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Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Composition on the Learning and Composing of Creative Writing

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree Master of Education by Research, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted prior to this for any other degree or examination at any other university.

Fatima Vally Essa

2019

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To my parents, Hoosain and Aysha

You have encouraged me to pursue a Master's degree since I was a little girl. Today, our dream has come true! This paper is dedicated to you, for your sacrifices to educate me knows no limit. Thank you for your continuous encouragement, support and love throughout this process.

To my husband, Muhammad Yamin

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A special thanks for generously funding this research in the aims to achieve educational change and social justice for the youth of our country.

ABSTRACT

This research explores the impact that multimodal composition can have on the learning and composing of creative writing. A key element of this research is to use a culturally relevant pedagogical approach to identify the impact and effect of using multimodal composition as a tool to work with epistemological resources, identities and languages that learners bring into the classroom by means of creative writing and multilingualism.

The study uses a qualitative approach to conduct the research. The research tools used for collecting data included a textual and multimodal writing intervention with a group of grade 7 learners. The intervention was conducted over a limited time of two weeks in every English period allocated to the participating class. The participants consisted of one grade 7 class, all between the ages of 12 – 13 years old. They were selected based on having a multilingual repertoire and they all came from low to middle income households. Once the multimodal intervention was completed, questionnaires and a focus group discussion was used to explore learners' perceptions and choices made during the writing process.

Theoretically and empirically, this research has attempted to bring together creative writing, multimodality and a culturally responsive pedagogy. The main findings of this study suggest that creative writing pedagogy requires a shift towards the performance/ dramatization modes. It had the potential to encourage multilingualism through oral modes whereas the textual mode was associated monomodally with English and reproduced anglonormative ideologies. Unlike the textual mode, the performance genre generated more vivid and engaging stories due to drawing on creative elements. The performance genre created opportunities for embodiment by constructing and exploring multiple identities. A limitation of this study is that the learners' did not select a range of modes to work with as they all chose the performance mode which influenced the data collected. Hence, I am not able to make broad conclusions about multimodality, but only about the performance modes. This research was a call for all educators to question if their pedagogy and approach to teaching creative writing is indeed creative at all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim/Problem statement

As children, most of us begin our early literacy journeys learning to read creative writing, particularly fiction and fairy tale genres. However, a vast number of children and adults struggle to produce works of creative writing. Many learners are judged as unskilled in literacy when experiencing difficulties in academic writing of formal essays and letters, yet school literacy is mostly based on a narrow definition of what literacy is (Weinstein, 2009). The learners are often judged according to grammar and format proficiency rather than that of engagement and interest in writing. In most cases, literacy does not expand to the kinds of multimodal literacies and languages that learners engage with daily and are relatable to them, such as online literacy forums, social media, multimedia and so on.

Writing style and language proficiency are elements that are linked to competence within schools. Educators need to understand that every learner has a unique writing style that differs from all others and are influenced by the people around them and the kinds of texts that they read (Weinstein, 2009). These writing styles could be used for a purpose such as writing poetry in the form of a rap/hip hop genre to address social and community issues. These genres are often ignored within writing classrooms and are not considered to be a part of academic writing.

Weinstein (2009) argues that academic and school writing is a form of alternative writing for the youth of today due to their adopting different forms of writing more often in their daily lives. There is often minimal link between the writing practices that they engage with at school and at home. The writing activities at school are based on formal notions of writing such as essays, friendly letters and diary entries. Some of the practices that they engage with at home are informal pieces of creative writing such as visual illustrations, writing music lyrics and conversing on social media. Through this, it is evident that there is little linkage between school and at-home writing modes and genres. She explains that learners often engage with writing that interests them

and where they can include aspects of their lives and skills to incorporate during their writing.

‘Educators, policy makers, parents, and other adults who have young people’s interests at heart have a responsibility to educate themselves, to focus not only on what kids need to be taught, but on what makes them want to learn’ (Weinstein, 2009). Therefore, it is important to create a motivation for reading and writing by including modes and languages that appeal to young learners in order to encourage them to read and write in and out of school contexts by creating a link between these two.

Like Hodges (2010), I agree that reading and writing is elusive and contested as most people struggle with it. Therefore, during this research, I have used a similar approach to Hodges (2010) in which I aim to draw on the participants’ histories, memories, perspectives and critical incidents that have shaped their identities as this makes the process of reading and writing relevant, identifiable and engaging. It also creates a motivation to write as it allows the learners to write about what they know and are familiar with. As a researcher, it provides me with insights into their lives and illustrates aspects of creative reworking and imagination used during their stories.

Children and young adults in the 21st century are accustomed to reading multimodal texts, yet school reading and writing still tends to be monomodal for reasons such as a lack of resources and a lack of knowledge and skills. The world is constantly changing due to globalisation, technology and digital spaces which have an impact on education in general, especially language, due to advances such as language merging, code-switching and translanguaging. Learners spend large amounts of time using technology and digital forums for both social and educational purposes in which they constantly engage with multimodal tools, thus identifying with the incorporation of a range of modes which are relevant both in and outside the classroom.

Andrews and Smith (2011) state that creative writing in school lacks relevance to the lives of young people and fails to engage and motivate them. Due to my own schooling experience and observations in schools, I assume that this lack of relevance, engagement and motivation stems from monomodality and the absence of a link between school content and everyday experiences and knowledge. Therefore, I am interested in identifying if incorporating multimodality into creative writing lessons will

motivate, interest and engage learners in a way that monomodal textual writing does not.

The aim of this research is to explore the impact that multimodal composition could have on learners' attitudes towards creative writing and the kinds of texts they produce. I developed and implemented an intervention with a Grade 7 class that consisted of 20 learners divided into four groups constructing collaborative multilingual short stories, followed by transforming their stories into multimodal creative writing work (audiobook, play or a visual) to illustrate that reading and writing can be extended to various modes and platforms. I analysed the impact of this intervention by means of analysing the stories and performances, analysing questionnaire responses and conducting a focus group discussion. Lastly, I identified the affordances and limitations of the different modes used during the series of lessons.

A key element of this research was to identify the impact and effect of using multimodal composition as a tool to work with epistemological resources that learners bring into the classroom during teaching in the language class through means of creative writing and multilingualism. I am not just working with learners' linguistic repertoires, but rather, a multilingual and multimodal repertoire. I intended to expand the notion of repertoire to include aspects of social, economic and cultural identities. Through this, I provided a space for the learners to express and develop a range of resources that they bring into the classroom such as identities, experiences, language and culture.

When restricted, learners develop a fear of tapping into their linguistic repertoires and resources, and eventually experience difficulty in code-switching and translanguaging or perceive it as unacceptable to use languages in collaboration with each other. Makalela (2013) has argued that traditional conceptualisations of language have been challenged by kasi-taal language practices to provide merging of African languages, also known as translanguaging and this is evident in students' and educators' daily conversations with their friends, colleagues and each other. Another issue of language segregation is that learners are not exposed to multilingualism in their writing process in schools. I would encourage learners to make use of a range of linguistic resources in the writing classroom that may develop their identity or multiple identities and explore if this form of expression affects their attitudes and writing.

The concept of multimodal composition used in this research is based on the definition by Gardner (2015), and means the combination of different modes used to communicate information. It links to the idea of drawing on the multiple resources that learners bring to the class in terms of language, modes and experiences. This definition aligns with the purpose of this study as writing is a form of expression and communicating identity during the course of this study. Ryu and Boggs (2016) added to this by arguing that 21st century literature is not confined to communication based on reading and writing in a monomodal form. Mendelowitz (2016) strengthened this by stating that we are currently facing a digital revolution in which one can re-imagine the self and the other through means of creative writing.

According to Archer (2010), from a visual to verbal mode draws on “a social semiotic metafunctional view of communication”. The same would occur between a textual and a verbal/audio mode. Meaning is dependent on both modes and the way that they are combined in relation to elements and effect. For example, tone, voice, pitch, sound effects, music and mood will impact the text. During the lessons, I observed and analysed how these elements affected the text and meaning and identify how the learners feel and react to these elements and the shift from one mode to another.

In a study conducted by Bohannon (2015), a group of first-year university learners were asked about their attitudes towards multimodal composition in writing. A majority of learners indicated that they learnt more by incorporating multimodal composition rather than just textual writing, by making use of multimodal skills in other courses and that it had increased their digital literacy skills. Clearly the university learners had a positive attitude towards multimodal composition and that it had a positive effect on their writing abilities. I determined whether the Grade 7 learners expressed the same positive attitudes. The shift towards a multimodal pedagogical approach is not simple in practice, as it comes with challenges and issues regarding both teaching, decision making and assessment. It is important to note that this study was conducted on tertiary education learners at an international university and was not focused on creative writing and multimodality, but academic discourse, which differentiates it from this study. Most of the studies that I have encountered have been conducted with either secondary or tertiary studies, which indicates a gap in the literature for studies relating to the senior-primary phase of schooling.

Despite multimodal composition and multimodality being a global trend and emerging pedagogy, I have recognised that there is a substantial body of local research on multimodal pedagogy in schools and universities within South Africa as revealed by Archer (2010); Newfield (2011); Kress (2010). However, much of this research is inadequate with regard to linking multimodality to creative writing and language. Like Weinstein (2009), I agree that there are only few studies of how marginalised learners use literacy to make sense of their social and school lives through means of academic writing, and therefore the participants in this study come from low- to middle-income households. There is a gap in creative writing and school-based writing research in South Africa, and multimodal composition lags even further behind. In relation to this gap in the literature, I have read numerous studies such as those by Andrews and Smith (2011), Archer (2010), Bohannon (2015) and Ryu and Boggs (2016), who elicited positive results when using multimodal composition, stating only the benefits. However, none of the studies engaged critically with the multimodal pedagogy itself. For the purpose of this study, I held no bias towards the use of multimodal composition, but intended to identify the affordances that it offers as well as the limitations of incorporating it during the learning and composing of creative writing.

1.2 Rationale

Creative writing has the potential to inspire, motivate and develop language, engage learners and be relevant. However, according to Andrews and Smith (2011), most school writing is problematic as it does not achieve this due to the pedagogy and resources used during teaching. Throughout my own schooling, I recognised that educators teach creative writing in a rigid and unexciting way. While at school I was expected to produce only written texts during writing lessons, thus rendering the lesson monomodal. I was usually given a written topic or picture in which I was required to write a creative writing piece by using the process of planning, first draft and final piece. No explanation or triggers were given, besides the educator placing emphasis on the required format of the task. For example, he or she would continuously repeat the format of a friendly letter without discussing what content or context would be interesting to write about.

I was required to work individually on tasks resulting in no collaborative triggers, discussion and support by peers. The lesson was always in English and despite a

multiracial and multicultural group of learners, we were always expected to speak and produce work in English. In most instances, the educator was my audience and this had a negative effect on my writing as it limited my creativity, imagination and motivation as I became consumed with writing factual information in a scripted manner and was afraid of being creative and imaginative due to the rigid assessment criteria used by the educator.

Years later during my experience as a student teacher, I observed that old methods of teaching and producing creative writing still exist. These include the rigid ways in which I was taught creative writing. I recognised that my attitude towards creative writing pedagogy was similar to that of the learners that I taught. The traditional and conventional method of the way that it was taught became unappealing, which was mostly described as 'boring' by many of the learners. While individual work allows for independence and precise indication of understanding among learners, it limited my involvement as an educator, and in some instances, represented an imbalance of participation among learners.

I observed no form of collaboration, sharing ideas and learning from each other during the lessons during my school visits as a student teacher. Traditional methods of teaching creative writing lead to none or minimal motivation, purpose and relevance for learners to put much effort into the task or enjoy writing. In some instances, I observed that the learners wrote anything that came to mind just so that the task could be over. This was alarming to me as I would like to make learning meaningful and productive. I am interested in identifying the impact on creative writing, learners' attitudes and classroom dynamics if educators update their teaching strategies and skills to suit the 21st century and inspire learners by creating an interest in writing and a rich range of writing styles.

Creative writing is an important aspect of the language curriculum as it can be used to teach both language and literacy to learners. It is a tool that I have used productively during my tertiary study, which has had a positive influence on more than just my writing. It has developed my confidence, voice, imagination and different styles of writing (academic, creative and social forms). Writing for the FunDza audience during my undergraduate and honours writing course has developed my writing context as I have learnt to write for a local audience with elements that can be relatable to a

majority of readers with the aid of content, characters, culture and language. My concept of voice was developed over each piece of writing as the characters' voice came across more strongly and more developed in each piece of writing, as well as a development of the narrative, beginning from one that is light hearted and ending with a serious emotional piece of writing.

My imagination and creativity around each topic selected was affected by the age group of my audience, leading me to structure the lesson accordingly. With practice and peer discussions in class, I learnt to write for my audience, which transformed the plot, language usage and imagination to cater for those who were targeted to read my work. Imagination in terms of constructing a plot for each piece of writing removed constraints and gave me structured freedom to develop my ideas as a writer (Mendelowitz, 2016). The freedom provided by audience and imagination developed my cognitive thinking and emotional engagement. It gave me the opportunity to write about what was interesting and relevant to me, rather than the usual school topics which read: "Write a friendly letter to your grandmother telling her about your holiday." In some cases, many learners like myself could not afford to go on a holiday, thus leaving the topic not relatable and creating negative feelings towards the task.

Writing during my tertiary studies and as an educator has had a positive effect due to the fluidity of exploring it in multimodal ways such as on social media or during my teaching experience, as I have gained knowledge about diverse creative ways of expression in the form of textual platforms, audio, kinaesthetic and visually in the form of art, print and digital media. Due to technology, instant publication and reaching different audiences has been beneficial in terms of building a support structure, obtaining writing exposure and both critical positive and negative feedback, which has developed my point of view and consideration for my writing audience.

Through these experiences, I believe that modern modes of writing and exposure to different writing forums such as the FunDza site is a vital form of writing that could possibly be incorporated into teaching in a dynamic way in order to create a maximum outcome for learners which may produce lifelong learners and readers. It incorporates elements of their daily lives in the form of modal experimentation and production which may harness skills and talent to produce influential writers. Encouraging the production of lifelong readers can be suggested in the hopes that it has a positive effect on South

Africa due to the large number of illiterate youth and adults which continues the cycle of poverty and economic inequality. I emphasise the word ‘creative’ in the term creative writing and question whether writing in schools is really creative at all.

1.3 Research questions:

What is the impact of a multimodal composition intervention on the writing produced by Grade 7 learners?

- What are the affordances and limitations of collaborative textual writing?
- What are the affordances and limitations of incorporating multimodal composition into the teaching and production of creative writing?
- How can multimodal and collaborative composition contribute towards exploring and expressing identity and existing linguistic and social resources?

1.4 Conclusion

The reasons for conducting this dissertation have been discussed in the aims and rationale of this study. In the next chapter I discuss the literature and key concepts that are relevant in outlining a structure for this research. Thereafter, the methodology, analysis and interpretation of data and final conclusions will be discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is based on a discussion of the literature that has informed this research. During this chapter I explore the literature and key arguments that exist within the context of this research. I discuss the use of multimodality and multimodal composition within an English home language creative writing class and the known impact that it has on writing. The literature is discussed in the following categories:

1. Creative writing and imagination;
2. Multimodality and multimodal composition;
3. A collaborative multimodal model;
4. Writing as a culturally responsive pedagogy; and
5. Language in the writing classroom.

2.1 Creative writing and imagination

There is an ongoing debate around the definition of creativity as it cannot be decided if it is a process or product, or if it is based on elitist notions of creativity or a dramatic view (Cremin & Myhill, 2012). I believe that it is both a process and product as a creative process may lead to a creative product, and this idea is explored during this study. I would like to identify if creativity is innate or whether all learners can learn to produce better creative writing in the right environment and with suitable pedagogies such as a culturally responsive pedagogy that draws on existing resources such as experiences and language. This links to my main argument that multimodal composition has the potential to be more inclusive for a bigger range of learners as they can draw on a broader range of resources.

> If we accept that almost all writing can be approached creatively, then we should be establishing classroom environments which explore the possibilities of ideas and the possibilities of language to express these ideas (Cremin and Myhill, 2012: 24).

Cremin and Myhill (2012) suggested that writing can facilitate both the generation of ideas and the means of expressing these ideas, hence enabling learners' creative and cognitive development. Any writing within the classroom can be approached creatively with creative pedagogy and motivation by the educator, for example incorporating collaborative group work for a monomodal task, or conducting a lesson in which learners can illustrate a writing product in a variety of creative modes. The quoted passage suggests that the educator is a facilitator and mediator for creative inputs and outputs. Educators are required to draw on aspects of their training and theoretical knowledge, to provide learners with classroom environments that create opportunities to explore and express creativity, and not restrict the formulation of creative ideas.

Newfield (2011) states that creative writing classrooms can become more participatory and agentive by addressing the forms of representation in which children make meaning. Cremin and Myhill (2012) and Andrews and Smith (2011) both draw on the idea that all genres have the potential for creative writing, including transactional genres, and we should not limit creative writing to fictional writing. In the attempt to produce creative outputs, educators could teach by using creative approaches and draw on aspects of their environment and identities of learners as this may possibly demonstrate both creative inputs and outputs.

Newfield (2011) observed a classroom in which the educator encouraged learners to draw on their existing knowledge, resources and semiotics in which it created a link between in- and out-of-school learning. A similar approach was used during my research. These learners were asked to make use of modes that they used daily such as oral, visual and performance which was aligned with school curriculum. By doing this, the learners elicited feelings of excitement and strengthened representational and communicative repertoires. It is important to create a classroom environment which offers diverse creative possibilities for learners to explore unlimited imagination and ideas.

Imagination and creativity are commonly interchangeably used. However, imagination is located within philosophy while creativity is a concept of psychology (Mendelowitz, 2014). Imagination is defined as "a mental function that synthesises creativity, cognition and affect" (Vygotsky, 2004). From this Vygotskian perspective, Mendelowitz (2014) stated that "imagination is foregrounded as the act of mind that generates

creativity". Therefore, imagination is a key component to creative writing and the production of a creative output. As cited by Mendelowitz (2016), Vygotsky (2004) stated that imagination is central to intellectual development, higher thinking levels and emotional development which are central to the aims of language educators.

The creation of new ideas is dependent on imagination; therefore, imagination generates creativity and these two terms can be used interchangeably. Imagination serves as a way to engage learners and sustains their attention by allowing facts, ideas and fiction to 'come to life'. Imagination is dependent on initiative and allows for dynamic teaching and learning by synthesising ideas and allows learners to create links between disjointed information which offers new pathways for creative writing pieces (Hooks, 2010).

Educators who wish their learners to expand their horizons and think creatively require an explicit understanding of what creativity is in order to maximise the benefits of teaching (Hodges, 2010). Theoretically, educators are required to create unique pedagogical approaches to teaching writing that are creative, and which may possibly be accomplished by incorporating multimodal tools into teaching. Through this, multimodality and multimodal composition enhances creativity through means of expressing ideas and writing in various ways that are considered to be 'new literacies' which are based on writing visually, through audio or digitally.

Learners require a supportive space when cultivating voice during their writing. Grainger et al. (2005) argued that in order to develop creativity in writing, pedagogy requires an expansion in the minds of educators as to what constitutes writing. The writing process needs to be extended and the processes such as planning need to include diverse possibilities and contexts. This idea is central to my research as it aims to include diverse possibilities and contexts by adding an instruction of a local context to writing. Grainger et al. (2005) recommended that multimodal elements be included from the planning stages which can be combined with textual imaginative contexts.

According to Mendelowitz (2014), current research shows that nurturing an educator's creativity, may improve their practice as teachers of writing. Thus, there is a pedagogical need for change when teaching creative writing as these modes render creative possibilities limitless. For example, the transformation of textual writing to

audio and kinaesthetic during the production or video of a play allows the content to ‘come to life’ in a different way than a text-based version. Despite the benefits of incorporating imagination into pedagogy, it is often and almost always overlooked by educators who focus on the production of factual information through the mode of text.

Vygotsky (2004) argued that imagination develops with experience, thus, stating that adults have a more developed imagination than children. He explains that imagination is dependent on the resources accessible to an individual and the richer the resource, the more creative and imaginative one can be, provided that these resources are accessed. Imagination in schools is constructed as being the binary opposite of rigorous intellectual work, and in higher grades is given less attention. Toddlers and adolescents are encouraged to explore imagination; however, as they grow up, imagination is frowned upon due to the fear of it impeding factual or academic knowledge or imposing on maturity.

The relationship between imagination and reality is complex. Vygotsky (1967) stated that imagination and reality are linked because everything created by one’s imagination is based on elements of reality. Therefore, a person’s imagination is expanded based on their experiences of reality. The more exposure one has and access to existing resources such as language, community and culture, the more depth and richness their imagination contains. Due to this link of reality and imagination, it is evident that creativity and imagination are a part of daily lives and experiences.

Vygotsky (2004) provided a model for understanding imagination and creative activity within human activity. The first was reproduction of a memory, such as prosthetic memories, which are drawn upon later in this study. It involves retelling or reproducing a memory that has already occurred, thus not creating anything new. The second is creative reworking, which is taking something such as a memory that exists and changing it to create new ideas and experiences, thus producing something new out of what already exists. This concept is also discussed further in the data section.

While there are benefits to incorporating multimodal composition into the teaching of creative writing as it has the potential to promote creativity and imagination, Hooks (2010) argues that excessive digital screening impedes learners’ creativity. Learners

become accustomed to receiving creative information rather than using it as a source to generate new ideas and develop their imagination. Because of this, I argue that multimodal composition can have both positive and negative effects on the creativity and imagination of learners, and it is important to select relevant forms of multimodality for the teaching of content and use it as an aid to teaching in conjunction with teaching methods, curriculum and content rather than a solution to creative problems in the classroom.

Despite learners making use of a variety of modes outside the classroom, language teaching tends to be monomodal in most instances. Stein (2003) stated that multimodal pedagogy can express creativity in unexpected ways. Learners are familiar with and use on a daily basis forms of multimodality and merge different modes to create meaning. For example, they may merge text with audio or they could merge text with visual art on social media platforms. Such practices draw on creativity and by including them in the classroom, learners can access a range of skills and creativity which can be used to merge non-academic practices with academic content.

Stein (2003) argued that resemiotisation is the key in unleashing creativity and reshaping knowledge. This is a concept that was worked with during this research in the form of transforming a text from one mode to another. As a text and ideas are developed from one mode to another, unexpected and unanticipated creations and findings emerge (Bock, 2016). For example, details in texts can take on colours, movement and sound, thus making meaning and semiotics fluid due to the creative nature of it and due to this, in multimodal and semiotic texts, creativity is valued.

2.2 Multimodality and multimodal composition

Andrews and Smith (2011) defined multimodal composition as the compilation and incorporation of various multimodal resources in the classroom, for example textual, audio, visual and kinaesthetic/gestural. Multimodal does not necessarily mean digital technology or multimedia, although it may include some elements of it. It is a combination of different modes used for communicating information (Gardner, 2015). A multimodal approach acknowledges the meaning-making resources in human life which are textual, visual, audio and kinaesthetic/spatial (Newfield and d'Abdon, 2015). These modes work together to create meaning. Every mode does not have to be used

together to incorporate multimodal composition into pedagogy. However, it is important to learn how to engage with each mode and how it can be used together to bring meaning to a text (Gardner, 2015).

In terms of writing development, it is important to note that textual writing is only one mode and that it intersects with many other modes to construct a repertoire of multimodality and multimodal composition possibilities (Andrews & Smith, 2011). One needs to note that the relationship between writing and other modes varies depending on style, intention and purpose. It is the educator's decision to decide which modes can be used together to maximise meaning-making and understanding of the content. Educators and learners must consider what their intended message is and how they intend to communicate an effective message by combining multimodal elements of their choice.

Multimodal composition is inclusive of the role of the body and senses (Newfield, 2011). This involves meaning-making through signs. This results in a shift away from traditional monomodal approaches which are based on language as a primary mode of learning and teaching. The movement away from monomodal pedagogy to a multimodal pedagogy moves away from the focus of language as a primary mode of teaching and learning, and now in addition includes the role of sensory and bodily practices (Newfield, 2011). Language is still present and by no means does multimodality exclude the use of language as it incorporates it with other modes; however, other modes are foregrounded such as audio, visual and kinaesthetic and these are sometimes used in conjunction with language or text.

According to Newfield (2011), 'multimodality enables cognitive, social and affective participation through expanding the semiotic space of the classroom'. The incorporation of multimodality and semiotic modes allows for communication in ways other than the sole use of language. It includes movement, embodiment, facial and body expression, languages, audio, text and visual aspects. Each mode of storytelling is not the same, despite narrating the same story (Newfield, 2011). This is due to bringing in aspects of body movement, audio or visual, as each mode may illustrate a different meaning despite the content remaining the same.

The inclusive nature of a multimodal approach takes into account out-of-school literacy practices and draws on the resources that the learners bring into the classroom. Resources used in different modes of storytelling draw on a variety of experiences and identities such as school learning, community experiences, social experiences and the media. These all form a specific identity that the learner adopts during the storytelling.

Not much emphasis has been placed on how modes have influenced texts in various disciplines. In schools, aspects of multimodal texts have implications for how multimodal composition is used to teach writing to learners. Each multimodal aspect has a different function and carries out a different meaning (Archer, 2010). For example, let us think about a simple poster that includes visual and textual elements. The text and visual/image provide meaning and this meaning is influenced by the font, spatial effects, sequence and colour. Both the textual and visual image on the poster work together to form a coherent meaning by either complementing each other or contradicting each other.

Images have become increasingly important in academic discourse due to it having impactful meaning. A dependency relation exists between the textual and visual mode (Archer, 2010). Visual mode is not limited to pictures and drawings. It includes special features, font, colour and size and the gestural/kinaesthetic mode is based on any movement of the body or language that is part of the communication process (Gardner, 2015). For example, word movement on a PowerPoint presentation is considered to be a kinaesthetic mode. Students need to be equipped with skills to understand and engage with multimodal composition. In many instances within Africa, due to poverty and low incomes, many schools lack the funding and resources to expose their learners to a vast range of 21st century literacy equipment such as the iPad, computers or reading stations that consist of audiobooks. This limitation of exposure tends to continue the cycle of literacy being confined to textual books.

Over the years literacy has expanded globally to become more than just reading and writing textually. It has evolved into multiple forms of multimodality to illustrate meaning such as multimedia, visuals, sound and movement (Kress, 2010; Miller & McVee, 2012). This change is significant to many learners worldwide as their lives have been shaped by new literacy practices that they engage with on a constant basis which

include forms of social media, mobile phones and digital technologies that bind them in a social culture of continuous meaning making (Miller and McVee, 2012).

Miller and McVee (2012) stated that critiques of schooling indicate that school disengagement and a lack of motivation in school learning are based on multimodal and multi-literacy practices that occur out of school. This is due to school learning not being designed for the 21st century learner in which they can make multimodal links between in-school and out-of-school learning due to the literacy modes and content that is being used. Many learners are excited and engage daily with devices that involve visual, audio and kinaesthetic modes such as the internet, mobile phones and computers. These need to be incorporated to provide a basis of interest, motivation, understanding and link to everyday knowledge that the learners possess. During this study, the learners were instructed to transduce the story into any mode of choice (visual, audio or kinaesthetic).

Transduction involves the representation and reforming of the resources available (Newfield, 2013). It can also be called transmodal meaning making, which is about designing meanings and ideas across different modes and languages (Newfield, 2009). It occurs when sign makers transform and design new meanings from what is available to them in their environments. Therefore, the learners are regarded as sign makers who transform content using semiotic action rather than using a pre-existing system, like text-based writing. They used transformation by changing the language used as well as the mode. This categorises the learners as agents of change and creativity.

When students shift from one mode to another, cognitive activity is required. This may be a challenge to many learners as cognition is not easy. Transduction activities enable critical thinking in many instances, as the learners have to consciously decide what content to foreground and convey meaning. Through this, they are able to critically explore issues of power and equality by means of changing modes. The use of transduction and critical literacy involved in this process aligns with the New London Group (1996) suggestion that multimodal instruction should consist of a transformative agenda which is ‘to redesign social features of young people across boundaries of difference’ (Jewitt, 2008).

Multimodal composition used in higher education is linked to access and power. Access varies in different faculties; for example, in humanities learners engage with four kinds of systems, namely 'the English language, academic discourse, modality and lastly visual and metalanguage of critical analysis' (Archer, 2010). Through this, it is evident that access needs to be thoughtfully facilitated and selected during teaching as it affects the meaning-making of a text. Unfortunately, underprivileged communities are limited in their access to some forms of technology for primarily economic reasons.

However, multimodal tools go beyond just digital aspects and educators can find multimodal tools within their environment such as pictures, music and physical props. These can be used in a creative way to provide learners with inspiring and motivational literacy and creative writing lessons in order to develop their use of reading, writing and speaking. Text-based, multimodal writing and meaning-making become fluid and are shaped by the mode used and how the reader interprets it. For example, words can be reinforced and enacted through digital sound which can change meaning due to the tone of voice and pace of the reader (Andrews & Smith, 2011).

While multimodality is not confined to technology, it is important to illustrate these as examples of new literacies to learners, as in many instances they engage with technology in the form of laptops and cell phones on a daily basis and may be used to link in- and out-of-school literacy practices. In many cases within Africa, resources for literacy and multimodality are limited due to poverty and a lack of resources by the state, which marginalises some learners. This exclusion of modern learning disadvantages them by not providing them with the skills to engage in modern global literacy practices. However, this does not limit their creativity as surrounding resources can be used to engage in multimodal practices and multimodal literacy.

As a 21st-century movement, many creative writers use technology and multimodal composition as a form of storytelling or narratives and these are used to create meaning (Kress, 2010). The same modes exist in the learners' daily activities which consist of literacy based on a range of devices, including traditional ones such as magazines, billboards, social media and audio books. The revolution of multimodal practices as an emerging literacy practice has changed the way that we think, communicate, read and write, due to breaking down traditional literacy boundaries that once existed.

