

Developing Dramatic Facilitation Practice across Formal and Informal Pedagogic Contexts

One Volume

Submitted by Sarah Rose Evans to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Drama, December 2012.

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(Signature)

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Christine and Victor, this is for you.

Abstract

This thesis examines how drama facilitators adapt and assess their praxis so that it can be applied effectively in different learning contexts. This research analyses the good praxis of established facilitators with comparatively little documentation to disseminate their approaches. MED Theatre, Magic Carpet, the Shakespeare Schools Festival and West Exe Technology College employ facilitators who adopt a personalised approach to their praxis, transitioning across the spectrum of formal and informal learning to engage a diverse range of learners.

The concepts of formal and informal learning are defined at the outset and the particular problems they can present drama facilitators are contextualised. Finding the right tools and assessment procedures is a significant challenge in a pedagogic landscape characterised by conflicting theories, a broad range of learner needs, and multiple perceptions of what actually counts as evidence of learning to justify praxis. With an increasing number of facilitators sustaining themselves by operating within a variety of learning settings there is an emerging need to identify what skills, knowledge and considerations support the process of becoming this kind of extended professional.

Initiating my investigation, I explore how the role of a drama facilitator has emerged through movements in the fields of education, Community Theatre and the arts in Chapter One. The main pedagogic theories and approaches to assessment that a drama facilitator must engage with to personalise praxis are presented in Chapter Two. Supporting the development of this expanding field of praxis, the four case studies analysed illustrate how facilitators have sustained careers as extended professionals whilst negotiating educational policy, different learners, and assessment criterion.

This thesis contributes to the argument for sustaining and developing links between formalised learning and informal social learning. I challenge the competitive perception of system-centred and learner-centred approaches, re-framing them as inter-related processes in cases of good practice. Finally, I identify how facilitators are attempting to forge further community links,

interrogating how this emerging field may be developed by drama facilitators who share a commitment to developing the quality of learning opportunities offered in the UK.

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Introduction

Framing the Facilitator

The Research Problem

The process of learning is contentious; educators are constantly grappling with conflicting concepts of learning, new approaches to praxis, and the requirement to find methods to evidence success externally. Learning is informed by political and social shifts, and as a lifelong activity, demands that the professionals invested in improving it engage in on-going and collaborative enquiry, to both justify and develop their praxis. It is a process that varies from individual to individual; it is “relational, context dependent and embedded in social practices” (Harrison, Reeve, Hanson, and Clarke 2002: 3). For the educational facilitator who operates in a range of learning contexts, the problem lies in finding the appropriate approaches and assessment methods to engage learners in each particular context.

In my research the focus is on drama facilitators who sustain their praxis by travelling into a range of learning settings governed by distinctive boundaries and aims. These drama facilitators are faced with the problem of negotiating prescribed outcomes imposed by external exam boards in formal settings, funding criteria in community learning settings, and negotiating the personally-referenced modes of assessment to measure informal learning. Furthermore, informal outcomes can conflict or coexist with the externally imposed requirements of formal education. Differing degrees of formality mean that facilitators are constantly negotiating and transitioning between the boundaries of what is classed as formal and informal learning. Documenting how experienced drama facilitators have developed their approaches to successfully deliver their praxis across a spectrum of learning settings is one of the main objectives of this research project.

At the heart of this research is the intention to provide facilitators with a distinct voice of their own, demonstrating the important role their perspective can play when trying to develop effective praxis. The cases examined in this thesis highlight the absence of the facilitator in existing research output and the potential to utilise their discrete findings to help develop the field. The organisations examined here have relied on documenting and disseminating the voices of the participants. They also give voice to managing staff from within the organisation alongside funders and related professionals such as teachers, patrons and politicians to argue the case for their praxis. Their websites, journal articles and reports present overviews of project outcomes but overlook the facilitator's distinctive input which is intrinsic to their successful output. This research enables the facilitator's voice to be heard, giving a unique insight into their role and extending the existing data which analyses how successful pedagogic praxis is conducted.

The figure of the drama facilitator has comparatively little research and documentation which analyses the importance of their role when compared to related professionals such as teachers, actors and directors. Research focuses on project outcomes, documenting what is learnt or achieved by the participants that facilitators support, meaning that the facilitator who underpins the learning process remains hidden. Here an original perspective of the facilitator is presented, offering the reader a detailed analysis of the challenges they face and the process of planning, delivering and assessing outcomes from this particular perspective.

I inform this project by discussing and documenting cases of good facilitation praxis. Praxis is defined as a process of "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire 1970: 36). In her discussion of praxis Dorothy Heathcote states that it is an approach which requires the facilitator "to be reciprocally active, pursue a course of critical investigation, to parley, to consult, negotiate and communicate" to support their work (Heathcote in Davis 1997: vi). Heathcote appreciates the "dialectical movement [in] action and reflection. Action causes reflection and reflection causes new action. Praxis is purposeful activity" (Hesten 1994: 15). The term praxis in this study refers to the process of

facilitation *and* the accompanying critical reflection which emerges from it to inform future work.

This investigation of good praxis is situated in a field where there are multiple perceptions of learning and approaches to supporting learner needs. The relationship between learning and drama is particularly contentious given that drama applied for the purposes of education occurs in a variety of contexts. In Chapter One I discuss the growing number of drama facilitators supporting learning in different social settings over the last century. This includes praxis in schools, theatres, community halls, museums, outdoor venues and an increasingly diverse range of public spaces.¹ This praxis is dependent upon the facilitator's ability to adapt approaches effectively to engage a diverse range of learners and realise a wide number of intended learning outcomes. From this a central research question has emerged, in this thesis I ask:

How does the drama facilitator adapt and assess their praxis to negotiate formal and informal learning requirements when practicing in multiple learning contexts?

Through my research I explore how dramatic approaches are personalised to ensure that they are efficacious for a particular group of learners. The process of personalisation consists of a facilitator selecting from their range of techniques and content, and adapting material to maximise its efficacy within a specific group (see the discussion of Heathcote's methods in Chapter One). For example, dramatic approaches offered to primary school students in a formal classroom may be personalised for application with adults in a trans-generational group in an informal community setting. The same exercises will be taken and re-framed, extended, or simplified to ensure they support the learning process. They may be paced and structured differently through additional facilitator modelling and resources so that content is matched, or personalised, to the learners' needs. The process of personalisation is both

¹ Sheila Preston has highlighted some of the recent developments in this field, noting that "[t]he intrinsic benefits of the arts in [...] social learning and understanding with youth in urban, educational and criminal justice settings has been well researched, documented and critiqued across Australia, Canada and Europe (see O'Brien and Donelan 2008; Gallagher 2007; Hughes et al. 2005; Hughes and Ruding 2009; O'Toole 2005)" (2011: 252-253).

exciting and challenging for the facilitator; in my own praxis it is an on-going struggle to find the time, resources and support I need to effectively deliver this kind of work. The need to extend my knowledge in this area prompted me to undertake this study, with the aim of documenting cases of good practice to identify how this kind of facilitation is sustained.

Categorising Learning

Formal learning in this study refers to compulsory learning and optional courses of Further and Higher Education which are assessed and graded against a set of externally imposed criteria from a recognised examining body.²

Formal learning is learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). It is intentional from the learner's point of view and typically leads to validation and certification.

(Werquin 2010: 21)

Formal learning in the UK is assessed against set criteria and usually structured around a prescribed syllabus. Formal outcomes in compulsory education, which occurs between the ages of five and sixteen, are specified by the National Curriculum which is set by the government. In the case of optional courses, which are studied from the age of fourteen onwards, a number of examining boards offer formalised programmes of study to the learner.³ My own training and early praxis was predominantly based with learners in the compulsory education sector; my analysis in Chapters Four and Five examines different ways of facilitating learning with students in this context. However, as a community facilitator I have also been required to negotiate prescribed criteria which funders and/or non-government organisations (NGOs) have established. In these cases facilitators will also be required to compile assessment data to evidence learning outcomes that have been formally prescribed. My analysis of the *Moving On* project in Chapter Three contextualises this process in further depth.

² See the glossary for definitions of the key educational terms used in this thesis.

³ The Education and Skills Act passed in 2008 made it compulsory from 2013 for learners to stay in education or training at least part-time, until they are eighteen years of age in the UK.

Informal learning includes optional study or participation in activities where new skills and knowledge are acquired but are not graded or formally recognised. It is “learning that results from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised in terms of objectives, time or learning support” (Werquin 2010: 22). Learners have a greater degree of autonomy, judging against personal criteria what constitutes success as opposed to an examiner or external body establishing this for them. Informal criteria can be influenced by external criteria but our personal objectives can be refined during the learning process as they are not prescribed. However, in formal settings, alongside outcomes that will be assessed and graded, the facilitator may be responsible for supporting personal and social development which is assessed informally. The learner may develop skills and knowledge in a classroom or similar formal setting that are not organised or explicitly recognised in the criteria set. It became apparent in my praxis that facilitators “are jugglers of contradictions whose practices may impact in many more ways than those that they foresee” (Etherton and Prentki 2006: 141). Facilitators may also offer projects where learners can choose to use the experience as an informal social space or as an opportunity to help achieve a formally recognised qualification, an approach modelled by the Shakespeare Schools Festival in Chapter Five. The integration of formal and informal learning demands a high degree of flexibility, secure pedagogic knowledge, and a broad range of facilitation skills to ensure different learning outcomes are supported. The problem for the facilitator is finding the time and appropriate support to enable them to develop the necessary skill set. How can we become extended professionals with the right tools when each set of learners comes with distinctive needs and varying criteria for success?

Another challenge is the process of assessment which accompanies praxis. The drama facilitator must endeavour to establish what the participant “knows, understands and can do at the start of the process” to measure the final impact on the learner (Kempe and Ashwell 2000: 45). Both the terms ‘assessment’ and ‘evaluation’ can feature when facilitators try to measure the worth of their actions. Assessment is the term commonly applied and associated with formal learning processes, and is directed at estimating the success of the student – what have they managed to learn? The outcomes of assessment are designed to be communicated to the learner to help them. Evaluation, or in some cases

monitoring and evaluation (M&E), is more commonly used by funders and informal educators; this is associated with estimating the success of the facilitator and process as a whole – what, and how, have they enabled the participant to learn? Outcomes here are for the facilitator to inform their professional development process. They are also communicated to current and potential funders, designed to help the facilitator sustain praxis which can constrain how they articulate and measure outcomes.

Another challenge for the facilitator is the fact that the term assessment itself is problematic; this is not a neutral term and carries with it many embedded assumptions. One of the difficulties “with assessment as a term in educational contexts is that its usage often departs from how the term is understood in everyday usage” (Joughin 2009:15). In using the term the facilitator must recognise that assessment “is a value-laden activity surrounded by debates about academic standards, preparing students for employment, measuring quality and providing incentives” (Boud and Falchikov 2007:9). However, it is an important term which travels across the boundaries of formal and informal education and therefore is applied here to accurately reflect how facilitators discuss their praxis in pedagogic contexts. The term assessment is used to contextualise the challenges faced by facilitators operating in a range of pedagogic contexts and trying to best understand and align their processes to documenting outcomes. Moreover, the problematic nature of terminology in education is not only applicable to the concept of assessment; the whole vocabulary of learning “depends heavily on the definition or meaning of the term underlying it, and many of these terms in education are extremely problematic: understanding, ability, achievement, numeracy, literacy, learning, development [and] knowledge” will all present the facilitator with challenges as they try to negotiate terminology in the context of each project (Wellington 2000: 30).

Importantly, these processes are inter-related; the process of evaluation is a form of self-assessment on the part of the facilitator. Facilitators use assessment data to inform evaluation, and their evaluation will affect future approaches to assessment. Furthermore, there can be distinctions between what the criteria at the outset measures and what outcomes the facilitator

identifies through their praxis. As Tim Prentki and Michael Etherton note, “[m]onitoring and evaluation tends to be constructed to measure what is intended by the initiative or project activity. Impact assessment, on the other hand, must take account of any result which provokes change, regardless of the stated aims of the project or programme” (2006: 147). The facilitators in this study work with an appreciation of the assessment/evaluation criteria established at the outset of praxis, however they also take into account the ‘bigger picture’ unintended impact in their assessment procedures as an informal measure of the full range of outcomes. Therefore, in my research ‘assessment’ is applied as an umbrella term which encompasses both how facilitators identify learning outcomes for participants against criteria and assess the wider impact of their praxis.

In formal contexts, establishing the ‘baseline’ of learners’ knowledge and needs will be supported with existing assessment data. Records, such as individual learning plans (ILPs) for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), can also be used to establish the baseline, and curriculum specifications can inform the facilitator of content which has already been covered. However, this kind of baseline data primarily measures *academic* learning outcomes. The lack of information to help inform learning processes geared towards the social and personal development of the individual is challenging. The drama facilitator collaborating with teachers, funders and pedagogic professionals must align their practice to the brief given, often on the basis of limited data. Dependent upon the formality of the learning, the dramatic elements of praxis and the assessment measures applied may differ markedly.

As I have suggested, formal and informal learning are part of a *spectrum*, and can occur in the same space.

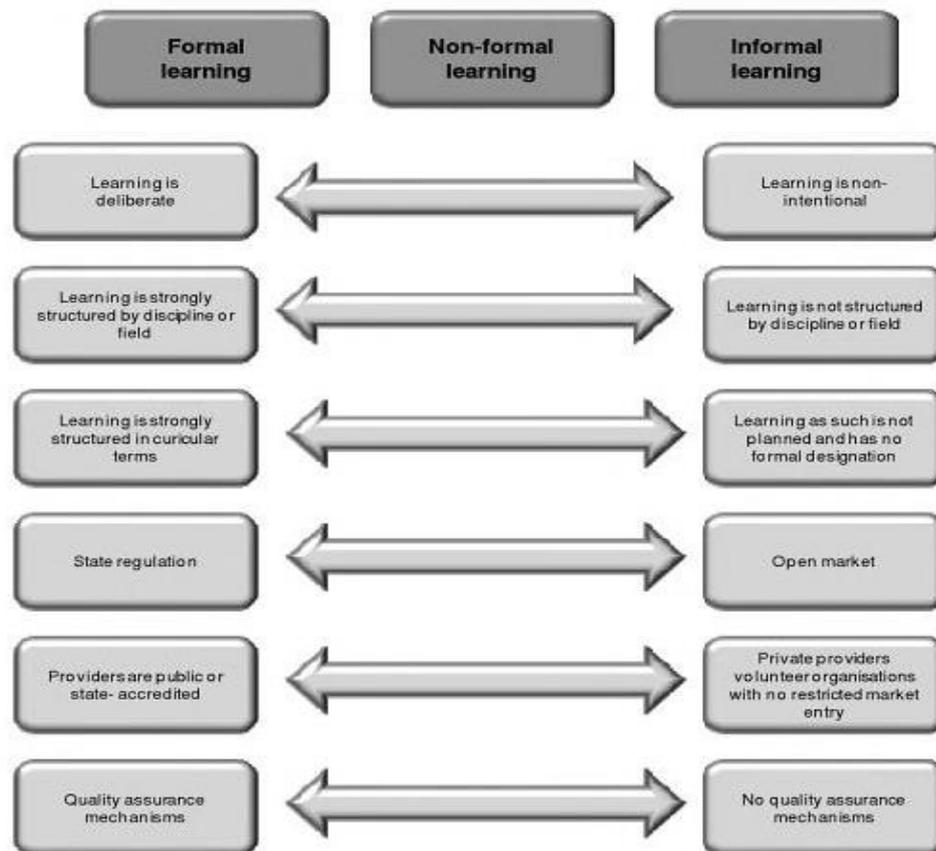


Figure 1.1 The Spectrum of Formal and Informal Learning
(Werquin 2010: 25)

Patrick Werquin⁴ (2010) has examined this learning spectrum, defining the transition between formal and informal learning as non-formal, which “is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). It is intentional from the learner’s point of view” (Werquin 2010: 22). Werquin argues that “there may be advantages in establishing degrees of formality rather than fixed definitions” (2010: 24).

The fluidity of the context-dependent concepts of formal and informal learning can be problematic for facilitators. Those who engage in learning governed by different degrees of formality must consider what activities are designated as ‘learning’ in a particular institution, and also identify intended outcomes from the *learner’s* point of view. In compulsory education different exam boards offer

⁴ Patrick Werquin is a researcher in the areas of education and lifelong learning.

distinctive syllabus specifications.⁵ Personal and social learning objectives are a mix of both statutory (formal) and non-statutory (informal) features of the curriculum, therefore what constitutes learning will be unique to the specific institution.

The uncertainty of the definitions and the changing nature of the concept of formal learning in particular suggest that it is not helpful to consider [...] learning concepts [as] rigidly circumscribed.

(Werquin 2010: 24)

If these concepts are indeed context-dependent and relational, then the drama facilitator operating in multiple learning contexts is challenged to actively define what kind of learning process they are supporting in each new context, and find ways to align their approaches accordingly. The National Curriculum provides a clear framework which helps define what constitutes formal and informal learning. Within schools, facilitators must work “with the whole organisation so that the needs of different groups can be understood, teachers and pupils working individually and collectively” to respond to the curriculum (Preston 2004: 262). In the Further and Higher Education sectors there is more freedom for the individual institution to create its own syllabus, drawing on the specialisms of staff to inform content.⁶ Similarly to the compulsory sector, they must adhere to a process of constructive alignment (Biggs 1999) to ensure that staff:

1. Define the intended learning outcomes (ILOs);
2. Choose teaching/learning activities likely to lead to the ILOs;
3. Assess students' actual learning outcomes to see how well they match what was intended;
4. Arrive at a final grade.

(Biggs 1999)

However, there are still aspects of learning which are challenging to assess despite the process of constructive alignment which underpins the formal sector. For example, there are informal or non-statutory areas which must be integrated into the compulsory curriculum. The programme of Personal, Social,

⁵ The three most common in the UK are Edexcel, OCR and AQA. Each offers a unique syllabus which is made up of a different ratio of practical work, coursework and exams. See the glossary for further information.

⁶ Given the focus on practitioners facilitating in the compulsory sector in my research this area is not documented in detail here. For more information, see the research of John Biggs (1999) in *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* and the discussion on course design in Susan Toohy's (1999) *Designing Courses for Higher Education*.

Health and Economic Education, commonly referred to as PSHEE or PSHE, offered in schools contextualises this. Although “programmes of study for PSHE education [...] remain non-statutory [...] aspects of them are already statutory” (PSHE Association 2010: 1). Sex education and career development are statutory components of PSHE (there is a prescribed set of criteria indicating what learners must know), but personal and economic wellbeing are non-statutory components. They must still be covered, but how is not specified, nor are the learning outcomes of these topics formally measured against a set of fixed criteria. What is particularly relevant is that the delivery of PSHE “can be used in any curriculum context” (Hill, Rushford and Tordoff 2003: 5). It can be applied as a cross-curricular component of learning; this means PSHE can be integrated into formal classroom learning in a range of subjects, as teacher Dave Salter models in West Exe Technology College in Chapter Four. Sex education, debt literacy and career development have all been PSHE topics selected by Salter to create devised performances for formal exams, integrating informally measured learning within the classroom. In my research, the freelance drama facilitators who collaborate with schools are contracted to extend the PSHE provision, sometimes in conjunction with the support of formal learning criteria. In Chapter Four I examine how facilitator Rachel Vowles delivered workshops exploring sexual attitudes with West Exe that later informed their formal exam. In Chapter Six MED Theatre demonstrate how bespoke workshops can be designed to inform GCSE or BTEC exams and promote social learning with their network of Devon schools.

Development of the Research Project

This study was motivated by my own experiences as a facilitator negotiating both formal and informal learning outcomes in my own praxis. I have been practicing as a facilitator since 2007. I initially trained and worked within the formal education sector where much of the content and modes of assessment were prescribed. However, I have since been working increasingly in a range of informal settings, facilitating groups with participants ranging from three years old to those in their nineties. Since commencing this research, in my own drama facilitation praxis I have worked with: international students in their teens, adults with learning disabilities, Special Educational Needs (SEN) groups and mixed-ability groups, adults with mental health issues, GCSE and A-Level school

groups, the homeless, adopted children, trainee medical staff, solicitors, youth theatre companies and community drama groups. I have facilitated in community halls, school classrooms, theatres, parks, art galleries and family support centres. Outcomes have been both formal and informal, ranging from projects where learning has been chiefly informal to cases where the primary focus has been the realisation of prescribed learning outcomes. I have facilitated alongside teachers, youth workers, drama therapists, actors, artists, and other professionals who travel into a broad range of groups to negotiate different learning specifications.

In the informal sector, guidance on content and assessment is necessary to create an extended learning society ethically and effectively. I have chiefly acquired this knowledge from more experienced colleagues during my praxis. I was motivated to undertake this research to answer questions which had been emerging from my work. As I became a more experienced facilitator I realised that “[e]very time with a given class or given learner is different[.] [...] To respond to this flux with familiar classes and with familiar learners, we constantly need to be creative - even if our goals are not new; if our context has not changed” (Postlethwaite 1999: 29). As I began to diversify and engage new learners I was increasingly challenged by the necessity to justify and personalise my praxis, challenges which my co-facilitators also articulated. How can we evidence that outcome? Why did that approach work with one group but fail in this context? What do we offer next to continue engaging learners? By undertaking this research I was able to reflect on and extend this process by situating my learning experiences within the wider pedagogic landscape, examining how other facilitators are contributing to this field of praxis. The experience of negotiating and evidencing an increasingly diverse range of formal and informal learning outcomes reiterated for me that “the creation of a [...] ‘learning society’ is laudable but unrealistic as long as it remains in the realms of educational and training policies alone” (Coffield 2000: 218). My experiences in the field, and the concerns raised by other professionals I have collaborated with, prompted me to investigate how the drama facilitator can translate, and subsequently evidence, intended learning outcomes through praxis. In this thesis I try to identify how facilitators are realising and evidencing

the creation of a learning society to identify the best ways that I, and other facilitating professionals, can continue to contribute to this field.

My practice is based in Devon and I have developed a series of partnerships with experienced and innovative drama facilitators. Through my research I reflect and examine the work of the main organisations and facilitators who have been influential in my development of good practice. Here I examine the work of Devon charity Magic Carpet, MED Theatre, the Shakespeare Schools Festival, and drama teacher Dave Salter in West Exe Technology College.

Facilitator	Sample Range of Projects
<p>MED (community theatre)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change (<i>Hot Air</i>) • Access to land (<i>No Access</i>) • Role of trees in environment (<i>Trees Family Learning Workshops</i>) • Making transition from military life into civilian society (<i>Civvie Street</i>-in collaboration with Exeter University MA students) • Housing problems in Dartmoor (<i>The Swallows</i>) • Different generational perspectives of the same place (<i>Loricum</i>) • Role of refugees and outsiders integrating into society (<i>Lost Roots</i>)
<p>SSF (Drama in Education provider)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitators enable students to make links between play themes and their own society and experiences to create productions which resonate and engage the cast • Heathlands School for Deaf Children (<i>Macbeth</i>) performed entirely in sign language with partner school collaborating with them to provide voiceovers • Leytonstone Business and Enterprise School (<i>Romeo and Julien</i>) staged an adaptation which explored homophobia and gang culture
<p>Magic Carpet (arts for health)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability and bullying (<i>Say No Project</i>) • Reflecting on personal experiences with mental health (<i>Write On!</i> creative writing group) • Exploring emotions with adopted children (<i>Exploring Emotions Project</i>) • Dealing with and creating possible resolutions for issues encountered in day to day life (<i>Thurspians</i> is a group for learning disabled participants)
<p>Dave Salter (School-based drama)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual attitudes in different cultures across history (Sex & History BTEC Year 11 Project) • Questioning territory and identity (BTEC Year 10 project) • The role of war in society (<i>Bassett</i> - BTEC Year 10 project and informal participation in National Theatre Connections Festival) • Transitions into the workplace (BTEC Year 10 project and informal aspect of work experience induction for Year Nine students)

Table 1.1 Summary of Projects

I have been a facilitator for both Magic Carpet and the Shakespeare Schools Festival (SSF) since 2008. Devon charity Magic Carpet provides arts-based groups to a diverse range of participants which they term as “disabled and disadvantaged groups of people” including adults with mental health issues and learning disabilities (Magic Carpet 2011: n.p.). I have worked as a drama facilitator for them, supporting informal groups and also delivering the formally assessed Theatre in Education National Open College Network (NOCN)

course. In 2012 Magic Carpet completed an evaluation of a three year project entitled *Moving On*, and their own process of collaborative enquiry and investigation into the efficacy of their praxis addressed many of the issues which motivated me to undertake this research.

SSF is the largest youth festival in the UK and their practice has significant impact given the range and number of participants and facilitators it engages nationally. I have observed and supported SSF facilitators working with schools and informal organisations such as youth clubs. SSF facilitators are inclusive of Special Educational Needs and disabilities, working with participants ranging from eight to eighteen years of age. Furthermore, SSF offer bespoke workshops throughout the year to formal *and* informally assessed drama groups who hire their drama facilitators, therefore the facilitators face many of the challenges I encounter in my own praxis. SSF have just been awarded government funding for the first time. The Department of Education (DfE) has awarded them £140,000 to enable them to expand their provision, particularly with primary schools. Their facilitators have had significant impact on my own professional development and were critical in the formation of my research questions.

Through my work with SSF I worked with many drama teachers who had different approaches to facilitating the learning process, including Dave Salter, based at West Exe in Exeter. I observed his approach to facilitating a Year Ten BTEC exam group's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. He was able to use the Festival to create a performance that satisfied formal examination criteria, whilst also supporting PSHE work-related learning specifications. This prompted me to consider how I could extend my own praxis, to help my learners satisfy formal criteria whilst still giving a personalised learning experience. I arranged to observe his work with this group in preparation for their other practical examinations, including a workshop with visiting facilitator Rachel Vowles, which further strengthened the links between formal and social learning.

During my MA in Applied Drama in 2009 I was introduced to the practice of Manaton and East Devon (MED) Theatre. I attended workshops delivered by their facilitators and also wrote my dissertation specifically looking at their

delivery of trans-generational praxis. I have maintained contact with them, and have observed and interviewed their two primary facilitators during this research project. Their work opened an important field of analysis in my research, as they are developing a model which blurs the boundaries between what is considered school-based and community-based drama. How these facilitators support learning across the spectrum of formality is summarised in the table below.

Facilitator	Formally Assessed Practice	Informally Assessed Practice
MED	The company offer bespoke workshops and longer courses to primary schools, secondary schools; sixth-form colleges and university students which are specifically designed to support their curriculum-based and assessed learning.	The broad provision includes a Community Theatre Group with dedicated clubs for junior members and young adults, improvisation classes for adults, Dartfest festival for young playwrights and family learning workshops. Bespoke workshops can also be tailored as an informal extra-curricular provision.
SSF	SSF support the practical examinations of A-LEVEL, BTEC and GCSE groups in the festival. They support SEN and mainstream schools that have made the Festival an embedded feature of their syllabus.	SSF support the extra-curricular engagement of schools in the Festival. SSF also offer bespoke workshops to teachers and students as an extension opportunity, and have an international school network. They also organise performances and events with young participants to promote the charity during the year.
Magic Carpet	They offer National Open College Network (NOCN) courses in various disciplines including song writing, art and drama.	They offer a broad range of arts groups in community settings and hospitals. Provision includes “painting, sculpture, ceramics, printing, photography, animation and film, music, drama, dance and movement and environmental arts” (Magic Carpet 2012: n.p.).
Dave Salter	He teaches the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) performing arts course at West Exe Community College. Key Stage Three teaching is also formally assessed.	He facilitates extra-curricular drama activities e.g. school production and Key Stage Three drama club. The BTEC is supported with collaboration from external facilitators including MED Theatre and SSF.
My Facilitation Practices	I deliver NOCN courses, facilitate university undergraduate seminars and support GCSE, BTEC, and A-Level school groups in the SSF workshops.	I facilitate in a range of on-going community groups with adults and children, mental health/ learning disabled workshops for Magic Carpet, and bespoke workshops in corporate settings.

Table 1.2 Summary of Formal and Informal Practice

The case studies document facilitators who have comparatively little academic research conducted about their work, yet have an established career in the field of drama facilitation in pedagogic contexts. The documentation and discussion of good practice is an important resource for developing innovative, ethical practices and supporting the on-going role of drama facilitation in multiple learning contexts. The documentation and analysis of practice is a resource for

extending the existing field of drama facilitation literature, specifically broadening the research which documents engagement with both formal and informal learning. The inclusion of the interviews (see appendices) is another way in which the 'voice' of the facilitators is captured and disseminated, contributing to the existing body of knowledge which captures current good praxis.

Methodology

My methodology relies on a process of triangulation, going "beyond the limitations of a single method by combining several methods and giving them equal relevance" (Flick 2009: 460). Two forms of triangulation are applied to inform my analysis. Firstly data triangulation is applied, enabling me to study "phenomena at different dates and places and from different persons" (Flick 2009: 444). Secondly I applied methodological triangulation. Norman Denzin⁷ (1978) has identified two categories here defined as 'between' and 'within' methods. Denzin has proposed that researchers may repeat one method 'within' a study with different participants or instead operate 'between' methods by applying more than one method to validate outcomes. The research methodology applied here situates me between ethnography and auto-ethnography. I utilise aspects of each to create a unique approach to capturing data.

Researchers "vary in their emphasis on the research process (graphy), on culture (ethno), and on self (auto)" (Ellis and Bochner 2000: 740). Dependent upon the specific project and the research focus the methodology will "fall at different places along the continuum of each of these three axes" (Ellis and Bochner 2000: 740). In my research my position is not constant. I shift along these axes as I have situated myself between ethnography and auto-ethnography. This is potentially an innovative methodological approach. The focus on the self (auto) shifts as I analyse my own praxis and that of others engaged in distinct facilitation processes. I acknowledge that there are different degrees of objectivity as a result. For example, ethnography is a mode of research which is based on participant-observation; the researcher functions as

⁷ Denzin, N.K. (1978) *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*, New York: McGraw-Hill.

a participant and also an observer over a period of time to analyse the behaviours or practices of a specific culture or group. I am more closely aligned to this approach when researching MED and West Exe, entering and observing the groups for a short period of time and looking at the praxis of another facilitator. With Magic Carpet and SSF there is a greater emphasis on the self, my longitudinal participation with these communities and role as a facilitator within the organisations aligns me closer to the position of autoethnographer. The utilisation of both approaches has the capacity to deepen the analogous learning of the facilitator. It allows us to situate our own self-reflexive analysis alongside the observation of others in the field clearly. This approach can help facilitators identify the commonalities and distinctions in their praxis, helping us to articulate the strengths and challenges of our praxis by examining the self alongside the cultures and processes of others.

The combination of ethnographic and autoethnographic approaches has enabled me to situate my own experiences alongside those of more experienced drama facilitators operating in the same region. Literary critic Mary Louise Pratt “describes autoethnographies as forms of writing that address both the writer’s own group and a wider, more dominant one” (Reed-Danahay 1997: 8). In *Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social* Deborah Reed-Danahay suggest that “autoethnography is defined as a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context”, in my research the social context of formal and informal learning settings (1997: 9). This builds on Denzin’s earlier assertions that “autoethnography entails the incorporation of elements of one’s own life experience when writing about others though biography or ethnography” (Reed-Danahay 1997: 6). By analysing my own praxis alongside that of others it became important to recognise how I was implicated in the research and ensure that my praxis was also visibly scrutinised as part of the critical process. Sheila Preston has highlighted the importance, and the difficulties, for the facilitator making themselves visible in their research.

I became implicated in the work, and became a ‘visible’ rather than invisible subject, which became, in part, a critical analysis of the facilitator role. It was this exercise that foregrounded the reality for me that interventions are fraught with complex power relations and cultural exchanges and which heightened my awareness of the quest for more

detail. For a practitioner/academic, being able to subject one's practice and ideals to critical scrutiny demands a sense of transparency (not easy), honesty, and a willingness to invite a reader to scrutinise practice and to develop a critical response. It is a vulnerable experience but, I argue, a necessary one if we are to develop practice by enabling our own critical reflection and the reflections of others.

(Preston 2004: 232)

I agree with Preston's assertion that a transparency is required when trying to situate our own praxis within the research. To operate with an appropriate degree of critical scrutiny I observed and interviewed facilitators, participants, and key workers to identify different challenges and approaches to facilitating learning, including those who were involved in my own praxis. The interviews and observations also focused on the way in which facilitators can establish or negotiate assessment criterion to evaluate practice. The analysis of the interview data clarifies how the facilitators select appropriate techniques and content, and adapt it to engage a specific group.

There are pitfalls to avoid in the application of my methodology. The potential for the researcher to become over-reliant or defensive of their own voice, and the selective nature of their memory, are challenging. The presence of the self in the research can also make the balance between narrative and analysis difficult to negotiate. In *Ethnographically speaking: autoethnography, literature, and aesthetics* (2002) Andrew C. Sparkes outlines the issues of justifying the autoethnographic method to ensure that 'research as experience' is legitimised and does not become a 'self-indulgent' act by the researcher (2002: 209-232). Sparkes highlights the importance of finding the right criteria to judge the value and impact of the research, a similar assertion I am making in regards to the way drama facilitators operate in multiple learning settings. Sparkes advocates an openness in academia to engaging with more personally informed modes of research, "[a]s part of this openness, we need to educate ourselves and others (as producers, critics and consumers of research) to recognise differences and judge various genres accordingly, using appropriate criteria" (2002: 224). In my research the triangulation of data sources minimises the risk of my own personal assumptions over-informing the conclusion drawn. Triangulating personal practice alongside observation and interview data also helps sustain a

balance between narrative and analysis, ensuring that personal memory and records are supported by other data sources.

This methodology also enables me to take an 'extended' approach to professional development. There have been "attempts to redefine the term 'professional' or to present different kinds of professionalism" within educational practices (Bartlett and Burton 2003: 125). To illustrate this shift, "[t]he modern professional, [...] constantly questioned and reflected upon practice" to develop the efficacy of their work (Bartlett and Burton 2003:125). The dissemination of reflections to inform practice has become an important aspect of developing skilled professionals in education. Two distinct professional approaches, 'restricted' and 'extended' professionals, were defined by Eric Hoyle (1980). He suggests that "[r]estricted professionals are conscientious practitioners but are limited in their outlook. Extended professionals seek to improve their practice by learning from other teachers and professional development activities. They are keen to be involved in practitioner research and to link theory to practice" (Bartlett and Burton 2003:125). The facilitators in this research are working in an educational culture that encourages "teachers themselves to be researchers" (Postlethwaite 1999: 2). The "interpretation of teacher as researcher" (Postlethwaite 1999: 2) recognises the value that the individual observations, findings, and insights gained by practitioners working in the field everyday have in the development of pedagogic practices. Their on-going facilitation of learning can and should make a valid contribution to the continuing dialogue which informs theory and practice. Arguably this applies not only to teachers, but to those facilitating professionals who operate in a range of learning settings. Drama facilitators who recognise their capacity to function as a researcher are operating as extended professionals. They are required to travel into new spaces, and collaborate with different professionals, negotiating a diverse range of learning criterion and agendas. The documentation and dissemination of their experiences are not self-indulgent but can be useful and original contributions to drama research and the pedagogic field. By employing both ethnographic and autoethnographic strategies in my research methodology I am attempting to improve my learning, and also enable other facilitators to undertake a process of analogous learning, by considering their own experiences against the theory and case studies included here.

Thesis Structure

The first chapter of this thesis is a literature review which functions to contextualise the main practitioners and social movements that have informed the development of the drama facilitator entering into a range of educational settings. The problem of assessing learning across the spectrum of formality is at the core of this thesis; therefore Chapter Two examines the concepts of learning and assessment in drama and education. The case studies are preceded with this introduction to the landscape of facilitation and learning theories to situate them within the broader socio-political context that frames these practices.

The case studies extend the existing literature which traces and documents the influences, development and impact of the drama facilitator as a discrete role. In Chapter Three I begin my analysis of Magic Carpet, examining their influence on my facilitation practice. Their role in my transition from formal to informal learning and assessment approaches is outlined. The problems of assessing 'arts for health' are presented, and the current steps the facilitators are taking towards improving their approaches are considered. My own practice is also analysed in this chapter. I have facilitated for Magic Carpet since October 2009, running up to five two-hour workshops on a weekly basis. For my research I drew on the observations I had amassed from this praxis. I conducted an interview on April 12th. 2011 at the Magic Carpet office with lead project worker Clive Essame to clarify how facilitators negotiate the challenges of facilitating with a diverse range of learners inclusively. I also discuss my approaches to facilitation and assessment within the University Movement Group, a project which originated out of a Magic Carpet community group I co-facilitated for two years. It is documented to consider the issues of both facilitator *and* participants creating a new informal facilitation framework outside the jurisdiction of the funding body and the charity. For this group I facilitated six two-hour dance and movement workshops with a seventh being facilitated by guest student facilitators at the Drama Department of Exeter University in 2010. These facilitators offered verbal and written feedback which is included to consider how they negotiated the process of supporting informal learning in a formal learning venue by drawing on their own formally assessed training at MA level

in the University. The participants also offered weekly informal feedback and took part in a group interview on December 13th. 2010 to summarise the outcomes of the project.

In Chapter Four I analyse Dave Salter's delivery of the formally assessed BTEC drama programme at West Exe. At a stage in my own practice where I was facilitating both formally in Exeter University and increasingly becoming responsible for delivering drama workshops informally in community settings, Salter models a progressive approach to facilitating in formal education which is worthy of further dissemination, validating the contemporary "interpretation of teacher as researcher" (Postlethwaite 1999: 2). Salter's ability to create formally assessed performances which supported non-statutory aspects of the curriculum was of particular interest. Salter regularly collaborates with external drama facilitators, including individuals from MED (2009) and SSF (2011). I first observed and helped facilitate with the school for SSF during a full day workshop and whole day rehearsal and performance on the 26th. September and 26th. October 2011 respectively. For my research I observed four two-hour classroom sessions on the 9th, 23rd. and 30th. November 2011. Each session was followed by a debrief with staff to discuss their approaches and the outcomes of the lesson. I also observed a session facilitated by drama facilitator Rachel Vowles as part of the Sex and History Project. This project is discussed as it offers a good example of how both prescribed *and* personal learning outcomes can be supported by the facilitator. I also conducted an interview with Salter and an interview with Vowles to extend my analysis of their approaches.

In Chapter Five I consider the impact SSF has had on my facilitation development, and identify how the Festival can support a broad range of learners and find appropriate methods to assess different outcomes. I first facilitated for the Festival at Paignton in October 2008 and have annually conducted up to six full day workshops and performance days each year for them in venues across the South West. Participants may use the Festival as an informally assessed opportunity *or* to perform formally assessed work, therefore the facilitators must negotiate the specific criteria and focal outcomes particular to each cast in workshops. I discuss specific examples of how facilitators have achieved this from my own observations of practice in the cast workshops. I

discuss examples of good practice from Exeter's Phoenix Arts Centre in 2010 and 2011, Poole's Lighthouse Theatre in 2011 and Merlin Theatre in Frome in 2012. In this case an interview with Festival Manager Bonnie Austin was undertaken in 2012 to extend the analysis of their practice.

In Chapter Six the facilitation practice of MED Theatre is analysed. MED have developed to offer an increasingly broad arts provision which includes scriptwriting, performing, film-making and dance. As I try to develop my own range of skills and partnerships, observing their process of expansion has been a useful experience. They have forged strong links with local schools and universities in addition to sustaining a Community Theatre Company and offering a family learning programme. I had previously participated in all-day workshops, visited their base and observed community play rehearsals as part of my MA study. For this case study I conducted three further observations with MED. Firstly I observed a two-hour community youth group session at their base on June 16th. 2009. I attended an all-day rehearsal and evening performance with local primary schools on the 4th. December 2009 and participated in a family learning workshop on May 8th. 2011. I conducted an interview with the two key facilitators on June 23rd. 2011 to inform the discussion of their approaches to assessment and adaptation.

I conclude my investigation by reflecting on the original contribution this research has made to my field of enquiry. The current challenges for facilitators within our pedagogic and political climate are reiterated. I summarise what problems persist in facilitation, and consider the options open for development identified in my analysis of good practice. I evaluate how I have addressed the questions which motivated this study, and suggest how my outcomes may inform future praxis and enquiry to continue extending this field.

Chapter One

The Development of the Drama Facilitator in Learning Settings

This chapter presents a summary of the developments over the last century which informed the growth of the drama facilitator in the UK. In my research I am focusing on facilitators who operate in a range of learning settings, with a particular focus on learning that occurs in community spaces and with learners from the compulsory education sector.⁸

In these spaces drama facilitators share responsibilities with other authoritative figures that have a facilitative capacity as part of their role. In the case studies later discussed, authority figures include teachers or lecturers, theatre workers, carers and support workers who share a duty to support and assess learning outcomes. The facilitators selected approach praxis with a person-centred philosophy, and a commitment to personalising their work to support the needs of the participants engaged. In this chapter I question how these person-centred facilitation approaches developed. What practitioners and social developments shaped this kind of facilitation praxis? How does this legacy inform the current praxis examined in later chapters?

I firstly examine how drama has developed in formal education, also looking at the informal practitioners and ideas that have impacted on this provision to introduce the pedagogic landscape which precedes the praxis of Dave Salter in West Exe and the Shakespeare Schools Festival. I then examine the rise of informal community-based practices to consider how the practices of MED Theatre and Magic Carpet have developed.

The drama facilitator is an established and arguably essential part of both formal and informal learning in the UK. Drama facilitator Chris Johnston

⁸ “Besides Community Theatre and Theatre in Education, the other principal sub-set of applied theatre is theatre for development. This term has emerged in the mid-1990s as an umbrella phrase to describe the various practices undertaken by non-government agencies (NGOs)” (Preston 2009: 13) This is an important field of praxis but not one which is examined within the context of the selected case studies in this thesis. For practitioners with a particular interest in this area see *The Applied Theatre Reader* (2009) and Kees Epskamp’s *Theatre for Development, An Introduction to Context, Applications and Training* (2006).

suggests that there are a number of different predecessors who informed the development of a drama specific facilitator:

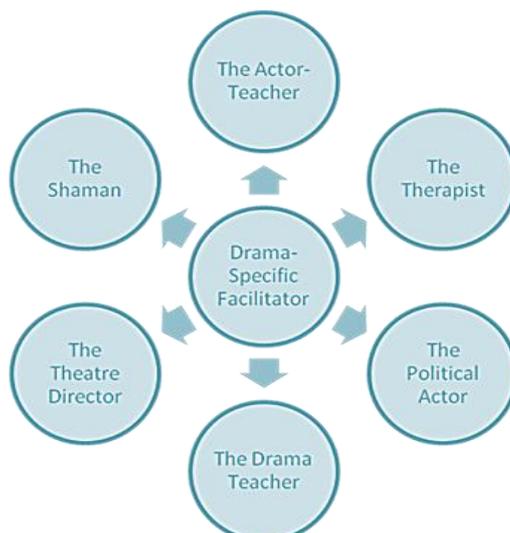


Figure 1.2 Predecessors of the Facilitator
(Adapted from Johnston 1998: 55-60)

In this chapter I consider the predecessors specifically from the fields of community drama, education, and also refer to therapeutic praxis to identify how this discrete professional has emerged. I examine the broader social and political shifts that have informed the drama facilitator's move towards becoming an integral feature of the pedagogic landscape; considering the challenges and strengths of their praxis. Drama practitioners, educators and theorists across the world have impacted upon drama facilitation in the UK, and to reflect this, reference is made to practice in the USA, South America, and across Europe to clarify the most important developments. My autoethnographic focus means that there is a bias towards documenting key developments within the UK in more detail to help clarify the specific developments that have informed the facilitation at West Exe and the praxis of MED, SSF and Magic Carpet. Practices which have shaped the broader educational landscape are included alongside drama-specific literature to ensure that the key shifts across the spectrum of formal and informal learning are outlined.

The Drama Facilitator and Education

The facilitators in my research offer diverse educational praxis. They can work with students both in and out of the school setting. They may engage adult learners, particular demographics such as people with Special Educational Needs, or facilitate trans-generational groups. The range of spaces, learners

and requirements they negotiate demand that drama facilitators become increasingly adept at applying different modes of assessment to effectively document and justify outcomes.

Importantly, the facilitators in this study operate with a person-centred approach to praxis, irrespective of the formality of the learning undertaken. This means that the needs of the learners, rather than the funders or exam boards, are of primary importance. However, this approach still sees the facilitators produce work which enables learners to achieve within formal settings and also satisfies funding criteria within informal contexts. To ensure praxis is sustainable there is a need to honour *both* the person and the formal requirements, even if one is prioritised. Learning is what has been termed a 'bigger picture' exercise; the learner is enabled to make links between the skills and knowledge developed in the immediate learning context, considering how these relate to the bigger social issues in their society.

The Bigger Picture of the English secondary curriculum has three principle and over-arching aims which are that children should become: Successful learners, Confident individuals, and Responsible citizens.
(Neelands 2009: 5)

Neelands notes that in "the Bigger Picture, subjects are still important in so far as they contribute to these objectives, but the measurement of academic success in individual subjects is mediated with other holistic and human achievements" (2009: 5). However, the facilitator's capacity to support bigger picture learning is heavily influenced by shifts in educational policy. There is also a view that "working/acting together to integrate knowledge from the entire spectrum of learning experiences in meaningful contexts is an economic necessity as well as a social one" reflecting a "pro-market need for a bigger picture of the curriculum" (Neelands 2009: 6). The drama facilitator may find their praxis commodified as the education landscape becomes a learning 'marketplace'. I shall contextualise the challenges this can present later in the chapter, by examining current tensions between current Prime Minister David Cameron's Big Society Agenda and Education Secretary Michael Gove's proposed reforms for Key Stage Four learners.

The facilitators in my research ground their praxis in the act of problem-solving, inviting the learners to engage in a process of collaborative enquiry. They combine their person-centred ethos with what I suggest is a primarily socio-constructivist approach to learning, an argument I extend in the following chapter. Learners construct their own understanding supported by facilitators rather than being didactically instructed by them. This leads me to consider how educators move towards facilitative rather than didactic approaches in education to support learning outcomes. Furthermore, what socio-political processes enabled the drama facilitator to become such an integral feature of the pedagogic landscape?

In *A Century of Education* (2002) Richard Aldrich contextualises that at the start of the 20th. Century a shift towards a more egalitarian formal education system occurred.⁹ The changes countered the perception that education should not be compulsory or a responsibility of the state, as argued in 1861 by the official Newcastle Commission, which had set the precedence for a fragmented provision. In 1900 a Board of Education was introduced in a bid to create a more standardised formal system.¹⁰ This board was also concerned about the general physical health and wellbeing of the child in addition to improving academic attainment.¹¹ In 1900 compulsory education took place between five and thirteen years of age, extended to fourteen years in 1918 under the Fisher Act. In 1922 *Education for All* reflected the social shift towards a more inclusive education system. A number of the pro-social developments such as these were introduced after World War I (1914-1918). Between 1900-1930 there were official Board of Education reports that focused on improving provisions for

⁹ For a detailed guide to developments specifically within the formal education sector an excellent timeline detailing key events between 1900-2000 is included in *A Century of Education* (2002), edited by Richard Aldrich. Steve Bartlett and Diana Burton also include a concise and clear overview of the development of the teacher's role in education over the twentieth century and summarise the key reforms and policies which have shaped the development of this role up to 2000 in Chapter Six of their book *Education Studies* (2003), entitled 'The Management of Teachers as Professionals', 121-139.

¹⁰ In 1900 the Elementary Code "encouraged a more enlightened approach to the curriculum" whilst the Secondary School Regulations of that year "prescribed a subject-based curriculum" (Aldrich 2002: xv).

¹¹ The 1904 Report of Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration raised questions about the general health and wellbeing of school students. These concerns also fell within the remit of the Board of Education (Aldrich 2002: xv).

children with Special Educational Needs¹², tackled the issue of gender inequality¹³ and also considered how to be more inclusive of students from lower income families¹⁴. At the outset of the 20th. Century, although formal education arguably had a work orientated curriculum, it also recognised the social and personal development of the individual.

Some of the most important educational shifts which supported drama's development as a learning tool are located in educational psychology and progressive pedagogic practice, influencing both formal and informal praxis. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) was an educator who created a model of education which was "based upon the principle that children should be allowed the greatest possible liberty" whilst learning (De Guimps 2005: 216). He would reject structured lessons and allow children to continue in playful activity at his school if they were engaged in that activity. Both spontaneity and self-led activities were core features in what became the 'Pestalozzi Method' of education developed in his first institution 'Neuhof' in Zurich. His philosophy impacted upon the 20th-Century models of Viola Spolin, Brian Way and Augusto Boal amongst others. Pestalozzi advocated a less didactic and more playful approach to learning founded on his belief that education should prepare children for life not just work, a philosophy still embraced within informal practices. He argued that students must "not be given ready-made answers but should arrive at answers themselves. To do this their own powers of seeing, judging and reasoning should be cultivated, their self-activity encouraged" (Silber 1965: 140). This problem-solving philosophy is still applied today; with Dave Salter (Chapter Five) and Mark Beeson (Chapter Six) both presenting models that embody these ideas.

¹² The Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act of 1899 enabled Local Education Authorities to support "physically and mentally defective and epileptic children. These powers were made mandatory for mentally defective and epileptic children by further legislation in 1914 and for the physically handicapped by the Education Act 1918. Compulsory education for children suffering from these defects was extended to 16 under the Education Act 1921" (The National Archives 2012: n.p.).

¹³ The 1923 Report of Consultative Committee on Differentiation of the Curriculum for Boys and Girls in secondary Schools highlighted disadvantages for girls in the curriculum structure (Aldrich 2002: xvi).

¹⁴ The 1907 Free Place Regulations provided free places for up to twenty-five percent of the secondary school population (Aldrich 2002: xv).

Pestalozzi influenced the pedagogic theory of German philosopher and psychologist Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), a founding figure in the development of pedagogy as a research discourse. Importantly, “Herbart was the first to create a system of education based on psychology [...] Herbart stressed mental expansion through broad-based, interdisciplinary instruction” (Cooney, Cross and Trunk 1993: 80). He recognised the child’s “unique potential, his individuality[,] [...] this potential remained unfulfilled until it was analysed and transformed by education” (Blyth 1981: 70). The development of personal and social learning was inter-related with more formal intellectual learning; “instead of postulating a moral pedagogy [...] Herbart insisted that moral development must be itself grounded in intellectual education” (Blyth 1981:72). His ideas are a foundation upon which later liberal pedagogies in the 20th. Century developed.

American psychologist and educational philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952) was examining the issues between ‘system-centred’ versus ‘child-centred’ education as early as 1921. This is a debate still present in learning discourses; in this thesis the term ‘person-centred’ acknowledges how the learners engaged include adults. Dewey was important as he saw the educator as a researcher, and argued for their observations to be central in the formation of learning theory and practice. He asserted that “contributory disciplines should not determine or dominate educational thinking to practice. Their role is to enable educators to see and think more clearly and deeply about whatever is being done” (Norwich 2000: 28). For the facilitator, Dewey’s work is important as he argued that children should see “themselves and their teacher as ‘fellow workers with a shared responsibility for turning selected subject-matter into dramatic form” (Bolton 2007: 48).

Over the last century these philosophies have been highly influential; “[n]ot only Deweyan but also Pestalozzian and Herbartian principles of relevance, correctness, and interest formed a more integrated and child-centred curriculum” (Birchenough in Cunningham 2002: 15). Analysing the relationship between drama and child-centred education, in *Drama in schools: its theory and practice* (1979), John Piers Allen identifies that drama had a strong role within schools during the first half of the 20th. Century. He highlights the writings of

Philip Coggin (1956) and Allardyce Nicolls (1949, 1952) who documented the early role of drama in education and its growth in society. The positive perception of drama in education was emphasised in the *Handbook for Teachers in Elementary Schools* (1929) and also highlighted “in the report of an adult education committee on *Drama in Adult Education* (1934)” (Allen 1979: 10).

In terms of influential drama practitioners who were developing person-centred approaches to practice, practitioner Gavin Bolton discusses school teacher Harriet Finlay-Johnson. From 1897 she “experimented by using drama to teach the subjects of the curriculum”, an approach which has continued to be argued for and modelled by contemporary practitioners as Jonathan Neelands in the 21st. Century (Bolton 2007: 48). She enabled students to write plays which practically explored aspects of their curriculum learning, a method also applied by MED Theatre in Chapter Six. In addition, Bolton highlights Elsie Foggerty’s establishment of the Central School of Speech and Drama in 1906 as another important development in the field of drama in education. In *Education and Dramatic Art* (1998) David Hornbrook notes the progressive use of drama and play by Henry Caldwell Cook at the Perse School in Cambridge during this period. Caldwell Cook “adopted the Platonic term ‘play-way’ and used drama as the central methodology for teaching English” (Bolton 2007: 48). He asserted that drama in schools should be applied as a rehearsal for living exemplified in his work *The Play Way* in 1917 (Hornbrook 1998: 6-9).

In the UK the legacy of progressive person-centred approaches from this early period is evident today, particularly in Montessori schools from Italy and the German model of Steiner schools. Maria Montessori has had a lasting legacy with 133 Montessori schools being a part of the UK formal education environment today.¹⁵ Historian and comparative educationalist Hermann Röhrs identifies the influence of Pestalozzi and Herbart on her work, and similarities with educational philosophers such as Dewey. He asserts that “very few others had such a powerful influence on developments in the world” of education as Montessori (Röhrs 1994: 1). Rita Kramer (1976) discusses Montessori’s application of her methods from 1907 onwards in the Casa dei Bambini

¹⁵ Figure correct for August 2012.

(Children's House) inspired by practice with mentally handicapped children. Montessori drew from educational theory over the last two centuries to inform her creation of what has been framed as socio-constructivist pedagogy, a concept examined further in the following chapter (Kramer 1976). She employed 'didactic materials' but not didactic instruction, "activities should be methodically coordinated so that the children could easily judge the degree of their success while engaging in them" (Röhrs 1994: 6). Self-assessment was an important feature of this model. Materials functioned like a ladder as children interacted with them and each other, constructing their own social and personal framework. Röhrs gives the example of "cylinders of different lengths and sizes which were to be inserted into appropriate holes; only one solution was possible for each cylinder and the child could grasp the fact of an incorrect solution when the cylinder slipped off and could not be inserted" (1994: 6). Learning was framed as a collaborative process in which social and personal learning were essential components; she asserted that "practical and social life must be profoundly combined in education", a philosophy which underpins the 'bigger picture' approach to learning modelled by SSF and Dave Salter (Montessori in Röhrs 1994: 6).

