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Investigating the use of image theatre, as a method of facilitating dialogue in South African organisational teams

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1 Introduction and Rationale

> We are lacking serious studies in dialogue in organisational contexts. There is an imbalance between the emphasis on its value for organisations, and tested trials or studies about it. My view is that we need more analyzed cases about dialogue (Roman 2005: 54).

Roman speaks of the lack that exists regarding studies pertaining to dialogue. There are different studies which consider the topics of the creation of discussions, debates and conversations in organisations. However, these studies do not delve sufficiently into the exploration of dialogue within organisations. Two reasons for this deficiency are: dialogue is used only minimally in organisations and dialogue is a challenging way of communicating (Senge et al. 1994 & Roman, 2005).

This report describes a research project that employed Image Theatre as a method of exploiting the possibilities of exploration inherent in dialogue as an approach to team learning. This chapter highlights the research aims (1.1), research questions (1.2), provides the rationale for the research (1.3) and gives an overview of the research report (1.4).

1.1 Research Aims

The aim of this research was to investigate how Image Theatre can facilitate dialogue as an approach to team learning within corporate South Africa. My research draws on the works of Paulo Freire's Pedagogical Theory, Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed and Peter Senge's Evolution of Dialogue.

1.2 Research questions

How can Augusto Boal's Image Theatre be used in corporate organisations within South Africa:

- To facilitate dialogue?
- To facilitate team learning?
- To provide an alternative to organisations' current mode of communication?

1.3 Rationale

According to Robert Reich in Lessem (1993), organisations are now in, what he calls, the human capital era in which the individual is considered a fundamental component of the organisation's success. Gilmartin (1996) argues that the success of a company depends on the unification of talented people with diverse perspectives, people who can challenge each other's thinking while collectively approaching problems from multiple points of view. According to Freire (1970), these perspectives may only be exposed through dialogue. Senge (1990) argues that dialogue then leads to team learning which goes beyond team building. Senge (1991) further suggests that for dialogue to happen there should be an outside facilitator and a metaphorical "container" in which the dialogue can take place. Boal (1979) argues that Image Theatre is a "container" in which those who are usually exposed to a *monologic* mode of communication may enter in to a *dialogic* mode of communication.

Bohm (in Senge et al. 1994) is sceptical of the application of dialogue in organisations. He does not say it is not possible or that it would be worthless to try; however he does warn that hierarchy is antithetical to dialogue and it is difficult to escape hierarchies in organisations (Senge et al. 1994: 245). This is an issue which has been highlighted within this study by Roodt (in Robbins et al. 2001) and has been a concern raised in numerous studies (Roman, 2005). In addressing this concern, various theorists in the field of dialogue have made recommendations for the resolving of this matter. For example, Gustaven (1992) calls for a more democratic approach; Agryis (1993) advocates for more open and valid communication; Schein (1993) calls for dialogue across organisational boundaries; Dixion (1997) motivates for conversations in hallways as this is a place where people feel more equal and Isaacs (1999) suggests that we need safe places to converse.

In taking cognisance of these arguments, careful consideration was given to choosing a form of dialogue that I could align myself with. Consequently Freire, Boal and Senge formed an integral part of the study. Boal's Image Theatre was chosen as a suitable container for dialogue as it provides a clear cut methodology through which to engage with group identified problems. Through employing Senge's Evolution of Dialogue, I was able to analyse the stages of dialogue that the participants did, and at

times did not, go through and Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed informed the democratic and collaborative nature of the dialogue.

A number of researchers and practitioners have written about their experiences with theatre in the workplace (Meisiek 2002, Shreyögg, Hopfl, 2004, Clark & Mangham, 2004) however none write about the use of Image Theatre in organisations. It is for these reasons I found it worthwhile to investigate the use of Image Theatre, as a method of facilitating dialogue in South African organisational teams.

1.4 Research sample

The research was carried out with three different teams from three organisations, whose names have been changed for ethical reasons. All three organisations are located in the city of Johannesburg. The three teams involved participants who volunteered to be part of the research. Consequently, it is not possible to claim that they reflect the group dynamics of an entire organisation; neither can it be said that they adequately reflect the lack of dialogue, and/or team learning of entire organisations. The workshops took place between the period of October 2008 and March 2009.

For the purposes of this study, organisation size is determined by the number of employees at the organisation. With small being from 1-25 employees, Small to medium size organisations being from 26-100 employees and large being from 2501+ employees (www.csirem.com.au, 2009)

1.4.1 "Facilitators Are Us"

This is a small sized communications training company located in the north of Johannesburg. They offer support, insight and learning in spoken and written areas of communication. They are learning specialists in Interpersonal Skills, Customer Excellence and Written and Verbal Communication. They use practical training and a comprehensive strategy to ensure that their clients' internal and external customer experience is a rewarding one. Their approach is multi-dimensional, client-centred and innovative.

The team consists of multi-racial, multi-disciplinary specialist facilitators and coaches. The team members that were available for the workshop consisted of five females and one male. There were two black females and three white females. The male was white.

During an interview with an employee from the organisation I discovered that the members of the team see each other only when they conduct workshops at other organisations. They usually communicate telephonically and via e-mail with a few face-to-face meetings now and then. The organisation is one that provides dialogue - creating services amongst other services. It is crucial that they, as a team, practise engaging in dialogue. The organisation is one that does have a good level of dialogue. However, the two co-owners of the company believed that my workshop could assist them in strategising for the year to come, as the company has not been doing well financially. The owners usually conduct meetings with just the two of them present. However, they felt that using Image Theatre could assist them in hearing what the other members of the team believe the problems to be and then to find possible solutions.

1.4.2 "Teachers Are Us"

This is a medium sized organisation - a reputable business school in South Africa. The dominant modes of communication are telephonic, e-mail and face-to-face talk as in the *"Facilitators Are Us"* organisation. The team consisted of diverse races as well as age groups. There were three males and four females. Of the females, two were white, one black and one Indian. The male group consisted of two black males and one Indian. Two other members of the team were not able to attend the workshop and hence, did not partake in the study.

The organisation used to conduct dialogue circles, after working hours, on a non-obligatory attendance basis. Members of the organisation would meet and discuss current issues affecting business in the general sense of the word. These are no longer taking place as the interest from members of the organisation began to decrease. The lack of attendance highlighted the ineffectiveness of these meetings and they were

deemed to be no longer beneficial to the organisation. As a result, the meetings have ceased.

During an interview with the then acting-head of school, and the current head of school, various issues relating to effective communication emerged. It was thus important to come up with creative approaches to facilitating dialogue. A change in management had also influenced the lack of communication that was currently being experienced by the team.

The use of Image Theatre was deemed to be one of the creative methods that could be exploited to address the problem of effective communication, while providing the organisation with a new approach to the creation of dialogue.

1.4.3 "Teams Are Us"

This is a team taken from a large organisation. Unlike the two above mentioned teams this team is not a service providing organisation but a product providing organisation. The team's performance is based on the amount of sales made. The team is evaluated regularly according to the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). This team has experienced many changes, as well as several challenges. The team had just acquired a new, young, female leader. The other members of the team are older and more experienced and her appointment is proving to be a challenge to her and the team. The mode of communication is usually face-to-face talking and she has to acknowledge the age difference of her team members, as opposed to the hierarchy.

The leader feels that the team is not working in a collaborative manner, as they have different strengths and weaknesses as individuals which they are not using to benefit the team. This lack of team work has led to the team's underperformance, and to tension amongst team members. The consequence of this has meant that the team has failed to meet the targets set by their senior managers.

During an interview with the team leader and the manager, it became apparent that the manager felt that the study would benefit a different department but the team leader insisted that the study was what the team needed. We then agreed that we would

conduct that study with the team. The team consisted of five members: a coloured male and four Blacks, of whom three were female and one was male.

1.5. An Eclectic Theoretical Construct

This study is an exploration of more than a single variable, as it cuts across team learning, dialogue, theatre and organisational behaviour. It therefore employs an eclectic theoretical construct. In this regard, it draws from the ideas presented by Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal and Peter Senge. The theoretical framework will be described in Chapter two.

1.6 Research Methodology

In this research I chose to employ a case study of the three organisations. This I did through the use of Action Research, workshops, focus groups discussion, video recording and observation. The methodology will be described in Chapter three.

1.7 Definition of key terms

The facilitation of dialogue to develop team learning has been articulated as the focus of the research:

Dialogue according to Freire is defined as, "the encounter between men[sic], mediated by the world in order to name the world" (1970:69). According to Senge, dialogue is "*a sustained collective inquiry into everyday experience and what we take for granted* [my emphasis] (Senge et al. 1994: 353). The goal of dialogue is to open new ground by establishing a "container" or "field" for inquiry: a setting where people can become more aware of the context around their experience, and of the processes of thought and feeling which created that experience" (Senge et al. 1994: 353). Within my research the use of the term "dialogue" encompasses both these meanings. Senge's inclusion of the term "container" is useful in providing a description of the function of Boal's Image Theatre within the research (Senge et al. 1994: 353).

Team learning is "a discipline of group interaction. Through techniques like dialogue and skilful discussion, teams transform their collective thinking, learning to mobilize

their energies and ability which are greater than the sum of individual members' talents"(http://www.solonline.org/organizational_overview/, Senge, 2009).

Image Theatre has been chosen as the vehicle for this facilitation: Image Theatre is "a series of wordless exercises in which participants create embodiments of their feelings and experiences. Beginning with a selected theme, participants 'sculpt images onto their own and others' bodies" (Shutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994:237)

Image is the primary term and action associated with Image Theatre. It is also important in bringing in a level of metaphor and abstraction to the concrete physical language of Image Theatre:

Image is also known as a *human sculpture*. "It is a device that is used as a way of physically depicting a representation of the participant's feeling. It is a still image that encapsulates the essence of a scene or encounter. The aim of the image is not to recreate the moment but rather to re-present the moment they are depicting based on the issue that is being discussed by the group. These emotional representations are usually very abstract sculptures" (Weltsek-Medina, 2007: 92)

Metaxis is the vital element within Image Theatre which allows learning to occur: ***Metaxis*** is "a heightened state of consciousness that holds two worlds in the mind at the same time. The fictitious world is not given to be merely suffered. It is actively constructed so that submitting to its experience the mind is tempered by the treatment of the fictitious world being an object. Thus the psychology of dramatic behaviour is of a different order from direct experience and independent of many criteria to do with 'nearly real'. It is a form of experiencing that brackets off an occurrence, permitting both submission and an enhanced degree of detachment" (Bolton, 1979:142)

1.8 Overview of the research

Both the theoretical framework of the research, and the review of literature, inform the discussion in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 is the presentation of research methodology. Chapters 4 and 5 constitute the research findings and analysis and Chapter 6 contains conclusions, reflections and recommendations.

2 Theoretical Framework

This research report deploys an eclectic theoretical approach informed by critical social theories. Critical social theories refer to a multidisciplinary knowledge base with the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge (Leonardo, 2004). The aim of this chapter is twofold: it will describe the works of the three theorists who have influenced this research, namely Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal and Peter Senge (see 2.1). It will also introduce Henk du Plessis who assists me in contextualising Image Theatre in a South African context (see 2.2). Finally it will introduce Marius Stander who contextualises the use of teams in South African organisations. The chapter then explores some of the relevant literature on the use of dramatic techniques in organisations (see 2.3).

2.1 Theorists informing the work

2.1.1 Paulo Freire

At the outset of this research, this study needs to position itself. Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1996) is of great importance due to his writing concerning dialogue as an approach to collaborative learning. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1996), Freire argues that in a learning setting, teachers reinforce the ideology that the peasants[1] are "empty vessels", to be filled with knowledge. This oppressive ideology assumes that teachers are the only bearers of knowledge and thus fails to acknowledge the existing knowledge possessed by the peasants.

Freire's philosophy is used as a lens through which issues pertaining to dialogue as an approach to team learning can be viewed and analysed. Furthermore, in the use of Image Theatre as a tool for facilitating dialogue and as an approach to team learning, I found that the appropriate theoretical model with which to engage is premised on Paulo Freire's philosophy. I also found correlations to Boal's Image Theatre as a manifestation of Freire's philosophies.

[1] Freire refers to the peasants in Brazil as being interchangeable with learners. For the purpose of this study I shall be using learners.

Freire's work is traced back to Brazil, 1962 and later Africa, where he worked as an adult educator (Odhiambo, 2008). The publication and distribution of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970) was a landmark event in the field of learning (Au & Apple, 2007). His philosophy of learning rests on the belief that autonomy is a condition arising from the ethical and responsible engagement with decision-making, and that conscientization—the development of a critical consciousness—is a necessary condition of freedom; that curiosity, both ontological and epistemological, is the keystone of the educational process (Weiner, 2003).

Freire argues that we cannot "deposit" our ideas into other people through what he refers to as the *banking concept*[2]. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* calls for the creation of an authentic dialogue between learners and teachers as equal knowing participants, with both, possessing an awareness of their existing context of facts: the social reality lived in (1970: 214). Freire argues that this knowledge however is only accessible through the use of *dialogue* as a move towards a collaborative *problem-posing pedagogy*.

A problem-posing pedagogy involves genuine participation of all those concerned in the learning and the eradication of the teacher-learner hierarchy that existed in the oppressive Brazilian education system. For instance, Freire advocates that the teacher respects the learner's knowledge of his/her social reality and the history that conditions it. In a *problem-posing pedagogy* the teacher is not deemed to be the dominating voice of authority. The process is rather a collaborative venture between the teacher and the learner. Due to its collaborative nature, this pedagogy becomes a powerful tool for learning and empowerment (Odhiambo, 2008).

In the context of South African organisations, Industrial Psychologist Gert Roodt (in Robbins et al. 2001), notes that the hierarchical nature of South African organisations leads to the manager/team leader being perceived as the "knowledge bearer" and the team members being assumed to be the "empty vessels" or the *dependants* (Robbins

[2] "Banking learning (…) attempts, by mythicizing reality, to conceal certain reality, to conceal certain facts which explain the way in which men (sic) exist in the world: problem-posing learning sets itself the task of demythicizing this. Banking learning resists dialogue; problem-posing learning regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition which unveils reality. Banking learning treats learners as objects of assistance. Problem-posing education bases itself on creativity, thereby responding to the vocation of men who are authentic only in inquiry and creative transformation" (Freire: 1970:71)

et al. 2001: 269). This is due to the hierarchical power and power struggles that may exist in the organisation.

In agreement with Freire, this research advocates for collaborative learning that is not framed within the banking concept where the social reality of both the team leader and the team members are taken into consideration. As a result of the collaborative nature of the pedagogy, the experience becomes a major contributing factor to the sharing of perspectives and learning.

In his theory, Freire refers to the central problem as 'oppression' which is due to the power that the teacher has over the learner. This power is expressed in various ways, one being communication. Because it is assumed that the learner does not possess knowledge, there is a one-way direction in which the information flows from the teacher to the learner (Freire, 1970). A similar situation is found in South African organisations. However, unlike the learners, employees are not oppressed per se, but rather experience the central problem of *dependency* [my emphasis] due to the hierarchical nature of organisations (Robbins et al. 2001). Roodt (2001), who specialises in the area of Organisational Behaviour, elaborates on the issue of *dependency* in organisations stating that:

> *The greater B's dependency on A, the greater the power A has over B*. When you possess anything that others require but that you alone control, you make them dependent upon you and, you therefore gain power over them… dependency in organisations is the key to power.
>
> (In Robbins et al, 2001: 271-2)

Mintzberg (1983), as cited by Roodt (in Robbins et al. 2001) states that dependency is increased when the resources that the team leader controls are perceived to be important, scarce and non-substitutable. The resources controlled by the team leader may be in varying forms, depending on the organisation. However, it is the manifestation of the control of knowledge-based resources, such as communication and information-sharing that this study will explore.

The occurrence of dependency that the study addresses is in the form of communication and lack thereof. According to Crafford (in Robbins et al. 2001), the trend in South African organisations is that:

- Communication is unidirectional and usually top-down
- The low levels of literacy mean that employees are excluded from information-sharing and because of their exclusion, employees risk being disenfranchised
- There is a drive to find new ways of communicating in a multicultural environment
- (There is) pressure towards dialogue as opposed to one-way communication
- The challenge of empowering previously disenfranchised people by providing access to information sharing.

(2001: 223)

In both Freire's context and the context of this study, those in power are "perceived to be important" (Roodt in Robbins et al. 2001: 271), by themselves, as well as those they lead. They are the ones who have control and determine the direction of the flow of communication. Secondly, hierarchy influences the path of communication. Both contexts advocate for the incorporation of dialogue as opposed to one-way communication and both believe that this will lead to the empowerment of the previously disenfranchised.

According to Freire (1970) and Boal (1979), both *oppression* (in the classroom) and *dependency* (in organisations*)* are "antithetical to dialogue", and ultimately to collaborative learning. Freire and Roodt advocate in agreement with Bohm, in Senge (1991), who argues that the lack of dialogue perpetuates "...old and vertical lines of communication which are now obsolete" especially in learning organisations (Senge et al. 1994: 245).

This study is based on Freire (1970), Boal (1979) and Senge (1990) in believing that dialogue allows for a shared vision and a presentation of varying perspectives. These may lead to team learning and thus the improvement of organisational teams' communication and knowledge-based resources. This improvement leads to the establishment of organisational teams where productivity and the channels of dialogue

are created for the employees' empowerment and genuine involvement in the organisation.

Although I have acknowledged the benefits of Freire's theories, I would also like to explore the criticisms made regarding his work. In *Rethinking Freire: Globalization and the Environmental Crisis* (Bower & Apffel-Marglin, 2005), the authors claim the core assumptions of Freire's ideas serve to "deepen the ecological crisis" and further oppress indigenous people and peasants around the world (Bower et al. 2005). Vaquez in (Bower et al. 2005: 459), claims that Freire deepens the ecological crisis by invoking an "individualised, competitive, argument-orientated literacy" which stems from what Robinson (2005:102) refers to as "an attachment to the illusion of some solid permanent entity called the *self*". However, in light of Freire's political commitment to human "emancipation" through education and organising for social justice, this claim is indeed a considerable one that would require substantial evidence to be supported (Au and Apple, 2007).

In response to *Rethinking Freire*, Au and Apple (2007) refer to the claims made by Bower et al. (2005) as a misinterpretation of Freire. They argue that "fundamentally, these misunderstandings of Freire's ideas flow from a lack of understanding of what might best be called 'dialectical logic', which posits that there are unified, interrelated 'opposites' at play in any single process.

In further investigating criticisms regarding Freire's theories, this study found that claims to Freire's individualism are not novel (see, Ellsworth, 1989; Weiler, 1991). Even though Freire was clear in stating that humans interact with the world around them, especially other humans, *dialectically* (Freire, 1982c), he does not make a distinction between how humans are with the world and therefore with each other (Freire, 1982a); and that there is "an indivisible solidarity between the world and [humans]" (Freire, 1974: 81). According to Freire, our consciousness and our knowledge are part of a communal consciousness (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This led Freire to conclude that "subjects cannot think alone" so that there "is no longer *I think* but *we think*" (Freire, 1982c, p. 137), thus using dialogue as an approach toward collaborative learning as advocated for by this study.

Freire's philosophy is one that focuses primarily on the oppressed and educational empowerment for the oppressed through collaborative learning; however a prerequisite for the collaborative learning is dialogue. This dialogue is one that requires commitment from both the teachers and the learners. Similarly the dialogue that this study advocates requires collaboration between the team leaders and the team members. According to Weiner (2003), team leaders who are willing to enter into the proposed dialogue exercise engender what he refers to as a transformative leadership[3]. Transformative leadership may present a number of challenging concerns. This study will make mention of the one most pertinent to this study.

As actors inside dominant structures, transformative leadership must always make problematic the institutional power it wields. Of course, part of transformative leadership's power comes from the institution itself, but this does not automatically necessitate the seduction and co-option of critical perspectives within the organisation (Weiner, 2003). Consequently, the teachers also fall into the category of the 'oppressed' because they are accountable to the "higher powers" - the government (Freire, 1970). Similarly the team leaders are accountable to those who are higher than them in their hierarchical standing in the organisation. This in itself is the primary reason Senge (1990) advocates for learning organisations so that all stakeholders may engage in dialogue. However, the analysis of the organisation as a whole falls outside the scope of this study, as the teams within the organisation will be the focal point.

2.1.2 Augusto Boal

This study suggests the use of theatre as a platform for the occurrence of Freire's praxis (practice through reflection on action) of dialogue between team leader and members within organisations (Linds &Vettraino, 2008)

Boal (1979) argues that the creation of *Theatre of the Oppressed* advances the dialogue that Freire advocated for in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* through the use of Theatre as a *container* – a metaphorical container where non-verbal dialogue may

[3] "Transformative leadership is an exercise of power and authority that begins with questions of justice, democracy, and the dialectic between individual accountability and social responsibility" (Weiner,2003: 89)

take place as problems are solved aesthetically and not verbally. Boal believes that it is in this *container* that the peasants in Brazil could rehearse for the revolution against their oppressors. This 'rehearsal for liberation' was embedded in the arsenal of methods found in *Theatre of the Oppressed* (Boal, 1979: 126)

Boal's theory has grown out of his earlier work with oppressed groups (1979) where he used various *Theatre of the Oppressed* techniques in assisting groups to recognise social oppression and rehearse ways of overcoming the oppression. The techniques found in Boal's theatre are far removed from the conventional theatre where the audience are mere 'spectators' of the action on stage. Rather, his theatre calls on the spectators of the performance to develop into *Spect-Actors*, a term Boal created to describe the performer who is not only spectator of the theatre but also an actor, able to observe and actively participate in the dramatic action presented.

> The [Spect-Actor] himself assumes the protaganistic role, changes the dramatic action, tries out solutions, discusses plans for change - in short trains himself for real action. (1979: 122)

Boal believes that an individual has the potential to recreate, and interrogate, the image of a real oppression in an imagined world and to use the imagined world as a rehearsal space for action which can be carried into reality (Mabena, 2008). This study investigates the use of Boal's 'metaxis': the simultaneous presence of an individual in two different worlds, the imagined world of Image Theatre and the real world (Boal, 1979).

Image Theatre is a method in which Spect-Actors rely on producing three images, using their bodies, to represent their oppression in the *real image*, their liberation in the *ideal image* and the rehearsal towards their liberation in the *transitional image*. Boal's theatre-devising techniques are less reliant on a spoken language than they are on a gestural language. Boal (1979) argues that image is a sensory way of communicating one's emotions, ideologies and perceptions in a codified way. He believes that the image, particularly an embodied theatrical image, is the most fundamental form of communication.

Examples of the assortment of unconventional methods of theatre that Boal deploys as techniques include: Image Theatre, Invisible Theatre, Forum Theatre, Newspaper Theatre and Legislative Theatre. This study focuses on Image Theatre primarily because it "…exploits human sculpting and tableaux as ways of highlighting oppression without introducing the confusion and ambiguities associated with spoken language" (Odhiambo, 2008: 33). This according to Odhiambo is due to the fact that "an image communicates in a more immediate way than spoken language" (ibid. 33).

At times, the hierarchical structure of communication in organisations is one that introduces ambiguities as it requires that certain protocol be observed - meaning that one may not "speak out of turn" - which leads to the silencing of those in a lower ranking (Roodt, 2001). It is primarily due to this silencing that this study advocates for the use of Image Theatre as each participant is given an equal platform in the image created.

Image Theatre has an umbrella of exercises that are loosely structured as conventions coded in a visual language (www.theatreoftheoppressed.com, 2008). This visual language is a *container* where visual modes of communicating are used to present perspectives and knowledge possessed by the oppressed. It is within this metaphorical container that participants physically experience how it feels to embody their own, and each others', oppressions, interactions, dreams and triumphs through image (Boal, 1979).