Multimodal composition is an emerging pedagogy among educators at various levels of education, while some still prefer to use traditional methods due to a fear of technology or not knowing how to use it. I assume that educators who shy away from the use of multimodal composition lack specific aspects of motivation, relevance and creativity in their teaching of creative writing. This is a disadvantage to their learners due to a lack of multimodal exposure. It is important for educators to make multimodal composition explicit in terms of its purpose, meaning and effect during teaching as learners often use multimodality unconsciously for a range of different purposes (Archer, 2010). For example, on the social platform called Instagram, learners may not be conscious of their use of multimodal composition when uploading an image with the inclusion of a textual and/or emoticon caption. Learners need to be aware that every mode has different functions that influence the meaning of the text.

Kress (2010) states that the affordances which are physical, material and social for each mode generate a specific logic by providing different representational and communicative potentials of expressing and understanding information. Developing teaching practices is essential for pedagogical development, which can be achieved through educator intervention programs in which educators are taught multimodal skills and theories to incorporate in their teaching. While all text (mono- or multimodal) has the potential to be convincing, imaginative and creative, each mode has its own distinctive affordances that educators can leverage and capitalise on to ensure that a range of learning styles and intelligences are catered for and accommodated (Gardner, 2015). This can be accomplished by the incorporation of both monomodal and multimodal composition in the classroom, which is making use, in creative way, of a range of monomodal or multimodal tools which may be textual, visual, audio or kinaesthetic.

Multimodality opens up the classroom to a semiotic space (Newfield, 2011). Due to the flexible and varied nature of multimodal composition, it has the potential to engage learners deeply and to encourage their expression of imagination, voice and creativity by using different modes, languages and their bodies to create meaning. By making use of embodiment and signs during teaching and learning, learners build up their confidence, engagement with text, find motivation for writing and they develop encouragement to take agency for their learning (Newfield, 2011).

Every learner prefers a different mode more than others and inhabits each mode differently (Stein, 2008), thus making it difficult to cater for each learner's modal preference throughout every lesson. Stein (2008) describes the shift from performance to textual mode as a profound loss due to moving from an embodied to disembodied form of text. This is due to how the participants in his research portrayed and expressed the text in both modes. Due to this finding, I adapted the process of modal transduction by first allowing the learners to begin with a written text, followed by a transformation to the oral/performance genre.

2.3 A collaborative multimodal model

New kinds of literacies have been extended in the form of multimodal texts based on textual, audio, visual and kinaesthetic (Ryu & Boggs, 2016). It may be challenging to decide how, when and what multimodal composition tools to incorporate into lessons. It is important to note that every learner learns differently and prefers different learning modes. However, the use of multimodal composition should not be sanitised so that the content and critical understanding of the lesson is lost. Each mode contributes differently and is used for a different purpose. Therefore, the educator should carefully decide which will contribute the best intended meaning and purpose without losing focus on the content. When teaching creative writing, there cannot be one model that is used in a classroom with regard to creativity as the fluid nature of creativity and meaning provides a means of experimentation and a chance to incorporate a range of models into pedagogy (Mendelowitz, 2014).

Andrews and Smith (2011) and Gardner (2015) stated that it is no longer possible to receive teaching within the English language in a monomodal system, specifically only in a textual print mode. Writing cannot be monomodal. Multimodal texts are all around us even if we do not recognise them (Gardner, 2015). For example: a magazine cover consists of textual, special, linguistic and visual modes of communication. This is because the writing could contain different fonts, sizes and be presented in different modes which allow the reader and writer to use their imagination during the reading process to create meaning of the text by using a range of different elements. These elements allow for interpretation of the text and meaning to be fluid.

Below is an example of a multimodal literacy model which can be implemented in classrooms to aid with new ways of reading and writing. It is based on a 21st century ideology of literacy which may be used individually or collaboratively. The model is as follows:

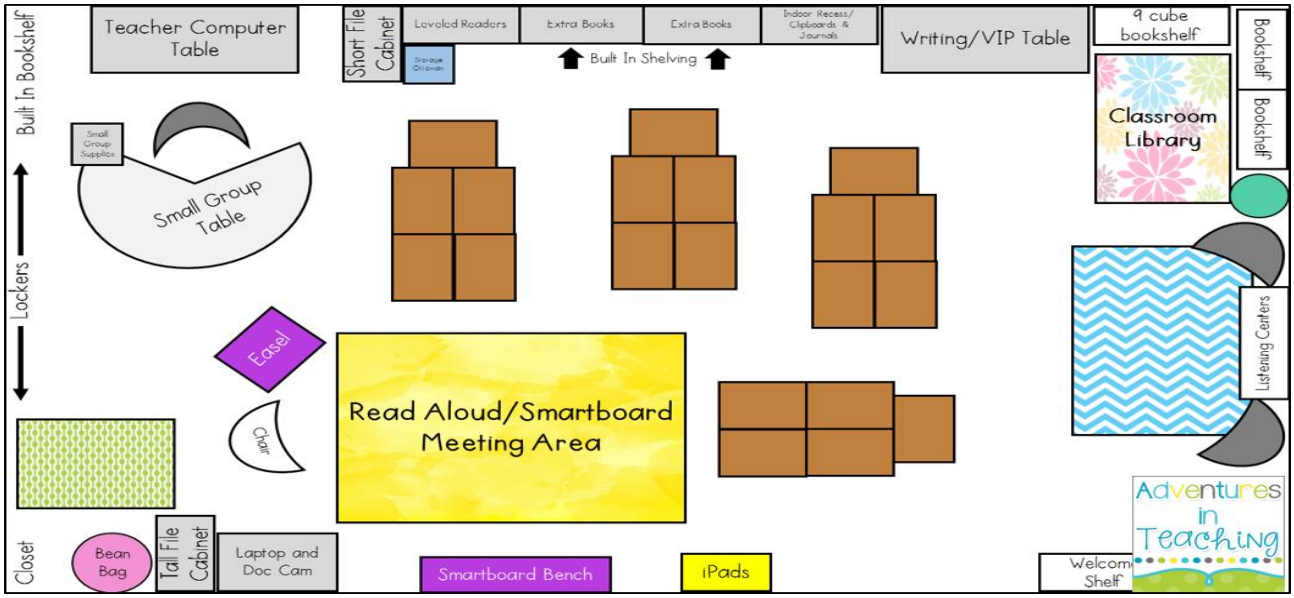


Figure 2.1: Multimodal Classroom Model

Source:http://4.bp.blogspot.com/iIALSqRsxiA/VX8goTLUuGI/AAAAAAAAENI/gaj7y8bgnKc/s1600/layout%2Bcolor%2Band%2Blabels.png - Retrieved on: 12 June 2016

The model illustrated above incorporates a range of multimodal composition options which include textual, audio, visual and kinaesthetic modes with specific focus on an emerging pedagogy, namely digital literacy. This is due to drawing links between at-home and school literacies in which many learners make use of reading and writing on iPads (Apple-specific) and laptops (less limited in terms of operating systems). Traditional modes of reading such as textual books are also available on the bookshelf, while learners who prefer audio books can access these via the smart board. The writing table allows learners to express their ideas in the form of text or visuals and can be used as a space for developing and planning texts. This mode is modern and caters for both individual and collaborative lessons.

Like every other model, the above has advantages and disadvantages. However, this model can be adapted to suit the needs and requirements of every classroom as it involves both digital and non-digital resources such as a writing centre/table in which learners can work on their creative writing or drawing skills. Recently, multimodal

resources to form multimodal composition have become easily available. These resources challenge all aspects of traditional writing pedagogy as they allow for creativity, limitless imaginative possibilities and break and cross boundaries to form hybrid genres and modes which are expressed in an original way (Andrews & Smith, 2011).

Multimodal composition, specifically digital, makes creative writing easily accessible to read and self-publish on online forums, which is an advantage of incorporating it into teaching. It may create knowledge and exposure about the online community and teach learners to use this to their advantage. This creates virtual experiences and content in which a digital audience is targeted and relationships can be constructed in terms of feedback and reviews which eliminate the traditional power structure of having the educator as the audience (Andrews & Smith, 2011). People online or even learners within the classroom can share ideas and assist others in terms of their writing through online forums. Through this, writing shifts from private to public, making it a collaborative process.

Making multimodal composition models accessible to learners both during and after classwork is essential to explore and investigate meaning (how these texts elicit a different response to different modes), features, elements and the purpose of using them. According to Bohannon (2015), teachers seek out new ways of teaching and learning and try to provide similar spaces for their learners. I investigated if this is true during my study. I drew on the work of Andrew and Smith (2011), Gardner (2015) and Mendelowitz (2016). Cremin and Myhill (2012) argued that educators need to establish classroom environments that facilitate conditions for creativity and writing. A new way of providing creative opportunities and spaces for learners can be accomplished by incorporating multimodal composition into the classroom setup to create exposure for learners.

Bohannon (2015) identified that educators need to transform their learning styles and approaches to meet the needs of learners as they locate themselves in digital spaces for both academic and social discourses. Through this, there is a chance for the content to ‘come to life’ through the use of images, pictures, sound and video which can be accessed through the smart board, iPad or computer station. All of these can be used collaboratively by means of group work for maximum potential learning as

many can learn to use these devices together through sharing ideas, information and producing joint content. This consists of both an academic and social discourse.

A child develops cognition when interacting with a more able member of society (Storch, 2005). Collaboration gives learners the opportunity to gain ideas from each other and provide each other with feedback. The more expert assistance they receive, the more potential development they may have. Thus, groups consist of learners with different potential levels and have the opportunity to stretch cognitive development through means of interaction, sharing of ideas and assisting each other by means of reviews and constructive criticism. A social constructivist perspective encourages learners to interact with each other and co-construct knowledge through collaborative writing products.

Despite a limited amount of pair and group work that exists in writing classrooms, advantages pertaining to peer reviews have been noted. Peer reviews have raised awareness about audience and it may help learners develop critical and analytical reading and writing skills (Storch, 2005). The use of peer reviews has created a shift from the educator to their classmates. This encourages reflective thinking during the creative writing process and consideration when making writing decisions. However, there is a disadvantage in peer review as there is emphasis placed on the product of writing rather than the process of writing (Storch, 2005). Those who are tasked with peer reviews might focus on grammatical errors and word levels which leaves the writer disadvantaged and having to consider important aspects such as writing style and character development by themselves. However, this depends largely on the ways in which the educator has set up peer review and the classroom discourses. Another disadvantage is the issue of preference to work individually or collaboratively which varies within a classroom.

As cited in Storch (2005), many scholars such as Daiute (1986) and Wells, Chang and Maher (1990) have stated that when trying to develop skills in an L1 language, collaboration is essential throughout the writing process. This ensures that each learner assumes a joint responsibility for the produced text, thus developing skills to collaborate productively about decisions such as plot, language and structure, which may lead to creating a good end product.

During analysis of data collected by Storch (2005), it was noted that learners who work collaboratively produce better academic scores than those who work individually. Those who wrote individually added too much unnecessary detail to their work instead of writing creatively, whereas those who wrote collaboratively had less detail but generated clearer insights and extracted the most vital information which was expressed with linguistic complexity. Collaborative texts produced better grammatical accuracy due to paying attention to feedback on language and assuming joint responsibility for the text which makes peer suggestions acceptable and open for change.

Just like monomodal approaches, all lessons that include multimodal composition cannot be collaborative. However, for those which are collaborative, group seating allows for social and academic interaction through assistance with these devices which provides an opportunity for learners to learn from each other. Writers groups work best because they include collaboration, group dynamics and are time efficient (Vandermeulen, 2011).

However, this statement is not always true, as there are affordances and limitations to peer response and feedback groups. They allow participants to learn from each other in smaller groups which can serve as a safe space to share ideas and contribute to the task at hand. However, there are a number of potential limitations. In some cases, group work can create an imbalance of contributions among learners as well as elicit negative feedback that is not constructive. Another limitation of group work is that the role of the educator becomes limited, and he or she serves a minimal role in guiding and teaching which may be a disadvantage for learners who are experiencing difficulties with the task at hand or for those who seek the educator's approval (Vandermeulen, 2011).

Vandermeulen (2011) believes that for introductory/beginner writers in a tertiary context, peer groups should offer questions to the writer and explain their responses to the text from a reader response perspective rather than in evaluative mode, for example, to explain what they enjoyed about the text or where they were confused about an aspect. This reader response process removes the element of formal assessment, thus allowing for meaningful feedback in the form of foregrounding reader response and meaning-making process that focus on the creative elements of writing,

namely the meaning that has been conveyed, creativity, imagination, voice and audience. This allows the writer to question and reflect on their work publicly which may create clarity for the group members and themselves.

Jeffrey and Woods (2003) have found success in creative learning within co-participative classrooms which is an inclusive environment or space in which learners and the educator discuss, explore issues and reflect on their thinking during the process. Such an environment deals with collaborative activities, sharing of ideas and expressing some notion of structured freedom to explore topics that are relevant to the curriculum. Structured freedom facilitates intellectual and affective engagement and the possibility of cognitive and imaginative engagement (Mendelowitz, 2010).

Mendelowitz (2016) found that working with groups of tertiary students to write a collaborative four-chapter story for FunDza had both positive and negative effects such as power struggle conflicts, while others viewed it as productive collaboration and formation of ideas. While the FunDza stories resonated with the majority of learners, some of them struggled to write about their familiar context in a creative way. There were some learners who did not identify with the content, context and audience as it was unfamiliar to them. Many schools are focused on the production of normative and conformed productions of work. However, these are traditional aspects which do not correspond with the linguistic backgrounds, interests and varied emerging communication methods that learners are accustomed to (Dagenais et al., 2017).

The main disadvantage is access to multimodal composition that is technologically advanced, as this is a financial barrier and also a skills barrier as many educators are not equipped and do not have the required knowledge to use these tools. This results in marginalisation and exclusion of those who do not have access and are not able to understand this technological advancement. A solution to this would require educator training for both pre-service and in-service educators of all learning areas in multimodal composition and technology usage. While advanced technology is expensive, it is not a key element to multimodal composition as it is only one area of it. Multimodal composition can be achieved through means of combining imaginative resources into teaching in the form of textual writing, audio tapes/books, theatre production, singing, dance, art, computers and cell phones.

Mendelowitz (2014) stated, there cannot be one model for a classroom that provides imaginative and creative opportunities, but due to the fluid nature of creativity, educators may use a range of elements from different classroom models to cater for and enhance the exposure and learning tools for their learners which may possibly inspire creativity.

2.4 Writing as a culturally responsive pedagogy

> Giving children equitable opportunities to represent their worlds – their voices, cultures, histories, feelings and opinions – in the modes and languages they choose and feel comfortable with is an educational right: it is part and parcel of how children's rights to basic education needs to be reconceptualised (Stein, 2008:42)

Stein (2008) believes that pedagogy requires a change which includes the use of home languages, identity and different modes. Stein's concern with use of learner's home language and identities resonates with culturally relevant pedagogy. Culturally responsive or culturally relevant pedagogy as described by Ladson-Billings (1995) "not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequalities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate". It is based on finding connections and links between the experiences that learners encounter at home and at school through means of interaction, experiences, speech and language. Culturally relevant pedagogy as devised by Ladson-Billings (1995), does not really focus on the use of modes and multimodality. The more recent version by Paris et al. (2014) is more engaged with modes and performance.

The aims of culturally relevant pedagogy, as articulated by Ladson-Billings, are to enable learners' academic success, develop a cultural competence and lastly socio-political criticality (Ladson-Billings, 2001). However, Paris and Alim (2014) argue that the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy did not go far enough in challenging unequal power relations, particularly in relation to language and literacy. Drawing on both Ladson-Billings and Paris and Alim (2004), I used identity writing as a culturally responsive pedagogy during this research in the hope of creating a social consciousness through this form of pedagogy.

For some, culturally responsive pedagogy within education means recognising language and culture of diverse populations as a need for social cohesion (Kostogriz, Doecke & Locke, 2011). It is based on drawing on learners' resources that they are familiar with or those that they bring into the classroom such as language, culture and experiences. By allowing learners to use these resources and incorporate them into the school curriculum, they are provided with access to equitable opportunities for all and allowing them to use their voice to express their feelings and perspectives in a safe learning environment. It is about building a bridge between everyday knowledge and school curriculum. By doing so, there is a possibility that educators can develop the skills and cognitive thinking that the learners already possess.

Bomer (2017) states that literacy and education is always culturally responsive due to teaching and learning being shaped by culture. The key question is whose culture is it responsive to? He defines culture as 'a group of people's way of life, all of their patterns of communication, systems of valuing, habits of being, and understandings of expression'. An educator's instruction is influenced by his or her predictions that are based on patterns of one's own life. This is what Bomer explains as an example of culture in which an educator tries to instil or project on the learners.

Teaching in the English classroom enforces a culture of "Whiteness" on the learners as it expects them to comply with affiliations of a culture that is not theirs (Bomer, 2017). For example, reading and writing of rap lyrics within an English class is frowned upon and replaced with forms of poetry. This is a form of a colonising agenda in which culture and difference are ignored, thus leaving the learners unable to identify with and recognise themselves and their communities within academic content, thus creating a gap between school and home experiences, modes and content.

Learners of colour and those who are from marginalised communities deserve to be recognised in academic content that is inclusive of their cultures (Bomer, 2017). These learners bring into a classroom the richness of their communities which could expand the social and linguistic resources of the class, including those of the educator. This is an affordance of a culturally responsive pedagogy as it is inclusive of content and social aspects which learners share across different backgrounds.

Bomer (2017) argued that naming the pedagogy culturally responsive or culturally sustaining is not what is important, but rather, the importance lies in the difference it makes in the relationship between the learners and educator in which the educator values the knowledge and competence that the learner brings and also encourages the learners to critique and interrogate power relations that exist. It is about an academic curricula that allows learners to make use of their existing literacy practices and sustain their heritage and languages even as they advance in their lives (Bomer, 2017).

Too often, learners of colour from low-income communities are labelled as deficient and problematic due to difference in culture, experience and language from the hegemonic, white, middleclass learners. However, a culturally sustaining pedagogy takes on an appreciative stance in which these differences are valued by finding and foregrounding the resources that they already have (Bomer, 2017). These resources are identified in the form of language, experiences and knowledge in which to understand and create a relationship between the educator and learners. By foregrounding these resources, culture is highlighted and serves as a representation of realities and identities that are experienced by each learner.

Ladson-Billings (2001) discusses that a reason Indian children experience academic difficulty in schools is due to educators attempting to insert culture into education instead of inserting education into culture. This was due to discontinuity of home and school experiences due to a change of language. Language is a resource that should be valued as it may or may not influence academic success. Sometimes modal preference may not only stem from exposure, but also from cultural identities. For example, in work conducted by Stein (2008), a girl during his study preferred and expressed positive feelings towards the oral mode of storytelling due to cultural norms of a female storyteller identity which were present within her home and community.

Paris (2012) investigated further into this by introducing a culturally sustaining pedagogy which involves multilingualism and multiculturalism in practice and perspective of learners and educators. It foregrounds language and culture in a pluralistic way to challenge social injustice and create social change within education (Paris & Alim, 2014). Due to this, the youth are being granted access to power, in which the power is based on effective communication and different ways of speaking

in languages other than English (Paris & Alim, 2014). Language and culture have shifted to become hybrid and inclusive and have changed from past notions of working with difference (Kostogriz, Doecke and Locke, 2011). Difference is now treated positively within educational theory and diversity and difference is celebrated in forms of recognition, tolerance and acceptance. This is what Sleeter (2011) calls 'empowered learning for diverse student populations'.

However, Sleeter finds a problem with culturally responsive pedagogy that is often overlooked or ignored, which is the continuing issue of racism. While theoretically culture is celebrated, in many instances within schools and educational settings, racism and racist individuals exist within society due to past ideologies which they still strongly believe. This affects the action of putting into place a culturally responsive pedagogy within classroom settings by those who identify as racists, as such educators will not be comfortable in dealing with and celebrating diversity in terms of language and culture that exists within their classrooms. Sleeter (2011) mentions problems such as low educator expectations from students of colour, ethnocentric curricula, unequal disciplinary referrals and unequal placement of students of colour.

All of these go against a culturally relevant and responsive theory and can impact academic success due to racial and cultural discrimination. A culturally responsive pedagogy should not only focus on culture and language, but rather how to incorporate it into the academic curriculum instead of focusing solely on diversifying culture. Despite this, academic achievement is still a priority and a key element of learning and assessment which is one of the three goals of culturally responsive pedagogy as described by Ladson-Billings. The link between culture and school learning is vital when dealing with a culturally responsive pedagogy and many tend to overlook that. One example in which it can be incorporated is through identity writing as a form of creative writing. This allows learners to explore identities through means of language, culture, race and experiences within an academic context.

There is mention of the term identity throughout this study as identity writing was a form of cultural pedagogy that was used. Identity refers to who or what a person is or a close affinity to that which is described. Social identity can be a singular or learners may experience multiple identities or simply relate to a range of different identities (Peirce, 1995). Identity writing during this study was based on writing about oneself in

a way that they perceive themselves to be and the experiences that they have encountered. Identity is fluid and is socially constructed and reshaped, particularly in the 21st century globalised world. Identity can be based or shaped through culture, religion, language, gender, institutions and so on.

Identity is always an aspect of writing. During this research the students were explicitly invited to express their identities in writing by writing about themselves and their experiences in a language of their choice. Encouraging students to draw on linguistic resources creates richer opportunities for identity writing. Incorporating identity into writing makes writing relatable, relevant and appealing to the reader. It provides a sense of motivation and purpose to continue reading and could even result in finding a solution to their common experience. This can be achieved through means of multilingualism as it can provide a familiar content and context for learners to read and write about as well as allow learners to express aspects of their language and cultural identity.

In terms of identity writing, Bohannon (2015) identified that too often in academia, we regard ourselves as the 'other' which leads to a disconnection in academic discourse and content. Integrating a multimodal composition into writing allows for learners to expand their writing abilities by challenging them to be critical in their choices, writing and speaking which may be a skill that they can access both in the classroom and in their daily lives (Bohannon, 2015). It challenges them to organise and select content to use during different modes and make use of resources such as voice and body movement, and access language repertoires. These decisions are critical to conveying meaning and must be carefully thought out.

By getting involved in identity and cultural story telling that challenge societal norms and inequalities, the youth illustrate some form of resistance and become active participants in allowing their voices to be heard (Rosario-Ramos & Johnson, 2014). They let their voices be heard through telling stories that need addressing and are important to them. Through this, identities, roles and norms are represented, challenged and deconstructed to convey meaning and show unequal representations that occur within society. This forms part of a critical approach and is something that is often ignored within language classrooms.

Social justice-orientated theories of critical literacy are linked to education as a laboratory process that may lead to social justice and action that can encourage learners to advocate for social change (Rosario-Ramos & Johnson, 2014). This kind of identity writing that involves critical literacy and deconstruction of texts can provide possibilities of engagement with texts and a motivation for writing in a range of different modes and marginalised languages.

Peirce (1995) suggests that identity writing should become an investment, rather than a motivation which is a means to capture complex language relationships. This is due to some modes including semiotics, which is the language of signs. The relationship of language is complex in multimodal outputs as meaning is conveyed and made through various elements that require metalanguage. Identity writing is a way to connect with the reader and provides a sense of companionship as the events described are somehow similar and shared. This also allows the audience to identify with themes involved in the writing or characters that are used.

FunDza is a digital creative writing platform which gives writers, both new and experienced, an opportunity to publish and read stories that are aimed at South African youth. These stories are based in an African context and are sometimes multilingual. The stories are relatable and relevant in terms of content and context and aim to produce creative writers and lifelong readers and allows learners to identify with either the content or context, or both. It is an effective form of culturally responsive pedagogy if used in the classroom as the setting is in a South African context.

This platform is made accessible to all socio-economic classes due to being accessible via a mobi and online forum and due to the digital nature of the forum, it allows the incorporation of an outside mode that learners are familiar with (Mendelowitz, 2016). By allowing learners to access multilingualism during their writing, we allow them to negotiate their own growth and take ownership of the outcome of their writing (Bohannon, 2015). This is due to providing learners with the opportunity for creative reworking by transforming their personal resources and experiences.

Imagination is a powerful tool to resist oppression and exploitation which can be like a lifeline; for example, abuse victims may find hope and motivation in writing about a

better future that they imagine (Hooks, 2010). FunDza stories are based on identity writing by including relevant themes such as love, money, poverty, bullying, drugs, crime and many more which most teenagers and adults can identify with. Learners can incorporate multiple identities (social, cultural, economic or linguistic) that they possess during their writing by either writing about their experiences or ones that they imagine. Learners have an opportunity to explore and investigate both social and personal identities that are relevant issues. This serves as a modern platform to share creative yet relatable works that cater for a range of learners from vast religious, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

2.5 Language in the writing classroom

Language ideologies are based on the beliefs that people have which impact the way that language is conceptualised and represented in society and these are constructed through positions of power or knowledge (Makoe & McKinney, 2014). This kind of ideology consists of anglonormativity which means that there is an expectation for people to be proficient in English and if they are not, they are labelled as deficient or defiant (McKinney, 2014). In this section, I argue that there is a need to create classroom spaces for students to write by drawing on out-of-school literacies, histories and linguistic resources.

Due to post-apartheid notions, there is an ideology of monolingualism that exists in schools. Despite multilingual learners and practices that exist in schools, the use of English as the language of learning and teaching produces and reproduces a notion of dominance of the language which is supported by the global ideology that English is a language of power which gives access to social and economic mobility (Makoe and McKinney, 2014). Through this, English within schooling contexts becomes normal and naturalised among learners even if their home language is not English.

Makoe and McKinney (2014) argue that post-apartheid policies continue to support monoglossic ideologies which support and give power to Standard English despite pluralism and diversity among South African learners. During research conducted by McKinney, Carrim, Marshall and Layton (2015), they stated that a child who is not proficient in English is labelled by the educator as not being able to speak at all. This indicates the hierarchy and power that is placed on the English language despite

South Africa having 11 official languages. These monoglossic ideologies eliminate the voice of the learners by means of silencing and exclusion due to some not being able to converse or be proficient in Standard English.

The learners' existing resources that they bring into the classroom, such as language and culture, as well as their epistemic knowledge, are ignored, thus leaving them at a disadvantage and possibly marginalised, which may negatively affect classroom participation and motivation to learn, thus reducing their interest in writing activities due to language proficiency and confidence in sharing their work. This is because they feel inadequate in conversing and writing fluently in English as well as creating a gap between their home and school lives. Thus, they lack identification with content and contexts that are taught and expected to be learnt.

Multilingualism is a result of geographical and linguistic demarcation which is a feature of the 21st century in which spaces are shared between people different in culture, race, ethnography and language. As most learners have extensive multilingual repertoires, these resources should be used alongside multimodal approaches to teaching in order to maximise its impact and motivation for writing. Multilingualism is a social resource and action that considers communication in the form of creative writing to go beyond monolingualism and incorporate multimodality (Dagenais, Toohey, Fox & Singh, 2017). Ferreira and Mendelowitz (2009) state that multilingualism should be valued, especially in an English language classroom, as it enables epistemological access and a linguistic identity can be constructed through this. It has the potential to link multiple aspects of school, society, economy and language to express learners' attitudes and imagination about these aspects which form part of their identities.

Multilingualism is defined by Makoni and Pennycook (2007) as the knowledge of separate languages as a pluralisation of monolingualism. This means that multilingualism is the use or knowledge of more than one language. McCormick (2001) defined code-switching as juxtaposing elements of two or more languages. This indicates that these languages are used in isolation, which can be described as switching one language off and the other on. Translanguaging is a more complex use of language which is defined by Garcia (2009) as 'accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages'. This

indicates a simultaneous use of different languages. It is similar to the term plurilingualism which is described by Canagarajah (2009) as the simultaneous conceptualisation of languages with separate competencies for each one.

All of the above constitute a language repertoire which is a key concept that I worked with throughout this research. Terminology such as that used above moves away from the monoglossic ideology of named languages as bounded entities and rather views them in a heteroglossic way as studies of languages in society rather than viewing each language in exclusion (McKinney et al., 2015). All of these terms described above will be used in some way during this report as they all in some way constitute multilingualism.

Multilingualism is evident in students' and educators' linguistic repertoire with their friends, colleagues and each other. This is a result of South Africa's diverse languages and cultures which make the communication process complex, yet provide the individuals with a deeper understanding of content and makes way for linguistic and identity negotiation. Despite the diversity that exists in South African classrooms in terms of race, culture and language, the education policy is silent in terms of using languages simultaneously in any form such as either code-switching or translanguaging as each language is perceived to be a pure bound entity (McKinney et al., 2015). By incorporating multilingualism into writing, learners have the opportunity to access multiple identities, voice, languages, resources and experiences that they possess.

Identity and voice are essential in second language writing as they influence the text (Canagarajah, 2015). However, not much investigation has been done with regard to finding out how aspects of a writer's identity may influence voice construction within writing. There are multiple layers of voice, especially when working with learners who are multilingual and make use of these languages within their writing. Canagarajah (2015) illustrated in the diagram below multiple layers involved in voice construction:

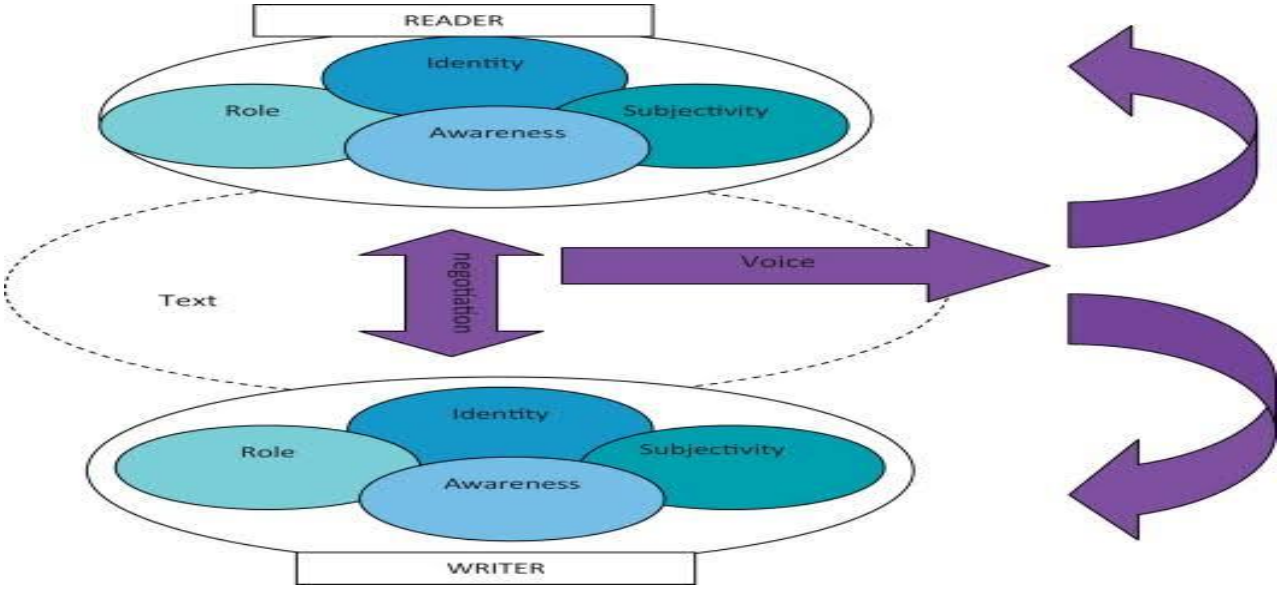


Figure 2.2: Heuristic for voice analysis – Canagarajah (2015)

Above are the four components which are used to negotiate and construct voice in multilingual writing. The first component is identity which refers to the history of an individual which consists of elements of language, ethnic and national affiliations. The second component is role which is linked to the social positions that people have within institutions, society, with their families or communities. It is based on the role that one is expected to embody in situations of communication. The third component is subjectivity which is an ideological concept that voice is influenced by conventions, norms and value systems.