Another important legacy from Montessori is the shift towards a more scientific model of education, extending Herbart's work. Röhrs notes that "[s]he demanded that the teachers and other persons engaged in education be given training in these methods and that the educational process itself be given a framework that would allow scientific controls and checks" (1994: 6). The importance of having the skills to assess learning outcomes begins to be recognised. Although never fully realised in her own practice, she worked toward the development of a new type of teacher, which has parallels with later developments in the field of facilitation. She asserted that the teacher:

Instead of talking he must learn to be silent; instead of instructing he must observe; instead of presenting the proud dignity of one who desires to appear infallible he must don the robe of humility.

(Montessori in Röhrs 1994: 7)

Similar ideas have been presented by Paulo Freire in the 1970s, Dorothy Heathcote in the 1980s and Jonothan Neelands over the last two decades. The

argument for a humble, 'uncrowned' educator who assumes a non-didactic facilitative stance is an enduring figure in person-centred models of learning. This kind of teacher is examined in more depth in Chapter Five, with Dave Salter demonstrating the benefits, and challenges, of assuming an 'uncrowned' facilitative stance in the classroom.

Rudolf Steiner created a humanistic educational model which was influenced by Pestalozzi and Jean Piaget, discussed further in Chapter Two. Today in the UK there are thirty five Steiner schools in the UK.¹⁶ Steiner's "educational philosophy is child-centred [...] education is seen as a process of gradual awakening or unfolding of the self" (Carnie 2003: 42). His first book *The Education of the Child* was published in 1907 and in 1919 his first school was created. His ideas began to travel to the UK in the early 1920s. Steiner asserted "that education comprised of three main strands. It had to be practical, artistic and develop the intellect" (Carnie 2003: 42). The central role of artistic development within his educational philosophy provides an important legacy for drama facilitators. In Steiner schools "the artistic development of the child is encouraged through art, sculpture, music and drama, all of which permeate much of the learning on a daily basis" (Carnie 2003: 43). This kind of educational ethos has been essential to enabling drama facilitation to become such an embedded feature of the educational landscape today.

Similarly to the UK's Finlay-Johnson, in a Steiner school classroom "[t]opics are often explored through storytelling [...] or in short plays" to reinforce what has been learnt (Carnie 2003: 43). He framed the educator as a collaborative or facilitative figure, through the rejection of a head teacher and staff hierarchy (Carnie 2003: 47). Importantly in the 'kindergarten' classroom (three-six years of age) no formally assessed education occurs. At this introductory level to formal education "[i]t is considered damaging to the child to be pushed into formal learning too soon. Instead the emphasis is on learning through discovery [...] play often involves imitating adults in their work and learning by example" (Carnie 2003: 44).

¹⁶ Figure correct for August 2012.

Gavin Bolton also refers to Winifred Ward as “America’s greatest pioneer in the history of drama education” (2007: 48). Ward’s ‘Creative Dramatics’ model of practice was introduced in 1924 in schools in Evanston, Illinois. It is important as it was a model in which “drama was ‘taught’ rather than ‘used’”, being framed as a discrete subject in its own right (Ward in Bolton 2007: 48). In Chicago, the practice of Neva L. Boyd¹⁷ in the teaching of adults and children was “linked with Caldwell Cook’s ‘playway’ approach to education” (Bolton 2007: 51). Her use of theatre games, storytelling, dance and drama created a dynamic classroom space and indicated the benefits of combining different disciplines to facilitate learning (Bolton 2007: 51). Boyd’s student Viola Spolin has become a highly important figure in the field of drama and education. Under Boyd’s instruction Spolin “became the leading authority on the use of Theatre Games and extended that philosophy and practice in further directions, for example, training community workers to use drama” with improvisation becoming a central feature in her practice (Bolton 2007: 51). Similarly to Caldwell Cook, Brian Way and Boal, Spolin saw improvisation in the theatre as a tool for “carrying the learning process into daily life” (1999: 3). She asserted that people “learn through experience and experiencing, and no one teaches anyone anything”, which aligns her approaches more closely with that of a *facilitator*, aiding the learning by being part of the experience (Spolin 1999: 3). Although these are strong examples of early innovative applications of drama as an educational tool, Bolton notes that these kinds of applications were in the minority. Many practitioners failed to implement drama into the curriculum successfully, unable to relinquish the authoritative stance of the teacher (Bolton 2007: 48). This supports the necessity for discrete drama facilitators operating in conjunction with other educators. They assume a unique and important role, and it can be highly challenging to transition between the responsibilities of the teacher and the facilitator, which are often distinctive. This is evidenced by the teacher training opportunities the facilitators at MED and SSF offer. Collaboration between drama facilitators and teachers is important; the facilitators offer a different skill set and knowledge which they can model for related professionals.

¹⁷ Neva L. Boyd practiced in the USA in the 1930s, she developed “a series of exercises and children’s games to assist the social development and integration of communities, both immigrant and those shattered by depression” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 34).

The relationship between formal and informal education began to develop in the 1920s and 1930s. Schools were building extended public profiles, collaborating with the wider community “through local open days and educational events” including ‘civil educational festivals’ and public performances as an informal extension of learning (Cunningham 2002: 16). Teachers were required to organise and create these informal learning events; therefore the specific remit of their role also begins to take tentative steps into informal and social development during this period.

Between 1900-1940, the application of drama in therapeutic contexts began to develop. Vladimir Iljine developed a model of therapeutic theatre with psychiatric patients in Russia between 1908-1917 (Casson 2004: 64). Iljine developed an interdisciplinary model of practice influenced by psychoanalytic practices in Budapest, Konstantin Stanislavski’s actor training techniques and Jacob Levy Moreno’s Theatre of Spontaneity (Casson 2004: 63). Similarly to Iljine, Russian theatre practitioner Nicholas Evreinoff also saw the therapeutic potential of theatre. He created a model called ‘Theatrotherapy’, discussed in his 1927 publication *The Theatre in Life* (Casson 2004: 63). Psychodrama¹⁸ was developed by Jacob Levy Moreno in the early 1930s. Psychodrama “shares its origins with psychoanalysis, and focuses on the integration of different aspects of an individual’s life and being through group drama work” (Kuppers 2007: 53). Rather than prescriptively planning content, Moreno asserted that participants learn best when engaged in improvised, or as he framed it, ‘spontaneous’ activities.

Post-War Praxis

The 1940s introduced significant changes to the general provision of social care and formal education in the UK. The “Welfare State, which promised an end to poverty and want, was epitomized by the National Health Service, introduced in 1948” (Aldrich 2002: 5). The 1944 Education Act, or Butler Act¹⁹, has become known as one of the most influential liberal shifts in formal education. A free

¹⁸ The work of Adam Blatner offers a good introduction to psychodrama; see *Foundations of Psychodrama* (2004).

¹⁹ This refers to R.A. Butler who was the Conservative President of the Board of Education.

tripartite system - primary, secondary and further education - was introduced; fees were abolished in privately maintained schools. The Butler Act created:

[a] national system of education which was locally administered through local education authorities. The system had a high degree of local decision making, with professional teacher autonomy, including the control of the head teacher over the curriculum, and a liberal academic value system rooted in the almost wholly autonomous universities.

(Fisher 2008: 255)

World War II impacted upon the educational landscape of the 1940s and 1950s. The “emphasis which all through the twenties and the beginning of the thirties had been on economic issues was now shifting to political events; the national and the international were becoming one” (MacColl 1986: xxviii). After the war “all the guiding principles of drama-in-education were in circulation. Endorsed by the child psychologists and psychotherapists of the 1930s and 1940s, drama was now in a position to make its mark on the school curriculum” (Hornbrook 1998: 8).

Brian Way and Peter Slade were the forerunners who integrated drama in the curriculum in the late 1940s. Way’s practice was informed by his earlier work with the Glynbourne Children’s Theatre Company. His educational “philosophy involved a non-competitive circle of physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and personal development for each child” (Hesten 1994: 14). He asserted that drama could be taught as a discrete and academic subject, but its “more significant role is as a way of teaching”, that is to say as a means of *facilitating* learning (Way in Goode 1983: 3). Way embraced ideas emerging in educational psychology, including Dewey’s, strengthening the link between psychological theory and drama in education. Way “along with child psychologists [believed] that play is practice for adult life and that the school can be a restorative location for the suppressed expressive outlet of play” (Hornbrook 1998: 10). His child-centred model was process not product orientated, the drama he introduced into the classroom was chiefly for the learners’ own benefit. Way asserted that his process orientated “drama, as opposed to a theatre orientated approach, is an innate and integral part of the process of acquiring knowledge and understanding” (Goode 1983: 3). This ethos is also located in the praxis of facilitators documented in later chapters. Again, drama was framed as a

rehearsal for life, orientated towards personal development. He urged teachers to ensure that the drama offered in formal contexts provided an educational experience for participants “irrespective of any function of communication to an audience” (Goode 1983: 3). Therefore although it was curriculum-based, drama was initially an informal aspect of the curriculum which was not assessed against a prescribed set of criteria.

Peter Slade’s seminal publication *Child Drama* (1954) extended Way’s child-centred approach to learning in schools. His approach to classroom drama advocated “respect for the creative ability of children and minimum intervention by the teacher” (Fleming 2003: 17). Slade’s approaches can also be classed as informal; outcomes were not prescribed or assessed, the lack of teacher intervention handed ownership of the process of discovery back to the learner. Slade was also visited by Moreno in 1951 to exchange their ideas about drama, therapy and education (Casson 2012: n.p.). The developments made by practitioners such as Slade and Way ensured that by the 1950s a “distinctive ‘culture’ of primary education had emerged, informed by developmental psychology” (Cunningham 2002: 11).

In the UK, dramatic praxis in therapy settings was influenced by the field of education.²⁰ For example, “from 1937 to 1939 [Peter] Slade was using drama to facilitate therapy with adults, working in collaboration with Dr Kraemer (a Jungian psychotherapist) in London” (Casson in Casson 2004: 64). Innovative approaches to therapy were pioneered after World War II to reintegrate disabled soldiers into their communities. Examples in the USA include artistic praxis in army service centres and rehabilitation centres (Jones 1996: 73). In Switzerland, After World War II Gertrud Schattner “used drama with concentration camp survivors” (Johnson and Emunah 2009: 7). In the UK, theatre director Elsie Green began her residence at Horton Hospital in Surrey in 1952 offering drama sessions until 1984. Sue Jennings began drama-based work in a psychotherapeutic capacity in Warwick from 1955. In Devon during the 1950s Veronica Sherborne was collaborating with psychotherapist Irene Champernowne to support the recovery of psychiatric patients (Casson 2004:

²⁰ Drama’s development as an informal learning tool in therapeutic contexts is documented in *Drama as therapy Theatre for Living* (1996).

66-67). Collaborations between the therapist and the drama facilitator were strengthened; arguably it is here that we see the beginnings of a discrete drama facilitator. These practitioners were neither performing to patients nor directing them; their function was to *facilitate* the process of recovery by helping patients learn to integrate into society.

American psychologist Carl Rogers developed new learning approaches working with abused children in the 1940s and 1950s, explicitly identifying himself as a *facilitator*. Rogers asserted that “the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal relationship between facilitator and learner” (Kirschenbaum and Henderson 1990: 305). The links between psychology and learning are strengthened with Rogers’ framing of the therapeutic client as a *learner*. Rogers’s approaches were important because they also supported a shift towards interdisciplinary collaboration.

Psychologists wanting to enter the field of psychotherapy; care, pastoral and youth workers wanting to develop their practice; lay people wanting to help or understand those with ‘problems’ – all could get something from Rogers.

(Smith 2004: n.p.)

We begin to see how drama facilitators intersect with a range of other professionals and can borrow from them to inform their work. They must be open to exchanging ideas with professionals from related fields, seeking these opportunities out, and ensuring they can negotiate the terminology which informs the work of other professionals to help communicate and share good praxis effectively. This requires additional research and study on the part of the drama facilitators to ensure that they find appropriate opportunities for this kind of professional development.

Extending the work of Slade and Way in the field of education, Dorothy Heathcote is one of the most famous pioneers of what became known as Drama in Education (DiE). Other important contributors which are not analysed in depth here, but are part of the same development of DiE practices include

John O'Toole²¹, Gavin Bolton²², Cecily O'Neill²³, Nellie McCaslin²⁴ and Jonothan Neelands.²⁵ DiE differs from TiE as “[t]heatre understanding is [...] necessary in classroom practice, but not the elaborate game element of showing, which professional theatre must employ” (Johnson and O'Neill, 1984: 31). DiE is distinct in that it is wholly participatory, learners are immersed and active in the process throughout, whereas TiE is characterised by the presentation of a prepared performance to which learners then respond and engage with.

In the 1950s and 1960s Heathcote's DiE method rejected Brian Way's focus on “the individuality of the individual” (Bolton 1984: 201). Praxis for Heathcote was modelled round facilitating a group interaction. She did not move through warm up stages, going through individual, pair and small group activities as Way and others did; she advocated an immersion as a group into the fictive context from the outset. Heathcote is arguably most associated with her idea of moving from the ‘particular to the universal’, and applying the ‘Mantle of the Expert’ technique as discussed in *Drama for Learning* (1994). She aimed to move from the particular circumstance of the drama to finding a universal level of meaning. “For example, if a class of secondary school children were looking at the effects of blindness on a newly blind person, she would create a moment when the class realised that this man's experience was that of every newly blind man's from time immemorial” (Hesten 1994: 11). The Mantle of the Expert was originally designed to facilitate learning in the classroom, students were put into the role of an expert and invited to perform this lead role, guiding peers and the facilitator-teacher in the selected fictive context. Her focus was on social learning:

Her aim is to build on her pupils' past experience and give them a deeper knowledge not just of themselves but of what it is to be human as well as

²¹ *Pretending to learn: helping children learn through drama* (2002) summarises O'Toole's person-centred approach to learning in formal education.

²² *Drama as Education: An argument for placing drama at the centre of the curriculum* (1984) clarifies Bolton's approach to process drama in formal settings.

²³ O'Neill clarifies the benefits of a model which focuses on process rather than product orientated drama in *Drama worlds: a framework for process drama* (1995).

²⁴ *Creative drama in the classroom* (1984) outlines how drama was applied in formal learning environments.

²⁵ *Making sense of drama: a guide to classroom practice* (1984) provides a clear introduction to Neelands' methods.

an understanding of the society they live in and its past, present and future.

(Johnson and O'Neill 1984: 12)

As she began to facilitate in informal learning contexts, her methods were adapted for application beyond the boundaries of the formal classroom. For example, “[w]hen Heathcote worked with Industry, she re-invented Mantle of the Expert and re-named it the ‘off guard’ concept. Previously, she had re-invented it as ‘Rolling Role’ when working with secondary school children in the 1980’s” (Hesten 1994: 156). Heathcote demonstrates how facilitators personalise approaches, adapting a technique so it is framed and structured appropriately for a specific group of learners.

Her career at Newcastle University from 1964 demonstrates the interdisciplinary potential of applied drama as her praxis began to encompass therapeutic outcomes. Although primarily a figure associated with drama in education “[f]rom 1966 to 1986 Dorothy Heathcote (who was influenced by Slade) ran drama groups in hospitals for people with disabilities and mental illnesses in England, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Norway and made videos of her work” (Casson 2004: 66-67). On Heathcote’s “final course in 1982, she changed the title to *Drama as Education and Therapy*” (Hesten1994: 12). Her praxis highlighted links to related fields from the 1970s onwards, as documentaries of her work were commissioned to present the interdisciplinary relevance of dramatic intervention. For example;

a BBC Open University programme, *Here comes the Judge* [...] was produced and presented as part of a cognitive psychology course. This explored Heathcote’s work in relation to the moral development of children and its relationship to Piagetian theories. The BBC Radio Series *World of Work* (1979) featured her in role-play activities, which dealt with the sociological problems encountered by adolescents in their late teens. (Hesten1994: 18).

Heathcote argued that theatre was a tool with interdisciplinary potential, not one designed specifically for pedagogic or therapeutic praxis. For her, drama had the potential to be “as much a tool for the therapist, the lawyer, etc., as [...] for the teacher” (Hesten1994: 12). In the 1980s and 1990s she enabled her students to develop into skilled drama facilitators by making placements in

hospitals, prisons and educational institutions part of their course of study. This legitimised the use of drama in a diverse range of social settings.

Nicholas Wright has questioned the process of moving from the particular to the universal in drama, and the absence of concrete fact, statistics and binaries which govern drama in relation to other taught subjects (1980: 99-100). Wright identifies that the ideological implications of Heathcote's 'materials', the phrase she has used to describe a universal set of values and knowledge, are problematic for the facilitator. He asks:

What are these materials? By whom are they valued? Are they equally valued by everybody?

(Wright 1980: 100)

Wright's concerns are pertinent, for example when in the learning process may the student "decide that what is universal for, say, the teacher, is not universal for him?" (1980: 102). The problem of not being a value neutral person, but trying to minimise the bias of our own value system when conducting and assessing practice is highly challenging. As Wright argues:

If we begin to consider this notion of universality, and the suggested process of going from a particular to a universal standpoint; the ideology which underpins this perceived universal point silently inhabits the ideology within which the drama is taught. It is impossible to disagree with it- not because it is true, but because it has become invisible and untraceable.

(Wright 1980: 102)

There is an invisible assumption that people will feel or respond in a particular way and Wright is correct to challenge this perceived universal point. For example, in my NOCN Theatre in Education course a group of learners created a TiE model called *It's All About You*. Primary school children would be invited to help two characters who were worried about performing in public have the confidence to go on stage. The project made assumptions about universal levels of experience. The ability to empathise with the feelings of these characters was an invisible assumption which silently inhabited the project but would have been exposed if the learners had rejected these values. The

learners may have chosen to ignore, ridicule or become frustrated with the anxieties of the characters in *Its All About You* based on their own *particular* experiences. In instances such as these should facilitators allow the learner to proceed with their own choices or should they steer them towards learning outcomes which are aligned with their own ideological assumptions or prescribed agenda?

During the same period that DiE began to emerge, an informal drama and education provision was developed by practitioners outside of schools. Building links between formal and informal drama “Young People’s Theatre [...] visited schools in Britain in the post-war years” (Ogden 1997: 48). By the late 1940s there were seven Children’s Theatre²⁶ companies already in circulation: the Glyndebourne Company, the Young Vic, Caryl Jenner’s company, Brian Way’s Theatre Centre, Bertha Wadells’ Scottish Children’s Theatre and the Osiris Players who toured Shakespeare (Allen 1979: 2). These companies began to form relationships with schools, and are arguably a precursor to TiE, although it must be noted that Children’s Theatre and TiE are two distinct forms. Children’s Theatre was not always explicitly designed as an educational tool (it could be primarily designed for entertainment) and the messages or values could be more didactic compared to a TiE performance. Informal drama practitioners initially had little knowledge of drama in schools and their provisions were not closely aligned or informed by collaboration with formal education practitioners. Schools did not always have the facilities or an appreciation of the informal practitioner’s role (Allen 1979: 2). Children’s Theatre began travelling into formal education spaces during the late 1940s. For example, “[t]he Glyndebourne company usually played in school halls [...] it was all part of a widespread attempt to realize [*sic*] certain social ideals that have been embodied in the health and education acts of 1948 which helped to earn for the country the sobriquet of ‘the welfare state’” (Allen 1979: 2). However, these early collaborations in formal settings were challenging. School hall spaces were inadequate, teachers would try to discipline children’s responses during performances, and in some cases be seen suppressing laughter themselves at the actors. Allen notes that these encounters “created a profound suspicion

²⁶ This is defined as “a term employed to denote the performance of plays by professional actors for a children’s audience” (Chambers 2002: 152).

throughout the theatrical profession of all teachers [...] before the days of TIE” (1979:3). Facilitators must communicate the purpose of their practice so that it is supported and valued by the educators they collaborate with. The process of developing a “competency in speaking the jargon of [...] organizations and disciplines” is a pressure evident particularly in the education reforms of the 1980s and in the current economic climate (Schechner and Thompson 2004: 12). In the interest of sustainability, facilitators may be required to “use ‘public policy speak’ in moments of advocacy” (Schechner and Thompson 2004: 12). This has been a challenge for Magic Carpet during the process of evaluating *Moving On*, and is an issue MED Theatre also highlight when evidencing outcomes for funders.

Children’s Theatre was also applied in community spaces and theatres; “[d]uring the 1950s the cause of Children’s Theatre was sustained almost wholly by Brian Way and Caryl Jenner” (Allen 1979: 4). Jenner is an important forerunner of the kind of informal drama facilitator examined in my study given her emphasis on travelling into different spaces with an educational agenda. She formed the Mobile Theatre in 1947 later becoming the Unicorn Theatre Company in 1962. She ensured that in an austere economic climate young audiences could still access theatre, and continued to find ways to provide this by creating dedicated theatre spaces for Children’s Theatre. She “began to tour work for audiences of children in both schools and theatres with a more serious intent” than entertainment, it also had a pedagogic function (Chambers 2002: 152). Jenner created “the only theatre for children in Britain along the East European model”, influenced by Natalya Satz and her development of Children’s Theatre in Moscow in the 1920s (Chambers 2002: 152). Satz focused on ensuring that actors, plays and the space were tailored to engage young audiences (Londre 1999). Jenner acquired her first permanent base in the Arts Theatre, London in 1961; “Jenner was following the Soviet tradition [...] Children were to get the best of the established theatre tradition, going to see plays in a theatre building” (Allen 1979: 4). Jenner also campaigned for state funding to ensure a quality drama provision for young audiences highlighting what she perceived to be the relative underfunded state of drama for children in the UK at that time:

It makes me blind with rage when I think that Yugoslavia has 123 state-subsidized children's theatres, the Soviet Union 300.

(Rudd 2008: 136)

Her work sought to reinforce the role of drama as an essential part of social learning, and also contributed to the development of drama designed specifically for the engagement of young audiences. Her premature death in 1973 cut short Jenner's personal innovations in the field of theatre; however the Unicorn Theatre has continued to be an important and enduring home for Children's Theatre in the UK²⁷.

Michael Billington notes that the 1960s introduced "a period of irreversible social change: capital punishment was abolished, abortion legalised and homosexuality decriminalised" (2002: n.p.). In 1968 theatre censorship was abolished which allowed more experimental and improvisational approaches to reach the stage. This period gave rise to the formalisation of many popular dramatic practices. This decade saw the development of Theatre in Education (TiE), Augusto Boal's praxis in Brazil, Marian 'Billy' Lindkvist's development of professional courses in drama and therapy in the UK, and the rise of Community Theatre.

The field of "dramatherapy evolved in the 1960s from drama in education, theatre in education and remedial drama" (Jennings 1994: 12). Marian 'Billy' Lindkvist founded the Sesame²⁸ approach to Drama and Movement Therapy. Motivated by her experiences in hospitals with her autistic daughter, she decided to develop a drama provision which would promote a sense of community amongst the residents. She founded Sesame short courses in 1964, designed to enable facilitators "to work at a professional level through drama and movement in [...] Therapy" (Central Sesame Course Information in Jones 1996: 86). It was during this period that the 'professional' status of the drama facilitator in therapeutic practices began to gain wider recognition. Sue Jennings

²⁷ Stuart Bennett's *Theatre for children and young people: 50 years of professional theatre in the UK* (2006) discusses the development of Unicorn Theatre's work.

²⁸ The Sesame Institute has a body of early research documenting the development of this practice. Samples of research are available on their website: <http://www.sesame-institute.org/sesame-research> [09 Aug 2011]. They invite researchers with a particular interest to contact their office for access to further research or to attend a research evening to disseminate new practice.

met Lindkvist in 1966 to exchange their experiences of practicing in this field. Along with drama education specialist Gordon Wiseman (who helped initiate TiE with Belgrade) Jennings founded the Remedial Drama Group. The group began to “tour hospitals and centres for people with profound learning difficulties in a range of locations including Germany, Holland, Belgium and the UK” (Casson 2012: n.p.). The drama facilitator in therapeutic settings began to establish an international reputation as a professional. Here Jennings, Wiseman and Heathcote embody the increasing geographic mobility of the drama facilitator; they were the forerunners who initiated the professional drama facilitator operating in a range of learning settings.

In the UK the 1960s became a period noted for experimentation in “education where ideas of child-centred learning and a problem-posing curriculum began to take hold” (Preston 2009: 13). In the formal education sector, the recommendations made by the Crowther Report²⁹ (1959) reflected the emphasis on the curriculum being designed to create employable individuals which had informed the system for the first half of the century. The proposed reforms were still focused on the *economic* wellbeing of the learner. However, within the classroom “changes in the philosophy and theory of education meant a gradual introduction of more child-centred heuristic techniques and the use of drama as a learning tool” (Ogden 1997: 48). For example, in 1967 Way published his key text *Development Through Drama*, which supported the “idea that drama in education has much to do with the psychological adjustment of young people to their social circumstances” (Hornbrook 1998: 11). Howard Wilson’s Labour government commissioned the famous Plowden Report (1967), noted for its backing of child-centred education, leading to much criticism from educational traditionalists and political opponents. A shift towards a more liberal and broad curriculum was particularly notable in the late 1960s and 1970s, which have been lauded by some critics as the pinnacle of “‘progressive’ education [...] not yet bound by a National Curriculum or SATS” and perceived by some as “‘a golden age’ of curriculum freedom” (Baker 2009: 5).

²⁹ The Crowther Report (1959) was conducted under a Conservative administration by Sir Geoffrey Crowther; he undertook a broad study documenting the education of fifteen to eighteen year old students. The report advocated raising the school leaving age to sixteen which was eventually implemented in 1973, and also proposed a provision of further education for fifteen-eighteen year olds, in particular to support school leavers as they made the transition into the world of employment.

This 'golden age' had important implications for the drama facilitator; closely aligned collaborations were established between schools and the informal drama practitioners working in TiE Companies. The actor-teacher of the TiE model is one of the primary developers of the kind of drama facilitators in my research. TiE can be integrated in schools to support formal learning but is also a valuable form for providing *informal* opportunities, often linked to non-statutory PSHE requirements. For example, Belgrade TiEs *Pow Wow* (1973) explored issues of race, Leeds TiE explored mental health in *Snap out of it* (1976) and Theatr Powys asked children to act as mediators and resolve a family dispute in *Soil* (1992). TiE models such as these continue to inform my own praxis, and have also informed the output of MED Theatre who create plays for and with young learners exploring similar social issues.

Gill Ogden also highlights that TiE is not just an extension of Children's Theatre. The explicit learning function of TiE gives it a diverse theatrical and educational heritage grown out of different theatre applications. It is part of the same social movement which "gave rise to community, alternative, and agit-prop theatre, like the earlier worker's theatre movement, embracing the idea that theatre can and should be performed anywhere, at any time" (Ogden 1997: 48).

The first Theatre in Education Company in 1965 was based at the Belgrade Theatre³⁰ in Coventry, which opened as Britain's first purpose-built welfare state theatre in 1958 (Kershaw 2003: 300). In TiE "[t]he role of the facilitator [...] is [...] a bridge between characters and spectators during the performance or workshop" (Ogden 1997: 51-52). Drama facilitators were referred to as "actor-teachers in recognition of the fact that the majority of them held teaching qualifications as well as being experienced theatre practitioners" (Ogden 1997: 48). This highlights that many of these actor-teachers were making a transition from delivering formally assessed material in the classroom to diversifying opportunities for informal learning, a similar professional path I have also opted to follow. The extended professional knowledge of the actor-teachers enabled

³⁰ Gordon Vallins was one of the key developers of TiE at Belgrade, for further information of the development of this form, see his article: 'The beginnings of TIE' in Jackson, T. (ed.) (1980) *Learning through theatre: Essays and casebooks on Theatre in Education*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2-15.

TiE companies to create personalised projects that linked to curriculum learning.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s companies were funded to provide a free TiE provision for “a specific geographical area” (Joyce in Jackson 1993: 267). The longitudinal relationship and shared local knowledge was considered beneficial as it allowed the TiE facilitators to “build up a closer relationship with schools and teachers, and more generally, with the community,” (Joyce in Jackson 1993: 267). For example, in 1976 there was a motion towards establishing “a TiE company in each county in Wales” to serve the young people in rural communities and provide welsh-medium services for certain areas (Ogden 1997: 49). Dee Heddon and Jane Milling note how that it was becoming increasingly evident that “[m]ost of the topics chosen involved moral and social choices and demanded some political and economic education” (2006: 141). TiE was being applied to address what later became labelled as PSHE issues, developing a niche role within curriculum learning.

Despite these liberal developments, one of the primary methodologies for structuring the facilitation of learning in schools during the 1970s was the system established by Paul Heywood Hirst³¹ (1974). His ideas have been frequently drawn on in the structuring of the school curriculum and his methods are still evident today. Hirst’s system is based on identifying objectives at the outset, then selecting methods to meet these objectives, finally conducting a test to determine how successfully objectives have been met. One of the main criticisms of Hirst’s model is that it “ignores the important learning that may occur beyond what the teacher actually predicted or planned for” so learning or achievement which is evident outside the specified set of aims is given little recognition or value in this model (Kempe and Ashwell 2000:42). Shifts such as this supported the argument that from the “mid-1970s, it was against predictions of economic demand that education policy was increasingly measured” (Hornbrook 1998: 34).

The issue of sustainability challenged UK facilitators in the 1970s and 1980s in the face of economic and educational reform. At the start of the 1970s the

³¹ Hirst, P. (1974) *Knowledge and the Curriculum*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Conservative government had appointed Margaret Thatcher as the Secretary of State for Education. In a climate of recession (1971-73) the government was handed a “rationale for economic cutbacks in education” (Galton, Simon and Croll in Gillard 2012: n.p.). There was also a “general disenchantment with education as a palliative of society's ills” with a shift towards increased teacher accountability and a more standardised curriculum (Gillard 2012: n.p). At policy level, this decade saw a great debate surrounding the role of informal and progressive teaching in a financially turbulent context.³² Neville Bennett's report *Teaching Styles and Pupil Progress* (1976) was noted for its criticism of ‘progressive methods’ with Bennett asserting that “‘formal’ methods (whole classes teaching, regular testing and competition) resulted in pupils being four months ahead of those taught using ‘informal’ methods” (Gillard 2012: n.p). The representation of failing schools and ineffective liberal teaching approaches in the media characterised the portrayal of child-centred learning in formal education during the late 1970s. In the current climate of recession, Michael Gove launched a similar critique of the ‘failing’ progressive learning approaches, and has called for a return to more ‘formal’ classroom methods. An awareness of these social patterns is important for the drama facilitator. An understanding of how their work might be considered in these social conditions enables them to be pro-active and develop new ways of evidencing and supporting their praxis to remain sustainable.

Further afield, the praxis of Paulo Freire offers an important legacy for formal and informal educators. Freire “conceived learners [...] as active subjects of the learning process and placed them at the centre of the process” (Schugurensky 2011: 58). Freire’s pedagogy was firmly grounded in on-going praxis, “theory, method and practice form a whole in his work” (Gadotti 1994: 51). In his book *The Politics Of Education*, (1985) Freire asserted that an oppressive culture of silence operated in Brazil, arguing that a ‘banking’ model of education was instrumental in reinforcing the oppression he observed. The banking model of education is discussed in Gadotti (1994), Schugurensky (2011) and Freire’s own *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). It concerns the idea that the educator

³² A series of influential reports were published (See Gillard, Chapter 7: 1970-1979 Recession and disenchantment) which criticised the role of progressive and child-centred models. See <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/chapter07.html> [01 Jun 2012].

makes a deposit of knowledge within an empty learner, reinforcing the hierarchy of a knowledgeable superior above the less able learner. For Freire the banking model, which underpinned formal education curricula, “transforms students into receiving objects. It attempts to control thinking and action, leads men and women to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power” (Freire 1970: 77).

Freire wanted to liberate the oppressed lower classes through his informal educational praxis, a process he referred to as ‘conscientization’ which is:

an on-going process by which the learner moves towards critical consciousness. This process is the heart of liberatory education [...] conscientization means breaking through prevailing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness – in particular, awareness of oppression, having been an “object” of others’ will rather than a self-determining subject.

(Goldbard 2006: 242-243)

To enable a liberating process of conscientization Freire created a new kind of educator, who impacted on the development of person-centred informal educators in particular. Freire proposed a ‘liberating and directive educator’, who functioned as “a politician and an artist and not someone who is neutral” (Gadotti 1994: 51). In this process of conscientization, the liberating educator would invite learners to think rather than using their power to bank a prescribed set of ‘truths’ within them. Freire argued that “democracy should be practiced in public schools” (Gadotti 1994: 50). However he noted that the shift towards a horizontal rather than vertical dialogue between educator and learner was a brave act because the liberating educator is *not* equal to the learner (Gadotti 1994). Freire identified that “the teacher and pupil are not the same – the teacher gives marks and sets tasks. His critical competence is different from that of the pupil” (Gadotti 1994: 58). Crucially if “the educator is different from the pupil [...] the authority of the educator, different from the freedom of the pupil” must not lead to authoritarianism (Gadotti 1994: 56-57). The degree of power in the educator’s role should not steer them towards a ‘banking’ model of education, instead they should use their position to enable learners to develop their own critical competence. In my own facilitation practice the issue of offering a ‘banking’, rather than ‘problematizing’ model of learning is a challenge, particularly within formal learning contexts. Trying to develop the

critical competence of students when there are prescribed facts and skills they must master can be challenging if they disagree with or question set aspects of the syllabus.

Freire also emphasised the role of informal learning which occurs in daily activities. He argued that “democracy can be learned more effectively through direct and active participation in social and political life” (Schugurensky 2011: 54). His pedagogy bridges “the gap between learning and daily life, and encourages the agency of teachers and students to intervene in the social world to challenge structures and promote a more just society” (Giroux in Schugurensky 46: 2011). However, his efforts to frame everyday acts as sites for informal learning and his binary perspectives of the oppressor and the oppressed were problematic. Carlos Torres (1993) has criticised Freire’s approaches, suggesting that his model of praxis is not so distinct from the banking system he challenges. In an attempt to frame the everyday as a pedagogic interaction Freire still facilitated a highly structured encounter shaped and led by the educator. His ideas about society and acts of oppression also meant that he steered participants towards particular learning outcomes which has parallels with the formalised banking model (Torres 1993: 127). It has been suggested that “[a]lbeit benign, Freire's approach differs only in degree, but not in kind, from the system which he so eloquently criticises” (Taylor 1993: 148).

The role of drama as a therapeutic tool was also strengthened in the early 1970s with the creation of a psychodrama training group in London. The term dramatherapy began to circulate, applied to practice which “facilitates change through drama processes [...] practised with groups and individuals in care settings such as clinics, hospitals and specialist centres such as adolescent units. [...] undertaken with both adults and children” (Jones 1996: 6). Building on the heritage of spontaneous praxis from the informal sector, Jonathon Fox and Jo Salas initiated Playback Theatre in 1975, a form in which “audience members share thoughts, feelings, memories - stories - and a team of performers enact them” (Fox 2009: 241). Playback theatre has developed into a form practiced in over fifty countries, applied in therapeutic, pedagogic and Theatre for Development (TfD) settings.

New Reforms, Old Issues

Education reforms introduced in the wake of Thatcher's election in 1979 problematised the capacity for TiE companies and other informal educators to sustain a personalised relationship with schools. These reforms were highly contentious; they were widely criticised and opposed by the practitioners who operated with a child-centred philosophy. TiE practitioner David Pammenter vehemently opposed the Conservative education policies arguing that they resulted in the child-centred TiE facilitator "swimming against the tide" within formal learning (1980: 58). His own practice as an actor-teacher with Belgrade TIE from 1969 led Pammenter to argue that effective TIE is founded on "an understanding of its potential audience/participants; objectivity, clarity and analysis in the researching process; creativity, vision and vitality in the structuring and writing process; and, at every stage, a sense of theatre and dramatic order" (1980: 53). He firmly believed that effective TiE practice was being undermined by Thatcher's drive to move from a 'learner-centred' to a 'system-centred' curriculum. The Conservative government had an economic and industrial focus, the emphasis was on producing, en masse, a skilled workforce. The concerns of the individual, although still recognised, were no longer considered to be part of the primary remit of education (Pammenter 1980: 58). Gillard argues that "the twin aims of Margaret Thatcher's education policies in the 1980s were to convert the nation's schools system from a public service into a market, and to transfer power from local authorities to central government" (2012: n.p.). It was in this particular climate that Magic Carpet (1981) and MED Theatre (1989) were established, perhaps in recognition that more opportunities for personal and social learning were required to supplement the formal education system. Thatcher's reforms prompted Pammenter to ask:

What is education? Who is it for and what does it say and do? Is the schools system the means by which we instil the inadequacies and contradictions of one social class or generation into the next? Or is it really concerned with freedom for children to develop their potential to the full [. . .] equipping them to take an active part in shaping their world? Is it 'system-centred' or 'child-centred'?

(Pammenter 1980: 57)

Questions initiated by Dewey in the 1920s remained pertinent in the 1980s and still impact on my praxis today, as education practices are subjected to a

continual process of review and reform. This requirement to provide closely aligned and ethical practice through TiE and other informal provisions is made more problematic in instances where the collaboration process is hindered by government or educational policy.

The constructively aligned relationship between the facilitator, the school, and the community established during the 1960s and 1970s was particularly threatened by the 1988 education reform act (ERA) in which many of the 1944 liberal reforms were rejected. The integration of the ERA was “a rapid, bludgeoning process, characterised by minimal consultation” (Readman 1993: 272). One of the issues identified within schools in the late eighties and early nineties was the difficulty for schools to “resist the ‘market place’ ethos encouraged by successive Conservative governments” (Readman 1993: 272). Outside of schools, during the 1980s there was an increased shift into interdisciplinary practices for the drama facilitator. Facilitators began collaborating with “art galleries, museums, health authorities or higher education establishments [...] the basis of these partnerships will vary, and may lead to work in alternative locations, such as hospital wards, urban dwellings, country parks, libraries and college campuses” (Readman 1993: 278). For example, C&T encapsulate this approach. They originated in Worcester as a TiE company under the name Collar and Tie in 1988 and have sustained their praxis by developing a series of partnerships alongside the development of sustainable digital approaches to applied drama. As artistic Director Paul Sutton argues

Sutton: Before we had the C&T network [...] we were like many other companies out there doing work, in that you need funding to do the work. So you look around for people who have pots of money, look at the criteria and you work out what can I do to enable me to get my hands on that money [...] in the end I thought ‘sod this’ what we need here are partner schools. So we’ll just be absolutely clear about what we want to do, about our vision, about the things we value, [...] we’ll talk directly to those schools and if the schools want to work with us they enter into a partnership with us [...] And that works. So all those partner schools now are signed up to those core values and those things that we hold in the middle.

In addition C&T have developed an international network of professional partnerships and links outside of education to sustain their praxis. They have responded and adapted to the shifting political and pedagogic landscape to ensure that their praxis continues to be both sustainable and valued by learners and policy makers.

Sutton: [our] technologies take you out of formal learning-learning isn't just something that happens in classrooms it's accessible all over the place. So we've always done a lot of work with learning disabled people so we have a strong track record of working in social care circumstances, we've worked in drugs rehabilitation and training work with drugs counsellors and drugs workers. Increasingly we're doing work in the developing world so we have partnerships in Kenya and Malawi and more and more community focused projects [...] So I do think that notion of being applied in that sense is true for us, we don't have any barriers to what we see our remit as.

A similar approach is also adopted by other facilitators in this study, for example SSF have also tried to launch international partnerships, in 2012 "groups of young actors from Russia, Serbia, Israel and Australia travelled to the UK and performed their own abridged Shakespeare plays" (SSF 2012: n.p.). Since 2009 they have had international Festival days linking with Argentina and Africa to diversify and sustain their praxis.

Another challenge to facilitators in the 1980s was the increased standardisation in the curriculum. This meant that schools were "pressurised to allocate their limited finances to other priorities created by the National Curriculum" (Readman 1993: 267). As a result new funding models were required to ensure that within the formal sector a continuing partnership with informal experts and external facilitators could be justified in the face of new curriculum priorities. Schools needed "to be confident that any external curriculum input will contribute to their agreed 'development plan', and that the educational aims of the input will complement those of the school" (Readman 1993: 275). Facilitators offered fewer workshops and increased audience sizes "in response to the growing inflexibility of the curriculum organisation" (Readman 1993: 272). These pragmatic concerns remain pertinent, SSF and MED illustrate how facilitators try to offer affordable practice aligned to the curriculum whilst still retaining a person-centred ethos. SSF have endeavoured to frame large scale workshops as spaces for positive interactions with an emphasis on the creation of a 'company' comprised of multiple casts. MED have offered free 'taster'

workshops to secure further business and also tried facilitating with larger groups, for example working with both Year Six and Year Seven classes simultaneously to support the Year Six transition into secondary school.

The application of drama as a therapeutic and informal learning tool continued to develop during the 1980s. *Drama in Therapy Volumes I and II* (1981) disseminated the praxis of Jennings, Lindkvist, Slade, Fox and Spolin in the USA and the UK. In 1982 John Bergman launched Geese Theatre in the USA and in 1987 Geese Theatre UK was initiated by Clark Baim. Their workshops with offenders and youth at risk situate the participants in a therapeutic process.³³ The Institute of Dramatherapy was established in 1988, followed by the introduction of a theatrically-based diploma in dramatherapy in the UK (Jennings 1994: 14).

At the start of the nineties the conflict between balancing education for employability and education for social learning continued. The infamous 'Three Wise Men Report'³⁴ (1992) was produced in just one month by Robin Alexander, Jim Rose and Chris Woodhead. The report advocated students being set by ability with a focus on whole class teaching, reducing individual and group activities. It also argued that "the teacher should be an instructor rather than a facilitator" (DES in Gillard 2012: n.p.), a suggestion which encouraged a more skills-based and didactic approach. In 1995 they established the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE), further emphasising the focus on education for employability.

In the same period that the Conservatives advocated the approach of 'teacher as instructor', facilitator John Heron³⁵ asserted that "teaching is no longer seen as imparting and doing things to the student, but is redefined as facilitation of self-directed learning" (1999: 2). The New Labour Government elected in 1997

³³ See Andy Watson's chapter "Lift your Mask': Geese Theatre Company in Performance', in Prentki, T. and Preston, S. (2009) *The Applied Theatre Reader*, Oxon: Routledge, 47-54.

³⁴ The paper was entitled *Curriculum Organisation and Classroom Practice in Primary Schools: A discussion paper*. A copy of the full report is available to read on Derek Gillian's excellent History of Education site at <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/threewisemen/> [09 Jan 2012].

³⁵ Heron is known for his research in the field of social sciences, pioneering the participatory research model known as co-operative inquiry. He is also a trained facilitator, documenting his methods in *The Complete Facilitator's Handbook* (1999).

and re-elected in 2001 introduced measures which saw the shift back towards the perception of teacher as a facilitator. Their 1998 Green³⁶ Paper *Teachers: meeting the challenge of change* asserted that teachers would be required to adapt their approaches:

- To work in partnership with other staff in schools;
 - To welcome the contribution that parents, business and others outside of school can make to its success; and
 - To anticipate change and promote innovation
- (DFEE in Mahony and Hextall 2000: 62)

“The overall restructuring of the teaching profession within schools” was designed to foster more relationships between external and informal educators and schools (Mahony and Hextall 2000: 62). The Labour government tried to move away from an education culture in which “isolated, unaccountable professionals made curriculum and pedagogical decisions alone” (DFEE in Mahony and Hextall 2000: 62). This decade highlights the rapidity with which educational policy can shift. I suggest that the temporal and ever-shifting nature of the educational field requires the facilitator to engage with these shifts so that they can respond and adapt practice to remain a relevant feature of the educational landscape.

During this period the rise of the discrete facilitator role was mirrored by the increased recognition of the role of *lifelong learning*. This term became an “umbrella term covering all of what had earlier been referred to as ‘lifelong education’, ‘recurrent education’, ‘popular education’, ‘adult education’, and ‘post-initial education and training’” (Bartlett 2003: 196). The shift towards lifelong learning taking place in Europe was apparent within the UK in the 1990s. Within two years of the New Labour Government being elected in 1997, twenty-three “government initiatives in lifelong learning were established [...] new posts which include the term ‘lifelong learning’ in the title have also been created across industry, education, and politics” (Coffield 2000: 6). The

³⁶ “Green Papers are consultation documents produced by the Government. Often when a government department is considering introducing a new law, it will put together a discussion document called a Green Paper. The aim of this document is to allow people both inside and outside Parliament to debate the subject and give the department feedback on its suggestions.” For further information of policy and terminology go to: <http://www.parliament.uk/site-information/glossary/green-papers/> [12 March 2012].

International Association of Facilitators was founded in 1993, with the aim of promoting and supporting facilitation as a legitimised profession in a range of settings.

By the late nineties the drama facilitator was a distinct professional. Chris Johnston published *House of Games* (1998) which specifically offered guidance to the drama facilitator. He has facilitated with young participants, professional performers, the elderly, and in probation and prison settings. In his book Johnston argues that despite the potential for an overlap with the responsibilities associated with other roles:

The drama facilitator, working amongst communities, arguably performs a contemporary, radical and innovative function. It's different from a theatre director or drama teacher, yet it borrows greatly from these roles.
(1998: 55)

Furthering this perspective, Hornbrook recognised that by the late nineties facilitation through role-play was “used extensively in industrial management training; it features regularly in counselling situations for professional care workers; it is recognised as an effective tool for people to explore their personal problems, and it serves to stimulate real-life situations and experiences” (1998: 39-40). Continuing to document these developments, Sue Jennings published *Dramatherapy and Social Theatre: necessary dialogues* (2009) which drew together TfD, community-based and therapeutic applications of drama. David Read Johnson and Penny Lewis published *Current Approaches in Drama Therapy* (2000), discussing the application of Playback Theatre and also documenting the efficacy of dramatherapy in schools and community settings.

The integration of diverse mainstream theatrical techniques within TiE was also evident in this decade. Gill Ogden identifies how TiE companies began collaborating with guest writers and directors. Theatr Iolo's output was influenced by the forum theatre model of Boal and Cwmni'r Fran Wen drew on the theory and practice of Dorothy Heathcote. Arad Goch began to explore how *commedia dell'arte* techniques could inform their work, and HiJinx were influenced by experimental community collective Brif Gof and used physical theatre techniques (Ogden 1997: 56-57).

From 2000-2012 a number of policies have been passed that have influenced the statutory requirements of the formal education sector. One of the most influential developments was the Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (ECM) in 2003, which informed the Children Act (2004).³⁷ The instigation of this legislation was relevant for both formal and informal educators as it placed emphasis on “the idea that, for each child to fulfil their potential, there must be a greater deal of co-operation, not only between Government agencies, but also between schools, GPs, Sports organisations and the Voluntary and Community sector” (Department for Education and Skills 2004: n.p.). The paper advocates the integration of informal and external facilitators, valuing “the specific skills that people from different professional backgrounds bring, [wanting] to break down the professional barriers that inhibit joint working” (Boateng 2003: 10). The legislation introduced new non-statutory requirements into the curriculum; facilitators from different professional backgrounds were called on to support the five main aims of the paper in their practice:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

(Boateng 2003: 6-7)

In 2007 Gordon Brown replaced Tony Blair as Prime Minister and made further changes to the Education Department, dividing it into two halves: “the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) with Ed Balls as Secretary of State, and the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) under John Denham” (Gillard 2012: n.p.). The child-centred reforms of the Children Act were extended in 2007; the Children’s Plan entitled *Building*

³⁷ In 2003, the Government published a Green Paper called *Every Child Matters* alongside the formal response to the report into the death of Victoria Climbié. After a thorough consultation process, the Children Act 2004 became law. This legislation is the legal underpinning for *Every Child Matters*, which sets out the Government’s approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age nineteen (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2004: n.p.).

Brighter Futures was based on ambitious large-scale reforms which aimed to tackle illiteracy, poverty and behaviour in schools by 2020. The Children's Society chief executive Bob Reitemeier supported the reforms, arguing that "responsibility for childhood rests with us all and we are encouraged that the children's plan looks beyond education to address fundamental areas such as parents and play", demonstrating the child-centred and social focus in New Labour's education policies (Gillard 2012: n.p.). However, then Shadow Secretary of Education Michael Gove attacked the child-centred approach telling "teachers that a Conservative government would reinstate traditional styles of fact-based lessons. Generations of children had been let down by so-called progressive education policies which had taught skills and 'empathy' instead of bodies of knowledge" (Gillard 2012: n.p.). Gove's critique and the furious debate it sparked in the National Union of Teachers (NUT) indicate that the tension between child-centred and system-centred learning models have endured within formal learning. An awareness of this debate is essential for facilitators trying to negotiate the transition between formal and informal learning within the curriculum.

During the last decade the role of drama in education gained popularity as a discrete subject of study. In 2003 at Key Stage Four:

nearly 100,000 young people were entered for the subject. In the same year, nearly 18,500 candidates were entered at AS level and 15,000 at A level for Drama and Theatre Studies. This makes it one of the two most popular arts subjects in all three examinations.

(Arts Council England 2003: 6)

The award of Specialist School Status was also established. Performing Arts Status³⁸ (and additional funding) was awarded to schools with successful drama departments, becoming a sought after and popular award. In *Drama in Schools* (2003) the growth of creative industries was noted, the sector providing 1.95 million jobs. Employers "in other sectors recognise the contribution drama

³⁸ To be eligible, schools had to demonstrate that they were achieving curriculum standards, provide a development plan for the department and raise £50,000 private sector funding. Schools would then be given an additional £100,000 from the government. This initiative was ended in 2010 by the Coalition government. The Department for Children, Schools and Families website was archived by the Coalition but specialist school guidelines are available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20101119131802/http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/specialistschools/what_are/ [09 June 2012].

makes to the development of creative thinking and effective teamwork, as well as to the key skills of the National Curriculum” (Arts Council England 2003: 8). In the informal sector, the Shakespeare Schools Festival was founded in 2000, growing to become the largest youth festival in the UK, as discussed in Chapter Five.

‘Lifelong learning’ is a continuing feature of the ‘Big Society Agenda’ of David Cameron’s’ Coalition government. In 2010 the Qualifications and Curriculum development Agency (QCDA) similarly presented a ‘bigger picture’ perspective of learning. Heavily informed by ECM legislation, they assert that bigger picture curriculum learning should be focused on creating “determined, adaptable, confident, risk-taking enterprising individuals” (QCDA 2010: n.p.). They should have “personal, learning and thinking skills” which they can apply independently and engage with the “big ideas that shape the world” (QCDA 2010: n.p.). This is extended from within a formal education framework into social policy through Cameron’s Big Society Agenda, which argues for “[m]ore freedom for professionals to innovate. A greater ability for new providers to come forward. It is the Big Society way to improve education³⁹” (Brown 2011: n.p.). Initially the Big Society Agenda sought to strengthen the links between the wider community and the formal education sector by offering more curriculum freedom and opportunities for informal facilitators to collaborate with schools, increasing “local community control of education, something central and essential to the growth and continuation of the community” (Brown 2011: n.p.). However, Gove’s current education reforms have been criticised for limiting curriculum diversity and centralising curriculum control.

In 2011 Darren Henley’s review of cultural education supported the principles outlined in the Big Society Agenda. Henley argued for the increased integration of community-based partnerships in formal learning, echoing The Community Foundation Network’s call for formal learning to involve ‘people from all parts of

³⁹ For example, the coalition government introduced Free Schools based on a Swedish model in September 2011. These “Free Schools are funded by the government, but are independent of local authority control. They are run by teachers and are able to set their own rules over length of the school day, the curriculum, and how they spend their money” (Marriage 2011: n.p.). However, this move has led to criticism over an advantage being offered to the middle class families who have the means to establish these Free Schools with a greater ability to personalise to the needs of their students.

a community working together locally to use all the resources available to them to improve everyone's life' (2011: 39). Conversely, in 2012 Gove has made proposals which would offer a narrower and more prescriptive curriculum and potentially restrict opportunities for drama in formal learning. Gove's radical "proposals for the English Baccalaureate, or 'Ebacc', certificates – which would replace GCSEs – did not include the arts as a core subject" (Marszal 2012: n.p). Gove argues for a more prescriptive linear syllabus, scrapping the modular courses "on the grounds that they encourage what Gove described as 'bite-size learning and spoon-feeding'" (Watt 2012: n.p.). His proposal to have one exam board and syllabus rather than offer schools choices has also been criticised. The tensions between facilitating social learning through curriculum freedom, and the drive to provide quantifiable learning opportunities which prepare learners for the workplace remain pertinent. The theories, assessment tools and innovative methods of addressing these tensions are outlined in the following chapters to offer further guidance and options for facilitators trying to develop good practice.

The Drama Facilitator and Community Learning

In addition to facilitating in formal learning contexts I am also a community-based drama facilitator, which presents its own unique set of challenges. As I have just outlined there are increasing endeavours to connect formal education to informal community learning practices to create a 'Big Society'. Community-based drama facilitators have emerged out of a dramatic heritage which has points of correlation and overlaps with the development of drama facilitation in formal education; however it also has a unique history of its own. For facilitators aiming to operate across formal and informal settings, an awareness and understanding of how this particular kind of drama facilitation has emerged is essential. This enables them to locate the kinds of techniques and assessment measures that have been effective in these settings.

Why has drama facilitation become such an important feature of the informal pedagogic landscape? What does it offer a learner that makes it such an enduring and widely applied practice? The examination of Community Theatre is necessary to address these questions. Community Theatre has its roots in

political movements; “[a]ll theatre is political - just as all the other activities of human beings are political - because theatre is not autonomous and must thus decide whose interests it serves” (Babbage 2004: 39). It grew out of a necessity to provide the wider public a space where they could learn about what was happening within their society, share ideas, and work towards positive social reforms. It did not have a stable group of learners or dedicated space. It emerged on the streets, and participation was voluntary. The learners could choose to engage with material whereas in formal education this is not always an option. Furthermore, community learning was conducted in spaces that made it trans-generational. Everyone, from children to the elderly could access and exchange ideas within this learning space. As the group of learners was not stable, and content was heavily informed by the pressing issues of the day, this praxis differs markedly from the prescribed curriculum model we now associate with the formal sector. Therefore, it requires its own set of facilitation skills and assessment procedures to support good practice.

The early 20th. Century was a period characterised by “economic upheaval and unemployment of an unprecedented kind. The rise of Fascist dictatorships in Europe produced a rapid deterioration of international relations” (Aldrich 2002: 4). In the UK the climate of high unemployment and the introduction of the Means Test⁴⁰ led to hunger strikes, protest marches and the worker’s movement. “As the economic crisis, with its attendant political upheavals, developed and became world-wide [...] a need to create a political theatre” emerged across Europe and the USA (MacColl 1986: xxi). This movement saw the increasing mobilisation of theatre to inform and instruct large working class audiences. As theatre became used by and for the working class outside of formalised theatrical spaces they began to develop distinctive performance styles and traditions.