This study has chosen to investigate the use of Boal's Image Theatre, as opposed to other theatre techniques, due to the nature of visual language. Furthermore, Image Theatre's metaphorical containment creates an enabling space where there is the opportunity for all involved to be on an equal footing, without protocols or language as barriers to the dialogue. Team leaders and members are in an enabling environment in which their perspectives and knowledge-based resources may be shared (Boal, 1979).

Boal (2002) elaborates on the efficacy of images as he states that instead of *saying* what the participant thinks, the image *shows* what the participant is communicating. He/she puts him/herself in a particular position, in relation to the other participants

thus collaborating in the creation of the meaning of the image, while conveying an idea, emotion or feeling. According to Boal "…this is a dialogue of images, not just juxtaposition."(Boal, 2002: 140).

The use of Image Theatre is therefore, a form of what Freire terms, codification (Freire, 1970). Boal believed that it is better to use images as a form of codification as opposed to words:

> When pronounced by the sender, the words are signifiers rich with signification of the experiences of the sender, of his memories, desires and imaginations: in transit, these signifiers change their significations, like a lorry changing cargo, from one city to the next. On arrival at the receiver, the words are loaded with the experiences of the latter and not the former. Even if it arrives at the receiver, with its cargo untouched, the receiver has his own apparatus of translation-reception, which translates and betrays the message received. (Boal, 2006:14)

What Boal describes above, Crafford (*in Robbins* et al. 2001) refers to as *selective perception,* which she found to be prevalent in South African organisations. Words are thus a means of transport as they transport ideas, desires and emotions. With the same word one can say the exact opposite of what the dictionary states: in writing a phrase; by means of syntax and in speaking the phrase; and by means of the language and voice (i.e. timbre, tone, volume, pause) (Boal, 2006).

It is due to the above-mentioned complexities associated with the use of words that Boal and this study advocate for the use of aesthetics.

> Words are the work and the instruments of reason: we have to transcend them and look for forms of communication which are not rational, but also 'sensory-aesthetics communication'. This aesthetic transcendence of reason is reason for theatre and for all arts. We cannot divorce reason and feeling, idea and form. They are a constant couple…The aesthetic process allows the subjects to exercise themselves in activities which are usually denied them, thus expanding their expressive and perceptive possibilities. (Boal, 2006: 18)

The basis of Image Theatre is its aesthetic quality as it enables participants to collectively process varying perspectives of a problem and engage to solve this problem. Here it is evident, once again, that Boal finds his roots in Freire's problem-posing pedagogy and adds to this by creating a theatrical 'container' in which the

learning may take place. Similarly, this study uses Image Theatre as a *container* in which collaborative learning may take place.

It is in this *container* that the visual language and gestural signs constitute the primary representational analytic tool in the arsenal of *Theatre of the Oppressed*, and its importance parallels the primacy of dialogue. It is from this visual language that the dialogue will be created. The visual representation of the image created by the participants will assist in eliciting the various perspectives that the participants may have pertaining to the themes discussed (Adjin-Tetty et al.2008).

Unlike the hierarchical structure of communication in organisations, the dialogue created in the metaphorical *container* through the creation of images promotes independence of interpretation. It allows the team leaders and members to explore dialogue through the creation of images. The presentation of the image-based dialogue can lead to the barriers that would usually be presented by verbal communication, being minimized, and at times even eradicated.

The use of Image Theatre as a method facilitates the representation of the dependency experienced by the team leader and members in the *real image* followed by the representation of the *ideal image* where the team is most effective and the *transitional image* which will allow the team to engage in a dialogue regarding the varying perspectives of the team members and leader regarding the potential solutions to the problems presented in the *real image*.

Boal presents a four stage plan in transforming the spectator into a Spect-Actor who thus becomes more effective within the metaxis (1979: 126). Figure 2.1 shows how this study makes use of Boal's four stages. However, there are a few aspects that have been changed and/or modified in this study from the Image Theatre originally presented in *Theatre of the Oppressed*.

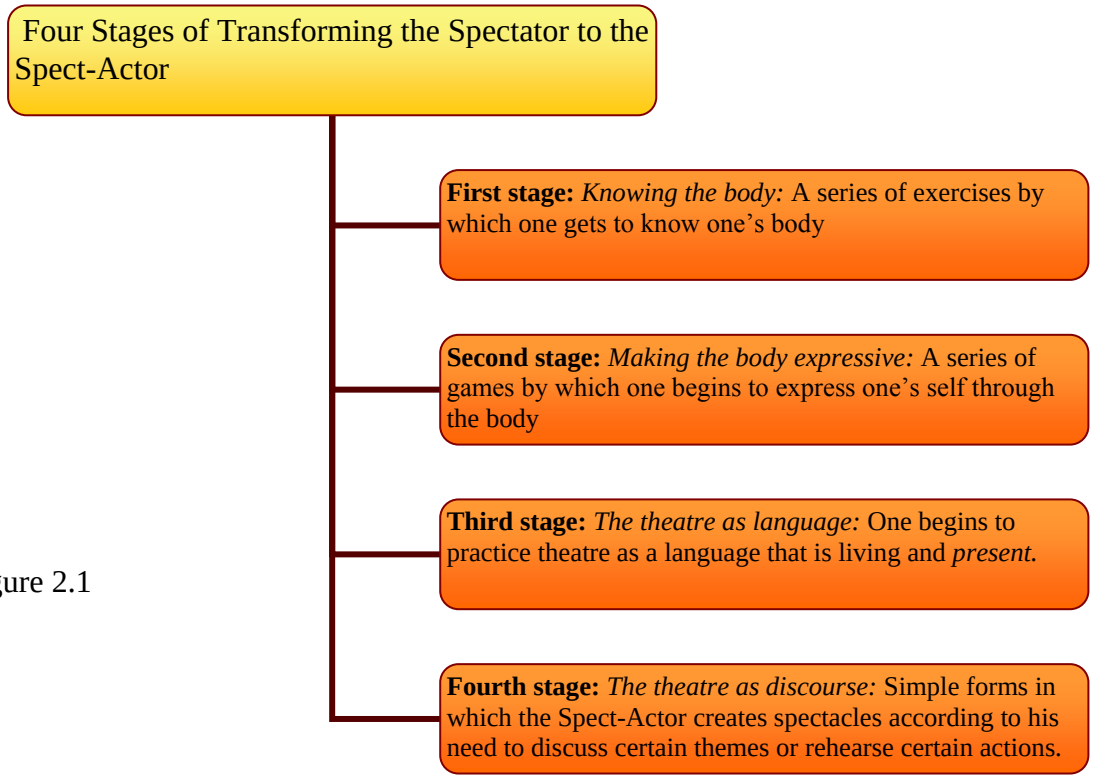


Figure 2.1

In refining my readings on Boal, criticisms indicate that his theories and methods provide a limitation in organisations (Clark and Mangham, 2004). In their article *Stripping to the Undercoat: a Review and Reflection on a Piece of Organisation Theatre*, Clark and Mangham review *Vanishing the Truth* (2004), a "tailor-made" forum theatre play, and pose the question "Is forum theatre an appropriate model for organisational theatre?" (Clark and Mangham, 2004: 841).

Clark and Mangham argue that Boal's understanding of the development of theatre is one which few scholars would support as Boal shows "little interest in theatre research or scholarship" (Clark and Mangham, 2004: 844). They go on to argue that Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, in its original form, was overtly political and revolutionary and thus in an organisation setting conceives workers and bosses to be the oppressed and the oppressor. Theatre of the Oppressed thus invites "revolutionary action and structural change" (Clark and Mangham, 2004: 847), which the authors find problematic in an organisational setting.

Clark and Mangham acknowledge the manner in which the oppressed are privileged in *Theatre of the Oppressed.* However, I would like to argue that the title in itself makes it clear that the lens, through which Boal advocates for the use of theatre, is primarily for the benefit of the oppressed. In applying his theory in organisations, I had to be cognisant of the differences between the setting in which Boal's theory was used and the one in which I proposed to use it.

Unlike Boal, this study takes all stake holders into consideration in the creation of dialogue as well as the collaborative learning for two reasons. The first reason is that organisations are very different to the social labour conditions in Brazil and secondly, the purpose of the study is to create dialogue as an approach to team learning which would signify that all members of the team need to be included in the workshop. This would thus include the team leader whom Boal would consider to be the *oppressor.*
In an e-mail between Boal and Clark and Mangham, Boal makes it unambiguous that he confines his activities to those groups that he views as the oppressed and emphasises, "Please understand me, Theatre of the Oppressed is theatre of the oppressed, for the oppressed by the oppressed" (Clark and Mangham, 2004: 849).

Taking Clark and Mangham's arguments into consideration, it was necessary for me to then make carefully considered choices regarding the use of Theatre of the Oppressed. This led to the careful use of *dependency* as opposed to *oppression*, as dependence was found to be what challenges South African organisations due to the bureaucratic nature of organisations. Due to *oppression*, the primary challenges that faced the learners in Brazil were illiteracy and the lack of dialogue. However, the challenges experienced by employees in South African organisations due to *dependency*, according to Roodt (in Robbins et al. 2001), is the lack of dialogue and collaborative learning. I found that the oppression experienced in Brazil and dependency in South African situations, are antithetical to dialogue and deprive the individuals of collaborative learning. Thus, in the investigation of the use of Image Theatre (which assisted the Brazilian learners in creating dialogue and collaborative learning), this study, investigates the creation of dialogue and collaborative learning, in the form of what Senge calls team learning (Senge, 1990).

Lastly Clark and Mangham (2004) critique Boal's creation of dialogue through the use of Forum Theatre, arguing that the creation of dialogue relies heavily on the ability of the "joker and convener to promote a process of dialectic among the participants" (Clark and Mangham, 2004:849). Beck in Clark and Mangham holds that dialectic is:

> mutual criticism of free and equal beings willing both to support and to change their reasons, actions, projects, plans, desires and aspirations. In dialogue, I respect you as a free agent by using no argument and appealing to no reason to which I do not bind myself ... for my emancipation from the limitations of my role I need the criticism and backing of free men; only from them can I learn. (1975: 136–137)

In the light of the above quote, Clark and Mangham conclude their article stating that the use of Forum Theatre in organisations was not what organisations required to create the dialogue that Beck advocated for. Instead they suggest that "a very different dramatic approach than that be adopted in this genre of organisation theatre" (Clark and Mangham, 2004:849), hence my exploration of the use of Image Theatre.

2.1.2 Peter Senge

Peter Senge's ideas are part of this study as he brings in concepts of collaborative learning which, like Boal's, have been informed by Freire. He also argues for the use of dialogue for learning to take place. He contextualises his concepts within an organisational setting for the purpose of team learning.

Senge, a pioneer in the concept of the 'learning organisation', identifies five basic disciplines or 'component technologies' as uniting forces behind an innovative learning organisation (Senge et al. 1994:94). These are: Systems Thinking, Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Building Shared Vision, and Team Learning. Senge adds to this recognition that members of an organisation are agents, able to act upon the structures and systems of which they are a part. Thus all the disciplines are, in this way, "…concerned with a shift of mind from seeing parts to seeing wholes, from seeing people as helpless reactors to seeing them as active participants in shaping their reality, from reacting to the present to creating the future" (Senge et al. 1994: 69).

This study would like to argue that there are connections between the philosophies presented by Freire and Boal, and those presented by Senge. For instance, Freire's philosophy, which is against the learners being considered as 'empty containers', seems to be echoed by Senge as he refers to the members of an organisation as potential "helpless reactors". Senge then touches on the issue of the members being 'active participants in shaping their reality' which aligns to the concept of Spect-Actors as argued by Boal – the members are active participants (1979). Lastly, Senge, similar to Boal and Freire, is a firm believer in collaborative learning; however, he refers to it as team learning (Senge et al. 1994).

Senge views the term *team learning* to be 'the process of aligning and developing the capacities of a team to create the results its members truly desire' (Senge et al.1994: 236). It builds on personal mastery and a shared vision – but these are not enough. People need to be able to act together. When teams learn together, Senge suggests, not only can there be good results for the organization; members will grow more rapidly than could have occurred otherwise. He goes on to say that "…there has never been a greater need for mastering team learning in organisations than there is today" (Senge et al. 1994: 236). It is due to this that this study focuses on team learning as opposed to individual and/or leadership learning.

This leads to considering the importance of teams in an organisation, as Senge believes that teams consist of people who need each other to act. For teams to operate effectively there needs to be 'operational trust', where each member is conscious of other team members and can be relied on to operate in ways which complement each other's actions (Senge et al. 1994).

The discipline of team learning begins with dialogue, which according to Senge, is the ability of team members to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine 'thinking together'. Even though, "dialogue is as old a phenomenon as communication" (Roman, 2005: 19), there are few studies on dialogue in an organisational context (Gustavsen 1992 and Isaacs 1994). The studies that one finds are frequently within a linguistic and philosophical context (Allwood 1992; Burbules 1993; Roman 2005).

> Dialogue can be defined as *a sustained collective inquiry into everyday experience and what we take for granted.* The goal of dialogue is to open new ground by establishing a "container" or "field" for inquiry: a setting where people can become more aware of the context around their experience, and of the processes of thought and feeling that created that experience. (Senge et al. 1994: 353)

Senge (1994) addresses three important issues pertaining to dialogue. The first being the way that the problem is explored; the second being how dialogue may be used to assist in reaching the solution; and the third being the learning that may take place as a result of this process. The idea of dialogue that flows through *The Fifth Discipline* is very heavily dependent on the work of the three theorists namely; Martin Buber, Patrick de Maré and David Bohm.

In 1914, Martin Buber used the term "dialogue" to describe a mode of exchange among human beings in which there is a true turning to one another, and a full appreciation of another not as an object in a social function, but as a genuine being (Buber, 1988 in Senge et al. 1994). In the 1980's Patrick de Maré suggested ways in which dialogue could also assist with engaging and altering misconceptions that people may have. He also believed in the role that dialogue plays in healing mass conflict. Bohm (1990) elaborates that the word dialogue has Greek roots, *dia* meaning "through" or "with each other" and *logos* meaning "the word" (Bohm sited in Senge et al. 1994).

Bohm (1990) suggests that the word dialogue carries a sense of "meaning through flow" of the words exchanged during the dialogue (Bohm, 1990: 1). This flow enables a collective learning of shared knowledge that takes place within the whole group. It is due to this flow that a new understanding emerges. This flow is created when one is in dialogue with the other.

According to Bohm, in Senge et al. (1994), there are three elements required for dialogue to take place. They are:

1. All participants must "suspend" their assumptions, literally to hold them "as suspended before us";
2. All participants must regard one another as colleagues;
3. There must be a "facilitator" who "holds the context" of dialogue.

This suspension of assumptions is highlighted by Senge as he proposes that space in the form of a metaphorical "container" or "field" for inquiry must be established. It is in this "container" where people can become more aware of the context around their experience and of the processes of thought and feeling that created that experience (Senge et al. 1994: 353).

Building on the theories of Buber, de Maré and Bohm, Senge created the Evolution of Dialogue which assists in identifying the various phases that a team goes through to arrive at dialogue. There are four phases found in Senge's Evolution of Dialogue. This study makes use of these phases in the analysis of the data as a way of understanding the various stages found in the dialogue that Image Theatre contains (See Appendix A). The complex detail of these stages warrants quoting them in full:

> *Phase One: Instability of the Container*
>
> This is where the participants (team members) bring a wide range of tacit, unexpressed differences into perspective. At this moment dialogue confronts its first crisis: the need for the members to look at the group as an entity including themselves as observers and observed, instead of merely "trying to understand each other" or reach a "decision that everyone can live with." In this initiatory crisis people confront and navigate critical paradox: that you can intend to have dialogue but cannot force it to happen. (Senge et al.: 1994: 361-2)
>
> *Phase Two: Instability in the Container*
>
> At this stage people might find themselves feeling frustrated, principally because the underlying fragmentation and incoherence in everyone's thoughts begins to appear. Normally this would be kept below the surface, but now it comes forward, despite the efforts of the participants to keep themselves "cool" or "together"… no point of view seems to hold all the truth any longer; no conclusion seems definitive. They can't tell where the group is heading; they feel disoriented, or perhaps marginalised or constrained by others. This leads to a "crisis of suspension." Extreme views are stated and defended. All of this "heat" and instability feels distressing, but it is exactly what should be occurring. The fragmentation that should have been hidden is appearing. To manage the crisis of collective suspension that arises at this stage, everyone must be adequately awake to what is happening. People do not need to panic and withdraw, to fight, or to categorize one viewpoint as "right" and another as "wrong." All they need to do is listen and enquire; …at this crisis, skilled facilitation is most critical. The facilitator does not seek to "correct" or impose order on what is happening, but to model (in his or her own behaviour) some ways to

> suspend assumptions. The facilitator might point out the presence of polarizations, the opportunity to learn what they represent, and the limiting categories of thought that are rapidly gaining momentum in the group. (ibid: 362-363)

> *Phase Three: Inquiry in the Container*
>
> If a critical mass of people stays with the process beyond this point, the conversation begins to flow in a new way. In this "cool" environment people begin to inquire together as a whole. People become sensitive to the way the conversation is affecting everyone in the group. New insights often emerge...This phase can be playful and penetrating. Yet it also leads to another crisis. People gradually begin to sense their separateness. Such awareness brings pain. It hurts to exercise new cognitive and emotional muscles, and it especially hurts to feel how you have created your own fragmentation and isolation, throughout your life. This 'crisis of collective pain' is deep and challenging. It requires considerable discipline and collective trust. As areas of lack of wholeness come to the group's attention, its members begin to change, freeing up rigidity and old habits of attention and communication. Moving through this crisis is by no means a given or necessary for 'success' in dialogue. Groups may need a considerable period of time to develop the capacity for moving to the final level.
>
> (ibid: 363)

> *Phase Four: Creativity in the Container*
> If this crisis can be navigated, the distinction between memory and thinking becomes apparent. Thinking takes on an entirely different rhythm and pace. The net of words may not be fine enough to capture the subtle and delicate understandings that begin to emerge; the people may fall silent. Yet the silence is not an empty void, but one replete with richness. Yet words can also emerge here: speech that clothes meaning, instead of words merely pointing toward it. I call this kind of experience 'metalogue' or 'meaning flowing with.' The group does not 'have' meaning in its conversation. The group is its meaning. This kind of exchange allows participants to generate breakthrough levels of intelligence and creativity, and to know the aesthetic beauty of shared speech. (ibid: 363-364)

Dialogue's purpose, as we now understand it, would be to create a setting where conscious *collective mindfulness* could be maintained (Senge et al. 1994). As elaborated by Senge, dialogue takes place in a metaphorical container which reaches its evolution through four stages. This study investigates if Image Theatre may be such a container in an organisational context. The primary reason for choosing Image

Theatre is due to its non-verbal quality and thus its ability to overcome the numerous barriers found in the use of verbal communications. It is in this *container* that dialogue creates a place where everyone involved is given an equal opportunity to inquire and explore while learning. It is in this sense, too, that I envisage how the ideas of Freire, Boal and Senge collate.

It is imperative to this study that the two dominant critiques regarding Senge which this study found to be pertinent, be brought to light. The first addressed the ideology of learning organisations and the problems it may present employees and the second is Senge's metaphor for dialogue.

Theorists who critique Senge's ideas of the learning organisation argue that Learning Organisations' ideologies may lead to coercive controls and exploitations. This according to Driver (2002) may happen through (learning organisation's) "experiments promising workplace democracy, (that) actually disguises control in an emancipatory rhetoric" (ibid. 41). According to Driver (2002), Senge's Learning Organisation ideology may be problematic due to the learning process itself being dominated by the decision makers of the organisation. Furthermore Driver (2002) and Dixon (1998) argue that the learning organisation culture may promise employees participation and learning on all levels, however this may not entail more democracy in terms of what form of learning takes place. Senge's use of the dance metaphor as a way of elucidating his understanding of dialogue has led to great debates regarding the benefits of dialogue and the use of metaphor as a representation of dialogue.

The learning organisation is a macro grouping in which team learning is located (Senge et al. 1994) therefore I found the above argument regarding Learning Organisations needed inclusion. However it is not in the scope of my research to view the organisation holistically but rather on a micro-level of teams within organisations. I found that literature regarding team learning did not have the above-mentioned challenges as it was on a much smaller scale and the dynamics of a team and those of the entire organisations are very dissimilar (Senge et al, 1994).

Not all theorists are as convinced about the benefits of dialogue, especially the metaphorical representation of dialogue as an approach to team learning in

organisations (Rowe, 2008). The use of metaphors is important as this study makes images as metaphorical representations of the particular organisation's current state, ideal state and the transformation that needs to take place for the organisation to reach its ideal state.

Metaphors are more than mere rhetorical ornamentation, being vital in furthering our understanding of the lived experience of organizations (Morgan, 1997). Consequently, various metaphors—such as 'dance' (Senge et al. 1999)—have been employed as conceptual devices for engaging with the dynamics of collective learning. However, recent criticisms suggest the necessity to both analyse current usage and explore further potentials of these metaphors.

In Rowe's article *Unfolding the Dance of Team Learning: a Metaphorical Investigation of Collective Learning*, Rowe engages with the ongoing debate surrounding the validity of collective learning methodologies, such as team learning. His article explores some of the alleged gaps in these dialogic methodologies by exploring the metaphors invoked by their proponents. This article supports the criticisms that some of the populist literature struggles to comprehend the complexities of collective learning.

> The illustrative metaphors used by its proponents tend to define collective learning in terms of singular *outcomes*: whether successful (alignment) or not (Groupthink). Further investigation of these illustrative metaphors raises some important queries. First, do they articulate 'collective' learning—or simply collections of individuals—and should they focus upon the collective (team or group) as a discrete entity? Here critics note a cognitive bias—emphasizing the individual participant, which overlooks collectively shared representations. The above makes it clear that the metaphorical collective learning that Senge promotes in the dance metaphor may not lead to collective learning but rather a collection of individuals' learning. (Rowe, 2008: 44)

Taking the above criticism into consideration leads one to an even greater appreciation of the use of Image Theatre. The use of images avoids the above-mentioned 'cognitive bias - that emphasises individual participants' as the image's meaning is only present in the analysis of the images holistically. Thus it is not just

what an individual does in an image, but rather what the individual does in relation to other members in the image, which is what collective learning is.

> Second, is it possible to delineate convincingly between 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' learning? The simplistic distinction between the alternative outcomes of 'alignment' and 'Groupthink' is viewed as problematical because it is difficult to define antecedent and causal relationships between variables (Neck and Manz, 1994 in Rowe, 2008). Indeed, some suggest that these outcomes are merely the post hoc rationalizations of particular parties, who wish to represent particular incidents as successful stories or otherwise.
>
> (Stringer, 1990 in Rowe, 2008)

The above criticism of Senge's theory is one that I found to be a great challenge as there was no clear indicator of what 'successful' or 'unsuccessful' learning is. Senge seems to view 'alignment' as success where as 'groupthink' would be unsuccessful. However, as rightly noted by Neck and Manz (1994, in Rowe, 2008), it is difficult to define forerunner and causal relationships between the variables. In conducting this study I found that the use of Image Theatre must take into consideration the variables that present themselves in the workshop. Variables such as the environment in which the workshop takes place, the time allocated to the workshop, the challenges that come with the use, and later the interpretation, of images posed as challenges to the facilitation of dialogue through the use of Image Theatre as well as the qualitative 'measurement' of the success of the workshop.

Going beyond the metaphor, I found theory on which I have based a considerable number of the theoretical underpinnings of this research. The three theorists mentioned in the theoretical framework of this study provide this study with a theoretical base for its dominant ideas: dependency, dialogue, learning, a container for all the above to take place and the outcomes of the combination of these elements.