Last is the component of awareness which is based on being aware of the first three components that exist and link to each other. It is being aware of the audience by using language and language choices to reshape identity, role and subjectivity. By using this heuristic, students can negotiate constraint and agency within their writing (Canagarajah, 2015). Voice depends on the way in which the readers and writers negotiate these layers. The concept of voice by Canagarajah (2015) will be further used during discussion of the textual stories in the first section of data analysis.

According to Ladson-Billings (2001), sociolinguists have suggested that by using a learner's home language in school contexts will most likely result in academic success. Despite all the elements required in writing such as writing style, character development, plot and creativity, academic success is still foregrounded as

assessment is a key element when considering academic success. Therefore, using a child's home language within a school context, allows them to make links between in- and out-of-school knowledge. This may allow them to make links between school and home and relate content and contexts in both spheres.

Educators and researchers worldwide are developing and incorporating inclusive education through multilingualism, digital and multimodal literacy (Dagenais et al., 2017). The inclusion of multilingualism and multimodality in the classroom draws on an ecological perspective which is defined as the inclusion and usage of as many languages and modes as possible in an environment and also a heteroglossic view which means the relationship and link between using multiple languages (Dagenais et al., 2017). This was a key argument within my research and an aim to achieve multimodal and multilingual literacy.

Multilingualism poses challenges for some schools as it demands acknowledgement of difference in schools that have histories of standardised languages and authorised knowledge (Dagenais et al., 2017). Some may argue against the incorporation of multilingualism. However, I believe that there are benefits to this unconventional form of pedagogy. Educators need to consider the growth and development of learners when setting up tasks as it is important to consider how learners will respond to the pedagogy, methods and approaches to meet the necessary outcomes and also maximise learning (Bohannon, 2015) as learners learn best in a language that they understand.

Not only does it add to learners' linguistic repertoire of the languages that they possess, it breaks boundaries and creates another level of creativity by adding a local aspect that can be used in their writing activities. Learners can broaden their creative writing not only by ideas and imagination, but by language as well. While it may restrict some learners who are monolingual from understanding specific aspects of the writing, I believe that linguistic clues, technological translators and peer collaboration are a solution to this challenge as many can learn new knowledge due to collaborative tasks and sharing of ideas.

Multilingual contexts challenge traditional ideals and understandings about language. Languages are not separate entities as they can interlink with each other and learners

can develop joint competencies in a range of languages and repertoires (Dagenais et al., 2017). Therefore, providing learners with a multilingual context of writing has the potential to lead to a development in language usage as well as serve as a creative and exciting way to use language. Multilingualism in various forms is an emerging trend globally as it is a way of understanding and appreciating diversity that exists and valuing the linguistic and cultural resources that exist.

There are some challenges predicted based on assessment of multilingual and multimodal composition of creative writing. The main question is: ‘How can this form of writing be assessed?’ Multimodal and multilingual assessment may be challenging due to its complex nature. It cannot be easily assessed by using a rubric as done during textual written activities and this type of assessment is not normative. I believe that the issue of assessment may be a challenge which requires investigation as to what works best.

The methodology for conducting this research and explanation of the methods for collection of data will be explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of outlining the methods used to conduct and analyse the findings of this research. Details of the research design, participants, data collection and ethical considerations will be discussed. The nature of the textual and multimodal creative writing intervention will be outlined.

I worked with the learners as a teacher-researcher for the duration of this study to correspond with a typical writing classroom environment in which I acted as a facilitator for the lessons that were conducted. This included teaching or reading at the beginning of each lesson, followed by instructions and then the learners split up into groups to complete tasks that they were given.

The work produced in each lesson was not used by the school for formal assessment, as it was strictly only used for the purpose of this study. The learners who participated in this study were English home language learners and insights that emerged from this study can be applied to mainstream classes within this learning area and can be adapted to suit those of other language subjects.

3.1 Research design

I used a qualitative, case study research method. The main characteristic of qualitative research is that it facilitates in-depth, detailed responses from participants rather than large scale numerical trends, as in qualitative research. An advantage of this approach is that it does not limit the scope of the research during collection of data and the participants' responses can be explored in detail due to an in-depth study (Collis & Hussey, 2003).

According to Adelman et al. (1980), a case study is 'the study of an instance in action'. The 'instance' should be a class or community (Cohen et al., 2007) such as the class that was studied which formed a community of writers. Cohen et al. (2007) stated that case studies are suitable for researching unique instances such as writing intervention as this is inclusive of complex dynamic interactions.

The intention of this study was to capture the perspective of the participants and this was done through means of observation and focus group discussions in addition to the stories produced by each group. These types of tools assist with understanding the students and complexity from their point of view rather than from the perspective of the educator (Hubbard & Miller Power, 2003). Simons (1996) added that an advantage of a qualitative case study is that it has the capacity for understanding complexity in specific contexts. Thus, qualitative research was vital for this study as I aimed to investigate the impact that multimodal composition had on the learning and composing of creative writing which consisted of a complex process due to the transduction of stories and analysis that followed.

During this study, the learners were the centre of inquiry and thus, I took on the role of a teacher-researcher. Qualitative researchers stress the nature of a socially constructed reality which provides an intimate relationship between the researcher and that which is being studied, the learners (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). This type of relationship includes constraints. In this case, due to collaborative writing activities among the learners, my participation and facilitation was constrained to an extent as the learners were given agency in which to complete the task. In addition to this, reflections on the tasks and developing them further was constrained due to time limitations and being considered as an outside researcher.

3.2 Research site

The school that was selected for this study is located in a central suburb within Johannesburg. The suburb is home to an Indian community who are mainly speakers of English as a home language. However, none of the learners were from this community. All of the learners within the school were from low- or middle-income townships that surround this community.

The school caters for both male and female learners. It provides hostel accommodation for the learners who cannot travel daily to and from school, thus making it mostly a boarding school. The community within the school is mono-racial as it consists of only black learners and educators who come from the same communities, thus, making it a community of support and familiarity.

A majority of the learners who attend this school speak isiZulu or isiXhosa as a home language, while the rest speak a variety of the South African official languages with the addition of Totsitaal. These are languages that the learners converse in during school time with their friends and educators on a daily basis in an oral mode. Despite this, in the English classroom, only English is allowed to be spoken and written.

3.3 Participants

Twenty Grade 7 learners were selected to participate in the study. The learners were aged between 12 and 13 years and were of mixed gender and homogenous racial background. They came from a range of low- to middle-income homes and this was reflected in their writing in terms of experiences and relationships. The majority of the learners reside in rural areas or townships within Johannesburg and are boarders at the school during the school term.

Although the participants were all studying English as a home language, this was not their home language as they speak a range of isiZulu, isiXhosa, totsitaal and English. This demonstrated a multilingual repertoire among the learners. They were comfortable with using these languages in an oral mode but showed hesitation when being encouraged to textually use it.

The participants come from working class backgrounds and most of them could not afford technological devices and therefore made use of oral modes such as singing with their friends and using resources accessible to them and their bodies to find ways of bringing in different modes to communicate information. Embodiment enabled the use of multilingualism through means of oral and body expressions. They mentioned not having magazines, pencils and an audio recorder available at school. The school was under-resourced, having only furniture, a chalkboard and a textbook available to use in class, thus leaving the learners to find creative forms of expression without the use of modern equipment and digital resources. Even though we are living in the 21st century in which learners are accustomed to multimodality, a lack of resources, specifically digital and multimodal, is a reality of our surrounding communities. The chosen mode of the learners' transduction stories was based on the limitation of resources that were available to them.

3.4 Sampling

The learners were selected based on access to the school and due to their participation as English home language learners while all of the learners in the class were multilingual. The focus of this research was on Grade 7 learners due to their being able to reach competence in reading and writing at this level. Sampling procedures for this research was non-probable and the results cannot be generalised due to the limitations of the study. These consisted of time constraints and a small number of participants. Purposive sampling has been used as the subject focus is on the English learning area and texts that were produced during this study. The class of learners that participated were required to consist of a range of diverse home languages, and possibly include multilingual learners. The language diversity was an important factor for this study as I investigated if multimodal composition could be used to facilitate and incorporate multilingualism into writing.

3.5 Research tools

An intervention was implemented by which the learners were required to construct a textual creative writing piece in groups. I read two stories for the class which was taken from the FunDza site and pointed out elements of a creative writing text such as plot, writing style, language play, voice and character development. The FunDza writing website was used as a model for the kind of text that was expected to appeal to the learners as young South African readers and illustrate the element of ending each chapter with a cliff hanger which is a requirement of the FunDza site. These stories were inclusive of aspects such as class systems, depression, death and love while the other was associated with money, goals and career aspiration. Aspects of themes were evident in their actual stories but the elements of the FunDza writing such as code-switching and cliff hangers were not included. My process included facilitation, modelling and instruction.

The activities completed were expected to be based on the learners' personal experiences and their identities. The learners were instructed to form groups of five and asked to write a collaborative story that was based on their experiences or on the experiences of people that they knew. They were given the instruction to construct a story of 500–600 words despite the CAPS curriculum expecting grade 7 learners to be able to produce a maximum number of 280 words in term 3. I extended the word limit

due to this being a collaborative task and I considered this a manageable length for groups of five learners. In addition, I feel that 280 words is too restrictive for constructing a rich and coherent story. The textual stories were not shared with the other groups as means to measure reactions for the performances that were to follow. The stories produced were creative and imaginative. However, most of them lacked a richness in voice and development due to a melodramatic nature. The intervention was an experimental process as the aim of it was to explore different ways of generating creative writing, for example, textual and multimodal, and the impact that it had by drawing on resources that the learners brought into the classroom. Through this process, I realised that as a researcher I assumed that the participants possessed prior knowledge of writing elements such as voice, character development and plot which could have been a factor that impacted the data collected. This will be a consideration for future study.

An advantage of this intervention is that it taught the learners to write for a different audience and shifted away from the educator being the audience, thus making the learners aware of language choices, style and different feedback that changes with this shift. By using the FunDza site to illustrate this, I was hoping to generate learner interest in exploring different platforms and forums for creative writing in different modes and to encourage them to read and write creatively about out-of-school contexts. A disadvantage of the textual stories was that I was not able to help the learners develop their story endings further or allow them to write them from a different perspective due to time constraints. Due to the learners not having an English educator at the time of this research, I was not able to share my findings and concerns with the educator in order to make this intervention successful and useful for future writing lessons.

After the textual stories were completed, I modelled examples of multimodality (visual, audio and kinaesthetic) to the class. I showed them a graphic novel and picture book to illustrate the visual mode, I played an audiobook of the story Cinderella and then showed them a video of the animated movie Cinderella. This was followed by an explanation of each mode, the elements involved and their purpose. Each group was instructed to convert/transduce their written story into a multimodal piece (either audio, visual or kinaesthetic) which was presented to the class. Cremin (2009) stated that

role-play can be used to generate richer character voice and descriptions by learners drawing on their experiences, knowledge and understanding of the world to make meaning. This is in relation to the study as the stories were based on writing about oneself and identity. The transduced stories that were performed produced rich and vibrant characters as Cremin (2009) stated that it would. The performances were engaging for the audience and created moments of surprise and creativity.

Field notes and comments were captured with regard to the performances as ethics approval for videotaping was not granted. This was a disadvantage to the transduction part of the activity as this data was all that I could work with after the performance was over, thus leaving the multilingual aspect of the performance minimally analysed due to not being able to transcribe it all while it was occurring. Despite the stories not being assessed for examination purposes, it was difficult to consider ways in which a multilingual and multimodal task could be assessed effectively due to its complex nature. This can be a further recommendation for future researchers as it is not a focus of this research. Instead, I used categories in which I analysed my observations, field notes and memory of the performances that took place. These will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

This was followed by questionnaires that were given to all the learners in the class as a way to identify common perspectives and feelings with regard to incorporating multimodal composition into teaching. Nineteen learners participated in a questionnaire as one of them was not present. The purpose of the questionnaire was to reveal generalisations, common perspectives and attitudes with regard to incorporating multimodal composition into teaching, reading and writing as opposed to monomodal teaching. The questionnaire was useful in terms of making clear perspectives that the learners had and allowing them to voice their opinions if they were too afraid to do so verbally. The questionnaire provided insights such as how some learners felt disadvantaged due to language hierarchies within their groups, which will be discussed in the next chapter. The questionnaire also provided a mismatch in information as all the groups chose a performance genre yet the questionnaire revealed that they least preferred to be taught and learn in this mode due to difficulties experienced.

One learner from each group volunteered to participate in a focus group discussion which served as a detailed reflection on the series of activities which were conducted and the reason for the choices that they made during their writing and transduction process. This discussion was aided by semi-structured questions in which I adapted with the flow of discussion. An advantage of the focus group was that due to it being a voluntary discussion, the learners who opted to attend it were honest, open and not afraid to voice their opinion as they chose to attend. Due to the intimate and safe nature small group discussions offer, they were honest in stating that they enjoyed some parts of the activity while they disliked others and gave reasons for their opinions.

3.6 Data analysis

I began the research by identifying how the learners were previously taught writing in comparison to the pedagogy involved in this task. It was evident that there was no constant method of teaching or of assessment other than marking based on grammar and content of the written work. I believe that this impacted the attitude that the learners had towards creative writing as all of their writing was used for the purpose of assessment in which they wrote to please the educator by listing facts, one after the other, instead of exploring their imagination and creative ideas.

Artefacts (creative short stories) were analysed which gave insight into the lives of the learners as they were instructed to write about their identities and experiences. These were analysed for the purpose of meaning and creativity rather than for a numerical value. Themes were extracted from the stories in order to perceive general findings. Each story was discussed in detail with regard to the following categories: themes and social consciousness; creativity and imagination; language; and cultural and identity elements. These categories led to a deeper analysis of the stories that were produced and allowed for vital information to be discussed further.

Questionnaires were given to all the learners to establish their attitudes towards creative writing. All the questionnaires were read and analysed according to the information required for this study. The most useful comments provided by the learners in the questionnaire were shared in this research to create a better understanding of some key ideas.

The focus group discussion focused on specific elements of the study in detail which was audio recorded and transcribed. Thematic content analysis was used when analysing the written artefacts and assessment of the multimodal transduction. Themes were extracted from each story and key ideas in which they were compared with the other groups to illustrate findings. A universal reductionist approach was used which is reducing the complex data to what is useful and presenting it in simpler ways. I reduced the data to just what was important and relevant for the study and which would add to richness in the data provided.

3.7 Limitations

Based on these instruments, it is evident that there are limitations. Focus group discussions are a daunting process in which the learners might not be comfortable or give inaccurate information to please me or the other learners present. There could also be peer pressure involved. However, this was addressed by making it a voluntary process and the participants as comfortable as possible by creating a safe space to share their views during the focus group.

Triangulation of data was conducted by analysing the data collected in the questionnaire, artefacts and the focus group in relation to each other to ensure multiple perspectives and insights on the data. Due to working with learners collaboratively, there was a limitation that some learners might be excluded from the task or not have their ideas voiced. Therefore, it was particularly useful to note what learners said about the process of multimodal composition and their attitudes towards it and how this is influenced in their written products.

I experienced time constraints during this study as I was only granted two weeks by the school in which to conduct the intervention with the learners. This affected my data collection as I was not able to conduct further writing activities after conducting the multimodal intervention. This made it challenging to assess if the intervention had an impact on the learners' actual writing. I believe that if more time had been granted, I would have collected richer data or developed the data that was collected. This will be an aspect to consider in future study.

I was not granted ethics clearance to video record the intervention, specifically the performances by each group. This created an additional limitation of language barriers

due to not fully understanding the language used during the performances. This limited the understanding of how the learners' used resources for meaning making and instead, the multimodal data relies on how I as the researcher made meaning of the text. Without video recording, there was no way to work with the multimodal data in a sequential analysis and exact translation, but rather through observation and field notes which limited my analysis of the multimodal data collected. Meaning made relied on visual clues, body language, facial expressions and narrators which aided my understanding of the content.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The school was contacted and asked to participate in the study, for which they granted permission. The principal was given an information and consent form to complete before the study was conducted. Due to working with minors during this research project, an information and consent form was given to the parents to complete. The learners who participated in the study were also provided with an information and consent form to complete. All the learners understood the information and requirements of the research process. Their participation was voluntary and the participants were allowed to opt out of the study at any time.

This project did not affect any participant negatively. Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants was guaranteed as they have been given pseudonyms in this report. The name of the school is not revealed during the course of the study. All data will be stored safely and will be destroyed three to five years after the study took place.

The methodology used to conduct the data was effective in producing key findings to answer the research questions of this study. Interesting data was collected which will be discussed, analysed and interpreted in Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: TEXTUAL STORYTELLING

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is a presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected during a series of lessons consisting of the construction of a collaborative textual short story, questionnaires and a focus group discussion. This chapter will explore the affordances and limitations of collaborative textual writing as it emerges in the data analysis. I will also interrogate the extent to which it enhances cognitive knowledge, social dynamics and classroom dynamics. In addition, I will explore the argument that creativity and imagination stems from allowing learners to explore topics that are relatable and interesting to them, specifically those linked to identity writing (Newfield, 2011). The use of written language and the use of multilingualism in writing were discussed earlier in the literature section. I will discuss how the learners accessed and did not access multilingualism and its implications.

In this data chapter, I will answer one of the research questions:

What are the affordances and limitations of collaborative textual writing?

An outline of each collaborative story will be provided, followed by an analysis of each text. The analysis will be discussed under the following categories:

1. Themes and social consciousness – This will be based on the themes that emerge from each story and draw on aspects of social awareness shown by each group within their texts.
2. Creativity and imagination – This discussion will be based on the creative ideas, imagery and creative language used by each group. This includes aspects of versatility (Beneke, 2008) which refers to freedom and risks that were taken during writing.

3. Language and voice – This will be based on the language usage throughout the story with specific reference to Canagarajah's heuristic (2015) which was referred to in the literature section of this research. It is based on the writer's identity, subjectivity, role and awareness of the audience. These all make up layers of a rich writing voice.
4. Cultural and identity elements – Culture and identity was an important aspect within the stories as each group was instructed to write about their experiences and draw on the FunDza story outline which is targeted at a local youth audience. This includes local aspects in their writing.

Thereafter, an overall interpretation of all the groups will follow in which key categories will be discussed. These include: Collaborative writing, writing as a culturally responsive pedagogy, language as a resource, and affordances and limitations of text-based writing.

4.2 Outline of the textual stories

I selected two FunDza stories to read to the class which were used as a basis to illustrate creative writing that makes use of an African context and is geared towards a youthful audience. This was done to be used as a model to illustrate the kind of writing that was expected in the tasks to follow and to serve as a trigger for ideas that the learners may use during their writing. The learners were unaware of digital writing platforms, specifically those that were targeted at young African readers and writers. They showed an interest in it during the class discussion and one of the learners asked if it was acceptable to use her phone in class to access the FunDza website as mobile phones are not usually allowed to be used during class time. This question illustrated that the educator does not incorporate technology and digital platforms on a daily basis into teaching and learning. Despite using the FunDza stories as a model for the learners' writing, none of the groups constructed a story that was similar to the writing style, language usage and context as illustrated to them. This might have been due to time constraints as it may have limited their capacity to fully engage with the stories and process the FunDza writing style. My pedagogy involved during this research should have been more explicit in relation to teaching aspects of the FunDza writing style.

The learners were grouped into five to six members per group and I instructed them to write a collaborative story that drew on aspects of their identities, their lives and experiences. Mendelowitz (2016) conducted research with 3rd-year university students who were instructed to write for their peers and the FunDza website. She stated that collaborative writing that is done for a digital platform allows learners to re-imagine audience. This is due to reaching a larger demographic with a switch in audience as learners usually write for the educator as an audience which may influence their writing style and creativity. I used a similar method by which I modelled two FunDza stories for the class, and they were told to write their story for the same target audience, thus being their peers who make up a part of the African youth. The learners were asked to write for an African youth audience and make use of African languages which was used as 'a vehicle for learning' (Ladson-Billings, 2001). They were encouraged to use informal/colloquial language which is not often used during their teaching and learning within the English classroom. This was a change for the learners as they are usually asked to write bearing in mind that their educator is their audience due to feedback and assessment.

When analysing the stories written by each group, it seemed as if they still considered their educator or in this case, me as the facilitator, as their audience. The reasons for this judgement are due to them holding back on their language usage throughout as each story was written in English and they did not create vivid characters. In many instances, the characters lacked emotions, character traits and feelings that the audience could emotionally engage with. Embodiment of a text is based on taking on the role of a character by adding emotions, feelings and character traits that one can relate to and engage with. There were minimal characters within the text that the audience could emotionally engage with. I noticed a pattern among all the groups in which they listed brief facts throughout their story. I intentionally did not provide an assessment criteria as I did not want to restrict them. However, in retrospect this may have led to problematic writing as they had no guidelines to work with.

After analysing each story, it is evident that the learners would have benefited from being given samples of the FunDza stories and an explicit lesson explaining metalanguage about writing such as voice, character etc. The learners were given a limit of approximately 500 words and told to be creative and imaginative. They were

allowed to select any African language or languages to use during their writing by making use of translanguaging, multilingualism and code-switching.

4.3 Analysis of collaborative textual stories

The texts below are collaborative textual stories that have been written by each group. These stories were constructed in groups of five and have not been shared with the learners in the class so that I could observe the reactions of the learners when they see the stories being performed for the first time. Peer sharing was intentionally limited during the textual stories due to wanting to gage expressions as a surprise element once each story was performed. There were possible limitations of this, for example, giving them access to both modes of stories could have facilitated interesting reflections and insights on the affordances of multimodal shifts. These stories are presented exactly as they have been written. An analysis of each story will be discussed followed by a collective interpretation of the results by all the groups.

4.3.1 Group 1: Abuse … Rape … Crime … Depression … Pain …

Chapter (one)

My name is Lebohang Malinga i live in Vrededorp I am 35 years old. I live with my grandparents my mum and dad past away at a very early age. My mum past on after giving birth to me. My dad had a heart problem and past away after hearing that his wife past on.

The same day the doctors and nurses we very unhappy because of the problem that had happened. The kept me waiting to see if my family was going to come. Doctor Vanwake when he knocked off he went home with me and him and his wife are very kind they gave love.

The second day is wife bought me clothes, babie nappies, milk and I was always happy when the Vanwake family came to see me they said that he must talk to the social workers. And he said that i must go stay in a shelter.

When turned 1 year old they started introducing me to the kids and youth. they were all kind the one that i remember is Ontratile Mpahlele she came the Same day with me and i love here she loves me. She was born

As i was growing i saw that I don't have parents and all the children were all running to their parents and hugging them. When i was 5 years i went to go live with my aunt and uncle. Aunt Faith was a very kind women and she loved children with all her heart. And the sad part is that she can't get children and Uncle John was always drinking beer's and his friends kept on visiting him Everyday.

Chapter (two)

Maria Dlamini who lives next door at vrededorp she said that the Malinga was very kind and loving they used to love Everybody and treated them a very equal. They all loved Every body.

On the 17th of July 2006 i turned 6 years and my aunt made me a small party and after the party she went to the stores to go buy some food to provide us in the house.

Uncle John was the one who was babysitting me he came in the bathroom when i was bathing and said "Lebo come here." I said Coming Malume.

When i went there he said that i should take off my dress. And i took it off I used to listen i was very young and i trusted him.

He started throwing me on the bed and he took off his pants and he pushed and pushed. I cried and Cried. My aunt came in she found me crying on the stairs she said *keng*?

Mama Malume o nkentse ntho ya hae ebite. My aunt said "Lebo o bud nnete." eYa Auntie. And when my aunt went to him she said what did you do to the child he was laughing While holding weed in his hand.

Chapter (three)

When she was 21 years old her uncle decided to go see her and her family the husband invited him in and she ran away when she saw him. But he was happy and he followed her to

(The story was incomplete due to word and time limitations)

a) Themes and social consciousness:

The story begins with a sense of loss and sympathy for the character due to the death of her parents and not having a stable home for the first five years of her life. She experiences sadness, even at the shelter as she has no sense of parental love and support. When she finally feels a sense of safety and belonging by living with and trusting her aunt and uncle, she is betrayed by him as he rapes her at the young age of six. This is an event that haunts her for the rest of her life.

At the age of 21, she still fears him and at the sight of him, she runs away. Throughout the story, there is a constant theme of vulnerability and tragedy that surrounds Lebohang. She has very little protection and love as a child due to being an orphan. When she grows up, she is in a safe environment living with her aunt and uncle, and despite this, she is still not safe from violation and being raped by a fatherly figure that she expected to protect her. She expresses vulnerability throughout the story.

Chapter 2 – 'When i went there he said that i should take off my dress. And i took it off I used to listen i was very young and i trusted him.' These two sentences strongly convey an imbalance of power and power relations that exist in their home. It indicates silencing of Lebohang as she obeys her uncle despite the violation she experiences. It is two simple sentences, yet so powerful in conveying a message and instilling emotion upon the reader. This is an example of the writer's criticality in in conveying unequal power relations.

There is a sense of criticality and social awareness within this story. This story consists of universal themes and it deals with real-life issues that occur within a wide range of communities on a daily basis such as homelessness, alcoholism, child abuse, death and rape. These are social issues that require addressing. During the focus group discussion, a learner from this group stated with regard to the choice of their chosen topic:

> We started by putting all the possible topics down and everyone came up with one. We had a vote of which topic to do and decided to write about rape since it is happening in other countries. Some of the other children are losing their parents because of rape.

From this statement, it is evident that the learner who made this comment distances herself from the issue of rape and loss of a parent due to saying it is an experience of ‘Some of the other children’. It could be due to reasons of her not having experienced these issues or due to the social stigma attached to it. However, as a group they felt that it was important to foreground these events by addressing them during their writing to express to the class the implications and severity of rape and death. There is a link between rape and parental loss because in this story, Lebohang lost her mother during childbirth and became vulnerable and a target for rape due to not having a parent or guardian to protect her. This group made a decision to express these social issues in a realistic way which made it seem believable and the experience real.

b) Creativity and imagination:

This group achieved some form of creativity through means of ideas and language. Chapter 1 seemed unimaginative due to listing events that occurred. There was little use of dialogue and no creative use of words. The story consisted of presenting factual events that occurred, probably due to the realistic events described and the seriousness of the themes included in which they create a convincing story from the perspective of the narrator.

‘Show’ in writing refers to explaining details through means of imagery and symbolism rather than writing them out in a literal way. Despite very little evidence of ‘showing’ the story through imagery rather than telling, there are some places in which imagery helps to convey feelings of loss by the narrator such as ‘As i was growing i saw that I don’t have parents and all the children were all running to their parents and hugging them’. There is strong imagery involved in this sentence as her loss is juxtaposed with the love that other children share with their parents through means of hugging which symbolises love, protection and care.

Chapter 2 – ‘And when my aunt went to him she said what did you do to the child he was laughing While holding weed in his hand.’ This sentence indicates a strong ending to this chapter due to inappropriate laughter by the uncle after raping Lebohang. Symbolism of smoking weed is used to indicate a lack of remorse. This was a creative way of indicating that the uncle was not affected by his actions, nor did he feel guilty.

The main character, Lebohang, was given a voice in which to express her personality and feelings from the perspective of a first-person narrator. However, more could have been done in terms of character voice. For example, they could have explained how she felt when her aunt decided to let her live with them or express feelings about having a birthday party by describing it. This kind of detail would not only make the story interesting, but it could create a mental picture for the reader and allow a sense of personality for each character. There is scope for more detail and perhaps this could have been achieved through a more intense planning and drafting session.

This group took a lot of risk during their writing by writing about tragedies and unconventional topics such as rape. They took a risk to be creative with an event that they have experienced or know someone who has experienced it. They had structured freedom when writing this story and could explore the topic by including additional topics of alcohol abuse and drug use. They had the freedom to make use of multilingualism during their story which they did for a limited time to add a local aspect and sense of identity to it. However, they required more structure to properly process the FunDza style and crafting devices involved.

c) Language and voice:

The story is written in first person narrative which creates a connection between the reader and writer. It allows the reader to unfold events from Lebohang's perspective. And provides a rich writing voice from telling events directly despite not using much dialogue. Social positions are illustrated through the use of language to give clues such as Lebohang obeying when her uncle instructs her to take off her clothes. Through these words, one can identify power relations and social roles within society and households.

According to Canagarajah (2015), voice is influenced by subjectivity. For example, gender roles that exist may impact voice within writing. This is evident in this story as Lebohang's voice is silenced and limited throughout this story. For example, when she cries out during the rape scene, her uncle ignores her cries. The same can be said for female characters in this story such as the aunt. She provides for the household while the uncle drinks with his friends. When she confronts her husband about raping

Lebohang, he laughs. This indicates power relations and silencing norms of the female gender.

This story is mostly written in English. Despite struggling with sentence construction, spelling and grammar, the learners continued to write in English. For example they wrote: “Doctor Vanwake when he knocked off he went home with me and him and his wife are very kind they gave love.” When asking a learner why the group chose to write in English, she responded with the following:

> It is better to write in English because we only know how to speak another language but we struggling to write it.