Living Newspapers

One of the best examples of this shift is the emergence of the Living Newspaper form. Living Newspapers were applied by a broad range of practitioners

⁴⁰ The means Test was introduced to Officials went into every detail of a family's income and savings. The intrusiveness of the means test and the insensitive manner of officials who carried it out frustrated and offended the workers.

including Moreno in Vienna (Psychodrama), Blue Blouse Theatre in Russia, Joan Littlewood and Ewan MacColl in the UK (political and social theatre) Boal in Brazil (Newspaper Theatre) and the Federal Theatre Project in the USA. The innovations by these practitioners, particularly in the UK and in Brazil, have important implications for later dramatic facilitation in educational contexts, arguably both formal and informal.

The Living Newspaper took theatre out to informal spaces, such as rallies and the streets so that drama became a more visible feature of social interactions, particularly politicised events. For example, in Russia performances were held “in streets, factories and stations [...] the diffusion of information” about current events was the aim (Bradby and McCormick 1978: 46). Maximising the educational function of the Worker’s Theatre, practitioners rejected the “heritage of formal western theatre” and were inspired by “the effective combination of mobility, mass chants, jazz rhythms, gymnastics, and propaganda” (Chinoy 1983: 484). In particular the Blue Blouse performances demonstrated how a broad range of drama forms can be drawn on and combined to be applied for a specific aim. They used:

skits, verse, monologues, and avant-garde oratory among an uninterrupted montage of scenes, songs, music, dance, mime, acrobatics and gymnastics. Messages were punched home with bold visual effects. Blue Blouse offered a model on which countless variations have been devised by agit-prop and guerilla theatre groups ever since.

(Drain 1995: 157)

The combination of methods and willingness to experiment with new resources is something which continues to characterise informal community output; MED Theatre for example draw on myths, legends, song, ecological issues, the school curriculum, and local heritage sites combining film, dance, drama and creative writing to create new work. In Magic Carpet I have used everyday objects, stories, newspaper clippings, songs, costume, film, artwork, literature and a combination of art forms to inform our community output. We create methods which speak to participants, rather than relying on formalised dramatic approaches.

Often the participants were “ordinary worker-activists ignorant of formal theatre. They had no preconceptions about what was right and wrong in theatre practice; they just wanted to call attention to their cause and stir action in terms of a proposed dialectical analysis of unemployment, racism, etc.” (Chinoy 1983: 484). Early Living Newspapers had a strong pedagogic function, in Russia they kept “illiterate audiences in touch with the issues of the day. The subjects were by no means always topical or political” but audiences did learn informally through this form (Leach 1994: 78). The community facilitators in my cases may also engage groups with little theatrical knowledge or access to formal theatre spaces. There is a balance between educating them about the way in which performers operate in conventional theatre spaces and also carrying on the tradition of combining different art forms and resources to offer a personalised model of praxis.

Robert Leach notes that “[i]n Britain, the workers theatre movement of the 1920s and 1930s performed short, sharp dramas from the backs of lorries to striking cotton workers or exploited tenants, [...] one-off performances which aim to make a political point” (2008: 161). Ewan MacColl and Joan Littlewood had an important impact in the UK. MacColl’s early agit-prop practice with the Red Megaphones led to the formation of Theatre Union which had a socialist agenda, touring working-class venues. MacColl’s early performances were situated in “public parks, city squares and factory gates, performing at anti-war rallies, unemployed demonstrations, political meetings and, occasionally, at the entrance to the Manchester City Football ground” (MacColl 1986: xxii). The material was tailored to inform the target audience about specific social issues (MacColl 1986: xlix). Theatre Union became Theatre Workshop in 1946, and with Joan Littlewood, MacColl continued to produce politicised theatre for working class audiences, for example touring mining villages in 1951. Previously Littlewood had collaborated with the “Theatre of Action, which was a continuation of the political tradition of the 1930s Workers Theatre Movement” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 30). Theatre Workshop was based at the London’s Theatre Royal from 1953, creating theatre which engaged the local working class community of Stratford East. Their explorations with the Living Newspaper “form inspired Joan Littlewood’s Theatre Workshop productions culminating in the famous *Oh What a Lovely War!* (1963)” (Casson 2012: 11). During this

period Littlewood also directed and starred in the British première of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1955). Littlewood's practice extended into the community during this period; she proposed "a 'fun palace'⁴¹ as a community resource where the community would create beyond the confines of theatre, becoming involved in the 'therapy of theatre'" (Littlewood in Heddon and Milling 2006: 43). MacColl and Littlewood's home was monitored by the British intelligence service, and both were arrested at a performance of their Living Newspaper *The Last Edition* in 1940 for inciting civil unrest, demonstrating drama's potential as a powerful educational and political tool.

Epic Education

The Epic Theatre⁴² experimentations of Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht strengthened the relationship between theatre and informal learning during this period. Brecht asserts that Piscator's theatrical innovations were "aimed to increase theatre's value as education" (Brecht 1964: 130). My focus here is on their application of drama as a learning tool, for a comprehensive examination of their techniques see the work of John Willett.⁴³ For a detailed discussion of Piscator and Brecht's contribution to education, Anthony Jackson (2007) provides a thoughtful analysis of their work in *Theatre, Education and the Making of Meanings: Art or Instrument?*

Both Brecht and Piscator employed "images, statistics, slogans which would enable [theatre's] parliament, the audience, to reach political decisions" (Brecht 1964: 131). They wrote new plays and experimented with restructuring or rewriting existing play texts to create new meanings. Piscator experimented with scenography and technology, exploring how devices such as recorded sound⁴⁴ and film footage could be utilised to reinforce the social messages in his

⁴¹ Through the Fun Palace project Littlewood "transformed discarded spaces and waste ground through temporary structures, playgrounds, mini inner-city farms, painting and planting schemes. These activities promoted the importance of children's access to and participation in cultural activity, social encounter and creative play" (Holdsworth 2007: 293).

⁴² The term 'epic' was first applied by Piscator in 1924, in relation to his production of Alfons Paquet's *Fahnen* (Patterson 1981: 153).

⁴³ John Willett has published extensively on both Brecht and Piscator and provides a broader discussion of their techniques, productions and influences for readers with a specific interest in Epic Theatre. *The Cambridge companion to Brecht* (2006), edited by Peter Thomson and Glendyr Sacks also provides a good grounding in his practice.

⁴⁴ For example, "[s]o far as we know the first person to make use of records was Piscator. He applied the new technique entirely correctly. In his production of the play *Rasputin* a record of Lenin's voice was played. It interrupted the performance" (Brecht 1964: 102).

productions. In the early 1920s, Piscator was involved in agit-prop theatre, performed in working class districts (Innes 1972: 206). Similarly to the early Living Newspapers, Brecht and Piscator utilised the Epic Theatre form to educate the working class about social issues. The Epic Theatre model has influenced many drama practitioners, including Augusto Boal and Joan Littlewood whose practices continue to inform drama facilitation in education. For the drama facilitator, Epic Theatre was important as it reinforced the potential for drama to be applied as a learning tool, and encouraged practitioners to experiment and create new methodologies to maximise the pedagogic potential of their drama. It encouraged practitioners to experiment with new technologies, and to consider how drama could make use of social developments to engage a wider audience, a legacy evident in the case studies.⁴⁵

Lessons from Brazil

Inspired by “the principles of the workers theatre movement [...] the widespread repoliticisation of the arts world in the late 1950s and 1960s produced a new wave of practitioners and educationalists who envisaged a liberation politics and a liberational art” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 131). Exemplifying this, in Rio de Janeiro Augusto Boal revised techniques learnt during his study in the USA, adapting plays to make the content and form relevant for Brazilian audiences. Mainstream theatre was entrenched in conventions, Boal argued that “the majority of the community are excluded from the creative process, implicitly becoming non-actors” (Babbage 2004: 37). With the Arena Theatre in São Paulo Boal developed new participatory approaches so that theatre became a recognisable ‘language’ which the wider community could engage with. Boal conducted performances in communal public spaces which could be accessed by working class audiences; his praxis became known as the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO). After directing Brecht’s play *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* in 1971, Boal was arrested and exiled to Argentina; such was the potency of his politicised theatre. During his exile, Boal became an archetypal travelling drama

⁴⁵ Magic Carpet has created animations that have been entered into competitions and recently completed a promotional film. SSF allow students to design and operate lighting and sound in performance, and students can pre-record and use film footage in performances. MED Theatre are expanding their online resources to build their network of local schools and West Exe also enable students to work with lighting and sound in performance.

facilitator, creating centres for the Theatre of the Oppressed during this period in Europe.⁴⁶

In my research the facilitator role is of particular relevance, and therefore I shall focus my discussion on Boal's 'joker' facilitator. Arena's production *Zumbi* inspired Boal's creation of the 'coringa' or joker system (Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman 1994: 36). The original joker system is documented in detail in *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979, see pages 167-90). The initial model did not just shape the facilitator's role; it had implications for the whole theatrical form.

It was characterised by several techniques that challenges the theatrical conventions of Brazilian realism including the blurring of fact and fiction, use of standardised ritual mask that signified social habits, shifting of roles within the play so that all actors played all characters and the introduction of the joker (who would later appear, transformed, as the director of Boal's most popular dramatic form, forum theatre).

(Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman 1994: 2)

Developments in the late fifties and early sixties provided elements which found "their way into the joker of forum theatre [...] crucially, that she is a contemporary and neighbour of the spectator rather than narrator belonging principally to the world of the play" (Boal in Babbage 2004: 60). The forum theatre model was informed by Boal's travel during his exile in the 1970s with various marginalised communities. In forum theatre, audiences are presented with a social issue to which they can relate and through their participation in the drama try to find possible ways of addressing this issue. In the performance itself, "there will be no end solution for the problem [...] [t]he audience is activated to explore solutions for the problem by inviting the audience ("spect-actors") on the stage to *act* the solutions for the problems (Piekkari 2005: 15 original emphasis). The joker is required to make the space feel safe enough so that they can invite, and support, spect-actors making the transition into participating in the performance space, and encourage them to try out new ways of resolving issues practically.

⁴⁶ Frances Babbage documents the developments in Boal's praxis and discusses their application in further depth in *Augusto Boal* (2004). For a comprehensive introduction to his approaches in practice see Boal, A. (2002) *Games For Actors and Non-Actors*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge.

In forum theatre Boal has defined “the joker as a ‘midwife’ whose task is to facilitate, but not control, the theatre event” linking to Freire’s earlier ideas about a liberating rather than authoritative directive educator (Babbage 2004: 143). The joker facilitator’s role has been compared to a number of professions, indicating the difficulty of providing a comprehensive definition of a facilitator’s role given its context dependent nature. David Diamond suggest that the “[t]he joker is an animator, an activist, a conductor, a mirror, a character, a traffic cop, a ‘Difficultator’ (as Boal would say), an improviser, a channel for energy, a wild card, an artist on a tightrope” (2007: 129-130). Jan Cohen-Cruz and Mady Schutzman also identify the context dependent and relational nature of this role; “[t]he joker must continually find the balance between honouring the process of the group and the needs of an effective final product. This is not always easy” (Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman 1994: 179). As I have discovered in my own facilitation, dependent on the group the degree to which I must channel energy, police activities, improvise or conduct the group is impossible to wholly plan for. The facilitator will discover in-the-moment what their role demands and this will impact upon the degree to which they can realise a product and support the personal process of the learners.

Paulo Freire argued that the individual who facilitates learning is not neutral nor are they the same as the group engaged. However Boal suggest that although the joker themselves is not neutral outside of the forum, in that context they *do* assume a neutrality in the interest of the group. Trying to assume a neutral stance is a technique which can aid the facilitation of the learning outcomes.

As the joker you have the responsibility to coordinate all the creations and the creators. But you also have to take care not to impose your own view. You are not superior to anybody. You have your opinion, you have your intelligence, you can have all the qualities you have, but you never say I am like this or I have more knowledge of this; that is the basics of it. [...] A joker, a real joker, is a person who can help the people write a play, help people do the blocking of the play, help the people with the music, with the text, with everything. [...] so the responsibility is to learn more and more and know more and more, so that you can teach in many ways. That is a bigger responsibility. But you have to teach in a democratic way, to respect the other ones. When the audience want to discuss what they think, the joker’s responsibility is a moral responsibility above all.

(Boal in Lyngstad and Eriksson 2003: 3)

But how does this translate into practice? How can the facilitator identify when they are transitioning into a didactic rather than democratic facilitator? Boal suggests that “[t]he joker’s neutrality is a responsible act and arises after having made a choice, after taking the side of the oppressed” (Boal 2006: 104). This underscores the political nature of facilitation. When faced with the difficulty of supporting a prescribed set of outcomes, by steering learners towards these when they indicate other interests I am not taking their side or responding to my ‘moral responsibility’. Boal’s arguments are problematic for the facilitator who wants to act responsibly but is also faced with the challenge of their own need to be sustainable.

Communities of Interest

In the UK, the new drama of the 1970s “assisted by the growth of fringe theatre, was powered by a belief that theatre had a directly political function” (Billington 2002: n.p.). The increasingly politicised British theatre of the 1970s and 1980s helped establish collaborative and co-operative modes of practice between communities and practitioners to sustain output.

a widely disseminated theatricality evolved and infused schools, institutions, political groups, marginal communities, suburbs, and cities, while new models of dramaturgy emerged, such as collective (ensemble) work and the workshop-theatre.

(Schininá 2004: 19)

The resurgence in agit-prop theatre was linked to economic and political upheavals in industry, for example proposed rent increases and anti-worker legislation which targeted worker’s unions. “The Workers Theatre Movement offered a model that chimed with the aspirations of many of the groups” during this period (Heddon and Milling 2006: 56). Interestingly, there are also examples of practitioners adapting dramatic approaches used with children to be applied with adult audiences, as in the case of the North West Spanners. Initially a “children’s company; parents asked the group if they could support their rent strike in 1972, resulting in their first play for adults, *The Rents Play*” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 98). John McGrath’s play *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil* (1973) became a famous example of a politicised play

which explored specific economic issues in Scotland during this era. His theatre company 7:84 Scotland (1973) began as a socialist theatre company but has now developed to have “a ‘community’ arm, which works with specifically targeted ‘communities’ for particular projects” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 122). These developments shaped the kind of community work now offered by organisations such as MED Theatre and Magic Carpet.

Sectional interest groups also began to utilise drama to support their own specific needs; their work had a clear pedagogic dimension. For example, “[t]he lesbian collective Siren Theatre Company, founded in 1979 in Brighton, [...] bore testimony to this process of group education and the focus on political clarity” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 101-102). The 1970s and 1980s had a resurgence in political theatre as there was an “observable lack of plays that addressed the concerns of many people including gay men, lesbians, disabled people [...] women” and also different ethnic minorities (Heddon and Milling 2006: 112). Companies such as Siren and Gay Sweatshop, Monstrous Regiment⁴⁷ and the Women’s Theatre Group (feminist issues), Graeae (disability), and British-Asian theatre company Tara Arts⁴⁸ (ethnicity) used theatre to explore “personal/political” issues (Heddon and Milling 2006: 126). It was during the 1970s that Paulo Freire’s idea of conscientization became widely disseminated and Boal published the highly influential *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1974) which highlighted “that communities of interest, rather than locality can be forged” (Heddon and Milling 2006: 131-132), a notion also found in the work of MED Theatre and Magic Carpet. These groups built on earlier movements which tried to raise the social and political consciousness of the working class. The development of informal learning through drama is linked to these radical and sectional groups, which sought to reclaim and reinvent dramatic practices so that they were inclusive of an increasingly multicultural and politically aware Britain.

⁴⁷ Monstrous Regiment originated in 1975, as a small feminist theatre collective. For more information on the key members and aims of their practice Lizbeth Goodman’s *Contemporary Feminist Theatres: To Each Her Own* provides a concise overview of their work.

⁴⁸ Tara Arts (1977) is the longest running British-Asian theatre company in the UK. They have expanded to have an educational programme and focus on translating/re-telling Asian and British plays and stories to engage Asian and non-Asian audiences (Heddon and Milling 2006: 182-183).

The Living Theatre in the USA also demonstrate how political, social and economic factors impact on facilitation praxis. Formed in 1947 by Julian Beck and Judith Malina, the Living Theatre had a socialist agenda. Their innovative productions of plays seldom staged led to the closure of all their New York venues. This prompted them to become a travelling ensemble in the late 1960s and 1970s. Travelling into different spaces and social contexts saw them move beyond staging existing texts to creating their own. They staged productions in slums, schools, prisons and factories, offering productions free of charge to audiences across the USA, Brazil and Europe. Importantly, in the 1980s they continued to develop their work by exploring the kind of participatory techniques popularized by Boal and TiE, perhaps influenced by their visits to the UK in the 1960s and 1970s. For example in *Prometheus at the Winter Palace (1978)* they used “the audience as groups of Bolsheviks, anarchists, etc. Workshops are held on stage to prepare audience participants for these episodes” (Murray and Keefe 2007: 69). In the London production in 1979, the audience “were invited to create Part Three of the play in the streets, walking from the Roundhouse to a silent, candle-lit vigil at the Holloway-Pentonville prison” (Murray and Keefe 2007: 69). This approach reinforced the links between the political and historical content of the play and current social issues for the audience. Facilitated workshops designed to extend the learning offered in a play have become an increasingly familiar feature of community praxis too. This shift towards growing levels of participation underscores the need for a dramatic facilitator in addition to directors and actors.

Further afield, the work of director and theorist Eugenio Barba with Odin Teatret was extending the way theatre could be applied within different communities. From 1974 Barba applied the practice of theatre ‘barter’, where Odin Teatret performers would “present a performance as a gift or barter for the local community” (Watson 2002: 75). Ian Watson (2002) identifies that the barter made theatre a site for learning about the act of relating to people, and also learning about the craft of theatre itself. Barba’s application of barter in a broad range of cultural settings including Uruguay, Italy and India, blurred the role of the actor as they also became facilitators of an exchange. In the “fading of the formal separation between spectators and performers [...] there is a shared space in which cultures meet” (Watson 2002: 103). Importantly, “the intention of

barter is to generate a barter community, not the theft of exotica” (Watson 2002: 108). There was a mutual respect and interest in engaging with different cultural and theatrical practices so that communities and performers could understand one another “even if our languages separate us” (Barba 1995: ix). For Barba “the extra-daily performance of workshops and community-based theatre meets the everyday performances of social and public life” (Schechner and Thompson 2004: 13). In Barba’s work facilitators gained a greater appreciation for what they could learn from the spectator. In this model Barba again showed that when the facilitator-artist is uncrowned and humbles themselves they are better able to learn from, and with, the community they have engaged.

Community Theatre

Extending this, Community Theatre is a form of participatory theatre which developed both inside and outside of mainstream theatrical spaces during this period. Petra Kuppers identifies that “there are many different definitions of community performance, and many practices that relate to it, such as applied theatre, New Genre Public Art, community-based performance, participatory arts, community dance, and theatre for social change and engaged art” (2007: 3). Given the diversity and overlaps in theatrical practices which aim to engage communities, it is more useful to view Community Theatre as part of a spectrum of developing forms which harnessed the pedagogic power of theatre through participatory approaches. Given my research focus, the analysis of Community Theatre here has a sectional gaze, focusing on key practitioners in the UK.

In *Radical Initiatives in Interventionist & Community Drama* (2005), Peter Billingham discusses how professional theatre informed the development of Community Theatre. He identifies how dramatists and directors such as Peter Cheeseman and Alan Ayckborn at the Victoria Theatre in Stoke and John Godber with Hull Truck Theatre began creating plays intended to engage specified communities (2005: 9). Philip Hedley, assistant and successor of Joan Littlewood at the Royal Theatre in Stratford East, also began developing a community programme “specifically working with Black and Asian sections of the community” (Billingham 2005: 9).

Cheeseman and Ann Jellicoe are two of the main figures in the early development of Community Theatre in the 1960s and 1970s. They demonstrate how professional theatre directors and actors began to adapt their work so that it engaged sectional audiences. Peter Cheeseman “worked with and for the local community of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme” (Giannachi and Luckhust 1999: 13). He created plays that resonated with a community which was “politically as well as geographically located” (Billingham 2005: 9). For example, *The Fight for Shelton Bar* (1974) examined “the impact of national government policies on specific, often dwindling local industries”, in the context of the closure of the local Stoke steelworks (Moore-Gilbert 1994: 290).

Jellicoe’s relationship with Community Theatre began in Lyme Regis where she was based; through her work she offers participants a “process of self-discovery and self-enrichment, for the sake of communication” (Jellicoe in Barnes 1986: 129). After staging her first community play *The Reckoning* (1978) Jellicoe realised that Community Theatre “was art which touched everybody in the community to some degree and by means of which some people changed their attitudes and lives (1987: 87). It had a function beyond entertainment, it also had a transformative or educational potential. In 1978, Jellicoe became the “founding director and, subsequently, president of the Colway Theatre Trust whose aim was to promote Community Theatre”, developing approaches to creating plays for and with a specific community (Peacock 1999: 113). For example “*The Western Women* (Lyme Regis, 1984) [...] was based on a story by Fay Weldon and historical research by John Fowles about the seventeenth century ancestors of the population of Lyme Regis” (Barnes 1986: 129). MED Theatre were influenced and supported by Jellicoe in the early 1980s; their success in her community competition and the guidance she offered to Mark Beeson helped them produce some of their early plays that have provided the template for their community output.

In 1968 Welfare State International diversified the kind of community praxis being facilitated in the UK, pioneering a distinctive form of community engagement. They devised spectacles in the form of processional theatre rather than staging plays like Cheeseman and Jellicoe. Their name was originally 'The Welfare State', reflecting their goal of offering art for all on the same basis as

education and health (Welfare State 2012: n.p.). This ethos is also apparent in Magic Carpet's aim to offer 'arts for health' in the community. Welfare State aimed to increase access to the arts, promoting "disability awareness, multigenerational and multicultural participation" in different communities" (Fox 2005: 7). In 1979 they established a permanent base in Cumbria; a residency in 1983 in Barrow-in-Furness enabled an on-going relationship with a specific community to develop (Peacock 1999: 117). As a testament to the impact of their practice founder John Fox asserts that "after a seven-year residency in Barrow-in-Furness working with the local community, Barrow now spends millions on art and leisure facilities (Fox 2005: 7). Having an on-going arts partnership that facilitated the creation of community-based carnivals and participatory events had a longitudinal effect on the way in which the Barrow-in-Furness community perceives and participates in performance. For the drama facilitator, Welfare State show how practitioners increasingly relied on the contributions made by participants themselves to shape their work. The "generation of primary artwork [...] takes a holistic and educational perspective" (Welfare State 2012: n.p.). For example, their "Lantern Parades, Flag Festivals, comedy excursions and street bands" relied on community participation during the process of lantern or flag making and in the actual performance itself (Fox 2005: 7). They worked "with children and their parents to explore imaginative play" rather than imposing their own ideas on the community, which requires strong facilitation skills to support cohesion and project development (Welfare State 2012: n.p.). Interestingly, Welfare State has also "made claims for the healing power of creativity" in their work, a claim echoed by Magic Carpet (Peacock 1999: 115). They argue that the collaborative creation of performances with a high degree of participant ownership can be "gently therapeutic" (Welfare State 2012: n.p.).

From Community Theatre the drama facilitator inherits a shift towards collaboration with the community during the planning, development and performance itself. In work made by and for a specific community the act of facilitating, rather than directing the process becomes central as the theatre practitioners share the decision-making process with participants. Theatre's pedagogic potential is again evident as it ensured that information about local history and current political and social events that impacted on the communities

engaged was disseminated. The role of theatre in the exploration of local issues and celebrations highlighted how theatre could “combine a disparate group of people in a collaborative activity [...] to promote the community’s awareness of its common history” (Peacock 1999: 113). MED’s output is also informed by this approach to community learning. In Chapter Six we see how they work with families in public workshops offering opportunities for imaginative play. They also offer an annual festival of young people’s new writing called Dartfest and have helped develop a lantern procession celebrating local history with students. Magic Carpet have also taken part in parades, and created art sculptures in community spaces to promote their particular client group and make links with the wider community.

The Contemporary Facilitator

Current research attempts to capture the facilitator’s voice; however it often remains a minor aspect within the analysis of the outcomes of projects, or a facet within a study. For example, Tim Prentki’s *The Fool in European Theatre: Stages of Folly* (2011), briefly considers the facilitative capacity of characters such as Azdak (*Caucasian Chalk Circle*) and Dario Fo’s madman (*Mistero Buffo*). He critiques some applications of facilitation; however the focus is primarily on the traditions and techniques of the ‘fool’ with facilitation being a small aspect of this distinct role. Prentki offers a thoughtful consideration of Boal’s joker, arguing that it must be more than a facilitator to be truly effective (2011: 208). His assertion that the “Joker has been too much the facilitator and too little the fool” (Prentki 2011: 210) is an interesting argument for the Forum Theatre specialist to consider. However, Prentki’s research only really examines the facilitator in this context and does not utilise the subjective voice of the facilitators themselves to help expand the arguments put forward, therefore providing a limited analysis to those with a specific interest in the facilitator’s role.

Wisdom Machacha’s article *Wisdom Machacha’s journey from workshop attendee to travelling facilitator* (2009) discusses the importance of facilitator collaboration, peer networks, and observation to the development of facilitation skills. He particularly identifies the benefits of co-facilitators exchanging skills and the way developing local networks can make praxis sustainable. However,

the analysis here is again brief with the focus on how facilitators can deliver ICT specific workshops, focusing on the project itself rather than reflecting on the facilitation which underpinned the project.

Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor and Mariana Souto-Manning have discussed drama-specific techniques as pedagogic tools in their book *Teachers Act up!: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities through Theatre* (2010). They document how teachers “beg, borrow, and steal ideas and then adapt these treasures to one's own needs in one's own context” (Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning 2010: 41). Here, the focus is specifically on the teacher, with an emphasis on those in formalised institutions within the USA. The personal and subjective dimension to their praxis offers some useful insights for the pedagogic facilitator. They analyse conversations documented from participating educators to engage with key issues such as the power dynamics in the classroom. They situate conversations and observations they have documented alongside their analysis of existing literature to enhance the potential for analogous learning. Despite the focus on Forum Theatre and the joker there are only two explicit references to facilitation itself, illustrating how the facilitative capacity of our roles gets lost within the analysis with related roles, here the teacher and actor.

Petra Kuppers documents her working processes through a range of different resources in *Disability culture and community performance: find a strange and twisted shape* (2011). This book includes poetry and images alongside Kupper's own observations and responses in workshops to give a more subjective flavour of her working process. Pertinently she asks the reader “am I a teacher, an artist/director, or a facilitator when I offer alternative options to participants, other ways of sharing?” (Kuppers 2011: 230). Despite providing the reader with an insightful self-reflexive discourse this is Kupper's only explicit reference to facilitation and her personal analysis is not linked to the existing field of literature. This text remains firmly grounded in the discussion of specific projects within the disabled community but Kupper's ideas have the potential to be linked and considered alongside facilitators in related roles to help establish a more comprehensive analysis of good facilitation praxis. My research aims to bring together facilitators and combine their personalised self-reflexive

documentation with the existing literature to expand the analysis of current facilitation practices.

Facilitators are becoming more adept at using journals to disseminate findings. For example, Gay Morris (2013) has analysed her process of offering theatre-making skills in Cape Town's black townships in 2005-2009. Her article *Flexible weaving: investigating the teaching and learning opportunities in the practices of theatre-makers and performers from selected townships in Cape Town*, documents the different modes of learning which underpinned her project and utilises participant feedback to help justify the conclusions drawn from her observations. She considers both the formal and informal learning opportunities which she provided, but here the emphasis is on the project outcomes, what participants gained from the project with her own role a secondary concern within the analysis.

Dawson et al. examine both learning outcomes for the teacher and for the student in their article *Drama for Schools: teacher change in an applied theatre professional development model* (2011). They utilise statistical data and informal conversations and observations to document how teacher reflection is supported by *learning facilitators*, discussing specific exercises to illustrate how these facilitators promote self-reflection for teachers. Interestingly, they suggest that drama in schools (DFS) can be developed by the training of a "master elementary learning facilitator" who would be an expert responsible for providing "peer training and the long-term sustainability" (Dawson et al 2011: 333). Despite arguing for the importance of learning facilitators in the support of teacher development, what constitutes a facilitator and how they prepare and develop for this role is not outlined in depth.

Maggie Pitfield (2012) thoughtfully analyses the way in which drama teachers develop their professional skills. Utilising qualitative data from a small sample of teachers helps to situate personal experience within the wider discourse. Importantly the process of informal professional exchange, observations and post-teaching discussions are highlighted as areas of particular importance. The relationship between the developing drama teacher and more experienced colleagues or mentors is put forward as an essential component to developing good praxis. Pitfield observes that "[m]entors have demonstrated, enabled,

allowed experimentation, and encouraged collegial reflective practice, thus supporting the student-teachers in arriving at a model of practice and a set of positions around pedagogical content knowledge to which they can subscribe” (2012: 440). My research identifies a similar process of collegial reflection and support for the drama facilitator, and similarly argues for experienced colleagues providing an essential space for “self-reflection, giving clear guidance when necessary, but crucially offering [facilitators] the freedom to explore and make mistakes” (Pitfield 2012: 437). There is a space to create similar investigations into the way in which drama facilitators develop their professional skills to help promote and develop their profession.

The facilitators or their organisations may try to promote and document their practice utilising online platforms. For example, SSF share many of their training documents, media coverage and pupil videos online but the majority of the documentation is created with little direct input from the facilitators themselves. Innovative TiE companies such as C&T feature podcasts by their facilitators which gives these professionals a platform or ‘voice’; again the focus is often shifted to the projects, the learners and the outcomes as opposed to how the facilitators themselves operate. Here the issue is often about the marketability of their services, with facilitators creating a positive bias in the way data is utilised. MED Theatre have tried to engage in Age of We, a non-commercial online network which brings together a range of community based arts projects across the UK. Organisations can share blogs, learn about similar projects, conferences, or online platforms which may help them find inspiration, funding or support. Currently this network is in its infancy with the focus being on the projects as a whole and engages with macro issues such as citizenship, notions of society and participation. Therefore, there is a distinct space in the field for the facilitator and the process of facilitation itself to be recognised and analysed discretely. This study begins to address this overlooked area of research by making a focused examination of how and why facilitated learning processes are being sustained and developed across various learning settings.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have mapped out the key practitioners and social developments that have informed the development of the 21st Century drama facilitator. This

overview has also indicated some of the benefits and challenges which may arise for the drama facilitator currently operating in formal and informal pedagogic contexts. Educational policy and reforms can function to both benefit and challenge the role of drama facilitation in education. Economic shifts necessitate that the facilitator looks for new ways of sustaining praxis and forming partnerships to access learners and resources. An understanding of the socio-political issues which people are affected by enables the facilitator to identify content which may inform their praxis. The political power of drama as an educational tool can both justify its inclusion in educational settings and conversely discourage its application. Although there is a strong history of drama being used in and out of schools as a complement to formalised learning, it can still be received with suspicion by education authorities as Gove's reforms suggest. As Henley (2011) discovered in his review, the drama facilitator and their practice can in one school or community setting be seen as an essential activity, in another regarded as an optional adjunct to learning which requires the drama facilitator to produce data to justify their inclusion. Furthermore, this chapter highlights that innovations in practice do not develop in isolation, there is a clear tradition of cross fertilisation and borrowing between dramatic traditions and more broadly from related fields such as psychology and different art forms.

The case studies selected extend the documentation of drama facilitation in education in the 21st Century. SSF builds on the heritage of Children's Theatre, striving to create an inclusive model that is closely linked to curriculum learning but still enables participants to develop socially and personally. Magic Carpet offers a model of lifelong learning which supports both informal development in the recovery of adults with mental health, and also offers formal learning opportunities in its NOCN courses. MED Theatre has extended the Community Theatre model and also borrowed ideas from TiE and DiE to offer facilitation in schools, colleges and universities. West Exe Technology College evidence how informal drama facilitators can enable learners to achieve formal qualifications and address informal learning through the exploration of statutory and non-statutory PSHE themes, supporting a 'bigger picture' learning experience. The case study chapters function to extend the existing literature which maps the progress of the drama facilitator, clarifying how they adapt and engage with

current challenges in the pedagogic landscape. The next chapter introduces the dominant learning theories which inform the pedagogic landscape to identify how drama facilitation is informed by these theoretical discourses. The range of assessment approaches are also outlined and evaluated to interrogate how these can be integrated and adapted effectively in practice.

Chapter Two

Pedagogic Problems: Theories of Learning, Assessment and Drama Facilitation

This chapter introduces the three main theories of learning which specifically impact upon drama facilitation praxis across the spectrum of learning settings. The problems of negotiating different learning theories are explored, and the challenges of selecting appropriate assessment tools are outlined. These principal theories will firstly be contextualised, and their influence on dramatic facilitation will then be considered. This is supported with an examination of assessment approaches, to consider the strengths and limitations of tools applied by facilitators in their effort to validate drama-based learning processes. In my own praxis I adopt a primarily socio-constructivist approach which has been reinforced through my observations and collaborations with the facilitators in this study. However, an awareness and ability to draw upon behaviourist and humanist approaches has become a necessary part of my praxis as the kinds of learning contexts I work in continues to diversify. This chapter argues in favour of drama facilitators having a commitment to engaging with the spectrum of learning theories and assessment methods to underpin their work with a broadening range of learners. The development of a secure knowledge base and a familiarity with the way other professionals frame, assess and understand the learning process is integral to good practice, an argument which is supported through my discussion of theory and its application in this chapter.

Theoretical Problems

In 2007 I undertook a Postgraduate General Certificate in Education (PGCE) in secondary school drama teaching. Here my exploration with different learning theories began in earnest. During the course of study, trainee teachers were given an intensive introduction to what have become the dominant learning theories applied in formal education, particularly within the compulsory sector. It was mandatory during my study that all drama teachers have a basic understanding of what were classed as the three main categories of learning theory: behaviourist theory, constructivist theory, and humanist approaches to learning. Trainee drama teachers were also required to get a working knowledge of what were presented as the seminal theorists in these fields of

learning: B.F. Skinner, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner and John Dewey. In a drama-specific context we were given an introduction to learning theory through the work of Jonathan Neelands, Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire. After qualifying in 2008, I realised that the primary lesson I had taken from this formalised training was that the field of learning theory, and its impact upon my dramatic praxis was too vast to be fully introduced within one year of training. I had been provided with a foundation of knowledge that required active development as part of my on-going professional praxis.

However, this was further problematised as I shifted from working in the formal education sector to practicing as a drama facilitator in a range of informal community groups. I discovered that my perceptions of successful learning, and also my approaches to assessment had to undergo a process of realignment to be compatible in these spaces. My understanding of learning and assessment processes was too limited and required development to enable me to successfully support both formal and informal learning.

In my on-going praxis and further study I observed that a multitude of different learning theories had been posited and integrated into learning practices. Working with schools and community groups I began to understand how learning practices are heavily influenced by government policy and reforms. By negotiating the different criteria and policies that structured my praxis I saw how learning is a political act. There are a range of perspectives on what the purpose of learning is and these are articulated in different ways by various governments, educational policies and theorists. For example, Stephen Coffield refers to the way in which learning was framed as a diverse social phenomenon by the Labour government in their Green Paper *The Learning Age* (1998).

Learning helps create and sustain our culture. It helps all of us improve our chances of getting a job [...] strengthens families, and the wider community and encourages independence [...] It helps businesses to be more successful by adding value [...] It provides the tools to manage industrial and technological change, and helps generate ideas, research and innovation [...] is essential for a strong community.

(DfEE Green Paper in Coffield 2000: 200)

Steve Bartlett rightly asserts that individuals “learn from birth, through childhood, at school, in the workplace. We have learnt how to live in society and are the product of our own learning” (2003: 191). Bartlett summarises the arguments that underpin the popular discourse of ‘lifelong learning’, which gained recognition during New Labour’s ‘Learning Age’ of the 1990s. In my research the drama facilitators are part of this extended ‘lifelong’ perception of learning, as they educate participants of different ages, in multiple ways and in multiple settings – there are *different* ways of learning evident. But the problem that facilitators of learning face is that how we learn, and importantly evidence that learning, is subject to many different theories and debates. This problem has been exacerbated in recent years through “a loosening of the boundaries around concepts of [...] learning [...] distinctions between formal and informal learning, or between different institutional contexts, become less significant since learning might occur in the workplace, the home, the car, the internet café, as well as the college” (Harrison, Reeve, Hanson, and Clarke 2002: 1).

If learning is being recognised and valued in a multitude of settings, then how it is supported and assessed will need to be tailored to maximise the efficacy of the process in that context. A loosening of the boundaries can actually make it harder to identify what kind of learning is occurring, and pinpoint what assessment tools should be applied to measure it. Furthermore, the lack of a cohesive learning society supports the need to locate personalised assessment tools to facilitate effectively. The ambition to create a unified or cohesive learning society in the UK has been:

severely hampered by widespread and deep-seated disagreement about the characteristics of such a society [...] Moreover, the political and educational discourse surrounding a learning society and lifelong learning was shot through not only by extreme conceptual vagueness but also by ‘factual’ assumptions and assertions which were unsupported by any hard evidence.

(Coffield 2000: 3-4)

For the facilitator, this indicates that an idea may be validated in one learning context yet negated in another, dependent upon the specific locality in which the learner is situated and the cultural values and beliefs which govern that context. Phil Cooke proposes that given this sectional perspective of culture it may be

more useful to consider “regional or even local learning societies”, a perspective arguably modelled by the personalised approach to praxis examined in my research (Coffield 2000: 14). The issue of having sectional learning societies is raised again in the discussion of SSF and MED’s approaches to being inclusive of the peer cultures that can be identified in schools and rural community settings.

It has been suggested that a “consequence of such local learning societies is that national initiatives tend to be seen as rather remote, irrelevant to local needs and imposed from above” (Coffield 2000: 15). In practice, this can translate into the personally determined informal criteria of the participant conflicting with formally prescribed criteria. Certainly, this has been a challenge in my own research with Magic Carpet within the *Moving On* project. The requirement to assess how participants have ‘moved on’ against the criteria of the National Lottery funders at times differed markedly with how participants themselves felt they had realised this task. Trying to find the assessment tools to evidence progression which was both meaningful for the funders and participants required specialist support from professional evaluators Sarah Taragaon and Angie McTiernan to enable the facilitators to undertake the task, a process analysed further in Chapter Three.

The different theories of how people learn are often framed as being in competition, seeking to legitimise their pedagogic worth by discrediting the efficacy of other approaches to learning. The drama facilitator operating in a range of learning settings should not perceive these theories as binaries but as different discourses that “emerge from particular historical, social and cultural settings” (Harrison, Reeve, Hanson, and Clarke 2002: 3). Instead of being viewed competitively, these discourses each have a legitimate potential for successful application and can offer the facilitator valuable insight. David James refers to Kneller (1965) and Brookfield (1987) who apply the terms ‘preparation’ and ‘exploration’ respectively to refer to the process of developing an analogous awareness of different learning practices. They encourage the practitioner to gain an introduction to different theories, without trying to champion any approach above the others from the outset, but giving equal consideration to the potential application of all the options presented (James 1999: 50). To extend

this, here I am looking at how the three aforementioned foundation theories within education may impact upon the drama facilitator's work. I argue that an 'exploration' of different learning models, although challenging, can help the drama facilitator become an extended professional, better equipped to facilitate across a spectrum of learning settings.

Key Learning Theories

There are a number of educationalists who have tried to summarise the range of learning theories into different overarching categories to enable the educator to engage with them. The three primary categories of learning introduced in my teacher training – behaviourism, constructivism and humanism – correlate well with the existing literature that documents the theoretical field of learning. Although researchers have proposed other sub-categories or use different labels to define the main learning theories, these three approaches arguably form the foundation of theory which supports the praxis analysed in my research. Therefore, although I acknowledge that there are alternative learning theories that have also been discussed to analyse education in other settings, in my analysis I shall use these three models to engage with the praxis of the drama facilitator in different learning settings.

In *Education, Culture and the National Curriculum* (1989) Denis Lawton defines the three principal categories of learning theory as classical humanism, progressivism and reconstructionism. Within this model, "classical humanism is knowledge-centred and progressivism is learner-centred, reconstructionism is society-centred" (Norwich 2000: 30). This indicates how terms can be applied in different ways, as the term humanism is also applied to counter what have been categorised as knowledge-centred processes. However, Lawton does aptly summarise what are broadly the main stances that educators assume towards the purpose of learning. If we recall Coffield's assertion that learning is a lifelong process that supports the extension of knowledge, the individual, and society, then the importance of the facilitator having a functioning knowledge of more than one theoretical model is reiterated through Lawton's summary.

In *Teaching Adults* (2002) Alan Rogers presents behaviourist, cognitive and humanist learning theory as three of the primary categories, also including an

analysis of personality theory to extend his own engagement with the field. This perspective is also echoed in Helen Moylett's (2003) discussion of education and care with young children. The theories of learning are again put into "three broad categories – transmission/behaviourism, laissez-faire and social constructivism. Most practitioners will work with all three models giving more or less emphasis to each depending on context" (Moylett 2003: 29). Moylett also identifies the need for an extended professional to be able to negotiate different categories of learning and the related assessment processes which govern them. Daniel and Laurel Tanner (1980) also present three educational 'visions': conservative, progressivism and romanticism. Again the conservative vision correlates with behaviourist notions of knowledge-centred learning, progressivism includes reconstructionist thinking, borrowing from the ideas of John Dewey, and romanticism parallels the humanist focus on the autonomy of the individual (Norwich 2000: 31-33). In *Learning Theories: A to Z* (2002) David Leonard places the spectrum of learning theories in one of four overarching categories; again constructivism, behaviourism and humanism are identified as primary models of learning theory, with cognitive processes also being discussed separately (2002: v).

These theorists are among many who have tried to break down learning processes into general categories. What the research indicates is that although it is possible to identify broad distinctions, it is not possible to provide definitive and distinct learning categories; "there is no universal agreement about what constitutes the learning schools" (Leonard 2002: vii). These are fluid concepts, negotiated between facilitator and learner. As I discovered through my own praxis and research, the diverse and sectional field of learning theory can be problematic for the facilitator trying to identify appropriate approaches and assessment tools, an issue also identified by Leonard. He asserts that facilitators can be presented with a "confusing array of learning theories, a language unique to learning theorists, and a good deal of overlap between one category [...] and the next" (Leonard 2002: vii). Consequently, it is difficult to summarise the full range of theories, particularly as the work of the seminal learning theorists has been developed and applied to inform more than one approach. The drama facilitator may find that a constructivist model of learning differs markedly from one project to another, requiring them to constantly review

and refine their approach to the brief. For example, Leonard has argued that facilitators will find that “some learning theories, such as Jean Piaget’s *genetic epistemology* and Jerome Bruner’s *discovery learning*, could easily fall under two schools, such as cognitivism and constructivism” (2002: vii). Brahm Norwich (2000) notes that John Dewey’s philosophy of education is problematic as it has been incorporated into both cognitive and constructivist learning theories. These overlaps in the literature can impede praxis; tensions can arise between facilitators who encounter conflicting approaches to facilitating and assessing learning based on different interpretations of the learning process. As I shall demonstrate, a commitment to engaging with multiple learning theories is necessary for the drama facilitator to ensure that they do not unconsciously apply learning approaches that are habitual rather than selecting those which are aligned to good praxis.

Behaviourist Theories of Learning

Behaviourist models focus on the role of external stimulus and the reinforcement offered by outside agents to teach learners what the ‘correct’ response to stimulus is. What is to be learnt is a fixed body of knowledge that can be transmitted to the learner. “Behaviourist theories distinguish sharply between right and wrong, they assume that knowledge is truth” and see knowledge as an objective entity (Rogers and Horrocks 2002: 100). For the facilitator, “the main aim of learning is to change behaviour [...] learning is thus brought about by an association between the desired responses and the reinforcement (rewards and punishment) through a system of success and failure indicators” (Rogers and Horrocks 2002: 99). The behaviour presented by the learner in response to different stimuli will be approved or discouraged by the facilitator, conditioning the learner to behave ‘correctly’ (Rogers and Horrocks 2002: 99). In behaviourist theory the learner is compared to an empty vessel, or as Paulo Freire (1970) has framed it in his criticism of this approach, an object in which to ‘bank’ or deposit knowledge. The research of Ivan Pavlov, John Broadus Watson⁴⁹ (1924) and Burrhus Frederick Skinner⁵⁰ (1978) provide a good grounding in behaviourist theory, and their research offers an extension of the summary I provide here.

⁴⁹ Watson J. B. (2009 [1924]) *Behaviorism*, 7th edition, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

⁵⁰ Skinner, B.F. (1978) *Reflections on behaviourism and society*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Behaviourist learning is usually perceived as a system-centred and prescriptive approach. The behaviourist model requires evidence which quantifies how much knowledge has been poured in or, to borrow Freire's term, 'banked' within a learner. This model and the assessment procedures it has developed do have a place within the spectrum of learning practices. There are instances where it is useful for a learner to acquire facts which are not negotiated; sometimes learners must acquire 'correct' answers to questions. When outcomes are not subjective, modes of assessment which help to identify what students can now recall and put into action are useful. In drama, facts, and knowledge about theatre history, plays and techniques can act as a foundation which enables more independent and negotiated learning to occur. There will be times, particularly in curriculum drama, where the act of banking is a necessary precursor to being able to facilitate collaborative and improvisational praxis and the facilitator needs to understand when and how behaviourist models can work.

Behaviourist theories have been critiqued on the basis that they have "their origin in animal experimentation associated with biological and mechanistic assumptions that are common principles of learning across different species" (Norwich 2000: 10). Behaviourism has also "been criticized [*sic*] for its emphasis on external factors that influence behaviour, at the expense of other variables" (Parrish 2009: 107). For example, Pavlov's (1927) "experiments with dogs and humans revealed that behaviour [*sic*] that had been thought to be entirely instinctual could in fact be the result of conditioning by learning situations" (Kornblum 2008: 100). It has also been proposed that Jean Piaget's theories of child development were informed by the transference of ideas from his earlier experiments with molluscs (see Haskell 2000: 210; Newman and Newman 2007: 83). Piaget presented play as a set of cognitive stages, bound by biological development. During these stages children gradually learn through play how to behave 'correctly':

1. Sensorimotor (practice play) at 0-2 years
2. Preoperational (symbolic play) at 2-7 years
3. Concrete operational (games with rules) at 7-11 years

(Jones 1996: 170)

Although Piaget's early ideas have been highly influential, many of his assertions have been discredited and developed by later researchers including Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1960) and Howard Gardner⁵¹ (2006). Despite the 'empty vessel' behaviourist attitude to learning being widely criticised and challenged in contemporary education discourses, behaviourist principles are an enduring feature of British culture, and importantly, our initial learning processes. Fixed notions of 'correct' and 'incorrect' behaviour characterise early learning, and these later become embedded in educational practices, both formal and informal. Whether a child is labelled 'good' or 'bad' is linked to their behaviour; 'good' children are quiet and assimilate well into the existing routine of adults. Children may be disciplined, even physically, because they are not perceived to be mature enough to be reasoned with in any other way (Moylett 2003: 19). They are sanctioned or rewarded, conditioned to produce what has been externally judged as 'good' behaviour. Professionals who facilitate learning need to recognise that "[t]he immaturity of children is understood as a biological fact of life but the ways in which this immaturity is understood and made meaningful is a fact of culture" (James and Proust in Moylett 2003: 19). The facilitator of learning should use their own observations to decide whether a behaviourist approach to discipline and learning is compatible with their praxis, rather than applying approaches because they are established or habitual in that context. Piagetian theories of how, and importantly, when children are able to learn have endured despite later research that has countered these ideas. The facilitator must be aware that there are other approaches available, and also be able to identify when they are aligning their praxis with a particular learning theory.

Behaviourist theory is often considered knowledge-centred, and therefore of limited use to the drama facilitator with a person-centred and liberal philosophy. However, re-evaluating praxis from a behaviourist perspective can help the drama facilitator to develop a stronger rationale for their chosen methods and

⁵¹ Wendy Conklin and Christi Sorrell present a concise and contemporary overview of multiple intelligences in their book *Applying Differentiation Strategies*, specifically considering how Gardner's theory can be applied in the education of children. They include strategies for introducing multiple intelligences to students and parents, identifying preferred learning styles and identify common pitfalls to guide the practitioner (2009: 136-150).

potentially identify areas for development. To illustrate, Kathryn Ecclestone and Dennis Hayes discuss the practice of educational psychologist Jenny Mosley and her impact on the statutory but informal Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning strategy (SEAL) launched in 2005 by the Department for Skills and Education (2009: 28-29). SEAL has become an important part of informal learning in the curriculum. It is a “comprehensive, whole-school approach to promoting the social and emotional skills that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance, staff effectiveness and the emotional health and well-being of all who learn and work in schools” (DCSF 2007: 4). The SEAL initiative has been informed by Daniel Goleman’s *Emotional Intelligence* (1995), a book which built upon the seminal Multiple Intelligences theory of Howard Gardner (1983). Goleman presents five key principles in the development of emotionally literate individuals:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-regulation (managing feelings)
3. Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Social skills

(Goleman 1995)

Influenced by the humanist principles of Carl Rogers’ research, Mosley’s praxis in the compulsory sector is designed to facilitate the development of emotionally literate individuals. Her praxis is chiefly associated with the implementation of circle time, a group forum in which students can discuss PSHE issues such as bullying, and also engage in “group and pair games to help children, socialise, build oral confidence and enjoy themselves” (Ecclestone and Hayes 2009: 28). The circle form is intended to ‘uncrown’ the facilitator, rejecting the conventional classroom hierarchies reinforced through the spatial layout that separates learner and teacher. It is considered to be an inclusive strategy as all learners can be seen and potentially be heard. Thus far, Mosley’s praxis appears compatible with a person-centred humanist approach. However, the application of circle time to explore personal and social education issues with young children is questioned. Although the circle time is ideally intended by Mosley to follow the “Rogerian principles of empathy [and] active listening” Ecclestone and Hayes suggest that the adults within the circle take a behaviourist approach,

reinforcing 'correct' responses to the issues raised (2009: 28). The circle time is rigidly structured and planned, with activities selected and prepared by the teachers in advance. The 'correct' responses to the issues discussed get rewarded, for example through verbal praise and certificates (Ecclestone and Hayes 2009: 29). Therefore, children are taught that not all their opinions are equally valid or welcome, not every contribution will be greeted with an empathetic response as some suggestions can result in rewards or sanctions. 'Correct' behaviour is reinforced in subsequent sessions so that the circle and the discussion function to 'bank' prescribed notions of right and wrong in the learner.

There is a problem with education praxis "happening in formal and informal settings, often with agendas dictated by their funding" producing "didactic work sometimes in the guise of participatory methodologies which are designed to 'educate' young people on health/social issues such as anti-smoking, drinking and drug taking" (Preston 2009: 231). When applied in this way, the facilitator is not uncrowned, but maintains an authoritative and powerful position within the learning interaction. Rather than allowing the learners to question attitudes, through a problem-based approach to learning, they are taught to assume a particular perspective. For example, a ten year old in Ecclestone and Hayes' case study said:

Now we're in Year 6, it's not called circle time, it's PSHE, that's personal, social and health education. It's the same but you talk about how to say no to drugs and cigarettes.

(2009: 30)

In this case the facilitator's focus and praxis has not been "identified or defined by the young people they serve but [...] determined by the agenda of the funders" or the facilitators intent on delivering the right message instead of exploring the problem (Preston 2004: 231). The aim of programmes such as SEAL and PSHE is not to prescribe behaviours but to create more informed individuals that can construct their own response to an issue. Here, thinking about the right way to frame and deliver is an essential part of good praxis; facilitators cannot rely on habitual teaching techniques. Also, is the facilitator aware of their own personal bias, and can they identify whether this is

reinforcing or favouring particular outcomes? For example, if the facilitator has decided to bank in the children the idea that smoking is bad, a highly structured plan, and the use of rewards and sanctions in the circle can help deliver this. However, if the aim is to discuss the pros and cons of smoking openly and empathetically, then a very different process of planning and assessment will be needed. What this example indicates for the drama facilitator is that an awareness of the kind of learning theory which is shaping the application of their techniques enables them to make more informed decisions. Importantly, when engaging with personalised informal learning we must be able to draw on different theoretical models; “the behavioural approach can be effective initially, but [...] it has few long-term benefits, being ineffective in helping children and young people internalizing their learning and generalizing from it” (Palardy in Weare 2004: 66). Therefore the drama facilitator needs grounding in constructivist and humanist principles to extend their approaches, and identify points of correlation and distinction within the varying theoretical models.

Constructivist Theories of Learning

In this model the work of Piaget, Dewey, Vygotsky and Bruner has been particularly influential, highlighting the problematic overlap inherent within learning theory and the appropriation of ideas to support different learning agendas. Facilitators may also be challenged by the sub-categories which have emerged within this field, such as reconstructionist and socio-constructivist theory, which place different degrees of emphasis on the role of socialisation and individualism within the learning process. At a base level, constructivist learning theory posits that:

learners are not empty vessels to pour information and ideologies into. They are rather to be seen as radiating starting points of their own learning through their own life experiences and values that they have formed in the socio-cultural contexts they live in both within and without the formal school system.

(Von Wright and Von Wright in Piekari 2001: 12)

Constructivist theorists assert “that human beings actively create their own models or hypotheses as to how the world works” rather than assimilating and accommodating the perspective of the world modelled by others (Bräuer 2002:

9). Learning occurs “as students reflect on what was taught and construct their own meaning as they study with peers or apply new learning out-side of school” (Collay and Gagnon 2006: 3-4). Formal and informal learning are framed as inter-related processes. In this model learning is “both an individual and social process of constructing meaning” where the educator ‘organises’ rather than plans for learning (Collay and Gagnon 2006: 3). The educator observes what the learner “can do in order to support or ‘scaffold’ his or her learning and then come up with ideas for extending it” (Moylett 2003: 31). Therefore the educator’s role is closely aligned with a facilitator within constructivist praxis.

Despite his influence within the behaviourist field, Piaget’s research has also been integrated into constructivist theory; he “introduced the idea that children construct their own knowledge in his book *The Construction of Reality in the Child*” in 1954 (Collay and Gagnon 2006: 3). However, the on-going and social nature of learning associated with this model has been developed by the work of other educators and psychologists. For example, in their discussion of a constructivist approach, Howard Tanner and Sonia Jones acknowledge the research of Jean Piaget (1977) which asserts that learners “must construct knowledge through their own efforts” (2006: 5). However their research extends his ideas so that they offer a ‘socio-constructivist’ stance, asserting that they “do not think that the process of knowledge construction should take place in isolation, divorced from teaching and social interaction” (Tanner and Jones: 2006: 5-6). Dewey’s research was instrumental in the creation of what Denis Lawton (1989) argues is a ‘reconstructionist’ ideology. Lawton suggests that Dewey’s research “tries to combine the active individualism of progressivism with the value placed on knowledge by classical humanism” in an attempt to address both informal (individual) learning and formal (knowledge-based) learning, an approach which has been extended in later constructivist models (Norwich 2002: 31). The research of Lev Vygotsky (1966; 1978) and Jerome Bruner (1983; 1986; 1990) has been particularly influential in this extension of constructivist theory.