This study builds on, and contributes to, work in organisational theatre. Although studies in this area have examined the use of theatre in organisations, there has not been a study which deals specifically with the use of Image Theatre. As such, the analytical focus on Image Theatre as a tool for facilitating dialogue for team learning enables another contribution. This study looks at the background of Industrial Theatre

as well as analyses key players who intersect with this study by reviewing literature pertaining to the use of Image Theatre in South African organisations.

2.2 Industrial Theatre

Henk du Plessis (2004), together with his partners, Ben Kruger and Theo Potgieter, are South African theorists and practitioners of Industrial Theatre. Practicing within the industrial theatre company called The Learning Theatre Organisation; these three directors are included in this study for three reasons that are critical to the advancement of the theoretical underpinnings of this study, as they provide a holistic overview of industrial theatre.

Firstly, they contextualise the use of drama in South African organisations. Secondly, they offer reasons as to why the use of drama adds value to South African organisations. Thirdly, they offer a way of categorising the three variations of industrial theatre that include facilitation. These three elements are important because they have assisted this study in categorising Image Theatre while locating the gap in research pertaining to its use as a strategy in South African organisations. Also, they offer five key reasons why drama in business is, at times, not the favoured intervention. These reasons suggest a gap which this research attempts to fill.

The definitions of industrial theatre are varied (Nissley, Taylor and Houden, 2004). However, Van Diggelen and Du Plessis, define industrial theatre in a South African context as '…a play or theatre production put on in an industrial or corporate environment with the intention of achieving business goals' (2003:2). There are three facets emphasized in this definition of industrial theatre. Firstly, the fact that industrial theatre remains within the category of theatre, secondly it has a specific target audience as it is primarily made for viewing in an organisational setting. Lastly, it is specifically created for an organisation's need (Howes, 2009). This definition of industrial theatre includes the use of different types of theatre and theatre techniques derived from the drama discipline including Image Theatre.

Du Plessis (2004), consider the use of theatre to be a *Value Adding Business Tool* in business primarily because "…theatre is one of the few tools that are able to surface,

depict and dramatize mindsets and beliefs, and can show the impact of applying the appropriate or inappropriate mindset and belief systems" (Du Plessis, 2004:1). These mindsets may be exposed through the use of drama without employees feeling weakened by their vulnerability but invited and praised as a good form of involvement (Robbins in Maritz, 2001, De Beer, Maritz & Du Plessis, 2008).

It is the theatre *learning* aspect of Industrial Theatre that has led to the inclusion of Learning Theatre Organisation in the study. Rowe (in Maritz, De Beer & Du Plessis, 2008), goes on to argue that learning may happen at different levels through the use of the variations of Industrial Theatre.

According to the Learning Theatre Organisation, hereafter referred to as LTO, Industrial Theatre made a mark in South Africa in the early eighties in the mining industry, educating workers about safety and productivity. It has since been utilized to communicate and explain new policies, amongst other things. Industrial theatre was originally intended for an illiterate audience influenced by oral tradition. The audience members for which the performances are now created, move across hierarchies, and at times, include organisations in their entirety (www.learningtheatre.co.za, 2008).

The Learning Theatre Organisation classifies four different types of theatre within the category of theatre and the underlying function of each.

Corporate or Industrial Theatre: refers to a conventional theatre performance. It is effective as a tool for disseminating information such as the launch of a new product or service; information about new policies.

2.2.1 **Corporate or Industrial Theatre**: refers to a conventional theatre performance. It is effective as a tool for disseminating information such as the launch of a new product or service; information about new policies.

2.2.2 **Interactive Theatre:** refers to a theatre where there is more involvement and debate expected from the audience. It is effective in soft skills training.

2.2.3 **Facilitated Theatre:** refers to the use of a facilitator to extract the learning from the theatre performance(s) and it will be effective in any major change or cultural initiative related to diversity.

2.2.4 **Participative Experiential Theatre**: During this kind of intervention, participants are given information by various means, and then with the help of facilitators and actors, they learn new skills and behaviours on a very deep level, by doing it themselves.

(www.learningtheatre.co.za, 2008)

2.2.1 Industrial theatre in South Africa

According to LTO (2004), industrial theatre provides a three-dimensional and comprehensive representation of the organisation's experiences. Story, as a building block of theatre, offers the flow of events, emotions experienced, mindsets, beliefs and assumptions about the relevant business strategy in a concise format. Clear illustrations for fresh insight, powerful images to mobilise people and compelling learning events can be provided, and that can often make or break the successful implementation of business strategies. (http://learningtheatre.co.za/feature.htm, 2008)

It is a highly entertaining method of communicating. However, it does not create dialogue in which members of the audience can participate in the way that this study advocates is necessary. Due to the fact that the intervention is commissioned by management, decisions pertaining to the script and performance are made by those that are at the top of the hierarchical organisation (Clark and Mangham, 2004). These shortcomings are also present within a South African context in the practice of organisations such as Blue Moon, The Learning Theatre Organisation and VWV, who use Industrial Theatre as interventions within organisations.

In all the above examples of Industrial Theatre, the performance by the professional actors leads to the employees becoming containers or, according to Freire, "receptacles" to be "filled", by the teacher (or in this case actors). Boal refers to this type of theatre as Spectacle Theatre, since the audience can only watch and not interact – instead of a *dialogue*, theatre is then a *monologue*. In this form of theatre, there is a division between actors and spectators; actors get to speak (and perpetuate the dominant ideology as the mandate given by management), while spectators sit in the audience and accept what they are told. The dominant class (in this case management) routinely uses Industrial Theatre as a tool for the maintenance of their dominance; "the dominant art will always be that of the dominant class, since it is the only class that possesses the means to disseminate it" (Boal, 1979 :53).

Thus the performance in Corporate Theatre becomes an act of depositing and the performers are the depositors. Freire (1970) critiques this method as he mentions that those into whom a "deposit" is being made through a "banking learning" concept do

not have the opportunity to become "collectors or cataloguers of things they store" (Freire: 1970:53) because they are merely being filled.

2.2.2 Interactive Theatre Model

The second form of theatre creates more involvement and debate from the audience and indicates a right and wrong way. This is similar to what Boal refers to as Forum Theatre. The employees can intervene in the play – suggest alternative acts for the actors to perform, or they can get onto stage themselves and act. Actors, on the other hand, become *jokers* – facilitators, encouraging spectators to become *spect-actors*, and act out roles that the *jokers* ask them to. Boal (1979) points out, though, that theatre is not just a form of entertainment. It can be used to educate, enlighten, and liberate, or it can be used to enslave, dominate, and perpetuate the status quo.

Gluck and Rubenstein (2007) in an article titled "Applied Theatre in Business", describe how Applied Theatre has been deployed in a business environment. In their description they highlight two examples of the Ariel Group Inc as well as the Dramatic Diversity. Ariel Group is an international training and consulting firm that uses techniques developed and honed in the performing arts to help business leaders develop leadership presence. They offer "practical, theatre-based exercises for improving one's presence as a leader, developing skills in areas where actors often excel" (Gluck and Rubenstein, 2007). Dramatic Diversity is a company based in Chicago. It has a team of actors, drama therapists, facilitators, researchers, theatre directors, playwrights, diversity experts and psychologists. Together they use action-orientated, partially-scripted theatre to facilitate diversity training in the workplace (Gluck and Rubenstein, 2007).

By means of research, the "team of experts" - which may include a researcher, director and actors - creates a script which addresses the problems pertaining to diversity within the organization. The details are significantly changed and metaphors utilized to create a sense of distance and preserve confidentiality. The script is then performed using what Gluck and Rubenstein (2007) call "scene-starters". The script highlights the use of role-play in leadership training conducted by the Ariel group as

well as the use of improvisation in diversity workshops conducted by Dramatic Diversity. They conclude by saying that the value of using interactive theatre in organisations is becoming increasingly recognised and that the one challenge for practitioners is finding the balance of the often-times competing management with the requirements of employees.

In favour of the use of role playing in organisations Shaw, Corsini, Blake & Mouton argue that "…Role playing resembles life more closely than other training procedures…" (Shaw et al. 1980:19) and the most effective way to reach a person, for communication purposes, is to deal with the totality of the person including their way of thinking, feeling and behaving. This is precisely what role playing accomplishes.

Guba (1990) argues that role playing may not be best for the participants. He promotes learning that intends neither to predict nor control, nor to transform the 'real' world, but rather to reconstruct the 'world' at the only point at which it exists: in the minds of constructors. It is the mind that is to be transformed, not the 'real world'. This study is in agreement with Guba. He is convinced that meanings are constructed by the participants as they engage with their reality, as opposed to attempting to reconstruct their reality. This may be achieved through the use of images as this allows the participants to engage with others' perception of the world (Boal, 1979).

The use of improvisation by Dramatic Diversity explores a creative way of problem solving. Mieseik (2002) argues that there is no space created, before, during or after the performances, where a shared dialogue can take place amongst the employees. He argues that it is in this space where the shared experience of the performance may be unpacked and the impact of the intervention be measured. Mieseik suggests that this space may be created through workshops and/or group discussions. He argues that this discussion will assist in creating a shape-integration of existing understanding and a collective understanding can be created amongst the employees.

This research explores the use of a dramatic method which includes the employees' reflection on the dramatic device throughout the facilitation. Similar to the two theorists, Clark and Mangham (2004), it is the premise of this study that the audience

members are better engaged if they, too, are a part of the performance. However, as highlighted by Miesiek, this may not create the dialogue that this study would like to achieve. Even though the interactive mode of theatre creates a platform on which the employees may interact with the information with which they are presented, there is still a greater extent to which they may be involved in the presentation, namely by creating and then presenting the work themselves.

This is a mode of theatre which creates a platform where the performance is for the employees by the employees. The professional actors perform in the scene-starter and later allow some of the roles to be improvised by the members of the organization alongside themselves.

2.2.3 Facilitated Theatre

LTO believes that facilitated theatre is very useful during major organisational or cultural changes such as a comprehensive leadership development program. An organisation that uses this mode of theatre is Performance of a Lifetime.

Salit (2003) writes that Performance of a Lifetime (hereafter referred to as POAL) - an organisation where she is one of the lead designers, trainers, and coaches - uses an innovative approach to executive coaching based on improvisational performance. POAL, which is based in New York City, developed out of several decades of psychological and educational discovery, while synthesizing elements of theatrical performance with elements of developmental psychology and psychotherapy. In this approach, the art of improvising is connected to the art of coaching in order to help executives see, and explore, new opportunities.

POAL conducts experiential workshops that explore the relationship between the skills and talents of a theatre director and those required for leaders in the organization to be effective coaches and mentors. They believe that being a good theatre director, and being a good coach, means that one is concerned with creating an environment for learning, for development and for discovery — an environment for exploration (Salit: 2003:3-4). Salit (2003) further emphasises that the workshop is deliberately designed as a creative, experiential journey, not a cognitive one. Similarly

to Drama Diversity, they use improvisation. POAL is part of a new psychology that believes that people are social beings, performers, improvisers and that they make mistakes. This ability to perform — to pretend, to play, to improvise, to be both *who we are* and *other than who we are* — is key to our emotional, social and intellectual lives.

Shreyögg (2004), a theatre practitioner who writes about businesses as metaphors, suggests that as the employees improvise the script. They have greater control and can thus present issues that are highly relevant to them. This resonates with this research, as well as with Nicholson, who says, "…drama provides a powerful opportunity to…redress the balance by telling alternative stories or stories from different perspectives. [The notion that lies] at the heart of the practice in applied theatre is the understanding that narratives can be changed" (2005:63). This speaks to the theory promoted by POAL that people are performers - that the performance of one's life gives the rest of the group the performer's perspective. Perspective is an important aspect of this research study as perspective forms the foundation of the use of Image Theatre.

Salit (2003) and Nicholson (2005) highlight the qualities that were found to be the most crucial in creating an intervention for employees of the organisations who are experiencing minimal or no dialogue. The play and the metaxis that the participants are allowed to enter into while improvising are what Salit (2003) advocates for and these are also endorsed by this study. This study, however, is not limited to the employees. It exposes the above attributes of facilitated theatre not only to the leadership of the varying organisations alone but also to the team members and their leader within the organisation. This allows for the various perspectives within the hierarchical structure of an organisation to be represented.

Gilmartin (1996), who writes extensively about business ethics, argues that the success of a company depends on the unification of talented people with diverse perspectives – people who can challenge each others' thinking while collectively approaching problems from multiple points of view. In this study, the role of Image Theatre is to expose the varying perspectives, while dialogue assists in facilitating team learning that would result from what has been exposed. This research does that

by exposing each individual's perspective through the creation of the images while allowing for dialogue to create a space for learning. Unlike POAL the intention for exposing the perspectives in this research is to promote dialogue. The dialogue, in turn, is stimulated by images that were created by means of the Image Theatre technique. POAL's rationale for exposing the perspective is to assist in training executive coaches.

2.2.4 Participative Experiential Theatre

Participative Experiential Theatre allows for the dissemination of information to help the facilitators and actors. Participants learn new skills and behaviours on a very deep level, by doing it themselves (LTO, 2008). Du Plessis (2004) highlights various points that the Learning Theatre Organisation believes benefit organisations through the application of drama techniques. Firstly, du Plessis highlights the importance of story telling by the indigenous people of South Africa, to convey important lessons. Du Plessis then moves to a later period in the early eighties in South Africa, and contextualises the introduction of Industrial Theatre into, and how it made a mark in, the mining industry: educating workers about safety and productivity. Since then, it has often been used to communicate and explain new policies. Du Plessis then writes about the conventional use of drama in organisations within a South African context stating that drama is generally used for topics such as HIV/Aids and Safety. Dramatic performances are not considered for complex applications such as transformation, organisational development and emotional intelligence (ibid. 2004).

Personal experiences of the working group members are used to construct a short play thereafter the members, together with the actors, act out their personalized play. This invariably increases the emotional effect and reinforcement of the tool as one is personally and subjectively involved from step one. Rationally, it also boosts their awareness of the actions and attitudes creating negative or positive environments as the members are required to act these out themselves and therefore must comprehend the effect it has. The facilitator then steps in to extract learning from the highly personalised scenarios created and acted by the group, always directly relating it to the work environment (Salit, 2003).

The increased involvement as described in the Participative Experiential Theatre then leads to "ownership of *learning* (own italics), wherewith the partakers identify issues that need to be addressed themselves, as well as portraying what it is that truly influences their working environments (Rowe in Maritz et al. 2008). It is the belief of this study that Image Theatre can be classified under Participative Experiential Theatre. Image Theatre has the key requirements as listed by LTO and will ultimately give similar benefits to organisational teams as offered by those of Participative Experiential Theatre.

This chapter has analysed the four forms of theatre as described by LTO (2004). It has highlighted the manner in which the work being done includes or excludes the audience, as well as the dialogue, or lack thereof, that takes place in the various forms of theatre. In the final part of this chapter, this study will advocate for the use of Image Theatre, highlighting the background of this form of theatre, and the benefits of using it in organisations as a method of facilitating dialogue.

2.2.5 Image Theatre in organisations

In the Image Theatre model, theatre becomes a tool of empowerment. The boundary between actor and spectator is broken down. Spectators become active participants in the performance; instead of spectators, they become *spect-actors* (Boal, 1974/1979).

> Image Theatre is a stimulating, dramatic device because it is so easy to practice and because of its extraordinary capacity of making thought *visible* (original italics). Each word has a denotation that is the same for all, but it also has a connotation that is unique for each individual.
>
> (Boal: 1974:138)

This visible language is immediate and uses metaphorical words that would speak to participants allowing them to communicate their perspective through the words. The use of images allows for all the participants to communicate using a singular language that they are all familiar with: body language - a metaphorical language of images.
William Ferris, an organisational consultant, who investigates the benefits of using Image Theatre as a tool for team building, conducted a study once a month for half a day, at Stanpark Software, a 23-person firm. He found that through the use of Image

Theatre for team building, the team developed a shared language that facilitated open communication about difficult topics, and eventually improved the overall team functioning and organisational performance (Ferris, 2002:25).

Some businesses believe that industrial theatre is too glamorous, expensive, and more entertaining than it is educating. LTO argues here that this may be avoided by using fewer cast members and eliminating the spectacle that would usually be associated with big theatrical productions such as those of mainstream theatre, thus decreasing the cost to the company. They advocate for the use of facilitators after the performance, as a method of generating reflection and learning that may take place during the facilitation, as the level of involvement by the participants will have increased reception of the theory presented in the performance.

Considering the fact that the Participative model is one that LTO maintains results in the highest level of learning while also being the most cost-effective method, this study argues that Image Theatre could be a relevant method. It is cost-effective in that it involves one facilitator, and not performers, as the participants create their own images. It also facilitates learning, as the participants reflect on their metaphorical representations of the problem, and possible solutions to the problem through the creation of the real, ideal and transitional image.

In exploring the various forms of theatre found in organisations, it is only Ferris (2002) who covers the use of Image Theatre in an organisation where he uses it in the context of teams for team-building, not learning. This study will now elaborate on the importance of teams in this study as well as the supporting literature regarding the benefits of dialogue as an approach to team learning.

2. 3 Teams

Two heads are better than one has become a cliché. However, this cliché, according to Keyser (2001), has become fact. This he says referring to the benefits of working in groups, as opposed to working with individuals. He argues that "two people will come up with more original and workable answers to a problem than one person working alone" (Keyser in Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2001: 189). Stander goes on to argue that this is only possible if the members of the groups are able to communicate their ideas freely and openly in the absence of hostility and intimidation, and in a democratic environment (ibid. 189).

In support of the above, one of the explanations for the popularity of teams, presented by Stander (in Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt, 2001: 199) is the fact that teams are an effective means for management to democratise their organisations and increase employee motivation. It is this democratisation that Freire (1970), Boal (1979) and Senge (1991) support. This research is also in favour of this theory.

The benefits of teams have become a critical building block of current and future organisations, as well as for this study (Gordon, 1992; Senge et al. 1994; Stander, 2001; Offerman and Spiros, 2001). However, one should consider the fact that teams sometimes do not work well (Hackman, 1990); yet there is an increase in organisational reliance on teams and teaming (Offermann and Spiros, 2001). This is because teams lead to the creation of high-performance, high-flexibility and high-commitment organisations (Stander, 2001).

Teams are a global trend that South African organisations began adapting in 1994. According to Stander, a theorist in organisational behaviour, there is ascending evidence that reveals that designing organisations around teams presents the vital leverage for an organisation to become world-class from a people-perspective. Stander goes on to express that the use of teams results in: "…significantly efficient operations and significantly improved business and people outcomes" (Robbins, 2001: 199).

According to Offermann and Spiros (2001), there is a need for team development interventions in organisations. In their study, Offermann and Spiros (2001) highlight the fact that there is a growing demand for team development interventions. Their findings suggest that there are substantial organisational needs for assistance with implementing and improving teams: "Goal-setting, communication, and decision-making interventions were perceived as having the most adequate bases in the literature, whereas resource management, diversity issues, and empowerment interventions were perceived as having the least adequate bases" (ibid.:385). Communication, or lack thereof, was reported to be one of the top three areas that is in need of team development by 46,4% of the respondents to their survey. Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline*: *The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* is one of the top three books that Offermann and Spiros (2001) sited as one of the "Most Commonly Cited Published Resources Used by Team Developers" (ibid. 383).

It is these needs that motivated this study to focus on teams, more specifically dialogue amongst the team members and the learning that takes place within the team. The influence of Peter Senge is of great relevance to this study. However, it is to be noted that although Senge does write his books in South Africa, he usually gives examples which are mostly of international organisations. For this reason, it was important that the research include his theory as a key player in team learning. The inclusion of South African theorist Marius Stander was also crucial as this places this study in the South African context. According to Stander (2001) there are four types of teams. They are: *problem-solving teams, self-managed teams, cross-functional teams,* and *virtual teams* (original italics). This study consisted of teams that had elements from all the above descriptions.

The *Facilitators are Us* team had characteristics of both a cross-functional as well as virtual-team. This is a team that Stander describes as one that is "…made up of employees from about the same hierarchical levels but from varying work areas, who come together to accomplish a task" (Stander in Robbins, 2001: 205). The virtual aspect of the team refers to the fact that they do not see each other on a daily basis and conduct most of their communication via technological means as they are a consulting organisation. They usually meet at the organisation at which they are consulting; and not all the members of the team are always at the same organisation at the same time.

Most of the members of this team were facilitators. There was also one member that was part of the support staff.

The other two organisational teams namely *Teams are Us* and *Teachers are Us* were what Stander refers to as a self-managed team. They are a "….permanent group of relatively highly skilled organisational members who take a wide-ranging and joint responsibility for a whole process or product through the performance of a wide variety of tasks within clearly defined boundaries" (Stander in Robbins, 2001: 201). *Teams are Us* is responsible for making sure that the merchandise being sold by the organisation is sold at a rate that meets the goals set by management as well as the team itself. *Teachers are Us* is responsible for the process of teaching the students at a business school, while taking care of the various roles they have in the corporate structure of the organisation.

Such types of teams have advantages and disadvantages. Some of the disadvantages that this study attempts to address are the lack of communication and of learning that Stander found to be prevalent in South African teams (2001: 213). These disadvantages were addressed through Image Theatre as a tool of facilitating dialogue as an approach to team learning.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 The Case Study

Yin defines the case study method as:

> An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, where the research is one which relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion. (1994:13)

This study of the use of Image Theatre (the phenomenon) in only three corporate organisations (real life context) qualified as a case study as the research relied on the multiple research instrument required for the sourcing of the evidence that would assist in establishing how effective a tool Image Theatre is, in facilitating dialogue and team learning.

Theorists such as Yin (in Chetty 1996) point out that traditionally, case studies were used for exploratory research only. However, the use of case study has greatly benefited descriptive research (Kidder in Chetty, 1996), test theory (Pinefield and Anderson in Chetty,1996) and generating theory (Gersick in Chetty,1996). This research explores the use of Image Theatre, describes workshop process, tests the theories presented by Freire, Boal and Senge and will also generate recommendations regarding the advantages and disadvantages, of using Image Theatre to facilitate dialogue and team learning.

In using the case study method, I was able to use numerous forms of data collection to strengthen the research. This was important regarding my study because I needed not only to capture what was said by the participants but what was done during my research as well as during the workshops

3.2 Action Research (AR)

Due to the initial collaborative nature of this study, the relevant methodology for this research was Action Research [AR] (Kemmis, 1985; Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Kemmis and McTarggart, 1988; McNiff, 1988; McTarggart, 1991). This

collaboration, in its purest form, would mean that the participants identify the problem and work together, in cycles of planning, action, observing and reflecting, to solve the problem while creating knowledge (Kemmis and McTarggart, 1986). A few adaptations were made to better suit the research and benefit the circumstances of the researcher and participants, such as participant availability. The structure of a pure Action Research cycle resembles one presented by Kemmis and McTarggart (1986).

