [Accessed: 29 January 2015].

Denzin, K. & Lincoln, Y. (2000) Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. In: Denzin, K. & Lincoln, Y. (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* New York: Sage Publications.

Johnson, H. F. (1911) *The Dramatic Method of Teaching*. London: Nisbet Publishing.

Foucault, M. (1980) *The History of Sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books.

Freire, P. & Shor, I. (1987) *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education.* London: McMillan Education.

Freud, S. (1962) *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*. New York: Norton.

Frosh, S. (2002) *After Words*: *The Personal in Gender, Culture and Psychotherapy.* New York: Palgrave.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1975) *Truth and Method.* London: Sheed & Ward.

Gadamer, H.-G., Misgeld, D., & Nicholson, G. (1992) Hans-Georg Gadamer *on Education, Poetry, and History Applied hermeneutics.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1994) *Literature and Phiosophy in Dialogue: essays in German literary theory*. Albany: State of University of New York Press.

Giroux, H. (2001) *Theory and Resistance in Education*. London: Bergin and Garvey.

Goldman, S. (1990) Narrative and Ethical Ironies in Esther. In: *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. 82 (*47): 15 – 31.

Gray, P. (1989) *Freud: A Life for our Time*. London: Norton Group.

Green, M. (1997) Teaching as Possibility: A Light in the Dark. In: *Journal of Pedagogy, Pluralism and Practice.* [Online] Available from: http://www.lesley.edu/journal-pedagogy-pluralism-practice/1997-spring/ [Accessed: March 2015]

Hall, S. (1997) *Representation*: *Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage.

Halliday, M. (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic*: *The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning.* London: Edward Arnold.

Halsall, F. et al. (eds.) (2009) *Rediscovering Aesthetics.* California: Stanford University Press.

Harun, H. (2003) *Postcolonial Discourse in Malaysia: Some Exploratory Themes.* [Online] Available from: http://semioticon.com/virtuals/postcolonialism. [Accessed: 12 February 2015]

Hefferon, C. (2000) *Process Drama: It's Effect on Self□Esteem and Inclusion of Primary Fifth Class Boys and Girls.* M.A. (Ed). Dissertation. Dublin: St. Patricks College.

Huizinga, J. (1938) *Homo Ludens.* New York: Beacon Press.

Keightley, E. (2008) Engaging with Memory. In: Pickering, M. (ed). *Research Methods for Cultural Studies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Kohlbacher, F. (2006) The Use of Qualitative Content Analysis in Case Study Research. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Research.* [Online] 7 (1): 21. Available from: www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/viewArticle/75. [Accessed: 22 January 2015]

Kovach, K. (1993) *Judgement as Play*: R*evealing Analogies between Aesthetics and Ethics*. Phd. Thesis. New Zealand: University of Auckland.

Laing, C. (2012) In Play, At Play. *Journal of Applied Hermeneutics.* 16 (6): 14 – 24.

Lapum, K. (2008) The Performative Manifestation of a Research Identity: Storying the Journey through Poetry. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research.* [Online] 9 (2). www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/397/862. [Accessed: 8 March 2015]

Lapum, J. (2008) Residuals of Death. *Qualitative Enquiry* 14 (2): 233 - 234.

Laubscher, L. *et al.* (2013) *Theorizing the Archive*. South Africa: University of the Witwatersrand Archive Project.

Lawler, S. (2008) Stories of the Social World. In Pickering, M. (ed). *Research Methods for Cultural Studies.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Lefebvre, H. (1991) *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Press.

Lefebvre, H. (2004) *Rhythmanalysis*. London: Continuum International.

Nwokah, E., & Ikekeonwu, C. (1998) In: Holmes, R. (2013) Children's Play and Culture. [Online] Available from: http:// www.scholarpedia.org/article/Children's_play_and_culture. [Accessed: 14 February 2015].

Piaget, J. (1962) *Play, Dreams and Imitation in childhood.* New York: Norton.

Probyn, E. (1993) *Seeing the Self: Gendered Positions in Cultural Studies.* London: Routledge.

Reitz, M. (2011) *Dialogue: Possible in a Leadership Context?* International Leadership Conference, Ashridge Business School & Cranfield University. Decemeber 2011. [Onine] Available from: http://www.ashridge.org.uk./Media-Library7Ashridge/PDFs/Publications/Dialogue.pdf [Accessed: March 2015]

Rule, P. (2004) Dialogic Spaces: Adult Education Projects and Social Engagement. *International Journal of Lifelong Education.* 23 (4). 319 – 334.

Salen, K. & Zimmerman, E. (eds.) (2006) *The Game design Reader: A Rules of Play Anthology.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Saukko, P. (2003) *Doing Research in Cultural Studies.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Shields, R. (1997) Spatial Stress and Resistance: Social Meanings of Spatialization. In (eds.) Benko, G. & Strohmayer, U. *Space and Social Theory: Interpreting Modernity and Post-modernity.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Smith, M. (1999) What is Praxis? *Infed.org* [Online] Available from: http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-praxis.htm. [Accessed: 30 June 2014]

Spence, D. (2001) Hermeneutic Notions illuminate Cross-Cultural Nursing Experiences. *Journal of Advanced Nursing.* 35 (4): 624-630.

Sutton-Smith, B. (2001) *The Ambiguity of Play.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Swidler, L. J. (1990) Death or Dialogue?: *The Age of Monologue to the Age of Dialogue.* London: SCM Press.

Tuan, Y. (1977) *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience.* London: Edward Arnold.

Turner, V. (1974) *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. New York: Sage.

Vaninni, P. (2007) Social Semiotics and Fieldwork: Method and Analytics. *Qualitative Enquiry*. 13 (1). 113 – 140.

Warner, F. (2009) 'Ethical Considerations for Digital Field-work: Cyberethnography and IRBs'. *Anthropology News*. 50 (6). 27.

Whitebread, D. *et al*. (2012) *The Importance of Play: A Report on the Value of Children's Play with a series of Policy Recommendations.* Brussels: Toy Industries of Europe. [Online] Available from: www.importanceofplay.eu/IMG/pdf/dr_david_whitebread_-_the_importance_of_play.pdf

Winnicott, D. (2005) *Playing and Reality.* London: Routledge Classics.

Yin, R. (2003) *Case Study Research: Design and Method.* London