Although Vygotsky began his research in 1917 it was not until the 1960s that his ideas were translated into English and gained recognition in the West. His influential book *The Process of Education* (1960) became a key text which

informed a period of experimentation in approaches to education, helping to introduce collaborative models of learning. “Vygotskian ideas have [...] been contrasted with behaviourist psychological ideas, which have had a longer influence on education” with their roots in earlier Piagetian research (Norwich 2000: 9). Vygotsky’s ideas emphasise the teacher’s role as a mediator of learning, strengthening the perspective of educator as facilitator. The General Teaching Council for England (GTCE)⁵² asserted that Vygotsky’s “ideas are more relevant than ever since the introduction of thinking skills as specific content in national strategies” (2003: n.p.). They argue that the most important features of Vygotsky’s legacy are his framing of children’s play as a pedagogic process and his theory of a ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD) (GTCE 2003: n.p.). ZPD “refers to the difference between what a person can achieve by him/herself and what s/he can achieve with the assistance from a more skilled person” (GTCE 2003: n.p.). It is “the level just beyond the one at which one can function on one’s own. [...] As children engage in spontaneous symbolic play or classroom drama directed by a teacher [...] they are catapulted into a developmental level that is above their actual one” (Bräuer 2002: 10). Through the proposal of a ZPD Vygotsky differed from his contemporaries, asserting that the assessment of learner ability is best done when they are monitored working with a skilled assistant rather than testing them in isolation. This theory developed because Vygotsky believed that the majority of learning interactions are part of collaborative processes where a form of facilitation, what Bruner later defined as ‘scaffolded interactions’, is integral to the development process. Assessment could also be an interactive and observational process not just a quantitative test of knowledge, an important consideration for the drama facilitator trying to create bespoke modes of assessment.

Vygotsky’s theories are often viewed in opposition to the work of Piaget; crucially for the drama facilitator both recognise the importance of play within cognitive development even if they disagree about the process of cognitive development itself. His ideas differ from “Piagetian ideas which portray the child as learning and developing as an individual in direct relation to the environment.

⁵² The General Teaching Council for England was closed in April 2012 and replaced by the Department for Education (DfE). The GTCs for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are still active.

The Piagetian framework is represented as individualised and biological, assuming fixed stages and sequences of development, less interested in the social environment and the potential for change in psychological development” (Norwich 2000: 9). Vygotsky believed that play fulfils children’s emotional and physical needs; he goes further than Piaget by suggesting that play can act as a major stimulus for cognitive development because learning is primarily constructed socially.

Jerome Bruner built on the research of both Piaget and Vygotsky in his analysis of constructivist processes. He embraced Piaget’s notion that learners actively assimilate and accommodate information to reinforce their existing cognitive framework. Bruner’s developments are particularly interesting for facilitators who also transition into ‘lifelong learning’ contexts with adults. He adapted Piaget’s three stage model of cognitive development and re-framed these stages as the pre-operational, concrete-operational, and formal-operational. Importantly, “Bruner, unlike Piaget, did not contend that these stages were necessarily age-dependent. Bruner’s progressive stage theory of children’s intellectual development relates to learning in general” (GTC 2006: n.p.). Bruner’s refinement of Piaget’s model extends it to allow for this learning process to continue into later childhood and potentially adulthood; social interactions can instigate learning at any point whereas earlier theory suggested that cognitive development was tied to pre-determined biological factors. Bruner’s approach to the learning process has points of correlation with Vygotsky’s ZPD theory as he opposes a biologically pre-determined approach to cognitive development, arguing that environment and interaction will determine when a learner is able to move on to a new stage of cognition. The facilitator should not pre-judge a learner’s ability based on their age, rather they should observe and interact with the learner to decide what level of support and stimulus is most appropriate-they need to conduct their own ‘baseline’ assessment. This kind of constructivist thinking has led to personalised learning being integrated into the curriculum with specialist support for ‘gifted and talented’ and ‘Special Educational Needs’ learners. Rather than providing standardised resources and tasks for learners of the same age, personalised handouts, extension tasks, one-to-one support and other specialist stimuli can be offered if the educator identifies the need to adapt the level of support

provided through their observations and assessments. Personalised approaches, such as different styles of questioning, optional resources, and additional time on tasks can also be applied within informal learning. For example I have created specialist resources in Magic Carpet for dyslexic and partially sighted learners to ensure that the stimulus is personalised to maximise their potential to engage with it. I may also come to a workshop with differentiated task for particular learners, offering a mix of practical and writing tasks to ensure that the learning outcomes we have negotiated with learners are being realised.

In later years Bruner became increasingly interested in the impact of the 'bigger picture' social and political environment on the learner. His interest in the way external factors will influence the learning process led him to utilise Vygotsky's findings in his book *The Culture of Education* (1996). Vygotsky's 'cultural-historical theories of development' helped to counter Piagetian perspectives on learning, and although Bruner does not adhere to Vygotsky's theories in general, they did inform his interest in the influence of culture on learning (Bruner 1996). Here Bruner argues that learners operate within a culture constructed from different narratives. The multiple narratives which shape society create inter-subjective realities, and to negotiate these, the learner requires an engagement with drama and other arts to help them understand how different stories and perspectives are constructed. Bruner sees the challenge of negotiating multiple narratives as "a means of bringing together the study of society, of human nature, of history, of literature and drama, even of law" (1996: 99). Equipping the learner with an ability to negotiate social constructions is for Bruner a fundamental requirement of educational praxis. Therefore, the exploration of role, narrative and multiple perspectives which are essential in dramatic praxis have been utilised extensively by constructivist educators. For example, the exploration of multiple narratives to explore history and human nature is central in MED Theatre's praxis, with Artistic Director Mark Beeson ensuring that his plays offer a space to study society through the active consideration of a range of responses to social and ecological issues.

To consider how constructivist theory has been applied to support drama specific praxis, Dewey (1959) Piaget (1962) and Vygotsky (1966) are all

credited by academic Gerd Bräuer as supporting the perspective of play as an important aspect of cognitive development. Their research has supported the integration of dramatic play into the classroom (2002: 8). For Bräuer, Piaget (1962) “showed how participation in drama leads to improved listening, comprehension, sequential understanding, and the integration of thought, action, and language (2002: 8). Vygotsky and Bruner’s constructivist theories of learning have also been used to justify the role of improvisational drama within education, therefore an awareness of their ideas is essential for the drama facilitator (Bräuer 2002: 8). Bräuer identifies Vygotsky and Bruner as the two key figures that provided “a solid foundation for using drama in the classroom” (2002: 8). Drama can be compatible with a constructivist approach as it “creates a problem for students before they have been taught how to respond. They act first and then reflect on their actions” (Bräuer 2002: 9). Catherine Franklin has also asserted that drama in the formal classroom “is a constructivist practice” (2008: ix). She argues that in education, learning through drama is “a constructed experience not a scripted one, [the] plan of action [is] merely a guide” (Franklin 2008: ix). She echoes the assertions of Vygotsky and Bruner that the role of the educator is facilitative; they act as an organiser or mediator of learning. In drama, learning can be “coconstructed by teacher and student engagement, negotiation, and activity, curriculum drama puts into practice constructivist pedagogy” (Franklin 2008: 4). However, it is important to recall from my analysis of behaviourist theory that just because drama has the potential to be facilitated as a constructivist event does not necessarily mean that it will be. Not all drama is automatically constructivist, what Franklin describes is perhaps an idealised form of praxis. In reality, the extent to which learning is coconstructed and negotiated will be affected by the formality and prescription of learning outcomes. To provide a template for good praxis, Franklin refers to the five constructivist principles of drama education presented by Jacqueline and Martin Brooks (1993):

1. Posing problems of emerging relevance to students
2. Structuring learning around primary concepts
3. Seeking and valuing students’ point of view
4. Adapting curriculum to address students’ suppositions
5. Assessing student learning in the context of teaching

(Brooks and Brooks in Franklin 2008: 5)

Here again an ideal template is provided, and in practice these principles can be very problematic to apply. The facilitator is not always at liberty to adapt the curriculum to address the students' suppositions; even informal learning contexts may have prescribed elements. If set texts, prescribed themes and intended outcomes must be studied, the problems which are explored may not be of emerging relevance to the student. The final point is also ambiguous; what does it mean to assess learning in the context of teaching? If we recognise that constructivist learning continues and is informed outside of the taught environment how then should we assess what is learnt? Given the constraints of time and resources, to what extent can the facilitator seek and respond to the students' own views? If views are negative, critical, and aggressive will the facilitator value them or be more likely to align themselves with a behaviourist model issuing sanctions or rewards to steer participants towards what are ironically framed as 'constructive' opinions? Applying a constructivist approach in drama is not an automatic given; "applied theatre is no more or less at the service of a particular ideology than any other kind of theatre" (Preston 2009: 13). The structures which govern learning processes present challenges which can steer the facilitator towards more behaviourist and knowledge-centred approaches.

The drama facilitator should be aware of the ways in which principles of behaviourist theory have been integrated into socio-constructivist learning approaches, to identify areas of ambiguity and overlap that can impinge on their praxis. To illustrate, Albert Bandura's social learning theory⁵³ (1977) has been perceived as a link between behaviourist and constructivist theory. Bandura (1971) identified that "behaviourism fails to explain how [...] behaviour is acquired through observation in the first instance" (Horn and Williams 2004: 177). He "argued that covert, mental rehearsal facilitates learning not through simple repetition, but through active processes" (Horn and Williams 2004: 178). The internalised processes of the individual also affect how the learner will respond to behaviours modelled by the educator. Internal and external factors both impact to produce a personalised response to the behaviour modelled, rather than all learners responding in the same way (Horn and Williams 2004:

⁵³ Bandura, A. (1977) *Social Learning Theory*, London: Prentice-Hall.

177). For example, sanctions may not encourage a learner towards 'correct' behaviour but make them confrontational or perhaps increasingly covert in their behaviour. In a drama specific context, there is the option to use techniques as a 'rehearsal for life' in which the child can deviate from observed and reinforced patterns of behaviour to try and find new ways of approaching different issues, testing and extending their own potential behaviours through practice. This is also applicable to adults, within my discussion of Magic Carpet's praxis I consider how they also offer participants opportunities to rehearse and develop new social skills to support their integration into mainstream community settings.

The necessity to be cognizant of alternative theories learning is further supported in Moylett's (2003) discussion of early learning. Although her ideas have links to behaviourist principles in the reinforcement of correct behaviours in children, there is a clear overlap with constructivist theory in her research. Moylett also suggests that "[f]rom the moment a baby is born he or she is being socially and culturally constructed" (2003: 19). Here there is an overlap between behaviourist approaches which condition the child and the social construction of the individual. The learner is subject to a set of enduring "common assumptions about childhood" (Moylett 2003: 19). Moylett identifies contradictory stereotypes which are reinforced in the lexicon used to label children as 'angels' or 'rascals'. If behaviourist approaches repeatedly fail, then this is taken as evidence to construct the child as a 'rascal' with 'behavioural issues'. The facilitator may similarly label adult learners as 'difficult' if they do respond to their approaches and fit their pre-existing expectations. Facilitators must recognise that 'bad behaviour' is neither innate nor fixed; they are in a privileged position with the power to decide and enforce what behaviour is acceptable. A drama facilitator may be informed by a regular class teacher that a learner is a 'troublemaker' or a 'handful' to discover a spontaneous, talkative, and questioning learner whose particular qualities become assets rather than hindrances in a dramatic context. As we shift increasingly into person-centred territory the facilitator can find that traditional modes of facilitating and assessing learning become increasingly problematic and limited in their usefulness. These issues are magnified for the facilitator also borrowing from humanist approaches to praxis.

Humanist Theories of Learning

Whereas behaviourism “involves external outputs, learning products, and outward behavioural change, humanism is completely concerned with inner self-actualization and individual transformation (Leonard 2002: 86). Although there are points of correlation with constructivism, “where constructivists are concerned with the act of *knowledge construction* and the development of these knowledge constructs in the learner, humanists are concerned with the constructor” themselves (Leonard 2002: 87). However, this is a limited perception of the socio-constructivist approach, as it can also consider how the individual constructs knowledge through interaction with others. The constructor is still valued, but the emphasis differs. This highlights that humanism, although potentially useful for the drama facilitator, can be difficult to define and therefore apply. It is “[a]gainst the hierarchies of the behaviourists and cognitivists that the humanist theories of learning emerged. These are not so coherent as other groups” making it difficult for the facilitator to relate their praxis to this model (Rogers and Horrocks 2002: 103).

Humanism has its roots in philosophy, grounded in the ideas of Chinese philosopher Confucius, Greek philosophy and also in renaissance literature (Leonard 2002: 86). From a philosophical perspective, “humanism is the belief that human beings have the freedom and autonomy to make choices that positively affect others as well as the ability to advance themselves, morally, spiritually, emotionally, physically and mentally” (Leonard 2002: 86).

There is a long established history between theatre, humanist philosophy and learning (see James Parente (1987) and Kent Cartwright (1999) for a good introduction). Cartwright identifies how “[h]umanism called forth the affective capacities of drama and thus helped to shape sixteenth-century theatre” (2004: 73). Humanist philosophy is part of a strong pedagogic tradition in drama, present in “Tudor and Elizabethan drama, from children’s plays to neo-Latin university dramas (Cartwright 2004: 50). Importantly, “humanist pedagogues discovered in drama a useful vehicle to promote their educational ideas [...] drama served well for countering resistance to humanist education and for shaping students to humanist values” a perspective extended in Parente’s examination of humanism in religious dramas in Germany and the Netherlands

(1987) (Cartwright 2004: 49). Humanist philosophy has been developed in the 20th. Century as a discrete learning theory in the work of Carl Rogers, George Kelly⁵⁴ and through the aforementioned praxis of Paulo Freire in drama.

Humanist learning theory can be difficult to engage with as it rejects empirical methods of assessing learning, and instead situates learning in “a world of living complexity, uncertainty, instability, the uniqueness of individual response and the conflict of values” (Schein in Rogers 2002: 11). The humanist learner is “seeking to take control of their own life processes [...] [t]he role of the teacher is to increase the range of experiences so that the student participants can use these in any way they please to achieve their own desired learning changes” (Rogers 2002: 12). For the facilitator “humanism focuses on the instructor’s ability to foster the student’s self-concept, autonomy, and ability to make personal decisions” which has strong parallels to Bruner’s constructivist approaches (Leonard 2002: 86). The humanist perception of learning makes the concept of assessment particularly problematic for the facilitator. If every individual learner’s response is unique then how are facilitators meant to find assessment tools which they can apply to assess the learning of a whole group? This perspective destabilises how many drama facilitators try to justify whole group progression, and within formal learning undermines the summative assessment procedures applied within BTEC and GCSE drama courses that take standardised assessment templates to measure individual progress.

Abraham Maslow’s model of a hierarchy of needs (1943) helps to clarify some of the potential challenges a drama facilitator may face. Maslow originally presented three categories of human need, defined as basic, psychological and actualization needs, extending these categories in later research to distinguish between different kinds of basic and psychological needs (1954, 1968, 1971). He argued that basic needs must be met first in order to enable individuals to realise higher order needs. Maslow recognised that not all individuals in society would readily fit into his proposed hierarchy given the variations which exist in personalities and our motivations. Despite this limitation, his theory continues to

⁵⁴ For more information see: Thorpe, M. Edwards, R. and Hanson, A. (eds.) (1993) *Culture and Processes of Adult Learning: A Reader*, London: Routledge. The theories of Rogers, Freire and Kelly are all outlined well in this reader.

be a popular feature of teacher training and related educational courses of study; his hierarchy of needs has an established and prominent role in humanist educational discourse (see Nemiroff 1992 and Orlich *et al.* 2012). For the drama facilitator, what Maslow's hierarchy indicates is that although in a humanist model the educator's role is facilitative not instructive, this approach does not reduce the responsibilities and demands placed upon them. Maslow's research identifies the facilitator's responsibility to support basic needs which are informal and not explicitly assessed. To progress toward higher order needs, the facilitator has to be able to measure whether basic and psychological needs are being met rather than assume that these are already being supported. Assumptions on any level are risky, and for Maslow basic needs are something which educators need to consciously assess and address at the outset of a process, to create the appropriate conditions for further learning. Facilitators need to have observational and formative assessment tools to identify when they can introduce tasks which enable higher order cognitive engagement to occur. Basic needs do not always form an explicit part of the facilitator's role and assessment responsibilities, particularly as the focus is on the assessment of 'higher order' learning such as improved social skills, new practical skills and factual knowledge. It can also be problematic to address them. If a learner arrives and complains of being tired or hungry, the onus is often on the individual learner or their carer to see these needs are met so that they come to the learning setting 'ready to work'. If the facilitator, as a humanist, is primarily concerned with the self-development of the individual, then they are obliged to reject the formalised brief and adapt their praxis.

I have encountered these issues in my praxis with adopted and disadvantaged children. When disadvantaged children have arrived for a drama workshop on a council estate complaining of being hungry, the start of the workshop has been delayed until we have provided children with some breakfast. Rather than expecting the children to be ready to work and adhering to the workshop plan, we prioritise their basic needs above the workshop aims to create a more conducive environment in which to offer practical drama. In my informal praxis with children activities will often be delayed, adapted or disrupted to ensure that children can eat, drink and rest so that they feel able to participate rather than offering rewards or sanctions to children who complain or offer little enthusiasm

for the activity. In an informal learning environment I feel at liberty to align my praxis to the learner, however within a formal classroom this degree of flexibility (and the resources needed to enable children's basic needs to be met) are not readily available. In primary schools the introduction of early morning breakfast clubs in the last decade has been one way to address the *Every Child Matters (ECM)* agenda, and ensure that basic needs are met before children enter the classroom- another strategy to ensure that they are 'ready for work'. The humanist *ECM* agenda has led to a shift towards strategies to cater for basic learner needs to support academic attainment, for example *Every Child Matters: A Practical Guide for Teaching Assistants* discusses the important role breakfast clubs can play within the extended school (Cheminais 2008). By providing a breakfast club schools can help 'close the gap' for learners whose basic needs are not being met outside the formal environment:

Schools can do something to ensure that increasing numbers of students arrive in lessons in an appropriate state to learn. [...] In many schools, the breakfast club provides the first socializing opportunity of the day. 'Setting up activities' can be arranged for troubled students, including semi- formal contact with a learning support worker.

(Hughes 2005: 47)

However, despite extended school activities being introduced by *ECM*, the delivery of truly person-centred and humanist praxis in a formal learning setting remains a problematic task if the facilitator accepts that supporting the basic and higher order needs of the learner fall within their remit. The facilitator needs to ask themselves where their responsibility to the learner and their personalised needs begins and ends. The answer will vary according to the facilitator, their resources, the learner and the particular project, making this consideration all the more important.

Given the highly internalised and individual nature of humanist learning, to what extent can the limited observations and documentation of facilitators help to measure the development of higher order needs, particularly if active analysis of other needs should become a more explicit part of praxis too? Identifying the complex nature of supporting learner needs Joan Kiel argues for a re-framing of Maslow's hierarchy to:

reflect that in today's world, a closed triangle is not a valid representation. Instead, an open, wide faced structure is needed to better reflect that

self-actualization is never ending. And with this never ending self-actualization, individuals can engender lifelong learning, change management, and boundlessness.

(Kiel 1999: n.p.)

The proposed on-going nature of self-actualisation and highly internalised nature of learning itself highlights the limitations of many of the drama facilitator's assessment tools. By considering learning from a humanist perspective, the act of assessment becomes increasingly more problematic and involved. In schools and within the informal learning practices documented in my research, the focus is often on gathering external evidence: observations, discussions, performances and written work is used to evidence learning. Our assessment tools gather limited evidence of the internalised and personal process which is at the core of humanist theory. Often the drama facilitator's praxis is geared towards assessing and supporting whole group progress, and facilitating collaborative praxis. Although personalised learning is a core feature of current educational praxis, it is the approaches and languages which are personalised, the assessment templates applied remain generic, which does not correlate well with a humanist model of learning. In the cases examined in this thesis, the responsibility for looking after basic learner needs is delegated to the learners themselves or other individuals such as parents, teachers or support workers and is not a primary facilitator responsibility. Self-actualisation is an important feature of the praxis documented; however group progression, external evidence and skills-based learning is also central to the learning processes in the case studies. This aligns the praxis examined most strongly with a socio-constructivist approach and I will contextualise this further in my analysis of good practice in later chapters.

The Problem of Assessment

Once the facilitator has considered the nature of the learning process itself, selecting and applying appropriate assessment tools is an important task. Assessment can be defined as the process of:

taking a sample of what students do, making inferences and estimating the worth of their actions. [...] The behaviours sampled may be specific to a course or they may be more general. They may be related to explicit or implicit criteria.

The tools applied to assess learning vary considerably. When negotiating the boundaries' between formal and informal practices the drama facilitator must consider: how do they "make assessments reliable? What elements of the work are important? What elements are less important? What level of quality are they aiming for? What standards are expected?" (Prosser and Trigwell in Morss and Murray 2005: 117). In informal settings this can be particularly challenging. In community work the limited contact with learners affects the reliability and depth of the evidence gathered. The facilitator is a visitor to the community and must try to assess the impact of their work when outcomes may not be fully evidenced until after the process has ended.

One of the problems with visitors, [...] is that they rarely stay around long enough to make an assessment of the impact of their (brief) visit. The benefits of critical distance and innovative vision have to be set against the disadvantages of restricted knowledge and limited time. Such fears may be countered by building an element of sustainability into our practices in the form of training the fieldworkers, teachers and the participants themselves to become their own facilitators [...] But who follows up to find out whether this sustainability has really taken place?

(Etherton and Prentki 2006: 144)

In formal settings teachers are trained to continue assessing and documenting learner progress, pupils are also invited to self-assess and recap on their progress so there is a greater chance of long-term impact being identified. Another challenge in informal settings is the elements of work which are considered important. Assessment in informal community projects may include measuring "the wider political and economic results of the interventions of this work for individuals and communities" (Etherton and Prentki 2006:140). These kinds of outcomes require follow-up work and particular assessment tools to try and measure this kind of longitudinal impact which can be challenging and costly to design and implement.

Ecclestone and Hayes note that in formal education increased recognition of informal learning outcomes "has led to numerous formal and informal assessment instruments" (2009: 40). The rising diversity of what is classed as learning and assessed in formal education is evident in a Department for

Education and Skills (DfES) report which identified forty “instruments for assessing different aspects of emotional competence, used in a variety of ways and in multi-agency contexts as part of *Every Child Matters*” (Ecclestone and Hayes 2009: 40). The drama facilitator may be simultaneously tasked with assessing informal outcomes, and also applying methods to quantify prescribed outcomes. There are principally five kinds of assessment applied in learning processes, although at base level all methods can broadly be categorised as summative or formative. As Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) identify, each category of assessment can be measured through a range of different instruments. What method or methods are applied is dependent on the kind of learning being assessed; it will be dependent on the criteria and the nature of the activity in which the learner is engaged.

1. Summative Assessment

This happens at the end of the learning process, or at the end of a unit or module of work to quantify what has been achieved in that aspect of the course. It is usually designed to decide what the final grade or judgement on the learner’s progress will be. It can be comprised of a combination of different methods. In a formal setting summative assessment may take the form of a written or practical exam, coursework, or presentation which is graded by a teacher or external examiner. A final award is decided upon, based on the standard of work produced measured against a set of standardised criteria. In informal practices, similar measures may be applied. There is also the potential to utilise much less structured and open-ended methods. For example a group interview in the final session, a chance to offer some written feedback, or a simple activity such as offering a word or gesture which encapsulates how the process has left the participant may be the selected method.

2. Formative Assessment

This refers to the opportunities to reflect on progress *during* the learning process, and is often an informal kind of assessment that does not count towards a final grade or award. It can include plenary stage group discussions, and peer and facilitator verbal or written feedback given in sessions. Criteria may be revisited or revised to identify what has been achieved and what areas need to be focused on next. Learners may write journals or log books to help document this process for external examiners. The following three modes of assessment will also be either a summative or formative kind of measurement of the learning process.

3. Continuous Assessment

This is where there is an on-going documentation of progress throughout the learning process. For example, continuous methods include the observations, recordings and session notes of the facilitator on a session by session basis. Learners may be required to produce ‘process journals’, ‘log books’ and video diaries that record their continuing

progress. This approach is useful when trying to identify how the learner has progressed longitudinally and identify which activities or resources have best supported their learning. This kind of assessment data can also extend assessment as it may document progress outside of the learning environment which the facilitator would not otherwise have access to.

4. Self-led Assessment

This refers to the ways the individual evaluates their own success. This can be an internal process that is not readily shared or documented. Individuals may be asked to complete self-assessment questionnaires, produce personal reflective statements, or orally present their own thoughts and feelings to try and gather evidence for this process.

5. Peer-led Assessment

This is when the group offers feedback to individuals about how they think that person has progressed. It can be in response to practical or written work. This can be done orally, or peers may offer written feedback, for example identifying two strong points and a target to develop in someone's work. This assessment usually enables the group or individuals to identify the main strengths and weaknesses in their work and establish new formative targets.

In formal learning a combination of formative and summative approaches are utilised to capture learner progress in different ways rather than relying on one data source. Similarly to the way I triangulate data sources through my autoethnographic approach, formal assessment is designed to get a more holistic perspective and minimise the risk of assumptions affecting the final grade. Being adept at applying a range of assessment methods "is an effective way of encouraging students to change their learning methods. Assessment is one of the most effective tools for innovating both instruction and learning" (Dochy and McDowell 1997: 279). However, in some learning settings the facilitator will discover that assessment tools are prescribed, minimising their potential to innovate their praxis. In GCSE drama learning is summatively assessed through written examinations, coursework and practical work, whereas in other settings there is the potential to select from multiple assessment tools. For example, in my delivery of the formal NOCN course I was provided with the following optional assessment methods:

Written Q&A / Exam / Test	Role Play / Simulation
Essay	Practical Demonstration
Report	Group Discussion
Oral Q&A	Performance / Exhibition
Written Description	Product / Artefact
Reflective Log / Diary	Practice File

Table 2.1 Range of NOCN Assessment Methods
(NOCN 2012: n.p.)

I could negotiate the extent to which the learners had to produce quantifiable evidence for the award. I could opt to assess formatively with one summative aspect, or implement a number of summative tasks to count towards the final grade if this appeared to be a more effective assessment strategy for the particular group. This experience taught me that for the facilitator engaging in assessment, trying to identify how to combine formative and summative methods is a big challenge. I was tasked with selecting the appropriate assessment methods from the selection provided by the awarding body to evidence the prescribed level one criterion.

Performance Planning Skills – Theatre in Education	
1.1	Take part in the workshopping and trialling of material.
1.2.	Receive meanings and interpretations within the script/text.
1.3.	List how meanings can be effectively communicated to an audience.
1.4.	Respond to key demands and needs of the text with reference to a given specific responsibility.
2.1.	Highlight main points of given research finding.
2.2.	List the role and responsibilities for a specific aspect of production.
2.3.	State the need for a production planning process.
2.4.	List some of the planning considerations when undertaking a production.
3.1.	Describe own skills which could be made available for the production.
3.2.	Identify a development within the rehearsal process.
3.3.	Identify an additional skill required and how to some extent it could be attained.
3.4.	Identify an additional skill required and how to some extent it could be attained.
3.5.	List own strengths and areas that require further development. Identify an approach/strategy for further self-development.

Table 2.2 NOCN Level One Assessment Criteria
(NOCN 2012: n.p.)

Negotiating the degree to which assessment should be practical, oral, written and observational will be dependent on the learners and the proposed criteria. The diversity of assessment ‘instruments’ available can therefore be both a liberating and daunting resource. It is a process of trial and error as the facilitator identifies and applies the assessment methods which can best measure and evidence the specified outcomes of the project remit. Assessments are problematic as they may “give us confidence and pride if we

do well, but if they go badly, for whatever reason, they can undermine confidence, destroy motivation or have other serious consequences” (Rowntree, 1987; Heywood, 2000 in Morss and Murray 2005: 114). This is a pertinent consideration for the travelling facilitator who may support a range of vulnerable adults and children. When assessing drama, particularly with vulnerable groups, the facilitator must be able to apply assessment methods which encourage and motivate learners. The difficulty of assessing and motivating learners is aptly captured in the debate surrounding the assessment ‘of’ or ‘for’ learning. The issue of assessment has been problematised through the promotion of Assessment for Learning (AfL).

Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

(Assessment Reform Group in DCSF 2008: 3)

Under the leadership of Jim Knight, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF⁵⁵) led the ‘Assessment for Learning Strategy’ which had an emphasis on creating practitioners “with a repertoire of assessment skills which they use to make fair assessment” (2008: 9). Initially, the strategy had a skills-centred focus but this approach has developed to become aligned to person-centred approaches. In 2008 the Quality Improvement Agency for Lifelong Learning (QIA) argued that “[a]ssessment for learning is a continuous dialogue that should [...] focus on the whole person, taking into account feelings as well as skills, and understanding any barriers the learner may experience” (2008: 3). The personalised needs of the individual are placed at the centre of the learning and assessment process. They are also encouraged to have a much more active voice in the assessment process, being a partner alongside the facilitator in the judgement of their work. For the facilitator, AfL has highlighted the difference between capturing learning to validate the process for an external audience and validating the learning process to help the learner themselves. Arguably one of the main factors which prompted the increasing number of assessment tools in the last decade is the recognition that traditional summative methods were too narrow and geared primarily towards the assessment of

⁵⁵ The Department for Children, Schools and Families was renamed Department for Education by the Conservative Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove in 2010.

learning. The rise of AfL however may activate the learner and make them more implicit in the decision-making process, but in practice the changes produced may not be in their interests. AfL strategies can urge the facilitator to make learners more aware of the formalised criteria, so that they better engage with the imposed requirements placed upon them. They invite learners to express their feelings about the process, and become more reflective learners. However if the learner identifies small personalised achievements within the process and expresses pride during these formative reflections it does not follow that these will impact upon the award of a poor grade if their achievements do not directly correlate to the external criteria. AfL approaches may encourage a more active learner, but the ultimate aim is to enable them to achieve the set expectations rather than the learner being able to affect the measures and values of the process itself. The same concerns impinge upon informal processes. Despite Magic Carpet participants suggesting ways to sustain existing groups and make changes *within* them to help extend their learning, ultimately facilitators had to reiterate that the ultimate aim of the project was to encourage them to find these opportunities *outside* our organisation in mainstream community activities. For some participants this led to frustration as the formative self-assessment data they consistently gave did not lead to the establishment of new formative targets. The ultimate target – to move into mainstream groups – remained the same despite feedback that an extended Magic Carpet provision was more useful and necessary.

Assessment in Drama

The concept of assessment and the ability to measure progress is an area of debate within drama. It is clear that “progress must be registered against some sort of criteria. In the arts, the exact nature of these criteria has often been a subject of heated debate relating to the perceived learning outcomes of teaching in, through and about the arts” (Kempe and Ashwell 2000: 25). In the context of drama the primary area of contention is whether learning and assessment should be centred on “the acquisition of new skills and attitudes, or an increasing ability to understand, use and reflect on what already exists?” (Kempe and Ashwell 2000: 25). Andy Kempe and Marigold Ashwell assert that in drama, “inter-related processes of planning and assessing” support effective

praxis (2000: 28). Interestingly, it has been suggested in the analysis of constructivist theory that facilitators do not 'plan but 'organise' for learning. Whether the facilitator refers to it as planning or organising, there is a level of preparation and a process of decision making which precedes praxis. During praxis, facilitators will identify whether their initial preparation was correct and make any adjustments to their intended approaches and assessment measures based on their observations. Subsequent planning/preparation will be informed by the assessments which grow out of praxis, therefore a cyclical relationship between preparation, praxis and assessment is established.

Tanner and Jones aptly describe assessment like "a slightly blurred snapshot of a moving target that is often out of date before it can be developed" (2006: 6). They highlight, correctly, that the conclusions we draw are temporal, given the on-going and personalised nature of learning. Carl Rogers argues that facilitators develop by "taking risks, through acting on tentative hypotheses" (2002: 33). There are clear limits to the extent to which we can fully assess the learner's, and our own success, but employing assessment procedures are essential as they enable us to take informed risks. Although tentative, our hypotheses and subsequent practice can be grounded in clear evidence if we establish a strong link between our assessment procedures, reflections and future practice.

In drama the nature of the praxis should inform the kind of assessment applied. Dorothy Heathcote for example did not focus on the formal assessment of drama in classrooms. Her praxis was aligned to formative, informal and self-led assessment which was a subjective and internal process. She did not believe that drama in education should be measured or quantified through summative written examinations or prescribed practical assessments.

The getting of an 'education' is really the widening of our areas of reference in meaningful ways, so that our reflective powers and our attitudes became more and more significant to us, and to those concerned with us.

(Johnson and O'Neill, 1984: 32)

Heathcote's praxis was aligned to the 1980s model of drama education where "the assessment of the process based, continuous assessment syllabuses [...] marked students on their ability to reflect upon and evaluate their work" (Radley 2002: 8). Heathcote videoed a lot of her praxis so that observers could judge for themselves what kind of learning occurred, rather than relying on quantitative student feedback to evidence the process. Gavin Bolton has also discussed the way in which drama praxis should be assessed. He notes the tension between practitioners who focus on the development of social skills and group cohesion contrasting with those who focus on delivering a knowledge-based curriculum (Bolton 1979: 133). Jonothan Neelands asserts that drama "is not quantifiable or academic" (1984: 6). In the last decade Neelands' praxis with Shaun Tan's graphic novel *The Arrival* has demonstrated his perception of drama as a cross-curricular learning tool to be applied in all subjects, rather than being taught and assessed as a discrete subject. Neelands and Tony Goode have categorised learning in drama to enable facilitators to understand the process and select appropriate assessment methods.

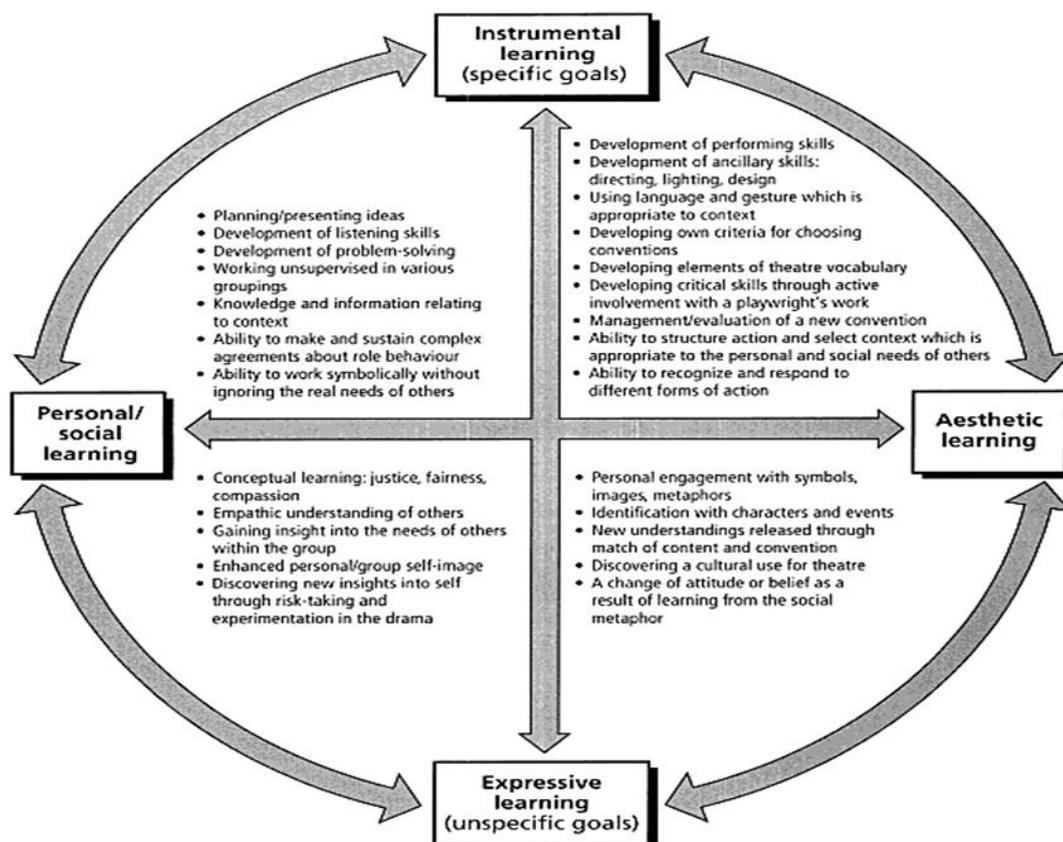


Figure 2.1 Categories of Learning in Drama (Neelands and Goode 1990: 113)

David James has identified that new creative professionals often question whether “some methods [are] just better than others, or more fashionable? Some people relatively new to teaching become frustrated by the fact that no one seems to be prepared to give them an instruction manual with definitive answers” (1999: 49). James asserts that developing professionals should not expect documentation such as that offered by Neelands and Goode to provide a comprehensive guide, or as he frames it, a form of ‘cookbook’ offering recipes for success. Indicators of what evidence we may look for are proposed in this model, not an exhaustive list. Theories and models such as this should be regarded as a starting point for the facilitator; they must be reinforced and used in conjunction with the observations and reflections of the facilitator themselves so that praxis and theory are refined through a dialogic relationship. James suggests that studying these kinds of models can enable facilitators of learning to reflect and develop their practice by examining “analogous situations (some of your own and some from the experiences of others)” (James 1999: 49).

Extending this debate, educationalist Kieran Egan (1983) “has been very critical of the dearth of educational theory” and models which can overshadow the observations of the educators themselves (Norwich 2000: 26). Egan criticises the influence of contributory disciplines and research from other fields; suggesting that these should not replace the potential for progression in educational theory grounded in the praxis of the educator. Egan makes a case for “educationalists’ asserting their own identity and resisting the dominance of the contributory disciplines” (Norwich 2000: 26). Engagement with the praxis of others, supported by a firm grounding in a range of theories and applications is a strong foundation upon which to base assessment and praxis. Each model will always have limitations in its usefulness; there is no fixed formula for identifying when it is best to use oral, written or practical assessment. No guide can definitively state which learning goals to prioritise, nor determine when it is best to formatively or summatively assess, focus on the individual or group, have a continuous assessment component or apply a combination of methods. Therefore educational practitioners must move towards documenting and disseminating their own findings further to help identify how practice and theory relate from their perspective. Importantly, facilitators must also be aware of their

own values. Assessment may be affected by “the aims or desires of the facilitator but these can often be masked by the determination to enable the community to set its own agenda, at least until the point where that agenda clashes with the ideology of the facilitator. If facilitators are transparent about their intentions, about the ‘baggage’ they bring with them into the work, there is a chance that any contradictions which may emerge between the aspirations of the participants and those of the facilitator can be used as part of a developing analysis” to help measure outcomes more transparently and reinforce ethical praxis (Etherton and Prentki 2006: 150).

Despite many practitioners arguing against applying an academic assessment model, drama is assessed summatively as an academic subject both in the English syllabus and in drama BTEC/GCSE courses. In English, students have a prescribed engagement with drama through the compulsory module EN1 Speaking and Listening:

EN1 Speaking and Listening
The range of speaking and listening activities should include:
A. Prepared, formal presentations and debates in contexts where the audience and topic are unfamiliar.
B. Informal and formal group or pair discussions requiring students to take on a range of roles.
C. Individual and group improvisation and performance.
The range of purposes for speaking and listening should include:
D. Describing, narrating, explaining, informing, persuading, entertaining, hypothesising; and exploring and expressing ideas, feelings and opinions. The stimulus for speaking and listening activities should include those drawn from work contexts and other real-life uses.

Figure 2.2 Speaking and Listening Criteria
(DfE 2012: 16)

In English GCSE, students will be assessed on practical dramatic skills through rehearsed role plays in the classroom and also their ability to analyse texts in written examinations. In GCSE drama the majority of courses have a ratio of 60% coursework to 40% written examinations. Two thirds of coursework usually consists of summative practical examinations with a written portfolio counting towards a third of this work. The portfolio can document how students self-assess formatively in addition to being a summative aspect of the final grade.

It is evident that in formal education drama is subject to a range of assessment procedures. In English lessons alone students may be given a group or individual grade through both formative and summative role plays, in addition to written assessments which test their knowledge of Shakespeare, who remains a compulsory feature and set text for all learners. In discrete BTEC/A-Level courses the learner may be assessed as part of a group and individually in practical work, oral presentations and through formative records of the rehearsal process. Learning is governed by different criteria and prescribed deadlines throughout their study. The same measures may arguably be present in informal settings, with participants asked to give interviews, performances, fill in forms or participate in group discussion and feedback activities. Facilitators therefore must be adept at managing different modes of assessment effectively and work to meet the set deadlines. There is the additional pressure of not only supporting and assessing learning, but achieving this within a set time frame, despite the fact that learners do not all progress at the same rate and have individualised needs.

In formal learning assessment happens at set times during the course of study, usually at the end of each module and during the final weeks of the course. This structure is often mirrored in informal learning so that interim and final assessment data is gathered. Howard Gardner argues that:

[r]ather than being imposed by external authorities at odd times during the year, assessment ought to become part of the natural learning environment. As much as possible, it should occur “on the fly,” as part of an individual’s natural engagement in a learning situation.

(Gardner 2006: 175)

However, informal approaches, and a less structured and specified system of assessment are offer challenging. Coffield asks the facilitator to consider how to “detect learning [...] if it is not planned, measured or talked about, possibly not even conscious?” (2000: 232). There needs to be a balance between getting regular, reliable assessment data and also capturing and including data which arises informally during the process. This is particularly true of learning that takes place outside of the formal sector in community spaces, where this kind of formalised structure is not in place. The facilitator must take an extended

approach to assessment. They are required to continually reflect on and refine how they assess, learning and incorporating different approaches as and when they become necessary. Assessment is a big commitment, it can be a time consuming and costly undertaking but a necessary one as ultimately the facilitator's praxis will rely upon thorough and ethical assessment.

Conclusion

The examination of the dominant learning theories presents a fragmented, complex field of educational praxis. Although the term education is often used to refer to schools as the primary formal educational institution in society, this is a limited perspective; "education is broader than schooling and involves parents, policy makers, religious organisations and many other interested parties" (Norwich 2000: 21). Formal and informal education are inter-related processes, and there is an emerging group of facilitators who operate in both contexts. The fragmented field of praxis makes it difficult to identify what the range of methods being applied are, and how other professionals are conducting good assessment praxis, indicating a need to develop better professional networks.

What my analysis of learning and assessment approaches indicates is that "education is an intensely personal as well as a social and political matter" (Norwich 2000: 21). Facilitators are currently operating in a field where educators "are expected to become more expert in the processes of teaching and learning [...] debates are about education becoming a more research-based profession supported by evidence based teaching" (Norwich 2000: 1). Drama facilitator Jouni Piekkari argues that there is a strong base of empirical evidence gathered which demonstrates that "drama has had a remarkable impact on learning of various groups in prisons, schools, and youth shelters etc. This evidence has been gathered in several countries that have practised drama as an alternative arena for learning for several decades" (2005: 12). However, drama within formal and informal spaces requires on-going evidence to justify and strengthen its application. As demonstrated in Chapter One, there is always competing research and evidence to justify differing approaches to learning, and specifically, drama-based learning. Although there is empirical evidence in favour of drama as a pedagogical tool, it can still be perceived as 'a waste of time,' or 'just for fun,' perspectives which Darren Henley documented

in his 2011 review of cultural education in the UK. Henley suggests that despite research and evidence supporting drama's role within learning it remains "a 'Cinderella' subject within schools, suffering further challenges in the way in which it is regarded as a subsidiary subject to English" (2012: 44).

The drama facilitator must be able to negotiate the political and social shifts which inform the pedagogic landscape and strong assessment measures will help them to communicate with educators and funders. As Henley identifies, learning through drama is not 'just for fun'; it is a diverse and dynamic form of education.

Fostering creativity in cultural learning is an important part of every child's education. However, there is a risk that the 'creativity agenda' has come to mean a particular style of education, which does not place sufficient value on the development of a child's understanding of cultural practice, or of fact-based knowledge about culture. At the same time, those who advocate a pure 'knowledge agenda' fail to value the skills and experiences that engagement with cultural activities can bring to a child's education. Excellence in Cultural Education should be a synthesis of these two schools of thought.

(Henley 2012: 18)

Arguably good dramatic praxis in education offers a synthesis of these two schools of thought, and therefore assessment measures need to be applied to evidence both. In my research the assessment conducted by facilitators offers a synthesis of formal and informal learning outcomes. The methods used by the facilitators have developed out of their experiences and their awareness of the approaches used by others, to help develop models that match their specific needs. Methods considered include verbal and practical plenary questioning at MED Theatre, designed to capture personal responses and quantify group engagement for funders. SSF apply triadic questionnaires and compile case studies annually, to get a combination of personal stories and statistics to evidence their process. Formal assessment methods are applied to measure the BTEC at West Exe, but learners also engage in many informal performances, peer feedback sessions and are supported with informal support from specialist drama facilitators. In Magic Carpet, on-going formative feedback is gathered through different methods with a range of summative measures also being applied in NOCN courses to evaluate the final outcomes of projects. I

explore how the methods of assessment are carefully matched to the specific target groups in my later chapters.

The drama facilitators in this research operate with a primarily socio-constructivist approach, enabling learners to problem-solve in a group learning context. However, as I have argued, their praxis is not intrinsically socio-constructivist because of its dramatic basis. They actively choose and commit to finding methods which enable them to best 'scaffold' and facilitate learning. Socio-constructivist approaches are grounded in problem-solving and whole group activity, which are at the core of the praxis I and the selected facilitator's engage with. Adopting a socio-constructivist approach to learning does not negate the potential for other learning theories to be applied, either consciously or unconsciously by the facilitator. I argue that facilitators must be cognizant of a range of learning theories and assessment approaches because no practices should be applied "merely because of [...] popularity, [...] they should preferably be used when based on conscious arguments or clear evidence" (Piekkari 2005: 12). Facilitators may be required to align themselves to approaches which borrow from more than one theoretical framework, hence a functioning knowledge of the major learning discourses is necessary. The preference may be to operate from a socio-constructivist standpoint, but necessity may dictate that other strategies need to be applied. Facilitators may be presented with a requirement to use behaviourist modes of discipline and assessment, or identify humanist concerns which lead them to prioritise the learner above the brief, making it difficult to achieve the intended aims within the time available to them. In my analysis of good praxis I examine how facilitators respond to these requirements, and negotiate different learning styles, degrees of formality and modes of assessment as they try to deliver ethical and effective educational praxis.

Chapter Three

Moving On Through Magic Carpet: from Formal to Informal Facilitation

Introduction

In this chapter I analyse how I have made the transition from operating within formally assessed learning contexts to becoming an extended professional working in informal groups. After qualifying as a drama teacher, I did not have the skills and knowledge to take a lead facilitator role in informal education; developing the necessary skills for this was a gradual process. When I first began facilitating with Magic Carpet in October 2009 the praxis I observed and supported challenged the working procedures I was used to engaging with in a formal context. Here I identify how the support of Magic Carpet facilitators, specifically those operating in the movement group *Stepping Stones*, enabled me to make the transition into the informal education sector. This chapter documents practice conducted with adults, and furthermore adults from a specified demographic: the participants have diagnosed mental health issues and/ or are learning disabled.

My analysis focuses on the way in which I have developed my praxis and assessment skills. I discuss the issues of assessing informal praxis by looking at the assessment process for Magic Carpet's principal project *Moving On*. This was the umbrella title for a broad range of groups which included *Stepping Stones*. The analysis of *Moving On* questions how facilitators identify the right tools to measure subjective and personally referenced outcomes. Before I began facilitating with Magic Carpet, my approaches were informed exclusively by the school-based teacher training I had received. In this chapter I examine how my experience within *Moving On* and *Stepping Stones* enabled me to learn new approaches to deliver and assess praxis with voluntary adult learners. My discussion of an independent project called the University Movement Group outlines how guidance from Magic Carpet facilitators enabled me to become an extended professional who is adept at transitioning between formal and informal person-centred praxis. This project ran from November 1st. to December 13th. 2010. Participants came to White House Studio Two at the Drama Department on Mondays between 3-5pm for seven weeks. I facilitated six of the sessions

with guest student facilitators observing on the 15th November and running the session on the 22nd November. Interview data from the *Moving On* project coordinator, feedback from participants⁵⁶ and co-facilitators, along with my own observations as a facilitator are drawn upon to inform my analysis. In January 2013 the *Moving On* Project concluded and the official report findings published in December 2012 are also utilised to reflect on the project outcomes.

Magic Carpet and the *Moving On* Project

Founded in 1981, Magic Carpet is an Exeter-based charity. Their primary goal is to provide participation opportunities for disabled and disadvantaged members of the community through arts-based activities. They offer professional “support [...] in a warm, friendly, creative environment” (Magic Carpet 2009: n.p.). Magic Carpet now offers a range of visual arts groups, a choir, movement and dance, drama, sculpture, creative writing and animation to a broad spectrum of participants. This diverse range of content is supported by a consistently inclusive and accessible style of facilitation. Projects are valued by participants and local agencies who “appreciate having supportive sessions available that are not directly [a] ‘mental health’ provision and creative sessions that are easily accessible and don’t have long waiting lists” (Taragon and McTiernan 2012: 5).

They have extended their remit to now work with vulnerable children, adults with mental health issues, carers, and learning disabled participants. They have groups which are just for learning disabled/ mental health participants and offer some groups which are open to both of these client groups. Participation in groups is voluntary, and many participants find out about the organisation through their website or advertisements in local community spaces such as health centres and theatres. All participants are required to attend an initial meeting to assess their needs and ensure that they are referred to appropriate groups within the organisation. Not all participants find out about our services independently; Magic Carpet has a long-standing relationship with Wonford Hospital and other local care providers. As a result GPs, support workers, or carers may also refer people as part of their recovery process. In these

⁵⁶All participant names have been omitted for confidentiality. At times when personal data has been discussed this has been omitted to protect participant identity.

instances, participation is not compulsory, but is perhaps best framed as 'supported participation,' rather than being perceived as a completely autonomous decision.

Magic Carpet relies on funding from different providers such as the Big Lottery Fund and the Arts Council England, to sustain the broad provision offered. A small fee has always been charged, to help sustain practice. Groups cost one pound fifty pence a session to try and make them affordable to a broad spectrum of participants.⁵⁷ Facilitators run workshops in centralised locations such as the Exeter Phoenix Arts Centre and the Hub on the Green Community Centre in morning and afternoon sessions to try and make groups accessible.

All work is run by trained, practising artists and specialists. Magic Carpet's work is extensive, running over 700 workshops annually in diverse settings such as psychiatric units, schools, parks, arts and community centres. It seeks to enhance the work of other arts, health and social care providers and have a long term impact on participants' lives through the continuity and quality of its provision.

(Magic Carpet 2012: n.p.)

The workshops are staffed with a primary and secondary facilitator, often with the support of a volunteer worker, enabling them to establish a discourse so that they can share approaches to good practice. Experienced facilitators collaborate with new staff and in the majority of cases specialisms are also combined. This enables elements of dramatic practice to be integrated in a range of groups with different focal art forms as the facilitator participates in, and learns about, a particular arts community. The process of participation and professional skill sharing enables staff to develop new skills and identify the facilitative approaches which best animate the individuals who attend Magic Carpet groups. The interaction with the experienced facilitator gives the support facilitator and volunteer time to gain confidence and develop an understanding of how their own specialist skills can be applied in groups.

I began working with Magic Carpet five years ago as a volunteer and have since become a support worker and lead session artist facilitating in a broad range of groups. I have facilitated in different drama groups with mixed ability clients, and

⁵⁷ This was the charge rate for groups in 2012.

also with the homeless and adopted children. I have regularly facilitated the creative writing group *Write On!*, interim dance courses, the storytelling group *Indaba*, and *Exploring Emotions*, a drama and visual arts club for adopted children. I have also created a Theatre in Education course for the National Open College Network (NOCN) through Magic Carpet.⁵⁸ My own facilitation skills have been developed through observation and collaboration with the other facilitators I have worked with, including dramatherapists, teachers, creative writing specialists, visual artists, dance, and music specialists. I have shared my drama specific skills with them as they model skills from their own discipline to participate in a process of professional exchange and informal training and development.

Moving On has been their flagship project for the last three years. It was funded by the National Lottery and it led to the creation of five core projects and numerous short courses during this period.

Moving On is a Magic Carpet project working with adults in the Exeter area, including those isolated through mental health issues, learning disabilities or being carers, and provide creative and development opportunities to develop participants' self-confidence, cognitive ability, focus and interpersonal skills, so they can become more involved in their local community and take part in mainstream college and development opportunities.

(Magic Carpet 2012: n.p.)

With *Moving On* funding due to end in February 2013 the focus has shifted to assessing the whole project outcomes. In this project art is framed as a tool for “people’s recovery” (Essame 2011: n.p.), therefore finding assessment tools to identify the impact on health and wellbeing has been a major task for facilitators. This has been a particularly valuable experience, enabling me to consider how to assess in a much more informal learning context compared to my previous facilitation in school settings. The *Moving On* projects had five overarching aims which needed to be assessed.

1. Participants develop peer friendship groups creating long term meaningful social lives

⁵⁸ NOCN courses are supported by the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and require a facilitator with a formal teaching qualification to deliver and assess them.

2. Participants develop life skills and confidence
3. Participants take steps into further education or training
4. Participants develop self-confidence and self-esteem
5. Volunteers gain valuable experience that will support them in career choices

(Essame 2012: n.p.)

Clive Essame is the *Moving On* Project Worker at Magic Carpet; and has been chiefly responsible for co-ordinating the different groups which make up the project. His role includes identifying the needs of participants and what kinds of provision they would like to access to offer a bespoke programme aligned to support their on-going wellbeing. Essame has been employed as a facilitator for over a decade with Magic Carpet, working with a broad range of adult learners using different art forms such as creative writing, and oral storytelling skills to engage them. Interview data from Essame is utilised in this chapter to help inform my analysis of assessment in the context of *Moving On*.