The learners in this class are fluent speakers of their home language or languages, yet they struggle to write in these languages due to not being taught how to in school. While they struggle to speak fluently and write coherently in English, they are confident when doing so due to English being the medium of instruction.

Chapter 1 ends with a strong final sentence: ‘And the sad part is that she can’t get children and Uncle John was always drinking beer’s and his friends kept on visiting him Everyday.’ It provides a cliff-hanger and a sense of something ominous that the uncle’s drinking will create a problem. This is further emphasised by intentionally writing “Everyday” with a capital letter to illustrate the frequency of his drinking. This is also an example of language play.

Chapter 2 – ‘He started throwing me on the bed and he took off his pants and he pushed and pushed. I cried and Cried.’ A child’s perspective is captured. Despite the writing of these sentences being simple, it conveys emotion and the use of repetition conveys the endless suffering and trauma experienced. This conveys feelings and perspectives of the narrator to the reader. The end of chapter 2 includes two sentences of dialogue in an African language. It is important to note that this occurs immediately after the rape scene. When reading it, I made a link of the rape forming part of her identity now and a sense of exposure and bareness, therefore a language linked to the identities of the learners was most fitting to be included at this stage. It seemed as if they also felt as if at this point they needed to be as true and open with their language as they were with sharing this experience. The use of multilingualism provides a moment of realness and illustrates that if this really occurred, it would be addressed in

the home language of the character, as it is the best language of expression and emotion which feels natural.

The learners in this group have used basic diction throughout this story. There is no use of sophisticated or formal language. The dialogue used provides a voice for the characters and adds to their identity. For example in the sentence, 'The second day is wife bought me clothes, babie nappies, milk and I was always happy', the use of first person narrative adds to the character traits and allows the reader to become engaged with the text while getting to know each character. Through this, we know that the doctor's wife was kind due to bringing supplies for Lebohang who is an orphan.

d) Cultural and identity elements:

Malinga that is used throughout this story refers to the surname of this family. It is of African origin and a race and culture can be attached to it. Despite the story mostly consisting of English, there is constant mention of the word "Malume" which is of isiZulu origin and means uncle. This indicates cultural reference and sense of respect when referring to Uncle John due to his being a dominant male figure of the household. Despite his violations towards Lebohang, she continues to uphold tradition and refer to Uncle John and Malume.

There are notions of cultural male dominance present in this story as the uncle violates Lebohang, which shows male dominance within this story and silencing of females to get what a male wants. Stereotypes are illustrated as the uncle spends the day getting drunk with his friends while the aunt buys groceries and provides for the households. This a traditional custom of women being the provider of food and taking the responsibility of cooking for the household while men are strong figures. This is the opposite of western cultures which tend to portray male figures working to provide food whereas the females bear children and cook the provisions that the men bring home.

The identities of the learners within the group are expressed through cultural references made within the story such as gender roles within an African home as well as titles attached to elders or family members. They have told either their experience or the experience of someone within their community in which they linked the identity of their characters to those attached to the real or prosthetic event that they retell or rework (Landsberg, 2004). This story can be linked to Vygotsky's theory of creative

reworking, as the events and characters have been reworked to cater for the audience of this story. The story is reworked to form the perspective of Lebohang.

Through the analysis of this story, an affordance to textual writing is to use language as a tool to express power relations and imbalances that exist within society. These can be retold due to creative reworking in which one can use language to communicate tragedies and socially unconventional topics that require addressing.

4.3.2 Group 2: Love with lies

Chapter one

My name is Skyler i am 18 years old, when i was 9 years old my mother passed away because of my father abusing her. My father (Peter) married potia My Stepmother after my mother passed away. Potia had two kids which is Nikiwe and John i was older than them but they treated me like a kid even though i was older than them. they didn't like me at all.

My stepmother abused me because she didn't want me in my father's house she wanted her kids in my father's house. So one day Potia tryed to kill me by putting poison in my food. I once saw Potia putting poison again in my food I tryed to tell my father but he couldn't believe me he taught I didn't want Potia in his house.

Chapter 2

Potia made me clean the house while Nikiwe and John are at school. I thought my dad would be able to see this but he didn't. One day Skyler asked her father to go to School potia interupted and said what the use of going to school because Skyler is dom. The next day while Skyler was washing dishes she broke a glass then potia kicked her out of the house and she said you going to get inside the house when your father come back from work. The same day peter didn't come back from work he came at the morning. he found Skyler sleeping near the door you were supposed to be at school. Skyler hushed to school then sir James asked why didn't you came to school last week and you even late.

Chapter 3

Sir James called peter. he told him everything that Potia had done to Skyler. Peter couldn't believe it he just left the office. where Skyler got home he found her clothes outside he tried to knock but none of them answered Skyler just left and he had no choice he found a young boy who he once saw him at school. Skyler once cried, she saw her father and Potia doing shopping she tryed to tak to her but she couldn't.

Chapter 4

Skyler ended working as a pilot. Peter came with an beautiful lady, Skyler said i want live in this house if this lady will move in. I am tired of this stepmothers i want to live my own new life alone. The next day Peter came back from work he got a letter from Skyler: Dear father

I cannot live this

life again I just want

to be alone

Love: Skyler

Chapter 5

Skyler went back to her father's house. None of them was there, she went inside the room she got potia to kill herself. Then potia ended up killing Skyler.

a) <u>Themes and social consciousness:</u>

This story is a reworking of Cinderella and I will analyse the extent to which it is a creative reworking or simply a reproduction of the original story. The title of this story is "Love with lies" which is an odd title due to love being associated with honesty and happiness, yet this group chose to use conflicting words in the title which already indicates to the reader that there will be some sort of conflict in this story. The themes included in this story are based on tragedy, death and abandonment. The story is based on some form of sadness and loss throughout each chapter which gives the

reader a sense of continuous hardship experienced by the main character, Skyler. The character Skyler has been adapted to suit characteristics of the fairy tale character, Cinderella. She is submissive, shabby and a victim of domestic abuse from her stepmother and stepsisters. She is written about in a position of pity as one reads about her difficult life.

There is only one element of criticality included in this story which occurs in chapter 4 where Skyler becomes a pilot. She changes her reality and instils a sense of feminism in this story instead of waiting for a male character to rescue her from her distress. She also makes the decision to want to live alone, which indicates a sense of independence that she wants to achieve. Both these reworkings suggest a modern context to which the group tried to adapt the story. This reworking indicates that this group was aware of social norms and generalisations that are attached to fairy tales in which women are often written about in positions of distress and need. Character development is seen through this by Skyler taking control of her life once she becomes a pilot which is usually associated with male occupation. This is a potential symbolism for breaking boundaries and flying high, which also links to her name, Skyler. She sees her stepmother trying to poison her. Despite the action being drastic and dramatic by trying to kill her stepmother, it is a form of action that she takes to change her circumstance.

b) Creativity and imagination:

This story is melodramatic and draws away from realistic events. It lacks a successful exploration of imagination due to being based on the children's fairy tale Cinderella instead of constructing a story based on their lives and experiences. The story was not successfully reworked and included a new addition of her become a pilot and adding in a few aspects of feminism to break away from a complete retelling of the story. In order for it to be considered as creative reworking, it requires a different setting, context, dialogue and language elements that is relevant to the setting. More creative layers are required.

While the original story ends with a happy ending, this story ends with the death of Skyler who tried to seek revenge on her stepmother. It draws on a soap opera genre which is melodramatic. The use of melodrama in this story draws away from a realistic

nature of events and makes the story seem unbelievable. The character experiences one tragedy/loss after the other which is an element of this genre, however it makes the content of the story less relatable and appears to be unrealistic.

The group had the freedom to change multiple aspects of this story to suit an African youth audience by localising the story or making it more relatable to the target audience, yet there is a lack of evidence pertaining to this within the story. Due to retelling of events of a fairy tale, creativity was impeded upon. There was minimal risk taken when writing this story. However, risk was present. This group took the risk to make changes to a famous story known by all in the class. While these changes did not work well, their decisions were slightly creative and dramatic which is part of the FunDza writing style.

There is much more scope within this story to draw on aspects of creativity and imagination in the form of dialogue, character development, a climax of events and story plot. This story consists of mostly ‘telling’ rather than ‘showing’ which creates minimal imagery and symbolism thus, restricting a vivid image when reading the story.

c) Language and voice:

In comparison to the story by group 1, the sentence construction and spelling by group 2 are much better. Once again, there is confusion when using pronouns and the letter “i” which is the same for both groups. However, language goes beyond grammar and despite better spelling by group 2, there was a lack of voice within this story due to a shift in narrative that occurred, thus influencing point of view as there was a switch from Skyler’s point of view to a third person whom the reader is unaware of. Language was not used as a vehicle for creativity within this story due to not using multilingualism, word merging or using creative language in the form of metaphors. The story was simply told in a literal sense by retelling events that occurred.

Group 2 makes use of colloquial language and contractions such as ‘didn’t’ and ‘couldn’t’ which are not regarded as formal English. Group 2 made the choice to write their entire story in English without making use of code-switching or translanguaging. This once again indicates that they were comfortable writing in English despite having the opportunity to add in languages that they are familiar with. This could have been

due to not knowing how to make use of code-switching in academic writing. It is a form of language that is familiar to them only in an oral mode.

The story lists facts one after the other, giving information that does not add value to the story instead of explaining one event/idea in depth which would have had more emphasis on creativity. The concluding Chapters 4 and 5 come across as confusing for the reader due to jumbled ideas that are incoherent and the reader is not sure if it is a suicide due to the note that Skyler leaves for her father. Another confusion for the reader is in chapter 5 where it is unclear if Skyler convinces Potia to kill herself or if Potia kills Skyler. This indicated incoherent ideas and writing structure based on planning process that had not been done well. Through this, it is evident that the planning process should have been facilitated to structure ideas and chapters which would have led to a more coherent formation of ideas and structure. Chapter 5 was not needed in this story and it would have ended in a more powerful manner if it was not included, thus ending the story at chapter 4.

Voice in this story is confusing for the reader as the story begins with a first person narrative and then changes to the third person. The reader began with a closeness and understanding the story from Skyler's point of view and then suddenly feels a distance once the narrative changes. Once the narrative changes to the third person, the reader is not sure from whose perspective the story is being told. This shift impacts the writer's identity due to an uncertainty of who the writer is.

The writer's subjectivity impacts this group's writing as it is evident that they are aware of stereotypes that exist in society. They are aware of and depict Skyler's stepmother as a villain, which is often done in soap opera genres, movies and fairy tales. For example, "I once saw Potia putting poison again in my food I tryed to tell my father but he couldn't believe me he taught I didn't want Potia in his house." It is also evident that this group used the ideology that women have the power to bewitch men who are in love with them which is also seen in this example. Her father was convinced that Potia would never poison or harm his daughter. He defended and believed his second wife instead of his daughter. He was also blinded towards the domestic abuse and child labour that occurred in his house.

Greene (1995) states that imaginative thinking may draw on envisioning new possibilities. This activity based on identity writing allowed the learners to create an alternate reality for their experiences and communities. For example, group 2 has done a reworking of the story Cinderella, and has re-imagined certain aspects such as female empowerment due to Skyler being a pilot in their version of the story. They could write themselves or their characters to be or do anything that they wished to. Despite this, they seem to miss that opportunity as the ending undercuts some of the alternate reality possibilities that they could have achieved.

d) Cultural and identity elements:

There is no link to any cultural elements or local language used. The characters have not been given traditional names and have no cultural references when being referred to as was done by group 1 when referring to an elder. The lack of contextualisation and specificity in the reworking makes this so plodding.

The learners may have identified with elements from the story Cinderella such as having a wicked stepmother who inflicts abuse onto them, the death of a parent or feelings of loss and abandonment from a parent who is present. This could have been a factor when deciding on what story to write about and may have influenced them to choose this due to a strong identification with a story that already exists.

4.3.3 Group 3: Bullying and love

Chapter 1 (one)

Once upon a time there was a girl called Palesa, she was in in grade 7. Her family was not poor, not rich just normal. She had a mother who was a domestic worker and she had diabetes. Her mother always give her R5 when she goes to school. One day Palesa asked her mother what kind of work are you doing. Her mother said “no i can’t tell you because you will be disappointed in me.”

Palesa went to school on Monday. When she got there she found a girl called Gontse. Gontse always bully her. she always take her money or sometimes her lunch box. Palesa was afraid to tell a teacher or her mother because she knows that she will get beaten after school. When Palesa’s maam says write the noise makers. Gontse says if you dare write me i will kill you with my bare hands. Gontse was a tall

girl in class she always wanted to fight with Boys expecially Palesa. Palesa hate fighting and everyone in class was afraid of Gontse. Gontse took advantage that her classmates. And she was so disrespectful and she was so cheecky and jeolouse.When time goes on there was a parents meeting at school. Palesa wanted to tell her mother but she was afraid of Gontse. But she wondered if she didn't tell her mother she will be bullied for the rest of her. Palesa told her mother that there is someone who is bullying her. Her mother didn't believe her. And she cried for so long.

Chapter 2

There was a boy who went to a new school he was thirteen years old. He lived with his mother, father and his sisters. They were not poor, not rich, just normal people. They lived a wonderful life but the boy named Jackie was so sad that he left his old friend and his old place.

On Monday Jackie and his family moved in with a lot of bags, and Jackie was not in the mood. He tried to control it. So the next day Jackie went to school and he was so afraid that if some learners embarasse him what will he do? He told his mother, his mother said don't worry about the other kids says about you. His mother said just be yourself and get some new friends and be cool. His mother remember choose your friends carefully don't smoke, don't drink and don't be disrespectful in class.

As the time goes he started to get new friend and it was Palesa. Then they got very close. On the same day they ask each other their names and where so they live and what is their age. Then Jackie asked Palesa what is the name of the school. Palesa said its Kingdavid private School. Wow what a nice name said Jackie.

Chapter 3

On the next day Jackie asked Palesa what grade are you in. I'm in grade 7 said Palesa. Then when it was lunch time Palesa never went to capertirar with Jackie. Then Gontse and her crew came and told Palesa to give them her lunch. And they pushed Palesa and took her lunch box but on that moment Jackie saw Palesa and he went to save Palesa. And they fell in-love for each other. And Palesa leand on Jackie and they started kissing each other. No bullies bullied Jackie and Palesa. And they lived happy ever after.

THE END

a) Themes and social consciousness:

The themes in this story include bullying, social class systems and love. These themes are universal and draw on issues that occur within society. Palesa's mother feels ashamed that she is a domestic worker and hides this fact from her daughter. This is common within some households where parents with lower income jobs hide their careers from their children and families due to social stigma that is attached to these jobs.

The issue of bullying is very common within schools and society and requires serious attention and addressing. When discussing why the group selected this topic for their story, they expressed that they have a bully in the class and that they needed to tell their story and try to stop this bully because they could not tolerate it anymore. This is probably why the story was so successful and authentic in comparison to the other groups as it emerges directly from their experiences and concerns. During the focus group discussion, a learner from this group said:

> *"Most of the time we see it in class (bullying).* We wrote about bullying because it's not right. They beat up other children and they end up with bruises on their face so that's why we wrote about it. We have seen it in our class."

On analysing this statement it is evident that the topic choice for this story is based on personal experience and a daily reality that is experienced by the learners in this class. They chose the topic to address the issue and as a form of social action against the crimes of this bully.

There is a sense of criticality and social awareness present in the story of this group. The text is geared towards social action which fits into the aims of a culturally relevant pedagogy and critical literacy. It illustrates the exploration of power relations to some extent, although it is not completely followed through. The power relations are never challenged or dealt with as they are overruled by the fairy tale ending where Palesa is rescued by her prince.

The events that occur are realistic and a youthful audience can identify with this story. The learners in this group are conscious about their surroundings and the issues that are experienced daily by their peers. They used this story in the hope that it would

alert the bully of their actions and hope that remorse and regret would follow in order to stop this.

b) Creativity and imagination:

The learners drew on elements of creativity and imagination such as creative reworking where they took an experience that they encountered and reworked it into a story that is realistic and identifiable. They began with chapter 1 which entailed of explaining the life of Palesa and her experience, followed by chapter 2 which was based on the life of Jackie and then followed by chapter 3 which discussed the life of both of these characters and how they overcome the bully and fell in love.

The story is written in chapters, which draws on the FunDza story outline, without the melodramatic/soap opera genre included in the FunDza stories. However, they chose a fairy tale structure and their reliance of fairy tale framework ended up limiting their story. It begins with the phrase ‘Once upon a time’ and it ends with ‘And they lived happy ever after.’ which is the conventional beginning and end of the fairy tale genre. It illustrates that the learners in this group were familiar with traditional story telling which may either be textual or verbal due to following the outline of it. One can argue that the fairy tale framework limited this group’s imagination to develop the ending of their story to resolve conflict in a meaningful way.

Despite the story being written in a third person narrative, details are creatively written in order to still express feelings to the reader in an effective way. For example, ‘Palesa wanted to tell her mother but she was afraid of Gontse. But she wondered if she didn’t tell her mother she will be bullied for the rest of her.’ Despite not being written in the first person narrative, the reader is able to understand Palesa’s perspective, her inner thoughts and feelings.

Versatility was a factor included within this story which draws on risk during writing and also freedom. This group took the risk to shed light on bullying that was occurring within their classroom. They chose to express the events that took place by creatively reworking it to suit the context of the story. It was a collective risk to select this topic as it could either anger the bully or bring about a sense of guilt. They had the freedom to explore this experience and add to or intentionally rework the story to have an intended effect on the audience and the bully.

The story ends with ‘And they lived happy ever after.’ This is an interesting shift to fairy tale genre despite the authentic nature of events within this story. It is believable and realistic until this phrase as it creates a shift from storytelling of real life experiences to a fairy tale genre. It makes one wonder if students feel the need and expectation to begin and end off storytelling with a decisive and dramatic beginning and end. This has also been done by group 2 who began their story with ‘Once upon a time’. It indicates that their perception about story genre has specific elements such as these embedded in their ideologies. It is almost as if they perceive it to not be a story if it does not consist of these phrases attached to fairy tale genre, particularly those that deal with gendered issues and themes.

c) Language and voice:

The story is written in English despite learners being allowed to include any African language. It is well-written in terms of sentence construction, grammar and diction in comparison to the other groups. It easy to follow the content due to coherent ideas and sentence structure which was aided with connectors used in this story such as connectors used to turn simple sentences into complex and compound sentences which made the story more engaging to read.

This group attempted to use sophisticated diction despite incorrect spelling for all of these words. For example ‘expecially’ = especially, ‘jeolouse’ = jealous, ‘embarasse’ = embarrass and ‘capertirar’ = cafeteria. It shows that the group tried to use sophisticated diction despite not being able to spell the words correctly. This has not been attempted by the other groups as they all used basic diction.

This group included aspects of language play (Beneke, 2018) as a means to show creativity. An example of this is ‘Her family was not poor, not rich just normal.’ Instead of being literal about their financial class, they chose to use a play on words as a description for this.

This group made use of exploring one idea at a time in each paragraph by using language to explain events in detail and making use of adjectives to create a mental image for the reader. Their ideas were more developed and coherent than the other groups. This was not done by the other groups who instead listed many facts one after

the other instead of providing details and explanations in their stories. This added to the interest of the reader and formed a coherent story.

The use of dialogue and stating what the characters said and how they reacted added to the voice of the characters and provide the reader with a vivid and convincing image and understanding of the character which is based on showing rather than telling. For example ‘Gontse says if you dare write me i will kill you with my bare hands.’ From the use of language and description included, we understand the character and get a sense of her personality and how violent she is. In addition, we also start to feel sympathetic towards the victim, Palesa, who has to deal with the threat and violence displayed by Gontse. Dialogue was used effectively in this story which was not done by any of the other groups, but it could have been developed further. However, with the few examples of dialogue used, this group managed to provide a sense of voice of the characters and intrigue and interest in the reader.

d) Cultural and identity elements:

This story caters for a universal audience and does not consist of any specific cultural elements such as the use of African language or traditional titles when referring to people. The use of African names such as Gontse and Palesa is the only cultural aspect included in this story.

Identity plays a strong element in this story. The writers identified with the events and characters in this story due to it being a personal experience which they have encountered. There are aspects of identity for the reader as bullying is common within schools and many may identify with either the victim or the bully. This makes the story relevant to the youthful audience that it was meant for and it is relatable.

The identity of two different kinds of mother and child relationships are drawn on which are illustrated in this story. This group showed criticality when using contrasting relationships in this story. Palesa’s relationship with her mother is different to that of Jackie with his mother. Palesa’s mother is seen to sacrifice everything for her child and work hard to educate her. However, she does not believe Palesa when she tells her that she is being bullied at school. It is almost like she is in denial that bullying can occur at such an elite school.

The relationship between Jackie and his mother is contrasting in terms of this. His mother supports him and his wellbeing. For example, 'His mother said just be yourself and get some new friends and be cool. His mother remember choose your friends carefully don't smoke, don't drink and don't be disrespectful in class.' This indicates that while she makes provision for him to attend this school, she is also able to care for him and give good advice when he faces difficulty with bullies. Through this, the group showcases different parenting styles that exist and learners can identify with either of them.

Despite being a domestic worker, Palesa's mother is able to afford to send her to King David Private school which is a prestigious school in the Gauteng region, yet the learners in this school are from lower- or middle-income households. This indicates that an alternate reality described by Greene (1995) is created within this story in which a new identity is re-imagined. Despite realistically being unable to afford to go to an expensive and prestigious school, the learners write that Palesa is able to attend it, which is ironic. However, the identity of the character is placed within this setting and despite it being a higher-class school, they write about bullying also occurring here which indicates that they understand that bullying is a phenomenon experienced at every school despite its standard.

4.3.4 Group 4: The Five Rapists

Chapter 1

Once upon a time there were 5 sex adicted brothers. And one day they plan something to do. They wanted a job and they got it, But there was a boy called Kagiso and he didn't get the work. And he was thinking of making bad things, and he told us that he is planing to hyjack cars.

Chapter 2

Lethabo and Atlegang did go with Kagiso's plan, they first WARNED Him that it was not a good Idea and it Would PUT him in PrisoN, KAGISO was so starborn and went along with his plan. He stole two cars before the police could get him and take him to prison. Once the other four brothers found out that their youngest brother Kagiso was in jail, they all said we are BBF's we go down together. So, they all stole cars, And ALL WENT

TO PRISON. Prison made them miss sex cause they were so addicted to it. THEY FINALLY GOT OUT IN 4 YEARS TIME

Chapter 3

In four years time they started to rap school girls. Then one day we thot of going back to prison, after a while Lethabo told them that we are not going to go back to prison. Two weeks later, we went to steal 5 cars from a BMW shop. We stole 5 I8's then the police chased came after us and we were able to run away from the police. With our five car we started to kidnap school girls and rap them we kidnapped 20 school girls. After 1 year we stole money from shops, banks and businesses. We built a big house the we did a big party and we invited girls only.

Half of them went back home and the other half of them went back home after two weeks. We went back on raping school girls by that time we were still stealing money. One day we made an under ground house. In our underground house we kept school girls. Each and everyday we raped a half of them, then we took them back home.

Chapter 4

The five of us wanted kids so that they can carry on with what we were doing. But we were not able to find kids, so we carryed on. The police found out that we are stealing money. Then we stole a lot of cars and money, the cars we stole we sold the immediately so that we can make our house bigger. 5 years later Uzezi told us that he is done stealing, but then us we told him that it means you will never rap school kids again. One month later Lethabo, Sandile, Atlegang and Kagiso went back to prison, then Uzezi found out that we went back in prison. So he came to bail us out. Then Atlegang also said he is done.

a) <u>Themes and social consciousness:</u>

The title of the story, The five rapists, is very literal and upfront about what to expect. It is a dramatic way to begin this narrative as it already creates an alarming response for the reader and grabs one's attention to read further. The themes in this story include brotherhood, rape, crime and law enforcement.

I was surprised that this group of learners chose to write about serious issues of conducting rape and crime. My surprise stemmed from viewing the learners in this class as young, innocent and I expected them to explore playful topics such as love, music and adventure. It was shocking to me that they wrote about the crimes from the perspective of the rapists which led me to wonder why they made this decision. Many of the FunDza stories cover topics like these, but they are usually from the point of view of the victims. This indicated to me that despite their age, they are aware that these issues exist and the severity of them.

They also indicated that there is a lack of law enforcement with regard to these themes. They continuously state that despite their constant actions, the rapists and criminals always get away from the police and that you can commit such severe crimes and be free by simply paying bail. This is in fact a reality within South Africa and the learners are aware that the law enforcement within this country is ineffective in many aspects which is an opinion that they foreground.

There is a sense of addressing social issues and a social consciousness through writing. They are aware that kidnapping and rape occurs often within their communities and that it is not taken seriously by those it does not affect. They write about the victims by positioning them to have no voice, which is believable as in reality, many victims are silenced by being ignored or overpowered in situations. They are also aware that the criminals do not reform immediately. In the story, the rapists continue to commit crimes until they experience some form of guilt and seek retribution from not going to jail again. It takes them many years and attempts at imprisonment for only two of them to stop.

This story reproduces misogynistic and patriarchal assumptions and beliefs. It is not clear if the writers associate with or support these views, but they do reproduce them to shed light on them. It is based on constant ideologies of men in power, a lust for money and violence as well as enforcing violence on women and having the ability to not be answerable for these crimes.

b) Creativity and imagination:

Once again, a fairy tale framework is drawn upon as this group also begins their story with the phrase ‘Once upon a time’. One gets the feeling that they have been taught

to do this at school during their writing assignments or that they are mimicking stories that they have read. Due to this, the reader gets the sense right from the beginning that the events of this story are based on fiction, not real-life experiences.

Minimal creativity is present through the plot of this story as the learners are not very imaginative when describing the events that take place in this story. I believe that due to exaggerating facts too much such as the different crimes and raping of many girls daily the story becomes unrealistic and melodramatic. Creativity is inhibited as the characters are not given rich voices in which the reader can understand their motivations, point of view and inner world. The writers provide a list of what the rapists did instead of interrogating these actions and events in detail. Due to this, there is reluctance to imagine a different perspective.

Risk is a factor involved in this story. The writers of this story expose themselves when exploring this topic. They are at a risk of facing judgement from their peers for writing about such a controversial topic as many in the audience may wonder if they have been victims or perpetrators of rape and whether they know victims of this crime. These learners are considered courageous in shedding light on such issues despite the repercussions that may follow.

The writers expressed freedom to choose these themes to explore without holding back. Despite the melodramatic nature of events, they were not afraid to use their imagination and write about kidnapping, bank robbery and hijacking despite this being an academic piece of writing. They were creative when considering the details of their story: for example, they used an underground house to keep the girls in. These are creative decisions that were considered during the planning process.

c) <u>Language and voice:</u>

The learners struggled with language usage, grammar and spelling throughout this story. The sentence construction was weak and incoherent due to listing a range of events that occurred one after the after. In chapter 3 the story shifts from first person narrative to third person. Thus, the reader is unsure whose perspective the story is based on. Despite this, there is evidence of attempting to use sophisticated diction such as ‘starborn’ = stubborn. They also used word creation in which they created their own abbreviation “BBF” which means best brothers forever instead of using the usual

“BFF” which is best friends forever. They adapted this and it showed creativity within their use of language and efforts at language play.

No dialogue was used throughout this story and that leaves the reader with a sense of distance from the events and the characters. The characters are not given a voice and we do not understand the story from any of their perspectives, but instead we understand their motive and identity as a group and joint entity. However, it lacks layers of voice and multiple perspectives despite there being five members of this gang.

d) Cultural and identity elements:

The only cultural element used is the names within this story. They are African names and belong to the learners who wrote this story. Each learner in the group took on the role of a character. From this, I interpreted that each of the learners identified with one of the characters in this story or either identified with the events that occurred. The story lacks context and setting, but from the crimes committed one can argue that the story is set in a low income area and that the crimes were committed due to low income households or poverty-stricken ones.

They chose to position themselves as the offenders or perpetrators of crime rather than being the victims by each member taking on the role of one of the characters in the textual activity. The textual story consisted of low levels of engagement for the audience and it was rather confusing to keep up with the various crimes carried out. It is interesting to compare the stories produced by group 1 and group 4 due to both of them exploring issues of rape. However these are from completely different perspectives. Group 1 viewed their character as a victim of crime and this impacted her entire life and affected her until she was an adult. Group 4 takes on the role of the perpetrator and is not affected by any guilt or fear until the end of the story. It is interesting to note that they write about the rapists as having no feelings and remorse. They continue to commit crime and go about their lives unaffected. This is the view that this group holds about rapists.

In all the stories the characters were in most instances based on the learners’ identities and experiences. This was due to the brief given to base the stories on their identities and those of the people around them. This led to a richness in writing and unexpected

topics such as rape, death and power relations. Each story included a form of self-transformative positions due to all the stories ending with a happy ending despite the tragedies or bad experiences involved. These stories were in opposition to their own lives. Once again, this is due to a fairy tale framework that despite experiencing tragedies, in the end all will be well. This ideology inhibits creativity and constructing a meaningful resolution to conclude the stories.

4.4 A general interpretation of all the groups:

This section will discuss an overview of group writing processes, findings and interpretation of the stories produced by all the groups in terms of the following categories:

1. Collaborative writing processes;
2. Writing as a culturally responsive pedagogy;
3. Language as a resource; and
4. Affordances and limitations of text-based writing.

4.4.1 Collaborative writing processes:

The construction of texts for this research was based on collaborative activities as a means to share ideas, resources and experiences. This was done in the hope that the learners work together and learn from each other in terms of peer support and collaborative learning to incorporate aspects of home and school learning.

The aspect of deciding on a topic for the textual short stories was challenging and I observed that many groups struggled with it due to different ideas, writing styles and group dynamics. This was a challenge for them as they were not accustomed to collaborative work and sharing of ideas was something new to their learning experience. Each of the learners in group 1 suggested a different topic which was a struggle to decide on selecting one. During the focus group discussion, a learner from this group said:

> We started by putting all the possible topics down and everyone came up with one. We had a vote of which topic to do and decided to write about rape since it is happening in other countries. Some of the other children are losing their parents because of rape.