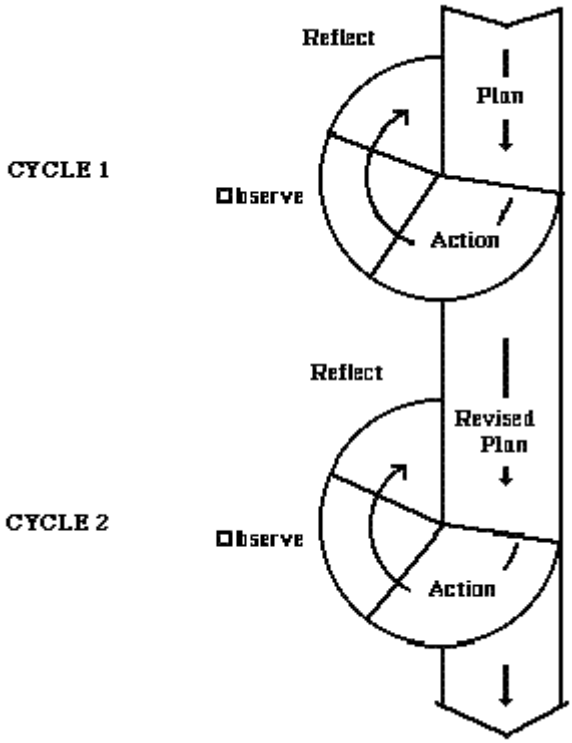


Figure 3.1

The above figure is representative of how the Action Research cycle moves from the top down as it flows from *planning* to *action* to *observation* to *reflecting;* then revised *planning,* which involves the participants (who are considered as co-researchers) and the researcher, in all the stages of the cycle which would take place over an agreed period of time (or as long as it takes to solve the problem that was identified by the participants) (Kemmis and McTarggart, 1986).

3.1.2 Approach

In the original proposal, my intention was to find an organisation that was experiencing *dependency* as well as *one-way communication* (see 2.1). The

researcher/facilitator and participants would be co-investigators on the journey to solving the problems identified (Hall, 1979: 289). The team would learn from each other as they explored solutions and revealed their varying perspectives regarding the problem. This would take place in the form of a workshop with Image Theatre as the "container" and a facilitator monitoring the exploration that would be taking place.

I met with the Vice President of the Knowledge Management Department of a large mining organisation and the Chief Executive Officer of a large logistics company. However they expressed problems with the research design in terms of:

1. A lack of dramatic inclination as the teams were made up of engineers
2. Time: the required eighteen hours would be too great a cost to the company
3. Focus of study: one organisation wanted this study to be combined with one on emotional intelligences already in place.

Thus the focus of the research shifted from "working in one organisation to exploring the use of Image Theatre as a possible tool for *facilitating* dialogue as an approach to team learning" to the focus being on "Image Theatre being a possible tool for *initiating* dialogue and team learning in three organisations". Unlike the initially proposed use of Action Research, the three organisations would no longer be fully involved in all stages of the AR cycles but rather, they would inform the planning in that the researcher would ask the organisation what their particular *dependency* is. In this way, the organisation's members would still be identifying the problem themselves. However, the workshop would then be planned in general, but its execution or implementation would be based on the *dependency* identified by the organisations.

3.2.2 Revised Method informed by Approach

In this revised application of AR, the research site would change with every cycle as the research was conducted in the three organisations. This is the first shift from what Kemmis and MacTarggart (1986) advocate, as the research site varies instead of having one site where a problem is identified and the cycle of AR continues until the problem is solved. The research now had three organisations that have varying manifestations of the same problem. This is a more "facilitator-form" of AR as

opposed to the pure collaboration as advocated by Kemmis and MacTarggart (1986). The research thus shifted towards McNiff's interpretation of AR (1988) as he advocates a more co-investigative orientated method.

Carr and Kemmis in McNiff (1988) define Action Research as:

> …a form of self-reflexive enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social and educational practice and (b) their understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations (and institutions) in which these practices are carried out . (McNiff, 1988: 5)

Unlike Kemmis and McTarggart (1979), there had been a shift from the purely participant-orientated way of researching. Above, Carr and Kemmis advocate for a self-reflexive researcher. This is relevant to this study as the researcher would be the one going to the various organisations. The *organisational context* that the researcher would be aiming to improve would be the use of Image Theatre in organisations, as this would be the knowledge-creating aspect of this research study. The aim would be to *understand the practice* and *situation* in which the researcher was testing the efficacy of the practice carried out.

Apart from the research now being researcher-orientated, the AR cycle has now morphed into two concurrent cycles which are best described by McKay and Marshall (2001). In the two cycles that McKay and Marshall (2001) present there are dual aims. In the first cycle, "…the researcher must aim to bring about improvements through making changes in a problematic situation" (McKay and Marshall, 2001: 47). In relation to this study, this would be the lack of dialogue and team learning in organisations. The second cycle would be aimed at generating "…new knowledge and insights as a result of his/her activities" (McKay and Marshall, 2001: 47). This would be the various findings unveiled with each organisation which informed the next cycle; and later, the analysis of the data collected for the study as a whole; which would culminate in the presentation of a research report paper to the faculty.

3.2.3 The Alternative Approach: This study Cycle of Research

There were three cycles in the research - the first was to assist in creating information regarding the study. This cycle included the first leg of the data collection and the "*Facilitators are Us*". The planning of the workshop, action in facilitating the workshop, observing the DVD of the facilitation and revisiting the lesson plan proved to be invaluable as the researcher planned for the next organisation, "*Teachers are us"*. The second cycle was a repetition of the first cycle during the workshop conducted at "*Teachers are Us*". Finally the last cycle was the workshop conducted at the "*Teams are Us*" organisation. All these organisations had the same basic workshop with a few adjustments based on the previous cycle of research. McNiff (1988) argues that AR allows for the researcher to have an experience that is not only theory orientated but also engages with practice.

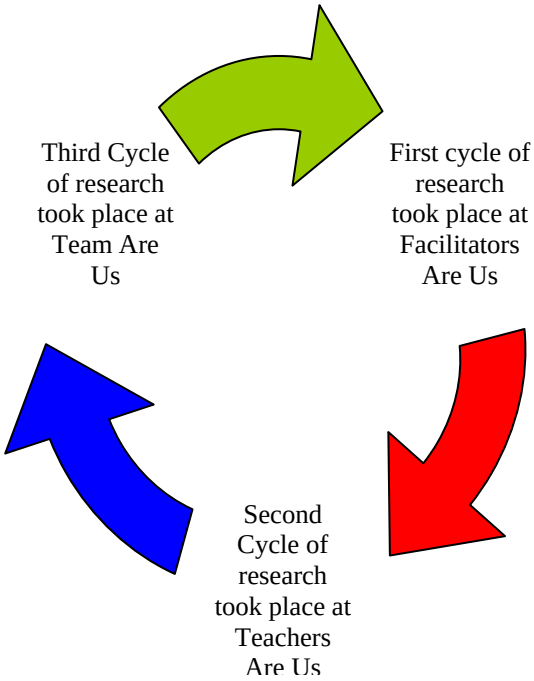


Figure 3.2 Cycle of my Method

AR has been criticized for its lack of repeatability, and hence lack of rigour (Eden and Huxman, 1996). Similarly, Checkland and Holwell (1998) re-examine the nature and validity of AR, arguing that its claim to validity requires a recoverable research method. Checkland and Holwell (1998) base their argument on the fact that the method is one that lacks repeatability and thus becomes difficult to defend as a system of knowledge acquisition.

This was a challenge that was found in this research even though the use of Image Theatre was taking place in all three of the organisations. Following the AR method, the findings were never identical in the organisations. This is due to a primary fact presented by Checkland & Holwell as they acknowledge, that unlike a scientific experiment "…things are more volatile in the investigation of human and social phenomena" (ibid.: 11). This being a major factor to consider in researching humans and social phenomena, it became a limit to the creation of the new knowledge (Checkland & Holwell, 1998). This does not mean though, that knowledge acquisition did not happen. In using Image Theatre and thematic content analysis in the organisations, common themes that existed in the organisations were found and knowledge regarding issues that inhibit the use of Image Theatre, as well as the themes that allow for Image Theatre to be optimally used, was acquired.

3.2.4 Pre-Workshop Data Collection

The basic workshop was designed to be repeated in each of the three data collection sites but also to be variable in response to the information gathered at each stage of the action research cycle and to the particular circumstances of each team. Prior to the planning of this basic workshop it was necessary to research each organisation. This was done through onsite visits and through interviews with relevant stakeholders. The action component of the first cycle of research involved engaging participants from the "*Facilitators Are Us"* team.

The main focus from the organisation was "How can *Facilitators are Us* be more effective?" In line with the principles of Action Research the researcher together with the participants (co-investigators) planned the first stage of the cycle. From this meeting, the first workshop entitled "How Image Theatre may be used to facilitate dialogue and team learning regarding making *Facilitators are Us* more effective" was created based on the objectives of the research together with those proposed by the organisation. Similarly after numerous meetings with *Teachers are Us* the focus they chose to engage with in the workshop was, "How can the team be more effective?" A specific focus would be the intrinsic motivation of the team members. Finally *Teams are Us* negotiated a workshop aimed at investigating the use of Image Theatre to

facilitate dialogue and team learning in order to establish how the team could be more effective.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

3.3.1Workshops

Workshops were the method of choice, as they provide the setting and the means for the participants in the organisation - both management and the lower cadres - to get involved in analytical problem-solving. This, in turn, would initiate dialogue and team learning. The workshop method provided a space and place where we (researcher/facilitator and participants) were able to understand the needs of the organisation and each other. This method was used to develop better means of communicating on the basis of the needs, concerns, and constraints of the organisation (Rouhana, 1995).

In describing his own work, Frisch (1950) highlights the benefits of using the workshop method as it makes possible the close observation of procedures. This method is also applicable; analysis of problems at different levels of development; observance and evaluation of techniques and devices; the constant evaluation of behaviour and personality changes; and the study and evaluation of material for use at different levels of dialogue and team learning.

These qualities found in the workshop method are the corner stones of this study as it is these principles that assisted in the excavation of issues that lay within the foundation of the teams. These qualities were only possible within the frame, or “container”, in which members of the workshop had the opportunity to observe the images, to discuss, to criticize and to challenge the procedures and outcomes at all times. This took place while engaging in dialogue and learning as a team.

3.3.2 Focus Groups

Focus group methods are popular with those conducting AR and those concerned with "empowering" research participants because the participants can become an active part of the process of analysis. The participants may develop particular perspectives, which are a key element of this research (Kitzinger, 1995).

The only organisation where I was able to conduct the focus group was at *Facilitators Are Us.* Due to time limitation, I was unable to conduct the focus group discussions but rather relied on the rich discussion that took place between the participants as this in itself provided me with complex data.

3.3.3 Video recordings

Audio-visual material has been highly beneficial to this study as it served as both a recording device which captured the activities that took place during the workshop, and an essential tool in the analysis of the use of Image Theatre. Due to the fact that I the researcher was also the facilitator, the video assisted me to attend with total focus to the facilitation during the workshop, and then to the research during the reliving through the video recordings. Thus the ability to record the minutia of interactions made it ideal to focus attention, in retrospect, on the research objectives.

According to Lomax and Casey the main advantages of using video recording can be briefly summarised as follows:

> It is relatively easy to use and adaptable to most research situations. Moreover, it is argued that audio-visual recordings of human social activity provide a record which is more accurate, more detailed and more complete than that obtainable by unaided human observation. Because of this it gives access to the richness and complexity of human interaction. The reliability of the data is, in a sense, self-evident because the recorded image may be repeatedly re-played, enabling analysis to be delayed until the researcher has left the field and allowing other researchers to conduct their own analysis.
>
> (Lomax and Casey, 1998: 34)

The above qualities proved to be essential to the analysis of the data and led to a better understanding of the reasons why the workshop proceeded in the manner that it did and why it was more effective in some situations as opposed to others.

3.4 Ethical considerations

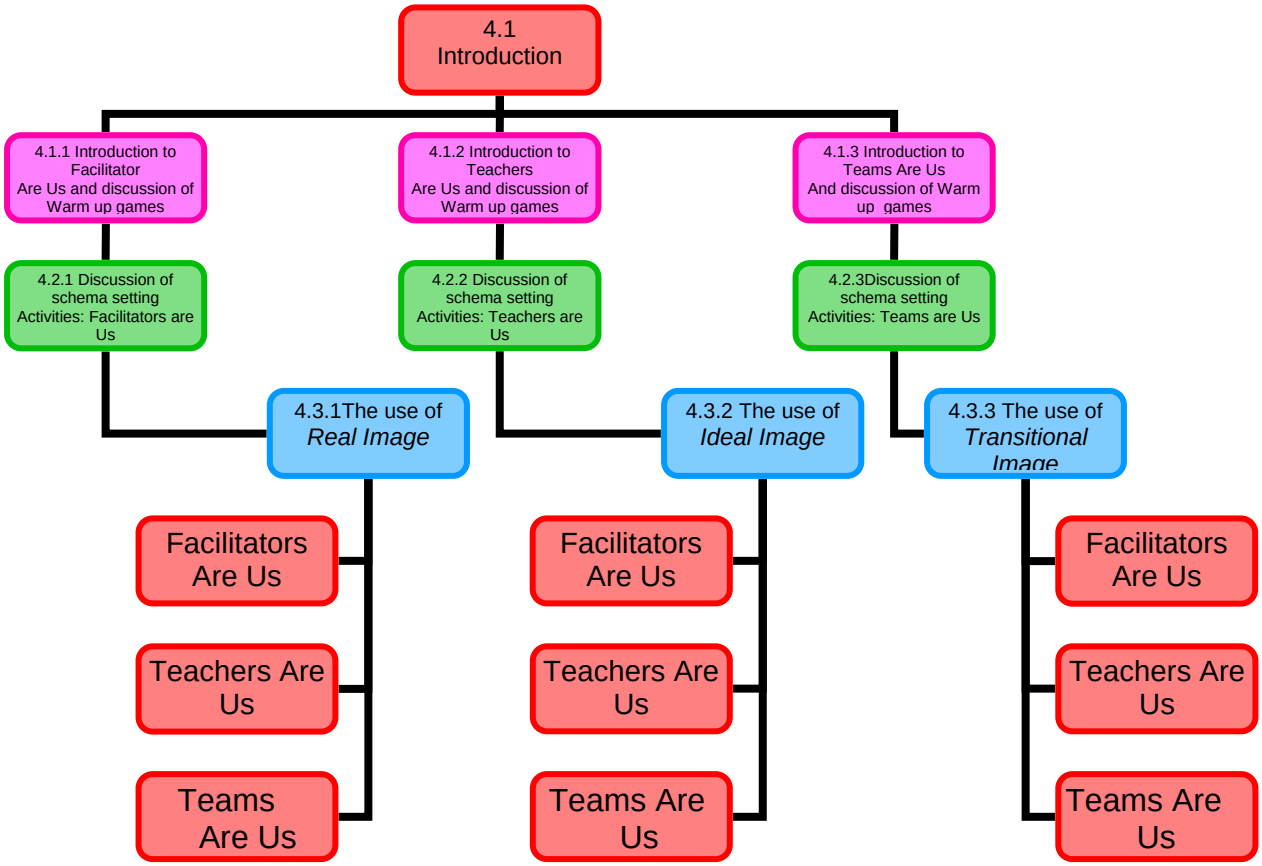
Ethical clearance was gained from the University after presenting a proposal together with the necessary documents required from the proposed research site. Due to the sensitive information, the names of the organisations had to be changed as the confidentiality of the organisation was very important.

With regard to the actual workshop and participants, the participation was voluntary and the participants had the right to withdraw at any time. The participants were informed of what the purpose of the study was so that they understood the nature of the research. There was a consent form with signatures of the participants agreeing to the video recording, participation, as well as the focus groups discussions. Pseudonyms were used to maintain the anonymity of the participants.

4 Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The relationship between the workshop process and the aim of this study is at the heart of this investigation. It is therefore important to bring into focus how the process of workshops one, two and three address the research question of Image Theatre being used to facilitate dialogue as an approach to team learning in South African organisations. A brief and concise diagram which elaborates on the manner in which this chapter is structured, follows:



This chapter deals with my research findings in relation to the three workshops conducted at *Facilitators are Us*, T*eachers are Us* and T*eams are Us*. It begins with a discussion of my use of warm up games in 4.1. Schema-setting activities and pedagogic strategies will be discussed in 4.2. These were used as vehicles to introduce the teams to the notion of Image Theatre, as well as to establish the contexts in which the use of Image Theatre took place. The three strategies which were used as

the build-up to the creation of the three images found in Image Theatre (discussed in 4.3) had varying effects on the participants.

The first workshop took place at *Facilitators Are Us*. The reflection on the first section of the three workshops includes: the warm up games (4.1.1- 4.1.3), the schema setting activities and the pedagogical strategies (4.2.1 – 4.2.3) which took place as predecessors to the use of Image Theatre.

4.1.1 Warm-up games of Workshop One: Facilitators are Us

The workshop took place during business hours at the home of one of the co-owners, the current premises of the business. The boardroom had been cleared for the workshop, and cushions placed in the room to be used during the workshop. This preparation assisted in creating an environment that would be conducive to the workshop as the workshop required that we walk around the room freely without obstructions. In total, six members from the organisation were present, and two facilitators. The participants acquainted themselves with the first facilitator[4], Nobulalu Dangazele and Simangele Mabena, my co-facilitator[5]. This led to the introduction of the first warm-up game.

Before the first game began one of the participants asked me a question:

> Le: Can we take off our shoes?
> Am: I was just taking mine off
> Si: I would like to keep mine on if that's ok cause they are flats
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

This question led to most of the participants removing their shoes as this is what they found to be comfortable. This is an element that will be discussed later in the chapter, as it forms part of the establishment of place and space.

The purpose of the games was to physically warm up the body as well as to warm up to each other. As discussed in the literature review, Boal presents a four-stage plan in

[4] The researcher is referred to as the 'facilitator' in chapter 5 and 6 as that was the primary role that she held in the action phase of the research.
[5] For this workshop I requested that a fellow practitioner assist me, as the work seemed rather over - whelming at the time.

transforming the spectator into a Spect-Actor to be more effective within the metaxis (1979: 126). According to Boal:

> Games help enable the de-mechanisation of the body and the mind alienated by the repetitive tasks of day-to-day [living], particularly [those tasks] related to work and to the economic, environmental and social conditions of those who take part in them.
>
> (Boal, 2006:5)

The de-mechanisation of the body is crucial to the use of Image Theatre as the body becomes the only form of communication and thus requires that the participants are ushered into the use of the body as a metaphorical language.

The first game was a game aimed at physically warming up the body. The participants (including the facilitators) walked around the room while listening to and carrying out various directions from Simangele. The last part of the warm-up game was greeting the next person one passed as if they were a long-lost friend. This was a gentle way of introducing the participants to a metaxis. In this aspect of the exercise, we all became long-lost friends who had not seen each other for some time and spent a few moments recapping what we had been doing during the period of time that had expired.

The second game involved the group in a *getting to know your name and feeling* game. We stood in a circle, and one at a time, each person was given an opportunity to say their name, accompanied by an action depicting how we were feeling. This assisted everyone in getting to know the names of the other participants whilst engaging with their bodies in an expressive form of communication. The game was in alignment with Boal's second stage which he describes as a "series of games by which one begins to express one's self through the body" (1979: 126). We played a modified version of the *name and feeling game*, where we said what we were expecting from the workshop. As with the *feeling game*, each participant presented their expectation, and the rest of the group repeated this. Some of the expectations included:

Me[6]: Lali[7] is expecting exploration
Sa: I's expecting to be out of my comfort zone
An: I's expecting to learn so many things
Si[8]: I'm expecting excitement
Ru: I am expecting fun
Nol: I'm expecting (sigh) not sure
Le: I'm expecting new learning
Am: I'm expecting solving all *Facilitators Are Us's* problems
(laughter from everyone). (Johannesburg, 2008)

There were varying expectations. The last expectation presented by Am led to a change in the expressions of the rest of the team. There was tension and the laughter was followed by silence that lasted for a little while. However, there was open body language during the process and we all took part in the games with no hesitation. The use of these games benefited the workshop, as R put it, "All the activities are part of the process - from getting participants to be physically engaged to the unpacking of the process" (*Facilitators Are Us*, 2008). The warm-up games for the second organisation followed a similar trajectory with minor alterations.

4.1.2 Warm up games of Workshop Two: Teachers are us

The organisation is situated at an office park. The workshop took place in the organisation's auditorium after business hours. I, together with my videographer, moved the tables and chairs to create space for us to move around during the workshop. Below is how the auditorium looked before we moved the chairs. How it looked after we changed the chairs will be seen in the viewing of the real image.

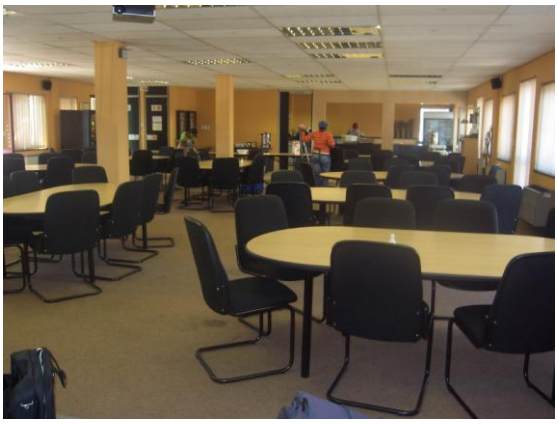


Figure 4.0

[6] The facilitator is refered to as me in the transcipt
[7] Lali is a shortened version of my name used by the participants and myself during the workshops
[8] Si refers to Simangele Mabena my co-facilitator

In total, seven members from the organisation were present and two apologised as they could not make it due to unforeseen circumstances. I was the only facilitator at this workshop.

We played the same games as in the first workshop. The *getting to know your name and feeling* game was an unfamiliar exercise for the participants. R commented saying, "You know we are conservative, right?" This was found to be a subtle indication that Image Theatre would really be something that challenged them.

Unlike the first organisation, some games were omitted. The reason for this was two fold: (1) Time constraints - there were only three hours available to the researcher, as opposed to the four hours available with the previous group; and (2) Expressing the emotions physically would achieve what the omitted games' purpose was, while introducing the participants to the use of Image Theatre. The last game, *"what we are expecting",* was omitted, as this put pressure on the participants in the previous organisation and prevented the "container" from being one that is more relaxed and open for learning.

4.1.3 Warm up games of Workshop Three: Teams Are Us

Unlike the first two organisations where there were three to four hours available for the workshop, there were only two hours and forty-five minutes available this time including a fifteen minute break. The workshop did not start on time as there were some technical difficulties with the equipment. Fifteen minutes were wasted on this problem, and in addition another thirty minutes were lost as the team leader and some group members had not arrived, leaving only two hours available for the workshop. Thus minor alterations were necessitated by a time limitation.

Apart from the team leader, none of the participants knew I was coming. The team always has meetings in the time in which my session was slotted. These meetings are usually used to talk about the various team members Key Performer Indicators, as well as their sales. Because the team did not know about the workshop, I was asked numerous questions, in the absence of the team leader, regarding the workshop. Most

of them saw it as a team building session and did not understand how we would be using dramatic techniques to facilitate dialogue.

The workshop took place in the boardroom of the organisation. There was a big table in the middle of the room with chairs around it. The table could not be taken out; hence we shifted it to the side. There was little room for movement. On the walls of the boardroom were the following posters:

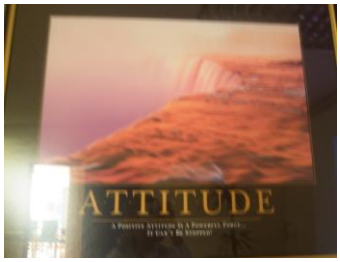


Figure 4.a Attitude



Figure 4.b Teamwork



Figure 4.c Leadership

These were put up by management as some of the qualities they desired for the employees to have, and to practice. Before beginning with the warm-up games, I took the opportunity to explain in brief what my research was about. We started the process by playing a series of warm-up games with the participants. The first game (a repeat from Workshop1) involved the group in *getting physically warm*, as well as acquainted to the space, the facilitator and each other, it also involved interaction.