***Stepping Stones* and the University Movement Group**

Offered as a short term *Moving On* project, *Stepping Stones* was initiated in 2010. It supported adults from mental health backgrounds, those with learning difficulties and marginalised individuals who wished to develop their social network. It quickly established a core group of eleven participants, ranging from one member in their twenties to some in their sixties. The group included adults with visual impairments, arthritis, anxiety issues, depression and other mobility issues. The majority of the group informally disclosed that they were taking medication for their needs and were under the supervision of some kind of outside care provider such as their GP.

I initially supported the two lead facilitators as a volunteer, and observed how they established a secure and familiar routine which was inclusive of the mix of participant's abilities. I went on to replace one of these lead facilitators after a year. I was now working with a facilitator who I had collaborated with previously in a drama group for Magic Carpet; we both had a shared understanding of the use of dramatic techniques and approaches to support our participants. In *Approaches to Drama* David A. Male asserts that "there is [. . .] a dynamic relationship between physical education and drama particularly in movement

and dance. Each involves physical agility, sensory awareness and emotional sensitivity to a greater or lesser degree” (1973:19). Our shared experiences enabled us to combine drama and dance specialist knowledge to create a dynamic model of praxis. Participants were introduced to “a variety of movement games and explorations and work with dances such as Five Rhythms and circle dance [and] other art forms such as drawing and music from time to time” (Magic Carpet 2009: n.p.). This facilitation model was inspired by dance traditions from different cultures and popular drama in education-based activities to help facilitate a collaborative and playful collective. Therefore, although there was an emphasis on movement to music, the level of dramatic material which was integrated in each session makes it an interesting and relevant case for discussion in the context of this study. *Stepping Stones* had three primary aims which were:

1. To release your natural creativity and sense of play;
2. To help build greater confidence and self-esteem personally and in relation to others;
3. To find routes into mainstream movement/dance activities in the community.

(Magic Carpet 2009: n.p.)

The level of prescription differed markedly from the syllabus I had to adhere to in the formal sector. “Such freedom, however, also carries the weighty responsibility of ensuring that breadth and balance are achieved and that a number of externally imposed requirements are met within the scheme” (Kempe and Ashwell 2000: 14). Despite the degree of informality I still needed to develop strategies to evidence outcomes for funders and relied on the modelling of assessment skills by co-facilitators to enable me to do this.

My independent project, the University Movement Group, was initiated when the allocated funding for *Stepping Stones* ended. The participants voiced their wish to continue the engagement until further funding could be allocated. The facilitators could not locate community dance opportunities which were ‘gentle, inspiring and appropriate’ at that time. Therefore, as an interim project I agreed to establish a short-term project outside of the remit of Magic Carpet. Two men and six women agreed to continue participating; although one woman stopped attending after the first session as scheduling conflicts arose. Participants were

aged between thirty-five and sixty-five years of age. I was aware that visual impairment and mobility issues affected this particular group, in addition to social isolation and depression. I agreed to facilitate an outreach project for eight weeks at Exeter University, and participants agreed to provide feedback on the process and also collaborate with other facilitators in exchange for this provision. It was also hoped that the outreach project would demonstrate the participants' commitment, and the importance of having this kind of provision to potential funders. At the outset of the project a collaborative set of project aims were verbally agreed with the participants to identify what we would do, establish bespoke boundaries and clarify our motivations for participating. Reflecting on and evaluating our previous experiences, we agreed that:

- An increase in activities which had a memorising component i.e. choreographed dance and structured games would be helpful as there was a general consensus that the memorising aspect was beneficial and created a sense of achievement when we could recall and revisit activities.
- Honouring the kind of basic workshop structure that had been established in *Stepping Stones* was requested. Therefore I agreed to provide a check in, relaxation/meditation, warm-up guidance, the time and space to dance individually and collectively and also a cool down and reflection period in the workshop plenary.
- To give ourselves realistic aims we agreed that in this eight week project we would be open to trying out some new activities to extend existing skills and knowledge and also work with some other facilitators from the University that I selected to exchange ideas with others.

In this group I was travelling outside my primary specialism. As a formal teacher I was aware that I could “perform the roles of expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, delegator, and more in the classroom” (Wankel and Fillippi 2005: 339). However I was no longer operating within the boundaries of the classroom. I questioned my ability to act as expert and model, and I was now an informal authority, which altered the way I could enforce boundaries in the learning space. The prescribed rules and regulations of the classroom became much more malleable. Principles such as punctuality, consistent attendance, and a willingness to participate were transposed to the Movement Group from my formal background, but the behaviourist sanctions and consequences which helped to reinforce these principles in the classroom were no longer appropriate. I had to draw on the models provided in *Magic Carpet* to ensure

that my praxis motivated learners without the use of formalised sanctions and rewards.

The responsibilities of my role had also changed. I was now answerable to the group directly; and I was not operating in conjunction with another facilitator. The boundaries, aims, space, specific group of participants who choose to continue, and the needs of the group had to be revised. I was creating a new environment or culture in which to facilitate. To successfully make this transition I had to consider how I would assess individually and informally, without the observations of other facilitators and a prescribed brief to guide my decisions. I had to ensure that I would not apply assessment measures I had learnt in formal education without questioning their suitability for identifying the impact of my praxis.

Sharing Skills- Becoming an Extended Professional

My facilitation style had been developed in a behaviourist learning environment. Following the teaching styles modelled by colleagues, I was used to sanctioning learners or issuing rewards to secure participation. My lessons were pre-planned in schemes of work weeks or months in advance. They were structured so that each class began with me writing up the intended aims of a session and getting students to read these out so that they were clear about my expectations. My experiences in *Moving On* taught me that this style of delivery would not be compatible with the University Movement Group. As Tim Prentki has identified in relation to his own praxis, “when practitioners come into a community context to which they do not normally belong, they also undertake an act of border crossing” (2009: 252). An informal dance orientated group for adults was a very distinct community, compared to young learners in a compulsory classroom. Like facilitator David Diamond, I recognised that this unfamiliar learning community and culture presented me with an intensive learning opportunity in which I could develop my own professional skill set:

[W]orking with a community outside my own cultural background, I found myself in an intense learning situation. The questions I chose to ask and the directions I chose to pursue as a facilitator were aimed partially at increasing my own understanding of the issue. I found that if I was honest about things I didn't understand and kept asking questions, the participants were able to explain things to me in a manner that also

helped them clarify issues for themselves and each other, in an atmosphere for real dialogue and exploration.

(Diamond 2007:139)

Asking the facilitators and the participants questions to help develop my skills and understanding was central to this process of border-crossing. The mix of socio-constructivist and humanist approaches offered by my *Stepping Stones* co-workers enabled me to transition into this new community context. They extended my facilitation approaches through the introduction of new content, assessment tools and styles of delivery.

My existing facilitation skills were grounded in the structured praxis of the secondary drama classroom. I relied on content from training workshops delivered by organisations such as Frantic Assembly, Shakespeare Schools Festival, Jonathan Neelands and advanced skills teachers from Devon secondary schools to inform my own praxis. Much of my work was text-based, as my classroom praxis was primarily designed to support the summative assessment of set texts in the curriculum. I needed more guidance on how I could extend my knowledge of dance and movement practices to facilitate this project. New content was introduced through my participation in the Five Rhythms dance model developed by Gabriella Roth. In Five Rhythms, participants dance a 'wave', an improvised movement form. The wave is guided by five 'energies': flowing, staccato, chaos, lyrical and stillness. Each stage of the wave is supported by music which corresponds with the particular energy. This particular informal and non-choreographed approach to dance was trialled over a number of early sessions and was engaging and inclusive for participants. Verbal plenary feedback and our observations the assessment measures used to assess impact. Feedback was consistently positive, and participants were able to sustain participation for longer during Five Rhythms activities. Five Rhythms became the foundation structure for the workshops. I observed and participated in the activities led by the *Stepping Stones* facilitators and also opted to attend a local Five Rhythms group in Exeter to extend my own knowledge and skills of the form.

In *Stepping Stones* I observed how relaxation and meditation activities were delivered, paced and structured to help participants arrive in the space, and be

'present' at the beginning of the session, rather than verbally stating my expectations as in a formal classroom. Sessions began "with gentle stretching and warm-up exercises to relieve tension, quiet the thinking mind and bring awareness into the body" (Magic Carpet 2009: n.p.). The guided warm-up did not adhere to any dance specific form of warm-up routine and the vocabulary was deliberately non-technical. Instructions were paced according to the responses observed, and were not overly prescriptive to ensure participants felt included. Often participants were invited to offer a warm-up move to be copied, empowering them to establish an appropriate pace and intensity of activity. I learnt to give much more time to establishing a safe and focused group dynamic through the spontaneous activity suggested by participants. I also observed that being too prescriptive in the instructions affected engagement, but if they were given several minutes with no guidance then participants would minimise their movements and becoming less 'present', disengaging from the group. A balance between using music as a guide, and offering gentle open ended prompts at intervals, based on my observation of participants' movements was the method I used to secure participant engagement in the University Movement Group. I also identified through observation that changing the verbal instructions and music from week to week so that the pattern was not predictable encouraged continuing investment in *Stepping Stones* and was a strategy I later employed in the Movement Group.

I observed how facilitators paced and adapted warm-up activities in-the-moment and began to model these approaches myself so that my leadership style became gradually more flexible. The familiar drama classroom warm-up of tag was adapted to become 'slow motion tag' played with either a 'staccato' or 'flowing' style of movement to facilitate playful group engagement and gradually introduce the different energies which structured the dance. This kind of adaptation introduced different ways of moving before we progressed into explicit dance activities and helped me to identify a base level of group ability in each session. This was important as persistent health issues could radically affect some participants' mobility from session to session, whereas in a formal classroom I would employ strategies to gather a baseline of group ability on a termly basis. By observing the pace, energy and noting responses such as laughter facilitators could gauge the group dynamic and adapt later planned

content and music accordingly. This was a strategy I also applied in the University Movement Group as a method of gathering baseline assessment information each week to ensure praxis remained person-centred.

Staff plenary discussions were a formative mode of assessment; previously I had not valued these exchanges in school settings as the majority of assessment material would be generated by my learners in the classroom. However, in *Moving On* these informal discussions, although sometimes difficult to conduct, form an essential part of professional development and inform praxis.

Essame: I don't do a formal evaluation of each session but I do always think at the end. I think 'yeah, that was good, now why was it good?' or 'that was bad, now what went wrong, what could we have done differently?' [...] I think it's good at the end of the session if we [the facilitators] get a chance to [talk] I don't think we actually get enough chance to chat about things at the end in some groups. [...] It's very difficult to grab a chance at the end to actually talk and say, 'that went well, that one didn't,' because for one thing some of the participants hang about [...] because they want to be there and talk to you. Myself and the guy I work with we want to have a chance to chat but you don't get that and I think that's quite important. Not in great depth, not half an hour, but five or ten minutes [...] is good[.]

In *Stepping Stones* these formative discussions enabled me to identify what features to focus on to assess whether the group was engaged informally. I particularly learned how to become more observant during prolonged dance exercises to monitor who withdrew from the social interaction (avoiding eye contact, lowering the head, staying fixed in one area of the room, minimising movement) as an indicator to move on the exercise and re-introduce a social aspect so that people stayed 'present.' In my praxis I ensured that I offered time for both pair discussion and individual plenary feedback to enable group and self-assessment to occur weekly, based on the structure modelled by *Stepping Stones* staff. Following new activities with pair discussion and whole group feedback to get a sense of whether the activity was engaging and appropriate was one strategy I adopted to assess practice rather than doing one summary in the plenary. The emphasis was on assessment *for* learning, to a much greater extent than in my previous praxis in the formal sector. The limitations of these quick, discursive approaches were that unlike in my formal praxis I did not

have any concrete data recorded to revisit. All the assessment material generated was qualitative and the formative focus of activities meant that the overarching aims of *Moving On* were not always explicitly addressed as the emphasis was much more personal. How this has impacted on praxis is explored further in my analysis of the summative assessment procedures for *Moving On*.

What this process of professional skill exchange demonstrates is that the development of the facilitator who can travel into a range of groups competently is a dialogic process in itself, reliant on collaboration with other professionals through observation, and shared evaluation. Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston posit that facilitators do not have distinct methodologies, instead they operate with:

an interlocking set of practices based upon some common principle which can, to a degree, operate across contexts in which these processes are applied; a process which is grounded in the principle of people-centred learning might be equally applicable in a school, a prison or a war zone.

(2009: 11)

The person-centred methodology was the common principle which connected my drama specialist knowledge and the dance skills of my co-facilitators. By utilising the shared features of our praxis dance specialists were able to help a formally trained drama teacher develop the skills to deliver person-centred praxis in a mental health community group. They enabled me to identify and develop the aspects of my drama specific processes which could operate across different contexts. The ability to observe, collaborate, and assess with the support of co-facilitators was invaluable in developing confidence and strategies to support a new community of participants.

The behaviourist influence on my praxis has steered me towards measuring quantitative outcomes and prescribing content to support the learning process. In *Moving On* groups I observed a mix of socio-constructivist approaches and arguably a humanist dimension to the ethos to the work, which broadened my thinking about the way in which people can learn. In formal pedagogic settings

there is, as I have argued, an emphasis on participants coming to the classroom space 'ready and willing' to learn. Yet in the context of *Moving On* and the University Movement Group people arrive to a group or a class coming from another space bringing the thoughts, feelings and energy from that space with them.

Participant: Sometimes I've come and I've probably been feeling [...] a bit inner. So when you first come here I'm aware of that point where there's a kind of - it's not like I come and 'go wow I want to do all this,' it's a bit of a stretch to have to emerge from some kind of state and engage with it but it works. It doesn't feel too forced, it's not like you have to come and join in so it's possible for that transition to come and you find your space but there's an encouragement to have to relate to people so I find that helpful. It's difficult at the beginning and sometimes you're aware of a transition period when it feels a bit awkward and I don't quite want to do it but it changes [...] I think partly the room is more enclosed somehow, so it's actually felt quite womb-like and quite intimate really. It's a safe place, that's felt really lovely.

This was an important shift in my praxis, I recognised that the basic assumptions I made about how participants 'should' behave in the learning environment had to be realigned. Participation was no longer compulsory, arguably participants had a greater degree of autonomy as they were adults and I had no prescribed syllabus on which to base the learning therefore we could negotiate content.

Essame: In an adult education setting you go in with a lesson plan or scheme of work and you go in and deliver that lesson plan or scheme of work. Going into groups that I then worked with through Magic Carpet you go in with a lesson plan and within ten minutes you realise that they don't want to do it, not interested, no energy - they've got a different agenda and therefore I relaxed quite a lot about lesson plans and what I was going to do [...] I very firmly believe that my role is to listen to what the participants say [...] it's not my group it's their group and I think it took me a little while to actually get my head around that. Because in an adult education setting, ok you may have a syllabus to deliver therefore it has to be led whereas with these groups it doesn't have to be led as such, not really, it can wander all over the place as long as people feel heard. That's one of the most important things I feel is that people need to feel heard so that was a pretty big challenge and now [...] I like to think ten years on that that's my priority, to hear them so it may sort of seem as if I go in completely unprepared but I don't. I just know that I want them to get out of it what *they* want to get out of it.

As Essame identifies, ensuring that practice is learner-centred in informal contexts can be very challenging for the facilitator trained to offer practice structured and aligned to formalised goals. Dance facilitator Anna Daly echoes this; she notes that the different dynamic and expectations of an informal group force the formally trained facilitator to realign their praxis:

The very nature of the group has challenged me to notice what they like to do and why, in order for the session to appeal to them. Witnessing this ‘unforgiving’ audience in how they interact with dance caused me to reflect on whether my work to date had been as ‘CHILD CENTERED’ as I had thought, with its STRUCTURED tasks/ improvisations with predetermined OUTCOMES.

(Daly in Kupperts 2007: 85)

I underwent a similar process of reflection in *Stepping Stones*. Given the informal nature of the projects discussed here, facilitators have to make the space and content conducive to learning, rather than the onus being on the *participants* to align themselves to the content. In *Stepping Stones* the facilitators put “the learner at the centre of interactions” (Martin 2003: 69). This differed from the knowledge-centred approaches I observed in the formal sector; here the focus was “primarily on fostering the continuing process of learning. The content of learning, whilst significant, falls into secondary place” (Rogers in Martin 2003: 70). For example, in the formal classroom if my learners arrived and the noise level exceeded my expectations I would reprimand them so that they were quiet. Sanctions were issued in this context when behaviour was not modified to the facilitator’s expectations. If learners are tired and unresponsive but the plan is to assess practical skills in that session learners will be manipulated towards practical activity to adhere with the plan, as there is a responsibility to satisfy the formal criteria set. The teacher-facilitator in a formal setting must satisfy the formalised requirements, therefore strategies to adapt the *participant’s* responses such as offering rewards/sanctions to motivate learners to engage in a particular way and adapting starter activities to generate the appropriate kind of energy and focus needed for the plan may be employed.

In the context of *Stepping Stones* and the University Movement Group, I could reject the plan given the fluidity and subjectivity of the intended project

outcomes and subsequently had much more freedom to shape content to the group dynamics presented. When trying to teach participants a circle dance in *Stepping Stones*, facilitators negotiated the outcomes with participants rather than teaching the prescribed dance steps. During the learning process, we reached a place in the routine where people found the moves too technical so we invited them to help create alternative steps, personalising the dance. We did learn a dance, although we had to deviate from the plan to achieve this, and we also learned to collaborate more effectively as a group. The content of the learning was secondary, the fact that we found ways to learn together was of primary importance. We would rearrange the furniture in the space each week to suit learner needs, take pauses to rest when they were requested, and adapt the rules of games and the complexity of the dances to ensure that everyone felt able to engage. This was a very different approach to facilitating learning, and these techniques enabled me to support participants in the Movement Group.

Learning in this context is recognised as a both a collective and individual activity. This meant that facilitators structured content to give opportunities for individual work and reflection alongside group orientated activities. The facilitators recognised that group “members have different interests, make diverse contributions to activity and hold varied viewpoints” (Lave and Wenger 2002: 115). From this socio-constructivist perspective, “the learner cannot be construed as object and the teacher cannot be seen as the ‘deliverer’ of knowledge” (Pike in Pike and Halstead 2006: 80). Both *Stepping Stones* and the University Movement Group were spaces which supported social learning, with the facilitators acting as mediators of this process. We provided participants with two hours of social contact and physical activity on a regular basis, which challenged them to learn new ways of interacting through non-verbal means. They explored new games, memory exercises and discovered different ways of expressing feelings through movement and gesture both on an individual and collective level. In addition, facilitators also promoted other arts events and groups which happened in local theatres and public venues, to encourage people with mutual interests to continue socialising independently in other social contexts, trying to make mainstream cultural practices more accessible. For example, in 2010 we had taught participants the basic principles

of Five Rhythms and invited them to learn more about this and socialise further by attend a Five Rhythms community class with both facilitators to make the initial step out into another setting together. However, the evening slot, additional costs, and remote location limited the success of this event. Mainstream community settings were still highly challenging as potential sites for learning and socialisation.

In the University Moment Group we were learning through play, which was framed as a social activity. As Vygotsky, Piaget and Bruner have identified, play is an important catalyst in cognitive development. As a socio-constructivist facilitator I aimed to use playful activities to encourage participants to try and discover new ways of behaving and responding. To facilitate participation through play “[t]he important thing is to follow an idea that you feel comfortable with, rather than something that makes you feel silly” (Jennings 2008: 1). This is an important consideration when asking adults to engage in play and games. Drama educator Nellie McCaslin agrees with Johan Huizinga’s perception of “play as a cultural phenomenon. [...] it is a form of relaxation and fun, but he also sees in it a serious side, through which art forms are created” (McCaslin 1996: 43). McCaslin asserts that forms of play should be read as a necessary “part of our life for as long as we live. Unfortunately in our modern society it is often discouraged” (McCaslin 1996: 42). The idea of playing seriously is not a concept which everybody is culturally literate in, therefore the invitation to participate in this way can still be a significant challenge, and make participants feel ‘silly.’

In *Stepping Stones* the emphasis was on movement and non-verbal interaction, which differed from the predominantly text-based learning I have facilitated in formal contexts. In the University Movement Group I had to adapt my strategies, creating use non-verbal games and movement activities to structure my praxis. One of the new elements I introduced was the manipulation of light as a resource. Going from a brightly lit hall with no blinds in a busy and noisy theatre building to a well-equipped, quiet drama studio was a key factor in this particular development.

We worked in low lighting, using electronic tea lights, fairy lights and hand-held torches. By handling and moving the light sources, we were able to engage in non-verbal interactions. We could create dances of light, and also use the movement to tell a story or indicate our particular emotional state without needing to verbalise it. Light could create smooth, measured waves, and transform into frenetic and fast action easily, without placing undue strain on the participants physically. It enabled people to keep playing and partnering others through the dance, even when they needed to sit down, as the light became an extension of their body, entering into the dance space whilst they rested. Here I was drawing on my own experiences as a participant in drama workshops and theatre productions where the use and manipulation of light was a key feature of the development process.

A range of brightly coloured fabrics and scarves were also used to create a multi-sensory experience. I made the use of these props a core feature of praxis as I observed that movement was more energetic and there was more laughter when they were integrated. Participants explored much more of the space, gave consistent positive verbal feedback and transitioned into pair or group activity more easily, sustaining social contact for longer when these resources were introduced. I acted upon what Carl Rogers (2002) would call a 'tentative hypothesis' gained from my drama facilitation; when interactions are supported with optional props and external stimulus inexperienced participants are generally more able and willing to engage as there is less emphasis on what they can deliver in isolation.

Participant: I feel that has been a really good experience, to able to choose the music and that's been a theme we didn't have [previously] and there's been more freedom and I've just enjoyed the drama aspect of it as well, interacting with people, trying out things that I haven't done before and I've enjoyed them.

I adapted improvisation and mirroring games, which are a core feature of my dramatic practice, to integrate the use of light and props into the dance. Scarves also functioned as a conduit which connected two bodies moving at different paces, and their movement and colour could also offer inspiration for different movement patterns. Seated participants could also use the scarves to stay

connected with the group. The scarves and lighting could also be used to conceal the body and face; this was reported to be a freeing experience. Participants saw their body shape and movement differently and more positively when it was modified by the light and scarves. They became less self-conscious and more expressive, participants consistently noted that they felt much more tired after using the scarves because they did not realise how long they had been moving. Instead of two - three songs, they could sustain activity for five - eight songs. Shifting the focus to the shapes and movement patterns created by the light and fabric, rather than solely focusing on the shapes created by the body appeared to reduce anxiety and aid concentration.

Skill Sharing in the University Movement Group

The process of professional skill sharing which helped develop my praxis in *Stepping Stones* continued in the context of the University Movement Group. I collaborated with two students who were completing an Applied Theatre MA in the Drama Department at Exeter University, who observed and then facilitated a session with the participants. This process of collaboration furthered my engagement with informal assessment procedures and supported my delivery of person-centred formative learning through movement and dance. Lauren Graffin had experience of working with young men going through rehabilitation and working with adults with learning disabilities. Areti Poulatsidou stated that she did not have significant drama facilitation experience but had studied different approaches in her course and had recently begun applying her knowledge in a youth at risk group. Neither was trained in formal assessment procedures, and had primarily delivered and assessed facilitation as an informal community-based activity. Both had a good knowledge of the kind of drama exercises which usually informed the warm-up stages of my workshops from their own experiences as drama students. Poulatsidou also had knowledge of Greek circle dance which had coincidentally become an important feature of the *Stepping Stones* workshops. We had been taught a Greek circle dance and revisited it as a way of closing the workshops, this was something participants had expressed a wish to continue exploring. Therefore, although they were relatively inexperienced facilitators, they did have secure artistic knowledge and skills appropriate to the group. I considered their suitability for the role based on the same values which Essame has when selecting facilitators for *Moving On*:

Essame: I suppose the core thing is they [the facilitators] need to be good at their art form. That needs to be the sort of rock on which it's built; but equally important is that empathy with the people that we're working with. They need to put away any sort of idea of 'I am the great artist,' that ain't gonna work. So they need to be the right character, they need to have the flexibility to change things at the drop of a hat. And they need to be patient and quite happy if their lesson plan, whatever they call it, goes out the window in the first ten minutes, not to get too precious about it. They need to be 'people people' definitely. You can have the greatest painter, drawer; whatever but if they're not right with people they're not going to work with our client group.

I had a preliminary planning meeting with Graffin and Poulatsidou and ensured they were cognizant of the key features of the project. The project aims, structure of praxis, and the formative assessment methods in place were outlined to disseminate clearly the approaches applied in this context. The facilitators were also able to clarify their own intended outcomes - personally referenced - through collaborating in this project. Primarily, they were attracted to the project as it provided them with an opportunity to gain experience in the applied drama field and trial workshop material with authentic participants as opposed to other students.

The next stage was sharing my session plans with them to familiarise them with the kind of structure implemented, and provide a model to base their planning on which would be transparent to me. The sharing of my style and strategies helped us standardise our approaches. They also attended a session I facilitated, running a short five minute warm-up activity and participating alongside the group to have experience of the community prior to leading them. This honoured the conditions set at the outset of the project and gave the facilitators time to trial an activity to confirm whether the intended strategies and content they wished to offer was aligned to the needs and wants of the group. They then had time to refine and adapt their planning based on their in-the-moment observations and our collective plenary assessment discussion after the session. I also allowed time in the plenary of the session after Graffin and Poulatsidou left so that participants were able to reflect and indicate whether they felt comfortable with them as potential facilitators. My own observations and assessment of the session confirmed their suitability so I, the facilitators, and the group were happy to go ahead with the intended collaboration.

The intensive level of preparation and reflection was essential to the integrity and efficacy of the work. It was an extension of the process of informal skill sharing which I had undergone in *Stepping Stones*; here I was sharing my knowledge and insights to support the practice of others. Reflecting the increasing autonomy of the group they were also much more involved in the decision-making process when it came to appointing facilitators, a new responsibility for them and me. It was crucial to establish whether they were, as Essame phrased it, 'people people', prepared to go off-plan and place the needs of these particular people above their own desire to trial material. They needed to demonstrate to me *and* the group that they could facilitate person-centred practice and not rely on conventional behaviourist approaches to deliver and measure outcomes.

To negotiate the different learning theories which could influence their praxis I asked them to articulate their intended outcomes to ensure that we were all operating from a person-centred perspective. I wanted to highlight that our "praxis is a conscious manipulation of people in time and space" (Taylor 2003: 31). There is a requirement for the facilitator to become self-reflexive to identify how and why we are manipulating participants. Graffin stated that her "intended outcomes for the workshop, were really just for the group to have an enjoyable experience, to have the space to freely express themselves and also, to see an improvement in their 'mood check' by the end of the session" (2010: n.p.). Her focus was on informal and personally referenced outcomes, and the 'mood check' was a tool to gather an informal assessment of whether participants had benefited from the session. Interestingly, Poulatsidou put forward intended outcomes with a technical and skills-based focus, specifying that all the participants would:

- Learn the dance according to their skill level
- Get familiar with this kind of music (Greek traditional)
- Get familiar with this kind of dance
- Learn some information on the context of the dance (wedding ceremonies and traditional feasts)

(2010: n.p.)

Her assessment was summative, with participants learning a dance correctly and recalling facts about her culture to evidence 'successful' learning. She was focused on the process of transferring technical skills and specific cultural knowledge, whereas initially Graffin was operating from a different viewpoint. Although trying to extend the choreographed content was one of our negotiated aims, this was not formally prescribed and was still a secondary requirement to supporting whole group participation. We worked collaboratively to plan a balance between unstructured and structured activities. It was also acknowledged that although formalised skills-based material would be offered, the facilitators needed the flexibility to revert to unstructured activities if the group were unresponsive. I shared the ways in which *Stepping Stones* had adapted prescribed routines to ensure that participants felt included, so that Poulastidou had specific strategies to adapt her dance to match participant level.

The data I received consisted of written feedback from the facilitators and a mix of oral and written feedback from the participants. Feedback suggested that the experience of working with new facilitators was overall a positive experience and that the project itself was well aligned to the agreed intended outcomes. However, one participant did opt not to attend the session facilitated by the students which may be indicative of anxiety around working with new people in this context. Graffin identifies from her feedback exercise and the written data that we received that she did achieve her intended outcomes in the session.

Graffin: There was a definite improvement in their mood checks – they seemed to be much more relaxed and content after the session. They also left quite positive feedback which suggests they enjoyed the experience and, they all did physically express themselves during the workshop in some form or another. (Although, I would say this was an outcome of a long process that had taken place long before I arrived) [...] The group really seemed to enjoy the Thai chi warm ups we did with them, that seemed to be successful. And also, the Columbian hypnosis to music. They really seemed to enjoy moving to music that did not have any lyrics. The mood check was incredibly useful for assessing an improvement in the group and also made you aware of each person's particular needs on the day. I did a dance sequence in the middle where they were encouraged to dance freely, this was not as successful – it might have been because it was quite prolonged or it might have been the choice of music which, upon reflection may not have been the easiest to move to.

What is useful is that as a facilitator she is able to articulate in critically constructive terms areas to develop alongside the successful components. We also see how drama specific skills in the use of Boal's Columbian hypnosis activity were appropriate and useful in this context when adapted and modelled clearly. Interestingly, Boal himself has asserted that "theatre is therapeutic, it is not therapy but it is therapeutic. [...] It allows people to go and try, and to try again a third and a fourth time - and this is extremely therapeutic" (Lyngtsad and Eriksson 2003: 1-2). This supports the integration of Boal's dramatic techniques into praxis which has a therapeutic dimension and an emphasis on developing confidence and skills through repeated participation in various activities.

Poulatsidou reflected upon the usefulness of being able to transition between choreographed and unstructured activities in the session, as a result of the process of skills sharing which we all entered into at the start of this collaboration.

Poulatsidou: There is a balance between those two, which leads the participants to relax, be in a safe environment, express themselves physically and verbally, be in charge of the group during high (passing) focus and let themselves follow a leader during low focus exercises. Processing the exercises (via reflection time) is also very helpful. [...] It seems more important for the participants to spend time with each other, especially having the opportunity to express their feelings.

Dorothy Heathcote suggests that effective praxis is "a manifested, social encounter whereby the manifesting of what is going on in the minds of people is achieved through the action the [facilitator] manages to achieve, to set up, to get going" (Goode 1983:24). In her evaluation, Poulatsidou had shifted from her initial summative focus; instead her observations of the social interactions chiefly informed her conclusions.

The collaboration with these facilitators was overall a positive and productive encounter. The ability for me to benefit from the process of skill sharing was hindered however by my inability to attend and participate in the session they

led, to extend my own knowledge of Greek culture and dance traditions. It also limited the kind of feedback and guidance I could provide them, as I had to rely on the data provided by participants to evaluate their success.

Participant: You can have an energetic part and you can have a detailed, different type of energy, like we did the machinery with the other two students who came, I quite liked that. That was quite focused and it would be nice to do that for a long time to see how it works [...]

Participant: When the students came, and they were great but it wasn't quite [the same] the relaxation and that. It's not a criticism at all because we really enjoyed it, it was just it really made me realise you've got a pace, the slow- you know the right pace. It's unobtrusive; it's kind of not obvious; we could overlook it almost because it just happens. When you realise what it takes you appreciate it, what goes in.

Feedback indicated that further experience with the group was necessary so that facilitators could tailor their delivery to support the participants' needs. Their comments highlighted how beneficial opportunities for on-going observation and skill sharing are to the gradual development of good praxis with a specific group. The content was fine; it was adapting the delivery for this specific group that required further attention. This seemed to support Graffin's earlier observation about the 'long process' which underpinned participants' ability to comfortably engage with the material. A similar extended process is also required to ensure they are comfortable with the facilitator. Importantly, when *Stepping Stones* was re-established the following year, one of the main developments was the increased integration of local guest facilitators to enrich the dance offered and extend the professional skill sharing opportunities for facilitators. Having the primary facilitator there to mediate the process and support the 'boundary crossing' of the guest facilitators has enabled participants to engage with an increasing range of choreographed dance styles, and also begin experimenting with song and dance in 2012.

Challenges

As I have argued, the learning opportunities in *Moving On* groups and the University Movement Group are intended to be person-centred. They are designed to differ from formal learning by rejecting the summative judgements which are explicitly attributed to learners. Learning is a formative process to minimise the potential for judgements to impact upon the learners' progression.

Essame: We do it in a very non-judgemental way and I think that is really important for a lot of people because they have been judged an awful lot during their lives and found wanting, or they feel they've been found wanting [...] I think that's what's really important, the space to go and free up and also with the *Moving On* project it's almost about learning new skills which builds up confidence and it's a good non-threatening way of doing that through creativity rather than doing English or Maths, you know stuff like that, which is actually quite challenging and you can succeed and fail whereas with art everybody gets a certain level of success and I think it's really important. It's a core part of being human and also a lot of people have been told at school you're crap at art, you can't possibly do art and they're actually rediscovering it later in life and they think, 'I can actually do this!' that's great, yeah.

However, the arts cannot be perceived as wholly 'non-threatening' tools for facilitating learning. As I have identified in Chapter Two, learning through the arts is also assessed summatively through coursework and exams, the same methods applied in core subjects such as English and Maths; these processes do impact on Magic Carpet's NOCN courses. A certain level of success is not a guarantee for everybody if there are implicit expectations about what is 'correct' or 'good' art. The statement 'I am not very good at this' is a frequent precursor to participation across my groups in *Moving On*. It is important to recognise that despite our intentions participants may find that negative beliefs and attitudes can be reinforced as well as challenged through our praxis, both in individual and collective activities. Although there is a strong potential to build participant confidence, conversely content and style can encourage connections and reflections on experiences which "may also increase your personal sense of unease" (Postlethwaite 1999: 45). The facilitator must acknowledge that engagement through art "can expose and humiliate. Many people have been brutally taught that they can't draw, sing or perform" (Learmonth 2007: n.p.). For example, when participants have been asked to share back dance routines they have choreographed in small groups in *Stepping Stones*, it has been difficult to deter individuals from making comparative judgements and apologising for the standard of their routine. This observation led me to work on whole group collective choreography in the University Movement Group to minimise the risk of negative reinforcement through comparative judgement. These tendencies indicate that behaviourist and knowledge-centred learning processes experienced in the compulsory education sector have a strong and enduring influence on our perception of learning as a whole. It can be difficult for

participants to leave behind the judgements prescribed in formal learning, and believe that they can learn and assess on their own terms. In *Moving On* groups, “[l]earners may be constrained by their own early negative experiences of learning and they need the context of a highly supportive and respectful environment to be able to recognise their needs and begin to explore them” (Boud in Usher, Bryant and Johnston 2002: 82). The notion of ‘failure’ is a socio-constructed concept for our learners, scaffolded by the interactions and modelling provided by previous educators. The emphasis in the cases of *Stepping Stones* and the University Movement Group is to make participants aware of what they can do and maximise their potential to engage artistically – definitions of success and failure are negotiated and established *with* them not *for* them.

Issues of Assessment

The issue of assessment has been one of the foremost concerns for Magic Carpet during my research, particularly in 2011-2012. The process of assessing *Moving On* has been a significant undertaking and an intensive period of learning for facilitators. The responsibility to assess informally and independently within the context of the University Movement Group was also an important period of learning and development for me. Here I discuss the wider concerns of assessment for the organisation with reference to *Moving On*, and evaluate the specific methods I applied in the University Movement Group.

***Moving On* Assessment**

One of the barriers to assessment was the degree of informality which had characterised our approaches prior to this project. In *Moving On* groups, formative assessment and self-assessment tools are most commonly applied. Essame discusses the role of formative assessment in *Moving On* practices, particularly the role of on-going informal facilitator observation. He discusses how he utilises this approach when assessing whether his practice is inclusive of the needs of a mixed ability group:

Essame: The [groups] that are actually mixed ability [...] I think that’s about picking up what people say and encouraging them to develop those ideas at their level. [...] so it’s about listening and feeling what

they're comfortable with, watching their body language, just seeing whether they are switched off. So it's watching, listening- I think that's what a facilitator needs to do, to be eyes and ears and also the gut feeling as to whether they [the participants] are actually comfortable with what they are being asked to do, and if not you just roll it back a little bit.

Primarily, assessment is a discursive activity. Assessment material can take the form of plenary discussions, interviews, and any written data offered; it can consist of overheard comments, or insights gleaned in conversation and the observation of new skills in practice. At irregular intervals a more structured attempt to identify outcomes was implemented, such as getting group feedback on post-it stickers, or in extended plenary discussions. Individual or group 'success stories,' which get reported to facilitators may feature on the website as an informal record of progress.⁵⁹ Self and peer assessment is also a discursive act which usually takes place in plenary circle time activities but there has been no requirement to formally document this process for external review.

There are many factors which led to the implementation of a formative and informal approach to assessing praxis. Firstly this is the model which has supported the small scale projects which were initiated in the 1980s. Facilitators are paid and contracted for the workshops only, which no planning allowance. Therefore finding assessment methods which can be applied within the workshop itself is a pragmatic and economically viable approach. Essame explains how formative listening and speaking activities enable facilitators to identify the needs in a mixed ability group, ensuring the material offered is inclusive.

Evans: How do you go about evaluating the success or the failure of the things we're doing? What are the main methods of evaluation that are used?

Essame: Listening to what people say. Observation, I mean sometimes you just know that things aren't working or haven't worked and sometimes it's incredibly surprising as to what doesn't work and sometimes I can pinpoint why they haven't worked and other times it's more difficult [...]

Evans: Do you find it easier working with informal methods?

Essame: Yes, very definitely because the whole business is about emotions and people. It's not about ticking boxes and filling in forms [...] so I think it's much better to just talk and say, 'how did that go? That was

⁵⁹ The news section is available at: <http://www.magiccarpet-arts.org.uk/news> [02 June 2012].

good, that was bad, that wasn't quite so successful' and why, and then stack it away and hopefully remember next time.

Furthermore, assessment needs to respect the confidentiality of participants. Assessment must not be an act which increases anxiety; the majority of participants informally discuss negative experiences within formal education in our groups. Therefore formative and discursive methods which are quick and process orientated have appeared more compatible with their particular needs, and they do not present major challenges to confidentiality. These formative approaches require little additional materials or preparation; they have ensured that the focus remains on the artistic process itself within the limited two hours available. Many of the facilitators are artists and do not have a background in formal education nor training in assessment procedures. The rapid expansion which *Moving On* funding prompted meant that assessment strategies were developed alongside praxis; there was not time or funding for in-depth training at the outset. It would have been problematic to implement given that facilitators changed during the project and short term projects were developed and staffed during the three years. It was also difficult to identify who would attend and what they would produce, meaning that what assessment approaches were appropriate changed during the course of the project.

Magic Carpet collaborated with evaluators Angela McTiernan and Sarah Taragon, who were employed when the summative assessment for *Moving On* was initiated in 2012. These evaluators have “a commitment to build well-being in the people, organisations and community” they support (Red Door 2012: n.p.). McTiernan specialises in providing evaluation procedures for community and voluntary sector groups. She asserts that “[a]ll her work is carried out with the aims of inclusion, empowerment and learning, ensuring that clients gain as much as possible from her input” (Red Door 2012: n.p.). In *Moving On* her role was to provide facilitators with assessment tools and collect primary data for her colleague to collate for funders. Sarah Taragon’s background is also in the not-for-profit sector, and she “combines her knowledge and experience of formal research methods with a commitment to participation and the active involvement of all partners” (Red Door 2012: n.p.). She was responsible for selecting the data to include in the report and formalising recommendations in consultation with Taragon and *Moving On* staff.

Initially however the assessment tools and guidance offered raised concerns. Facilitators were reluctant to run assessment tasks within sessions which would limit the time spent on the arts activities participants pay for. Facilitators also questioned the ethics of the tools themselves, wanting to ensure they did not get biased results. Facilitating discussions about personal experience in a group setting and respecting confidentiality given the intention to use findings for an external report were also potential challenges.

For instance, one of the suggested tools offered by McTiernan consisted of offering participants a range of coloured paper, asking them to select which most represented their feelings about *Moving On* and explaining why. Although this has the potential to be a useful tool, in the context of our mixed ability groups this 'one size fits all' assessment tool raised concerns. This task could challenge many learning disabled participants whilst also patronising others. The colours also limited, and to an extent, prescribed responses given the implicit associations many colours carry. The group-setting also meant that people could be influenced by the responses of others, and feel pressurised to give favourable responses. Such tasks may also be perceived as a 'game' in the context of the group, leading people to offer entertaining or playful responses rather than an honest response. Similar assessment tools were also deemed inappropriate given that they may steer participants towards particular responses. However when McTiernan and Taragon invited facilitators to offer suggestions for personalising or adapting these tools responses were limited as this kind of assessment was unfamiliar. The level of facilitator participation within the group meant that there was an ethnographic dimension to praxis. Ideally, "as participant, the researcher 'takes part', becomes part of what is happening; simultaneously, as observer, the researcher maintains a thoughtful distance to critically observe the process" but this balance has proved challenging to realise in practice (Simpson and McDonald 2000: n.p.).

After a process of negotiation facilitators were asked to produce a maximum of three stories which documented the outcomes of participation for individuals to collect qualitative assessment data. This approach enabled to facilitator to look at the whole impact of practice and include any outcomes which they had

identified and wanted to be considered rather than just focusing on the initial brief. It was also a space in which they could forward the informal, everyday observations which are sometimes absent from more structured methods. This was an optional and unpaid task; therefore not all facilitators participated in this activity which limited the assessment data produced. The reliance on facilitator memory and also the assumptions they may have to make about how participants had progressed outside were also disadvantages to the rigour of this approach. This method also had the potential to produce a lot of duplication and for many other cases to go undocumented given that the three cases were selected anonymously.

Another data collection method applied was interviews with selected participants to identify how participation in the arts had impacted on their health. However, there was a distinction between the language participants used to discuss the impact of arts on their health and the language used by funders in the brief. Very early on in the assessment process McTiernan highlighted that the self-assessment data being produced through written feedback and interviews was too personalised. It was not aligned to the funding criteria prescribed, the participants were not demonstrating an awareness of the project criteria when discussing their outcomes. As a facilitator I had a responsibility to honour the voice of the participants; our “[a]ssessment strategies [...] should be context-driven and centrally concerned with giving voice to the participants” (Prendergast and Saxton 2009: 24). The pressure to evidence the criteria affected the kind of voice I documented. For example, in one-to-one discussions I facilitated as preparation for the interviews, one participant was eager to discuss how important *Moving On* was to their social wellbeing, but when I asked them to find specific examples which corresponded to the five prescribed criteria they were disheartened as they had very few experiences which corresponded to this kind of ‘moving on’. Although the participant was eager to provide a strong voice advocating the benefits of *Moving On*, how we captured and presented their voice was affected by the criteria. Magic Carpet are now trying to address this by establishing a participant steering group who can develop opportunities for their voice to be heard, meeting and negotiating with staff to help improve groups on a regular basis.

It became evident that in many cases the concept of *Moving On* specified by funders differed with participants' actual experiences. Given that some participants were retired or severely disabled it was often not realistic or desirable to 'promote opportunities for further training and integration into the workplace'. Their engagement with *Moving On* did not fit in with this profile. Another issue was that *Moving On* charged so little for a two hour provision with refreshment and the support of up to three experienced facilitators. The mainstream community groups we tried to encourage people to move on into were much more expensive and intensive. For example, the cheapest dance class available was five pounds, led by one instructor and for half the time with no refreshments provided. There was an issue in that we had created a unique and quality provision which offered much more for much less. It was both financially and emotionally challenging to move on given the marked distinctions between our specialist groups and the mainstream activities available. *Moving On* had an emphasis on moving participants *out* of Magic Carpet; however this intention became implicit during the actual process which caused challenges. Often external funding "dictates that the measures of success will be primarily attached to the outcomes of the original purposes of the project" (Prendergast and Saxton 2009: 23). However, this produces a very limited 'snapshot' of outcomes, and can exclude important achievements from the summative assessment. In this project, many participants 'moved on' to become volunteers, complete accredited courses and try out different arts *within* the framework of Magic Carpet itself. They realised many of the overall aims except they did not take the important step of doing this in other community settings. Despite this, these experiences were documented and included in the final report and have also functioned to inform new funding bids.

To develop our assessment procedures, looking at the formalised structures applied in the professional courses is one method being applied to help facilitators develop praxis. In my NOCN Magic Carpet course I was explicitly contracted and paid to select and employ data collection strategies to assess participant progress. I found that continuous assessment through the recording of my observations, supplemented with one-to-one discussion, coursework and performance enabled me to draw on a range of data to satisfy the formal criteria and also feedback to individuals how they were progressing on a

personal level. For example, my observations were recorded weekly for each participant. After each session I was able to write up my observations and then match them to the criteria to identify areas of strength and gaps in knowledge to help inform content for the following session. This also helped me pinpoint which criteria required further evidence through other data; therefore I conducted one-to-one discussions and documented verbatim responses to evidence criterion 3.3. and 3.4.

Participant A	Criteria
<p>Week Five: Participant A attended, showing great commitment to the course, recovering from a hospital visit last week. Well done. Today Participant A took on one of the most challenging roles: education liaison officer and created a well-structured letter of introduction to a school for Theatre Alibi's <i>A Flying Visit</i> TiE programme. She had to consider what information they needed to book, the needs of the company, and the kind of persuasive language that would secure a booking. In the hot seating she challenged the character in role with relevant questions to extend our knowledge of Joe. Tutor one to one: discussed existing skills, areas to develop/extend and ways of developing skills in the course. Focus on criteria 3.1, 3.3, 3.5 (evidenced in tutor one to one sheet in portfolio.)</p>	<p>1.4. Respond to key demands and needs of the text with reference to a given specific responsibility. 3.1. Describe own skills which could be made available for the production. 3.3. Identify an additional skill required and how to some extent it could be attained. 3.5. Identify an approach/strategy for further self-development.</p>
<p>Week Six: Participant A discussed key roles and responsibilities, considering how an education officer would operate. She articulated key research findings well, making useful suggestions regarding how we would use music to address the brief set. She made some thoughtful suggestions about involving key staff, and trying to operate inclusively. We discussed existing skills and skills to develop, in relation to how we can use music to create the production.</p>	<p>2.2. List the role and responsibilities for a specific aspect of production. 3.3. Identify an additional skill required and how to some extent it could be attained. 3.4. List own strengths and areas that require further development.</p>

Table 3.1 NOCN Assessment Data

A portfolio of coursework was also collected to support my observations. This approach also enabled me to record personal development which goes beyond the criteria. I recorded how participant A continued to attend and help inform the devising process despite on-going illness. I was able to feedback clearly and specifically how they had managed to be successful and contribute to the sessions despite illness impacting on their mobility. Although not explicitly related to the criteria this was an important piece of feedback for the learner, as it motivated them to continue attending groups and focus on what they were

capable of doing rather than the limits their illness may place upon them. This method could be transposed to help facilitators assess in our informal groups. By committing to the production of brief weekly records, this can enable them to identify patterns in behaviour, track progress over time and also take note of the achievements that are so important to the participants on a personal level. The NOCN tutors with the professional experience of documenting observations to address specific criteria have the potential to take a lead role in developing in-house staff training to disseminate how such approaches may be applied to evidence progression within the informal groups. These experiences strongly indicate that the sharing of formal tools is essential for the development of assessment; this process of skills sharing is also required to make assessment a more explicit and embedded aspect of future good praxis.

The University Movement Group and Assessment

As I have argued, for ethical and effective practice to take place the facilitator must consider how they can make assessments reliable. They must also identify which elements of practice will take precedence in the context of assessment, and establish appropriate standards to measure quality. In the context of the University Movement Group, the assessment process differed as we did not have the requirement to produce any evidence for a funding body – although this option was acknowledged. I borrowed from my formal training to document my observations, gather written feedback weekly, but used the approaches modelled in *Stepping Stones* to ensure that whole group discussions assessed each session formatively. In the final session an extended group discussion was recorded to provide a summative record for the process in a non-threatening and inclusive way. Each week I left paper and pens on a table and participants were free to write down anonymous comments at any point during or after the session. Each week I was left with comments on exercises, personal responses, and suggestions for activities and music. In this group participants had a greater degree of ownership and input on the assessment process. We negotiated our aims, and also decided how we wanted to measure them. I tried to create a group where “[t]he facilitator shares responsibility for the learning process with others in the learning setting” (Rogers in Martin 2003: 70). Assessment was explicitly designed to be an informal weekly activity and this form of assessment for learning could quickly

impact on praxis. Participants were able to suggest music, activities and other practical ideas which could then be implemented in the following session. For example, in week two participants suggested I offer more music without lyrics to ensure that people did not begin analysing the meaning of the language and stayed 'present' in the activity. Plenary discussions gave me feedback that meant I knew to offer more light resources to support a partially sighted participant in subsequent sessions. I would not have adapted my praxis to support these specific needs if I had opted to apply a skills-based summative approach to assessment, nor would I have identified these issues if I had not made formative assessment a weekly and group activity. However, the informal discursive nature of the data also meant that there was very little material compiled which could be used to inform a funding bid, so one of the potential outcomes we had considered was not realised.

As an example of how I identified the participant needs on a weekly basis I retained the use of a check-in as a core feature of my plan, and as a useful tool for identifying whether adaptation of my planned content may be necessary. I tried to make my own assessment of what the group wanted, and was capable of, by beginning each session with time to hear how they felt, and share what they wanted to do that day. This introduction was not a quick perfunctory task; it was essential to good praxis so it was not time restricted. In any group "[i]t is problematic for teaching artists to predict how participants will respond at any given moment" (Taylor 2003: 51). This issue is exacerbated when working with participants whose ability to participate can be affected by medication, physical disability and mental health issues.

Ensuring that content was accessible and people actually participated was of primary importance, acquiring dance specific knowledge and skills were secondary concerns. In the check-in and plenary discussions participants could choose to talk or remain silent. Often they would offer a few words, a movement or gesture to indicate where they were starting from that day and perhaps highlight any particular injuries, or their emotional state, so people could work gently and respectfully of other people's capacity that session. Check-ins also took more creative forms, such as weather forecasts, so that participants gave an indication of their mood without offering personal information. As the

facilitator I would close by acknowledging the particular mix of needs and energies that day; repeating that people were able to go at their own pace, respect their own body, and be gentle with others. I would explicitly reiterate what they had indicated in this initial self-assessment because assessment data is a strong motivator and can function as a positive tool to support learning (Gibbs 1999). In the closing circle participants would self-assess and articulate what they had learned and engaged with. Had they tried anything new? Could they identify any initial challenges they had overcome? I was able to use this feedback to inform my planning for the following session and evaluate to what extent I had supported the group.

By giving participants the opportunity to feedback to inform session content I distanced my praxis from a behaviourist approach. Instead a socio-constructivist perception of an *active* learner was embraced, and the person-centred focus of practice encouraged facilitator “uncrowning’ and distribution of the power [...] in favour of a more democratic and demanding autonomy” (Neelands 2009: 184). Increased autonomy and decision making power for the participants does not simplify my role. By uncrowning myself I was required to be more flexible, listen, observe and respond in-the-moment, and go off plan confidently and safely. For example, high energy group activities were sometimes substituted for gentler, slower individual warm-ups, thus creating a dialogue between assessment and praxis.

Participant: I think it’s a balance. Sometimes it’s good to get things that are quite energising, sometimes, but not too much. [...] there’s a kind of integrity to the whole thing that you go through a process but you arrive at a place when you leave where I think - that’s when I’ve enjoyed it; you go away feeling ok and not kind of too churned up.

My approaches to assessment did have limitations. Gathering formative assessment data enabled me to personalise my planning, however, I would incorporate a specific request to be more inclusive of an individual's needs to find that they were not in attendance to respond to this the following session. When planning I would also try to ensure activities were not too physically intensive from my observations the previous session, but in-the-moment would

be called on to adapt as the general health and ability level of the members of the group shifted significantly each week.

Another challenge to assessing praxis was the fact that I participated in many of the activities, to act as a role model and a 'scaffold' to enable learning to occur. I situated myself within the dance and drama, this made it difficult to observe the whole group and retain an objective view. Although being a practical role model was a necessary responsibility, "[i]f one is genuinely participating [...] then it is impossible to fully observe how each member of the group is managing. Furthermore, if we are actively participating [...] it is easy for the class to become fascinated as an audience, and therefore work less fully themselves, or alternatively they may copy" (Way in Goode 1983:5). For the purposes of informal and on-going assessment, the participatory position I assumed limited my ability to assess in-the-moment.

Artist Keith Postlethwaite suggests that the facilitator's "'feel' for the effectiveness of our actions" can be misleading, and identifies that "[t]hese impressions can be based on very selective information" (1999: 36). Relying on our eyes, ears and gut instincts provides a general 'snapshot', but our focus, particularly when we are invested in the activity ourselves, is inevitably selective. For example, I introduced the group to a new choreographed routine in session five. After the session I felt that it had been unsuccessful because the group had not given any verbal or written feedback, and had offered few non-verbal indicators such as smiling, laughing, or increased energy during that section of the session. However, the next year when *Stepping Stones* had resumed, some of the group asked me if we could share that routine and spoke enthusiastically about it. It had in fact made a lasting impression, and they could recall some of it, and were keen to revisit and share it; my longitudinal contact with participants enabled me to see that there had been a positive engagement with that material which my initial selective impressions failed to identify.

Conclusion

What I have learnt through my facilitation in *Moving On* and the University Movement Group is that although it is important to create and disseminate evidence for praxis, trying to find the right methods to achieve this is

problematic. This is exacerbated for facilitators transitioning into unfamiliar learning territory. My praxis and research present the facilitator as a learner too, and like participants they also learn by making mistakes. Giving ourselves permission to make and discuss our mistakes, to understand the necessity of trial and error is essential for the development of our praxis. I have learnt that the facilitator, whatever their level of training or expertise, cannot do a 'perfect' job, they must accept their limitations and furthermore not be afraid to own them.

For the facilitator this case study also reiterates the importance of co-facilitation as a strategy for developing extended skills. Prior to commencing this research I did not value the post-workshop evaluation discussions I often entered into. However, hearing Essame reflect on this and also having that intensive week by week reorientation for *Stepping Stones* with my co-facilitators really made me appreciate how informal discussion contributed to my body of extended professional knowledge. As Essame identifies, that post workshop five minute informal exchange helps facilitators to communicate observations, realign strategies and learn how other professionals are observing and responding in the moment. It is highly challenging when asked to try and recall those insights a week or even a day later, this immediate debrief is therefore framed as an essential component of good practice. I learnt that although the workshop has ended your job as a facilitator has not. What this case study further highlighted was the lack of space to utilise the insights gained informally through our discussions and field notes any further. As Petra Kupperts has highlighted in her research, informal data such as images, notes, conversations and poems can be integral to capturing the facilitation process. Although these kinds of materials have been used in the production of promotional films for *Magic Carpet*, they were conspicuously absent in the final report produced to evaluate *Moving On*. The informal network of professional skill sharing remained undervalued and notably absent. The report captured the voice of participants, gave an overview of the groups and their purpose and presented statistical data. The voice of the facilitator although present, had the potential to be a much stronger advocate for the outcomes of praxis, potentially arguing the case for our work from multiple perspectives.