This group made a decision through the method of voting, which was a democratic approach. This was followed by agreement from all the group members that the issue of rape and death required addressing through their story.

Group 3 selected their topic based on unanimous agreement that bullying is an issue that required addressing. A learner from this group said:

> We wrote about bullying because it's not right. They beat up other children and they end up with bruises on their face so that's why we wrote about it. We have seen it in our class.

For this group, their topic selection was based on a form of social justice in which they aimed to identify and express concern about bullying that is occurring within their class as well as in their school and society.

The process of writing the story varied among each group. Some decided to separate the work by allocating a chapter to each group member to write, while others opted to construct the entire story collaboratively. The latter was time constraining due to constant discussion and input. However, it created more cognitive stimulation and maximised the input of each learner throughout the writing process due to constant collaboration. Collaboration allowed for socialization in the classroom during planning activities as each group engaged in conversation in a variety of local languages other than only English which indicated that the oral mode allowed for multilingualism. Different understandings of collaboration allowed for different ways in which the learners collaborated and structured the tasks. Those who collaborated by writing the story together resulted in a more coherent and successful text such as group 1 and 3 whereas the groups who understood that collaboration meant sharing the work in terms of each member writing a few sentences resulted in a less structured text with gaps in their writing such as group 2 and 4. This indicated that communication between group members and understanding what method of collaboration is required, is an important aspect during collaborative work.

Vandermeulen (2011) talked about writing groups in which individuals share their writing with each other. He stated that writers' groups work best because they include collaboration, group dynamics and are time efficient (Vandermeulen, 2011). However, by interpreting the findings of this research, I believe that this statement is not always

true as there are affordances and limitations to peer response and feedback groups. It allows participants to learn from each other in smaller groups which serve as a possible safe space to share ideas and contribute to the task at hand. However, there are a number of potential limitations. In some cases, group work can create an imbalance of contributions among learners as well as elicit negative feedback that is not constructive. During the focus group discussion, a learner from group 2 stated with regard to the matter of collaboration:

> "It was not so amazing and there were disadvantages because people were not participating. We had to force them."

This indicates an imbalance of participation among the group members which led to negative group dynamics which affected the writing task.

Another limitation of group work is that the role of the educator becomes limited, and he or she serves a minimal role in guiding and teaching, which may be a disadvantage for learners who are experiencing difficulties with the task at hand or for those who seek the educator's approval (Vandermeulen, 2011). In this case, as the facilitator I was unaware of some learners not participating while others struggled with the task for these reasons, and this affected their attitude towards collaborative tasks as well as their writing. During this series of activities, limitations of collaboration included non-participation by some members and exclusion and silencing due to language hierarchies, which will be discussed later.

According to Grenville (1990), it is an important process of writing to write down ideas without making the end result and assessment the main focus. I envisioned the task as serving as a creative journey that inspired, motivated and educated learners about creativity, imagination, identity writing and voice. Opposed to the binary perception of what imagination is, imagination is a cognitive function that involves high levels of thinking and processing. Imaginative writing is the opportunity to remove any limitations or constraints and allow learners to write freely in order to develop ideas (Mendelowitz, 2016). Imagination was lacking as the learners limited the extent to creatively rework the common outlines and events that they had used which formed part of their prosthetic memories. In particular, they struggled to imagine endings that developed their stories further.

These include the reworking of the story of Cinderella by a group which consisted of limited reworking due to the time and place in which the story was set. An example of a common outline of a story is by group 3 in which they explain the hardships of bullying, followed by a female character being 'saved' by a male and then falling in love and living happily ever after. This is a common theme of a fairy tale which has been used in the story. It seemed as if they did not explore new topics and events, but rather reproduced events from soap operas, films and series. Group 1 did not produce an ending for their story, but all of the other stories ended with a happy ending whereas no cliff hangers and climaxes were used despite this being illustrated in the FunDza stories. Ending on a cliff hanger was an element that was emphasised during the modelling process as it is a requirement of the FunDza site due to submitting a chapter of each story weekly in the attempt to keep the readers engaged to read a new chapter each week. As described by Vygotsky (2004), each story was reworked in different ways and each had their own strengths and weaknesses. They used the experiences and memories that they worked with to transform them into something new. Due to the reworking of each story, the learners showed agency in their work.

Imagination and creativity existed in the stories, yet it was an aspect that they struggled to develop further. The learners confused this with exaggeration, which was a failing in their writing due to emphasising events too much which began to make their stories unbelievable and it drew on a soap opera genre. This could have been due to imitating some of the FunDza stories as they draw on a soap opera genre. The stories reveal assumptions that the learners had about writing stories. The dramatic moments and tension within their stories entail melodrama and the ending should always be a 'happily ever after'. This mimicked the soap opera and fairy tale genre.

There are different types of freedom, and in this series of lessons the learners were given structured freedom. Vygotsky (2004) argues that freedom and imagination are linked because one needs inner cognitive freedom in order to be imaginative. Due to this, the learners were given no assessment rubric to follow; however, they were given a word limit of 500 to 600 words. Their stories had to be based on their experiences or those of their communities, they were allowed to make use of any African language/languages and they were encouraged to be creative and imaginative. Their freedom was structured in terms of this outline, as well as the mode selected, as they

were required to produce a textual story and use the FunDza stories as a model to work with in order to write for an African youth audience. This was done so that the learners could focus on the content of their writing, rather than the assessment outline.

When analysing the stories, the content of each one was based on local and social aspects that are common in South Africa and their communities. They included issues of rape, crime, death, bullying and relationships. The topics chosen were based on socio-economic issues, which illustrates Greene's (1995) argument that imagination is grounded in the social in which we may draw on our realities to identify these issues and be critical about them despite harsh realities. Each group fulfilled the requirement of selecting a topic related to their identity and some localised it by providing an African context and elements.

Despite having the opportunity to access and write in any African language by being encouraged to code-switch and use colloquial or informal language, none of the groups made use of this. They lacked the skill to use language creatively in the form of code-switching, translanguaging and multilingualism. I expected to see common phrases that were used by them in class such as "eish", "awe" and "lekker", but these were non-existent in the stories. The learners did not make use of language rules, figures of speech such as metaphors, plot and character development or extended dialogue which would have created an impact in their writing other than writing a story in the literal form throughout. The stories produced by group 2 and 4 lacked excitement and had no emotional engagement due to being melodramatic and creating an unrealistic series of events, whereas those produced by group 1 and 3 were interesting, realistic and engaging due to dealing with current issues in a way that conveyed emotion and perspective from the writer/character to the reader. The writing style of these stories was coherent and relatable due to the development of ideas within the text.

In the questionnaire, the learners were asked to describe the best and the worst experiences that they had during the series of multimodal lessons. The responses varied and included the following:

Table 4.1: Best and worst moments of the collaborative task

Best moment
Sharing ideas with the group and listening to other opinions.
Accomplishing a series of tasks that was never done before.
All members participated together.
Getting to know the members of the group and classmates.
Worst moment
No group participation by some learners.
Difference of ideas/topics which lead to disagreements.
Language barriers which caused difficulty with sentence construction and vocabulary.
No tolerance towards diverse languages.

The learners stated that the best moments of the lessons were mostly inclusive of positive group dynamics. Through this, it is evident that when doing collaborative activities the relationship of the group members and classmates is an important aspect of enjoying the lesson and maximising learning through the use of sharing ideas and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1974). However, the latter was limited during the textual component of the activities. Through positive dynamics, the learners shared ideas, learnt from each other and accomplished the task successfully in an enjoyable manner.

The worst moments were also reliant on group dynamics. While during the observation it seemed as if all the learners were participating, in reality, some were not. It is good that all the learners have a different opinion and input; however, these need to be valued and respected or else disagreements will form and lead to negative group dynamics and participation which has occurred during the lesson.

During the focus group, three of the four learners expressed that they enjoyed group work. A learner said:

> I enjoyed it so much because I finally got to know some of the children.

This was surprising because it was the third term of the year and she expressed that she did not know all of the learners in the class. Therefore the collaborative task was

beneficial by creating communication and sharing of ideas among learners that did not usually occur. This has the potential to create cognitive and social development by means of communication, sharing of ideas and positive criticism from which one may benefit and learn.

Another learner stated:

> We all had parts. It's not like one person wrote the whole story. We didn't have any disadvantages because each person in our group participated and we enjoyed working as a group.

Through the collaborative writing process she learnt that each learner had a role to play through the separation of duties which contributed towards the final product. This contributed to a positive group dynamic in which all the learners in the group contributed to ideas, writing and sharing of experiences, which made the process of this task enjoyable.

4.4.2 Writing as a culturally responsive pedagogy

Culturally responsive or culturally relevant pedagogy as described by Ladson-Billings (2001) is based on finding connections and links between the experiences that learners encounter at home and at school through means of interaction, experiences, speech and language. Ladson-Billings (1995) strongly encouraged culturally responsive pedagogy approaches and stated that there is value in the linguistic and cultural resources that learners bring into the classroom which was traditionally overlooked and marginalised in schools.

Paris and Alim (2014) suggested moving further with cultural pedagogy and instead having a culturally sustaining pedagogy which deals with a critical ideology and 'encourages shifting between ways of making meaning to communicate with multiple communities'. Woodard, Vaughan and Machado (2017) developed this idea by attempting to construct a culturally sustaining writing pedagogy. This kind of pedagogical approach may assist with communication within diverse South African classes due to the wide range of languages and cultures present. Culturally sustaining pedagogy was used during this study by myself and the learners. I have used it by acknowledging the different cultures and languages that were present among the

learners and encouraging linguistic pluralism which is the use of various languages and dialects that can be used in the form of code-switching, translanguaging and informal language usage.

It is suggested that if learners incorporate their home languages into school learning, there is a better chance of academic success. However, the incorporation of language is just a micro-level classroom interaction and high-level academic success requires micro- and macro-level interaction. Macro-level interaction is inclusive of the other elements of culturally relevant pedagogy, such as culture, experiences and all the other resources that the learners bring into the classroom. These may include social and economic issues in writing and having a social consciousness about them. For example, group 3 addressed the issue of bullying in their writing as they were experiencing a similar scenario in their school. Socially conscious awareness is one of the aims of a culturally relevant pedagogy.

During the series of activities that took place in this research, the learners were instructed to build a bridge and make links between school curriculum in the form of creative writing and their home experiences by incorporating issues of identities, experiences, culture and language. This is a form of culturally responsive pedagogy which was used with the aim of creating a local form of writing specifically for a South African youth audience. Bartolome (1994) argues for a 'humanizing pedagogy that respects and uses the reality, history and perspectives of students as an integral part of educational practice' (p. 173).This form of pedagogy is intended not just for individuals, but for collective empowerment and gain (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Through this, I decided to structure this activity around collaborative work in order for the learners to extend their knowledge, ideas, experiences and language repertoires through interaction.

Ladson-Billings (2014) discussed the concept of socio-political consciousness, which is described as the ability to take learning outside of school domains and 'identify, analyse and solve real-world problems'. During a study conducted by Ladson-Billings (2001), an educator challenged his learners positively by asking them to write about topics that are of value and meaningful to them. The educator must ensure that learners have the opportunity to find links between academic discourses and the discourse of everyday life experiences (Moje, Collazo, Carrillo and Marx, 2001). I took

on a similar approach during this research by asking the learners to write about their identities and experiences, which resulted in academic development and harnessing of academic skills and dispositions, namely creativity and imagination, while ensuring that the content and ideas shared were relevant and identifiable. Most of the learners seemed to be invested in the identity writing task and expressed themselves in the form of text as their chosen topics were of interest to them and served as a motivation to explore and express ideas by localising their ideas and writing. Despite their motivation to share their experiences and ideas, some of the stories were not engaging for the audience such as the five rapists which was written by group 4. The learners drew on aspects of their lives, cultures, social domains and school experiences during the construction of their stories.

It is important to consider the type of learners involved and the environment that they come from as this impacts the creativity and resources that they bring to the classroom as it has shaped the outcome of their writing (Moje, 2008). When considering the type of learners that were present, by analysing their stories, their economic and environmental backgrounds are evident in their writing as it depicts events that are familiar to working class, township individuals. These learners experience social and economic issues that affect either their physical or emotional wellbeing as they experience events of abuse, inequality or crime on a daily basis.

Allowing learners to explore critical practices allows for multiple privilege and makes writing a neutral practice (Johnson & Vasudevan, 2014). Multiple privilege refers to providing equal opportunities for all the learners from various economic classes, races and cultures. It provides a space in which all of them can explore and investigate social issues that exist or are re-imagined. It is about providing opportunities to use the resources that they possess such as multilingualism, culture and identities in a safe schooling environment in which these resources can be shared and explored to foster social and academic development

Criticality and social awareness were seen in their writing as each story addressed social issues that affect the learners or their communities. For example, group 3 felt the need to address bullying because it affects the learners in their class. It is a form of culturally responsive pedagogy and identity writing with the aim of creating a social awareness towards these issues. There are rich opportunities available when allowing

learners to bring everyday experiences into school textual writing (Johnson and Vasudevan, 2014). This is what was done during these lessons in which I intended to build a bridge between the learners' daily lives and identities which was incorporated into school learning, specifically the construction of a collaborative short story. The learners are accustomed to incorporating their experiences and identities in everyday texts that they engage with such as chatting to their friends about the main events of their day on WhatsApp or by posting about their identities on their Facebook profile. I used this lesson as a platform to incorporate these practices with school writing.

Incorporating these kinds of texts into school writing creates a form of verbal or written responsiveness and critical curricula through means of engagement with the text, the mode and content (Johnson & Vasudevan, 2014; Janks, 2002). Janks (2013) states that language and literacy education have the potential to address topics that lead to equity and social justice and through addressing these topics, learners may become agents of change. She states that by being critical about these issues, learners read the text and also the world in relation to power, identity and equality issues which they can interpret and analyse. Power relations were present in all of these stories, often giving power to dominant characters. For example, group 1 wrote about the rapist who is a male character and included stereotypes of laziness and alcoholism to his character which lead him to being a rapist, group 3 described the bully as a macho, big-built female who exerts power over those smaller and weaker than her.

However, within all the stories, power relations were discussed but not problematised or interrogated to challenge existing power struggles. While group 3 attempted to draw attention to bullying which occurred in their class, the bullying was not resolved by a productive solution. Group 4 illustrated issues of power and misogyny but merely reproduced these ideals rather than challenging or resolving them. While these are interesting findings, they are not central to the aims of this research, but can rather be used as feedback that the educator can work with.

When analysing the stories that they wrote, it is evident that the learners had an interest in social issues as they wrote about topics relevant to their surroundings and communities which needed to be addressed. For example:

Table 4.2: Story topics

GROUP:	TOPICS:
Group 1	Death, abandonment, family, alcohol abuse and rape.
Group 2	Death, child labour, stepfamilies, attempted murder, education and murder.
Group 3	Class levels, disease, bullying, violence, no support system and friendship.
Group 4	Brotherhood, crime, violence, rape and abduction.

By analysing the topics discussed in each story, it is evident that these are relatable and current issues that require addressing due to many learners possibly experiencing them. It indicates that the learners are socially conscious of the experiences faced in their communities which may possibly affect them, their communities or their families. Thus, they were motivated to explore these topics and let their voices be heard with regard to the experiences that they have witnessed or identify with.

Ladson-Billings (2009) states that 'learners can be sources and resources of knowledge and skills – a critical component of culturally relevant pedagogy'. The learners may have discussed these topics in order to express their identities and experiences or find solutions to deal with them, which has been conducted in a safe environment in the form of creative and identity writing. This form of identity writing ensures that the students become the subject of the writing rather than just objects (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Most of these stories include issues of power in which they illustrate male dominance in the form of violence. Through this they problematise notions of power and equality through acts of violence and abuse. Male characters are in positions of power, while the females are at the receiving end of this. For example, group 1 wrote in their story: 'He started throwing me on the bed and he took off his pants and he pushed and pushed. I cried and Cried.' The male character in this story is in a position of power in which he used his position to rape a defenceless young girl. They illustrate the inequalities of power within family relations.

It is important to note that despite identity writing in terms of social issues and power, the power relations do not switch for almost all of these stories. The female characters

do not attain power by themselves without the aid of a male. For example, group 3 wrote in their story: ‘And they pushed Palesa and took her lunch box but on that moment Jackie saw Palesa and he went to save Palesa. And they fell in-love for each other. And Palesa leant on Jackie and they started kissing each other. No bullies bullied Jackie and Palesa. And they lived happy ever after.’ Palesa is written about in a stereotypical position of a female in distress who requires saving from a man. The bully only stops once Jackie ‘saves’ her. This example can be linked to the difficulties of reimagining the status quo or common perceptions. It could also be a product of failed collaborative imagination.

This may be due to African cultural beliefs that men are powerful figures within their societies and the head of a household. The learners may choose to write about themselves in empowering situations, rather than being the victims of violence which they are usually accustomed to, as was done by group 4. It gives them the power to be heard in which they usually are not. Instead of requiring the learners to write about topics which will minimally impact their academic success such as writing about their pet or their holiday, I chose to instruct them to write about topics that are meaningful and interesting to their education as this may potentially benefit their reading, writing and their lives beyond school practices. This is the ability to link pedagogy with a deep understanding and appreciation for culture and the experiences that these cultures encounter (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Culturally responsive pedagogy used in these activities was in the form of allowing learners to make use of any African language during their writing which could be in the form of code-switching, language merging or translanguaging instead of using Standard English throughout. However, despite the learners not being fluent in speaking English, none of the groups chose to write in any other language that they were comfortable speaking in. During the questionnaire, the learners were asked how they felt about being allowed to write in different languages. One learner said:

> I felt like it didn’t make a sense writing in another language. But I felt happy that maam gaved us a permission.

By being schooled to only write in English monomodally, the learners found it strange and were not comfortable in using other languages apart from English in their writing.

They were taught to use their language repertoires as separate entities, thus making the use of multilingualism in a writing task confusing for them during these lessons. I noticed that the learners associated English with written text as a result of being taught to write in English during school learning and not in their home languages. For many learners, writing in English was considered as the correct and dominant way in which to write academically.

According to Ladson-Billings (2001), culturally relevant pedagogy should serve as a way to question and critique cultural norms and values within society to prepare them to be active citizens and not just be coerced into accepting what is passed on to them. A culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy requires educators to teach learners to engage with and be critical about their surroundings, teachings and perspectives (Ladson-Billings, 2014). This may lead to cognitive stimulation and new insights of looking at society. In a minimalist way, this writing activity served as a task for learners to look at their society and experiences critically before transducing it into another mode. It was about what they experienced and how they chose to express and critique it. For example, bullying is a norm in schools around the world, yet group 3 chose to discuss this issue as they noticed that many learners in the class were experiencing bullying by a peer. They wrote about the hardships that their character experienced due to being bullied, the realism of nobody believing her and a solution to deal with the issue. While this was a minimal form of critique, it still served as questioning the values of society and the issues of dealing with problems that are encountered on a daily basis for many of the learners. Through this, I understand that the groups required more lessons in which they could enable a critical reflection of their stories, for example, rewriting their stories from a different perspective or changing the ending of their stories to empower the characters.

Culturally responsive pedagogy expects learners to engage with the world around them (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Through this, educators need to use different means and modes of teaching by bringing in alternative resources other than just textbooks. It requires the use of newspapers, magazines, television and the media. In such a case, I believe that due to a love expressed for television and soap operas, the learners made use of ideas that they had seen on television and in books to construct their stories. An example of this can be seen in the story written by group 2 which

discusses the life of a young girl who lost her mother at a young age and lived with her wicked stepmother. This story consists of many similarities to the children's fairy tale of Cinderella. However, in this story, Skyler plays the role of the traditional Cinderella, studies and becomes a pilot, but instead of her living happily ever after, it has a tragic ending in which she is killed by someone she regarded as a friend. This story draws on familiar ideas depicted in a classic fairy tale with the incorporation of local ideas and aspects of betrayal, education and death. When reading it, one gets the feel of telenovelas and soap opera series from which ideas are drawn. It shows a creative reworking and a combination of ideas drawn from various resources to construct something new (Vygotsky, 2004). The creative reworking as described by Vygotsky is an acceptable way in which to address social issues by engaging with various forms of daily resources and in this case, these resources included a children's book, soap opera genres and real-life experiences, which are all a form of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Culturally responsive topics ensured creativity in the form of content that was meaningful to the learners, which made identity and writing about the local resources accessible to the learners. While they selected creative topics and experiences to write about, I recognised that they lacked exposure to linguistic creativity and imagination. I identify this lack of successful creativity and imagination with a statement by Vygotsky (2004, p. 15): 'The richer a person's experiences, the richer the material the imagination has access to.' These learners were limited by social class due to a poorly resourced school and in the written stories, it seemed as if the learners lacked cultural capital due to a basic nature of retelling in their written work through the use of language used as a resource and means of communication.

4.4.3 Language as a resource

The writing produced by the learners was not what I expected. Despite most learners being able to speak fluent English, even though it is not their home language, the learners struggled with the textual writing. For some groups, the ideas discussed were not focused and due to the word count of approximately 500 words, they tried to discuss multiple ideas and themes in a brief manner which resulted in an incoherent, brief story. Through this, the events of the story were not engaging in terms of content and the incorporation of multiple ideas led to a melodramatic genre as the characters

in the story experienced one tragedy after another. Most of the groups struggled to give their characters a voice; for example, a limited amount of dialogue was used only by some of the groups. Through this, the characters in the story lacked voice and were unsuccessful in being impactful and illustrating a meaningful story that would inspire others and create relevance to the other learners.

The concept of audience was understood because the learners wrote for the intended audience, which was their peers, by selecting topics that were relevant to their current lives. These topics were relevant in terms of experience, culture and common experiences that the learners experienced or knew about. However, the audience of the written text required more engagement with the writing and the incorporation of cliff hangers during the story would have been beneficial.

Language for an African youth was not addressed at all during the writing as all the groups wrote in English. All the writing was relevant to the audience of the FunDza website demographic in terms of structure and content, but none included local elements or language within their stories, while the stories included relevant topics that are applicable to the learners in this context and they used diction that is simple and understandable to learners of this age. However, despite this, I believe that it lacked slang, and South African colloquial English which may have captured and interested the audience of their stories. Instead, all the groups chose to write in standard, traditional English throughout their story.

Risk writing was a factor involved for each group. They all selected a topic that exposed them to some form of risk; for example, group 2 wrote about a bully in their class. The bully was at risk to be exposed and the writers were at risk by exposing her which could have resulted in more violence and discrimination. Each learner took a risk by sharing ideas and allowing themselves to be emotionally vulnerable due to discussing some controversial topics during their writing.

Some learners feel silenced in school due to speaking a non-dominant variety of English in an accent that is not prestigious (McKinney, 2016). These learners often experience exclusion due to being labelled as different and inadequate. Children who do not speak Standard English are often positioned as having no linguistic resources at all (McKinney, 2016). Due to this phenomenon, the learners were instructed to

complete both the written and multimodal tasks in any preferred standard or non-standard varieties of language. They were allowed to use code-switching or translingualism during their written stories that makes use of a variety of African and English languages.

In terms of the written task, all the groups chose to write in Standard English and did not make use of any code-switching, translanguaging or the usage of any African languages. I expected to see slang and colloquial language included, but these were non-existent. They chose to write in Standard English throughout their stories despite struggling with spelling, grammar, sentence construction and punctuation. This indicates that the learners have been positioned in terms of associating written language with Standard English.

Due to being schooled in writing in English, there is a possibility that they were not confident in writing in any other African language. The learners who did not possess a dominant English repertoire were excluded due to being positioned as having no or inadequate language resources to work with. This may be the result of uneven group participation as mentioned by a learner during the focus group discussion. A learner voiced her opinion in the questionnaire by mentioning being excluded as she stated that the other group members had a problem with her using ‘her’ language. This is an indication of being labelled as inadequate and excluded due to language hierarchies as the language that she spoke was not the dominant one in the group. Such learners are deprived of the opportunity of learning and communicating in a familiar language in which their most valuable resource, language, is ignored (McKinney, 2016). Through all of these findings, I have identified two issues that were present during these lessons. The first was a presence of English dominance among the learners and the second was a notion that valorises Standard English.

Language and power share a complex relationship and in many cases such as the above, language reproduces inequality within schools. In South African schools, dominant English is regarded as homogenous and standard which assumes that there is a single way of speaking and writing in the language (McKinney, 2016). This can be seen in the textual stories produced by all the groups as they associate ‘good writing’ with writing in English despite experiencing struggles of language usage and creativity in their writing and grammar. Monolingual ideologies from language practices and

policies ignore the resources that African learners bring to the class and enforce mainstream English (McKinney, 2016). Both learners and educators ignore a variety of languages to use and communicate with for better understanding and sharing of culture, history and epistemic knowledge.

> Language ideologies refer to the sets of beliefs, values and cultural frames that continually circulate in society, informing the ways in which language is conceptualised and represented as well as how it is used" (Makoe and McKinney, 2014).

These language ideologies are constructed through means of power as language dominance and hierarchy continued to be present even after decolonisation. Educators need to consider the identities of their learners and what they bring into the classroom because notions and ideologies of language impact teaching and learning. Language choices and usage constantly need to be constructively criticised because attitudes towards language is important to note. During the focus group discussion, I asked the learners why they chose to write in English and not in their home language. They answered with the following:

> Most of them (the learners) know English so we wrote in English.

> It is better to write in English because we only know how to speak another language but we struggling to write it.

Learners may become proficient in the language of learning and teaching and due to this, it may be that some of them are not able to write in their home or other African languages. The learners are confident, but not fully competent in writing in English as it is the language of learning and teaching. I noticed during my observation that they struggled with vocabulary and mixed pronouns, for example, when referring to a female many of the learners referred to 'her' as 'he'. It was interesting to note that a learner stated that despite being fluent in speaking her home language, she could not write in that language. A reason for this could be due to not being taught to do so at school.

Despite having the choice to write in any language, all the groups chose English. Some learners found it difficult to access English vocabulary during their writing task which

made the task challenging for them. Some of the group members were not tolerant and appreciative towards the diversity of language which was allowed during this task. One of the learners wrote in the questionnaire:

> I hated when people were having fucken problems with my language.

This indicates that discriminating and not valuing the opinions, language and culture of others lead to not enjoying the task and not enjoying the collaboration involved. It is actions like this that lead to learners disengaging and not participating in group activities due to being afraid of discrimination. Attempting to create a multilingual space with the classroom, in some instances generated conflict and linguistic persecution. This is often ignored in existing multilingualism literature.

The repertoires of language that learners bring to the class are sometimes discriminated against or viewed as inferior by their peers and this raises issues of the relationship that exists between language and power. The learners' multilingual repertoires were not used as a resource during the writing process to express social, economic and cultural experiences of their lives. The use of their home languages would have contributed to better understanding and a more authentic illustration and explanation of events as the learners would have added a sense of voice to the story. I expected to identify common phrases that were spoken in class such as 'eish', 'ya' and 'lekker' which would have added a sense of voice and context to the stories if used appropriately; however, there was no use of any colloquialism.

'Writing is a central way for The Writers to construct identity and claim membership in discourses' (Weinstein, 2009). Identity writing and experimentation are forms of development and in some instances consist of political issues, especially when working with learners who come from low income or marginalised backgrounds such as the participants used in this project. Language links to identity and while the learners wrote about aspects of their identities, they have done so in a monomodal language which may not be associated with all of the identities that they have. Language serves as a resource in which to illustrate authentic or imagined experiences in a language that is 'yours'. To some extent their experience was constrained due to language boundaries as they lacked the ability to maximise the impact and voice during the written version of their stories.

Elbow (1994) describes voice as a visual metaphor. A distinctive or unique voice is referred to as one that can be identified by others; for example, a person's writing can be identified as theirs through the use of a unique or distinctive voice. An authentic voice was required and they lacked the ability to achieve this by writing their experiences solely in Standard English rather than in a language or voice in which the events and experiences would have taken place. For example, group 1 made use of translanguaging after Lebohang was raped which made the reaction authentic as they would have probably spoken in their home language after a tragic incident.

Through these insights and findings, it is evident that there are affordances to textual writing activities within the language classroom which aid and develop learners' skills. In addition to this, there are also limitations to monomodal textual writing activities which will be discussed next in relation to the implications of these limitations.

4.4.4 Affordances and limitations of text-based writing

The affordances of text-based writing identified during this task are as follows. The learners had the ability to write in English confidently as they have been skilled to do so in school due to English being the language of teaching and learning. The learners remained confident in their language choice to write in English despite language and grammatical errors made. This allowed them practice in their writing of the English language despite it not being their home language. It was an opportunity for them to develop their creative writing skills and learn new vocabulary and diction from each other.

Language was used as a resource for learners to express themselves, their emotions and identities. Unfortunately, the learners did not make use of multilingualism, as I had hoped, in which they could have added to the language repertoires and create a unique voice for their characters during their writing.

Text-based writing allowed for an intended meaning to be illustrated. In most instances, there is more than one meaning to a text. Meaning is not just in the text, it depends on what meaning the reader makes of ,based on text interaction, personal experience and meaning (Zamel, 1992). Reading and writing in this scenario allowed for critical thinking and understanding during the construction of the short stories. For example, group 3 wrote in their story 'Gontse was a tall girl in class she always wanted

to fight with boys but especially Palesa.' They moved away from the stereotype of men exerting violence on women and constructed the bully as a female character who harmed both male and female learners at the school. The participants had the opportunity to use words in a creative and imaginative way to express meaning and content through text through means of creative writing, style and content. They could write about controversial topics without having to express their thoughts verbally, which is sometimes a struggle.

Collaborative textual writing allowed for academic and social collaboration which the learners felt ambivalent about as this provided an opportunity to get to know their peers as well as learn from them. The learners constructively challenged each other through discussion and experimentation of different writing styles and choices that were made with regard to content, context and language. For most of the groups, collaboration instilled positive group dynamics in which they learnt to share knowledge, ideas, experiences and identities in a safe environment. Through this, many of the groups expressed that a positive attitude towards the writing task was based on their group dynamics and willingness to work together in order to share the resources that each learner brought into the classroom such as culture, experiences, identities and languages.