In studying the video, it can be noticed that the participants began to walk around immediately. This game was challenging due to the lack of space. Hence, we were limited with the amount of movement. The participants kept on bumping into each other and as a result some walked around with their hands stretched out to avoid bumping into their team mates. I asked if they would like to take off their shoes and one of the participants, J, said "I really want to take off my shoes" but was resistant to doing so. It was only after I and the team members encouraged him (or gave their permission), that he took them off. This act of seeking permission from others seemed insignificant at the time, and later developed into a theme.

The second game involved the group in a *getting to know your name and feeling* game (Refer to 4.1.1). Unlike the second workshop, the game was presented in its original state, to engage with how we were all feeling by expressing it to each other. The last

game, *what we are expecting*, was omitted for reasons similar to those in 4.1.2 as this game had caused discomfort in *Facilitators are Us* and I wanted to avoid this. In hindsight, this game would have been beneficial to the group, as the group had not been told of the workshop and the game would have assisted everyone involved to create a frame in which expectations could be expressed. In the other organisations, all the team members had been consulted about the workshop, and informed of the content, and context, of the workshop.

I shall now discuss the schema-setting activities and pedagogic strategies used in the three organisations beginning with the first, *Facilitators Are Us*

4.2 Schema-setting Activities

4.2.1 Schema- setting activities of Facilitators Are Us

> Words are the work and the instruments of reason: we have to transcend them and look for forms of communication which are not just rational but also sensory – aesthetic communication. This aesthetic transcendence of reason is the reason for (Image) Theatre.
>
> (Boal, 2006: 15)

In the first schema-setting activity, the participants were asked to bring objects found in the office, and/or personal belongings, which represented what the organisation means to them. The participants then shared the personal narratives attached to the objects they had chosen. This was a schema-activity used to introduce the participants to visual communication. The aim of the schema-activity was to assist the participants in communicating aesthetically and to create a non-verbal vocabulary in a short space of time. The transcendence, mentioned by Boal above, was achieved through this activity as participants moved from words to visual objects focusing on shape, size, texture and other aspects of the objects. This exercise simultaneously connected the participants and facilitators to what the organisation meant to each individual. There were numerous personal narratives shared pertaining to the participants' experiences in the organisation, as well as their personal ambitions. Creative meanings were infused into the objects chosen. Some of the participants' comments regarding representations of the organisation follow. For the purpose of relevance, the transcripts have been shortened to include the relevant comments:

Nol I brought a file…when I see this file I think of learning and *Facilitators Are Us.* For me it means learning it means learning new things.

Le: I chose these two little purple sweets because for me I mean *Facilitators Are Us* is purple (*as this is their corporate colour*) so You definitely get the purple…I want to call it grace it doesn't quite go with these sweets …That's what comes to mind.

Sa: …I chose my glasses because they are unusual for reading glasses I mean they are (an) unusual colour and everybody comments on them and the thing is that is what I see *Facilitators Are Us* as, it's an unusual training company and it helps people to see things differently.

An: I have a pen here its purple and it has *Facilitators Are Us* written on it and the office number so it means after the training you can contact us and when you are learning you need to write also.

Am: I've also got this beautiful orchid umm which for me is a lovely symbol of *Facilitators Are Us,* its not quite purple but for me it gives me great, great pleasure. I've never had an orchid in my life and it just blossoms and blossoms and then it dies for six month and it blossoms again every time, for me that's also *Facilitators Are Us,* it's a blossoming and it's a while and it gives me pleasure.

Ru: Does anybody know what the pay off line for this is? Lights first time. Firstly it's this light first time is the reliability. It's account that you can count on it. It mm the other things about it, it that it means that we've gotta have smokes breaks because I've got to light up, and that's really a part of *Facilitators Are Us* learning is. The fact that we are not content based we are mm learning based so mm if we need to have breaks and we need to have discussion that is all taken into account as part of our workshop but also that *Facilitators Are Us* provides fire that lights the passion for many brands that mm that's one of the things that we do so this little cigarette lighter a flick is a Bic that lights first every time is really representative of what *Facilitators Are* does. It's not purple but next time I will get a purple one. (Johannesburg, 2008)

The first schema setting provided us with insight into what the organisation means to each participant while enlightening us on the participant's persona. According to Boal "'naming', of both 'word' and 'world' - is transformative" (Freire: 1996, 107). This is an important part of the build-up to the use of Image Theatre. The participants are introduced to what Freire refers to as *naming the world:*

> … knowing is a social process, whose individual dimension, however, cannot be forgotten or even devalued. The process of knowing, which involves the whole conscious self, feelings, emotions, memory, affects, an epistemologically curious mind, focused on the object, equally

> involves other thinking subjects, that is, others also capable of knowing and being curious. This simply means that the relationship called "thinking" is not enclosed in a relationship "thinking subject - knowable object" because it extends to other thinking subjects.
>
> (Freire, 1985: 92)

In the act of presenting their objects, the participants moved from just showing the object to learning and knowing what the object represented to themselves and others. Through reflecting on the objects presented by others, we were able to partake in the process of knowing. This, as highlighted above by Freire, presented us with the self - the person presenting the object - stating what the object meant 'for them'; their emotions. As participants presented how they feel about the organisation, they mentioned it gave them what A refers to as "great, great pleasure"; the memory presented by L "every time we have a meeting there (are) always sweets on the table" and an epistemologically curious mind as Nol pointed out that for her "it means learning it means learning new things". Most of the objects spoke to the essence of the values of the organisation and the personal investment the participants have toward *Facilitators Are Us*. In the light of the reflections presented by the participants on their objects, we had established the use of visual communication. It now became possible to delve deeper into the use of the body for self expression.

The second schema-setting activity continued from the theme of visual communication, with the body as the "object" to be viewed. This involved the participants working in pairs, each sculpting their partner into an image that expressed how they were feeling. The only condition was that they were not to talk at all. The only way they could express themselves was through the image they were creating.

Pedagogic Strategy

In presenting the sculptures created by the "artists", I used role play as a pedagogic strategy which involved me taking on the role of a *curator*, and the participants the role of *honourable guests*. The *honourable guests* were asked to comment on what they thought the "artist" was communicating through the image. Most of the time, the intention of the "artist" was seen by the *honourable guests* and this served as affirmation of what the "artist" was creating. The "artist" also got to say what they

were communicating through their work. This gave the individual an opportunity to clarify any misinterpretations regarding their sculpture while promoting a collaborative learning environment. After all the sculptures were viewed, we de-rolled and went back to being ourselves, as opposed to the *curator* and the *honourable guests* in an "art gallery".

This part of the workshop is the third stage in transforming the spectator into a Spect-Actor, in order that they may be more effective within the metaxis. Boal refers to it as the stage in which one begins to use "*the theatre as language:* One begins to practice theatre as a language that is living and present" (Boal, 1979: 126). The aim of this schema had been achieved, as this activity allowed for the participants to create images that communicated non-verbally. The schema dynamised communication through the physical resource of body language and facial expressions.

While the activity was fun and easy to use, we as the facilitators felt that the use of Image Theatre would be easily utilised by the participants as they had just created a non-verbal vocabulary from the games and schema-setting activities. They would then be able to create an image in a critical manner taking into consideration the levels of non-verbal visual representation used: the facial expressions, use of space, as well as the audience for which the image was being created. Now that we had created a non-verbal vocabulary, as well as a way of critically analysing the images we created, we could begin creating the three images contained within Image Theatre: the real, ideal and transitional images.

4.2.2 Schema- setting activities of Teachers Are Us

The warm-up games were followed by two schema-setting activities. The first schema-setting activity involved the participants in creating an image of how they were feeling. Unlike the first organisation, there were alterations to this activity. The participants would no longer work in pairs, even though this worked well with the first organisation. Time needed to create would be decreased if they created the images themselves. The participants went into the creation of their images almost immediately. To assist the participants in critiquing the sculptures without feeling attacked, I enrolled as a *curator* who was working along with the participants to see

works of art from different countries. By using a French accent and taking on a different persona, I became the "curator" and no longer related to the participants as a facilitator. They were also no longer responding as participants, but as "artists" representing their respective countries. This was also an alteration to the first workshop, as in *Facilitators Are Us,* I did not have the accent. This was to assist the participants in enrolling as well as to add a light-hearted element to the way I facilitated the workshop.

It was noted that different images could have numerous meanings. For example, V noted that D was holding up a fist. Her interpretation of this action was that it could mean black power or, in the context of the rest of the body, mean that she was celebrating having accomplished something - "The meaning could be ambiguous". We then acknowledged we would look at the images in the context of the organisation. D later clarified that she was grabbing at something, hence the fist in the air. The group was enlightened and learnt how different expressions mean different things to each participant. The participants subsequently agreed to make the images as clear as possible and also communicate what they were creating, during the reflections in between the three images in the Image Theatre model.

The environment was one that allowed for the participants to be honest in the analysis of their image. The schema activities created a warm and friendly environment as they brought plenty of laughter to the participants.

The aim of this schema had been achieved, as this activity allowed for the participants to create images that communicated non-verbally as this would assist in easing us into the use of Image Theatre, it dynamised non-communication through the physical resources of body language and facial expression.

The second schema-activity involved drawing objects that the participants connected to the organisation and which had a personal narrative attached to them. Unlike the first organisation, I did not ask that they fetch objects as this took a great amount of time in the first organisation. It also limited the participants to small tangible objects. Instead, I asked that they draw an object and then present it to the group as if it were the real object and not just a picture. This was an exercise used to introduce the

participants to symbolism. The aim of the schema was to assist the participants to think in pictures and images, as opposed to just words; to assist the participants in creating a non-verbal vocabulary in a short space of time, using one object to symbolise an organisation and a personal narrative. During this process, we learnt of the power symbols may have to tell a story.

4.2.3 Schema-setting activities for Teams Are Us

We started with our first schema setting activity, which involved drawing objects the participants connected to in the organisation. (See paragraph above)

Pa presented a candle holder that was given to all of the ladies on Women's Day. She said that it showed "uniformity within the ladies of this depot. Our depot manager bought it for us for Women's Day or was it Mothers' Day?"

Y: Women's day
Pa: So he bought it for us just to say 'thank you ladies' (said in a manly voice).
J: This is my communicating tool, my Blackberry, it enables me to talk to my colleagues, my customer management…I can send and read e-mails through it so this is my working tool
Pa: So if you lose that you lose your life
E: Ja
F: This is a computer like a desk top computer and it says 'information and access to SAP' everything we do here is connected linked to SAP…its like an internal system we use. So for me its like whatever we do out there or in the office basically if you don't have your information you cannot do your work.
Y: This is the door to my office, the reason why I feel connected is cause every day I open this door and this is where I make all the decisions, my targets, my volume and on the door it says 'Sales Manager'. I am not a sales manager but this is where I will be one day so every day if I am having a really bad day I just look at that sales manager I think 'yazini one day ngozo fika la so kucono ngibekezele' (you know what one day I will get there so I had better endure)so me opening this door on a daily basis with ebalwe (something written) sales manager it says I am walking closer to my dream or whatever
Me: So your door says Sales Manager
Y: Ja it was a coincidence and my office is the only one written sales manager and it's the biggest office in the depot so it means I've go A LOT of potential but ngizofika (I will get there)… ja and this is my team ja it's my life. This door opens a window.

M: This is a PC before I even greet anyone, before I ask people how they
are I go for my PC. Its like a collection site you know a collection tool where we share information, where I do my planning. Whenever I have to report I use the PC, whenever I want to learn something new I use the PC. If there is something I did not get like away on training I first went for the PC check e-mails and what-what just to catch up so it's the most important tool and whenever I come to work I come for the PC.

Me: Sho, it seems PCs are very important I am noticing that the technological things are

F: Connection

Me: Ja are quite a big factor with regards to what you do.

(Johannesburg 2008)

What was noted from the images created was that more communication between the participants takes place through the use of their company phones, and their computers. One participant even commented that if he had a lap top he would not come to work, but would rather work from home. There was a general agreement with the above sentiment from the other members of the team. It also seems as though the team leader is living in her Ideal Image in that she sees herself on a daily basis as a Sales Manager-to-be rather than the team leader she is. Four participants spoke about technological gadgets, one about aspirations and one about being appreciated. Their objects represented pragmatism as opposed to personal narrative. This team did not present objects representative of how they feel, like the other two organisations, but rather of what they do. Numerous personal narratives were shared with regard to the objects drawn by the participants. Creative meanings were infused into the objects chosen by them and this permitted us to communicate what we perceived, as we allowed the objects to represent the majority of what the participants would have otherwise said.

The second schema-setting activity involved the participants creating an image of how they were feeling, using their bodies. I found that the participants were apprehensive about this as they all stood back and seemed reluctant to create the images. They would not create the images simultaneously and preferred to create them one by one and comment on each image as soon as it had been created. This was not how I had planned the activity. I acquiesced to their choice, because I wanted to gently usher the group into the use of Image Theatre as opposed to insisting on going about the activity exactly the way I wanted. The use of Action Research methodology

means the research, in this case the workshop, was not one solely steered by me but rather in collaboration with the participants. This did not enable me to enrol into the *curator* as I wanted to be able to assist them in understanding the activity throughout the process. At that moment, I felt their understanding superseded enrolling them. This was the first time I had experienced such challenges with this activity, so I decided to go about the exercise a little differently.

After explaining the activity to the participants, there was silence in the room and all the participants were leaning on the table. Y, P and F had their arms crossed, J was standing with his legs crossed and M was standing with his arms and legs crossed. My interpretation of this was uncertainty and reluctance, so I explained the activity again. I asked for questions and then said that there would be a time limit of ten minutes to think about the image and present. In support of this interpretation, Borg argues that crossed arms (aside from temperature reasons) nearly always signify some form of discomfort. Whenever we humans experience anxiety or distress, we tend to withdraw our arms (2002; 136).

After a great amount of reluctance with regard to creating their images, the youngest member of the team P created her image as the other participants watched her. This is different to the way that the activity is supposed to go as the images are supposed to be created simultaneously by everyone and only viewed one at a time. As this was what I had asked when presenting the activity to the participants, I decided not to stop the way in which the activity was going as 1) P had offered a different way of doing it and the team did not mind 2) I did not want this game to end up frustrating the participants and preferred that we play it according to their interpretation.

In my observation of the video being watched while creating the image put pressure on the participant. The members waited and watched as the participant that was creating their image created it. This was also inhibiting to the process of creating the image as the amount of time that each participant had to create their image was very little. This could have been an opportunity for me to stop the activity and ask the participants if the instruction had been clear and if this was the way in which they preferred to create their images.

From the creation of the images, various themes were presented. The most dominant theme was the dependence on technological gadgets for the team members to operate. The second was a feeling of despair and anxiety. The last theme was the hierarchical structure – this was made very clear to the observer as the team leader created an image that presented herself as the teacher and the employees as the learners. The employees were therefore reliant on her for learning, as well as progress, in the work they did. These are themes that continued throughout the workshop and became more and more apparent as the workshop progressed. These will be discussed later in the chapter.

In analysing the warm ups and pedagogic strategies, the outcomes of the first two organisations were very similar as the games played and the reaction to the games were very similar. However the schema-setting activities at *Teams Are Us* were very different to those of the other two organisations. *Teams Are Us* was reluctant to create an image depicting how they were feeling and the participants did not want to create the images simultaneously, but rather one by one.

4.3 Establishing Image Theatre

In accordance with the four stages presented by Boal, this is the fourth stage: "The theatre as discourse: Simple forms in which the Spect-Actor creates spectacles according to his need to discuss certain themes or rehearse certain actions" (1979: 126). Following Boal's methodology, we first created the 'real' image, which represented the participants' current state of effectiveness, which was discovered by the participants from the creation of the real image and the discussion that followed. This was followed by the 'ideal' image which represented what they would like the organisation to be - how the organisation would look if it was effective. Lastly, there was the 'transitional' image. This was where the participants were then expected to engage in dialogue, as they learnt from each other what the possible solution was to the ineffective state they found themselves in, in the first image.

The image created was interpreted in various ways by the participants. The analysis of the data produced during the workshop will be done by comparing the three workshops focussing on the use of Image Theatre. Themes which emerged from the

workshops will be carefully examined. The discussion will begin with the analysis of the three real images, their creation, their interpretations according to participants and what theorists may say about them. For the purpose of clarity, I shall write as the facilitator and researcher.

4.3.1 Real Image

Even though the group had not discussed what the problem was before the creation of the first image, there was synergy between the group members regarding what the problem was in *Facilitators Are Us* and *Teachers Are Us*. This was not the case in *Teams Are Us*.

According to Freire, the first component of the dialogue begins with the participants (team members) naming their world. Boal refers to this stage as the real image where the participants identify what it is that is oppressing the participants. Senge refers to this stage as the first phase of four in the evolution of dialogue as this is where the participants bring a wide range of tacit, unexpressed differences into perspective.



Figure 4.1



Figure 4.2



Figure 4.3

(See Appendix B for enlarged real, ideal and transitional images)

In presenting their real image all the organisations were able to collectively name their world. The participants had similar perspectives of what it was that the organisation was currently experiencing. *Facilitators Are Us* named its world according to the decrease in revenue that that organisation was experiencing with the Am referring to the organisation as "dead weight" and Ru referring to the organisation as a "runner in 'freeze frame'. The general naming of their world was one that presented the adverse effects of their *dependency* on their clients to provide them with work. This was very clear from the first reflection that the participants had of the image and did not alter as they discussed the image.

Facilitators Are Us

> Am: I was dragging a dead weight in my leg (we) are not getting the big jobs that [we] used to, so …it's a battle every month to reach the targets."

This was supported by another participant, Sa, saying that:

> Sa: I was carrying this lot (referring to the rest of the group).
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

The second dominant issue was the problem of growth. One participant represented a flower that had not bloomed for a season and another represented the sun that was not rising. Thus darkness, and the stunted growth, surrounded the participants and their problem.

> Le: I was a seed growing, coming out after winter
>
> Nol: For me, the hand up there (referring to her right hand) it was representing the sun; the sunlight because we are going through this phase but I saw it as still going through this phase but we will get to, I mean there will be that sunlight; that sunlight will come out
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

The last two, who were not part of the dominant representation of the image, presented other images. The first was of an individual beginning his race:

> Ru: I feel a little like that like the organisation has taken off and then been put in like a… freeze frame so …in our mid run.
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

When asked what she was representing in the image An said,

> An : "We are all going to the same direction",
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

Teachers Are Us

In the second organisation the facilitator found that the outcomes of the creation of the real image were similar to those of the *Facilitators Are Us* team in that the participants were able to name their world as Freire advocates, and present the real image as advocated by Boal. However, it was Senge's interpretation of this part of the evolution of dialogue that the facilitator found revealed themes regarding the use of Image Theatre.

At the first viewing of the image, the five participants reflected on what they saw in the image which was generally that team members were stretching themselves. Elements of balance and support that the team has, highlighted certain individuals' unacknowledged roles as they stood in the background of the image, metaphorically and literally. The manner in which some team members are offering their support to the rest of the team is palpably clear to the onlooker.

D: I'm trying to stretch (gestures hands upwards and around) to see where my best place my best role is cause I've got a lot of roles I am good at …to see which one is my best one.

Nt: I think that my image was all about balance all about support umm ja all about strength …anything that comes I can deal with it and in terms of support if anybody needs support they've got a solid foundation on which to base their support … I left space and that was deliberate I always keep my personal space and always respect other peoples' personal spaces too.

V: If you notice where I positioned myself, behind R and L… that was actually deliberate because I see my role in *Teachers Are Us* – I am very much in the background but if ever, whenever anybody needs my help and support because, I am also a very strong team player, …I could have also stood at the side like R and S because I was standing there but I moved to be behind them and to stretch out my hand because I want to show that I want to give support I want to give knowledge cause that is what I do you know I facilitate almost every day of my life …I want to be in the background I don't want to be in the foreground but in the background I am working pretty hard.

Ra: You start with the eyes first they are facing forward it's a goal it's an objective I think the Team knows everyone, where we are heading this year…This had two points some you've rightly mentioned the first to protect from outside forces and the second interpretation was the pushing of the whole team forward because we need to be moving from where we are to where we want to go.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

From the first image, the participants had synergy, which L identifies in the discussion as she comments on the direction they were all facing in the image.

Lu: There are some unifying forces; we all seem to be looking in the same direction, we all seem to be looking outward…we are all looking towards an energy or goal…its (the image) open…there is an openness of our bodies.

Pe: Initially I thought I saw unity but then on a closer look you find that it is you have different individuals doing whatever it is that they do…but at the same time you have the same outlook…we are all facing the same thing whatever it may be …the synergy is moving towards a particular object.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

Similarly to these two participants there were other participants who agreed. However, on a closer analysis by one of the other participants, it became apparent that this was not the perspective everyone had of the team. Some members saw a fragmentation of the team with gaps between the participants in the real image, as well as the image having two distinct sides. The one side of the real image contained the leaders of the team and the older members. S referred to this dynamic as the 'machine'. The side with the younger members of the team and the lower-status members in the hierarchy of the team were on the side labelled by S as the 'parts'.

Sp: My legs are spread out trying to find a balance trying to find my inner self…I am part of this team but then on the other hand on my own I also need to find my equilibrium…it says a lot I wasn't aware if it says a lot …if you look at the right hand side (of the image) you are looking at people you know, trying to gel…but if you look at the left side you are looking at individuals perhaps that are trying to fit in…in a certain set up or so…initially I thought of going under R's arm but then I just stood on that side. They (on R's side) are the machine and we on (his side) are the parts … that is what I was thinking.

D: I also picked that up cause there were spaces in between

Me: Like two images next to each other possibly?

D: Little groups

Pe: Ya!

Lu: Sho!

D: Like a bit of a division

Pe: The little spaces in between S were very close he had his hand on me but then ja the little spaces in between created issues.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

The image did indeed exhibit dialogue that was, prior to this workshop, unarticulated by the participants and of which they were oblivious. This learning however was not in any way something that the participants had intended it to present. S commented on the real image, saying that it 'says a lot I wasn't aware it says a lot'. In the light of S's contribution, other participants were able to voice their increasing interpretation of the non-verbal dialogue with which the image had presented them. D stated that she also

picked up that there were spaces in between the participants which created little groups, like a division. P added to this saying 'the little spaces in between created issues'. This was an unexpected realisation as L exclaims "Sho!" in surprise and later comments on her reaction and interpretation of this analysis of the image saying; "I am seeing um ja… well there is a slight disconnect and maybe even a slight pain in the gaps".

It was these issues that began the dialogue regarding the real image/state in which the team is. Even though different people had different interpretations of what the spaces meant, there was a need to address the issues some of the team members had raised in the discussion of the real image. The team members considered to be part of the machine responded to the issue saying that:

> Lu: My intention when I first saw Ra I think we all moved quite fast, I saw Ra and then I wanted to make my image instead of waiting and seeing what happened around it I was doing my response to Ra rather than my response to the rest of the group, because he has sort of labelled... It is representing my role but the right arm its holding Ra and my intention was (she gestures) that my right arm holds everybody and that the left arm shows the direction and almost lifts up rather than pushes down and then the right arm was unable like Ra was saying contain everybody because I had already wrapped it around the symbolic team that was there already by the time I got there and its interesting timing is interesting I am seeing um ja… well there is a slight disconnect and maybe even a slight pain in the gaps so for me and so I would have like and the role I'm saying is the role for me I'm saying it to give everybody the sense that they are in there they are under the wing… I need to be the direction and the vision so I would have included it somehow maybe stood in a way that includes everyone.
>
> (Johannesburg, 2009)

This comment by Lu presented the real with 'instability in the container' (Senge et al. 1994) as the participants presented a wide range of tacit and unexpressed differences in their individual perspectives. As per Senge's suggestion, at this moment dialogue confronted its first crisis: the need for the members to look at the group as an entity including themselves as observers and observed, instead of merely "trying to understand each other" (Senge: 1994: 361-2).