My work with Magic Carpet has highlighted that in cases of good praxis the facilitator is not just a meaning maker in the group, they are a *meaning sharer* in a wider professional context. They can disseminate how they have engaged with inter-subjective terminology, roles, and practices in each unique setting and respond to both formalised funding criteria and the personalised outcomes of the learner. My facilitation with Magic Carpet was instrumental in broadening my understanding of the purpose and definition of assessment. In this context, “[a]ssessment is a process, a very human and humanistic process, that includes looking at our [participants’] learning, determining what strengths and weaknesses are present [...] and then deciding what to do about improving their learning, if that seems necessary” (Wright 2007: 5). My research also highlights how crucial it is to explicitly address and make assessment decisions at the *outset*, even in informal contexts, to ensure that the data collected is both an accurate and ethical reflection of the whole process. Therefore, although my formal assessment procedures cannot simply be transposed into these groups, they can be useful resources in the development of more rigorous approaches to data collection. There is the potential for me to share my skills from the formal sector to help sustain and extend the way informal praxis is documented and valued.

As I draw my research with Magic Carpet to a close, the principal functions of the facilitator are undergoing a process of development; a response to our experiences within *Moving On*. There is a focus on the development of assessment procedures and forging new partnerships to extend praxis. For example, I have received specialist supervision from a child psychologist on a new project called *Exploring Emotions* to help me focus my observations and develop appropriate assessment procedures for the group. In addition, time and funding has been explicitly allocated in the brief to support the summative assessment of the project. In this climate of change I have continued to facilitate and develop my praxis with *Stepping Stones*. Since the University Movement Group, *Stepping Stones* has been re-launched as a series of short term courses in 2011 and 2012. The courses have featured guest facilitators who run a diverse range of dance classes in the Exeter area, including belly-dancing, square dancing, free-form improvisation and circle dance. Classes have also

been facilitated in more than one venue to help encourage the transition into different community settings.

Importantly, a stronger focus on making products which can be shared *outside* of the private session with the public has emerged out of the *Moving On* project. This shift away from the private space has led to an increased responsibility to produce work for public display. For example, there are animations and videos of performances on the website from drama groups, visual arts are displayed and sold in local galleries, and in 2011-2012 the *Say No to Bullying* project took a performance devised by adults with learning disabilities into Exmouth Schools. Magic Carpet also created an event called *Time for Change* in November 2012 at the Gloss Art Gallery, Exeter, to disseminate the outcomes of the *Moving On* project to local artists, carers, healthcare professionals and mental health specialists. Professionals were presented with a mix of qualitative and quantitative data; the *Moving On Evaluation Report*⁶⁰ from Taragon and McTiernan was presented and supported with a sharing of creative writing, visual arts, a promotional film⁶¹, the choir and a drama performance which I developed specifically for *Time for Change*. Since 2012 the 'Own Two Feet' initiative has also sought to legitimise the art produced by participants as professional.

Own Two Feet is a new project that is focused on generating regular income for Magic Carpet [...] working on several different ideas, including using Magic Carpet participants art, to create [...] saleable products and our new Community Choir.

(Magic Carpet 2012: n.p.)

Although this shift has at its core the interest of the participants there is also a political agenda which drives the move towards product rather than process orientated praxis. The requirement to make visible how our praxis supports the participant and makes a contribution to the 'Big Society' is an increasing requirement. This will also change how we assess 'successes' as the products introduce a clear summative aspect to the learning process. Participants (and

⁶⁰ To access a copy of the report contact Magic Carpet administrator and facilitator Janet Sainsbury: jrs@magiccarpet-art.co.uk.

⁶¹ This promotional film made by artist and Magic Carpet facilitator James Hedge was designed to show "the range and quality of our work and how people's lives can be changed through art" (Magic Carpet 2012: n.p.). It is available online at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kziPI_Xq0U&feature=youtu.be [22 Nov 2012].

facilitators) will also be judged on the basis of whether work is deemed worthy of purchase, attracts an audience or generates further income. The shift towards summatively assessed products also supports my argument for formally trained facilitators in the organisation to share their skill set and take a lead role in the development of appropriate and rigorous assessment procedures.

However, the political appropriation of praxis is a long standing feature of the field, as demonstrated in the literature review. What this analysis of Magic Carpet identifies is that when our work is appropriated or commodified we can reclaim it; our art can be re-staged, extended and presented in other spaces, transforming 'summative' judgements into formative feedback. Even as facilitators become more adept at "public policy speak" to communicate the efficacy of their work, 'art speak' is still recognised as a powerful mode of communication and evidence, which we can use in conjunction with more scientific methods (Schechner and Thompson 2004: 12). The field stands firm by allowing the art produced to communicate in conjunction with, and importantly, in its own right to a wider audience. The impact of the art itself to attract participation and communicate the efficacy of our work to related and interested professionals should not be ignored. This is also evident in the work of SSF, with key politicians asserting that their engagement with the *performances*, not the data, motivated them to support the organisation.

Displays in art galleries, performances, saleable art items and workshops in public spaces may look good politically, but these moves are only part of good practice when they grow out of participant feedback and function well from a person-centred perspective. *Time for Change* may be partially driven by a political agenda, however there is also a genuine person-centred motivation which informs Magic Carpet's decisions to disseminate their work and develop an extended network. The invitation to other professionals in their locality is not solely motivated by financial motivations, there is a fundamental commitment to finding innovative ways to share skills, knowledge and develop the provision for participants in the area.

This case study highlights the challenges of evidencing outcomes appropriately. As a developing facilitator I found that qualitative and informal data was useful for me but proved difficult to utilise for funders. In Magic Carpet pictures, poems and performances can be produced and displayed as evidence of 'success' but may have little or no relationship to formal outcomes. This invites the facilitator to consider for whose benefit is material being produced and displayed? The person-centred approach encourages the facilitator to keep their focus firstly on the micro concerns of the participants and secondly formal outcomes in a macro context. However, as I discovered with *Moving On* assessment can create a tension between ensuring the participant's needs are met and the needs of the funding agency or institution are also realised.

In this case study voluntary work emerges as a potential form of professional development for the facilitator in the early stages of their career. Magic Carpet has many volunteers, including me, who have forged long term professional associations with them. The opportunity for analogous learning and informal skill exchange has created a community of facilitators who exchange specialist knowledge and mix and match a range of artistic approaches to offer a highly personalised model of praxis. When considering this as an avenue of professional development, the voluntary opportunities will need to be sought out, so the facilitator must locate local organisations which may be suitable and amenable. Voluntary work needs to be compatible with paid work commitments; here too the facilitator's economic sustainability affects their ability to access this kind of work. Also, the exact nature of the work the facilitator wants to access should be clarified at the outset, and it will not always be possible for the volunteer to gain the kind of experience they were primarily seeking. A similar process of informal professional exchange explored here is also a key factor in the success of praxis discussed in Chapter Four. Here the focus shifts from learning and assessment in an informal framework to an examination of how informal learning is facilitated alongside formalised outcomes.

Chapter Four

West Exe: Social Learning and the School Syllabus

Although Chapter Five presents a detailed examination of the praxis of the Shakespeare Schools Festival (SSF) my journey in this chapter also begins with them. I first encountered West Exe Technology College in the 2009 Festival with an engaging adaptation of *Othello* directed by their Head of Department Jo Diffey. In 2010 I was the Venue Manger, providing backstage support to West Exe's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*. The director of this production was the new Head of Expressive Arts, Dave Salter, who replaced the retired Diffey. I helped facilitate Salter's cast workshop in September and was the Venue Manager for their performance day. I supported Salter's Year Ten Performing Arts Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) exam group; this performance was their first formally assessed practical exam under his direction. During the two intensive days I spent with the cast I was impressed with Salter's ability to negotiate the responsibilities of his new role, using the Festival to support the informal social learning this opportunity provided and also ensure that students were able to satisfy their exam criteria.

In this same period I was extending my facilitation skills by becoming a support worker in Magic Carpet groups for the first time. I was also making the transition into facilitating in higher education as a graduate teaching assistant in Exeter University's Drama Department. To help facilitate with Magic Carpet I was seeking guidance from extended professionals to help me apply my formal training and knowledge to effectively support informal learning. I also was trying to extend my own skills so that I could confidently negotiate the balance between sustaining personal interest for participants and realising formalised outcomes in a higher education setting. My initial observation of Salter's praxis and discussions with him indicated that he was an extended professional who may be able to offer me further guidance in the specific facilitation settings I was operating within, particularly as he was negotiating the additional responsibilities

of his new position. When I contacted Salter in 2010 he was in the process of organising a collaboration between the same cohort I had observed in the 2010 Festival and another external project. He collaborated with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM) as part of the Sex and History Project which was established in 2009 at Exeter University's Centre for Medical History. The Sex and History Project worked with six schools and colleges in the South West including West Exe Technology College. The schools were all provided with facilitated sessions at Rougemont House, Exeter, which enabled them to integrate "work with historical objects into mainstream classes [...] feeding directly into coursework" (Langlands and Fisher 2012: n.p.). The Sex and History project was designed to support the academic achievement of students and had a secondary function which was to support "the implementation of statutory requirements to provide Sex and Relationship Education" through drama specific activities (Langlands and Fisher 2012: n.p.). This has been a large-scale three year project led by "the world-leading research of Dr Rebecca Langlands and Professor Kate Fisher to meet the need for effective sex and relationship education" (Langlands and Fisher 2012: n.p.). The RAMM and the university researchers collaborated with students in formal education "as a means of delivering national Sex and Relationship Education requirements [...] bringing youth facilitators and/or museum professionals into school classrooms to kick off creative projects exploring sexual issues through art, dance, drama, music and film" (Langlands and Fisher 2012: n.p.). Salter's students worked with Rachel Vowles, one of the youth facilitators who were employed by the RAMM, to help facilitate this project with schools in the area. I was invited to observe his classroom praxis and the process of boundary crossing taking place when students worked alongside Vowles to inform my research. In this chapter I discuss the insights I gained as a facilitator from this process of observation. This chapter focuses on how collaboration with external facilitators enables both social and formalised learning outcomes to be supported simultaneously. It also argues for the benefits of teachers collaborating with informal learning facilitators to offer a deeper learning experience to students.

In the autumn term of 2010 I observed four two-hour lessons in West Exe Technology College. Firstly, I watched students rehearse, perform and evaluate their first year eleven practical exam in three separate sessions which were

facilitated by Dave Salter in the school's drama studio. This exam was informed by Augusto Boal's forum theatre techniques and had been specifically designed to address the statutory requirement for schools to provide work-related learning opportunities for students between fourteen-nineteen years of age. The exam clarified the work experience process for Year Ten students, as the cast designed and performed their exam for an audience of their Year Ten peers. I also joined the students during a two-hour session facilitated by Rachel Vowles in Rougemont House. The session was designed to generate discussions to inform the group's next practical exam which addressed statutory PSHE issues. The exam was designed to address the academic requirements of the BTEC and also support the 'bigger picture' requirement of developing the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about sex and relationships. To inform my analysis I draw on my observations in the SSF Festival, the classroom and Rougemont House. I also include interview data I collected from Vowles and Salter, and the evaluation data produced by Langlands and Fisher's research.

Curriculum Drama

As argued in Chapter One, there are multiple perceptions on how and why drama should be integrated into a curriculum. Jonothan Neelands argues that the "lack of a national consensus about what drama is and where it might be best positioned, taught and assessed leads to a degree of professional insecurity amongst teachers employed as drama specialists and has also led to a long and sometimes fierce contest to define what is legitimate drama in schools" (2008: 2). This is a pertinent argument in the context of the Michael Gove's proposed reforms which see the curriculum move towards a linear rather than modular structure. These reforms would also have significant impact on the BTEC course, as coursework is phased out and the arts are removed from the core curriculum. West Exe presents a case of good practice, demonstrating how the BTEC is an effective course for supporting social learning alongside the study of a formal qualification. Furthermore, Dave Salter shows how drama can have a central role in the school curriculum by delivering a course which is enhanced with support from external facilitators and work-related learning opportunities in the community. The challenges to delivering person-centred dramatic praxis in an increasingly prescribed curriculum context are also identified in the analysis of Salter's lessons.

The delivery of BTEC Performing Arts at West Exe is strongly influenced by the broader shift towards collaboration with external agents, including drama facilitators, in formal education. There has been a move towards “collaboration between practitioners (Home Office 2000; OECD 1998) to enable [...] joined up responses” to multi-dimensional issues which surround children’s wellbeing and education (Edwards *et al.* 2009: 7). This shift towards collaborative praxis and joined up responses to social and academic issues is part of a ‘bigger picture curriculum’ where the educator must “work responsively with the whole child” (Edwards *et al.* 2009: 67). The sessions facilitated by Salter and Vowles were closely linked to a bigger picture curriculum given that both formal and informal social learning were addressed during their sessions. The bigger picture curriculum was formalised and disseminated under New Labour in 2009-2010. Focusing on the bigger picture requires the facilitator to look at how learning goes beyond the academic and also develops social skills to support integration into the wider community. This bigger picture of education has continued to be a central discourse within the coalition government’s Big Society Agenda, introduced in 2010. The government continues to champion the idea that “[s]trategies must be put in place locally and nationally to support more equal access to the resources that would enable participation in the Big Society. If this level playing field is missing, then the Big Society cannot be considered fair” (Schmuecker 2001: 15). The Big Society agenda shares the bigger picture curriculum emphasis on providing “education and skills, confidence and a sense of efficacy [...] in order to make the most of the transfer of power and responsibility to individuals and communities” (Schmuecker 2001: 15). Therefore, schools like West Exe have sought ways to establish local and national external links to extend the range of resources available to enable learners to participate in society. Salter has developed partnerships with national organisations such as the National Youth Theatre and the Shakespeare Schools Festival and has local links with theatre companies, Exeter University, theatre venues in Exeter and Plymouth, and other public resources such as the RAMM museum.

Salter: [T]he job is to lead a team to ensure the best possible outcomes for students studying the expressive arts subjects. This is done by ensuring that

good practice is shared, and that lessons are observed to ensure consistency of high level practice. [...] my role is to ensure that the students get the best opportunities they can, and that the high profile of the subject is maintained.

Jonathan Neelands has asserted that “drama-in-education (process drama), with its emphasis on decentering the power of the teacher, negotiated learning and encouraging deeper contextual explorations of the bigger questions of life, has tended to flourish in the context of a bigger picture curriculum” (2009: 178). This ability to negotiate and support the bigger picture for learners was an area in which I required further instruction, and was a focal area in my observations. I wanted to identify how collaboration with extended professionals like Rachel Vowles outside of the classroom can enable Salter to deliver a ‘bigger picture curriculum’ successfully.

Formal outcomes in this context will be specified by an examining board. In West Exe this is the Edexcel BTEC specifications, and also the National Curriculum syllabus. Informal outcomes may be informed by the criteria set by these organising bodies but are also personally referenced and can be refined during the learning process. They will also include the integration of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) targets. The programme of study for PSHE education at Key Stages Three and Four themselves remains non-statutory; however statutory aspects include:

- Careers – statutory for Key Stages 3 and 4
 - Work-related learning – statutory at Key Stage 4
 - Sex education – statutory for all pupils registered at the school
- (PSHE Association 2010: 1)

These must be addressed, but how and when is at the discretion of the school. Salter has personalised BTEC projects to explore statutory PSHE topics, effectively integrating broader social learning into the formal classroom. In a curriculum context “[w]ork-related learning is defined as: planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful in work” (QCA 2005: 19). Arguably the vocational nature of the BTEC, and the strong links with extended professionals in a range of theatre venues enables

drama students to “[l]earn through, about and for work” in addition to gaining a formal qualification (QCA 2005: 19).

Importantly, the boundaries between what is classed as a formal and informal learning outcome can blur in the classroom; for example the target to “enjoy and achieve” from *Every Child Matters* is highly personal and subjective and may be evidenced within both formal and informal learning processes. Achievement of a grade and a personal achievement can both be realised through participation in drama. However, negotiating the transition between the formal and informal learning outcomes in the classroom is challenging. What it means ‘to achieve’ may differ dependent upon whether you are a teacher, student or collaborating facilitator. Acceptable standards differ markedly dependent upon whether the facilitator assesses these features using formal or informal criteria. For example, one of the cast members from the 2010 SSF project gained an award at the ‘Excellence In Exeter’ ceremony, held in Exeter University’s Great Hall.

The awards celebrate the very best in achievement from Exeter’s school students. [...] Lauren had never had a lead role before and is never confident in her ability to be successful. Not only did she take on the male part of Benedick, she totally immersed herself in it and worked exceptionally with her “Beatrice” to produce scenes that were mentioned as highlights during the adjudication by the festival directors.

(West Exe 2011: n.p.)

However, ‘excellence’ or ‘success’ in one context may not constitute ‘success’ in a BTEC examination, which can be a challenge when extending formal learning into informal community contexts. In the case of the focal cohort, the student was told that they did an ‘excellent’ job by the audience and festival staff at the Shakespeare Schools Festival but this does not necessarily correspond with an excellent grade being awarded using the BTEC exam criteria. How facilitators talk about achievements when negotiating both formal and informal learning needs to be considered and phrased carefully so students understand what criteria is being used to structure feedback.

Drama at West Exe Technology College

West Exe Technology College is a state comprehensive school teaching pupils between eleven and sixteen years of age, situated on the outskirts of Exeter

city. The college has also attained a number of awards, indicating its dedication toward providing work-related opportunities for learning, gaining recognition as an Applied Learning specialist provider in 2007. The awards include Artsmark (given to schools where the opportunities provided by staff in dramatic and visual arts are significantly above average), and Investors in Enterprise. BTEC Drama is supported by the culture of Applied Learning which has developed within the school.

At West Exe Dave Salter is responsible for overseeing Applied Learning Activities, such as Practical Learning courses and teaches students the BTEC Performing Arts course. He chiefly facilitates with students in the eleven-sixteen age range. The compulsory teaching of drama remains in the remit of the English syllabus, and will only be encountered as a discrete subject if students opt to engage with drama either as a formally examined optional course of study (BTEC) or as an informal extra-curricular activity.

In the English education system, all students in the 5-16 age range have an entitlement to drama within the National Curriculum Orders for English. Alongside these statutory orders for drama there are additional references to drama within English in non-statutory guidance for the *Key Stage 3 National Strategy Framework for Teaching English: Years 7, 8 and 9* [...] these additional references to drama reiterate the core requirements for drama as part of the Speaking and Listening strand in the National Curriculum.

(Neelands 2008: 1)

In his praxis Salter must deliver drama which is both a statutory requirement informed by the English curriculum at Key Stage Three and also deliver the optional BTEC course at Key Stage Four. He is also responsible creating and providing a strong extra-curricular drama programme which is an informal social learning opportunity. The extra-curricular drama programme at West Exe brings together students across the whole age range in one learning environment, and is directed towards large-scale productions inside and outside the school. In this chapter the focus is on Salter's facilitation of the formally assessed study of BTEC Drama, the course is designed to:

help students have a practical experience of the subject, through the three principal activities of Improvising, Performing and Evaluating. Students are encouraged to develop their voice and movement skills and

build confidence through performing. They will have exposure to the basics of Drama theory and the opportunity to perform to a live audience. (West Exe 2011: n.p.)

The College was provided with new state of the art facilities in 2006. Drama classes are conducted in a “fully equipped theatre with retractable seating as well as generous and mirrored studio space both with full lighting rig and sound system [with] a well-equipped wardrobe available” (West Exe 2011: n.p.). These kinds of resources are not readily available to students in every school; drama may still be conducted in English classroom spaces or halls. These additional resources mean that students have better opportunities to explore set design, space design and sound and lighting, giving them a broader introduction to the career paths which relate to this course of study.

Salter’s students were taught the BTEC at the Extended Certificate Level which is the equivalent to two GCSE grades. BTEC is often seen as a course of vocational study in comparison to GCSEs. It has been argued by BTEC providers that “[l]earners who are less engaged, or who struggle with academic study, flourish in the practical, real-world environment of vocational learning” which their course provides (Pearson 2012: n.p). Salter’s decision to offer a vocational qualification which is “work-related and suitable for a wide range of learners” connects to the notion of educators providing a bigger picture curriculum (Pearson 2012: n.p). In the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) document *A big picture of the secondary curriculum* (2010) they highlight how “[l]earning outside the classroom” is a key feature of bigger picture learning (2010: n.p.). Based on the five principles of *Every Child Matters*, ensuring economic wellbeing is one of the core aims of this vision of the curriculum. Formal educators must ensure that learners are undertaking ‘work-related’ study. In the context of classroom drama, Neelands has suggested that it is not always designed and delivered to support bigger picture learning outcomes. He asserted that “[c]lassroom drama tends not to correspond to experiences of theatre and drama outside of schools” (2008: 3). However Salter’s approach is tackling this by making learning outside the classroom an essential feature and extension of the formal school provision he facilitates. His commitment to collaborating annually with external facilitators in professional environments addresses the bigger picture requirements by

making course delivery “[p]ersonalised - offering challenge and support to enable all learners to make progress and achieve” both formally and in a wider social context (QCDA 2010: n.p.). The process of content selection at Key Stage Four is dependent upon what external links and collaborations can be formed to support that specific group. Students may work with a theatre company, a museum or gallery, a local theatre, and content will be based upon the specialisms and specific projects that external professionals offer.

Salter: I look at the overall aim, and try to ensure that there is adequate coverage of content and skills development across the module. Key Stage Four is harder, as the way I deliver BTEC depends on what is available at the time. [I consider] the nature of the group and whether they can be regarded as developing independent learning skills. It will also depend on the end task.

He has collaborated with drama facilitators from Exeter University⁶², MED Theatre⁶³ and SSF to facilitate the learning of past BTEC groups, making the analysis of his facilitation practice particularly relevant in the context of this study.

Salter’s Praxis: Festival Observations

I first observed Salter working with this cohort at the Exeter Phoenix Arts Centre, the professional venue in which the Shakespeare Festival workshops were facilitated in 2010. He had opted to use the Festival as a way of firstly creating an examined performance for the BTEC drama course, and secondly to extend the students’ engagement with Shakespeare, helping to support their

⁶² In 2010 Year 11 BTEC Performing Arts students collaborated with Exeter University’s postgraduate student Erin Walcon and her theatre company. They explored the issue of ‘Territory and Identity’ in this project and performed their “final devised pieces of work at Exeter University Drama Department’s Studio Theatre, Thornlea”, taking examined work outside of the school into public spaces (West Exe 2011: n.p.).

⁶³ West Exe has an on-going relationship with MED, who have hosting their performances at the school and also work with them to support specific BTEC projects. For example, “[i]n 2009 West Exe Technology College requested a bespoke workshop to complement the curriculum needs of their year 10 drama students. After working on a character building workshop with MED Theatre they later ventured out to the theatre company’s studio on Dartmoor to share the short performances that had been inspired by these characters” (MED 2012: n.p.). In 2012 BTEC students also collaborated with MED, in a site-specific project at Castle Drogo. The group worked with MED facilitators outside of the school to “create well developed and fascinating characters from different eras in a MED Theatre workshop. They went on to make an impressive site-specific drama which they performed at the castle itself”, creating a public performance which also counted towards their formal learning (MED 2012: n.p.).

English GCSE examination. The BTEC group were a mixed ability cohort, and the additional time spent engaging with Shakespeare was considered an important opportunity to ensure they had the skills and knowledge to pass their English exam. It also provided work-related experience as students could talk to the facilitators and venue staff about their professional roles and responsibilities. Students could also take on marketing, lighting and backstage responsibilities to extend their understanding of how to work professionally in a theatre.



Figure 4.1 West Exe students participate in the cast workshop
(West Exe 2010: n.p.)

I became particularly interested in Salter's approach to facilitation during the technical rehearsals of the performance. The group had opted to use contemporary music and costume in their production and one scene took place in a nightclub. The students themselves had chosen the Katy Perry track *Hot and Cold* to create the nightclub atmosphere, and also link to the underlying themes in the play. In conversation Salter discussed the rationale behind the aesthetic choices made. Although from a director's point of view, Salter would not have opted for this track or the particular set and costume choices that the students had made, he felt that he had made the right choices as an educational facilitator. By handing over much of the final dramaturgical choices to the group Salter recognised that these decisions had enabled this specific group of learners to engage more deeply with the themes of the play by relating it to their own experiences. For example, finding contemporary pop music to

make clear thematic links to the action supported them in finding ways to articulate the plot in their own terms, helping them to realise the formalised requirements of both their BTEC and English exams.

Salter: [C]ertainly, I am a believer in empowering others to "find" the answer themselves, [...] the best work came from the students discovering their own abilities and solutions. By having that sense of ownership, the people that I facilitate with are able to feel that they are the ones who have made progress, and usually it is done by a sense of "deep" learning rather than just getting the job done.

I began to consider the implications of this process of educator 'uncrowning' for my own praxis. Salter knew there was going to be an external audience in a professional venue but his primary focus was on creating a staging of the production which was meaningful and engaging for the cast, not the audience. His person-centred ethos meant that the learning process, rather than the product, was prioritised even when collaborating with an outside professional body. I wanted to understand further how the facilitator can find ways to uncrown themselves and adapt their approaches, even in formally assessed settings, so that they enable rather than instruct the learner.

Classroom Observations

Facilitating in a classroom differs from facilitating in a professional theatrical venue and I wanted to identify how this affected Salter's praxis. This was particularly important as I was leading workshops for Magic Carpet in the Exeter Phoenix arts centre and also working in the more conventional classroom spaces of the University. I wanted to observe how an experienced and extended professional negotiated the transition between these different spaces to adapt approaches accordingly. In my praxis I am aware that "[t]he facilitator either takes or delegates leadership, but [...] this may be problematical if formal accreditation is required by outside authorities" (Burrows 1997: 401). I had observed how Salter had handed over dramaturgical choices to the learners in the Festival, delegating leadership despite the formal requirements of the course. Arguably Salter was able to delegate in this context because of the high degree of specialist support from the SSF facilitators, as discussed in Chapter Five. In the classroom however there is a different dynamic. The school system is structured differently and Salter is not supported by other facilitators to help

guide students. To consider how Salter facilitates both the formal and informal learning requirements of the curriculum the four primary characteristics of effective instruction in learning settings identified by Jerome Bruner shall be used as a guide:

- 1. Personalised Instruction:** the learners' predisposition is central to the process and praxis must be personalised ensure that they are engaged by the learning process.
- 2. Content Structure:** content must be organised so that the learner can follow and assimilate new information.
- 3. Sequencing:** the material must be presented in a logical and organised way to ensure that it is effectively communicated.
- 4. Reinforcement:** rewards and punishment must be selected and paced appropriately for the specific learners.

(Bruner 1966: 40-70)

These four areas still form the basis of classroom-based learning; the issue is identifying the best ways of realising these to support specific learners. For example, Bruner highlights that “[i]ntuitively it seems quite clear that as learning progresses there is a point at which it is better to shift away from extrinsic rewards, such as a teacher’s praise, towards the intrinsic rewards inherent in solving a complex problem for oneself” (1966: 41-42). How does the facilitator identify when “immediate reward for performance should be replaced by deferred reward[?]” (1966: 42). The issue of rewards and punishments is the most ambiguous and contentious area, particularly for the facilitator who travels into existing groups as a visiting specialist. Linking back to the concept of a personalised approach, arguably what constitutes reward or punishment is a personal concept too. For example, some students will feel rewarded by school trips whereas others will find the additional time and financial commitment challenging. The issue of appropriate reinforcement and discipline in the learning environment is an important issue. I was conscious that in Magic Carpet I cannot reinforce learning through the same reinforcement structures I have been taught to apply in formal classrooms. Similarly I cannot use these structures to help reinforce my praxis in the higher education sector. Salter’s learners are on the cusp of adulthood, and the conventional punishments begin to lose their efficacy. Furthermore, with Salter adopting a more deferred leadership style in other settings I questioned how he then managed the transition into a space with a rigid reinforcement system in place.

I first observed Dave Salter facilitating a lesson for the forum theatre-based work-experience project. It was two weeks before their assessed performance and in the session the students were trying to devise the final scenes for their pieces. There were twenty-two students enrolled on the course, all of whom attended the session. Within the group three students were male and nineteen were female. Salter had allocated the two groups of eleven and devised the project brief based on the BTEC criteria. The way Salter's classroom learning is structured and sequenced is firmly informed by the syllabus. He ensures that the way learning is sequenced overall is transparent at the outset of the course to students each year. The course overview is personalised as the specific facilitators who collaborate with students is dependent upon the predisposition of learners and the community opportunities available. It is also informed by the statutory requirement to support work-related learning and PSHE targets. The exemplar below highlights how the 2011 cohort was provided with personalised learning opportunities. Their course included contact with extended professionals in Plymouth and looked at the bigger picture issues of racial equality and debt literacy.

Each project will have an assigned brief and a range of tasks which have to be completed and grading criteria so that you know what you have to do to achieve a Pass, Merit, or Distinction.
Module 1- Acting 1. Developing voice skills 2. Developing movement skills 3. Assessed workshop 4. Skills audit
Module 2- Acting (putting it all together) 1. Research project with Barbican Theatre and Race Equality Council looking at cultural identity in Devon and Exeter writing workshop 2. Rehearsing performance 3. Performing in Barbican Theatre Plymouth 4. Second public performance
Module 3-Devsing Theatre 1. TiE on debt literacy with Exeter University law school 2. Drama as a tool 3. The devising process 4. Drama techniques
Module 4- Working in the Performing Arts 1. Research job roles in the performing arts 2. Presentation and research skills 3. Manage a budget

Table 4.1 BTEC Course Overview
(West Exe 2012: n.p.)

At West Exe, Salter specifically highlights the focal areas of assessment on a lesson-by-lesson basis. Module sequencing is clear; students are introduced to new material, and have exploratory sessions with external support, followed by a rehearsal period and a specified performance date. The course is structured so that assessment happens during the rehearsal process, but overall is sequenced to work towards summatively assessed performances and written tasks being submitted at the end of each module. Self and peer assessment are forms of formative engagement which are structured into every session during plenary time and in performance rehearsals. Written and performative coursework form the summative aspects of study but with opportunities for personal and social development structured into the content.

Sequencing and structuring content can be a challenging aspect of praxis. In my own facilitation I have frequently struggled to clarify to learners how content fits in with the overall picture. When the facilitator is trying to delegate ownership to the participants then the way content is structured is partially dictated by them, making this a complex process. Trying to find the right techniques to communicate and clarify how, and importantly, why content will be structured and sequenced in a certain way was an area I was trying to develop in my own praxis as I tried to delegate and negotiate content to a greater extent with my learners.

While the learning brief and formal learning intentions are prescribed by Salter, students themselves determine how they respond to these. In the first session I observed, Salter verbally reiterated the brief and through open-ended questioning got the two groups to verbally identify and agree what the focus of the session should be for them. He asked them to set themselves a target for what they should have completed by the end of the session. He then used these self-set targets to inform his questioning and guidance during the session, basing the content structure on their predispositions. With the students he negotiated the lesson content so that it would help them to work towards the overall learning intentions for the module.

Content is structured so that the focus of each session is explicitly introduced, and content is organised around the core principle of learning by doing. Participation is at the centre of the structure. Salter asserts that “[a]rts based practice is interactive,” citing Edgar Dale’s (1946) ‘Cone of Experience,’ to describe the different layers of experience and the efficacy of engaging in a practical framework. He argues that further integration of arts-based participatory approaches should be integrated into the curriculum “as research suggests that deeper learning and greater retention is a more likely outcome” (Salter 2011: n.p.).

In this session Salter did not use any of the reinforcement methods I associate with the formal Key Stage Four classroom from my earlier school praxis. At no point did he raise his voice, or use any of the sanctions which form part of the school disciplinary system. He reinforces learning appropriately for an older cohort by drawing on the personalised targets set at the start of each lesson to help motivate them. He is shifting towards intrinsic methods of reward but still ensures that teacher praise is offered sparingly to further reinforce the learning process. For example, one group set themselves the target of finalising the opening of their performance, and deciding how to integrate the joker into it. During the session the students began to get off task, focusing for a prolonged period on how to stage a witty exchange between the parents of a prospective work experience student, laughing and talking about this whilst the joker tried to make decisions alone. After observing this for ten minutes the students had not been able to problem-solve and refocus independently so Salter asked them to show him how the joker had been integrated so far, and then asked open-ended questions relating to this target to refocus the activity. Salter did not reinforce ‘good behaviour’ through sanctions, or verbally discipline students to refocus the activity. He did not assume an instructive stance or tell them to stop their activity. Drawing on his knowledge of the learners’ predispositions, he used the session-specific targets formalised by the group themselves to motivate them, and generate interest in the problem-solving task they had initially set themselves. I recognised that I had to integrate more rewards and develop my questioning style to motivate mature learners if I was going to facilitate with older learners outside of formal systems more effectively.

Salter had a secure understanding of the individual learners based on a long-term facilitation relationship with them and was able to use gentle humour, phrase questions appropriately and ensure targets were achieved with minimal intervention and direction in this session. An example of this was when he playfully asked the girls in one group to remind the joker what his peer feedback had been during his Year Ten performances, and warned the student that he'd better pay attention to his 'directors'. To be able to engage with students in this way demands a secure understanding of their dispositions to ensure that they will be motivated by this exchange. The joker was one of the weaker performers, but as a natural class 'joker' with lots of enthusiasm had been given this key role. Salter's interaction was designed to encourage the other group members to support the joker so that he did not have to assume a directorial stance and explicitly address the areas of weakness himself. This meant that Salter did not have to transition from being an 'uncrowned' facilitator in the Phoenix arts centre to assuming a didactic authority position in the classroom, which helped to maintain a consistent and secure relationship with the cohort. I am a facilitator who can work with the same learners in multiple settings and different groups, therefore identifying how Salter tried to maintain a consistent relationship, adapting the questioning techniques rather than his fundamental facilitation style was a key learning outcome for me. Salter recognised that the student was struggling with the task from his observations on the periphery of the groups, and gave the group time to try and address the problem themselves before engaging them in discussion. This exchange resulted in the girls giving the joker constructive and consistent feedback about voice projection, where to position himself in relation to the action, and how to phrase the all-important questions to facilitate audience participation, which the joker had been struggling to do independently. To identify that the intended learning outcomes of the session are being achieved Salter will:

Salter: Set up learning intentions and intended outcomes at the start of the lesson, and make those explicit to the students. Check on understanding either orally or by performance at the end, and throughout the lesson against the intentions. Again, peer assessment in drama is excellent for that, as students have to articulate against the outcomes, thereby demonstrating their own understanding.

By the end of the session the group had collaborated to make clear choices about the joker's role. He was going to introduce the play, and then interrupt a conversation between a father and daughter about the suitability of her getting a placement as a car mechanic for work experience. The joker was going to ask the audience for suggestions about what the daughter could change in her argument to help facilitate the discussion and then replay the scene for a better outcome. Importantly at no point had Salter said yes or no explicitly to any of the questions raised or decisions made by the students, he did not reinforce extrinsically but delegated the problem-solving to the group. He assessed whether the learning intentions for the session had been met through performance. Both groups showed the scene they had developed and received peer feedback in the plenary. Students were also invited to suggest targets for the following session based on this formative feedback to begin considering how they could structure the rehearsal time in the coming sessions to realise the overall learning intentions for the module.

This style of instruction was consistent with Salter's earlier approaches within the context of the Festival and highlighted for me the need for consistency when transitioning between different groups. I began to question further what aspects of praxis should change, and what approaches needed to be consistent to establish a positive and effective relationship with learners. I noted that Salter remained on the periphery, and was occupied with other tasks during the lesson so that students did not feel constantly under observation, a strategy I try to employ in my own praxis so that learners feel free to explore ideas. He intermittently engaged learners in conversation and tried to remain as objective as possible, offering few suggestions and careful questions to guide them so that there was less opportunity for him to assume an overly directorial role. Through this dialogue he would enable students to articulate the 'rules' of forum theatre and the project brief in their own words. He would also repeat the expressions students used rather than trying to reinforce formalised terms so that they felt engaged and heard by him. Through articulating the brief in their own terms they would then be able to consider whether their ideas related well to this or required development themselves, solving the problems without relying on Salter to provide the definitive answer. It would have been easy for Salter to intervene and tell them which ideas were best aligned to exam criteria,

remind them of timekeeping, directing them to make particular choices and move on in the rehearsal process but he did not structure content in this way. He had an understanding of the bigger picture, and how learning was being sequenced through the BTEC and related to the statutory social learning requirements of the curriculum. He understood that within the framework of the course teamwork and group skills were assessed. Factors such as being able to provide constructive peer feedback, make independent decisions, and manage deadlines all informed their final grade and supported personal development. Importantly students had to learn how to move forward themselves, scaffolded by timely questions and suggestions, but not direction from facilitating staff. Learning here was a socio-constructivist exercise. They were their own directors, stepping out of the performance in rehearsal to judge whether their choices were 'successful'. This was a very distinct style of praxis compared to previous encounters in the formal classroom and made me question the extent of intervention I use and the way I reinforce the choices my learners make. The observations taught me to be self-reflexive and identify when I was stepping across the boundary into didactic rather than facilitative praxis through my level of involvement, the prescribed nature of feedback and style of questioning employed.

The second session I attended was the practical exam for the two groups a fortnight later. I would observe whether course content had been structured and sequenced during that time to enable them to work towards a clear understanding of forum theatre and the brief to create a strong final product for summative assessment. The two groups were very energetic on arrival, giggling and running about the space to try and set up quickly. In the session the students came with a lot of anxiety before the audience of their peers arrived, particularly questioning how they would handle poor responses or no response from the audience when they were invited to intervene by the two jokers. Salter invited them into a circle after five minutes of frantic activity in which they tried to organise the space and used the remaining pre-performance time available to get them to agree on a course of action as a whole group if problems arose. He used this time to enable them to problem-solve collectively and focus their energy. Speaking quietly and calmly, he asked the group a series of short open-ended questions based on the project brief to get every participant to offer

briefly what they were going to aim to do well in that performance. This quiet, focused discussion channelled the energy of the group, and explicitly reminded them about the brief, their role, and the personal targets they had set themselves during the module.

The groups had a full audience of Year Ten students who understood that they were going to see a play about work experience; this was an allocated PSHE session in the curriculum for them. By attending the performance this counted towards their statutory work-related learning provision. Both performance groups had managed to fulfil the brief in the time set producing fifteen-minute performances which utilised a range of forum theatre techniques to explore the issue of finding a work experience placement. The audience responded positively, laughing, applauding, and listening attentively to their peers. They also engaged with the jokers. They offered thoughtful responses to the questions asked by the joker in the scene between father and daughter, drawing on their own knowledge of specific work opportunities for students in the Exeter area to offer the character guidance. When the scene was re-played the daughter used specific information about the work experience programme at West Exe to reassure and persuade her father. In the second group the audience watched a phone conversation between a company manager and a prospective work experience student, which was unsuccessful due to the student's lack of preparation. This conversation evoked a lot of laughter from the students, as the performer became increasingly flustered and unable to answer the manager's questions. The joker invited the audience to offer the student some advice, and was offered several constructive suggestions which the students gave directly to the performer. The scene was then replayed with this feedback integrated. At the end of the performance this joker summarised and thanked the audience for their suggestions to reiterate the changes made and value their input. The students had all passed this exam, however the challenge for Salter this day was the fact that the performance was followed with another lesson with the cohort after lunch.

The lesson which followed was facilitated by Salter in the school computer suite and the BTEC course was sequenced so that students had to work quickly towards producing a written evaluation of their performance to be submitted as

part of a formally assessed portfolio. Due to the way drama is timetabled they had to use this session to evaluate their performance, typing up their observations individually in this session. This was a challenging session, and I empathised with the difficulty of engaging learners to self-assess. At the outset of the lesson the criteria for self-assessment were projected on a screen and Salter discussed these with the students and left them displayed as a guide during the session. This was very familiar territory, and I recognised this kind of structured lesson approach from my own school-based praxis. Here a more conventional behaviourist approach is taken as the intended outcomes are much more prescriptive. All students had to produce an evaluation within a set word limit by a fixed deadline, addressing the same key points. The content of this lesson was not negotiable and Salter was unable to delegate how the task was realised to the learners. Although their behaviour strongly indicated that prolonged time to verbally de-brief and peer assess as a whole group would be productive, the limited time available meant that this behaviour had to be redirected towards the set task for the purposes of summative assessment. Here the challenge of being consistently person-centred when there are prescribed system-centred tasks to realise is highlighted. This session challenged both Salter and the learners, who wanted to verbally process their performance. They wanted to praise and offer individual feedback to their peers. However, Salter had to curtail this, and firmly reiterate what they should be doing. He assumed a much more didactic stance in this session. Despite students being motivated to discuss work and engage in evaluation the prescribed nature of the course and the strict time frame implemented meant that working towards completing the assignment rather than facilitating evaluation in general was the primary focus for the facilitator. The ability to adopt a personalised instruction style is hindered when the predisposition of the students is partially ignored. The space to personalise responses was limited, therefore Salter was much more actively involved with students. Rather than being on the periphery, he was continuously circulating and monitoring activity closely. He firmly placed the emphasis on the criteria using the formal terms to steer students towards an analysis which was closely informed by the marking criteria in this content.

Keith Armstrong suggests that for learning to take place, the facilitator should encourage participants to “move beyond simple subjective responses (i.e. I did like it, how did it all work?) Towards embodied forms of learning (i.e. what have I just been experiencing and what have I therefore learnt as reflection becomes transformed into conscious knowledge?)” (2004: 191). This is what Salter was trying to facilitate in this coursework session, but given the immediacy of the task and the difficulty of giving personalised support in a classroom setting this was a challenging learning intention to realise. The practical and applied experiences with professionals are arguably better aligned to enabling this embodied form of learning to take place, but the facilitator also needs to have strategies for supporting this kind of learning in more traditional learning formats. Drama is assessed summatively, with learning graded through both written and practical work despite the criticism of DiE practitioners such as Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton and Jonothan Neelands who have argued for it being a primarily social rather than academic form of learning.

In this session students were required to produce the first draft of their individual self-assessment to go into their coursework portfolio. The slow pace of writing, frequent discussion and questions indicated that it was a very difficult transition from working practically in the studio under assessed conditions to being behind desks in a formative lesson in the computer suite. It became apparent that students could come up with examples and happily discuss the process verbally with their peers and Salter, but many struggled to write these down in a coherent and formal style. They were comfortable using informal and colloquial language to express ideas coherently but struggled to articulate observations in formal English. It was also difficult for them to quickly process and document the outcomes immediately after the performance. To help address this in follow up lessons students would be able to watch a recording of their performances and identify things which they had forgotten to support the re-drafting of their analysis before submission.

It has been argued that as a “coach and facilitator, the teacher uses formative assessment to help support and enhance student learning, as judge and jury, the teacher makes summative judgments about a student's achievement” (Atkin, Black and Coffey in Tanggaard and Elmholdt 2005: 98). From a socio-

constructivist and person-centred perspective the teacher should act as facilitator, and arguably Salter aims to assume a facilitative stance both in and out of the classroom to support students. However, there is a formal requirement to make summative judgements as part of the teacher's role. Importantly, they should act as a judgement about students' achievements at a particular point in time, rather than a judgement about the individual. Whether the summative assessments made are perceived as final judgements about ability, or 'snapshots' throughout the course which can be integrated into a person-centred approach, is dependent upon how the facilitator frames and uses this assessment data.

Salter: Evaluation is based on the relative success of the lesson. If I feel that the students have made good progress, then, for that group, it will have worked. However, I am also aware that not all groups behave in the same way [...] Often I will ask the students what they think, especially if I have tried something new.

Salter refers to outcomes in the Year Ten performances to help set targets and develop work in Year Eleven rehearsals. The summative grades and feedback have been assimilated into formative target setting. The work-related external workshops also reinforce that after the BTEC is completed students will continue to develop and refine their skills, either in courses of further study or the workplace. By framing the summative course assessments as temporal 'snapshots' of student performance he is able to retain a facilitative stance, ensuring that learners understand that he is coaching them to develop rather than judging them. This is only possible in a formal curriculum setting when there is a degree of flexibility and freedom. The teacher needs to be able to build in formative opportunities to support learning and the grade alone cannot be of primary importance. The social and extended learning - the bigger picture - must also be taken into account. However, Michael Gove's proposals to move towards narrower assessment methods and less curriculum freedom indicates that this kind of praxis will become increasingly challenging to facilitate. The educational reforms proposed will align the teacher more strongly with the role of judge rather than coach, requiring facilitators to find new ways of negotiating formalised assessment measures if they want to retain their person-centred ethos.

Learning Outside the Classroom

The Sex and History Project has been praised for its innovative facilitation methods, offering teachers new ways of negotiating statutory sex and relationships requirements so that the social learning aspects are explored in further depth. Salter opted to collaborate with the Sex and History project to support the development of the final Year Eleven practical exam.

Rachel Vowles is an experienced facilitator in both formal and informal learning contexts. She graduated from Royal Holloway, University of London with a BA Hons in Drama and Theatre Arts before developing her specialist knowledge in the area of theatre and education. She has worked in theatre and education since 1993 and has eight years of experience as both an A Level and BTEC teacher, giving her a clear understanding of the demands of Salter's role. She also has extensive experience in professional theatre and participatory practices in education. In addition she has also travelled into the area of corporate facilitation practices and is an associate of a company that delivers staff training through role play. Vowles got involved in facilitating the Sex and History Project at West Exe as she had previously collaborated with the RAMM Museum in her capacity as Associate Director for Education and Community at the Northcott Theatre, Exeter. Vowles has eighteen years of experience with similar client groups in educational settings and suggests that she "learned many things along the way that I now do without thinking. I sort of know the beast and have amassed quite a practitioner's 'tool kit' over the years" (2011: n.p.). Although a visiting facilitator with little prior knowledge of the cohort Vowles has a secure knowledge of the way BTEC and A Level courses are structured, experience with this specific age group, and knowledge of the museum resources. These broader skills enabled her to formulate the necessary 'tentative hypothesis' upon which her facilitation methodology was based. Vowles facilitated six sessions with the West Exe students as part of the project. From the sessions with Vowles the West Exe students created a devised performance exploring sexual attitudes which was specifically designed to be performed for their peers to extend the PSHE provision within the school.

In the session I observed, the group worked in two rooms. There was a small exhibition room where all the artefacts were showcased and an adjoining

meeting room, where students were able to sit around desks to discuss their findings with Vowles in the plenary. Vowles welcomed the students and allocated them into groups of three for the session. In their groups she informed them that they would be able to go around the exhibition room and handle the objects. She wanted them to discuss and identify what the function of objects might be, and note what the objects revealed about the particular society to which they may have belonged using flip cameras and recorders. Students were also given gloves to handle the objects as they were fragile. The students circulated the small display room in their groups, and Vowles and Salter worked together to offer open ended questions at regular intervals to encourage the students to engage critically.

Rachel Vowles personalised her approaches based on her observations of the learners. For example, some of objects, such as bowls, featured designs which were sexually explicit. Vowles explained how many of the explicit design features were considered to be symbols of good luck and fertility and would have been displayed openly in people's homes. She asked the students how this differed with the everyday objects in their own home. She invited them to consider what these designs and objects suggested about different cultural attitudes towards sex. Her questions and the information she offered about objects varied according to the trio of students she was talking to. When talking to three girls who volunteered thoughtful insights about the different cultural attitudes without prompting, she gave them some more specific information about that culture to help extend their thinking further. However, the trio of boys offered much more superficial and highly personal responses, about how 'weird' the artefacts were. Vowles firstly valued their contribution by agreeing that the artefacts were very weird compared to objects displayed in her home. She then gave them specific information about when and why these objects had been displayed and asked the boys what they thought about the beliefs attached to the objects. A prolonged discussion here helped to elicit some interesting and useful responses which related to the BTEC project brief.

The session ended with a thirty-minute series of discussion tasks in the adjoining room. Rachel led a structured feedback session, firstly hearing from each group then opening up to a whole group discussion. However, from a

socio-constructivist perspective, “[t]he whole class format may not be a comfortable setting for many students to offer their ideas” (Gagnon and Collay 2006: 97). It may place undue pressure on students less adept at verbalising ideas, and may also encourage students to agree or paraphrase the ideas of others encouraging what Neelands has described as a consensus rather than a conspectus of ideas to emerge (1984: 40). In the context of the drama lesson students are “working together as a group, individual reactions and opinions are still important, what we need to do is see whether our individual ideas can be meshed, or patterned, into an experience that we share together” (Neelands 1984: 40). This ‘meshing’ of experience is a socio-constructivist perspective of the learning process where learners ‘construct’ their own understanding of the world with the support of others. Vowles and Salter both supported the discussion, trying to generate a conspectus of ideas to construct a shared understanding of the main issues which needed to be explored in the exam. To ensure that the individual voices which help to inform socio-constructivist praxis were heard Vowles deliberately structured small group tasks to precede the plenary. She also ensured that students used the flip cameras and sound recorders to document their personal responses as they explored the exhibits. This gave each group personalised material to draw upon in the whole group discussion to help support and structure feedback. It promoted inclusion as everyone came with something they could offer and also meant that students had been given some time to prepare ideas rather than having to think and offer opinions in-the-moment.

In the whole group discussion Rachel decided to build on her progress with the boys by inviting them to open the feedback by articulating one of the points from their earlier discussion. This helped to validate and include them into a discussion on what could have been a challenging subject. By beginning with the only three boys in the group it gave the minority a point of entry into the discussion, and ensured there was a constructive dialogue between the two genders. It discouraged them from assuming their natural ‘class joker’ roles and offering reactionary or humorous comments to other points raised. Vowles relied on her observation of the boys’ behaviour on arrival and their laughter and initially flippant comments during the main task to structure the plenary and help establish an appropriate analytical tone to the discussion.

Building upon the conspectus of ideas emerging, Vowles split the class into four groups and provided them with images of fertility symbols, artwork, devices designed to prevent masturbation, and related items such as Victorian chastity belts. Students were not given any information as to what the items may be. She invited them to discuss what the function of the objects in the images might be, and then offer their suggestions to the whole group. Vowles had to ensure that students were willing offer their opinions in a whole group setting. Thus, suggestions which were not 'correct' were still valid and no suggestion offered was held as 'better' than another. This was reinforced through her language; she would repeat and actively consider each suggestion identifying the features in the image which had prompted the suggestion. She asked for 'different' ideas rather than labelling a suggestion as correct or incorrect which helped to encourage participation in the discussion. Her calm, considered style and language helped to reinforce that all responses were equally valuable and welcome as part of a socio-constructivist exploration. Even suggestions which were challenging were handled with care and consideration. One of the boys tried to introduce some humour to the discussion by asking Vowles whether she was joking about the function of an item designed to prevent male masturbation. He suggested it was a Victorian kitchen implement she had included to trick them, prompting laughter in the group. Vowles engaged in the laughter and stated that she could empathise with that opinion, as it was such an unfamiliar image and indeed looked more like something we would see in a modern kitchen. She then opened the discussion out, inviting the whole class to think about what the objects revealed about the attitudes of different societies and how this compares with their own experiences to personalise the discussion and link explicitly back to the BTEC brief. To what extent did they think attitudes had changed? Students offered informal, personally referenced knowledge about other teens that had experienced negative sexual encounters and the stigma attached to friends who had become pregnant. Vowles acknowledged these responses and posed questions to encourage students to make links between the micro contexts of their own experiences to the macro issues of the project. The boy who had initially challenged Vowles about the image responded with an insightful comment about the dangers of repressing a natural bodily function. He pointed out how ridiculous this attitude appeared next to the earlier artefacts which celebrated fertility openly in the home. When the whole

project was evaluated, the facilitation approaches applied by Vowles and the other youth facilitators were identified as being particularly effective for supporting both formal and informal learning outcomes.

Students responded especially well to the chance to discuss sex in a less didactic way and to explore issues around the subject rather than the more narrow focus of sexual health that is common in formal education. Talking about sexual mores of the past enabled a de-personalisation of the subject.

(Museums, Libraries and Archives Council 2011: n.p.)

Interestingly the de-personalised nature of the initial contact with the artefacts and images was used as a springboard to move into more personalised territory in the final stages of the session I observed. Arguably this kind of discussion would have been difficult to facilitate at the outset without the process of introducing the subject matter in a broader and informal manner. The integration of technology through the use of flip cameras and recorders helped to reinforce that the students were exploring and documenting something unfamiliar, but when they began to present their findings they were able to find personal links between the sexual mores of the past and their present experiences. Retaining his 'uncrowned' stance, Salter did not intervene to reinforce discipline during this session; he only entered into the discussion when he had a genuine question or comment to make, becoming a fellow learner and explorer alongside his students, delegating the decision making to both Vowles and the students.



Figure 4.2 Image of Victorian chastity belt used in workshop
(Wellcome Collection 2012: n.p.)

A socio-constructivist approach to learning requires the facilitator to enable the learners to problem-solve and construct their own understanding. Therefore the

facilitating strategies selected should not be designed to transmit or reinforce correct responses. To enable learners to consider multiple perspectives and construct their own understanding the rich questioning techniques modelled by both Salter and Vowles are designed to support the 'deeper learning' which correlates with a bigger picture perspective of the curriculum. The questions are directed towards the development of independent thinking skills which can be applied in both formal and informal learning settings.

Salter: The key thing is that they must be allowed to fail and understand that as long as they can reflect on the experience and have the opportunity to improve, then that is good [...] Adaptation of practice will depend on the nature of the group, and whether they can be regarded as developing independent learning skills.

Here the centrality of a socio-constructivist approach in Salter's praxis is clear; learning through failure and having the freedom to construct new approaches in response to this is embraced as a valid and important part of the learning process. In a formal learning setting the pressure to achieve and realise national targets can deter the teacher from offering this space. Instead more prescriptive behaviourist measures that steer the learner firmly towards 'success' are chosen, even by extended professionals such as Salter, as earlier identified in the computer suite lesson. Open ended questioning, and personalised projects with extended professionals increase the risk of failure as they put more decision-making and choice in the hands of the learner. However, it is arguable that "unless teachers are facilitators, giving up their traditionally didactic role, then this relationship will always be oppressive and will block rather than enable learning" (Rogers 2002: 82). Ultimately, to support the bigger picture in education, there must be the space to make 'wrong' choices. If didactic models are not replaced with facilitative approaches then we will not produce truly independent learners equipped with the critical thinking skills to function socially. Longitudinally this is a much bigger failure compared to the achievement of a grade in the context of the formal classroom.