Limitations of text-based writing in English included language barriers, as some learners struggled with accessing vocabulary and making use of grammatically correct writing. The learners were confined to one mode, being the textual mode which they associated with one language, English. This may have restricted creative and imaginative ways of expression such as code-switching and translanguaging which I believe may add to a creative form of writing that adds to a local context. It is a literary form of creativity as it requires thinking and knowledge of how to merge different languages together. Due to English being a traditional writing approach used by their educator on a daily basis, the learners lacked motivation to be creative in their writing and were not textually creative as they did not make use of any figures of speech or creative outlines to their stories.

Monomodal texts are predominantly print based (Walsh, 2006) and that is associated with this section of the activity. The notion of anglonormativity is present in which people are expected to be proficient in English and are regarded as deviant if they are

not (McKinney, Carrim, Marshall and Layton, 2015). This was an ideology that was present among the learners as they all made the decision to write solely in English and regarded the learners who discussed in other languages as deviant and expressed a verbal disregard towards them. This is an issue as language segregation puts other African languages at a risk of extinction as learners feel that their home languages are inferior due to a hierarchy system.

Recommendations for text-based writing are as follows. Language cannot be conceptualised in a monoglossic way in which each language is treated as a separate entity (Makoe and McKinney, 2014). Integration is required in order to make use of language repertoires and serve as a form of scaffolding from which the learners can make links from one language or dialect, or variety register to another. Monoglossic conception of language affects learner participation in class and removes their voice which can be labelled as epistemic injustice due to undermining their knowledge to learn (McKinney et al., 2015). Instead, a heteroglossic approach to language can be used in which an integration of language repertoires can be integrated depending on the context that it is used in. This draws on ideals of a culturally relevant pedagogy.

A language regime should be established by which the learners are accustomed to specific language practices that may be used in class such as code-switching. This is valuable because space determines norms by which language is constructed and contributes to linguistic identity (Ferreira & Mendelowitz, 2009). It draws on learners' everyday lives and makes links with academic discourse by integrating them. While it is important to provide learners with access to language, cultures and identities, it is vital to provide them with access that is critical. Access in the form of multilingualism and its components should be well thought out and used constructively to benefit the learning experience and academic success of the learners. It should not be used aimlessly for the sole purpose of adding to linguistic repertoire, but rather to add to the language competence and skill of the learners.

While the learners who participated in this project can be identified as multilingual and have wide linguistic repertoires with spoken confidence in most of the languages, the regime of language at the school constitutes them as monolinguals and often classifies them as incompetent language learners. This is due to monoglossic ideologies that

exist within the school and language classrooms as they favour the use of fluent Standard English and encourage notions of anglonormativity.

The next chapter will discuss the process, findings and interpretations of transducing the textual stories into multimodal narratives with the inclusion of using resources that the learners bring into the classroom such as language, identities and embodiment.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION: MULTIMODAL STORYTELLING

5.1 Introduction:

This chapter is a presentation, analysis and interpretation of a series of lessons consisting of a transduction of the textual story into either a visual, audio or kinaesthetic mode. It includes reflections on the transduction process and product which were gathered by means of questionnaires and a focus group discussion. This section will answer the remaining research questions and provide evidence for these answers. These questions are:

- What is the impact of a multimodal composition intervention on the writing produced by Grade 7 learners?
- What are the affordances and limitations of incorporating multimodal composition into the teaching and production of creative writing?
- How can multimodal and collaborative composition enable learners' exploration and expression of their identities?
- How can multimodal composition and collaborative composition enable or encourage learners to capitalise on their existing linguistic and social resources during writing activities?

5.2 Outline of the transduction process:

Once the textual stories were completed in groups, I modelled different modes to the class illustrating the different modes of storytelling. I began with a combination of a picture book that included some textual elements, but mostly visual elements in the form of a pop-up picture book as well as a graphic novel. I explained this mode to the class and pointed out the use of images, colour and font used for emphasis and effect which adds to the meaning of the text. For example, red indicated love or danger. The learners showed an interest in this particular mode and asked to read the two books shown to them. They were particularly fascinated with the pop-up book and

commented that they could never do something like that because they were not creative enough.

I then played an audiobook of a story that I assumed was familiar to all the learners. I played Cinderella to illustrate that a story can be converted from a textual mode to an audio which is different to what they are usually accustomed to. They showed an interest and enjoyed the narrator's use of different voices to depict different characters. Lastly, I illustrated a drama to the learners by showing them a short video of a scene from the movie of Cinderella. This seemed to resonate with them as whispers began throughout the class and they reacted to the characters' emotions by laughing and making comments about it. During the class discussion that followed, the majority of the learners stated that they enjoyed drama in the form of television soap operas. They enjoyed the cliff hangers, the emotion, storyline and dramatic effects included in it.

The learners were instructed to stay in the same groups as they were during the textual activity as this was another collaborative task. There were four groups and all initially chose to do a drama production of their stories as they expressed their love for drama and television soap operas. They skipped the planning process of their drama and immediately began enacting violent scenes from their stories such as acting out a scene of domestic abuse, alcohol abuse and crime. This was done with enthusiasm as many embodied different personas during their acting.

Upon asking group members why they chose to dramatise and not create a visual story despite their interest in the visual mode during the explanation of each mode, many responded with comments such as 'I am not creative', 'I do not have a magazine or pencils', 'I cannot draw', 'It is too expensive to print pictures' and 'I like drama'. From these statements, it was evident to me that the learners associated creativity with visual art. They did not understand that creativity can be illustrated and expressed in different forms and modes. This is problematic and is a phenomenon that is instilled in children at a young age as most art classes in early schooling consists of drawing, painting, colouring and crafts. They often lack the incorporation of art in the form of music, dramatisation and the incorporation of the body and movement.

Most of the learners expressed a limitation to transform their stories as they identified themselves as not being creative. However, Vygotsky (2004) stated that creativity or

a creative act can be any act that gives rise to something new that can be emotional, mental or physical. Therefore, each of the performances were regarded by me as creative due to the transformation and production of a new mode and a new version of storytelling that was created by the learners despite not having created visual works of art. The non-existence of equipment and physical writing tools such as stationery showed a lack of resources among the learners and school as most did not have a pencil or any materials to draw with if they had chosen the visual mode. Due to spending a limited time with the learners, I was not prepared to cater for this lack of resources and facilitate the necessary resources required to explore each mode, for example providing paint or pencils to draw a visual depiction of their story or an audio recorder to construct an audiobook.

After much encouragement and explaining to the learners that creativity is derived from being imaginative and that they could achieve a creative product through means of using different modes and elements such as colour, language in the form of metaphors and body movement such as dance, one group decided to do an audio by transforming their story into a rap song. This group selected a rap song to reproduce and transform their written text into an audio mode. This performance was vibrant, energetic and identifiable to all the learners in the class as it is a common mode used in their daily lives. They used figures of speech such as alliteration, personification, onomatopoeia and metaphors during their performance. This resulted in a form of culturally responsive pedagogy in which a link was made between school learning and everyday activities that the learners love and identify with. This is an example of how academic work and cultural competence can be combined during pedagogy. Once the other groups saw this, they began assisting them with a beat, some lyrics and singing along to the rap song.

Deconstruction of texts such as redesign prompted learners to question realities by interrogating representations of texts such as gender, race and equity (Comber & Nixon, 2014). This is an idea that I worked with during the transduction activity as I aimed to let the learners deconstruct and redesign the text by choosing a different mode of representation in which they decided what aspects to foreground, change and leave out. This allows for the learners to take agency of their work which may lead to some form of social action.

5.3 Analysis of the multimodal stories:

Table 5.1: Group performances

Group:	Transduction:
Group 1	The text was transduced to the kinaesthetic mode. This story was transduced into a drama. The story consisted of a narrator who spoke in English while all the other characters spoke in isiZulu. The genre of this performance was soap opera. **Scene 1:** *Lebohang's mother stumbles into the house moaning with pain as she clings to her pregnant stomach. She looks weak and mumbles through cries. Her granny realises that it is time for the birth of her baby and lies her down hurriedly on the bed (a table is used to improvise), talking her through what needs to be done. It is a struggle to get the baby out and in the process, her mother loses a lot of blood. Her body jerks as the life drains out of her. She dies giving birth to a baby girl. Her mother cannot accept what has happened and jumps on top of her body trying to wake the dead corpse.* **Scene 2:** *6 year old Lebohang is having a bath after her birthday party. She seems joyful, singing traditional songs and her aunt has left the house to go to the shops. Her uncle pushes open the door and enters the bathroom, calling out to Lebohang to come to him. He pulls her out of the tub and towards him. Drunken, he pulls down his pants and pushes her face against the wall. Cries fill the room as the little girl is confused and afraid. He rapes her, forcing himself into her over and over until she gives up fighting and he leaves her to fall hopelessly onto the ground.* There are links between the two scenes mentioned above. These links consist of a common theme of tragedy. In scene 1, there is an event of loss, namely death, whereas in scene 2, a rape occurs. It shows some form of time progression as scene 2 occurs six years later. These scenes deal with issues that are experienced daily within the urban as well as the township settings of South Africa, therefore making the story accessible to a wide audience despite the tragic nature of events. Meaning was conveyed through visual clues and imagery. In scene 1,

	the audience is aware that the girl on the table is pregnant as her belly is big due to the stuffing of a pillow used to illustrate this. We know that she is labour as her grandmother screams out “the baby is coming” which is followed by jerking movements indicating a struggle by the pregnant lady which comes to a complete stop followed by the cries of her grandmother. This drama was melodramatic due to the sequential tragic events, yet relatable due to universal themes. The characters emphasised specific aspects by using props in their play. For example, they brought in a few empty glass bottles to illustrate the uncle’s alcohol addiction. These visual elements added to the meaning making process of the audience.
Group 2	The text was transduced to the kinaesthetic mode. This short story was transduced into a drama that was acted out in class. It contained similarities of the story Cinderella but local elements such as the language (English, isiZulu) and topics such as domestic violence. **Scene 1:** *Skyler sings cheerfully in her native language while she sweeps the dusty floors. Her torn clothes hang over her skinny body that has not been fed in days. Her stepmother and stepsisters burst into the room, startling her and yelling about the housework not being done fast enough. Her stepsisters leave to go to school and Skyler stares at the door, thinking about what school is like. She tip toes toward the door as she sees her stepmother pour a strange liquid into the food. Her eyes widened and her hands covered her mouth in disbelief as she read the label marked “POISON”.* Meaning was made through the use of visual clues such as tying cloths around Skyler to create the look of torn clothes. Emotion was conveyed through high and low pitched screams and cries with the aid of facial clues. The body language during this performance was strong and provided clues that expressed emotion and assisted with meaning. Skyler’s posture and facial expression when she saw her step mother pour the poison into her food was gripping as horror struck her face and

	her hands were slapped over her mouth in disbelief. Due to the extreme dramatic action and content, the drama consisted of a soap opera genre. This story was extremely melodramatic due to exaggerating emotions through constant screaming and uncontrollable crying by the characters. This resulted in laughter amongst the audience and the performance came across as humorous. It involved some form of creativity as the learners used a familiar children's story and transformed it into their own version. It was a creative reworking due to the aspect of multilingualism. There were changes such as the stepmother poisoning Skyler which is not included in the original story and she became a pilot, thus adding a sense of female empowerment to the story. This story drew on prosthetic memory from the story Cinderella and is not necessarily an event that occurred in their lives or in their communities.
Group 3	Transduction occurred from a textual to kinaesthetic mode. The short story was transduced into a drama which was performed by the learners. **Scene 1:** *Palesa's mother is dressed very shabbily and untidily. "Here is R5 for you my dear. Buy you some lunch to eat at school." With a beaming smile, Palesa thanks her mother and put the money in her pocket followed by a question. "What work do you do ma?" Her face fills with shame and uneasiness. "I cannot tell you now. Get yourself ready to go to school."* **Scene 2***: It is Monday morning and Palesa arrives at school. A tall, big built girl named Gontse awaits for her at the classroom door with her hand open. Palesa reaches into her pocket and hands over the R5 coin, her hand slightly shaking. Gontse says: "If you tell anyone about this, I will beat you up after school. Understand?" and she walks away with a grin on her face. Palesa's teacher gets called to the office and asks her to write down the names of the learners who are disruptive while she is gone. As Palesa stands up, Gontse pulls her by her blazer and threatens, "if you write my name, I will kill you with my own hands." She*

	then makes an action of her slitting her throat with her hand. Scared and shaking, Palesa sits down and tears begin to roll from her eyes. The learners made use of their surroundings such as the tables, chairs and classroom resources available. They did not bring in any additional props, however they made use of voice, body and facial expressions for emphasis and a dramatic effect which conveyed meaning for example, when Palesa asked her mother about her work, she moved backward and had a sad expression on her face, then covering it with her hands. The use of body language was powerful in this performance. It added emotion and it was obvious to the viewers that the performers felt passionately about telling this story. Language was emphasised through body language and action which was well thought out in many instances such as tears running down Palesa's face to show fear and a feeling of defeat. One of the most impactful gestures was when Gontse pulls Palesa down by her blazer and threatens her. The pull metaphorically symbolised strength and the ability to overpower Palesa as she was pulled down forcefully with just one hand. Her tears impacted the audience as Palesa was able to cry naturally during this act in comparison to the screaming performance done by other groups. This signifies that the learners have an emotional connection to this story and the events that occur. It was engaging and the learners were passionate about their performance due to expressing that events of bullying occur in their classroom daily. This performance served as a platform to address a social issue in a safe space and possibly find a solution or expose what has been happening to them. The story and performance were believable, identifiable and relevant due to the commonality of bullying that occurs daily in many schools.
Group 4	Group 2's rap performance: (Beat boxing, drumming on the chalkboard and table for a beat.) **"DHOOM, DHA, DHA, DHADADHA, DHOOM, DHA, DHA, DHADADHA"**

	"Once upon a time there were five rape-isssts, ayyyyyy. Once upon a time there were five rape-isssts, ayyyyyy. They hurt some girls and stole from the world, ayyyyyy." The story was transduced from a text to an audio. The learners converted their textual short story into a rap song which they performed. The content consisted of five rapists who were involved in criminal activities and ended up in jail. Language during this performance was diverse as they used a combination of English, Tsotsitaal and isiZulu. This added a local element as South African artists generally use multilingualism in their rap music which the learners drew on. This was the most creative transduction that took place. The performers and audience used their environment as instruments (the chalk board, tables and the floor) to make a beat for their song. Once a rhythm was established, the rest of the class joined in to continue the beat on the tables and move their bodies along with the beat. Embodiment in the form of swaying their bodies and some of the audience dancing created a sense of engagement by the performers and the audience. They joined in to sing with the performers making sounds of "ayyy, ohhhh". This transduction captured the attention and participation of the entire class. The audio mode and language used was more effective than the textual story due to engagement by the performers and the reaction of the audience. The textual part of this activity was melodramatic due to an exaggeration of criminal activities occurring consecutively which drew on the soap opera genre and was not believable due to weak links and explanation of content in their story. During the textual version, the group added a range of criminal events that they had conducted, yet did not elaborate on these to create a coherent story. However, the lyrics of the rap song was a summary of the text, only adding the main events and conveyed the seriousness of rape and crime which had a different effect and meaning than the text did.

Above are vivid extracts and analysis of the performances carried out by each group. There were limitations present during my observation and analysis of these performances due to all of them consisting of multilingualism and the incorporation of a variety of languages that I am not familiar with. While I was at a disadvantage of not completely understanding all the language involved, I believe that the learners in the class, who were the audience of these performances were not at the same disadvantage as they were all multilingual in a variety of languages and dialects that are present in their communities and school surroundings. While it was difficult to access the use of language, I made sense of the events by means of voice, body movement, actions and facial language. These served as visual and audio clues which aided my understanding.

Despite not understanding all the language used, I was able to follow the events of the performances due to all the groups including some aspects in English. One group made use of a narrator who explained in English the events that were to follow which made a difference to my understanding. This assisted me in understanding better as I knew what to expect. This is a daily phenomenon that educators deal with on a daily basis due to having a class full of diverse learners who come from different backgrounds and cultures. In my opinion, it makes learning more interesting to work with the resources of language and culture that these learners bring into the classroom despite being a monolingual educator or a multilingual one who does not speak the same languages as their learners.

5.4 A general interpretation of multimodal storytelling

The performances of each group will be interpreted and discussed in detail with regard to the following sections:

1. Multimodal storytelling;
2. Resources and embodiment;
3. Multilingualism enabled by the performance genre;
4. Memory, creativity and imagination; and
5. Affordances and limitations of multimodality.

These sections will reveal answers to the research questions mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

5.4.1 Multimodal storytelling

A brief was given to the learners in which I encouraged them to select topics which would be relevant to the experiences and identities of their own lives and those of their communities. I was interested to see if relatable topics would engage the performers as well as the audience, which it did in most cases by means of reactions in the form of whispers and gasps. The performers also seemed invested in their acts through strong embodiment of the characters in the play as their performances were dramatic and engaging. In this scenario, identity writing added a sense of social consciousness and may have had an impact on the attitude that the learners have towards creative writing.

The content of their stories included topics such as bullying, substance abuse, domestic violence, rape, relationships and death. These were relatable and identifiable to some learners in the audience and they enjoyed it thoroughly, while it generated difficult feelings for others as these are sensitive topics to work with when dealing with learners who have experienced them, especially in traumatic situations. The performance genre made the events more realistic, which had a different effect on the viewer than the textual story did. Dealing with these topics in a realistic manner may sometimes trigger emotions that the educator is unaware of or the educator may not be knowledgeable on how to deal with. A learner said with regard to enjoying the series of lessons:

> No, I remembered things that I didn't want to remember.

While this personal writing task helped some to find solutions for dealing with conflict and issues, it became too personal for others who may have dealt with these controversial issues. In such a case, it may have constricted performance and engagement of that learner as he struggled to open up to the topic.

Once the intervention was complete, the learners were given a questionnaire to complete in order to find common threads and to analyse attitudes and perceptions that the learners had with regard to the task they had been given. The learners were asked which mode (textual, visual, audio and kinaesthetic) they preferred during the teaching and learning of this series of lessons in which they had to write and transduce their own stories. The results have been tallied and shown below.

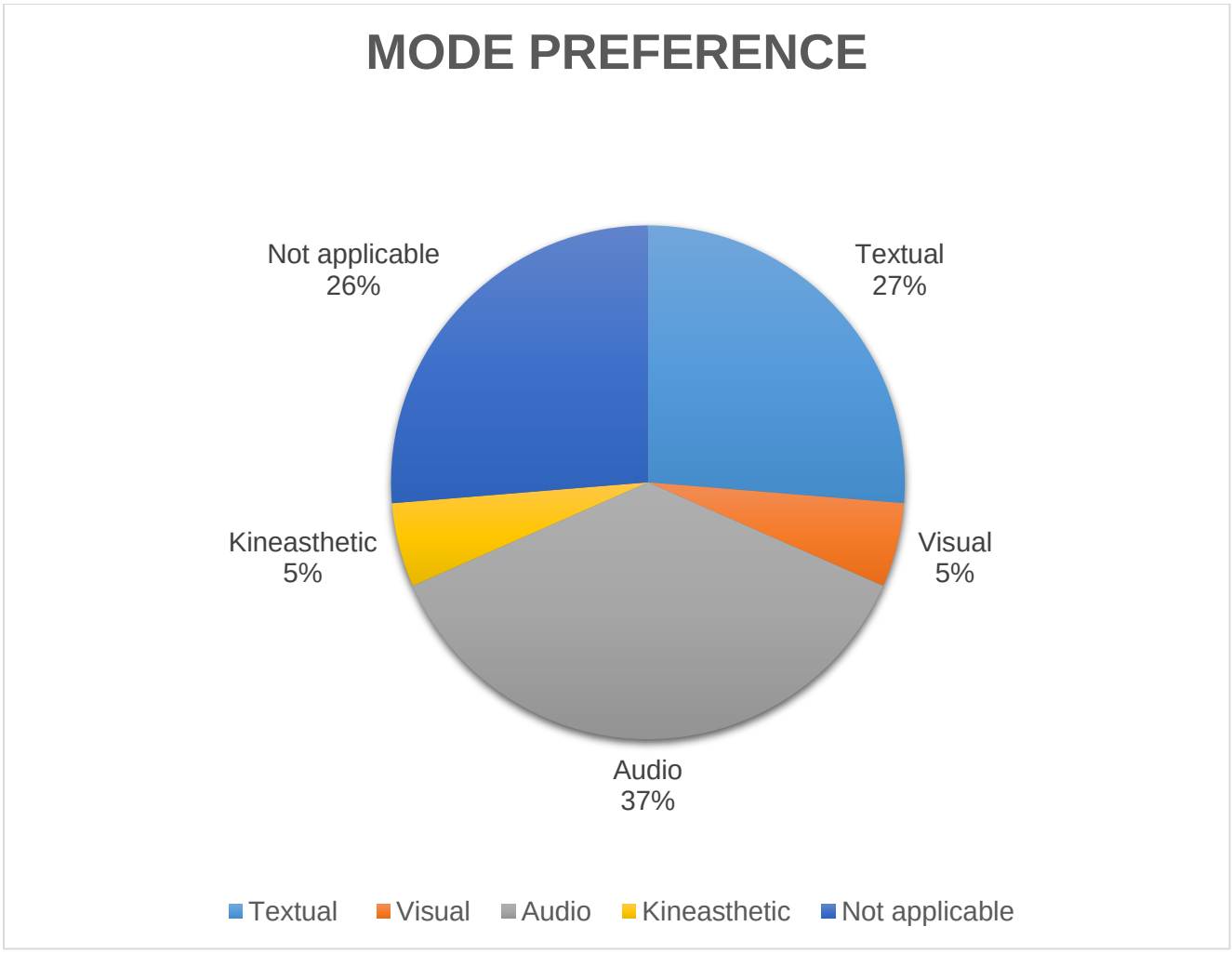


Figure 5.1: Mode preferences

The above pie chart indicates the preferred mode of 19 learners who participated in the questionnaire.

1 (5%) learner prefers visuals.

1 (5%) learner prefers kinaesthetic.

5 (27%) learners prefer textual writing.

7 (37%) prefer the audio mode.

5 (26%) learner's data was not applicable due to no answers and spoilt data.

Five learners prefer the textual mode. This was expected as the language of learning and teaching at the school is English despite it not being the home language of the

learners. It is familiar to them and a common concept of teaching and learning that is used daily by their educator. The textual stories constructed were dull and most struggled to present a coherent and engaging text, while their performances were creative and engaging. Many of the learners showed immense interest in the visual mode when it was modelled in class and asked if they could keep the graphic novel and pop-up book shown to them to read during the period. However, only one learner stated that they enjoyed the visual mode.

The audio performance conducted by group 4 possibly interested the learners as seven out of 19 learners prefer that mode despite only one group electing to do it. This decision may have been influrnced by the audiobook which was used as a model of the mode as well as the rap song conducted by one of the groups which the class participated in and showed immense excitement towards the performance. The audio was fun, interesting and engaging as all of the learners joined in the performance of the rap song. The data collected does not correlate with the questionnaire as only one learner stated that they prefer the kinaesthetic mode despite three of the four groups choosing to do a play.

The learners stated that they specifically enjoyed the drama production during the transduction process due to maximum participation, different tones, voices and pitch used to add emotion, emphasis and imagery to the content. During the activity, the learners verbally expressed that they enjoyed drama, specifically soap opera films and series which they watch daily; however, only one learner stated that they enjoyed it during the questionnaire. This was a mismatch between the data collected and the modes chosen for representation. The process of their transduction could have influenced their choice as many expressed their opinion that the transduction process towards the kinaesthetic mode is difficult. This could have been for reasons such as no participation by all the members, conflict of ideas or some finding it difficult to express themselves verbally and through embodiment, as not all the learners enjoy performance due to the realistic nature of events. They may have an interest and find enjoyment in watching performances in the form of soap opera, but may not have enjoyed transducing their stories into this mode because of challenges experienced. It is important to note that enjoyment does not necessarily mean productive learning, although it may encourage it.

The learners were asked what they learnt during the process of transducing their story from a textual mode to another mode. Transmodal meaning-making is the process of "designing meanings and ideas across different modes and languages, continued and diversified in unpredictable ways" (Newfield, 2011). One learner, Ozzi, stated:

> It was difficult and I felt like leaving it the same way, and I learnt that writing can be turned into a lot of things.

This indicated to me that the process was not enjoyable and easy to all the learners as it seemed during my observation. However, despite not being enjoyable to all the learners, it still made for a worthwhile learning experience of modality, genre and different types of writing which will be academically and epistemologically beneficial as this can be used both in and out of the classroom. Multimodality challenged him to develop his thinking and showed how texts can be changed and developed across different modes.

Academic learning is often challenging to learners; however, this is what leads to creative development and possibly better writing skills. Some of the learners, like Ozzi, may have struggled with the task given to them for various reasons such as a change of genre, not preferring a specific mode, group dynamics and language barriers. Despite experiencing challenges during the transduction, these learners still learnt something new and experienced links between everyday and school learning. Ozzi learnt that the same story can be changed into different modes and genres which can bring about different meanings. He learnt about transformation and the process that goes into this.

Another learner, Letti, stated:

> It was easy and exciting and I learnt more about bullying.

Letti had a different experience during her transduction process. She enjoyed transforming her story from one mode to another and found it easy to do so. This could be for various reasons such as positive group participation and sharing of ideas. Through the transduction process, Letti learnt more about the content which her group chose to write about. Since she did not know much about bullying, it is evident that this group worked well by sharing ideas and learning from each other. This was a

positive learning experience for Letti as bullying is a current phenomenon in schools and society which was addressed in this activity.

In another question, the learners were asked if multimodal composition benefited them in any way. Out of 19 learners, two stated that it did not benefit them in any way, four questionnaires consisted of spoilt data and 13 learners said that multimodal composition during these lessons had benefited them. It is interesting how each genre conveys meaning in such different ways, enabling different kinds of learning. This draws on multimodal theory discussed by Newfield (2011) who states that each mode represents different meanings. This has been illustrated in a pie chart below.

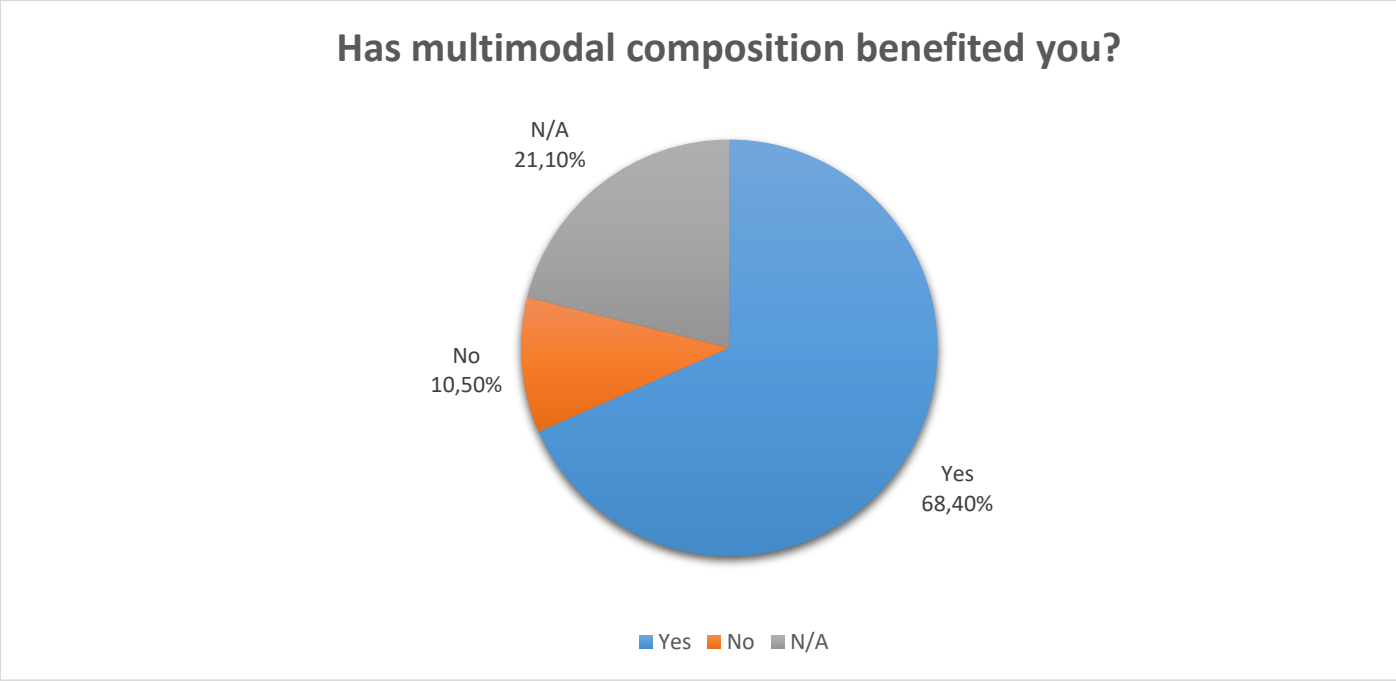


Figure 5.2: Benefits of multimodal composition

From the learners who have stated that these multimodal lessons have benefited them, a majority said that it benefited them because it allowed them to understand their stories better when they were transduced from a textual mode to an audio or kinaesthetic mode. Language and embodiment are possible factors that could have affected the understanding of the learners. It is possible that the use of home languages and body language could have led to a better understanding of the content as the performances consisted of a structured and detailed series of events.

A familiar genre such as a drama production or rap song could have also impacted understanding as it includes modes and genres that are familiar and accessed daily. Textual stories require analysis and interpretation for meaning, whereas during the transduction activity, the story was viewed and listened to instead of read. The performers used language as well as symbolism and embodiment to convey clues and meanings. These gestures aided meaning-making for the audience. Others have found that it benefited them by instilling teamwork in the form of collaborative tasks that gave them an opportunity to learn from each other and share ideas. A few said that it benefited them by triggering identity construction and identity revelations about themselves and those around them.

A learner said that she was able to identify with the story that they wrote 'because my friend was raped then killed'. Another learner also suggested identifying with the content relating to identity as he said that he would not like to do tasks like these in future 'because I do not feel like telling people my fucken problems'. The use or the word 'fucken' suggests anger or irritation towards experiencing an identity trigger or triggers as it was difficult for the learner to deal with sensitive topics that were performed. Another learner also stated that they found benefit in the lessons that were conducted because it was 'fun' to do such tasks in the English classroom. The group dynamics were different from the textual activity as collaboration seemed to work better during the transduction task.