What seemed to be a picture of a team facing the same direction in the image - some members of the team interpreted the image as the team working well together towards achieving a certain goal later, and there being synergy amongst the team - was confronted with a crisis as the range of perspectives widened and the participants began to view themselves in relation to the rest of the participants in the image as observers and observed. Here it is clear that there is truth in what Boal argues as he states that the image *shows* what the participant is communicating. He/she puts him/herself in a particular position, in relationship to the other participants thus collaborating in the creation of the meaning of the image, while conveying an idea, emotion, and feeling. According to Boal "…this is a dialogue of images, not just juxtaposition"(Boal, 2002: 140).

Thus the real image presented issues regarding hierarchy and clear sub-groups within the team. In looking at the image, I also noted the people referred to as the machine included the older members of the group – the team leaders and manager. The other two members in the "machine" side of the team included the oldest member of the team and one of the members who has been in the team for a while, and is also an older member of the team.

Included in the group that was considered the "parts" of the team was the only Black female, who was later noted as an excluded member of the team in that she was not engaging with anyone in the first image, and in the organisation. The second member of the "parts" sub-group was the youngest Black male in the group who expressed that he did not fit into the "machine" and considered himself an outsider to the "machine" sub-group. The last member of the sub-group was the youngest of the team and the only Afrikaans-speaking member of the group. She was one of the newer members to have joined the group and had not been in this corporate environment for as long as the other team members.

The instability of the container continued as Ra acknowledged the gaps. He suggested the gaps might be due to people like him valuing their personal space and that if the image had been discussed prior to its creation, it would have been completely different. The image would have gelled and there would have been interconnectedness. He argued that the interconnectedness would exist as he said "I

think the team itself knows what we want, we're heading to in this year (Clears his throat)."

Ra presented the notion that he would have felt better with the images created, if there was a small discussion between the participants. According to Lu, she preferred the spontaneously created images as they avoided "group think". N concurred with her and went on to say that he felt that this would have "distorted the image". There were subtleties present in the image that Lu felt would have been "wiped out because they don't look as good as we want them" when discussing the images before creating them. Lu believed the individual steps allowed for the awkwardness, fear, separation or anything else to emerge. These aspects of image-forming would not have emerged if discussions had taken place and thus the truth would have been compromised.

The creation of the real image in the first two organisations may have been similar, however there are numerous points of departure regarding the level at which the two organisations engaged in the interpretation of the image. Where the first organisation created a literal meaning from the real image, the team from *Teachers Are Us* found metaphorical meanings in the image - especially in the groupings and gaps in the image. The interpretation of the image by the participants of *Facilitators are Us* was similar in content. However, the image created by *Teachers Are Us* generated very different interpretations and meanings from the participants. Interestingly, the perspectives of the problems at *Facilitators Are Us* were not as wide. Even though the perspectives differed slightly, they all had the same theme relating to the decrease in revenue due to their dependency on their clients.

The naming of the problem by each participant is consistent with what Freire has argued. The participants knew, without being told, what the social reality of the organisation was. They proved that they were not empty containers waiting to be filled by being told by management what the problem is; they knew without the intervention of the team leaders. They were able to give the problem different names according to each individual's experience. In participants being able to name their problem, or rather according to Freire their oppression, they were already on a path to finding a solution - following Freire's theory that it is in the naming of the oppression

that one may begin to act against it. According to Freire (1972) in McLaren and Leonard:

> Human existence cannot be silent nor can it be nourished by false words, with which humans transform the world. To exist humanly is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. [Humans] are not built in silence but in word, in work, in action-reflection.... (McLaren & Leonard, 1993:96)

Boal also makes reference to this, as it is in the image that he believes that the participants identify their oppression and thus begin creating ways in which they may begin their revolution against the oppressor through the ideal, and later, transitional image.

Above, the participants named the world as being: a heavy weight, the sun failing to shine, a runner in frozen motion and a flower that won't grow. This according to Boal is the real image. The image that presents their dependency, according to the participants, is the reason that the organisation (in the case of *Facilitators as Us*) is not effective and reaching the targets as there has been a decrease in clients.

Similar to Boal's original use of Image Theatre, the participants did identify their dependency or oppression (Boal, 1979). Similar to Senge's theory, this first phase of the evolution of dialogue did lead to the participants discovering a 'wide range' of varying perspectives which were present in the image they created. Without any verbal communication prior to the creation of the real image, the participants presented their interpretation of dependency.

In a closer look at the *Facilitators Are Us* image, one may note that potential groupings may also exist. It is possible to see that on the left side of the image, and in the front, the more vocal members of the team are present. The less vocal members of the team, Nol and An, and the only black females, are at the back of the image. This was not an issue discussed by the team members. However, this was Nol's and An's interpretation of the reality of the team in the organisation is at that moment. Interestingly, this is not where the two participants positioned themselves in the ideal image. This will be further discussed in the ideal image.

The use of the real image in *Teachers are Us* created an opportunity for matters that had been hidden from the participants to be exposed. Boal (2000) argues that the image is not *polysemic* thus there is no right or wrong interpretation of the image. This has led to there being multiple interpretations of the image, and thus team learning.

Teams Are Us

The real image created by *Teams Are Us* is the one that presented the greatest amount of positive interpretation. It is to be noted here that the team leader left the room just before the team reflected on the image to go and get food.

F: I was trying; my image was comforting being supportive…I am always concerned about other people you know like what are you doing? If someone says I need help with this then what can I do to possibly support.

Pa: I was filling in the new shoes because I am a new member to the team so I was adding on to the existing team filling in the new shoes

M: (who is standing next to F): mine is (clears throat) standing on the same level with everyone looking into the future being the tallest in the team I need to see into the future and just giving that smile to say even if things go wrong we will still be together as a team and we should just hold on to each other and hence the clenched fist and holding onto P to say we are one team, unshakable!

(Johannesburg, 2009)

The team leader returned as J was in mid sentence

J: its plain simple that I will be supportive to all three of you at one time the unfortunate part is that I cannot stand close to Y

Y: (who is in front of the group with her hands up) - I am seeing I am allowing my team to grow, that's my role I think to allow them to grow and reach their full potential let them grow and shine. I see M holding the team part of the team like holding them, F holding them offering support so she will be maybe the mother of the team ensuring that everybody has done everything like ubapha isupport (giving support) and J is like bringing us all together P ummm? I cannot be there as their leader and be selfish and hold information or whatever in order for them to grow I have to allow them to grow. I have to support them in everything like from top to bottom…when you plant something you water it and allow it to grow so I am on my knees to show that one day they will grow whatever reach their goal in order for them to succeed. (Johannesburg, 2009)

After the leader's return, none of the team members spoke. The team leader commented on which image was her favourite and asked to see the other. Unlike the other organisations, the participants did not speak to each other, but to the facilitator. They also did not speak about the image unless the facilitator asked them a question regarding the image. Very little was said regarding the image. No one disagreed with the other interpretations and no questions were asked among themselves.

This team viewed the real image as, due to M, "looking into the future being the tallest in the team I need to see into the future and just giving that smile to say even if things go wrong we will still be together as a team." Y presented her interpretation of the image saying, "I am seeing I am allowing my team to grow". In this image the team members presented that they are supportive of each other, caring, and when asked to title the image M titled the image as "Y presenting her four shining stars…"

This took me by surprise, as this was not what the team leader had stated in our previous conversations regarding the workshop. The team that she had presented to me was one that was struggling due to people working as individuals, rather than as a team so that they could attain higher points in their scoring of KPIs - Key Performance Indicators. She had also said that there was little support among the team members due to internal competitiveness.

The image presented a completely different scenario to the one the facilitator had expected due to the conversation I had had with her. I asked that the team create another real image representing a hypothetical situation as opposed to the state of the team at present and the team presented this as their 'ideal image' which shall be discussed with the other two organisations' ideal images. M refers to the image at some part of his reflection as, "everyone looking into the future."
This is similar to a theme raised by Y during the schema-setting activity. In the drawing of the picture (see 4.2.3), Y spoke about the 'Sales Manager' label on her door:

> Y : I am not a sales manager but this is where is I will be one day so every day if I am having a really bad day I just look at that Sales Manager (label on the door) I think 'yazini one day ngozo fika la so kucono ngibekezele' (you know what one day I will get there so I had better endure) (Johannesburg, 2009)

It would seem as though the team applied a similar principal of 'living in the ideal' in their creation of the real image even though according to the conversation I had with Y, the team was experiencing many challenges. They presented an ideal image of what the team would possibly like to be.

Another possible reason for the creation of this image was due to the space in which the workshop was taking place and the values that the participants were expected to present by management. In the room in which we conducted the workshop, the values presented to the team by management were also a constant reminder of what was expected of them. There were framed posters with images and captions that spoke of teamwork, collaboration, leadership, and attitude. These were visual representations of what the team was expected to strive for and possible unconsciously led to the creation of a real image which seemed more like an ideal image.

Each organisation then created their ideal images.

4.3.2 Ideal Images



Figure 4.4



Figure 4.5



Figure 4.6

The ideal image presented the participants with an opportunity to collectively imagine an ideal future. This was the case with the first two organisations and the complete opposite with the third. Due to this I shall discuss the first two organisations, *Facilitators Are Us* and *Teachers Are Us*. This will be followed by *Teams Are Us*.

According to Boal, at this stage of Image Theatre, the participants should be exploring images representative of their freedom. This is the image that no longer depicts their oppression. According to Senge, however, there is a point of departure from Boal as it is at this second phase of dialogue where the participants experience even more discomfort:

> At this stage people might find themselves feeling frustrated, principally because the underlying fragmentation and incoherence in everyone's thought begins to appear. Normally this would be kept below the surface, but now it comes forward, despite the efforts of the participants to keep themselves "cool" or "together"… no point of view seems to hold all the truth any longer; no conclusion seems definitive.
>
> (Senge et al. 1994: 362-363)

Facilitators Are Us

The ideal image presented by *Facilitators Are Us* was that of happy team members receiving revenue and success from 'above'. The image presents four of the members receiving from the sky that which they desire with An and R being the only ones that have not taken this stance. They have instead presented a man standing proud with R standing with his arms crossed and An now standing in the front of the image with her hands together as she thanks God for the revenue. Boal refers to this form of solution as one that depends on change to occur through the grace of God, also known as false consciousness, as opposed to the participants finding the solution within them. In the ideal image almost all the participants created the same image. This was one of reaching to the skies for the solutions to all the organisation's problems.

The four team members with their hand stretched upward to the sky all had different interpretations of what their image represented:

> Le: I think I am accepting all that hard work that we have put into it we are reaping the rewards or we are harvesting something we are excepting that it is there now our work is paying off its satisfying.
>
> Am: I was you know accepting blessings and everyone is looking upwards and you know sort of and R had a settled and content sort of …Satisfied content easy expression and sort of laid back content but a strength there you know we were all sort of receiving
>
> Sa: (raising her hands in a gesture) I has I first of all had that and then I had my arms like this because I've got a little Buddha at home that says you know …that says like you get everything like its ra you get everything it's not only the rewards it's the loyalty it's the…
>
> Nol: Yes I had started off with my hands like this but then I decided to do this and for me it was more celebrating its receiving it and embracing all lovingly all together
>
> (Johannesburg 2008)

It would seem that four of the participants' ideal representation of the organisation is highly dependant on issues outside the team's capacity. Thus the same reason for their dependency in the real image is still a great influence in their creation of the ideal. Even in their ideal image, it would seem that some of the team members of *Facilitators Are Us* are still dependant on external elements for their ideal world to be fully realised.

> Am: I guess what I am saying is that all of the internal is strong so I'm seeing the arrival like when you said where are we going its mainly it needs to come from the outside I don't feel its so much you know you must whip you into shape you know I don't think that there's that so I don't feel that the internal need the work I Think its solid.
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

The participants cannot fully attain this without the revenue provided to them by their clients. This adds complexity to the use of Image Theatre in small organisations such as *Facilitators Are Us.* The team is a representative of the organisation, even though it is one that may be effective, it is highly dependant on the clients who are in their macro level for the full realisation of their ideal image. It is the conditions found on the macro level that have a great stake in the success of the team.

> Le: …people are not wanting to commit and not want to like training is like some- thing that is a little bit unnecessary in their minds so training gets pushed away. It's not like oh we really need you come in (hands pulling towards), it more like good ja (hand pushing away) but not right now perhaps ok
>
> Si: Could it be what R was saying - that it is not *Facilitators Are Us* [who is at fault] its pretty much macro economic.
>
> Le: I think (this) plays a huge role, a lot of people responsible right now for making budget cuts not being flippant with the money and just like being very caution. (Johannesburg, 2009)

The question asked in the creation of the ideal image was what the team would like to be in an ideal situation. Evidently, even within the image, is the dependency that the team continues to experience in their ideal. This is not a matter that can be fully explored within the scope of the study; however it is a matter that was of great concern to the team and dominated a greater part of the discussion that followed the creation of the ideal image. This does seem to be a finding that is in alignment with both Boal and Senge in that the team did present their ideal image, however, on

greater analysis, there is an indication that the oppression still exists even though the team is not consciously aware of it.

Some of the members did not present images with their hands in the air. An and R had different images. An elaborates on her image saying:

> An: I first looked at them and think that they are all receiving all I have to do they are happy and receiving something all I have to do is to say thank you God.
> Le: Ag you're a beautiful woman
> Sa: She is An she's lovely
> Ru: …(his image) its really about *Facilitators Are Us* that I would like to say authority and in authority I don't mean as in power but for people to recognise *Facilitators Are Us* as being an authority in what we do.
>
> (Johannesburg, 2009)

Here Ru is presenting a triumphant attitude regarding *Facilitators Are Us'* success that even though they are dependant on external factors to succeed, there are certain actions which the team can take towards creating this ideal situation.

The one observation I noted with this image was the Black participants, Nol and An had now moved to a frontal more focal position in the ideal. It would seem that in an ideal situation, they would prefer to be frontal and more active in the organisation. This may have also been due to the fact that they - Nol, Am and An - are the only participants responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation. Even though Ru, Sa and Le are part of the decision-making, the members that are responsible for the implementation of the plan are the ones who are now at the front of the ideal image.

Am has kept the same position whereas Sa and Ru have moved back. Le is still found very close to Am as she provides support to Am while Nol and An are also very close. According to Le, she "wanted to kind in a sense I wanted to link arms moving forward together so that everybody benefited from the moving forward".

What took place in *Facilitators Are Us'* ideal image did not correlate fully with what Boal believes happens in the ideal image, even though the participants are now presenting what seems to be an image without dependency. There is a lot of

immediate dependence on their clients to provide them with work so as to generate the revenue they desire in the ideal image.

Here even though the image has not created dialogue regarding independence or the lack thereof and 'oppression', it has led to the team engaging and learning about the matter that is at the essence of their dependence. The team had collectively learnt about the problem in the real image and unintentionally expanded on the matter from a different aspect in the ideal. This is similar to what happened with *Teachers Are Us*.

Teachers Are Us:

For this group, the second image was challenging to create and took more time. The participants allowed themselves to be adjusted by others at times and the consideration with relation to the group had increased. V raised a point that there were subtleties the gross body could not represent. R responded to this concern saying that he took this into consideration and made very clear decisions on the facial expressions he employed. He ensured these expressions were discussed during the course of the reflection, and were clarified to the other participants.

Ra: …in this image I'm linking into the team tapping on their knowledge and then at the same time sharing my experiences and then my hand there represents researching and reading because if you move on to the next picture my face is down (this participant took it upon herself to dynamise the image)… that represents new knowledge skills while I am still in the team in order to upgrade knowledge and skill in the team… I'm reading trying to get the latest trends in management. My hand is around S, D, R and the new knowledge will flow into the rest of the team.

Se: If I can focus on myself…I am taking a lot of strain there serious I mean but its all about being part of the team there are some sacrifices but there is also the supporting role because I think almost everyone is leaning on me. But what is also interesting is also around the stretched hand of participant and I am also holding… if you look at the hand I'm also holding the participant's message being that I am part and parcel I also want to work hard and be accepted as part and parcel of the team its basically around that.

D: Well when I went into that position it was to help V nurse the baby I thought it was a baby I went and then I held her hand with fingers in between so it was supporting the baby… I thought (the baby) was the company…

Ra: When I saw V position herself she was protecting something and I thought maybe it was just the school that she was protecting therefore when I positioned myself again with my left hand it

> was around her and of course with my right hand holding the whole group and then that stretch forward is that leap from where we are to where we want to be. So as a whole group we move from where we are and it's just not a step it has to be a tangible leap to where we want to be. (Johannesburg,2009)

There was also the role of the dreamer which was played by V in that she constantly mentioned ways in which she should like to nurse the organisation and provide it with a "pot of gold" that contained in it all that would be needed to make *Teachers are Us* the best in the whole world.

> V: Let me explain why I took the shawl and I did this right .The one thing about the future if I could make a pot of gold for the organisation I would this represents …to bring in lots and lots of revenue business… to expand internationally…that is the future…
>
> Lu: One of the things that emerged for me is the sacrifices that one makes when taking a role at work you said bring all you are as well as a dream of what you want to be and I could only represent some of what you want to be and that is not all I want to be and maybe it because you can't be all you want to be I wanted everyone touching and I also wanted to be out front risking and I wanted to teach but I couldn't find the space in my body to represent the teaching part …
>
> Nt: I chose to go to the back to play a supportive role but my hand is also up front which represents pushing the boundaries breaking new ground creating new centres … there's energy actually in the image there is lots of activity I don't see it as strain I just see it as energy that is vigorous a powerful source that is eager to achieve.
>
> (Johannesburg, 2009)

It would seem the role the participants have in the organisation, and the ones they have in the team, are interrelated and overlap. The team leader was under the impression that everyone was aware of the roles they have, and the trajectory they are to follow to achieve the goals they have as a team. However, the experience of looking at the image made it clear that the image depicted a team with members who were not being used to their fullest potential. Where the team leader thought everyone in the team was clear regarding their goals, there were fragmentations in the unity and gaps of which the team leader and members were not aware. Thus the perception and the experience were not the same. It was only through the careful analysis of the image, together with the discussion that followed its creation, that the participants entered into dialogue. They learnt where they were as a team, the roles they played,

and did not play, in the team. Through this, I found the image created initiated the dialogue as a learning game. From the analysis of the image, the team grew and exposed their inner feelings regarding the team unconsciously through the creation of the image, and later consciously through the discussion that ensued regarding the image they had created.

In the team's day-to-day operations, there are roles which each member has in the greater aspect of the team. Some of them teach and facilitate; others are limited to working in the office, and have little or no contact with the students. Their roles in the organisation were clear. However, they do, at times, have to play numerous roles in the organisation due to the fact that it is a school, and a business. This requires the participants to be aware and cognisant of the implications of this fact at all times.

Teams Are Us

I believe, with this particular group of people, they created an image that was not a representation of the true reality of the team but rather a defended representation of the real. According to Argyris (Senge et al. 1994), the defensive nature in which the team reacted in the first image is similar to what he called "defensive routine":

> Team learning also involves learning how to deal creatively with the powerful forces opposing productive dialogue and discussion in working teams. Chief among these are what Chris Argyris calls "defensive routines", habitual ways of interacting that protect us and others from threat or embarrassment, but which also prevent us from learning… Yet, the very defensive routines that thwart learning are also great potential for fostering learning; if we can only learn how to unlock the energy they contain.
>
> (Senge 1990; 237)

It seemed as though the team had indeed developed mechanisms that would defend their honest perspective of the team's reality at the time of the workshop. After they had created the image, I strongly believed that there was more to the team than what they were choosing to project. In the hope that I would be able to 'unlock the energy in the container', I asked the team to create a hypothetical image as a representation of their ideal. This was something that was not in the lesson plan and the facilitator did this to further investigate what she assumed the participants were not revealing. I decided to ask them to create the "re-real". This was the image created using the metaxis an image created in the place of the ideal. Due to the conversation with Y and

what she had told me regarding the team, my concern was not to present the real state of the team due to fear.

I engaged the team in a metaxis that was more detailed than the one I had presented them with in the creation of the real image. Even though the other organisations created a real image that was representative of the reality as opposed to their ideal as with *Team Are Us*, I attempted to invite the participants to greater, and safer, introspection.

> Me: Ok now guys we have seen what (pause) is working in the team can we now, and what we really do like can we now think about things that sometimes disturb this image this creation, the things that get in the way of this image looking like that …can we create an image here that represents, what can we call these things?
> F: Limits
> Me: Limitations to creating that (pointing to the image).
>
> (Johannesburg, 2009)

In observing the video, all the participants had their arms crossed. Y was the only one with open body language, as well as a smile throughout.

Following my invitation, F went to her bag immediately, took out a ten rand note and went to create the image. All the team members, including F, started laughing at this image. This image seen in 4.6 is the ideal, or rather re-real, image created by *Teams Are Us.* The varying perspective of what the participants thought of the image follow.

Visually the image showed a lack of synergy as the team members seemed to be doing their own thing with all the participants looking in their own direction and none of them linked to each other in any way. The re-real image also presented a group that found individual answers to the team problems. They were still looking in their own direction and doing what it was they as individuals felt would solve the problem that the group was facing. M later commented on the lack of synergy.

It seemed that the team breaks down when challenges are presented to them. The entire team realised that it is up to them as individuals to solve their part of the greater problem in isolation from the rest of the team. The greatest contributing factor to this

attitude is that the group is not evaluated as a team but more as individuals that make up the team. The individual's success counts more than that of the team and this caused the team to move from being a team to being a group of individuals depending on the levels of success and failure being experienced by the team.

J: (Now sitting at the back with his hand balancing his face see figure 4.6) If the team disappoints me like this I don't want to be a part of the team and I would rather be alone... That is not a team it's broken apart I would rather be alone.

He then looked at the team members and saw their reactions and said:

J: But it can have a different meaning as well …like can you give me time… can you give me time

Immediately after him M responded and said this about the image:

M: (on the left of F looking down at his lap top) I am trying to figure out something there at the same time I want to be part of the team I think I got it but I don't. But at least the positive thing about it is the effort I'm not sitting back or looking the other way I am with the team but I'm just trying to obviously figure myself out and discharge the energy to the rest of the team cause if I can get those papers from Y and take the ten rand and put it in my pocket, things will be good (everyone laughs)… still want to help out you know eager to help out where I can.

F: (now on the right of the image tearing a ten rand note) I feel like you want to move forward but everything is standing still and everything comes down to budget

Me: Who decides on the budget?

F: G the sales manager does our budget. We have so much we want to do but there a is limitation it sort of tears you down… so if the higher power says that there are funds to do this but your direct manager says there are no funds its not about creating the budget but access to the funds that is the problem.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

After the creation of re-real image there was a higher level of openness:

Pa: (now standing behind F with her hands on her waist) Not interested in learning or people I want to do things on my own I want to show people that I can do this on my own I don't need help from anyone

Y: (in front of the group but with a stack of papers this time): I feel eyo stress, clutter trying to hold the team together when everybody is doing their own things. Things are not going well for me as well, stress you can see my face I'm holding so many papers because if they don't work together we can't achieve anything so now I am trying to stretch myself holding their dreams together and my job so its stress…things are falling apart and its like I can just take the papers and go do them on my own

for everybody so let me get out of here and do it on my own not here just find my own space and fix everything on my own get things back in order.

J: It shows that she is out of it

M: Heading for the door. (Johannesburg, 2009)

This was the reflection that the team had on the re-real image. In this image, the team seems to have similar issues to those presented by the first two organisations in their real images. However this was within the 'hypothetical' metaxis, unlike the metaxis of it being a real image, i.e. a representation of their reality.