Vowles gathered data from the students as well as the RAMM and Salter to evaluate her contribution to supporting a bigger picture approach to both social and formal learning. Vowles used a range of strategies to gain formative and

summative data in written, spoken and recorded formats to try and ensure that the process was documented thoroughly. Her data contributed to the larger evaluation process conducted by Langlands and Fisher.

Vowles: [I]t doesn't matter how long you have been doing this work it is always very important to get feedback and evaluate otherwise you would get complacent and then start making assumptions and ultimately mistakes. I tend to do it in various ways, informally by discussion with students along the way, getting their feedback and by observation - if something doesn't seem to be going well then I will change mid workshop etc. On this project we also got feedback by asking the [participants] to use the Flip cameras and sound recorders to record thoughts, we also got them to use post it notes with a 'one thing I have learned that I didn't know before' and 'one thought about the event' (this could be positive or negative). I also get feedback from the lead tutor of the group [Dave Salter] as well.

To identify whether she achieved the intended learning outcomes Vowles applied a triangulated methodology, ensuring that the voices of the learners, the teachers and the facilitator are documented and analysed. Extending the data gathered from West Exe, whole project feedback from teachers and students in the participating Exeter schools also affirmed the efficacy of the facilitation approaches applied by Vowles and her colleagues. Both the formal outcomes were considered and also the informal learning was valued. Students in the participating schools were able to produce a high standard of performance satisfying the exam criteria. However, informal outcomes such as improved attendance and more confidence in discussion were also identified. For example, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)⁶⁴ contributed to the evaluation and noted that through this project “young people developed as creative thinkers and independent enquirers. The increase in wellbeing from discussing relevant, but often taboo, subjects was matched by the high level of interest and motivation” (2011: n.p.). The collaboration with extended professionals and external resources was identified as an innovative approach for teachers trying to facilitate sex and relationships education as part of the PSHE statutory requirements.

We have to deliver SRE targets...[but] it's hard. This provided a new way...The objects are surprising... They facilitate discussion, they make

⁶⁴ The MLA was abolished in May 2012.

it okay to talk about sex...We've never found a better way to do it. It was a revelation.

(Langlands and Fisher 2012: n.p.)

In this project Vowles had a dual responsibility; she had to enable learners to develop projects that adhered to prescribed formal criteria, and also develop the informal social skills which would underpin their approaches to sex and relationships in society. She had to find strategies which helped to address Salter's requirements and also the requirements of the Sex and History research project itself. Both the formal and the informal learning outcomes were founded on socio-constructivist principles requiring learners to problem solve and construct their own unique understanding and response to the tasks set. As Langlands and Fisher argue, their project was intended to have an "empowering effect on young people's approach to issues around sex" enabling them to make informed choices independently (2012: n.p.). This is closely aligned to the development of independent thinking skills which Salter also specifies as a key learning outcome of his praxis. Therefore, despite Neelands' concerns about the gap between classroom drama and experiences outside of school settings, here Salter and Vowles demonstrate that these different learning experiences can be aligned and integrated effectively to promote bigger picture learning outcomes. Fundamentally, if the classroom and outside facilitators both operate from a person-centred stance then this will provide a secure starting point for closing the gap between formal and social learning.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that the boundaries which differentiate between formal learning and informal social development are challenged by extended professionals such as Dave Salter and Rachel Vowles. Through the delivery of bigger picture learning experiences which integrate a high level of independent choice and external opportunities, the boundaries become increasingly indistinct. Salter's bigger picture approach to realising both formal and informal learning supports the contemporary perspective of "the teacher's role as essentially that of a facilitator" (Kempe and Ashwell 2000: 72). Salter's approaches indicate that the binaries which define formal and informal learning can be limiting, instead the freedom to integrate both into the classroom is a

much more holistic approach to facilitating deeper learning. An integrated curriculum approach which includes PSHE and work-related learning within the study of a formal subject helps the learners to rehearse and apply their developing social and dramatic skills simultaneously. At the centre of Salter's praxis is a belief in the importance of a personalised approach to the facilitation of learning outcomes. Both facilitators documented in this chapter embody the core principles of person-centred praxis by applying socio-constructivist approaches; Salter and Vowles recognise that:

children do not simply imitate or internalize the world around them. They strive to interpret or make sense of the adult world and to participate in it. In attempting to make sense of the adult world, children come to collectively produce their own peer worlds and cultures.

(Cosaro in Freeman and Mathison 2009: 3)

The boundaries of the formal educational building and course criteria may be concrete, but as the outcomes of the Sex and History project indicate, the borders between academic and social knowledge within the mind of the learner are permeable. What the individual has felt, experienced, observed and learnt outside the formal institution will inform their ability to engage and achieve within it. Formally acquired and graded learning is also intended to be applied outside of formal settings, to enable the individual to become a member of the wider community, thus formal learning outcomes will have points of correlation with informal learning.

The extent to which formal education can develop integration into peer cultures and provide opportunities for participation in the adult world is challenged by the prescriptions of the formal curriculum. Gove's "failure to include the arts as a core subject suggested there might be no room in the school timetable for art, design, dance, drama and music" (Marszal 2012: n.p.). The ability to produce our own cultures, to be a socio-constructive learner who participates during learning, is challenged by a system which is moving towards an increasingly narrow and standardised curriculum. Multiculturalist David J. Elliott argues for the value of sub-cultural knowledge as opposed to perpetuating a dominant set of cultural values in a pedagogic framework. He "posits self-knowledge and insight gained through an understanding of others and their diverse cultures and

values as the most desirable goal of education”, particularly in the context of the arts (Smith 1990: ix).

This chapter has underscored the need for flexibility and adaptability on the part of the facilitator themselves. Although the specifications might remain constant, how they are addressed has to keep on changing to engage each group of learners. This builds on the observations I made in Magic Carpet where the weekly process of informal reorientation become an essential component to good praxis. Despite the formality of the school system, there is still a requirement for the facilitator to keep realigning and actively considering the content and style of praxis to ensure that students were engaged. Again the process of co-facilitation or collaboration is highlighted as an integral feature to good praxis. Salter’s work is consistently innovative because he does not rely on solely using his knowledge and skills; he seeks to enhance them and the experience for students through collaboration. A solid knowledge of the curriculum requirements, and the project brief itself is therefore only a foundation to good praxis. Additional research, resources and collaborators are also required to help develop a truly person-centred and engaging model of facilitation. It is clear that this is not the easy option; it is clearly a more time consuming and potentially costly and complex undertaking for the facilitator who must invest more time outside the classroom sourcing and organising these partnerships. However, the benefits to both teachers and students are clear.

Continuing the exploration of how the facilitator negotiates the tensions between formal and informal learning, the Shakespeare Schools Festival will be discussed in the next chapter. Interestingly, at the same time as Gove announced his conservative reforms he also awarded SSF with a donation of £140,000 to extend the informal extra-curricular drama provision they provide in England. Gove argues that this expansion of the Festival is designed “to improve cultural education in our schools” (Burns 2012: n.p.). How do the SSF facilitators achieve this informal learning outcome? If the only drama-based ‘cultural education’ provided is the study of Shakespeare how compatible is this with a bigger picture perspective of education? Compared with the diverse personalised projects offered by Salter how can a company which only offers Shakespeare provide a personalised and person-centred learning experience?

Moving forward from my analysis of individual extended professionals working in a specific locality, the next chapter explores how SSF's large network of facilitators aims to provide a similar level of person-centred praxis on a national scale. Drawing on my five years of experience with the Festival, I consider how SSF facilitators negotiate the requirements to provide support for formally assessed exam pieces and also deliver informal 'cultural education' across the UK.

Chapter Five

Bridging the Bard: Shakespeare's Role within Formal and Informal Learning

My work and observations with the Shakespeare Schools Festival (SSF)⁶⁵ have provided an important model for my own professional development. In this chapter I discuss how my professional experience with them has extended my formal training, providing techniques and approaches applicable for use in both formal and informal learning settings. The diversity of participants and the scale of the Festival offer a unique insight into how facilitators take a standardised set of skills and approaches and adapt them to personalise their delivery. This chapter focuses on the process of adaptation that facilitators must be able to deliver in the moment. This case study examines how facilitators respond to these challenges and adapt their techniques to engage a diverse range of pupils whilst still honouring the agreed project outcomes and workshop template.

To clarify how SSF have continued to inform my engagement with facilitation approaches in different educational settings since beginning to facilitate with them in 2008 I shall draw on evaluation data produced by the Festival to identify the main outcomes and challenges to praxis. I also discuss my own observations of good practice in different South West Theatres, specifically observations drawn from Frome's Merlin Theatre (2012), Exeter's Phoenix Theatre (2010-2011) and The Lighthouse in Poole (2011). These full day workshops, rehearsals, and performance days provide two intensive days to observe facilitators working with each cast of students. I also conducted an interview with and draw on information provided by the Festival Manager Bonnie Austin in an interview I conducted on 20th February 2012.

My work with SSF began in 2008. During the third term of my teacher training the placement school I was based at, South Dartmoor Community College, signed up to participate in the Festival. It was offered as a Key Stage Three extra-curricular event at the school, and was a respected high-profile activity

⁶⁵ Co-ordinator Annie Hughes offers further publicity, evaluation data and related materials on request. To contact her for more information about the Festival, email: annie.hughes@ssf.uk.com.

within the school culture. Allan Sutton, my teaching mentor in the drama department, offered me the opportunity to attend the Teacher-Director Workshop in Bristol. In 2003 Sutton and the school participated in the Festival for the first time. He has found the Teacher-Director Workshops offered by SSF to be a particularly important part of his own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as a teacher, and particularly values the opportunity they provide for drama specialists to exchange skills and knowledge.

I attended a valuable workshop [...] at a local theatre where I got to meet about twenty-something other teachers in the area. Given the paucity of provision for meaningful, practical INSET for Drama practitioners and the difficulty of arranging meetings for us over such a wide area this opportunity was invaluable. Not only were we able to share best practice with real professionals, but we were also able to share and develop ideas amongst ourselves and stay in communication to help each other through the rehearsal process.

(Sutton in Teachit 2005: n.p.)

The Festival was also an important experience for the learners. South Dartmoor was one of two schools selected to perform at the prestigious Shakespeare Schools Festival reception in 2004 at the Peacock Theatre, London. Their 2003 production of *Richard III* was performed at the event to demonstrate how the Festival enriches student engagement with drama in schools. After the cast had completed their studies, in student feedback they all “listed the Festival as one of the most memorable and significant experiences of their school career” (Sutton 2005: n.p.). The positive experience Sutton and the students had in the 2003 Festival has led to it becoming an important part of the school’s drama department, with the school participating every year from 2008. In 2010 students from the Year 10 GCSE Drama group were again invited to London to promote the Festival, this time performing scenes from *Twelfth Night* at the London Eye. Sutton has argued strongly for the Festival’s ability to support both social and work-related learning for his students.

To see young people being given the opportunity to cut their teeth on these well-crafted precis of Shakespeare's plays, to see them tackle verse, learn professional stagecraft, take an audience and impress them is invaluable. In an age when the press usually only portrays young people as either the victims or perpetrators of crime, a celebration of youth rediscovering and revitalising such iconic work deserves attention and support.

(Sutton in Teachit 2005: n.p.)

I was highly motivated to discover more about the Festival and how it could extend the formal skills I had at that time. On behalf of South Dartmoor I attended a workshop in Bristol alongside eight drama teachers from the South West of England. We received a practical “training day with theatre education practitioners, the MAP Consortium” (SSF 2008: 1). MAP is a diverse collective of arts professionals who offer bespoke programmes to different organisations. Like SSF they have “a strong belief in the power of the arts to deliver deep learning and a shared ethos around sensitive, responsive facilitation that supports change” (MAP 2012: n.p.). In the workshop I was given a set of practical approaches which could be applied in the rehearsal process with the cast. The workshop facilitators invited teachers to consider how to find a ‘universal’ or shared level of experience within the texts to enable their students to relate to the thematic content. In dramatic facilitation, “the key skill for any group-leader is to – in Heathcote's words – 'drop to the universal'. The universals are often those prescribed by the citizenship curriculum in schools or other social objectives [located in] other informal settings” (Braverman and Supple 2002: 14). There is an established relationship between drama and informal social learning outcomes. The Festival is designed to extend the opportunities to drop to the universal, or perhaps it is better to frame it as a process of relating to bigger picture social issues in which most learners will have a shared investment. The play texts function in a similar way to the artefacts used in the Sex and History project discussed in Chapter Four. Both resources function to de-personalise the social issues raised, and enable learners to examine the universal human experience before considering the issues in relation to their personal experiences. To remind teachers of the importance of the universal experience in drama, the Teacher-Director Workshops offered teachers “an opportunity to put themselves in the position of their students, possibly for the first time, and also to look at new ways to overcome potential problems” (SSF 2008: 19). The facilitators asked us to act as participants, sharing back our work as if we were students, to empathise with the task we handed to our casts and also, to consider how best to tailor exercises to their particular needs.

In particular, I was impressed by the range of non-verbal activities which were offered to help students explore the themes of the plays. We tried to reduce one of the set texts to a series of simple actions as a whole group, then to transition through them as an ensemble to 'show' the story without words. We performed this in silence with no direction or cues to inform our transitions, making it a valuable focus activity. Another activity called 'see it/ be it' invited the participants to firstly respond physically without words as if seeing an event before adapting their physicality to 'be' the event. This was a particularly effective way of identifying whether we were in agreement as to how a character was feeling or behaving, and generating different readings of a situation. By simplifying the themes of a play to basic actions, gestures and expressions I felt I had found some new tools to apply in my own teaching and ensure that texts were explored and analysed practically in the classroom.

By the time the 2008 Festival occurred I had completed my teacher training and had left South Dartmoor. However, I began working as a Venue Manager for SSF and therefore had the opportunity to observe how Sutton had led the cast through the rehearsal process in their performance at the Palace Theatre, Paignton. Importantly, I encountered a Year Ten student I had taught during my training, who had taken on the responsibility of being the stage manager for the cast. She had not opted to formally study drama as a GCSE subject but told me that my encouragement in the classroom the previous year had motivated her to volunteer as a stage manager. Sutton informed me how much this opportunity was boosting her confidence and enabling her to develop her organisational skills in a professional setting. This encounter reiterated for me how external teacher reinforcement in a formal setting may impact and support informal learning outcomes for the student. This Festival also enabled me to work alongside a cast of SEN students for the first time; the Ellen Tinkham school students produced a strong and moving adaptation of *Much Ado About Nothing*. This experience initiated my interest in exploring further how drama can be used to engage participants with specialist needs, and was an important factor in my decision to work with Magic Carpet. I have since used techniques modelled in the Teacher-Director Workshop, and the later cast workshops I have hosted, with Magic Carpet participants to explore *The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. SSF had a direct impact on my

ability to engage Magic Carpet participants with Shakespeare's texts and incorporate them into both informal community drama groups and the formally assessed NOCN course. Their praxis has become such a respected and successful feature of the drama in education landscape because of the Festival facilitators' ability to address both formal and informal learning outcomes.

History

SSF are a not-for-profit, arts-education charity and are currently the largest drama festival for young people in the UK. Between 1992 and 1994 Chris Grace, Director of Animation at S4C,⁶⁶ helped create *The Animated Tales*.⁶⁷ The twelve adaptations of Shakespeare plays had been designed by Grace to make the texts more accessible to young learners. He wanted young people who had limited or no access to theatres, and who struggled with the language in a formal classroom setting, to engage with the 'universal' content of the stories. SSF report that the *Animated Tales* are now used in ninety percent of secondary schools to extend the textual analysis in the English syllabus. They are shortened adaptations of the original texts which provide an introduction to the key themes and the language. The success of the series makes it "BBC Education's most popular series. In 2009 the films were made available by the DCSF to all English primary schools" (SSF 2010 n.p.). The process of textual adaptation is defended by Grace who argues that the plays "weren't dumbed down but edited" (Curtis 2011: 26). This helps learners grasp the universal meaning in the plays before beginning practical work and further analysis

The Animated Tales were the inspiration for Grace launching the Shakespeare Schools Festival in 2000 with Penelope Middleboe. It was launched in Pembrokeshire, with eight schools participating. At that time, and still to some extent, the study of Shakespeare is predominantly the domain of the English classroom as a primarily non-performative exercise. The study of Shakespeare is part of the English curriculum, and is a compulsory aspect of study, as outlined in the statutory objectives for Shakespeare in English below:

⁶⁶ S4C is a Welsh television network, which produces programmes in Welsh and English, with a focus on producing media that is reflective of Welsh culture.

⁶⁷ These are twelve animated thirty minute adaptations of Shakespeare plays designed to introduce children to the plays.

Year on Year Learning Objectives

Year 6

To explore some of the great themes of Shakespeare's plays, such as kingship, romance and ambition

Year 7

To appreciate that Shakespeare's plays can be performed and interpreted in different ways
To engage with some of the issues, themes and ideas in Shakespeare's plays and to appreciate the way they remain relevant in the 21st. Century

Year 8

To understand how characters' actions reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts of Shakespeare's time
To understand the cultural significance of Shakespeare and his place in our literary heritage

Year 9

To understand how characters are developed during the course of a play
To appreciate the dramatic conventions and linguistic qualities of scenes and understand their significance to the play as a whole

Year 10

To make a confident, critical and personal response to a whole play, using close textual reference
To understand the complexity of Shakespeare's characters and to make connections with other plays by Shakespeare

Year 11

To understand the significance of the social, historical and cultural contexts of a Shakespeare play
To appreciate the moral and philosophical significance of Shakespeare's plays and their relevance for a contemporary audience

Table 5.1 Learning Objectives
(Department for Education 2011: n.p.)

Building on the inclusive and accessible resources he had created in the nineties to be used in the classroom, Grace was now creating opportunities for learners to extend their learning in professional settings. SSF helps to reinforce the practical exploration of text as an extension of the literary analysis; this practical emphasis helps support the realisation of the objectives specified by the Department of Education. However, SSF does not solely focus on formal education criteria; their remit is much broader, emphasising their 'bigger picture' perspective of learning.

Austin: [Working in professional theatres] that's very unique about what we do [...] actually getting young people out of school and into a real environment, a professional environment where they can feel like they are part of something bigger is really important. And that's why it's a festival, we don't want schools to perform in isolation, we want schools to perform with other schools in a professional venue where they meet professional technicians, they meet theatre directors, theatre producers, marketing teams. And they feel like they are part of that cultural landscape around them and by turn they become more aware of it and hopefully they engage with it longer term [.]

SSF also focus on the development of social and professional skills, aiming to boost student "articulacy and confidence as well as imparting key employability skills such as teamwork, peer leadership and self-discipline - all in addition to

the benefits of Shakespeare's language, themes and characters" (SSF 2010: n.p.). Thus the engagement may be helpful in addressing formally assessed curriculum criteria but it also supports informal outcomes such as PSHE and work-related learning.

The organisation has gradually expanded over the last twelve years, building an extensive network with schools and theatre venues to help support their work. Their annual fundraising events featuring the work of selected casts have drawn praise and support from politicians, who have identified the Festival's efficacy as a social learning opportunity.

Andrew Gwynne, Labour MP: In these difficult times it's so important that we look for ways to give our young people the communication skills, aspiration and confidence they will need as they grow older. The Shakespeare Schools Festival has an exciting way of doing all these things; [...] the skills and understanding they have gained through taking part will benefit their learning and open many more doors for them in the future.

(SSF 2012: n.p.)

The Festival has continued to expand each year as it builds a reputation for success. In 2003 the shift towards becoming a nationalised festival began in earnest. SSF embarked "on a three year cycle to cover the whole of England and Wales, [and] the Festival was launched nationwide at a reception hosted by Cherie Booth QC at 10 Downing Street" (SSF 2012: n.p.). In 2005 this initiative was supported through collaboration with the BBC. Together they created 'One Night of Shakespeare', an event which occurred across the UK, bringing together 800 schools in 140 professional theatres. "Schools performed in theatres from the Shetland Isles to Bodmin, from Enniskillen to Margate and set the model for the Festival to become fully UK-national. SSF attained a place in the Guinness Book of Records" (SSF 2012: n.p.).

The national model was fully implemented in 2007 with the Festival being conducted across the entire of the UK for the first time in this year. Grace states that "[p]eople ask if we concentrate on excellence or outreach [...] we want both. But the core is outreach: we have to give every child the chance" (Curtis 2011: 26). This underscores the person-centred ethos which informs practice,

indicating that participation is central to their notion of success; the achievement of formalised criteria is not prioritised above this.

The workshops offered are an important feature of the national Festival model. To help deliver an educational experience on a national scale SSF established a four year partnership in 2009 with the “National Theatre (providers of the Teacher-Director workshops) and the National Youth Theatre (providers of the Cast workshops)” (SSF 2012: n.p.). The workshops offer both teachers and students the resources to have a practically-led engagement with Shakespeare, shifting the emphasis away from isolated text-based analysis. For example, “[t]he teachers take part in a workshop in June, learning how to use SSF’s scripts to best serve their pupil’s particular needs” (Curtis 2011: 26). The SSF participants then “take part in workshops conducted by the National Youth Theatre in September, where the emphasis is on giving them ‘creative ownership’ of the process” (Curtis 2011: 27). In 2012 they established a new partnership with the Central School of Speech and Drama⁶⁸ to continue developing the cast workshops offered. This year there are 700 schools participating during the Festival across ninety theatres in the UK. Of the 700 schools participating 8% of these are special schools and 15% are categorised as inclusion schools. (SSF 2012: n.p.).

Austin: [W]e have certain targets that we set ourselves at the start of each year. So we make sure that 15% of our schools are inclusion schools where over 30% of the children are on free school meals, because that way we know that we are reaching deprived schoolchildren which feeds into the way we develop.

The Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) set the definition of inclusion schools which Austin refers to; they argue that “[t]hese schools often face wider problems, such as lower attainment levels at GCSE, and high pupil non-attendance and exclusion rates. Eleven per cent of schools in England are inclusion schools” (SSF 2008: 11-12). SSF are therefore working with students who may have little experience or access to theatre, and aim to integrate these students alongside a range of more experienced and privileged students within professional environments.

⁶⁸ For more information visit: <http://www.cssd.ac.uk/events/news/central-teams-shakespeare-schools-festival> [06 November 2012].

The education programme offered by SSF provides young people the opportunity and support to perform thirty-minute abridged productions of Shakespeare's plays in professional venues to public audiences. There is currently a choice of twenty-two scripts, with nine Welsh language adaptations and seven designed for primary schools.⁶⁹ The SEN schools have also compiled their own bespoke versions online to allow other SEN teachers to consider how they can best tailor scripts to support their students, helping to extend the support network for teachers which Allan Sutton has found so invaluable. All schools are able to adapt texts through further editing, cutting or extending the text to ensure it is appropriate and engaging for their specific cast.

SSF defines its practice as non-competitive, supportive and celebratory of the personally referenced successes of each participant. Given that the staging of the text is secondary to the learning outcomes for the individual, this model is also compatible with a person-centred approach to facilitating learning. The facilitators are called upon to work with a range of school groups and youth groups who use the Festival to provide extra-curricular (informal) access to drama like South Dartmoor, and also support groups who use this opportunity for the purposes of formal assessment at A-Level, GCSE or BTEC such as West Exe. The range of participants and their specific needs is very broad:

It's for class groups (e.g. Yr 7, English and Drama GCSE and BTEC Drama) and out of school groups, for young people who have never acted before, are learning English as an additional language, or have difficulties and disabilities.

(SSF 2010: n.p.)

Since 2011 they have also given primary schools the opportunity to participate, and they now work with students ranging from eight to eighteen years of age. The Festival is open to every school in the UK; SSF assert that "[a]ll schools are welcome. It's the mix that's so important" (SSF 2010: n.p.). They specifically "target disadvantaged schools and teachers who feel that their young people cannot do Shakespeare" (SSF 2010: n.p.). By targeting schools and teachers

⁶⁹ SSF resources are password protected, and schools must have paid the registration fee before they can access all the scripts, teaching materials and interactive software online.

where there is a preconception that the students will be unable to ‘do Shakespeare’ this indicates that there exists a set of assumptions and preconceptions about how students should learn and engage with his texts. SSF are trying to tackle assumptions about who, and what, Shakespeare is for. They aim to diversify the ways in which students can engage with Shakespeare in education. They also question what the baseline of student capability must be, and what the outcomes of successful learning should look like, when engaging with this material.

To broaden out who can ‘do Shakespeare’, SSF has a particular commitment to including students who have learning difficulties and disabilities in the Festival. In this context the terms ‘difficulties and disabilities’ includes both students from SEN Schools and students in mainstream schools who have a stated special need. Although SSF are aiming to tackle the representation of particular groups, creating a more positive and inclusive pedagogic landscape, there is the potential for their work to be misinterpreted. The representations facilitators help create, “however sensitively and carefully handled, will carry their own political significance and resonance in the broader socio-political sphere and will be constantly vulnerable to appropriation and redefinition” (Preston 2009: 65). This vulnerability is particularly apparent with the representation of disability and mental illness. As Magic Carpet worker Clive Essame identifies, public representation “needs to be gauged at the right level because we don’t want the ‘poor them’ syndrome but we do want the ‘wow! I didn’t know they did that’” response which informs positive development (2011: n.p.).

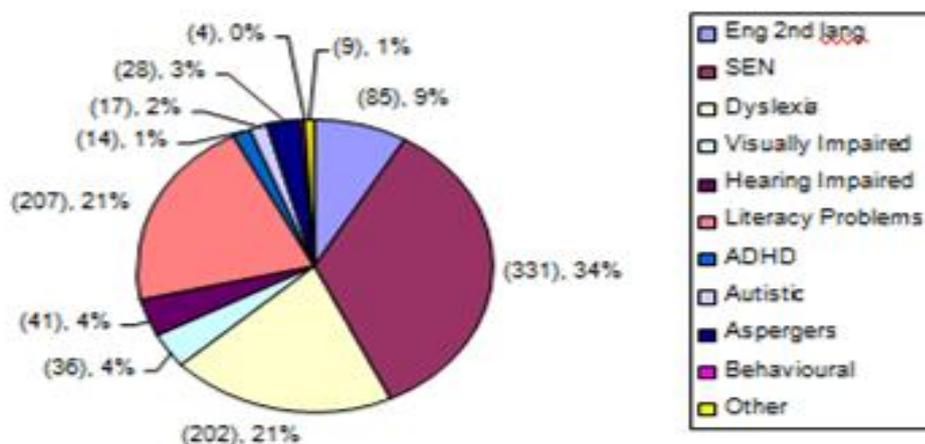


Figure 5.1 Range of Special Educational Needs in the Festival (SSF 2008: 9)

The Festival “offered specific workshops for teachers working with students with disabilities and difficulties working with specialists Mind the Gap and Graeae” to help SEN schools participate from 2008 (SSF 2008: 7). Teachers from SEN schools are offered one additional CPD day which focuses on “inclusive practice, offering suggestions on how to make Shakespeare more accessible” (SSF 2008: 8). SSF give SEN teachers consistent and reliable support in the workshops, through a range of online resources, and also through regular contact with the regional co-ordinator.

The casts are provided with work-related learning opportunities as they are able to take on directing, lighting design, costume, make-up and stage managing roles. They may also support front of house staff and create a student marketing team. The marketing teams are given guidance by the facilitators and specially designed online resources to help them identify feasible marketing strategies and support them in the venue to fulfil their role. For example, in 2010 I helped students arrange a radio interview with a local station to help market their plays, and attended the recording with them to offer additional information and support. This highlights that the facilitator must be prepared to be creative and flexible, finding personalised ways to help extend the learning for different groups. This may require them to give support outside the immediate context of the workshop or performance environment to help learners fully engage with the practices of the workplace.

As I have argued, formal and informal learning outcomes are inter-related and interdependent processes. SSF have a strong understanding of the Festival’s potential to extend both formal and informal learning for students. As they have expanded they have tried to develop methods which can address a range of learning outcomes, developing ways to:

include SSF in the teaching of Shakespeare at GCSE level with Edexcel. Teachers not directly involved in either SATs or GCSEs also said that involvement in the Festival resulted in a greater understanding of the text; and an enhanced knowledge of Shakespeare in terms of a greater understanding of both language and character. Teachers also mentioned the additional benefits of encouraging, supporting and developing speaking and listening skills and expanding drama.

(SSF 2008: 16).

However, schools will be charged £730 to participate, thus the Festival is a significant investment of school resources.⁷⁰ The money is required to support the twelve “full time staff and [...] up to 600 professionals to run the workshops and performances” (Curtis 2011: 27). The financial commitment covers approximately half of the £1600 it costs for each school to participate, but it can reduce the diversity of schools who can afford to sign up, acting as a potential barrier to inclusivity. The charity requires an annual budget of £1,200,000 in order to deliver the Festival on a national scale. One third of their budget is provided through donations. The rest of their budget “is generated from school registration fees, box-office and merchandise” (SSF 2012: n.p.).

SSF annual budget	
1	Registration fees 45%
2	Box office/ Programmes/ Merchandise 20%
3	Trusts and foundations 14%
4	Corporate sponsorship 13%
5	Individual donors/ events 8%

Figure 5.2 Breakdown of Budget
(SSF 2012: n.p.)

To date, SSF has had little exposure in academic discourse with the exception of a brief synopsis of their praxis in *Children's Theater: A Paradigm, Primer, and Resource* (2010). Until 2012 the charity did not receive Arts Council England or government support. However, this is about to change with the Department of Education providing the Festival with funding to expand their provision over the next two years. In light of the contentious reforms that Michael Gove has proposed in relation to arts education this decision situates SSF within an emerging academic discourse. Gove has justified this move by the government, arguing that “[t]he Festival enables students to bring the plays of the great playwright to life and does fantastic work to improve cultural education in our schools” (Burns 2012: n.p.). However, this raises questions about how we expect children to develop their own cultural understanding. Theatre for Development (TfD) practitioner Kees Epskamp posits that “[n]owadays, culture is seen as a resource” something which can be utilised and actively explored for the purposes of education (2006: 29). He identifies, correctly, that “[c]ultures are certainly not immortal. As shared complexes of values, norms, attitudes, beliefs

⁷⁰ These fees were accurate for 2012.

and customs, cultures are subject to change” (2006: 31). In Chapter Four the value in a socio-constructivist approach to education is clearly argued for. However, if we try to transmit a ‘cultural education’, offering learners a limited introduction as to what is classed as ‘good’ and ‘important’ drama then facilitators begin to align themselves with a behaviourist educational philosophy. How does the presentation, rather than co-construction, of culture affect learners’ ability to develop their own ‘peer cultures’ as independent critical thinkers? The way culture is framed can make it “a source of rich and sustainable development or a brake on change, an obstacle and a source of division” (Matarasso in Epskamp 2006: 22). Therefore Shakespeare cannot be a fixed feature of ‘good’ culture, the value of his work needs to be open to criticism and change so that it helps learners develop rather than becoming an obstacle to successful learning.

Who Participates?

SSF argue that the teachers they attract “are passionate about the arts or social mobility” again suggesting recognition of both formal and informal considerations; staff bring a combination of subject learning and social learning outcomes to the facilitators (Curtis 2011: 27). The Festival is aligned to a bigger picture perspective of learning, aiming to support students, teachers, and the community (SSF 2008: 2).

SSF Aims		
For students	For teachers	For the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop groups skills • Support relationships between students across class/age groups • Develop teacher/pupil relationship • Facilitate interaction between all kinds of local schools • Introduce future actors to national youth theatres • Train past participants as staff to develop transferable leadership skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find ways to connect with disadvantaged, disaffected and excluded students • Skills/ resources to provide practical experience required by the National Curriculum in English and Drama at Key Stage 3, GCSE and BTEC • Develop directing skills • Coach teachers in the transferable skills necessary for personalising learning • Extend how teachers support ethnic minorities, and students with special needs in both mainstream and Special schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise schools profile and get community support • Create positive general public image of young learners • Boost interaction between schools and their local, professional theatres

Table 5.2 SSF Aims
(Adapted from SSF 2008: 2)

Participation in the Festival is intended to directly link into curriculum learning, and to create extended social learning networks in the community. The Festival is also a powerful tool for the promotion of facilitation practices in the formal classroom space. Teachers, including Sutton and Salter, consistently feedback about the positive impact of the techniques modelled in their own work.

It's completely changed my approach to teaching drama texts in the English classroom.

Sarah Ackland, Sir William Robertson High School, Lincoln Drill Hall

(SSF 2008: 17)

Teachers have traditionally used the Festival as an aid to further understanding in preparation of the Key Stage Three English *Statutory Assessment Tests* (SATs). Despite the abolishment Of Key Stage Three SATs in 2008, using the Festival as an aid to understanding the English syllabus remains a popular reason for participation. As exemplified by Dave Salter in the previous chapter, many schools use the Festival “as part of pupils' wider citizenship and learning objectives, taking their shows on tour around local primary schools, or into retirement homes. Some areas have joined together to produce further nights of joint theatre in school” (Teachit 2005: n.p.). It is the additional contact, support and resources offered by SSF facilitators that enable pupils and teachers to find routes into bigger picture learning contexts.

Historically, the smallest year group represented at the Festival has been Year Seven. As registration for the Festival takes place before the new Year Seven students have joined secondary schools, teachers may cast, or have formed ideas about how they will cast plays, before these students have joined the school (SSF 2008: 4). With the integration of primary schools SSF are taking steps to enable younger learners to participate in the Festival. However, students who are undergoing a transition between Key Stage Two and Three after the sign up process may still have a restricted opportunity for participation due to the limited time available to integrate them into the cast.

As indicated in SSF's aims, a range of ethnic groups participate in the Festival alongside student with different specialist needs. It has been argued that some ethnic minority groups may find the arts elitist. There can be a “cultural barrier

with access to art forms such as theatre, which is perceived as being a middle class enjoyment” (SSF 2008: 5). The Festival aim to tackle these assumptions about who theatre, and specifically Shakespeare, is for. They have a consistent track record for attracting and integrating a representative number of different ethnic groups within the Festival. This indicates that the way in which workshops and the performances are facilitated is both inclusive and engaging for a range of different groups.

Ethnic Group	Percentage in England	Percentage participating in SSF
Other white groups	2.5 %	2 %
Indian	1.8 %	1 %
Pakistani	1.3 %	1 %
Mixed	1.2%	3 %
Black Caribbean	1 %	2 %
Black African	0.8 %	2 %
Bangladeshi	0.5 %	1 %

Table 5.3 Percentage of Ethnic Minority Participation in SSF
(SSF 2008: 6)

The degree to which casts can personalise the text and draw on their own strengths and knowledge to tell a story in a professional space is arguably one of the main factors which supports ethnic diversity within the Festival. For example, in 2008 Notre Dame Senior School performed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with a cast of GCSE students. The high proportion of Indian students in the cast led to a unique adaptation of the text.

The play was set in colonial India of the 1920's and the characters were recast as Indian God and Goddess, Vishnu and Lakshmi. The school incorporated modern Indian music, movement and dance to show how the English lovers gradually fall under the mystical spell of India, climaxing in a 'Bollywood style' dance lead by the mechanicals showcasing the colour and culture of the east.

(SSF 2008: 5)

Students were given the freedom to use the text as a stimulus to be re-imagined by their own 'peer culture' rather than seeing it as a fixed cultural resource which had to be delivered in a particular style. Students are able to learn about and through Shakespeare by drawing on their existing cultural knowledge and skills, which enriches the learning process and makes the Festival a more diverse and relevant experience for students. This approach is particularly compatible with informal learning and formative assessment methods, as the

kind of skills developed through the Festival will be refined and developed longitudinally. Students will extend and continue to construct their understanding of theatre and Shakespeare in future productions and the classroom.

Similarly, to extend the social learning provided by the school, and connect with the PSHE issues being tackled by young learners, texts can be adapted to help learn about particular societal problems. For example, Leytonstone Business and Enterprise School participated with a cast of eleven-sixteen year olds in 2008. They chose to adapt *Romeo and Juliet*, re-imagining Juliet as Julien to focus “on themes of homophobia and bullying within East London. Both leads were played by boys. The performance touched on gang culture, drugs and acceptance, all issues the cast considered relevant to their lives growing up in London” (SSF 2008: 11). In cases such as this the facilitators who support the process need much more than a secure knowledge of the plays and a range of drama skills to perform their role. Given that the Festival addresses bigger picture issues so explicitly, facilitators must also have an awareness of statutory PSHE requirements and be able to mediate discussions around sensitive and personal issues. Person-centered learning does not just refer to finding suitable ways to help learners understand text and performance, here it also requires the facilitator to empathise and question social norms alongside the student to help them in a socio-constructivist approach to understanding the world.

Age and perceived student ability have previously acted as barriers to participation. For example, SSF did not work with primary school students initially because there were assumptions about their ability to ‘do Shakespeare’ and engage with the text.

Our initial approach was they wouldn't be able to cope with the discipline of working in a theatre and they may not cope with working with the language. [...] Children from primary schools, though, don't seem to have the same fear and suffer from the inhibitions that children in secondary schools develop. [...] They might not get all the special nuances but if they get the love of Shakespeare or get over the fear of Shakespeare that doesn't matter.

(Hughes in Garner 2012: n.p.)

This parallels arguments about SEN students and their capacity to fully engage with a play text. If the facilitator assumes that SEN or younger students cannot engage with Shakespeare because of the language barriers, then this inhibits the kind of access we provide and the perceived barrier to learning is reinforced. In the case of SSF, the degree to which participants are free to adapt the text rejects the notions that there is a 'correct' way to perform the play, and challenges the assumption that those with a limited ability to read or verbalise the text are disabled from engaging with it. This is now being extended to tackle age barriers, enabling younger learners to discover of themselves whether they can engage with the plays. Participating in the Festival has given primary "pupils confidence and self-esteem which has shown itself in the way they now approach their normal lessons in the classroom" (Garner 2012: n.p.). Being able to memorise and deliver the exact text is not perceived as a 'better' or 'correct' form of engagement, adaptation is paramount to supporting the chief goal of learning through participation. This needs to be reflected in the way in which facilitators phrase feedback and discuss the plays with participants.

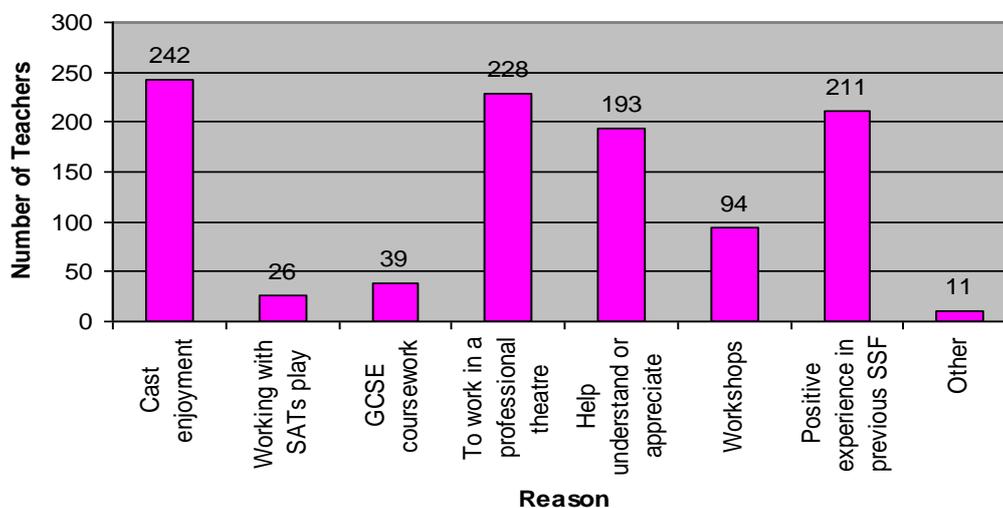


Figure 5.3 Reasons for Participation
(SSF 2008: 15)

Who participates, and the reasons for participation are varied; therefore this requires a high degree of flexibility from the facilitators and a range of resources which can be adapted to inform their praxis. Importantly, teacher feedback indicates that it is cast enjoyment and the social and work-related learning that are the primary reasons for participation. Formal learning outcomes are also acknowledged, but overall participation has been an informal, person-centred

exercise rather than a system-centred opportunity for curriculum extension. However, this will change year on year and in the current climate of educational reforms, facilitators may be increasingly required to align work more closely with formal outcomes. They will also have to adapt to address the new structures and criterion which support formal learning courses, and remain responsive to any shifts in the PSHE requirements for learners. As the Festival also undergoes a process of rapid expansion, the diversity of participants, particularly the expanding age range with higher numbers of primary schools signing up, will challenge facilitators to find new ways of including and supporting learners both formally and informally.

The Facilitators

Facilitators are co-ordinated by region with four regional managers and two co-ordinators overseeing the Festival under the leadership of Bonnie Austin. A full day of training and additional workshop resources is provided annually to all workshop staff in London at the charity’s base. Facilitators are sourced locally so that they may have knowledge of the theatre venues which will be performed in, and be able to access the schools and venues in their region. Facilitators must operate from a person-centred stance, offering formative feedback which is tailored to a wide range of abilities, and also support teachers who have different skills and knowledge.

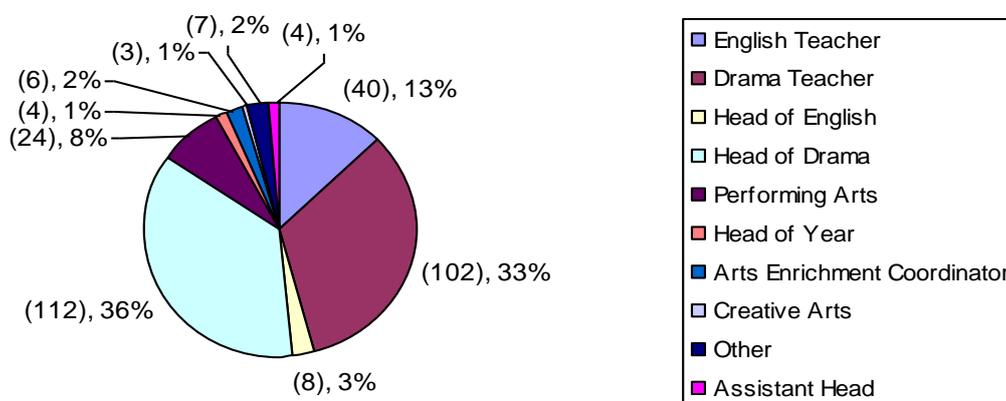


Figure 5.4 Types of Teachers involved with SSF (SSF 2008: 3)

In some cases teachers will have no experience of directing, for example many English teachers enter the Festival as an extra-curricular project and require a lot of additional support to enable them to direct with confidence. Facilitators also liaise with theatre staff, lighting technicians and school staff to ensure that four casts can rehearse and perform in a venue cohesively. They must comply with basic child protection procedures established by SSF during their employment and these are introduced in the training workshop and outlined in the accompanying workshop pack provided to all facilitators. For example, schools must adhere to an 11:1 teacher/pupil ratio at all times so that facilitators are supported by staff. The facilitators are not allowed to supervise students independently, teachers must always be present and take responsibility for their students therefore in the context of the Festival there is a distinction between the role of teacher and that of facilitator. The teacher must take on additional responsibilities with regards to student welfare, and in exceptional cases, may be required to step in and reinforce good behaviour with their cast. Facilitators cannot be alone with students and must operate with an awareness of physical boundaries with minors, which will affect the way they can model and participate practically.

In the Festival the facilitator does not have time to gradually establish an identity or a mutual trust between themselves and the learners. They need to be highly skilled listeners and observers to reflexively adapt in-the-moment to be the right kind of extended professional needed by the students. The degree to which SSF facilitators can intervene, and offer feedback differs depending on the formality of the intended learning outcomes. In certain cases the pressure on students to offer a final product to an external audience is alleviated altogether as facilitators are prepared to step in and go on stage alongside students if necessary to give them confidence. They may also act as a stage side prompt ensuring that the students feel able to participate, irrespective of how this changes the 'quality' of the product- it is the facilitation of the learning for the students rather than creating a product for an audience which is the facilitator's focus. However, in cases where 'success' is measured against formalised criteria which specifies that students must produce a performance of a particular standard then the level of support a facilitator offers can impact on the grade

awarded to learners, placing restrictions on their ability to intervene and guide participants.

Austin: [T]he biggest challenge is actually meeting the needs of all those diverse groups. [...] it's all very well being inclusive and diverse which we definitely want to be and we pride ourselves on, but what we don't want to do is dumb down the experience for anyone. No matter where they're coming from, what school they're coming from, what ability they are, we want to be able to offer the very best that we can to each individual. So that's our on-going challenge really, and that's what we are always striving to improve.

John O'Toole correctly identifies that for successful facilitation to occur a project needs to be "tailor made to the needs of the children and the strengths of the team" (1976: vii.). In the facilitator training staff acquire a standardised workshop template which they can personalise according to the needs of the children and their own strengths. Some content and approaches must remain consistent to ensure parity in the quality of support offered across the country. For example, each year a gesture is established as a signal for silence that all facilitators must use in each workshop. This means that students from different workshops and schools will recognise and respond to this signal collectively on the performance day, helping to establish a company atmosphere and manage behaviour. Workshops follow a set structure, beginning with group warm-up exercises followed by vocal warm-up activities. This will be followed with exercises that encourage students to improvise and work with individuals from other casts, gradually introducing text. Most importantly the workshops give each cast time to present a short excerpt from their play and receive peer and facilitator feedback to develop it. This is followed by time to work intensively with a facilitator on that excerpt to help implement feedback practically. Although facilitators are offered the same range of warm-up, vocal, and text-based exercises, how these will be implemented in each workshop will be personalised to fit the needs of the students. Facilitators can be selective and the time allocated to each area will vary depending on the requirements of the casts they are working with.

Edwards *et al.* assert that extended "[p]rofessionals are [...] not usually engaged in rigid and predictable work practices where routine dominates" (2009: 21). The facilitating professionals will find that the workshops have an

inherent degree of unpredictability; the differing needs of each cast will prevent the workshops from becoming 'routine'. The active consideration of what the facilitator's role will constitute is important in each context. They must define the boundaries and question to what extent the emphasis is on formal outcomes, and what kind of informal outcomes are also valued and assessed? For example, if the facilitator is aware that certain techniques have to be demonstrated in a performance for the purposes of an exam this will inform the feedback they provide and the particular set of exercises they choose to apply at a cast workshop. They have a responsibility to ensure that the Festival allows students to fulfil exam requirements. However, if the participants are using the Festival for extra-curricular purposes then the facilitator needs to identify what the primary outcomes for success are according to the group and frame feedback to support this particular set of criteria. Ultimately, they must also ensure that what they do enables learners to participate, honouring Chris Grace's assertion that being enabled to participate is the primary objective.

Putting it into Practice

The whole group warm-up activities are offered at the outset to integrate the two casts. This also gives the workshop facilitators an opportunity to observe group dynamics and behaviour to identify which activities they should transition into. For example, in a 2011 Exeter cast workshop facilitators began by asking students to follow four instructions whilst walking through the space: stop, go, jump and clap. Using a very basic focus exercise enables the facilitators to establish the baseline of ability within the two casts. Can they follow instructions? Are they attentive and willing to work, or are there behavioural issues the facilitators need to address at the outset? It became apparent that one cast was initially less focused, giggling and trying to exchange comments with friends during the activity, which affected the ability of the group to function as an ensemble. Acting on this observation, facilitators extended the whole group warm-up, stating that they would continue until the group was moving as an ensemble. Therefore, the whole group had to try to do a simpler activity, stopping and starting walking in silence as an ensemble without anyone leading the transitions. One facilitator participated to act as a model and the other monitored the periphery to position themselves by students who were talkative

and encourage friendship groups to split up and work with the other cast. This additional attention to establishing a whole group focus represents the kind of in-the-moment decisions SSF facilitators have to make. They may be required to adapt the way content is structured within the workshop to enable students to engage with the broader learning outcomes of the project itself.

Importantly, the workshops must build to a point where each cast has the opportunity to share a few minutes of work, and receive feedback from both the cast and facilitators. They must also be given time to receive personalised support from the facilitator to help inform this short section of their play. The preceding activities should help students lead into this, and these initial activities can be shortened or extended depending on the level of engagement and particular abilities of each group. To explore the facilitation process further I shall discuss examples of good practice to consider how exercises have been personalised to support both formal and social learning outcomes.

Workshop content is facilitated so that SEN and mainstream schools can rehearse and perform alongside each other in integrated cast workshops, creating a radically mixed ability cast and crew. They share warm-ups and provide each other with feedback to promote production development. In cast workshops facilitators invite everyone to participate in all the exercises to whatever degree they can. Thus SEN participants will engage in improvisations, vocal and physical warm-ups, and also present a section of their performance for facilitator and company feedback.

Austin: [O]ur facilitators [...] they have to work with such a range of pupils and schools, and on any one day they could have a special school, with a very smart independent school, and then a primary school and a local secondary school [...] and that throws up so many things, you know, potential behavioural issues, different standards, quality of work, and different ways of learning that they have to be very able to respond to whatever is in front of them in that very moment whereas I think with other projects the facilitators are tasked with something quite specific and they know what type of group they are going to be working with. We are not really able to offer that.

Hosting an SSF workshop in the Lighthouse Theatre, Poole, I observed how facilitators adapted praxis to engage an SEN school. A number of the cast

appeared to have limited or no verbal capacity in the initial warm-up exercises, and the mainstream comprehensive cast appeared wary of working with them, trying to stay in their own friendship groups. However, during the workshop opportunities to give peer feedback during the improvisations arose and one facilitator used this opportunity to promote integration between the casts. After watching the mainstream secondary cast perform, the facilitator invited the SEN cast to give feedback. One participant, a wheelchair user who could not speak raised her hand. She had technology which enabled her to type and play back her ideas. The student shared an astute and constructive observation about the cast directing their dialogue out towards the audience. This interaction also revealed to the facilitator that she was 'able' to communicate verbally, if given additional time. Ensuring that she was invited to give feedback and comments in questioning, being inclusive of the additional time it takes to type comments was something which the facilitator built into both the rest of that workshop and the performance day. In the final performance, the student's text was pre-recorded and she signed and matched her physical characterisation of Lady Capulet to the recording. In this case, the performer was 'able' to perform the text, the fact that she could not speak it aloud live was not perceived as a disability. If the SEN cast's feedback had not been sought and given equal time and value alongside the mainstream cast this student may not have revealed her full range of ability and capacity to engage with the text. The facilitator revised his assumptions of the SEN cast's ability on a formative basis using his own observations and open questioning to personalise practice to the group. The ability to identify when to offer differentiation strategies rather than make assumptions about abilities and the necessary resources at the outset is an essential requirement. SSF argue that access to professional theatre spaces and the chance to collaborate with theatre professionals is a rare opportunity for SEN participants both formally and informally.

The teachers directing the SEN cast at Poole were initially concerned about the workshop, which was scheduled early in the Autumn term. They had been unable to develop an excerpt of text to share at the workshop. However, the facilitators asked the teachers what they would like to work on and used their observations of the group during preliminary exercises to offer ideas to help develop the opening fight sequence in the cast's adaptation of *Romeo and*

Juliet. The cast understood that the Montagues and Capulets were rival families and that there was a long history of violence between them. This was the essence of the scene they wanted to convey to the audience. The facilitators tried to choreograph the scene by having pairs fight in different ways according to their ability. Some pairs ran quickly across the space whereas others had slow motion interactions. The idea of participants circling each other was offered by one facilitator. This suggestion proved popular with the group, and in particular enabled the wheelchair users to create a central 'dance' where the rivals circled each other before the fighting pairs launched. Once the basic structure of the movement had been devised, the facilitator invited students to mix spoken insults from the text if they wanted to deliver lines, also supported with cries and other improvised sounds by some cast members to capture the essence of a fight. Exploring different styles of movement, and playing with pace and sound helped to include all the students at a level they felt comfortable with, and also created a diverse and engaging moment of performance. The facilitator modelled safe and effective moves to help inspire the students and also offered sparing and thoughtful external praise to reinforce their development. The ideas explored helped to inspire and inform the rehearsal process in the school. The teachers also devised the ball at which Romeo and Juliet first meet around the same principles, choreographing a dance which featured dancers crossing at different paces and a repetition of the circling motif. This demonstrates how facilitators who are able to adapt and personalise content based on their in-the-moment observations can have a significant impact on the learning process for students and the teachers.

Another example of how facilitators can personalise approaches to engage a specific group can be located in the delivery of vocal warm-up exercises. In this case, facilitators adapted the style of delivery to make it age appropriate and to differentiate between casts using the Festival for formal and informal learning. This year the facilitators were working with a standardised vocal warm-up activity. It was a call and response exercise which led students through a series of different sounds and facial stretches. In a 2012 workshop at Frome one facilitator presented the exercise as a recipe for a magical cake, each sound corresponding to a different aspect of the cooking and eating process. The group of Key Stage Three students were participating in the Festival as an

extra-curricular activity. Students made the cake, ate it and ended by being sick. The facilitator modelled with great energy and volume, breaking down the whole sequence into several stages, recapping each stage before the group put it together, offering verbal praise to reinforce the activity. She then got students to repeat it at double speed to help embed the activity and introduce some humour into that exercise. She tried to add a musical rhythm and fast pace to the activity so that no one could do it perfectly; ensuring that the exercise was fun and inclusive of a range of abilities. In a later workshop at Truro I observed a facilitator modelling the same activity; however this time it was with Key Stage Four and Key Stage Five students participating as part of a formal exam. The style of delivery differed. In this instance, it was framed by the facilitator as a vocal warm-up activity as opposed to a game. The function of the exercise was made explicit to the students so that they invested in it seriously. In addition, the call and response was not broken down and repeated in sections, instead each sound was repeated once before students were invited to put the whole sequence together. This also added an additional memorising component to the exercise to make it a more challenging activity for the students. Instead of offering external reinforcement through verbal praise, the facilitator motivated students further by giving technical information about how different sounds are produced and offering tips to improve diction in performance.

In the Frome and Truro workshops both facilitators adhered to the workshop template and delivered the standardised exercise. Here we see that personalising praxis to be inclusive does not require the facilitator to change the fundamental activity. The style of facilitation itself, the way the exercise was framed, structured and paced was made bespoke to ensure the specific students present felt engaged by the experience. This example indicates the limitations of planning, as how the exercise will be specifically delivered is something negotiated within the workshop environment itself and is informed by in-the-moment observations. Here the way the facilitator chooses to construct their identity impacts upon the learning process. Their professional “identity is not a stable characteristic, but is negotiated and accomplished within activities” shaped by their observations of the learners and their understanding of their needs and abilities (Edward *et al.* 2009: 25).

Importantly, the process of adaptation to support different types of learning goes further than just making exercises tailored for a group; facilitators must also recognise the individual needs within the group itself to truly offer a person-centred model of praxis. In the context of the Festival the facilitators need to acknowledge that just because a group is linked by commonalities such as ethnicity, gender, or belonging to the same school community they will retain their individuality and have different skills and needs. It may also be possible for a cast to include a mix of formally assessed Key Stage Four students working with Key Stage Three students who have signed up on an extra-curricular basis, making the type of learning outcomes markedly different *within* the cast.