> Group 1: "We didn't have any disadvantages because each person in our group participated and we enjoyed working as a group."

> Group 3: "Same as us. We didn't have any problems and no one was fighting."

The multimodal aspect of these lessons allowed for embodiment which created a sense of freedom and a new way for learners to express themselves. There is a link between embodiment and freedom because embodiment allows a sense of freedom to take on the role, emotions and language of the characters involved in the story. When discussing freedom, I draw on a term by Mendelowitz (2016) called structured freedom which is the facilitation of intellectual and affective engagement that is structured, which opens up possibilities for cognitive and imaginative engagement. For example, the use of collaborative activities was a form of structured freedom as it

ensured that the learners shared ideas and considered aspects such as audience, content and language when constructing and transducing their stories. There are different types of freedom referred to such as the freedom of expression as well as the freedom to write and perform in a range of different languages.

Embodiment and performance enabled the participants to use a broader range of their resources by stepping inside the characters' mind and world by being, thinking and acting like they would. The body is usually marginalised during textual writing, but during the performances, they are able to make use of their bodies, minds and the languages that they possess. It allows them the freedom to draw on a broader range of resources.

A learner said: 'I felt very free because I could use my language and not to use English only.'

This is something that they were not previously familiar with. It taught them to use symbols and language to express themselves and create meaning for a text. It seemed as if drawing on their linguistic repertoires enabled performance and embodiment. This made the lesson engaging for them as it is a genre that they are familiar with and passionate about as they stated that they invested a lot of time in watching television soap operas. It allowed them to take relevant content and contexts that they can identify with and use in a creative way to tell a story. It changed their attitudes by making the learners more willing to engage with the context and mode.

Collaborative writing was not usually allowed by their educator and this series of lessons allowed them to learn from each other and share ideas to create a product. It gave a sense of peer support in some instances and allowed them to explore the topics that they were working with from different perspectives. A revelation to the learners was that one story could be transformed into different languages and modes and create better understanding and different meanings. Mode shapes meaning in different ways (Newfield, 2011). Therefore, each mode used in this series of lessons transformed the same story and depicted different meanings. Many of the learners stated in the questionnaire that multimodality helped to understand the story better when it was transformed from a text. This may have been due to dramatisation, a

change in language in which English was a barrier for many and also the use of body and props for emphasis.

This multimodal task resulted in performing for the target audience, listening to others and sharing ideas more than the written task. This is due to constant collaboration, discussion and creative input. This part of the lesson ensured that each learner was involved in the planning and presentation as they each took on the role of a character. One learner stated that people said he could not draw, but this task showed him that he can be creative. This is due to the explanation and modelling of the modes in which I told and showed learners various examples of creativity and visuals. It illustrated to the learner that creativity is not solely in the form of visual representation but can be achieved through various modes. I explained the different kinds and how a simple visual such as a picture, colours or stick figure drawing can be used for an intended effect.

The performances consisted of a melodramatic storyline, embodiment and exaggerated performance during the dramas which was a representation of reality and issues that the learners may deal with on a daily basis. In addition to that, identity writing and performance is a creative writing risk and could have a negative impact on the learner and learning process due to identifying with sensitive issues and memories. Another stated that he did not enjoy the task because he was not creative, yet one day he would be. Despite achieving a creative transformation of the textual mode, the learner still associates creativity with perfection and drawing. However, he is hopeful that within time and practice, creativity will be achieved.

The learners were asked how they would describe the activities that they done in class and responded with the following:

> We did very well. You can read or write a story in all different ways like singing and acting it. It's not that hard. It is not what you think it is. You can change it into reality.

This quote indicates a sense of empowerment for accomplishing the task and having the ability to understand the process of transformation. The learners expressed an understanding that a text can be transduced into a different mode and showed pride in achieving a transduced product. One of the learners stated that a story can be used to represent reality and this indicated that the learner was able to make links between

the modes that were used in class and the modes that he experiences in his daily life. This link made the lesson relatable to the learner.

The shift from writing to drama involved using resources that the learners bring into the classroom as well as embodiment which allowed for a different type of expression with the use of modes to make the drama and rap song interesting, exciting and relatable. In my opinion, the performances worked better than the textual mode due to freedom of speech and body, attitude of the learners towards multimodality and embodiment. The learners used authentic voices during their performances to mobilise the resources that they bring into the classroom. In the sections that follow, I will be exploring and analysing these issues in detail.

5.4.2 Resources and embodiment:

The body is a visual text which often represents meaning (Mallozzi, 2011; Johnson and Vasudevan, 2014). A body in action, during performance can be analysed and interpreted for meaning without the aid of language and in most instances, the body conveys meaning that is aided by language (Mallozzi, 2011). Wohlwend and Lewis (2010) define embodiment as 'the immersion of bodies and emotions in digital spaces as well as the ways in which bodies and emotions are represented in and shaped by digital spaces'.

A key reason to why the performances generated much better results than the textual activity did is that the learners added emotions, engagement and aesthetics which are usually absent from literacies and critical literacy that is a part of school discourse and curriculum. While this research is not based on critical literacy, it draws on some elements of it. An approach to critical literacy is to design and redesign (Janks, 2013) which is an approach that was used during this research in the form of first writing a textual story and then redesigning the same story into another mode. This allowed the learners to internalise events for deeper meaning and to select actions, content and emotions to foreground which has impacted the audience and conveyed meaningful content that shows issues of race, equality and power. I will be working with the term criticality which I refer to as the ability to evaluate and reflect on an issue from multiple perspectives.

It is important to note reactions and embodiment through the use of body language and speech when dealing with controversial topics that the learners wrote about. These can be critically analysed to give clues and insights into the attitudes that the learners have towards the content written about and the mode that is used. For example, a learner who cringes or is silent during the writing of a rape scene could have been exposed to or have experienced such a tragic act in their lives. This kind of experience could impact the attitude that the learners have towards this collaborative activity. It is also important to note that such attitudes have been impacted by personal experience and not necessarily a negative attitude towards the mode.

My attention is drawn to the fact that embodiment and emotional engagement which has been present in the performances, is not a norm to the learning and lessons that the learners are accustomed to. Embodiment is a resource that learners bring into the classroom and each learner can portray a unique style of embodiment. It is a way of internalising the event or content in which one can express in the way that they would like to express meaning. This meaning is produced through signs of the body and is either socially or contextually constructed. It is a form of visual and personal access that the performer, in this case, the learners give to the viewer. They sometimes let out emotions that are an act or they draw on real ones to embody the role of the character. For example, empty alcohol bottles used during one of the performances represented a man in a drunken state, and due to the number of bottles present, there was possibly a circumstance of alcoholism. This type of embodiment is often used to position students and is part of identity writing (Johnson & Vasudevan, 2014).

The performers made use of metaphors and visual clues to work with in order to identify a character and take a position with regard to the events that follow. When using this example, the students led the audience to have a negative impression of the uncle who suffers from alcohol addiction and soon after we are positioned to dislike the character based on his actions. These decisions were thought, positioned and produced due to a social consciousness. Critical literacy is not just present in written text, but is also present in different modes such as drama productions and embodiment in everyday life as it makes use of social norms and addresses issues of power imbalances (Johnson & Vasudevan, 2014).

This is evident in the performance about bullying as it is a critical approach regarding poverty and power struggles that has been redesigned in terms of constructive reworking in order to portray a message and explore issues of power relations. For example, during the performance about bullying, the learners drew on real-life emotions as this was a phenomenon of their daily school lives. This form of embodiment and emotion gave a sense of realism and allowed the performance to be 'genuine' which provided a deeper meaning and impact on the class.

During the activities of transduction and transformation, the learners engaged with new multimodal literacy tools to make meanings and understanding of the stories, events and identities within them. Despite having a major interest in the different modes that were modelled, three of the four groups did dramatic performances due to saying that they were not creative and did not have the necessary resources required to conduct a visual or audio story. It seemed as if the learners were more comfortable with oral modes which could possibly be due to links with out-of-school practices such as television and music. These are also practices that are common in their communities which they express by using socio-cultural resources which are available to them.

Despite not having a device to audio record, group 4 made use of their environment and available resources such as the classroom furniture and conducted a rap song with a hand-made beat which was sung to the class. This illustrated to the learners that despite being under-resourced, they were able to use their everyday knowledge and their environment to accomplish a creative multimodal outcome. They drew on their epistemic knowledge to make a link between everyday knowledge of the rap genre, their environment and school requirements.

According to Weinstein (2009), rap is primarily performed by marginalised communities and individuals to enact divisions of power or to address current issues. This was evident in the rap performance by group 4. They rapped about common issues that are experienced within their community such as rape, crime and violence. This was a modern form of literature which they are accustomed to on a daily basis as the learners in this class listen to music, specifically rap music, on a daily basis. It was interesting to note that they rapped about their marginalised community issues in a language that is marginalised in their classroom instead of rapping in English. Due to limitations of not being able to understand or speak in African languages, I was not

able to capture the lyrics and performance that was done in any language other than English. There was also a limitation of time in which I could not spend more time analysing the inclusion of African languages.

Weinstein (2009) explains that rap is largely about empowerment, reputation and fame in which the rappers position themselves to achieve this. In this performance, the rappers positioned themselves in an empowering position by each of them taking on the role of a character in their performance. Each rapper was one of the rapists which to me was analysed as being problematic. While this was surprising, it also came across as interesting to me as these innocent learners identified and took on the role of criminals instead of being the victims of a crime that they have seen and experienced. The rap genre generally communicates positions of power and gives a sense of male dominance and macho aspects which could have impacted this choice. This showed courage, bravery and empowerment during their performance and they were not shy to take on the position of the rapists and perform this to their class.

To me, it came across as if they were trying to take back control of the situations they rapped about in order for them to come out on top of it and be feared and unstoppable for a period of time instead of being the victims of a crime that is normalised in their communities. This is a problem with the rap genre and its position of empowerment as the learners felt that they had to take on the role of the rapists rather than be seen as a victim that has been re-empowered as this shows past signs of weakness. However, a position of empowerment was not a position taken by any of the other groups. For example, most of them showed signs of weakness and vulnerability in their performances to capture the events authentically. This could have also proven a lack of critical engagement with the social issues addressed by each group. Below is an extract of a performance illustrating vulnerability and being violated:

Group 1, Narrator: *"The child grew older and older and then came the day that she was bathing when the uncle came in and raped her."*

(The uncle is singing and stumbles across the room with a bottle of beer in his hand. He walks into the bathroom, calls out and pulls Lebohang out of the bath and violently rapes her. Lebohang screams in horror and defeat as she stands there hopelessly.)

Multimodality and multimodal pedagogy are not reliant on technology and multimodal devices. However, these certainly make creative processes and outcomes of text more accessible and easy to use. Shift in mode makes the transformation a radical change (Newfield, 2013) due to impacting other elements as well. The shift from a textual to kinaesthetic mode was radical as the learners have not done this before and experienced new insights such as how to transform one text to another mode, incorporate multilingualism into it and use body, sound and movement in the classroom which all formed part of the resources used for meaning. It was a radical shift due to bringing controversial topics such as a rape from a safe textual mode to an embodied performance due to actions, expressions and audio.

They could keep a safe distance during the writing as they did not publicly have to address the issue and embody the characters in front of their classmates as the class did not read each other's stories as I wanted the stories to have a surprise element. There was a disadvantage to this choice as the learners were not able to see the transformation from text to performance and the different meanings that were conveyed in the different modes. While good writing can create very realistic experiences for the reader, I ponder as to why the mode shift to drama created a more realistic story for each group. In the shift from textual to kinaesthetic, the students were encouraged to draw on epistemological access, social and cultural references and elements of their identity. This was expressed in vivid ways which formed a new domain, style and discourse for the learners which they previously were not accustomed to. These include multimodality, which brought language to life by adding emotion and engagement to events that they have experienced or still experience daily, the addition of language made expression and learning a socio-cultural experience in which they felt comfortable and accessible when acting out the events of the drama and rap song. These new domains and styles resulted in a culturally responsive pedagogy which made learning and texts consist of local aspects which was not explicitly present in the textual stories.

The transduction allowed for integration of social and economic aspects and topics to be integrated into the curriculum and activity by means of text, audio and movement. The drama facilitated this due to means of making these social and economic events realistic through means of using home languages during the performances, actions

and embodiment that made the events come to life and working with resources such as music and emotion that cannot be fully accessed and expressed through textual monomodality. Some writers are able to access their full repertoire of resources and emotion in writing but it seems that for these specific learners, new possibilities were offered through the oral and dramatic genres. The use of kinaesthetic and audio performances resonated with the learners and motivated them through means of interest and identifiable aspects as they make use of these modes outside the classroom, but are not necessarily accustomed to using them in the class.

During the transduction process, language was a resource which the learners accessed. Every group performed their drama and audio in a range of languages such as isiZulu, isiXhosa and Totsitaal. They used language to make the performance unique and relatable. It added a local feel to the drama and had similarities of local television series in which they spoke in different languages, code-switched and merged words together. It was interesting to note that while they chose to write in English during the written task, they barely spoke in English during the performances. This indicated that the performance/oral mode created a shift away from anglonormativity. This revealed that this particular multimodal task allowed for multilingualism and the incorporation of language and language repertoires. However, it is important to note that multimodality does not always allow for multilingualism as textual writing can also produce multilingual outputs.

Despite experiencing limitations of time as these lessons were conducted over a period of two weeks and the learners did not have an English educator for a month, they still produced good, dramatic performances that were multimodal and multilingual. There was a difference between the textual and the oral performances. Through my observations and analysis of content produced, the learners struggled to produce textually creative work and experienced difficulty in producing believable and emotionally engaging texts as this was written solely in English. The drama production and rap song were engaging as they took on the role of multilingual individuals during their performances and their speech flowed easily. It was visually easier for them to express themselves, their emotions and bodies when using their home languages which they could have drawn on from local soapies by which most are multilingual such as Generations, 7de Laan and Muvhango. This also triggered creativity as their

performances felt as if I was watching a soap opera. They were engaging and believable by showing emotion and embodiment that was aided by language usage. The performance catered for an African youth audience due to the use of language and the content.

Using multimodality constitutes embodiment which may lead to a breakthrough in identity through means of communication (Sekimoto, 2012). Through the use of embodiment, events may unfold and be internalised to create meaning that was once textually overlooked. This can be seen by analysing the textual stories with the performances in which I have identified some changes such as in the textual story about bullying, there are verbal threats made which change in the performance as these become verbal and physical which add to meaning and effect.

Embodiment allows for certain identities that the learners can identify with or are familiar with, which allow them to recognise people and things in a specific way (Mallozzi, 2011). This creates a personal link to the events experienced in their own lives. The performance genre and identity writing allowed learners to deal with personal issues that they may be experiencing in a safe academic environment which may make their writing more meaningful. This aligns with a culturally responsive pedagogy and identity writing that was intended during these lessons which provided engagement among the learners during their performances and while watching the performances of the other groups.

The engagement was verbal and emotional by observing comments being made through whispers about the events of the plays or noises of disapproval by characters who committed a crime during their performance. This indicated that the learners were engaged in the performances as some embodied the role of the characters. In keeping up with the 21st century, multimodal spaces allow for engagement that is interactive (Wohlwend & Lewis, 2010). This is a practice that should be incorporated into school learning in order to create links between school and everyday practices as well as keep learning interesting, relevant and modern to the learners.

Table 5.2: Responses to culture (Bomer, 2017)

Culturally colonizing	Culturally restricted	Culturally tolerant	Culturally sustaining
Whole-class texts: monuments of literature as objectives for their own sake	Whole-class texts: skills as the objective; text types matched to tests	Whole-class texts: limited and inclusive	Whole-class texts: purposeful about advancing disadvantaged groups
Independent reading: little or none	Independent reading: skill practice	Independent reading: student choice	Independent reading: explicit encouragement to seek out texts that represent students' own groups and language practices, as well as those of different groups
Minimal attention to processes of reading and writing	Assertions about what good readers and writers do	Inquiry into difference among the readers and writers in the class	Study of strategies for literate practices for advocacy and uplift of the community
Writing assigned arguments about literary elements or themes for teacher grading	Writing about texts; other genres as appropriate for testing	Writing, largely personal, in varied genres for real audiences	Focus on community and audience as source of writing agendas, use of most effective languages and varieties of English for those audiences
Prescriptive grammar	Prescriptive grammar as structured on testing	Sentence and word study—in context of use—as needed for expression	Analysis of language as an instance of power; valuing of heritage language and flexibility of language practices

Above is a table by Bomer (2017) who describes different cultural pedagogy for audience and learners. This activity was located in the column of culturally sustaining as it was based on personal writing for the benefit of the learners in terms of identity formation and exploration and cultural appropriation. It was based on inclusion for the participants and the performers to illustrate their lives and experiences which were previously ignored and this classified them as culturally disadvantaged. It celebrates difference among the learners which is cultural, linguistic and social. Using the FunDza website as a model for writing is based on the first two points of the culturally sustaining column. The use of collaboration for the performance task draws on the third point in the culturally sustaining column due to having a built-in audience and the use of multilingualism that was impacted by a culturally sustaining pedagogy and diverse audience. The last point, analysis of language as an instance of power was not a focus of this research and therefore not applicable to this study.

The challenge is to use embodiment critically during lessons so that learners become engaged with new ways of learning in the form of multimodality that they can possibly use in their lives and future careers. Critical engagement has strong links to cultural participation (Wohlwend & Lewis, 2010). It creates a form of encouragement to be interactive and explore texts critically; however, in this instance, some of the texts such as the rap song consisted of the perspective of the rapists rather than challenged it, which was not a form of critical engagement. Despite this negative point, it is important to note that there was some critical engagement present in this as they challenged their realities of being a victim by illustrating some form of empowerment despite it being a problematic form of empowerment, it still existed. It was a reproduction of heteronormative behaviour.

The engagement of the learners during the transduction process links to notions of attitude among the learners. They were more open to exploring the mode and excited to begin practicing their performances. This indicated to me that while they were a bit passive during the textual activities, they showed a more positive attitude towards the multimodal aspect of the lessons. Although visual, audio and kinaesthetic modes are relevant in the lives of learners, it is not guaranteed that they have the critical literacy skills to see and analyse these texts in a critical manner.

5.4.3 Multilingualism enabled by the performance genre

Despite initially writing their stories in English, they spoke in a range of languages such as isiZulu, Totsitaal and incorporated a minimal amount of English into their drama productions and rap song. Woodard et al. (2017) states that educators and learners should acknowledge that language is not neutral. We need to critique and explore the power dynamics and language ideals that exist; for example, text was associated with Standard English, whereas the performance genre allowed for multilingualism. We need to be critical about these choices that were made and the reasons for them. Multilingualism was preferred by some learners and more relatable to them instead of only using English.

In the questionnaire, the learners were asked how they felt about using different languages during this task. A learner responded with the following:

> "It was new but and enjoyable and it also felt strange. I liked it because it was the first time I had ever been allowed to write in any other language during English."

Despite being multilingual, the language resources that the learners bring into the classroom were previously ignored as they were not allowed to use any language but English in the classroom. The learners were given the freedom to use any language of their choice during the series of lessons, which was strange to them yet enjoyable due to their performances allowing the possibility of embodiment and multilingualism which is something that they incorporate into their lives on a daily basis. Through this, I have recognised that this multimodal task that was set up for the series of lessons allowed for multilingualism, translingualism and code-switching. I have identified that not all multimodal activities allow for an incorporation of multilingualism as it is mostly achievable provided that the environment and activity encourage it.

Embodiment and multilingualism are linked as embodiment enables the use of multilingualism through oral modes. The use of embodiment triggered the learners to take on the role of the characters and speak in a language fitting the character, events and the context in which the play occurred. It allowed learners to make links between their everyday lives and their academic discourse through means of content, mode and language. The transduction activities had the potential to incorporate language as a resource that learners brought to the class and shared with each other. This potentially added to the repertoire of all the learners involved in these activities and shared some cultural access with their peers. The home language of learners became a common means of communication in which to express themselves. In some instances, the language used provided a context and catered for the audience of the stories.

Multilingualism incorporated in the drama and audio productions gave the learners a distinctive voice to express themselves and narrate their stories in a specific style and manner. This voice added elements that were not previously seen in the textual stories. In a way, it added personality and realism to the characters by speaking in African languages. It also made the performances unique in a way that is not seen in some of the soap opera television shows that the learners usually watch.

The learners seemed more comfortable when using their home languages and the process of transduction and forming the story was quicker than the written activity. It facilitated this result due to the learners not using multilingualism, specifically their home languages, during the written activity as all discussions and text were solely in English. This can be understood better as previously stated that a learner suggested that they can write in English due to being schooled to do so but can verbalise themselves better in their home languages. Speech is almost always carried out in their local languages, while English is a structured writing task mostly or almost always conducted in an academic setting. Through this, I have recognised that while they are fluent in speaking their home languages, they were never taught how to write in them, hence not adding multilingual aspects in their written stories.

While language aided with meaning-making, the learners made use of language through symbols. 'We find, in our details and broken obscured images, the language of images' (Hooks, 1996). This claim is an enlightenment of how meaning was made through embodiment as the learners conveyed messages to the viewers through facial and body expression, movement, sound and voice. Even though language was present, symbols and imagery served as a tool to guide and reveal meaning within the multimodal activity.

We accept specific images and symbols as a means of common representation and communication. It becomes acceptable and we do not question these symbols such as red means danger. This is for a communication system. We set conventions for us to be able to communicate. We need to have a common meaning for communication systems. This is an indication of learners bringing in preconceived ideas and knowledge and association of everyday symbols and icons. The use of symbolism and imagery draws on creativity and imagination as it is a form of representation and creates mental images which serve as a description to the audience. These decisions should be considered well as it impacts meaning and the perspective of the audience.

The learners were able to use their bodies, voices, expressions and language all in conjunction with imagery and symbolism. Badenhorst (2010) stated that voice in writing comes through self-discovery. Therefore, these activities were based on encouraging self-discovery and identity through writing, which aided in providing a unique voice in each of the stories that were performed. Language is not a clearly

bound entity as it is constantly evolving due to globalisation and semiotic practices in everyday life such as multimodality and meaning-making from a variety of modal resources and repertoires (McKinney, 2016).

During the transduction process, it was evident to me that no specific language was bound to the modes used, whereas English was bound to the written mode during the first activity. Therefore, performance allows for multilingualism, making a variety of languages accessible and comfortable for learners to use and explore in context. Due to the evolution of technology and everyday resources, the learners accessed their prior knowledge of local soap operas and mimicked the language usage in the form of translingualism, code-switching and language merging. This added to the meaning-making of the story and created a voice for each of the characters involved in the performances. The language accessed during the multimodal task catered for the specific audience of the performance and made the events relatable and relevant due to the language used.

5.4.4 Memory, creativity and imagination:

'Memory (the deliberate act of remembering) is a form of willed creation.' (Morrison, 1996). He states that it is not a way in which to dwell on the memory to locate the exact experience, but to rather focus on the way in which it appeared and why it appeared in that way. Through this, memory can be disrupted and one can use it to imagine the future (Mitchell and Weber, 1999). By doing so, we make the past experience one that can be used for future gain. Hampl (1999) adds to this by saying that she does not write about what she knows, but writes about her memories to find out what she knows; for example, using past memories of hurt from being bullied to not become a bully yourself. Dwelling on and rethinking a memory, gives one the ability to interrogate it and perceive the incident or the individuals involved in a different way (Mitchell & Weber, 1999). This is a form of reflection and evaluation that one can experience.

Memories consist of stored images of value (Hampl, 1999). We hold onto memories that consist of events that are valuable to us. For example, we will hold onto feelings and emotions of a first love such as Jackie and Palesa in the story written by group 3. However, the feelings and memory may become estranged over time and may impact the memory. Hampl (1999) says that writing about a memory is to live it twice as a spiritual and historical act as the narrative is full of emotion and senses which make it

come to life. This is evident in the performances as their memories were embodied full of emotion and feelings.

Memory is a form of reproduction and makes use of one's imagination by drawing on events or experiences that have occurred followed by reproducing or recreating them (Vygotsky, 2004). It is the process of reproducing or repeating events that have previously occurred. It is not the creation of something entirely new, but the reproduction or recreation of something that already exists. Memory draws on aspects of fact and actual events that occurred, it requires each of us to have a 'created' version of the past (Hampl, 1999).

Landsberg (2004) discusses prosthetic memory as an experience that makes it possible for an individual to have a deeply felt memory of a past through which he or she did not live. It has the ability to shape that individual's subjectivity and political identity. Movies can create prosthetic memory because people invest emotions in movies or series to create a collective memory, thereby having the possibility of creating many memories that are not our own.

By analysing the drama productions of the learners, it could be possible that some melodramatic scenes could be a product of prosthetic memory since they mentioned that they watch local soap operas on a daily basis. It could also be possible that the learners have made reference to and drew on events that had happened in their communities, but not necessarily to them. Many people may forget their own identities or create inaccurate memories due to prosthetic memories (Landsberg, 2004). The connection of realistic and prosthetic memory has the potential to create higher order critical thinking and creativity.

Memory and imagination were an important aspect of writing the short story and transducing it. The learners relied on memory to access their lived experiences or the experiences of those around them. They then used their imagination to fictionalise these experiences and characters and creatively make them unique by emphasising them and exaggerating scenes within the drama and audio. The activity on transduction allowed them to draw on their memory of elements within a soap opera genre and everyday life experiences. This illustrated that boundaries between genres

have become fluid. It served as an activity of constructing a collective memory of a play and rap song.

The performances involved an issue often experienced in memoire writing which involves trying to access a stored memory or image and expressing the hidden emotions of it (Hampl, 1999). Performance of this memory enabled the learners to express it verbally, bodily and emotionally which also allowed them to internalise it and create a different creative version of the event. All the groups struggled with this task as they over-exaggerated the emotions of real and authentic events which resulted in a loss of an authentic effect on the viewer which was probably done by some learners to create a safe distance from the actual experience that they had encountered or the emotional memory linked with the event. In some instances, such as the alcohol abuse scene in group one's performance, were dramatised so much that it became funny to the viewers as the character stumbled across the room.

According to Johnson and Vasudevan (2014) humour is included in classroom encounters when learners are comfortable with their peers. Many also add humour to classroom discussions about serious issues due to their being regarded as taboo topics which are not usually addressed in school or classroom contexts. Thus due to the unfamiliarity of discussing serious topics in class, the learners treated it as they would any other by adding humour to it, which is often done while the educator is not present (Johnson & Vasudevan, 2014). While there were some mishaps in expressing emotion during some instances such as giggling during a serious scene, the learners were successful in doing so during other scenes by instilling their emotion into the viewer.

During a scene in group 1's performance, a rape incident was conducted with the severity it deserved and they were very successful in expressing this memory and emotion as it left the viewers stunned, feeling hopeless as we were not able to help this character within the story and leaving a sense of anger towards the realities of society. It occurred to me that while this task offered a more engaging approach by the learners, the educator needs to be able to deal with addressing these issues and emotions that the transduction to a multimodal mode enables. In this instance, I was not prepared with dealing with these serious and real-life events and emotions that the

learners expressed in terms of myself and also for the audience which was the learners.

Due to creative reworking and embodiment, it required the learners to draw on multiple identities, multiple languages and multiple versions of creativity which may have obscured the exact event of memory. For example, in the story about bullying, the events were exaggerated to express what the victim was feeling which was emphasised by physical violence by the bully to instil emotion in the audience and allow them to feel similar emotions that the victim felt. Reinventing the memories of these learners' experiences and identities may be described as a post hoc understanding which means that the learners can use their past memories as a reflection which may be of aid to imagine the future (Mitchell & Weber, 1999).

This was a reflection on events and experiences that have occurred and the activity allowed learners to reflect once again on the experience and internalise it for meaning and to convey the events by deciding what to share, add and leave out from the actual experience that they have encountered. The reflection on these memories is evident for some in their drama and audio as some events have been brought to life and internally reflected upon. For example, if there were any learners in the class that were bullied, the performance by one of the groups could have impacted them and taught them how to deal with the issues and pressure of being bullied in a positive way instead of succumbing to the pressure and hurting themselves as a way of escape. When reflecting on a memory, the events are interrogated and new revelations about personality, identity and choices are made. Through this, reflection may often lead to change with regard to identity (Mitchell & Weber, 1999). Due to this being a collaborative task, it may assist others who experience the same events or require similar reflections and change in their lives.

After the transduction activity, group 1 added a visual cover to their written story and used colours of red to illustrate the bloodshed and violence in their story. Their plays were creative as they used props during their performance. The props elicited creativity as the learners used them as a form of creative representation. These props served as a metaphor during the performances and assisted with providing visual clues without the use of language. They needed to be well thought of as each prop

served a purpose during the performances. It is easy to see creative processes in early childhood play such as using a stick and pretending that it is a horse (Vygotsky, 2004).

The learners made use of similar representations by using a pillow that was put under the mother's shirt to represent a pregnant lady. These props served as a metaphor in storytelling which was present in the stories and use of props during the performances. This is not a reproduction of events that have occurred, but it is a creative reworking of impressions that were made (Vygotsky, 2004). These represent notions of authentic creativity as they draw on illustrations of realism and a construction of a new reality for these learners. The use of metaphors and props in the lessons regarding the transduction of modes drew on imagination and identity as each prop used added a sense of identity for each character. For example, group 2 dressed Palesa's mother in torn old clothing to represent her identity as a domestic worker or illustrate an identity of being from a working-class background.

Vygotsky (2004) states that imagination is the basis for all creative activity. There is a misconception that creativity is only for some individuals and that everyone cannot be creative (Grainger, Goouch and Lambirth, 2005). Creativity is a disposition that is learnt and developed over time. This is based on work by Bourdieu (1979) who states that aesthetics is a disposition as creativity is embodied and internalised due to being a cognitive structure. The reason that I perceive creativity as a disposition is that it becomes embedded in our daily lives and is constantly in use, unlike a skill that one can have but may choose not to make use of.

During the tasks in this research, many of the participants made comments about not being able to explore some of the modes as they were not creative. However, all learners have the capability to be creative with the aid and guidance of the educator. Educators should construct spaces and opportunities in the classroom in which learners can explore and express different forms of creativity (Grainger et al., 2005). For example, the series of activities in this research provided a safe space for learners to be visually, verbally and kinaesthetically creative by using colour, art, voice, space and body to explore and express creativity. However, this was not completely achieved in the intended way due to a lack of resources and time. This provided an environment for the learners to take risks in selecting content and telling their story while being imaginative and creative. This was achieved by creating a safe space in which the

learners were able to use their imagination to take risks in which they felt comfortable exploring topics that are generally seen as controversial.