In this image the issues that Y had raised in our conversation began to surface, and fragmentation presented itself and the instability of the team. Members such as M, similar to Ra in *Teachers Are Us* preferred to see the brighter side of things he says "at least the positive thing about it is the effort". He then in the same sentence indirectly makes a judgement of the decision made by other team members to move away from the team as he says "I'm not sitting back or looking the other way."

The other participants expressed what they saw in the image and spoke of it as though they had not been a part of "it" with J commenting saying that, "It shows that she is out of it".

Upon reflecting on all three images it would seem that *Facilitators Are Us* and *Teachers Are Us* have created images that have similarities that are more common than those contained in *Teams Are Us'* re-real image. The themes in *Teams Are Us* are very similar to *Facilitators* and *Teachers are Us'* real image.

According to Boal the "image of transition; this third technique consists of working on a model, generating an argument, by visual means alone. More than ever, it is vital that words are absent here; but not discussion, which should be as rich and full as possible" (Boal 2002; 185). This proved to be a truly rich and full discussion as the teams now attempted to make the leap from real to ideal through the creation of the transitional image. At this stage according to Senge:

If a critical mass of people stays with the process beyond this point, the conversation begins to flow in a new way. In this "cool" environment people begin to inquire together as a whole. People become sensitive to the way the conversation is affecting everyone in the group.

(Senge et al. 1994: 362-363)

4.3.3 Transitional image



Figure 4.7



Figure 4.8



Figure 4.9

Facilitators Are Us

Am (still on the extreme left of the image):…I was dusting off the negativity or whatever I was worrying about I was looking upwards with a positive feeling and …not seeing the pooh and saying right how do we get can we re-strategise how can we remarket so that was the energy there you know not of being weighed down by the limp leg?

Le: …there is thoughtfulness we put a lot of energy and work and the deepening …I don't think so much change what we do just deepen it a little …but also be aware. Be aware that the most amazing things happen when you are aware and give.

Sa: Positive; spreading the word.

Nol (on the extreme left of the image again): It's just the strength of just pushing forward; it is difficult, but keep on it and being strong and pushing forward.

Ru: I have not necessarily won but I've crossed the finishing so all of them are rather determined – positive, determined to get where we are going …I think the notion of encouragement in that second image - that third image one - the one that is the in between one and that what I like it the encouragement of A) *Facilitators Are Us* and B) of one another and I'm a strong believer and I have reinforced it in meetings that if we can appreciate ourselves I think that (points to S) if you give the attention to the intention then it comes back and if we appreciate ourselves by knowing our value which in that photograph we do then that shows a positive thing.

An: I didn't know where to stand so I decided to come (gestures under) like at school we use to run relay so where it had to be four people who are running there must be a back person who is at the beginning and there must be a last person who stands in the front who's finishing so that whenever you get the opportunity just grab it and run.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

The general perspective of the participants in the video was of Am "saying right, how do we get can we re-strategise how can we remarket so that was the energy there you know not of being weighed down by the limp leg?" In a similar tone Nol states that her image represents her, "It's just the strength of just pushing forward; it is difficult, but keep on it and being strong and pushing forward." In alignment with the notion presented by Nol and Am, R says "I think the notion of encouragement in that second image" which is true - there is hope that exists in the ideal image. Choosing an image is not always easy though and this is something I noticed with An. In the creation of the first image she was the last member to join the image and regarding the ideal image she begins her comment on the image staying; "I didn't know where to stand so I decided to come (gestures under)". Creating the image is not an easy form of expression for everyone. After I gave instructions asking that we create the last image, P, D and V walk to where the image will be created arm in arm, people are no longer reluctant to create the image. However R struggled for 20 seconds to secure a place.

Teachers are Us

On their first view of the image there were bursts of laughter:

> Nt: (clears his throat) there is energy, actually, in the image. There's lots of activity, you don't necessarily see there's strain I just see it as energy as...a powerful force that's eager to achieve (speaks slowly with regular pauses)
>
> Pe: I also looked L in the eye to say here am I, I'm not hiding anything, let's talk let's be open with each other you know, and if, I tried to look everybody in the eye on the other side (laughs)
>
> Me: what do you see looking someone in the eye as opposed to not looking someone in the eye?
>
> Pe: …if I look down that would say I'm hiding things, but I'm not really ready to talk with you. I'm occupied with other things, but then my looking her in the eye, eye to eye, I'm ready let's talk. I respect your time, the time that you talk to me, and then I'm also available to talk yes
>
> Me: in a sense you are ready to engage through dialogue, it's not just a one way.
>
> Pe: . . .because we are going somewhere, we need to update each other, nobody should be left in the dark. We need to be well informed about where we are and where we want to, what we want to achieve and nobody should be left behind. If somebody is struggling somewhere they need to be lifted up, one way or the other. . .if you embrace everybody, take everyone with you, you know, to achieve that goal you may actually reach it faster than you thought. (Johannesburg, 2009)

There has been a great amount of reflection made by the participants and the analysis of the image is more insightful. From the above set of comments the participants seem to be more relaxed and more able to read the images metaphorically. Pe raises an interpretation of her looking into Lu's eyes that she is open to communication and honesty with nothing to hide. This is a sign of dialogue taking place as according to Senge dialogue creates the container of inquiry and above the participants are engaging with each other as they inquire what and an ideal team would be for all. Lu notes an interesting characteristic to this image that the other image did not have.

Lu: There is still a slot of energy but less strain (agreement).
Me: Did anyone feel strain? It also doesn't look strenuous in any way.
Lu: It's very interesting because (exhales) this is more desirable for me than the next, the first, the second one that we did (agreement) I would rather be doing this than that other thing which is just as well because this is exactly what we need in order to make that pot of gold and in order to have a unified direction.
Nt: It's gonna be a very serious challenge
Lu: Ja and it's just very interesting to me that we look inward as a way of getting to our outward goal, we're all looking at someone else...and that feels like a very significant thing
Lu: It's funny it looks like, I mean everybody is playing their role, its interesting R and I are not anywhere near the front, and we're not anywhere on top of anyone else as some of the other images were suggesting (murmurs) interesting power relation there as well
ME: And what I noticed is that the personal spaces have to a certain extent been (someone says "reduced") closed, there are no gaps.
V: There is a lot of closeness (Johannesburg, 2009)

Teams Are Us

The creation of the last image was challenging because the participants were reluctant to create the image. Various perspectives were presented and they were in a word: great, hard, challenging, hope. The environment was one that allowed for the participants to be open and honest, but it seemed as though the participants did not trust the space at all at the start. They slowly warmed up to the space, but not completely. This is discussed extensively in chapter 5.

5 Research Findings and Themes

Following is a discussion of the findings with details that support and explain each finding. Through thematic content analysis of the workshops, this study set out to document a broad range of experiences, and thereby provide an opportunity for the reader to enter into this study and better understand the reality of the participants in relation to the use of Image Theatre. This chapter deals with my research findings in relation to my research questions: How can Image Theatre be used in corporate organisational teams within South Africa:

- To facilitate dialogue?
- To facilitate team learning?
- To provide an alternative to the organisations' current mode of communication?

5.1 The significance of the Environment in the facilitation of dialogue

The workshops took place at the offices where the participants work. The use of the place as a space for conducting the workshop in itself is a shift toward creating the metaxis in which the effectiveness of Image Theatre resides. I found that the use of Image Theatre in organisational teams as a tool for facilitating dialogue is highly dependent on the *environment*. In the context of this study the term *environment* consists of two components namely place and space. The temporary ownership of the space was of great importance to the use of Image Theatre in relation to it facilitating dialogue:

> *Space is a practiced place*. Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers. In the same way, and act of reading, is the space produced by the practice of a particular place: a written text, i.e. a place constituted by a system of signs.
>
> (de Certeau 1984: 117)

Place is the structure that stands even without people in it. Its meaning or purpose however, is one that would be altered by the manner in which the space is utilised. Space is determined by the people in it. The boardrooms (place) differed with each organisation. However, once the workshops began, the spaces (practiced place) became similar, each with its own nuance. The walls and boardrooms of the

organisations which usually project work-related information were transformed into an explorative and experimental space for facilitating Image Theatre. The walls became an area on which the image created by the participants was projected and viewed. However, not all the organisations had a space conducive to the creative use of Image Theatre.

5.1.1 Enabling aspect of Place

At *Facilitators Are Us* and *Teachers Are Us*, the image could be as wide and high as the group desired. The tables and chairs that had been in the boardroom were removed before the workshop. The chairs were replaced with cushions, and the cupboards no longer had stationary on them, but rather drinks and snacks to create a space that allowed for the participants to be at ease.

In the real image presented by *Teachers Are Us,* the participants image is spread out and their arms reach in all directions (see figure 4.2). Similarly, in the ideal image presented by *Facilitators Are Us,* there are four members of the organisation with their hands reaching upward (4.4). When the participants reflected on the meaning of the hands reaching upwards, they felt this gesture had great significance and would not have been possible if the room was too small.

5.1.2 Limitations due to Place

There were challenges to the workshops and indirectly, to the facilitation of dialogue where the place was too small as the images created were limited by the space. The size of the place in which the image is created is important - if it is small, it can limit the creativity of the group. At *Teams Are Us* all the images they created were very small and narrow as opposed to the wide, open image created by *Teachers Are Us* and *Facilitators Are Us*. This could be interpreted as the team wanting to create the images like this. However, this was not the case as none of the discussions showed the deliberate creation of narrow images. The table filled most of the room and thus team movement was limited.

The fact that the place also had the various posters (see figures 4.a, 4.b, 4.c) put up by management on the walls led to there being pressure throughout the workshop for the

participants to live up to the ideal definition of what a team should be. If there is no sense of ownership in the space, it can be intimidating to the participants. *Teams Are Us* expressed the need to put things back exactly the way they looked before the workshop. If they did not, according to M, "[they would not] be allowed to use it again" (Johannesburg, 2009).

Limited space influences how Image Theatre facilitates dialogue. The smaller the space, the greater the limitation of the creativity and freedom for the participants to create their images.

5.1.3 Safe Space

Safe space in this instance refers to a space where participants are free to engage openly and honestly. Establishing a safe space before engaging in the use of Image Theatre was imperative to the study and had an adverse effect on the creation of images when not present. The first instinctive way in which the space was established was introduced by the participants from *Facilitators Are Us*. *Facilitators Are Us* removing their shoes was initiated by Le asking, "Can we take off our shoes?" She was met by Am's response, "I was just taking mine off".

Teachers Are Us and *Teams Are Us* struggled to take ownership of their workshop space. This was noted in a conversation which took place between J, me and later, the team, as he said "I really want to take off my shoes!" Yet, he was unable to do so. Taking off their shoes allowed the participants to be comfortable and relaxed while creating their images. This action helped in defining the space as a place where they could relax and be comfortable. Even though not all the participants took off their shoes at the start of the workshops, some of them opted to as the workshop progressed. The space became physically comfortable for the participants.

Sills, reflecting on works done by Spolin, notes that warm-up exercises are ways of "perceiving/sensing/ experiencing environment (space) around us. It is an actual dimension we can all enter, communicate in, inhabit and be free. Each player becomes a receiving/sending instrument capable of reaching out beyond the physical self and

the immediate environment. As water supports and surrounds marine life, space substance supports and surrounds us" (Sills, 2001: 16)

The warm-ups were of great importance to the establishment of a safe space as they led to the participants exploring things which are outside of their day-to-day routine. Ra commented, "You know we are conservative right?" This was an indication that they were not used to this form of expression. The use of the warm-ups warmed them up physically, and to the use of Image Theatre. Ru stated during our focus group discussion:

> Ru: Look we believe as trainers that physical activity unlocks a lot of stuff cause it's a natural disinhibitor that is why I think your whole process worked well it made sense I would say that you used a third of your time warming up, a third of your time doing the images and a third of your time reflecting and I think that that balance worked well but I think that at first we were a little bit wary that the warm ups were…
> Me: ... getting a bit much?
> R: They eased very nicely just at the right time
> E: I agree; felt totally the same (all nodding)
> Ru: But it is essential for your process to do that otherwise it wouldn't work. People are going to be too physically stiff …
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

Unlike *Facilitators Are Us*, the team members of *Teams Are Us* seemed anxious as we began to engage in the first schema-setting. Karp warns that 'when anxiety is high, spontaneity is low and when spontaneity is high, anxiety is low' (Holmes et al. 1994:52). The spontaneity of the participants was very low as they waited for a while before creating their images and instead of creating them simultaneously, they created them one by one (see 4.2.3). This was the first indication of the space not being safe for these participants. The second was presented in the creation of their real image. Due to the lack of honesty regarding their reality, I had to spontaneously use metaxis to engage the participants in the creation of the real image.

> …organisations are lodged within a wider environment, individuals normally work within teams. All too often, teams in business, tend to spend their time fighting for turf, maintaining the appearance of a cohesive team. People who are skilled in advocating their views are rewarded, as opposed to those who are good at enquiring complex issues.
>
> (Senge et al. 1994: 359)

Senge's words resonate with what happened at *Teams Are Us.* There was pressure on the walls in the form of posters (see figures 3.4, 3.5 & 3.6), the constant rating to see how the team scored in their Key Performance Indicators. These factors led to the team being one that represented "shining stars".

The metaxis was re-established through the hypothetical situation I gave. It described elements that were raised in a conversation I had had with the team leader when I was proposing to conduct the workshop with her team. Through using this descriptive scenario while asking them to express their perspective on such issues, the space became an enabler as the participants were able to be open and honest about the frustrating state that the team was currently experiencing. This was no longer the "Y and her shining stars" picture as presented before. The participants expressed themselves saying:

F: I feel like you wanna move forward but you feel like you're standing still and when you wanna do something everything comes down to budget and everything is budget low budget (claps hands together)
Me: Who decides on budget?
F: G, our sales manager
Me: And you feel ukuthi (that)
F: You've got so much that you want to do but there's limitations, sort of tears you down (makes gesture as if she is tearing the ten rand she held earlier)
Me: Do you feel if you were part of the decision-making team in creating the budget, it would make any difference?
F: It's not about the creation of the budget it's about the budget being utilised
Me: How so? Please explain more
F: For example if the higher power says there is money to do something like this but then your direct manager says there's no funds. It's not about being part of creating the budget it's about ukuthi (that) how do I access those funds, it's access to the funds that's the problem
Me: So who's the higher power?
F: Angithi yi (Its the) sales manager and then district manager, so the district manager says he's got the funds (pointing) maniya ku (when you go to) he's got the funds he says there is no fund
Me: So with that do you feel the organisation is working together?
E: No!
Me: Why not?
F: Because it's… supposed to filter down angithi (isn't it so) if i (the) district manager says on premise this is your budget and it sits with your sales manager. Sales manager should say fine, let me split the budget accordingly and give, let me give them responsibility over

> their own budget uyabona (you see) or some sort of responsibility over the budget so that you give your team leader I (their) budget yabo (their)so they have control so that they can make decisions nabo (as well) so that…whatever we plan here, its pointless to put a plan on paper and then it's not executed based on budget, this force' (Johannesburg, 2009)

There is a constant reference to the dependency described by Roodt (2001) in the literature review. Above the participants express the dependency that is created by the sales manager by withholding resources from the team members. Roodt (2001) argues that communication is unidirectional in South African organisations and usually top-down. It is through reflection on the state of the organisation that these matters are revealed and the participants engage in dialogue. The field of inquiry has led to the participants reaching what Senge describes as "their first crisis" as the participants are observing themselves in the image but also observing others while their team members hear underlying fragmentation. In this phase of dialogue I found that the participants did not react in the same way to what was being said and experienced by some of their team members. Y for example was aligned to the argument that F presented regarding the constraints of the budget and management style practiced by their sales manager M; J had a completely different take on this matter. When I asked them how they felt about the issues raised by their team mates they responded saying:

> M: Mina (I) personally I would like us to refrain from using the word stress I think it's stressing itself, you know, once you start adopting that word in your vocabulary
> Me: And what word would you like us to use?
> M: I don't know, I think you need to define stress; you need to define what is pressing you. If it's workload it needs to be workload, if you are tired you need to say you are tired instead of saying stress because clearly stress is so demotivating and it's… contagious once someone says stress nawe (you also) you just feel like
> Me: Is it something that's present only in teams or do you think nasekhaya mawufika (when you get home as well) eish! I'm stressed or is it only in a work situation
> M: You know what's nice about it esiZulwini asikho istress like kuZulu language alikho igama elithi(in the Zulu language there is no word to describe stress) stress maybe even in Sotho, so it's just a word you use as sort of escapism
> J: …rather say I'm exhausted. (Johannesburg, 2009)

This is what Senge refers to as the *Instability of the Container* as the team could not tell where the dialogue was heading. There were team members who now felt disoriented and perhaps marginalised. At this point, I noted that Pa was completely

silent and watched the interaction between the rest of the team. Unlike the theory presented by Senge, this did not lead to the crisis of suspension but rather heat and instability as it seems "that the fragmentation that should have been hidden" in the image of the "Y and her four shining stars" is appearing through the defragmentation and instability of the container. According to Senge:

> To manage the crisis of collective suspension that arises at this stage, everyone must be adequately awake to what is happening. People do not need to panic and withdraw, to fight, or to categorize one viewpoint as "right" and another viewpoint as "wrong." All they need to do is listen and enquire; …at this crisis, skilled facilitation is most critical. The facilitator does not seek to 'correct' or 'impose order on what is happening', but to model (in his or her own behaviour) some ways to suspend assumptions.
>
> (Senge et al. 1994: 362-363)

This seemed possible in the planning phase workshop and I understood the role I was to play as the facilitator - however this was very challenging. During this reflection, I too found myself experiencing great frustration and anxiety. Through my experience of the praxis, I had to attempt to find a balance between theory, which states that I should not seek to "correct" or "impose order on what was happening", and the practice which is what I was faced with in the workshop. For sometime I did attempt to impose order by asking open questions as opposed to making statements and in the end I asked the participants:

> Me: Ok, moving from that kena (now) a challenge to the team, instead of saying Y is stressed, M is stressed, P is stressed, J is stressed, can you each think of a word then where you can say ok laphayana (there) I am…
> Y: Frustrated
> Me: Y is frustrated
> M: That's even more (laughter)
> Me: What are you M?
> F: But M the first part we were defining something positive, la (here) we have to describe izinto ezinegative (negative things) we cannot run away from things that are negative because the picture it's limiting us, what's the word, barrier it is a barrier to our success, to us achieving something to being effective…
>
> (Johannesburg, 2009)

Ultimately the *Instability of the Container* continued for some time. Later, after the creation of the transitional image, when the space was safer, F revealed that the first image was not a representation of their real but rather their ideal:

F: I think mina (me) the first image is the ultimate goal, it's the ideal situation and the second image (which is the one created within the frame of the metaxis) is basically probably what we are going through right now and the last image is the solutions we need and then the third image is coming up with solutions.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

This was not disputed by the other members, but instead accepted as some of the members nodded in agreement. The safe space experienced by *Teams Are Us* took a while before it was established. It was not unique but present in all three organisations. Sa comments on this while reflecting with other team members during their focus group discussion that:

Sa: I was just thinking you know how many MD's do you know that would be as honest as you and Nol cause that was such an honest limping.

Am: Well I think whenever there is an open space for dialogue although we had an honesty in our company.

Am: I was about to say yes I think when there is the space you will be honest

Le: Well I think that's also what makes this group of people so special I really do. I think that people show up with their integrity

Sa: Yes but we had it in another company the fear of it was said the fear of losing the fear of financial remember.

(Johannesburg, 2009)

This ability to be honest about the current financial situation that *Facilitators Are Us* is experiencing was not a matter that Sa had expected to be so honest about however due to the space created by Image Theatre the honesty and openness was enabled. This honesty was present right from the creation of the real image at *Teachers Are Us* as the division that exists between the members of the team was revealed and acknowledged.

Perhaps due to the safety of the space, participants mentioned matters that were personal and honest at different levels in all the organisations which in their opinion, would not have happened if significant trust had not been established amongst the team. This trust was created through the sharing of personal stories, listening and being listened to, as well as the exploration of how certain situations depicted by the image could be reflected upon. In this regard, psychodrama practitioners remind us that 'when emotional content unites people, encounter is made on a profound and unforgettable level' (Holmes et al. 1994:43).

Regarding the establishment of the space, this study can conclude that the space may be established as safe for participants to express themselves with no fear by using the warm-up games and schema-setting activities. If this were not the case, the safe space may be established by the end of the creation of the transitional image.

5.1.4 Aesthetic Space

According to Boal, theatre provides a special space where those involved are able to engage in the acknowledgment of the self and the other, and in the consequent expressions of desire for change in everyday life. The theatre provides a special place for this process, one that Boal calls the "aesthetic space" (Feldhendler, in Shutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994: 94).

"Aesthetic space exists whenever there is separation between the space , of the actor (participants) and that of the spectator or when there is a disassociation between two times" (Boal, 1990: 28). This aesthetic space is thus an enabler of the metaphorical container. The games chosen for the workshop were to assist in establishing aesthetic space through the use of warm-up exercises and schema-setting activities. The use of exercises is endorsed by Shutzman & Cohen-Cruz:

> Through a series of workshop-based exercises, the human body is used as an expressive tool to represent, non-verbally, a wide repertoire of feelings, ideas, and attitudes. This versatile form reflects Boal's belief in the body as one's most essential tool in transforming physical sensations into a communicable language altering everyday space into a theatrical arena, or aesthetic space…image theatre techniques often precede forum exercises in workshop situations. They are often instrumental in creating trust and providing visceral cues regarding the themes being investigated. (1994:3)

Through the bringing in of an object in the first workshop and then later the drawing of images the last two organisations the aesthetic space was being established. This proved to be of great importance to the use of Image Theatre that followed as it was a gentle way of ushering the participant into the use of non-verbal communication and the ultimate use of Image Theatre.

The non-verbal mode of communication practiced in the space led to the participants exploring new ways of expressing themselves and engaging in a different manner of non-dialogue.

> Ru: When you say to people express yourself in words tell us how you feel people search they search and they search and often they are not confident with words then often they fall back in the same old clichés and they are nice I feel fine I feel happy I feel sad
> Le: but they have got the story that they always tell and they tell it
> Ru: Ja but when you are imaging and other people tell from our point of view from what we do in terms of dialogue in listening of body language and it gives a huge wealth of information interpreting just what is that body language in our lives just even that bent leg that foot forward what is that indicating so it creates just a far greater awareness. (Johannesburg, 2008)

According to Boal, the qualities of the aesthetic space are plasticity, dichotomy and telemicroscopy (1990:29ff). Image Theatre exposes the truth as it is – raw, uncut and unedited. The discussions which followed each session limited the analysis of this truth and at times created a space where the participants could explore this unearthed truth. Aesthetic space also provides the experience of telemicroscopy, through which human action becomes observable as if under a magnifying glass: what was far becomes close; what was small becomes large…what was invisible becomes visible; *what was unconscious becomes conscious* [own emphasis] (Feldhendler, 1994 in Shutzman & Cohen-Cruz, 1994: 94)

Telemicroscopy seems to have manifested in the *Teams Are Us* real image. Referring to the gaps identified in the real image, Sp comments saying, "I was not aware it says so much". These hints of telemicroscopy were not welcomed by some of the team members. What follows is the argument that ensued in the reflection of the ideal image (see figure 4.5)

The participants shifted in the creation of the second image which spoke whatever it was that they felt. However, they were still guarded during discussion and when asked why they had chosen to create that image, one gave a very honest answer. This participant later said, "Or it could have another meaning". The other meaning was not offered and it appeared as though he was protecting himself in case others felt offended by his honesty. One of the participants asked that his team members use

euphemisms instead of saying they were stressed. He believed the participants were opening themselves up to auto-suggestion and creating an issue which was non-existent. This led to a debate regarding the words to be used. Eventually I asked that they each present a word that could possibly replace the word "stressed". Here the aesthetic space presented the participants with what Senge refers to as the second phase in the evolution of dialogue, where the participants experience instability in the "container".

This study has found that the environment may be a limit to the amount of space available for the participants to fully express themselves using the images. However, where the space was abundant there was a free flow of dialogue within the images. Establishing a safe, aesthetic space is imperative to facilitating dialogue through the use of Image Theatre as it is an enabler of dialogue. Due to the sensitive information that was revealed, it was found once the participants had established trust through safety and the aesthetic quality of the space that telemicroscopy manifests, resulting in robust dialogue among the participants. Thus Image Theatre can be used as a tool to facilitate dialogue once the place and space have been established.

5.2 The significance of Time in the facilitation of team learning

This study found that the use of Image Theatre in organisational teams as a tool for facilitating dialogue as an approach to team learning was limited by time. In the context of this study the term *time* refers to time in the literal sense i.e. the amount of hours available to conduct the workshop.

5.2.1 Time Pressure

The lack of time, as well as its effect on learning, was an important theme for the participants and facilitator. The amount of time available was a contributing factor to the structure of the workshop. The more the time, the greater the amount of reflection available and the less tense the facilitator. The idea of spending four hours on each session was not well received by any of the gatekeepers. Thus I was constantly under

pressure to move to the following exercise, even though there was a large amount of material that I could work with from the exercise that was being explored at the time.

The amount of time spent working with the groups increased the levels of synergy. In the first image, the first organisation had spontaneous synergy as they created the image without talking about the problems the organisation was facing. All the participants had the same issues presented as the inhibiting issues that were not allowing *Facilitators are Us* to be effective.

> Le: I liked getting past the analysis, etcetera, to the physical expression of the now. It could be really honest without taking time to get clarity. It really speaks to the ways I get information and I appreciate that it makes concepts tangible.
>
> (Johannesburg, 2008)

According to Babbie & Mouton time plays many roles in the design and execution of research, aside from the time it takes to do research (2006; 92). The creation of the three images found in Image Theatre takes time; the reflections on these images takes even more time as each individual perspective is acknowledged at some point in the reflection. Reflecting on the image gave each participant an opportunity equal to the rest of the group in which they could contribute toward the discussion and thus learn from the contrasting perspectives.

This is a study that initially requested at least eighteen hours. The most amount of time that any of the organisations were willing to dedicate to the workshops was four hours with the focus group discussion included.

> Organizations impose deadlines on decisions… A host of decisions must be made quickly in order to stay ahead of the competition and keep customers satisfied. These conditions create time pressures on decision makers … (Robbins 2003; 121)

Time pressure led to two potential research sites turning down my proposal as the decision makers argued that the workshop would be too costly to the company and due to time pressure they would not be able to engage in the study. The issue of time was a constant element. Only one out of the three organisations agreed to four hours;

the other two agreed to only three. This was a limitation to the study and to team learning.

I had to decrease the amount of time allocated to investigating the use of Image Theatre or remove the focus group discussion. These were important components to the study as the one provided me with data and the other provided me with a tool to analyse the data. I opted to remove the focus group discussions in *Teachers Are Us* and *Teams Are Us* as I chose to use that time to conduct the workshop with as little time pressure as possible. Where time was available, the participants were able to fully immerse themselves in the process.

5.2.1 Adequate Time

Where four hours was available for the workshop, the results were very different to those found in the three hour workshops. *Facilitators Are Us* had a four hour long workshop followed by a forty-five minute long focus group discussion.

In the process of dialogue and team learning, tacit knowledge was later exposed at *Facilitators Are Us*. The group agreed to create a fourth image. Boal refers to this as the dynamised image. This image is the transitional image with one movement that the participants choose to move them toward the ideal image.



Figure 5.1 Transitional image



Figure 5.2 Dynamised transitional image

Above is the transitional image transformed into the dynamised image. This happened as we had time to explore the transitional image further examining how the participants could contribute to the team's progress from the real to the ideal image.

> Si: I think that there was a poignant part of the (dynamised) image for me earlier on Am when your side of the image here was on the side over here but when we went into the transitional image you

were the one that was gathering everyone into a circle to strategise and there is a beautiful moment there where you are sharing the energy where you were not leading them or dragging them but you were forming part of a circle

Am: part of them

Si: Part of the circle its no longer on your shoulders it's a shift in energies where you are no longer carrying everything it's being shared

Am: mm (Johannesburg, 2008)

Due to the available time, there was a movement in the form of dynamisation that was given to the image. This led to the team being able to engage in dialogue regarding the way forward for the team and the organisation. Below are some of the team members' movements forward according to their interpretation of the dynamised transitional image.

Am: Strategy more strategy for me

R: Victory …closure

Le: Movement forward

Am: I'm not sure what you are saying

Sa: There was part of the movement I close the deal

Me: How would you perceive this strategy?

Am: By for instance picking various ways here instead of Nol and I doing the strategy every year by including everyone in the strategy every year for instance that kind of thing. (Johannesburg, 2008)

Am says she will include everyone in the strategy meeting because of the tacit knowledge that was exposed during the reflection of the transitional image. Different roles emerged as the varying team members spoke about their likes and dislikes. As a result, team members identified varying roles they could explore which would assist in leading *Facilitators Are Us* toward the ideal image.

Am& Sa: you (L) are a spotter

Me: and in a sense that's what research does to you – it's spotting

Le: it's a kind of like I see a trend and its not a big trend it's a little trend and its generally interesting and R is good he knows the trends and sees somewhere there and he sort of kicks in and knows that dialogue is there and sometimes its just once where it worked with me where I literally picked up the phone in the office and it's the X and I know there is something about ja sorry I can't put it into words but I'm a spotter

Me: You're a spotter

L: Trend spotting

Me: And R, would you agree that you know the trends and…

Le: I think you know how too channel that trend

R: Ja I'm pretty astute. I'm a great environmental scanner we've got spotters and scanners I spend three to four hours a day on news watching listening to news
Le: See I never do that I pick up something and bam
R: I get exposure and I tend to read things then I pass information of and I phone Am and I say check this out
Am: And give statistics ja
Le: I do a similar thing but I do it with feeling its not a its not a
Sa: Tangible
R: But also because I am involved in different things I suppose I also get exposure from training to business and then to academics and so I have that constant bridge
Sa: And I am just a networker
Am: Ja all the work that we got recently
Sa: Has brought in for us (Johannesburg, 2009)

Adequate time led to the exposure of tacit knowledge, creation of meaning and the emerging of roles amongst the team members. This is not part of the three images which are the focus of the study. However, it is a component of Boal's Image Theatre (2002). Due to there being sufficient time in which the workshop could take place, we were able to collaboratively explore various aspects of the team and this led to an increased level of trust, dialogue and genuine team learning. The team learning that took place led to the members knowing more about the extent to which the organisation was suffering and being able to, for the first time, engage in dialogue regarding solutions:

Am: R had given me three great ideas …all those are such stunning ideas that I don't know how to run with I literally don't know how to clear my desk to give the time and the input because just the day-to-day running like sending proposals you know just that on that level let alone we are trying to credit all the courses I mean its taken us six weeks just to do the one course now we have four. So what I am saying is there is too much work and too little hands so what I'm say is
R: And not enough money
Sa: How come you never asked the hands that are around
Am: Well how can I ask
Sa: Yes you can
Am: To start writing proposals?
Sa: But you can ask I mean I'm very good and calling people and following up
Le: I was just thinking of that phone stuff because this is what you (Am) and Nol don't like.
(Johannesburg, 2008)

Team learning requires time to reflect on the image and this leads to the creation of the meaning attached to the image as well as the meaning received from the interpretation of the image.

> This "crisis of collective pain" is deep and challenging. It requires considerable discipline and collective trust. As areas of lack or wholeness come to the group's attention, its members begin to change, freeing up rigidity and old habits of attention and communication. Moving through this crisis is by no means a given or necessary for "success" in dialogue. Groups may need a *considerable period of time* (own italics) to develop the capacity for moving to the final level.
>
> (Senge et al. 1994:363)

With time, those who had been silent became more vocal. This led to the belief that the images allowed them to express themselves in silence and later, through the discussion. Because the silent members were part of the image, there was no escaping their input and when they were well received the first time they commented, there was an increase in the amount of dialogue that took place. The fact that the image was also a way into the conversation allowed for the more silent to have a platform from which they could contribute, simply because they were in the image and they too had an opinion and perspective to present to the group and thus with the increase of time enabling team learning as demonstrated by *Facilitators Are Us*. This resonates with the words of Michael Marquardt (and Peter Senge), as he elaborates on the discipline of team learning:

> Perhaps there is no greater demonstration of true team learning than what occurs during action learning meetings where the entire group is developing common basic assumptions, common understanding of the problem, and common growth in developing new knowledge. Usually, at the end of the action learning meeting, the group seeks to identify ways in which its learning can be applied organization wide. (1999: 83)

This is a discipline of group interaction. Through techniques like dialogue and skilful discussion, teams transform their collective thinking, learning to mobilize their energies and action to achieve common goals, and drawing forth an intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members' talents. The icon symbolizes the natural alignment of a learning-oriented team as the flight of a flock of birds. (Senge, 1999:32)

Thus the second finding made by this study is that Image Theatre can indeed be used as a tool to facilitate team learning; however time is directly proportional to the team learning. The more time there is allocated to the research, the greater the amount of team learning that takes place.

5.3 Image Theatre: An alternative mode of communication for organisations

The communication modes used by the participants in this study are similar. Technologically they use cell phones and e-mail. Top down communication is experienced by *Teams Are Us*. In answering the question as to Image Theatre being an alternative mode to the organisations' current mode of communication, this study would like to argue that Image Theatre cannot be an alternative to the organisation's current mode of communication but rather an intervention used by the organisation to establish trust, open dialogue and a creative and sensory mode of team learning. Further more this study would like to argue that Peter Senge's Evolution of Dialogue may be explored, and/or practiced, through Image Theatre.

5.4 Image Theatre as a facilitator of Peter Senge's Evolution of Dialogue

According to Senge (1990), the goal of dialogue is to open new ground by establishing a "container" or "field" of inquiry. This field of inquiry is the space in which the dialogue takes place. Image Theatre may be used as this "container".

It is through the four phases in the evolution of dialogue, that this field is established. Senge then elaborates on these four fields with the last phase leading to metalogue. Even though metalogue is not within the scope of this study, I would like to briefly explore the fourth stage of the evolution of dialogue. In contrasting and comparing the four phases to the four stages presented by Boal, I found that what Senge presented as key indicators of the dialogue evolving were present in the creation of the three images within Image Theatre. However their manifestation did not progress in a linear manner with all the organisations.

Phase One: Instability of the container

> This is where the participants (team members) bring a wide range of tacit, unexpressed differences into perspective. At this moment dialogue confronts its first crisis: the need for the members to look at the group as an entity including themselves as observers and observed.
>
> (Senge et al. 1994: 363-364)

Real Image

1. *Facilitator Are Us* presented the "unexpressed differences" and in observing the image engaged in observing themselves as the observer and the observed.

2. *Teachers Are Us* experienced a similar outcome as *Facilitators Are Us*. The manifestation of the instability of the "container" was clearer.

3. *Teams Are Us* presented an image that did not match any of Senge's phases.

Phase Two: Instability in the Container

> At this stage people might find themselves feeling frustrated, principally because the underlying fragmentation and incoherence in everyone's thoughts begins to appear. Normally this would be kept below the surface, but now it comes forward, despite the efforts of the participants to keep themselves "cool" or "together"… no point of view seems to hold all the truth any longer; no conclusion seems definitive (Senge et al. 1994:363).

Ideal Image

1. *Facilitators Are Us:* this image did not match Senge's second phase. Varying perspectives were presented of the ideal situation the team would like the organisation to reach, however in my analysis of the photo there is still dependency on external stakeholders. This however was not noted during the reflection of the image by the participants.

2. *Teachers Are Us:* the underlying fragmentation in the team still presented itself although there was coherence in the thoughts of the team. They commented on the image as looking "strained".

3. *Teams Are Us* : now presented an image that F later noted was the real image and similar to *Facilitators Are Us* and *Teachers Are Us*, this image caused considerable instability in the container.

Phase Three: Inquiry in the "Container"

> If a critical mass of people stays with the process beyond this point, the conversation begins to flow in a new way. In this "cool" environment, people begin to inquire together as a whole. People become sensitive to the way the conversation is affecting everyone in the group. New insights often emerge... This phase can be playful and penetrating. Yet it also leads to another crisis…the "crisis of collective pain (Senge et al. 1994:363).

Ideal Image

1. *Facilitators Are Us:* this image did match Senge's third phase as the participants had experienced a "cool" environment however instead of there being a crisis regarding *collective pain* there was collective hope that the team would meet again and strategise ways in which they can begin moving towards the ideal image.

2. *Teachers Are Us:* in this image the participants began to enquire as a whole with the image being one that represented the participants looking inward and engaging in collective inquiry they are now still aware of the collective pain but moving more towards hope.

3. *Teams Are Us:* in this image the participants are now in a cool environment all but one of them are facing the same direction and the one that is not is looking to enquire within the team. New insights have emerged.

Phase Four: Creativity in the Container

> If this crisis can be navigated, the distinction between memory and thinking becomes apparent. Thinking takes on an entirely different rhythm and pace. The net of words may not be fine enough to capture the subtle and delicate understandings that begin to emerge; the people may fall silent. Yet the silence is not an empty void, but one replete with richness. Yet words can also emerge here: speech that clothes meaning, instead of words merely pointing toward it. I call this kind of experience "metalogue" or "meaning flowing with." The group does not "have" meaning in its conversation. The group is its meaning. This kind of exchange allows participants to generate breakthrough levels of intelligence and creativity, and to know the aesthetic beauty of shared speech.
>
> (Senge et al .1994: 363-364)

Dynamised Transitional Image

Facilitators Are Us was the only Team with which the exploration of the transitional image took place. However in analysing the reflection that took place following the creation of the transitional image this study found that similar to Senge's *Creativity in the Container*, the transitional image led to team members of *Facilitators Are Us,* as a group, becoming the meaning. The distinction between memory and thinking became apparent as Am no longer lived under the assumption that her team mates would not be willing to work toward generating revenue for *Facilitators Are Us* without getting paid. Subtle delicate understandings began to emerge as Nol offered that she would bring positive energy into the office. It seems the meaning, similar to the metalogue, took place in the creation of the dynamised transitional image.

Even though it was not one of the aims of the study to compare and contrast Senge's evolution of dialogue to Boal's Image Theatre it has been an enabling tool in the analysis of the data as well as a framework that assisted the carrying out of the workshop in the three organisations. In relation to the research question, four findings have been highlighted in this chapter regarding the use of Image Theatre. The next chapter will conclude the study as well as consolidate the four findings and the implications they had on the study.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine how Image Theatre can facilitate dialogue as an approach to team learning in selected workplaces. The conclusions from this study follow the research questions and findings. They address four areas: (6.1) Image Theatre can be used as a tool to facilitate dialogue in corporate organisations within South African teams; (6.2) Image Theatre can be used to facilitate team learning; (6.3) Image Theatre is not an alternative to current modes of communication in organisations but rather an intervention used to establish trust, open dialogue and a creative and sensory mode of team learning and (6.4) that Peter Senge's Evolution of Dialogue may be explored and/or practiced through the use of Image Theatre as a method.

6.1 Image Theatre as a tool to facilitate dialogue in corporate organisations using South African teams.

The first major finding of this research is that the use of Image Theatre as a tool to facilitate dialogue within South African corporate organisational teams is dependant on environment which is inclusive of place and space. Place, as an aspect of the environment can be an enabler of dialogue, as well as a hindrance, when using Image Theatre. The establishment of a safe, aesthetic space is imperative to facilitating dialogue through the use of Image Theatre. The facilitation of dialogue using Image Theatre requires that the participants be in an environment that enables the optimum use of Image Theatre. This was achieved in this study through the use of warm-up games, schema-setting activities, pedagogic strategies and ultimately in the creation of the three images found in Image Theatre.

All these strategies were used in two of the organisations and omitted partially in the third. The delay in establishing a safe space in the third organisation was manifested in the creation of their transitional image. It can also be concluded that although Image Theatre has been found to facilitate dialogue by Boal, in a South African context in the corporate environment, it is imperative that Image Theatre be used only after engaging in warm-ups, schema-setting activities and pedagogic strategies, as this leads to the use of Image Theatre being optimised.

6.2. The use of Image Theatre to facilitate team learning

The second major finding was that for Image Theatre to be used as a tool to facilitate team learning, adequate time should be allocated to the process. This is due to the finding that time is directly proportional to team learning. The more time there is allocated to the workshop, the greater the amount of team learning that takes place. A major constraint placed on this research was time. This study would suggest that the use of Image Theatre in organisational teams be an on-going process as opposed to a once-off intervention. However, should this not be possible, this study has found that four hours was a most favourable time frame for the use of Image Theatre. Even though the method is applicable in a shorter amount of time, the shortest being two hours and forty-five minutes in this study, the outcomes achieved in the shorter time span were not of a high quality.

A conclusion that can be drawn is one that resonates with Freire (1979), Boal (1979), Senge (1994) and Marquardt (1999): that collaborative learning takes time and should not be rushed.

6.3. Image Theatre: not an alternative to current modes of communication in organisations but rather an intervention used to establish trust, dialogue and a creative and sensory mode of team learning.

The study's third major finding was that Image Theatre is not an alternative to current modes of communication in organisations. It was highlighted by participants from *Teams Are Us* how important a role cell-phones and computers play in their day-to-day functioning as they communicate with each other and with their clients in this manner. The use of Image Theatre, however, would be beneficial to assisting teams in establishing trust, dialogue and a creative and sensory mode of team learning.

This study would like to argue that for the optimisation of the dialogue process all the relevant stakeholders should be present in the workshop. The dialogue which took place at *Teams Are Us* was highly informative of the systematic malfunctions of the

organisation and the negative impact this has had on the team. However, due to the absence of the sales manager, who is the ultimate decision maker, this dialogue did not lead to substantial solutions to the problems being experienced by the participants.

6.4. Peter Senge's Evolution of Dialogue may be explored and/or practiced through the use of Image Theatre as a method.

This study's fourth major finding was the link made between Peter Senge's Evolution of Dialogue and Boal's method of Image Theatre. The use of Senge's Evolution of Dialogue was employed to assist the facilitator in being aware of the varying phases of dialogue and later to use these phases in the analysis of the data. Consequently, these two fundamental theories of Senge, and Boal led to the researcher's realisation that the two were not only compatible, but very comparable in principal and practice, with minor nuances in emphasis and intention. This realisation led to the researcher contrasting and comparing the two practices and finding that they are indeed highly analogous. This, however, was not in the scope of the study, but did lead to a better understanding of my experience as a facilitator in the workshops. Later, the comparison provided a better way of following the varying stages of dialogue that the teams were experiencing at the different stages of Image Theatre.

6.5 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that further studies be conducted to develop a larger database for understanding the long term benefits of using Image Theatre in organisations and/or multiple organisations.

In the light of this, the following should be considered:

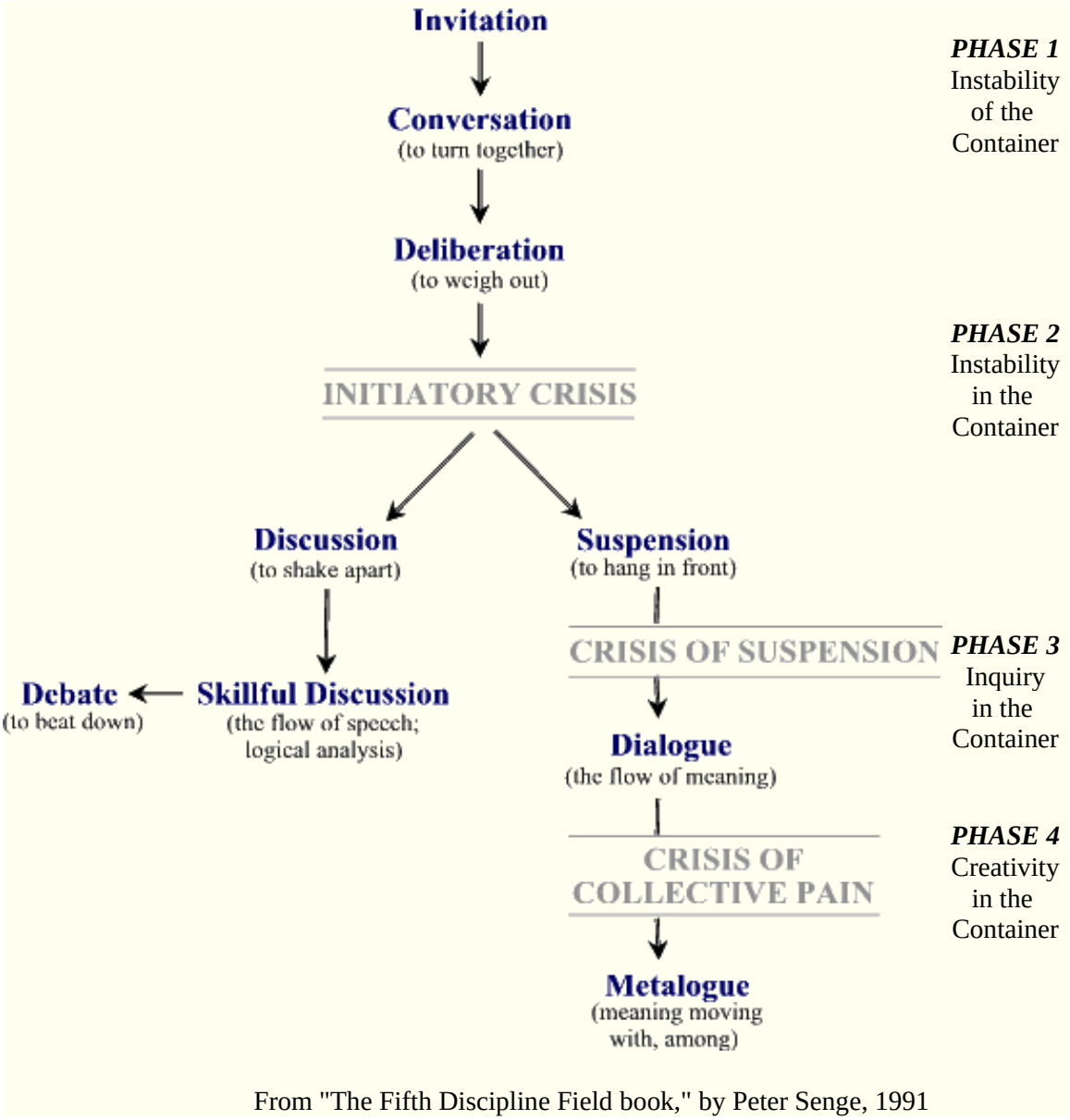
1. Based on the limitation of the current study and to correct for researcher's bias, a survey of the long term and short term benefits or short falls of the use of Image Theatre in these teams.

2. A further similar study using the same criteria should be undertaken among teams but care should be taken that all relevant stakeholders both within the team and those that the team is accountable to should be included.

3. A comparison and analysis should be undertaken to assess the recent experiences of team members who participated in the use of Image Theatre against other modes of interactive theatre interventions they may have experienced.

Appendix A: Peter Senge's evolution of dialogue

Evolution of Dialogue



From "The Fifth Discipline Field book," by Peter Senge, 1991

Real Image



Figure 4.1



Figure 4.2



Figure 4.3

Ideal Image



Figure 4.4



Figure 4.5



Figure 4.6

Transitional Image



Figure 4.7



Figure 4.8



Figure 4.9

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