It allowed some such as group 4 to take a risk of labelling themselves as rapists during their performance and being able to remove this label without being criticised once they left the classroom. An advantage is that this form of creativity drew on aspects of school literacy such as language and creative writing and it incorporated aspects of out-of-school practices such as rap and soap opera genres, the use of different modes and also multilingualism. That is one of the purposes of culturally responsive pedagogy which is to facilitate access and academic achievement.

During the focus group, four learners were asked: What was it like to learn creative writing and complete a task in this new way (multimodal)? Was it enjoyable or did you dislike using the different elements? How was this lesson series different to your previous experiences of creative writing at school? They responded with the following:

Learner 1: "*It was amazing and nice to express ourselves differently. It was amazing because it teaches you how to be creative when you talk and write."*

Learner 2: *"It is different from previous school experiences because it is the first time that we are doing this in class."*

Learner 3: *"It's actually good and I enjoyed it because we don't speak our languages in class, only when its break time but during class we only speak English."*

Learner 4: *"The topic wasn't something new because our teacher allows us to write about topics like rape and love."*

By looking at the responses of the learners, it is evident that for some learners, this multimodal activity was beneficial to them through means of expressing themselves in a new way and using multilingualism and their home languages as multimodal activities may allow for this. For others, it created an opportunity to express oneself in different forms such as verbally or bodily and allowed them to explore different topics and ways of writing. This research aimed to make use of multimodality in productive, expressive and creative ways that draw on the identity, experiences and resources of learners. It draws on aspects of multimodal social semiotics and culturally responsive pedagogy.

The participants were instructed to express their experiences and identities that drew on their local forms of knowledge in order to explore and share these with their peers for social and educational exchange. It resulted in some positive excitement and communicative repertoires whereas learners were previously not interested in creative writing and expression. One of the contributions that I have made is to theoretically work with multimodality and creativity simultaneously.

5.4.5 Affordances and limitations of multimodality:

Affordances of multimodality were as follows. Literacy has become more than just reading and writing. The learners were allowed to express themselves in various ways such as singing, acting, using bodily movement and the resources around them. This ensured an incorporation of everyday knowledge and elements to be used as resources in the classroom. Introducing multimodality to learners has included affordances of new levels of engagement among learners, new content learning and cognitive and conceptual understanding of content and context (Miller and McVee, 2012). The learners had the opportunity to learn from each other during collaborative tasks and work together to construct multimodal meaning. It allowed for learners to gather understanding of content and context in multiple ways and be actively engaged and involved in learning and creating new modes.

Multimodality requires the ability to be able to re-think and re-imagine resources in the form of transformation as well as meaning-making processes (Miller and McVee, 2012). It required learners to be creative and imaginative during the process of constructing and understanding multimodal texts of their choice. For example, learners needed to understand specific symbols used in texts such as red represents love or danger, high pitched screaming represents horror or excitement. These are symbols that learners were aware of based on their prior knowledge. They were able to make use of them and form links during their transduction to the audio and kinaesthetic modes. This specific performance mode allowed for multilingualism. Learners felt confident to use a range of African languages during their performances which they lacked during their textual writing.

I have identified very few limitations of multimodal composition. These include a lack of resources within the school. The school was under-resourced, thus limiting the learners to use various modes and tools in constructing their text. Learners did not

have access to computers, the internet, digital devices, recording devices, magazines, colour pencils and art tools. The lack of resources limited learners in selecting specific modes to use as well as limited their exposure to modern learning and ways of presenting forms of reading and writing.

Other limitations and challenges are that educators need to be well informed and read on a repertoire of modes, signs and content to recognise the different meanings that learners make and to have the ability to facilitate them with this. From my observation and during my findings of a participating school, I have realised that many educators do not incorporate multimodality into their teaching and have little knowledge about it. Time was a factor that limited my involvement and engagement with resources among the learners during this series of lessons. Therefore, I was not able to harness and expose the learners fully to the different ways that each mode could be used. I assume that if this was done and time was not a challenging factor of this research, then the learners may have been persuaded to try different modes of transducing their stories.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will provide conclusions and recommendations arising from the research conducted. The primary aim of this research was to explore the impact of multimodal composition on the learning and composing of creative writing. This question will be answered based on the sub-questions that were investigated during the conduct of this research. A textual and multimodal writing intervention containing a series of lessons was conducted with a Grade 7 class of learners. This led to an exploration of four modes, namely textual, visual, audio and kinaesthetic.

Theoretically and empirically, this research has attempted to bring together creative writing, multimodality and culturally responsive pedagogy. My potential contribution to knowledge in this field is based on creating a link between multimodal composition and creative writing, building on the previous work done in this field by Newfield, Andrews and Smith, Ladson-Billings, Vygotsky and Mendelowitz. This research provides in-depth insights of the impact that a monomodal and multimodal intervention had on the production of creative writing stories. While identity writing has been worked with in terms of creative writing, this research takes on a new approach as I have used a culturally responsive pedagogy to work with identities, experiences, language and social and economic resources that the learners bring into the classroom. This offers new findings for creative writing research due to drawing on existing resources and different modes to facilitate a motivation for writing.

6.1 The affordances and limitations of collaborative textual storytelling

With regard to textual storytelling, I have concluded that traditional ideas and writing pedagogies still exist within the school where this research was conducted. Monomodal ways of writing as written text was the dominant mode and anglonormativity the dominant underlying ideology. Textual writing and academic writing were associated with the English language and there was limited space provided for learners' linguistic resources.

Textual story telling provided a safe space for writing in which the learners could express their realities and identities without exposure to judgement because their work was not shared with the class. The textual stories provided an opportunity to develop the stories by developing the plot, characters, dialogue, and so on, without needing to perform or share the story with the whole class. This allowed the opportunity to write about and explore social issues of conflict and topics that are usually regarded as unconventional. Through this, it is possible that the learners may express notions of a combined, collaborative voice by exploring their histories and identities and develop layers to their voice as described by Canagarajah (2015). The learners were encouraged to engage in collaborative discussion and writing during the group writing activities due to socialisation and oral interaction possibly being constructive during writing and the construction of texts. There may have been some judgement and forms of disagreement between the group members, but overall, a safe space and positive group dynamic were established.

An affordance of the written mode is that it serves as a form of reflection and revision on the events in the story. The choices made by each group such as language play and detail of their experiences can be reflected upon and changed to be developed further or may be streamlined, depending on the purpose of its use. This is something that is not offered in the performance genre. Some of the events that were written about are based on prosthetic memories that the learners had from movies they have watched, books they have read or experiences that they have heard about.

Creativity and imagination were achieved successfully in the textual mode through means of creative reworking, language play and symbolism. The learners took experiences that they identified with and reworked them to construct a potentially successful story. They made use of character development and creatively reworked the events to suit the purpose of the task. In doing so, they used creative language play to assist with showing creative choices within the text. For example, group 4 made up an abbreviation “BBF” which means best brothers forever. They needed to use language to describe the events that occurred without the aid of props and body language that was available for the performances. The learners were required to use their words creatively to convey meaning and the severity of the actions. Writing can also be regarded as a performance by using language which is a symbolic system.

However, written texts are highly policed performances where anglonormativity commonly exists.

Collaborative writing allowed for the learners to share ideas and learn from each other. It provided an opportunity to share cultural capital and assisted with peer review and critique in which many of the participants worked well together. A limitation of collaborative textual activities is that language was an issue during group discussions due to language hierarchies which made some of the learners feel excluded and portrayed negative attitudes towards using multilingualism during these activities. Therefore, language hierarchies can be problematic in such cases as some learners may feel silenced and excluded due to others not allowing them the opportunity to use and share their language. In this case, English and isiZulu were the dominant languages used during group discussions and English was mainly used during writing. Through this, the position of languages became explicit, which allowed for a reflection on existing language ideologies.

The school lacked resources due to funding. Due to this, a disadvantage of the textual stories is that they were not developed further to reach a digital platform in order to illustrate a variety of written textual modes. Therefore, this may continue ideas that the textual mode is solely linked to print-based writing. Despite using the FunDza stories to illustrate the digital writing platform, the reality is that not all the learners can afford a cell phone or digital device to access the website and participate in community writing projects as well as write for a different audience.

A culturally relevant pedagogy allowed for topics of meaning to be selected. The participants chose to write about social issues which they felt were important to them and their communities in the hope of achieving social justice. They were successful in discussing serious experiences such as rape, crime, death and bullying in a way that was approachable and appropriate for their audience to read; whereas in the stories of the reworking of Cinderella and The Five Rapists, these groups were less successful in creating a meaningful and relatable story.

6.2 The affordances and limitations of multimodal storytelling

I came to the conclusion that the performance genre has the potential to allow for multilingualism to be used, provided that the task instructions invite learners to use

their multilingual repertoires. The learners looked and felt free using their home languages and accessing language repertoires during their use of voice and body in the performances. The performance genre opened up a multimodal and multilingual space in which the learners felt free and confident in expressing ideas in a language of their choice. Through this, the performance genre facilitated embodiment as it allowed the learners to take on the role of different characters and explore different identities and languages. It is evident that multimodality had a positive effect on the learners and allowed development in their attitudes and transformation of texts due to their performances being more vibrant and engaging during this mode.

While their textual writing was basic and consisted of many writing errors and gaps in understanding of events, the transduction into the kinaesthetic and audio mode was liberal and entertaining, leading to better understanding of content. The performances were creatively presented and drew on local aspects by providing unique identities and events. Language served as a resource that learners could use to express themselves. By using the resource of language, the viewers were entertained, engaged and the learners were confident in the production and performance of their texts. A shift in language provided a shift away from anglonormativity which allowed for opening up a space for multilingualism. Multimodality, specifically the performance genre, allowed for many affordances which made the transduction effective in their performance and in conveying meaning. Through this, 68.4% of learners stated that multimodal composition benefited them. Most of these learners expressed that the transduction activity allowed for better understanding of the content of their stories and provided solutions for dealing with conflict.

The performance genre allowed for creativity and imagination to be accessed as the learners made use of visual elements and symbolism in their drama productions which added to meaning due to providing visual clues for the audience. This indicated that detail and meaning was considered as well as an awareness of the audience. They included props in their performances to provide visual clues and used their bodies, facial expression and voice to express emotion and feelings which contributed to the success of their performance. An important insight of this research is that the inclusion of embodiment in the performances created a sense of freedom for the learners as they took on the role of a character, expressed their emotions and feelings. They

experienced a sense of structured freedom (Mendelowitz, 2016) which gave them the freedom to act as someone else and possibly create an alternate reality for themselves. This type of freedom created a possibility for cognitive and imaginative engagement.

After the transduction, it was evident that the learners understood that multimodal texts are not reliant on technology and can be accessed through means of the resources around them. Despite a lack of resources available, they made use of their surroundings to add effect and convey meaning when constructing a multimodal story. It occurred to them that a textual story can be transformed into a multimodal text and convey a different meaning due to the change in mode. One of my contributions to this field of study is to consider using both written and oral modes to create more powerful stories and creative writing texts. I suggest using the oral mode first followed by the textual due to the oral mode eliciting the use of multilingualism, embodiment and creative choices. These aspects could generate richer written texts.

6.3 How can multimodal and collaborative composition contribute towards expressing identity and existing linguistic and social resources?

A culturally responsive pedagogy was used during this research in the form of identity writing. This was used to draw on the participants' identities and experiences in order to create a motivation and interest in writing. I argue that it is important because it created a classroom space for students to write by drawing on home and school literacies, histories and linguistic resources. The learners were able to make links between home and school literacy practices and modes. The learners were instructed to write about themselves, which was an approach that was new to them. I immediately observed that they expressed an interest in this type of writing and all the groups chose to write about socio-economic issues that they felt required addressing. This was interesting to me because one of the aims of a culturally responsive pedagogy is to create social awareness or consciousness which was achieved through means of the construction of the activities. There were signs of the beginnings of critical consciousness in all the groups' stories due to identifying power relations that exist within gender roles. However, it needed further development as the learners did not interrogate and challenge the power imbalances that they wrote about.

While the textual activity reproduced anglonormative ideals by associating written texts with Standard English, the performance genre created a space for oral multilingualism as the learners felt free in expressing themselves in a range of local languages. Multilingualism was achieved by means of multimodality and allowed the learners to draw on existing linguistic resources and repertoires. The incorporation of collaboration in these activities aided multilingualism as the participants were able to learn from each other and add to their linguistic repertoires, bringing a different language to the discussion and performance. Language hierarchies were problematic in the discussion during the written text activities, but this was not a problem during the performance group discussion. This could possibly be due to the oral mode enabling multilingualism as it is a norm for the learners to orally code-switch and use translingualism during oral discussions. The performance genre could have also drawn on multilingual oral practices as this is common in local soap operas and could have influenced their decision regarding language choice.

The collaborative process was similar in both the textual and performance mode. Social resources were developed during both the written and textual activities due to collaborative discussions and sharing of ideas. The learners were able to share their ideas and express their opinions about social issues such as bullying, rape and crime which they felt would shed light on these issues or address them due to exposing them. It was a way of expressing their importance collaboratively, which provided a sense of support as it was a group effort. Group 3 tried to address an issue of bullying that was occurring in their class, which was a form of social action that they tried to take through means of their performance.

6.4 The impact of a multimodal composition intervention on writing produced

This section answers the main research question. Multimodal composition had a positive impact on the writing produced by the Grade 7 learners. Development was seen in the writing from the textual mode to the kinaesthetic and audio mode. The performance genre was much more exciting and engaging in comparison to the textual mode. It opened up spaces and possibilities such as multilingualism and embodiment which led to a development in writing and creativity. It created a better understanding of content and context of the stories. Changing the mode of the writing resulted in a

change of audience and the learners identified that different audiences react differently to specific elements. For example, the performance genre offered a space for an oral mode which drew on multilingualism.

The learners were introduced to aspects in writing that they were previously unaware of such as cognitive development, engagement with power relations in writing and structured freedom. Hopefully, these will be writing tools that they incorporate in their daily writing which is now not limited to textual writing as they realised that writing can be transformed into different modes to conduct different meanings. Multimodal composition offered more advantages to writing, specifically a motivation for writing. It is an emerging pedagogy which makes writing relevant and engaging and is important to incorporate into writing practices.

6.5 Implications and recommendations for writing pedagogy research

Insights from this research have emerged which state that audience affects writing. For example, the writing style, language and content differed when I positioned myself as the audience during the textual activity in comparison to the performance genre in which the learners were the audience. During the textual activity, the learners were focused on listing facts and precise information, whereas during the performance genre, they were 'free' when expressing themselves and showed enjoyment and a passion in expressing themselves during the drama production and rap performance. Scholars such as Elbow, Andrews and Smith and Mendelowitz all state that learners produce better texts when writing for an authentic audience. In the case of the performance, their audience was their peers and consisted of people that could relate to and identify with the issues that they were performing. Therefore, the performance came across as more vibrant than the textual activity did and I believe that the shift in audience played a role. By this insight, I believe that audience influences one's writing and it needs to be considered when setting up writing tasks. But it was, even more importantly, about the shift from a policed mode associated with anglonormativity (i.e. textual writing) to an oral performance mode closely associated with their everyday language practices.

This study highlights the importance of risky writing as sharing one's experiences and identities can be a vulnerable process despite encouraging it in these activities. It is

important to allow the learners to take ownership of their work by judging it themselves and correcting their own mistakes in order to learn from them. This can be done during collaborative activities as the learners can learn from each other through this process. Rely on the learners to give feedback and constructively criticise their peer writing before the educator evaluation (Vandermeulen, 2011). While feedback and peer discussion were included in this research, there was more scope needed for reflections and revisions to be done. It would have been beneficial for each group to use a checklist for assessing their texts.

'Facilitate and promote students' access to a variety of texts that reflect their realities, and foster students' own production of texts-broadly defined to include print, film, and other media-describing and depicting their lived experiences' (Rosario-Ramos & Johnson, 2014). The study also highlights the importance of giving students access and opportunities in safe spaces such as the classroom to explore and investigate issues within their communities and their lives as a form of reflecting on their realities and challenges that are experiences daily around them. These activities allowed them to interrogate these realities and issues through reproduction and redesign of texts through various modes such as visuals, performance or on digital platforms to share different forms of lived experiences within a literacy context.

Writing about the self and topics that matter to the learners provides engagement with the text for both the writer and reader. Educators should allow learners to explore relevant topics and experiences in their writing which could possibly lead to a creation of ideas and cognitive stimulation as it rendered positive effects during this research. By providing the learners with meaningful topics to write about, it created an interest and motivation for writing. Allowing the learners to write about themselves and those around them drew on a culturally responsive pedagogy which provided the learners with a space to use the resources that they bring into the classroom such as their identities, experiences and languages. Through this, the learners may develop an interest in writing and become lifelong readers and writers.

Educators should encourage the learners to explore different styles and modes of writing that are of interest and relevance to them, for example, writing on safe social media platforms such as the FunDza website or creating blog spaces to express themselves. This creates opportunities to explore existing writing forums in which they

can develop their writing to cater for different writing styles and audiences. This may serve as an out-of-school literacy practice that could possibly develop their writing and create links between in- and out-of-school literacy practices. It also provides an opportunity for instant feedback and peer review which could be helpful for their writing.

As an educator, one should always remember that each learner prefers a different learning method or mode. This calls for allowing learners to explore a range of modes instead of using exclusively a monomodal pedagogical approach to writing to cater for the learning needs of all learners. This may be a tool for encouraging writing, reading and creativity and create an interest and motivation to explore different platforms such as online, digital, textual, audio or visual aspects of reading and writing. It is important to encourage learners to not be afraid to experiment with language and modes as exploration may lead to a richer text. The use of multilingualism and multimodal composition draws on an ecological perspective which links to aspects of inclusive education.

This research highlights the importance of creating a safe space for multilingualism, translanguaging and code-switching in learner writing tasks. This makes learning and writing unique and adds a local context to writing. When using home languages during writing, the learners may feel more comfortable with sharing ideas and texts with the class. From insights emerging from this research, a recommendation can be made for traditional language barriers to be broken and allow for multilingualism within the classroom as it provides confidence, respect for heritage and culture and adds to learners' linguistic repertoires. A multilingual pedagogy can serve as a form of inclusive education in which marginalised learners may feel comfortable to share their experiences, culture and languages.

A phenomenon that exists in many South African classrooms is linguistic barriers such as in this case a monolingual educator and multilingual learners. This is not necessarily categorised as a disadvantage, but rather a limitation due to not fully understanding the language used in discussion and texts which requires a narrator or interpreter. I overcame this by using visual, audio and body clues as well as discussing the language used after the performance. This benefited me by exposing me to a new linguistic repertoire and allowed me to learn vocabulary associated with the languages

that were used. The success of these lessons relies on the educators' attitude towards a multilingual pedagogy and their willingness to accept and make use of the language and culture that the learners bring into the classroom.

During this research, I took on the role of a teacher-researcher. When showing the learners that I had similar interests in their chosen topics and also experienced similar challenges that they have during writing, I created a safe space for them to explore challenges and not be afraid of making mistakes that they can correct, understand and learn from. A mistake that I made during the lesson discussion and writing was that I assumed all the learners enjoyed and understood the elements of writing. It is important to continuously encourage, explain and guide learners through the process. For example, I did not remind them that when it comes to writing, they should 'show' the reader the events of the story through means of the mode that they are working with rather than 'telling' the story in a straightforward and literal manner. This could have encouraged creativity in the form of language. They need to be reminded to use elements such as voice, risky writing, audience, style and imagination during their writing. It is important to do this in order to cater for all the learners' writing abilities as some may be stronger and more successful writers than others. This may serve as encouragement to all the learners, specifically those learners who do not consider themselves able to write or creative enough to do so.

A recommendation for considering assessment for multimodal and multilingual tasks is advisable due to the complex nature of these texts. A rubric is not sufficient to be able to critically assess a text of this nature.

6.6 Limitations of the study and further recommendations

This study is qualitative in nature and despite it focusing on a depth of findings, I have identified some limitations. Due to this study only being conducted with one Grade 7 class, I recommend that it be conducted with a larger number of participants to verify the findings of this research. The research sites may be spread across different contexts to include a range of suburban, rural and urban schools to provide a better understanding of multimodality, resources and languages and the role that each of these elements plays in the learning and composing of creative writing.

Due to not being proficient in the languages used during the learners' performances, there were limitations to my involvement and understanding of aspects of these performance texts. I was not able to keep up with the language used despite being able to gain clues from the embodiment and expressions used. My inability to use multilingualism with the learners could have impacted their view of my understanding and due to me being the audience of the written text, it could have resulted in perpetuating anglonormative ideologies and culture (McKinney, 2014) as their written work was in English and this changed during the performance when there was a shift in audience. Hence, my monolingualism resulted in both research and pedagogical limitations.

Time constraints limited the development of text and writing during this research. A longer intervention would have offered scope to explore the affordances and limitations of the different modes in depth. It would have also provided an opportunity for the participants to develop their texts further and provide different perspectives of each story. This would have been allocated time to structure a reflection of the texts that they produced and the modes that were used. It could have also provided an opportunity to challenge norms and ideals that they wrote about such as the fairy tale structure involved in most of the texts or power relations that they wrote about.

In future, it would be preferable to provide the participants with a range of modes and resources for the learners to use during their exploration and composition of texts to ensure that the research is not limited by the lack of resources at a particular school. This may result in not limiting the choice of multimodal text during activities and could improve the quality of the texts, both to be creative and professional. This research was a call for all educators to question if their pedagogy and approach to teaching creative writing is indeed creative at all.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information sheet: Principal

Dear Principal/SGB Chair

My name is Fatima Vally Essa (604 128) and I am studying a Master of Education by Research Degree (MEd Dissertation) at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My research topic is “Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Composition on the Learning and Composing of Creative Writing.” This research will include an interview with the educator to get background information about the approaches and pedagogy that learners have been exposed to during creative writing lessons. I will prepare a series of lesson which I will teach to Grade 7 learners. In groups, the learners will be required to construct a creative writing piece that will be published on the FunDza digital platform. Learners will be required to transform their stories into writing pieces that include multimodal composition aspects (audio book, play and a visual piece). A questionnaire will be given to each learner to complete after the intervention. One member from each group will then be selected for a focus group discussion which will be a form of reflection for the task. The time period involved will be approximately 3 weeks in which a series of lessons will take place.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because I believe there is potential to investigate this topic in order to gain accurate and precise information. It is strong in diversity which will aid my research. I am cordially inviting your school to participate in this research project.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. All learners and their parents/guardians will receive an information form which stipulates details regarding my study and a consent form to complete in agreement/disagreement to participate in this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher details:

Name: Fatima Vally Essa
Email: fatimavallyessa@gmail.com
Cell: 071 493 2177

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information, assistance or to opt out of the research project.

Appendix 2: Information sheet: Learners

Dear Learner

My name is Fatima Vally Essa (604 128) and I am studying a Master of Education by Research Degree (MEd Dissertation) at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on teaching creative writing in different ways and how learners feel about school creative writing. I would like you to be a part of a series of lessons in which you write a short story in a group and the transform the story into a radio programme (audio story), a comic or a play. Would you mind if I am present for a few lessons to teach you and speak to you about your feelings, attitudes and experiences of this writing process?

Remember, this is not a test, it is not for marks and it is voluntary, which means that you do not have to do it. Also, if you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way. However, if this is the case, your responses will not be taken into consideration.

I will not be using your own name, but I will make one up so no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing about the study. All information collected will be stored safely and destroyed between 3-5 years after I have completed my project.

Your parents have also been given an information sheet and consent form, but it is your decision to join me in the study.

I look forward to working with you!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you

Researcher details:
Name: Fatima Vally Essa
Email: fatimavallyessa@gmail.com
Cell: 071 493 2177

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information, assistance or to opt out of the research project.

Appendix 3: Learner Consent Form

Please fill in the reply slip below if you agree to participate in my study:

My name is: _____

I am in grade: _____

	YES / NO
Permission to review/collect documents/artefacts	
I agree that my creative writing work can be used for this study only.	**YES / NO**
Permission to be interviewed	
I would like to be interviewed for this study. I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked.	**YES / NO**
Permission to be audiotaped	
I agree to be audiotaped if I am selected for a focus group discussion. I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only.	**YES / NO**
Permission for questionnaire/test	
I agree to fill in a question and answer sheet for this study.	**YES / NO**

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

YES / NO

Sign_____ Date_____

Appendix 4: Information sheet: Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian

My name is Fatima Vally Essa (604 128) and I am studying a Master of Education by Research Degree (MEd Dissertation) at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Composition on the Learning and Composing of Creative Writing. I would like to be a part of a series of lessons in which your child explores using multimodal composition in creative writing.

The reason why I have chosen your child's class is because it will aid my research. The lesson and topic are age appropriate and will broaden your child's perception of multimodality and corresponding ideas. The lesson is part of the curriculum and syllabus which requires your child's attendance whether they choose to participate or not. This will not affect the learner's studies in any way.
Would you mind if I teach a series of lessons in which your child is present, and their responses recorded through audiotape during a possible group discussion and a questionnaire.

Your child will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. S/he will be reassured that s/he can withdraw her/his permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and your child will not be paid for this study.

Your child's name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. His/her individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher details:
Name: Fatima Vally Essa
Email: fatimavallyessa@gmail.com
Cell: 071 493 2177

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information, assistance or to opt out of the research project.

Appendix 5: Parent's Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to allow your child to participate in the research project titled: Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Composition on the Learning and Composing of Creative Writing.

I, _____

the parent of _____

Permission to review/collect documents/artefacts

I agree that my child's creative writing work can be used for this study only. **YES / NO**

Permission to observe my child in class

I agree that my child may be observed in class. **YES / NO**

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree that my child may be audiotaped during interview or observations.

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only. **YES / NO**

Permission to be interviewed

I agree that my child may be interviewed for this study. **YES / NO**

I know that he/she can stop the interview at any time and does not have to answer all the questions asked. **YES / NO**

Permission for questionnaire/test

I agree that my child may be fill in a question and answer sheet for this study. **YES / NO**

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My child's name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- He/she does not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

YES / NO

Sign_____ Date_____

Appendix 6: Information sheet: Teachers

Dear Educator

My name is Fatima Vally Essa (604 128) and I am studying a Master of Education by Research Degree (MEd Dissertation) at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My research topic is “Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Composition on the Learning and Composing of Creative Writing.” Before the research process begins, I would like to interview you about the approaches and pedagogy that the learners have been exposed to during their creative writing lessons as a means of background information. The interview will be audio recorded and you may choose to skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. Please note, that this is not the focus of the study. This research will include me teaching a series of lessons as an intervention for Grade 7 learners. In groups, the learners will be required to construct a creative writing piece that will be published on the FunDza digital forum. Learners will be required to transform their stories into writing pieces that include multimodal composition aspects (audio book, play and a visual piece). One member from each group will be selected for a focus group discussion which will be a form of reflection for the task. A questionnaire will be given to each learner to complete as a means of triangulating the data collected during the focus group. The time period involved will be approximately 3 weeks to complete a series of lessons.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because I believe there is potential to investigate this topic in order to gain accurate and precise information. It is strong in diversity which will aid my research while benefitting the critical awareness of both the educator and learners towards the topic. I am cordially inviting your school to participate in this research project.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study. All learners and their parents/guardians will receive an information form which stipulates details regarding my study and a consent form to complete in agreement/disagreement to participate in this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. All research data will be destroyed between 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher details:
Name: Fatima Vally Essa
Email: fatimavallyessa@gmail.com
Cell: 071 493 2177

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information, assistance or to opt out of the research project.

Appendix 7: Teacher's Consent form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my research project called: Exploring the Impact of Multimodal Composition on the Learning and Composing of Creative Writing.

I, _____give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artefacts

I agree that lesson plans, worksheets and all related artefacts can be used for this study only.

YES / NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview. **YES / NO**

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only **YES / NO**

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study. **YES / NO**

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to answer all the questions asked. **YES / NO**

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- My name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped.
- All the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

YES / NO

Sign_____ Date_____

Appendix 8: Questionnaire

Date:_____

Name:_____

Grade:_____

Please read each statement and answer the questions by giving as much detail as you can. Remember, there is no RIGHT or WRONG answer. Your answers will help the researcher understand more about what you learnt from the multimodal writing project (i.e. writing a digital story and then transforming it into audio, visual and play modes).

Questionnaire

1. What did you enjoy most about the multimodal elements (digital, audio, play, visual) of the lesson series? What did you enjoy least? Give reasons for your answer?

2. What did you learn by changing your story from a text to an audiobook, play or visual? Tell me more about this process.

3. Were the elements (digital, audio, play and visual) relatable and identifiable? Explain this further.

4. How do you feel about using different languages during this task, especially being allowed to write in different languages?

5. Describe the best and worst moment of doing this project in a group.

   Best moment:

   Worst moment:

6. Was this task helpful in exploring and expressing who you are as a person (identity)? If yes, explain further.

7. Would you like to do more creative writing tasks like this one? Please give reasons for your answer. Why? Why not?

8. Has using multimodal composition benefited you in any way? Why? Why not?

Semi-structured focus group preliminary interview questions

- Languages used:

1. How would you describe the multimodal project lessons to other learners at your school? Your description can include the process that was followed, the highlights, the challenges etc.

2. Tell me about the process that went into deciding on a common topic to write about, then writing the story, posting it online and then changing it into an audiobook, play or comic strip?

3. Why did you choose the topics that you did?

4. What was it like to learn creative writing and complete a task in this new way? Was it enjoyable or did you dislike using the different elements? How was this lesson series different to your previous experiences of creative writing at school?

5. Writing is usually done individually. How did you feel about writing and creating multimodal texts in groups?

    - What new things did you learn about the writing process and creating multimodal texts by working collaboratively?

    - What were the limitations? Did any of you have arguments with your group members? Why?
      How did you overcome the issue of disadvantages?

6. What was it like to be allowed to speak and write in different languages other than just in English? What were the advantages/ disadvantages?

7. Why did you choose to write the story in English and transduce it into other languages?