In another 2012 Frome workshop, the facilitators adapted workshop content in response to questions raised by some members of a cast. In the morning workshop a Key Stage Three cast was staging *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and were struggling with choral speaking and synchronised movement as an ensemble and asked for help. The second half of their workshop focused on addressing these issues, with the facilitators offering suggestions and inviting the cast to try different ways of structuring movement, by picking up selected words delivered by Oberon and Titania to co-ordinate their response. Students were on their feet throughout, with the facilitators modelling practically, using the whole space to explore different ways of moving and inviting the students to select which ideas they felt most confident with. However, in the afternoon the second workshop structure had a different focus in response to a different set of needs. The facilitators had three participating schools in that venue therefore in the afternoon workshop there was only one cast. In this workshop the facilitators had much more time to offer input, as there was not an opportunity to provide peer feedback from another cast. The cast was performing *Henry V* and when the facilitators asked them to put the scene they had shared into their own words some students raised the issue that they were still unsure about what their lines meant. In response to this the facilitators decided to offer them a task outside the usual workshop structure. They set them the task of selecting a phrase which they were unclear about delivering. They asked them to call out their phrases at the start of the task to ensure everyone had a focal phrase. Students then had five minutes in small groups to discuss possible interpretations before delivering their contemporary translation to the class.

During this time the facilitators spoke to students individually to give them ideas and guidance on a one to one basis, reassuring those who had been most nervous about delivering text. Students delivered the contemporary versions of their lines and the facilitators offered further questioning and praise to help them continue their textual analysis in the rehearsal space.

The rehearsal feedback during the 2011 performance day in Exeter provides another example of how facilitators can personalise their approach to help individuals extend their learning. The facilitator was watching the closing of a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and had the opportunity to give the actor playing Puck personalised support. The Key Stage Four cast were participating as part of a formal GCSE exam and the facilitator encouraged them to explore new ideas practically, extending their learning now they were in the professional environment. He invited the rest of the cast to offer peer support and situate themselves in different parts of the auditorium to help identify any issues with projection and sightlines in the space. The actor playing Puck had been struggling to pace the closing speech, and was also unsure about what to do at the end of the speech. The facilitator got Puck to try ending the scene in lots of different ways, also modelling some suggestions himself to encourage laughter and comments from the cast regarding which choices were most effective. Some members of the cast called out a suggestion which the facilitator acknowledged and invited the actor to try. Puck had been delivering the speech whilst packing all the props away inside a large box. To help address pace, the cast suggested he packed himself inside the box with the props, and delivered his final line from inside. The facilitator encouraged the cast to experiment with their staging choices and supported the actor in trialling new ideas, adding excitement to the final rehearsal whilst also extending their learning. It encouraged the group to think critically about their choices and extend the kind of peer feedback they had been offering one another, supporting their social learning. It also helped address their formal learning outcomes, as the facilitator presented the final rehearsal as an opportunity in which they could still make changes, and analyse what they wanted to achieve with their play. By opening up a dialogue about the final scene, the students were able to articulate what they wanted to achieve and make changes which improved the overall quality of the scene, potentially having a positive impact on

their grade. Through this approach the facilitator was modelling his own attitude as a professional actor, demonstrating to the students that their decisions should not be rigidly fixed, the play and their understanding of it should always be open to discussion and development.

Identifying Outcomes

As Dave Salter has also indicated in Chapter Four, collaboration with extended professionals in the workplace helps to close the gap between school-based drama and outside work in theatres. The SSF facilitators adhere to the assessment for learning (AfL) philosophy, creating “opportunities to support and guide the learner’s reflection in a climate of mutual trust and respect” (QIA 2008: 6). Facilitators recognise that the assessments they personally make are formative, intended to help students identify where they are now and consider how they will develop with further practice. Consistent with AfL practices, facilitators formatively assess *with* learners, integrating a high level of peer and self-assessment into workshops and performance days so that learners begin to take responsibility for their own development. The challenge for the facilitator in these cases is establishing the climate of mutual trust and respect within the limited time and contact allowed so that their input is valued.

SSF assess the outcomes in the performance on the day itself through an appraisal delivered by the Venue Director or a visiting appraiser. Appraisers summarise what has been summatively achieved by the company on the night, but there is also a strong emphasis on the formative learning. Appraisers emphasise how the opportunity can support students’ development, and what they will take away from the experience. To be inclusive of both formal and informal outcomes, appraisers do not only congratulate the strongest actors but also highlight those who have tried the hardest, and focus on outcomes such as confidence and teamwork. For example, in the Exeter Phoenix 2011 appraisal, the facilitator who had worked in the cast workshops praised cast members who found a way to support someone who forgot their lines and continue the performance. The ensemble skills displayed were an important informal learning outcome for the group, and had the potential to inform their thinking and approaches in future performances. Guest appraiser Jenny Agutter gave equal merit to the teamwork, energy, and creativity displayed by an SEN and primary

school cast participating informally, alongside mainstream secondary schools entering for their exam in the Poole 2011 appraisal.

The appraisal places emphasis on personal development rather than focusing on the 'best' individual performances and brings to the forefront the ensemble. The casts also applaud and acknowledge each other's contribution on stage together during the appraisal in front of the audience; therefore emphasis is placed on the achievement of *the company*. This informal form of assessment concludes the evening, taking it further than just a theatre performance as the audience and cast leave having the intended outcomes and values of the SSF team reiterated. The appraisal dissolves the binaries and any perceived hierarchy between formal and informal outcomes. This supports the notion that the "importance of drama in schools is in the processes of social and artistic engagement and experiencing of drama" rather than the graded outcome (Neelands 2009: 173).

It can be challenging to stop learners using formalised criteria to compare and 'grade' themselves against other casts. The culture of summative assessment prevalent within schools leads students to label their work, and it can be a struggle to focus on the formative outcomes if they perceive their play to be less 'successful' than others. For example, in the Festival students can perceive the running order decided by facilitators as an indication of which cast is 'best' and try to judge their production competitively against others rather than identifying themselves as part of a company. The non-competitive ethos of the Festival must be endorsed to tackle this and facilitators must reinforce that the running order is based on pragmatic factors to benefit the *company* rather than to showcase the skills of individual casts. Each cast will have a strong sense of their school and personal identity. Although it is important that the facilitators try to establish a collaborative company ethos in the performances, challenging existing identities and norms to create a bespoke learning community, this will prove a significant challenge to any facilitator in the limited time available.

SSF also assess the success of the Festival and the outcomes for participants on a longitudinal basis by gathering both qualitative and quantitative data. They require evidence which can be distributed to potential funders and schools that

clearly illustrates the benefits to both teachers and learners, justifying the financial commitment required.

Austin: [A] school that isn't that interested in Shakespeare, isn't that interested in drama, is not that fussed about performing in a professional theatre, we need some more proof to give them to say 'you should really be doing this you shouldn't be denying your young people'.

Austin suggests that this kind of practical and collaborative engagement is not a luxury, however trying to compile quantifiable conclusive evidence of the outcomes of this engagement to justify on-going and significant financial investment is still problematic. A selection of cast, teacher and facilitator questionnaires inform the quantitative material analysed. In addition they invite facilitators to document and include stories of individual success, and they also select case study schools each year to follow up on a qualitative basis the learning outcomes for participants; as in earlier chapters we see the benefits of a triangulated model of assessment.

Austin: First point of evaluation is the teacher workshops. Every teacher fills out an evaluation form there and that evaluation is very much about the content of the workshop and the logistics of the day, [...] so that's a very simple evaluation if you like because it's just finding out about what works and doesn't work for a teacher in terms of content and the practicalities [...] And then the second stage is during the Festival. Every teacher fills out an evaluation form and then a selection of pupils, so we choose about fifteen schools across the country and we target them to get a range of schools across the country. And we get each of those schools casts to fill out a form so we get about twenty pupil evaluation forms from fifteen schools. And that forms our pupils' feedback. And then in addition to that we do interviews with schools. So we do what we call case studies. Each year we'll do about- well between five and ten case studies. Again we try to choose a range of different schools and what we try to do is choose a range of different approaches. [...] So our evaluation document is created by the statistics that we get from the teacher questionnaires and the pupil questionnaires and the softer stuff that we get about the wider impact, the impact it's having on academic attainment and social skills, and then the case studies supplement that to give it a more of a real flavour [...] So the personal stories come through a little bit more. [...] we also run teacher steering groups throughout the year.

SSF's methodology is designed to get a balance between qualitative and quantitative data to justify and continue their praxis which has been successful

in attracting government funding. The case studies and qualitative feedback offered by facilitators is particularly useful in capturing the informal long-term benefits for participants. For example, facilitators identify individual students or casts who have created particularly innovative performances to refer them to the National Youth Theatre and offer them an opportunity to participate in fundraising events for SSF. Facilitators make observation notes on the day which are forwarded to SSF to help document the personal outcomes for individuals. This data helps to justify the efficacy of the Festival by capturing evidence which is unlikely to be included in the more structured questionnaires and case study interviews. However, although SSF have tried to establish a thorough assessment process there are areas which they intend to develop as they continue to expand their remit. Austin identifies areas of assessment which they want to address in new ways:

Austin: There are a few gaps [...] that we are unable to fill until we have more funding. We do currently have a desire to get some proper research funding to look at academic attainment in particular. Our biggest problem at the moment is that we are full of fabulous stories and stuff about what happens to people, and we know that what we do works but we can't prove that. We can write really strong [...] documents however there is not a huge amount of proof. So we are currently looking into getting some research funding for proving what we do does actually work [...] because we ask for a registration fee actually that's really important because often a school isn't willing to part with money unless they know that they are signing up to something that's definitely going to have a positive impact.

These concerns parallel issues raised by the evaluators of Magic Carpet in chapter Three. The facilitators have the qualitative, personally referenced data that argues for the efficacy of their praxis, but alone it is not rigorous enough to justify funding. Interestingly, both charities have sought out external evaluators to help offer new methodologies and legitimise their praxis through the production of more rigorous 'scientific' data. Whilst it is positive for organisations to explore ways of making their findings increasingly transparent to potential partners, there is a tension inherent in the process of trying to quantify outcomes which may remain personal, internal and longitudinal. Additionally, as arts facilitators extend their skills by learning the language to communicate scientifically with other professionals, it is also important to ask whether these professionals are willing to learn and value our performative language. The

backing of politicians, including Michael Gove, is secured when they come and *observe* performances for themselves. By taking the time to observe and analyse the efficacy of SSF's praxis firsthand, they are able to understand and advocate the need for this work much more articulately than through engagement with quantified statistics or written case studies. Therefore, whilst facilitators should explore ways to document and send out their findings, they should also assert the importance of outsiders coming in to firsthand engage and arrive at their own understanding of our praxis, letting the *art* speak for itself.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have considered how SSF negotiate formal and informal learning in their praxis, and the challenges of assessing and justifying their work. The efficacy and importance of their practice has been argued for. Penelope Middleboe asserts that the Festival places "so much importance on the role of drama and Shakespeare in schools. We have seen it change lives. It is key to education - not just an add-on" (Burns 2012: n.p.). To an extent, this has been proven in their evaluation proceedings and in their recent recognition by the government. However, the decision to support SSF can be examined critically. It must be questioned why the government chooses to support Shakespeare in particular. As a prescribed feature of the English curriculum all students already get an introduction to Shakespeare's plays and it is a statutory requirement that they get a basic practical introduction to the texts. To truly broaden the cultural education provided through dramatic activity, why support an organisation which only offers the chance to work with one playwright? Although learners have been given a high degree of ownership to personalise the text, cases such as Notre Dame Senior School (Indian *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Leytonstone Business and Enterprise School (*Romeo and Julien*) also indicate that there is a strong potential for a diversity of source material to help engage a broad participant group address wider social issues. In a bigger picture educational landscape, a narrow selection of dramatic resources in schools, and youth organisations such as SSF, makes the facilitation of a range of learning outcome increasingly challenging. However, SSF is at the start of an exciting phase of expansion and exploration and has

the potential to respond to shifts in the educational landscape to ensure that the bigger picture needs of their participants continue to be addressed.

Austin: We pride ourselves on kind of providing an equal playing field for every school [...] I think that our focus is inclusivity. And you know the key to what we do is that it is non-competitive and I think as soon as you do that you appeal to all those groups in a way. But we somehow manage to do that whilst also remaining excellent. So what we don't want to say is 'we're for everyone you can do whatever you want,' because that actually gives the impression that you don't have to work hard and you don't have to produce something that's really excellent.

Importantly, concepts of inclusivity and excellence are context dependent, and negotiated in dialogue with participants. SSF is arguably part of an agenda to raise the level of cultural literacy in schools and the wider community. By engaging in a process of artistic education, and enabling a wider range of young learners to become literate in the conventions, roles and norms of theatre there is an attempt to “simultaneously [...] raise everyone to a level of existing mainstream culture and to attempt to advance existing culture beyond its current level” (Smith 1990: 5). Through SSF the learner has a broader understanding of theatrical culture, and the professionals who create our theatrical culture are provided an insight into how best to advance this culture beyond its existing level to engage and include the next generation. Here the importance of entering into collaborative professional networks to help inform good praxis is again highlighted.

What this case study highlighted for the facilitator is that there is no standardised framework of good practice in formal education despite the degree of formalisation in the curriculum structure itself. Here the limits or challenges of offering a person-centred model on a large scale are identified. Observing facilitators trying to engage with students on a national scale highlights how difficult it is to ensure that everyone is engaged on a level which is appropriate for their needs. Also the explicit engagement with both formal and informal learning outcomes highlights how facilitators have to make difficult choices when trying to honour both the process and the product. Although the festival is geared towards giving students a really valuable social informal learning opportunity there is still a requirement and arguably at times a tension to adhere to formal specifications. This demonstrates on a bigger scale the

tensions which Salter and Vowles faced with one cohort, whereas here facilitators are faced with the same difficulties on a mass scale. For the facilitator it underscores that they need to commit to being researchers in their own right, reading beyond the basic or prescribed policies and procedures to have a secure grasp on the educational theory, approaches and social issues which may feed into the students' work to truly be an extended professional fit to engage students on such a large and diverse scale.

In the following chapter, MED Theatre offer a different perspective on the ways in which plays can help learners engage with bigger picture social concerns. Here, we move from a large-scale national charity to a small charity which is informed by the local ecology and social issues of Dartmoor. Whereas SSF utilises the widely read, compulsory texts of Shakespeare to engage learners, MED write their own plays and also facilitate the new writing of young learners to help them engage with wider social issues through drama. Whilst SSF use professional venues to help extend social and work-related learning, in the following chapter MED demonstrate how engagement with community spaces and outdoor venues can also help facilitate both formal and informal learning outcomes.

Chapter Six

Med Theatre: Constructing Learning Communities

This chapter examines the way community arts facilitators Mark Beeson and Abby Stobart have adapted and developed their skills to facilitate both formal and informal learning outcomes in a broad range of social contexts. To engage with this issue I examine how their community plays support informal learning in my discussion of their 2008 play *Hot Air*. I also consider how they educate and engage members of the broader public through their free informal family learning workshops entitled *Trees* which I attended in 2010. Finally I discuss how they negotiate the transition into formalised education in the 2009 Castle Drogo lantern procession, which was a personalised education project designed to promote cohesion between year six students from Chagford Primary and year seven students from Okehampton College. I utilise my data from three observations of good practice and also include material from an interview I conducted with both Stobart and Beeson at their Moretonhampstead base in 2012 to clarify their approaches to facilitation in community learning settings.

I first encountered Manaton and East Dartmoor (MED) Theatre during my MA study in 2009. MED's two primary facilitators, Artistic Director Mark Beeson and Education Officer Abby Stobart, invited the MA students to come to the company's base in Moretonhampstead, introducing us to their model of praxis. They subsequently took us on a visit to Dartmoor to help us engage with the ecology which informs their praxis.

After visiting MED Theatre's base on the Dartmoor National Park and being taken out on to the moor to explore the surrounding environment, students from the applied drama course at the university received an *About Community Theatre* workshop, to get MED Theatre's slant on Community Theatre practice.

(MED 2012: n.p.)

In the workshop they guided us through the process of developing personalised activities, particularly helping us to find cultural links through story and song to promote cohesion in an international group of students. During this period I had been working with Magic Carpet for several months, and was beginning to consider what kinds of resources would be most engaging for a particular group of drama participants with mental health issues. I was trying to locate stories,

myths and other resources which would inspire this informal community group. I was also embarking on a trans-generational community drama project with single parents and children between four-twelve years of age in Exwick, Exeter. My lack of knowledge about local history and the community culture was initially a challenge to my praxis.

MED offered a model which was grounded in a secure knowledge of local history and culture, creatively using such information and local resources to develop innovative bespoke projects. I was motivated to observe their praxis further during my MA, considering how they engage trans-generational participants in their work, and have since continued to observe and participate in their community events. Their work has also directly informed my facilitation of the NOCN Drama course with Magic Carpet. Consideration of their community plays *Snow* and *Hot Air* helped my learners to produce original writing and informed their thinking about how to make their devised plays relevant for specific community audiences.

History

MED is a community-based educational company, which has its origins in the 1980s plays of founding Artistic Director, Mark Beeson. Beeson was motivated to create theatre which was “for and by Dartmoor people” influenced by his work as a primatologist in Malawi, and his long standing relationship with Devon, having been raised there since the age of five (Dickenson 2006: n.p.). His observations of monkey behaviour on the Zomba Plateau, where younger monkeys played in a protective circle formed by adults, inspired Beeson “to create and develop a Community Theatre organisation in the Dartmoor National Park, where adults, teenagers and children could all work and play together in drama that dealt with issues around the manmade/natural interface” (Dickenson in Schaefer 2012: 249).

The first play Beeson wrote for MED which explored this interface was *The Badgers* (1980), “a play whose subject matter displayed a parallel between ecological and social issues on Dartmoor” (MED 2012: n.p.). *The Badgers* was “a protest play against the treatment of Badgers by MAFF, and the treatment of Dartmoor people by the Dartmoor National Park Authority. The play, which was

inspired by a summer's field work for Exeter Museum, was played back to Dartmoor people that autumn, in local village halls" (Dickenson 2006: n.p.). Beeson's play set the template for the community plays which have followed over the last three decades. Beeson's second play *The Hedge* "was written as an entry to Community Theatre exponent Ann Jellicoe's Village Community Play Competition, held in 1982" (MED 2012: n.p.). *The Hedge* was written;

specifically for and about his home village of Manaton. The play came second in Ann Jellicoe's village community play competition that year, and Jellicoe encouraged Beeson to stage the play himself. The production was finally staged in Manaton Parish Hall in 1984 and was followed by three more plays written and directed by Beeson for the hall and its community.

(Dickenson 2006: n.p.)

Building on these initial community projects, MED Theatre was registered as a charity in January 1989, making it the first dedicated Dartmoor theatre organisation. They have developed so that they have an established network of community spaces in Devon, performing in a range of "village/parish halls or rooms in schools and community centres. MED Theatre carves out the space in these places with a circle of chairs, three to four deep, placed around a circular painted floor canvas" (Schaefer 2012: 257). The choice to perform their community plays in-the-round is a decision that facilitates the open forum debates with audiences which accompany many of their plays. The plays are designed to "debate rural issues [...] extending it into an actual debate between performers (in character) and audience, led by a facilitator" (Schaefer 2012: 253). The debates provide a social learning opportunity, providing a space to hear different perspectives, facts and proposed solutions to the issues raised. This space facilitates a socio-constructivist learning experience, where the individual is able to construct their own understanding of an issue, supported by the social scaffolding that the actors, facilitators and other audience members provide. Beeson asserts that the act of facilitation has also been a feature of MED's praxis from the outset as a framework to support informal learning.

Beeson: From the very beginning [we were] facilitating people's experience of drama to, I don't know, take part in community plays, but also we facilitated skills learning through workshops from the very outset of MED theatre.

Since its inception MED has developed a core collective of local adults that participate in their community praxis. The process of facilitation offered by Beeson has enabled them to evolve an “understanding of the writing based not only on the knowledge of how to deliver it technically, but on a kinship with their Dartmoor surroundings and the issues involved” (Dickenson 2006: n.p.). Informal learning in this context is both a skills-based activity, and a form of social learning through engagement with the content of the plays. Beeson has ensured that participants in MED’s community projects have been provided with a facilitated learning provision so that they can assume ownership over the work they create. This has fed into the creation of a dedicated youth provision, which enables younger members of the community group to learn writing, performance, dance and film skills.

Akin to SSF and Magic Carpet, MED has been reliant on securing funding for sustainability, and this necessity informs practice, as they must negotiate funding criteria in addition to participant needs. Like Magic Carpet, their output has been partly funded by Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This imposes a set of assessment criteria which formalises what will be considered ‘successful’ outcomes. Whilst their “young people’s programme is comparatively well resourced (average young people’s project costs are approximately £17,000) and enables MED’s continuing existence, the community play is much more difficult to find funding for (the annual event attracts local council support and some local business sponsorship)” (Schaefer 2012: 252). The challenge for the facilitators is justifying the need for a large-scale community play. Arts for young learners are an established feature of the curriculum, albeit one frequently subject to scrutiny, whereas for the adult learner in an informal environment it can be difficult to quantify the impact of play as a form of lifelong learning.

Beeson: We have a business plan, a schedule which we have to match what we are doing against. Obviously at a crude level we produce numbers for beneficiaries and I suppose also at a larger level annual reports [...]

Stobart: At the end of every project as well we have to write a report to the funder or give them statistics again, numbers.

In a school setting facilitators can draw on the established range of assessment procedures and existing data to inform the ‘statistics’ which justify further

funding and the impact of praxis. There is also a number of existing assessment criterion which can be adapted to help measure success. Finding ways to measure the impact of a community play to justify its continuation can be difficult given the lack of existing data and the differing reasons which bring participants to a voluntary, rather than compulsory, learning setting. However, MED's community plays are challenging this by negotiating the boundaries between school-based and community-based learning through audience participation, bespoke workshops and more rigorous evaluation procedures, as my discussion of *Hot Air* later clarifies.

Kerrie Schaefer notes that although "MED has been creating work since 1980, there has been little scholarly attention given to its practice [...] [t]his lack of visibility is all the more surprising given the scale of its practice" (2012: 250).⁷¹ In addition to the production of a large-scale community annual community play MED "run an education programme composed of many smaller-scale performance projects" (Schaefer 2012: 252). This includes the informal community learning opportunities such as the *Dartfest*⁷² festival, adults' improvisation classes and Wild Nights Young Company, which is exclusively for thirteen-nineteen year old participants. In addition to drama, MED have been facilitating community dance projects since 1991 and film projects since 2004. The family learning workshops are also part of their outreach work, enabling them to consolidate their partnerships with local heritage sites. They also offer a broad education programme which sees them enter into formal education spaces. They offer schools the opportunity to work with them in community spaces to integrate classroom and social learning. Now a significant proportion of the company's output involves work with groups from outside their immediate community in both formal and informal learning settings, including primary and secondary schools, universities and youth groups. Having presented a broad history of the company, I will now specifically focus on the educational programme which has developed out of the community provision to consider how MED supports learning in schools and the wider community.

⁷¹ Although atypical of MED's usual community output, their community project *Loricum*, which resulted in the production of an online game was selected to provide one clear example of 'community-based theatre' in Monica Prendergast and Juliana Saxton's overview of Applied Theatre practices (2009: 5) and is one of the only academic references to the company's work.

⁷² *Dartfest* is a Dartmoor festival created by MED to showcase young participant's scriptwriting and performance, initiated in 2007.

Education

The move into formal learning began in 1991 with MED developing “a programme of playwriting and performance workshops in Dartmoor primary school, pioneering a ground-breaking playwriting programme for young Dartmoor people supported by the Arts Council the next year” (Dickenson 2006: n.p.). Their education programme developed, building up a network of local schools that use MED’s bespoke programmes, resulting in an established series of partnerships with local primary and secondary schools.

Beeson: I began working in schools in 1991 I think, so that was a long time ago as well; but that was just Morton school at that point [...] I worked in Morton school for six or seven years and then Widdecombe, and then Bovey, then lots and lots once we had an education programme. In 2006, that’s when the major expansion happened.

MED was awarded funding from Futurebuilders England in August 2006; this led to the creation of an education programme organised by a dedicated Education Officer. The post was initially held by Carly Mays, with Abby Stobart taking on this role in October 2008. This financial investment “continued the expansion of both the in-school and out-of-school education programme through leading a specific education and lifelong learning strand” (MED 2012: n.p.). The acknowledgement of education and lifelong learning highlights MED’s commitment to facilitating trans-generationally, framing learning as a formative and on-going process.

To date, MED Theatre has produced over thirty “full-scale Dartmoor dramas, as well as over [thirty] plays written by children in local primary schools” (MED 2012: n.p.). They have continued to develop what they class as ‘bespoke’ workshops and projects to help extend social learning and also support formal outcomes. Whereas SSF has a global workshop template MED have developed workshop models specifically for primary, secondary, and sixth form students to ensure that praxis is personalised to the specific needs of the age group targeted, and relates to topics being covered in the curriculum at that Key Stage (MED 2012: 3). For example, they have worked with West Exe BTEC students at the Castle Drogo National Trust property to help inform their formally examined performance, and have also offered stage combat and dance workshops to Kingsbridge College and ISCA College respectively to extend the

skills students could utilise in their formal studies (MED 2012: n.p.). With primary schools they offer storytelling, animation, playwriting and drama workshops, enabling young learners to develop skills that can be integrated into their formal study whilst also promoting informal learning through social interaction and collaborative investigation. Workshop topics have included learning about local history, legends, wildlife and plants; these can be linked to PSHE targets and formal curriculum requirements. For example, learning “how to treat animals with care and sensitivity” is part of the non-statutory PSHE requirement to teach Key Stage One and Two learners about “[d]eveloping a healthy, safer lifestyle” and is designed to cross reference with the formal teaching of science in the classroom (DfE 2011: 2). In these workshops MED often benefit from two facilitators, primarily Beeson and Stobart, working in conjunction to support and extend one another’s ideas in-the-moment, a similar approach to that applied in both SSF and Magic Carpet’s praxis. However, in the case of MED, this is not always a financially viable option and facilitators may have to operate alone in workshops, which can challenge their ability to identify learning outcomes and be inclusive of the full range of group needs.

Stobart: Sometimes I can’t always deliver it as a one person job which would make it more sustainable. [...] when you’re doing something like a radio play there’s a lot of time when you as a professional need to be focused on the technical aspects of actually getting a good recording whereas you also need someone to be managing [...] the other creative stuff so that’s a challenge trying to find workshops where you can deliver it as one person, or if you have to deliver it with two, trying to make it affordable for people to go along because often it will then get more expensive and there’s no point in delivering it [...] you have to charge them less because they can’t afford it and two of us have to go along and it’s not sustainable.

As with SSF, participation in these projects can be a financial challenge to schools and other groups, with workshops costs ranging from “£75 for a taster session to £600 for a course” (MED 2012: n.p.). However, MED do encourage groups to contact them for negotiable scales of charges in a bid to be inclusive of potential participants with smaller budgets.⁷³ The community and family learning provision are also currently free; however participants must invest a

⁷³ In post-interview discussion Beeson and Stobart highlighted their recent move to offer direct support to help their regular network of schools apply for funding. By giving their feeder schools assistance and guidance with the application process it is hoped that the schools will continue to have the money to sustain their relationship with MED as they try to negotiate budget cuts.

significant amount of time and travel to the location itself which has also been identified as a potential barrier to participation in the geography of Dartmoor (Beeson and Stobart 2011).

One of the most significant developments in their education programme is the Dartmoor Resource website, launched in 2009, which documents and disseminates their praxis. The website is a valuable learning resource, designed to be “a research platform to document performance on Dartmoor from the origins of recorded drama to the present” (Schaefer 2012: 250).⁷⁴ Developed in collaboration with schools, young people and adults this website is a resource designed to document the “[h]istory, ecology, folklore and communities of Dartmoor - as interpreted by the performing arts” (Dartmoor Resource 2012: n.p.). It also has a dedicated section for all of MED’s partner schools, enabling students to share and learn about each other’s projects. This provides a space for reflection and constructive feedback on the work which extends beyond the facilitated workshop as digital media becomes a more prominent feature in their output. It also represents a new phase in the education provision offered by the company.

An integral strand to the Dartmoor Resource project is its outreach element. MED Theatre employed Clare Saunders as Education Worker, supported by MED Theatre’s Education Officer Abby Stobart, to lead workshops both for the community and for schools.
(Dartmoor Resource 2012: n.p.)

They adapt their work so that it can engage trans-generational groups in informal settings and engage young learners in classrooms. “The outreach projects were a valuable tool to educate members of the community about the opportunity of adding to and using the Dartmoor Resource website”, helping to establish a platform for lifelong learning which is designed for use by both young and mature learners alike (Dartmoor Resource 2012: n.p.).

Similarly to SSF, MED also aim to offer Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teachers, so that both the participants and supporting educators are able to learn new skills from their projects. MED’s CPD days

⁷⁴ Dartmoor Resource can be found at: <http://www.dartmoorresource.org.uk/> [08 August 2011].

share aims with SSF's Teacher-Director Workshops as they also offer "drama exercises and techniques that can be used directly in the classroom. Teachers not only have the chance to be a 'student' for the sessions, but they are invited to share their own ideas for variations on the techniques explored with each other" (MED 2012: n.p.). This provision also highlights the level of skill and knowledge MED's facilitator's have amassed through their diverse praxis, and underscores the benefits of teachers collaborating with extended professionals to enrich the formal learning opportunities they can provide.

Training for Facilitation

The breadth of their educational praxis requires Beeson and Stobart to undertake both formal and informal facilitation training to ensure that they are able to negotiate the different kinds of learning outcomes they will be required to support.

Beeson: [...] I think there is quite a lot of training that goes on with you [Abby]. You've been to first aid, there's child protection. [...] And I've done at least two child protection courses over the last five or six years.
Stobart: I did a 'working with children with difficult behaviour' course.
Beeson: I spent a week with Chicken Shed⁷⁵ as part of a course on inclusive theatre in 2002 [...] I've been to numerous workshops with various different professionals. Playwriting, acting, directing, voice work, movement back in the nineties when I was training myself [...]
Stobart: And also [...] if we want to have a workshop as part of something we're delivering and neither of us feels that we are professional in [it] then we will get professionals to deliver that in. So a choreographer or a composer, so essentially I often feel that I'm lucky enough to learn from them as well which is great.
Beeson: Yes, and the film work we do, the training we've got to do, that has come from professionals that we've used to help or we've partnered with; we've learnt from them and sometimes had one to one sessions on editing etc. so we learn from the professionals that we employ, at the same time as they're facilitating our young people they're teaching us.

The role of collaboration with other extended professionals is framed as an informal training opportunity by Stobart and Beeson. In addition to formalised training like child protection, project-specific updating is a core feature of MED's process to enable facilitators to personalise praxis appropriately. If a gap in

⁷⁵ Chicken Shed is a theatre company for young people; they have become noted for their facilitation of theatre with disabled and Special Educational Needs participants. For more information visit: www.chickenshed.org.uk [17 November 2011].

knowledge is identified they will consider how to best address their personal learning requirements to support them in delivering the project. For example, Stobart identified gaps in knowledge when undertaking an oral history project and formal training was organised to address this.

Stobart: [I]n order to make sure that we felt up to date we funded me to go to the Oral History Society in London [...] So that's an example of needing to get training in order to feel that we were [...] able to facilitate that session properly.

This approach strongly indicates that other facilitating specialists are best framed as potential collaborators rather than competitors to help support professional development. If facilitators opt to closely guard their intellectual property this can be potentially detrimental to the sustainability of practice for those who wish to facilitate in a range of contexts. By remaining sectionally skilled, facilitators limit their potential efficacy when attempting to engage a range of learners in multiple educational contexts. As I have also experienced in the context of Magic Carpet, professional development does not have to be an expensive endeavour if we acknowledge the potential benefits that collaboration and the observation of colleagues can bring.

Beeson and Stobart frame their training as a continual formative process, ensuring that they have an on-going commitment to self-reflexively assessing their skills and addressing gaps in their skill set as they emerge. The potential breadth of on-going training is an area which marks the extended drama facilitator apart from related professionals, such as classroom-specific educators, who traditionally have a much narrower focus in their continuing professional development. Their role and responsibilities are formalised and a mandatory training provision will be specified, whereas Beeson and Stobart will have to seek different provisions to respond to an increasingly broad range of learners. The application of Beeson and Stobart's facilitation skills shall now be contextualised by examining their approaches in the context of the community play, family learning workshops, and with school students.

Learning and the Community play

MED has developed into a Community Theatre Company with a trans-generational group of voluntary participants. This is facilitated at their current base in Moretonhampstead; the community play is an enduring annual feature of the company's output, consistently featuring anything between twenty to forty cast members. MED's Community Theatre Company is structured so that there are three groups to represent the children, young adults, and adults in the company. In regular meetings representatives for each group can take forward any requests or issues on behalf of their respective sub-community to ensure that all the generations who access the service have an active voice and participate in the shaping of future practice. Representatives must be voted in by their peers, the young participants having to prepare and deliver a personal statement and answer questions before they are voted into their post. Their role is framed as a 'job' and this process offers an opportunity to develop the presentation skills needed in a job interview setting, making this a work-related learning opportunity. In the community plays, young company members can shoulder an equal responsibility with adults by taking on lead roles, helping with the writing and directing process, and working alongside elders as an ensemble.

Stobart: That's something which Mark's always done, written in at least something for each person which makes their role interesting. [...] they don't have to do auditions [...] it's quite a fair process but also quite a sensitive process that's gone through [...] they're very proud of what they've been a part of and they are very important to it. We don't have sort of understudying so if someone's ill we've got to rearrange everything somehow so it works.

Here the act of participation is again placed at the centre of the learning process. The participation is person-centred, with the requirement to offer everyone an inclusive and meaningful role the primary outcome. Although the realisation of an engaging product for an audience is an important concern, Beeson firstly ensures that the needs of the community learners are met. This leads me to question what kind of community is being created and supported in this learning environment.

Kerrie Schaefer (2012) demonstrates the challenge of defining MED's community, in her article *Performing environmental change: MED Theatre and the changing face of community-based performance research*. She examines

different paradigms of community to demonstrate how it can be read, for example it can be 'inoperative,' (Nancy 1991) 'a form of misconceived idealism,' (Mackey and Whybrow 2007) 'coercive' (Kerhsaw 1999); underscoring how communities are not fixed but constructed by the context and practices in which participants are engaging. Community is therefore temporal, and how it can be defined will be dependent upon how each 'community event', or in this instance, play, is facilitated.

Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston identify that there are "different participative relationships" which characterise theatre practice in communities, suggesting that theatre can be facilitated *for*, *with* and *by* a community depending on the level of facilitation, intervention and participation (2009: 10).⁷⁶ In MED's model a high degree of ownership is handed to the participants so that they can make decisions *by* themselves and also in conjunction *with* Beeson and Stobart. However, this process of handing over ownership is supported by the longitudinal nature of their relationship with the community participants, where initially decisions may be made *for* learners. Facilitators can gradually offer less scaffolding in the learning process as participants develop the theatrical skills and knowledge to problem-solve independently.

Beeson: Facilitating is like bringing up children. You start off by having to do quite a lot for them in order to give them the skills to assume [control] as they feel ready to do it entirely for themselves, better than you do it. I think that's how I look at it, facilitating is an educational process and at its deepest level educational processes are about bringing up children to take your place with an improved outlook or improved skills[.]

Here the act of learning is a socio-constructivist process, as Beeson and Stobart offer content which develops problem-solving skills and extends the existing range of knowledge that learners have through collaborative enquiry. Given this socio-constructivist perspective of praxis the term 'community' in this context does not mean "a well-defined, identifiable group, or socially visible boundaries. It does imply participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing" (Lave and

⁷⁶ Similarly in her article 'Social Theatre: An integration of education and theatre arts: The Portuguese experience', Lucilia Valente summarises community-based intervention as theatre for, in, and with community which may be a useful extension of this discussion for facilitators with a particular interest in this issue (2009: 157-165).

Wenger 2002: 115). For MED the 'community,' may have shared understandings and interests in the Dartmoor area, so in some cases the plays will engage a 'community' with geographic commonalities. However, to create a community-based on "physical proximity is not enough; just because people happen to live in the same place geographically, this will not necessarily create the circumstances which can produce 'a community'" (Somers 2009: n.p.). Here what is 'communal' is the development of theatrical skills *together*. The writing, staging and participation in a performance both by and for the Theatre Company is what generates the shared understanding for this temporal 'community'.

Beeson: [The young Community Theatre participants] get the chance to take part in the creation of the material for the community plays and they oversee the young people's plays for themselves entirely and I think a lot of them get a lot out of creating material. The young ones enjoy creating material which the [...] adults are going to deliver.

Stobart: And then directing them in that.

Beeson: Directing, that gives them a great sense of achievement and ownership and a sense of being part of something that's different and unique.

Stobart: [...] I think another outcome is that they get to build on their relationships in maybe their own family or with other people in the community.

Reflecting this socio-constructivist ethos, Beeson argues that "MED is constantly grappling with defining what community means and responding appropriately while managing to stay in existence" (Beeson and Stobart in Schaefer 2012: 251). The community is not stable, it is constructed and scaffolded by the particular participants and issues which help inform and create each annual play. Despite the longitudinal relationship with participants, Beeson and Stobart are still required to personalise approaches in each new play, to respect the unique people, issues and components that inform a particular project.

Hot Air

The 2008 community play *Hot Air*⁷⁷ was written by Beeson and focused "on how the issues of climate change affect communities across the world, and the

⁷⁷ For readers interested in a more in-depth analysis of this specific project Kerrie Schaefer discusses this project in her article 'Performing environmental change: MED Theatre and the

difficulties we all face trying to understand global warming” (BBC Devon 2008: n.p.). It was performed in parish halls, Exeter University, local schools and theatres. Here the notion of bigger picture learning is again applicable, as MED try to help participants and audiences make links to the global social issue through their personal engagement in the drama.

Beeson: [Participants] like the challenging nature of a lot of material, which is not obscure, but I am always introducing stuff that pushes people higher and puzzles them in small doses. I think that’s one of the reasons why they find it a stimulating activity because we are always trying to do new things at the same time as making it enjoyable but with a deeper educational, stroke, social agenda too.

Beeson’s comedy was set on Dartmoor, centred on a family birthday party for businessman Frank, which sours when the topic of climate change is introduced. To help facilitate audience participation, and maximise the potential for a socio-constructivist rather than didactic engagement with the central issue, Beeson ensured that his play looked “at climate change from all viewpoints and does not advocate any single position” (BBC Devon 2008: n.p.). Performed in-the-round on a simple painted floor canvas, depicting “a white turbine blade on a background of blue sky and white clouds” the audience met a range of characters who present their response to the central issue (Schaefer 2012: 257). The action centres on the repercussions of Frank’s decision to invest in wind turbines to develop his company. Neighbours protest against his decision, worried about the impact on the local ecology, and experts including an archaeologist and ecologist also challenge his choices, trying to dissuade him from proceeding. Some local community members and his daughter counter their arguments by exploring the potential benefits for local residents and the environment. The play concluded with an interactive debate, with the audience hot-seating some of the fictional characters from Beeson’s play.

The debate was not designed to resolve the potential conflicts which may exist between spectators; instead it invited “the audience to probe their understanding of the dilemma of a proposed wind farm site on Dartmoor. The play drew out many issues to do with climate change and sought to ask

questions rather than provide answers” (MED 2012: n.p.). This process of questioning and constructing understanding, rather than engaging with a didactic message, was mediated by a facilitator. Dominic, a character in the play, acted as the facilitator leading “the debate as a journalist consulting the local community. Dominic took a vote at the end of the discussion to gauge how the community felt about the wind farm. The vote was very interesting, but the main purpose was to open up the discussion about climate change and the environment” (MED 2012: n.p.). The company collated and published the voting results from the six performances on their website, helping to produce data to evidence the benefits of the community play as a learning tool to potential funders.

No vote comments...
Wind farms are very inefficient. Money should be spent on wave and tidal power.
Wind turbines are so inefficient as energy producers that there is no way they can justify the environmental damage.
Tidal power is more appropriate for Devon. Wind farms won't produce that much.
Yes vote comments....
Anything that helps to end the march towards disaster! Wind turbines are quite graceful. But I still need to be better informed really.
We have no choice. Alternative energy (as well as energy conservation) is vital.
I voted yes because renewable energy is the only way to go forward.
Abstaining comments...
Not enough information on this complex issue to make a decision.
Too many conflicting "technical" and scientific views - difficult to make a clear decision...!
The subject is so very complex; I need a lot more information.

Figure 6.1 Hot Air Votes
(MED 2012: n.p.)

As the votes demonstrate, the conflicted audience was motivated to address the debated issue by finding out more information to develop an informed and positive response to the subject matter. Conflict, discussion, debate and voting became tools to help engage and inform the audience. The debates which accompany their community plays also strengthen the case for this output being framed as a valuable lifelong learning opportunity. The cast function as ‘experts’, undertaking a lot of research to offer informed responses about an archaeologist or ecologists’ views on the issue. By assuming the ‘mantle of

expert' the actors provide the audience with a pool of knowledge that may prove hard to access and collate through independent engagement with written media. MED are providing a unique live space for a large group of people to engage with important issues which can be difficult to establish in the challenging Dartmoor geography. The data they are producing as part of the Dartmoor Resource project is providing them with the evidence to both justify and develop this provision.

Integral to the learning process in the community play is the differences which exist in the audience. As Jonathan Neelands (1984: 40) has argued, a person-centred facilitator "differentiates between *consensus* and *conspectus*; the former involves a homogeneity of perspectives, the latter a rainbow of differing opinions [...] an effective facilitator will aim for *conspectus* over *consensus*, ensuring that the voices and attitudes of each participant are represented" (Prendergast and Saxton 2009: 135). *Hot Air* enables both the audience and the actors to learn through exploring the *conspectus* of beliefs that Beeson had identified in his research. As Schaefer pertinently notes, "*Hot Air* questions the existence of community, at least in terms of any form of collective unity or consensus" (2012: 254). Instead there is a form of collective enquiry of the *conspectus*, a more challenging but potentially useful undertaking. Beeson is cautious with regards to unifying "notions of 'community building', characterizing MED's work as provocative without antagonizing to the point of building barriers, and as a catalyst for getting people to think in a social forum" (Beeson and Stobart in Schaefer 2012: 249). The rejection of a unified community is essential to enabling those present to begin constructing a more informed understanding and response towards the issues of the play. People learn through critical thinking, not through the acquisition of prescribed facts and figures. MED makes no assumptions about how the audience will feel; they have no means of establishing a baseline of what the audience will already know. Furthermore, by playing to audiences in schools and university spaces the play reaches beyond the immediate local 'community' of Moretonhampstead, broadening who the play is for. The wider audience helps to explore an issue specifically set in Dartmoor within a bigger picture learning context, as audience members from outside the immediate location of Dartmoor also engage and learn about this social issue through the play.

To extend the social learning provided to audiences, MED also offered a series of workshops for both primary and secondary schools based on *Hot Air*. The workshops offered “an opportunity for students to expand on ideas that they've seen in the play and explore these issues for themselves” (BBC Devon 2008: n.p.). In the workshops MED used “issues and characters from the play to help students explore how climate change could affect their local communities and how their actions can have big consequences” (BBC Devon 2008: n.p.). The community plays have begun to blur the boundaries between what is classed as community-learning and school-based learning as their community plays increasingly begin to make the transition into school settings with accompanying workshops, such as *Snow* (2009) and *Catchment* (2012). Here we see how extended facilitators such as Beeson and Stobart aim to close the gap between school-based experiences of drama, and outside opportunities, offering a bigger picture learning experience. In their model, curriculum and community learning can be effectively integrated; highlighting how what is taught within schools can and should be applied outside to help people make sense of the wider world.

Learning and the Family Workshops

The *Trees* workshops are a non-profit community service, which were initially conceived and delivered by Carly Mays, Stobart's predecessor. These workshops build on MED's history of ecologically inspired work, grounded in issues which resonate with the Devon community which they serve. Learning in a family setting differs from community or school-based practice. As I was discovering in my own praxis with the trans-generational drama project in Exwick, facilitating family dynamics is a unique challenge. Unlike the other learning settings, facilitators may find that there is a distinctive hierarchy with the needs of younger learners being prioritised by elder participants, seeing workshops as a learning encounter primarily designed for children. However, MED also try to help adults learn about local history and offer new ways of engaging with the children through dramatic play. Existing family hierarchies and dynamics will also inform the way in which the group engages. Whereas the facilitators usually assume responsibility for modelling expectations and reinforcing behaviour, in this context these responsibilities can be shared by participants. What the facilitators may consider acceptable behaviour and

reinforcement methods may differ with the expectations of family members. Both children and parents may take on a lead role, depending on the task, guiding the other group members by drawing on their prior experience of a story, issue or activity.

The *Trees* workshops have travelled to different community locations and are uniquely facilitated in each space. On Saturday 18th September 2010 the first workshop, entitled *Living Trees*, was conducted in Moretonhampstead Parish Hall. It was attended by thirteen participants (a mix of adults and children) and facilitated by Stobart and Beeson. The participants “explored how important trees are to our everyday lives and connections to climate change. They used drama and storytelling to unravel folklore and poetry about trees” (MED 2012: n.p.). In contrast, in the workshop held at the National Trust property Castle Drogo⁷⁸ on Friday 25th February 2011, the content was tailored to the needs of the family learning participants who had signed up to attend. This second workshop was called *Tree Stories*:

nineteen participants ranging through three generations dramatised a variety of stories about trees, provoking responses about their views on trees which they wouldn't have necessarily explored, as well as having a chance for these different generations to work together as equals.
(MED 2012: n.p.)

In this workshop more than one focal story was utilised and explored. This may be attributed to a number of factors which the facilitators identified and planned for such as the higher numbers of participants who signed up to attend and a prior knowledge of the family learning participants who had signed up. MED also try to use the space creatively so that learners consider the ecology through engagement with the physical environment they are working in. For example, in the second workshop they included a discussion of the uses and importance of wood in society. This was aided by the environment itself, as the entire room in which the workshop was held was made from very old carved wood, so the content and focus was aligned to encourage reflection of and engagement with the environment. This is also an example of in-the-moment decision making, given that the inclement weather necessitated that the

⁷⁸ Castle Drogo is a National Trust property on Dartmoor, known as the last castle to be built on England in the early 20th Century.

workshop was an indoor event so the planned for outdoor activities had to be modified appropriately. In the third workshop participants offered a different set of questions and tasks to link to the environment. Participants were invited to share and reflect on their personal engagement with trees, as the facilitators had observed the children playing in the orchard which surrounded the workshop enclosure before they began.

I attended the third workshop called *New Life in Trees* on Sunday 8th. May 2011. This workshop was an open-air public event, coinciding with other local activities including visual arts and a traditional folk dance display which were free for the public to attend. At the workshop the group comprised of six adults and four children between four-ten years of age. Stobart used two stories during the workshop to stimulate discussion and performance. She used an abridged version of a story entitled *The Last Leaf* (1907) by O. Henry and *The Golden Apples of the Hesperides*.⁷⁹ Unlike with schools or the community group, MED did not know who would attend. There was the potential for drop-in attendance as the open-air public setting may have attracted families who wanted to take advantage of a free family activity. This meant it was difficult to select material which was guaranteed to be of interest and appropriate for the particular workshop demographic. The workshop content was not advertised therefore the stimulus was new and unexpected to participants.

When the group arrived Stobart invited the participants to share their names and also asked them to say a little about their favourite tree. This was broadened to include favourite species of trees, specific trees, and also trees in the orchard itself which we were drawn towards. Stobart and Beeson modelled the task themselves first before opening out to the group to establish their expectations. In this context the responses of the younger learners was co-dependent on that of their parents, requiring additional questioning and prompts from their family to help elicit an answer. As a whole group they were also invited to call out suggestions for the potential usefulness of trees in our environment, with young learners offering a range of answers including ‘for fuel’

⁷⁹ A simplified version of the story, written for accessibility to young readers was selected for the Parke workshop. This version can be found at: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Herakles/apples.html> [11 November 2011].

and 'for furniture'. This baseline activity helped the facilitators to identify which of the children were confident and articulate, and which required further time and external reinforcement to secure their participation.

This was followed with Stobart reading the story of *The Last Leaf*, and inviting the group to consider what message the writer was trying to convey. Although learners responded thoughtfully, the discussion was brief and learners were very energetic, therefore Stobart handed over to Beeson to introduce a practical activity. He led the group away from the small wooden shelter in which the workshop was held towards the orchard hedge. He began to discuss in more detail the trees and the conservation of resources at the site itself. At Parke there are traditional forms of hedge laying, where branches are manipulated to form a living hedgerow. This was a unique feature of the site and workshop participants were urged to consider their impact on local ecology in a discussion facilitated by Beeson. He invited the group to touch the hedge and consider how it might have been made. He also asked them to think about how old it was, and what benefits it might bring to the site. Participants, including both parents and children raised their hands with suggestions, such as the hedge was sustainable and a habitat for local wildlife. Beeson listened to all the ideas from the group before explaining the history and the process of this form of hedge laying. He then invited the group to become hedge layers themselves, using the rest of the group as the living branches to build their hedge. Here the distinction between a family workshop and a school-based workshop is identified. Whereas in schools all learners are given an equal opportunity to explore roles, here there was a bias towards enabling the young participants to take on lead roles. The four children were invited to be hedge layers whilst the adults followed their instructions. This also offered the adults a valuable learning opportunity as they had to listen to the children and value their input as leaders, observing how the children were capable of handling this role with minimal instruction.

After this activity Stobart read the second story in the wooden enclosure, which was a simplified version of a Greek legend centred on the figure of Hercules. To transition into practical exploration, she invited the group to consider how Hercules may have got passed the hundred-headed dragon, named Ladon,

who protected the garden in the story, as it was not specified. In two small groups we created our own scenarios and then performed them back using the natural environment to help create the orchard in the story. This activity enabled us to think creatively about the orchard, seeing its potential as a performance space. Importantly the young learners took on a leadership role in this activity too, making casting decisions and giving the grown-ups advice on how they should act out various parts of the story and utilise the space for maximum effect. Here they were given the 'mantle of expert' as experienced performers and players; they were equipped with the skills and knowledge to effectively bring the story to life. In the stories the importance of trees is presented, and this notion was explored in discussion and dramatically throughout the workshop, however the intended learning outcomes were not *explicitly* articulated to participants, again differing with school-based practices. The learners were there to have fun, the learning outcomes were incidental not central to their participation.



Figure 6.2 Family learners create a 'hedge'
(MED 2012: n.p.)

The *Trees* workshops were funded by a small grant from the Co-Operative and formed part of the National Trust's *Full Bloom* Festival. Therefore, the workshops still had to be assessed for funders to evidence the efficacy of the work and justify the financial investment. The workshop was closed through a short assessment exercise led by Stobart. She asked the group questions and told us to move to her right or left to indicate whether we agreed or disagreed strongly with her questions, giving her immediate quantitative data to assess the session. We were also asked to offer individual verbal feedback, identifying

what we had most enjoyed and/or learned through the workshop, providing her with qualitative data to satisfy the funding criteria.

Stobart: Sometimes with a group if I think a questionnaire is not going to be suitable or there's not going to be a massive amount of time at the end for them to fill it in other things like the game where I say a statement like 'I enjoyed the workshop today,' go to that end if you agree with it, that end if you don't.

Beeson: Did we do that at the end of the [*Trees*] workshops?

Evans: Yes [...]

Stobart: Oh did we do that there; yes I quite like using that one because people don't feel like 'oh, I've got to sit down and write stuff down'.

The approach to assessing outcomes parallels the level of flexibility and informality which characterises the family learning provision. Arguably learning outcomes are most difficult to quantify in these workshops given the brief contact and difficulty in following up learning. In addition, the unpredictable nature of attendance for free public events can also challenge the facilitator. However, MED understand the benefits of a trans-generational learning opportunity from their extensive work with their Community Theatre Company. Trying to take aspects of this out into the wider community, to offer families a chance to explore new ways of working with one another has the potential to be an important and valuable lifelong learning opportunity. This kind of outreach also challenges assumptions about who, and what, drama is for. It can act as a stepping stone for people into other community drama settings, such as participation in or attendance of the community play, when they may not otherwise have encountered MED's work.

Learning and Collaboration with Schools

The school-based practice of MED is dependent on partner schools having both the funding and impetus to invest in it. MED has established on-going partnerships with local schools and can therefore facilitate a personalised model of praxis for these schools as they have formed a clear understanding of the purpose of their praxis and the intended outcomes. This shared starting point is important to good practice; Anthony Jackson identifies that where this has not been established:

Companies have found themselves used as convenient sticking-plasters to cover up uncomfortable gaps in the formal school sector, bringing welcome diversions from the daily grind or at best offering entry points into difficult areas of curriculum provision (such as health education and citizenship) that teachers have felt insufficiently prepared to address.

(2007: 43)

Although MED's projects can be designed to address gaps in the curriculum, viewing the work produced as a 'sticking plaster' in these cases is unjustified. The time, resources and personalised approach of the facilitators means that their input has longevity; their resources do not act as diversions but extensions to learning. For example, in 2009 Stobart and Beeson helped to facilitate the Castle Drogo Lantern Procession. The project was a partnership between MED and the National Trust, as the workshops and final performance were facilitated at the castle itself, promoting the site to students and their families. It was designed to be "a transition project working with year six students from Chagford Primary and year seven students from Okehampton College. The students worked together in learning about the history of the last castle built in England, and created lanterns under the guidance of artist Sandy Berridge, and performances with help from MED Theatre" (MED 2012: n.p.).

I observed Stobart and Beeson facilitate a morning workshop and the evening performance at Castle Drogo. The morning session was the culmination of a series of previous workshops with the students. MED had facilitated drama-based activities around the story of Julius Drewe, who built Castle Drogo. The aim of the project was to help facilitate the transition from Year Six at primary school to Year Seven at a local comprehensive. By getting Year Seven pupils to work with Year Six pupils it was an opportunity to re-familiarise with old friends. It gave the younger students the confidence to work alongside older pupils, and enabled Year Seven to mentor the younger learners and exchange skills with them. As the drama also focused on the history of the castle and the Drewe family, the workshop also functioned to extend the learners' knowledge and engagement with local history and the National Trust itself.



Figure 6.3 Castle Drogo Lantern Procession
(MED 2012: n.p.)

During the rehearsal in the workshop the students revisited the scenes which they had devised previously in small groups, taking it in turns to step forward and share their part of the story. Beeson had provided a written story which had been divided into sections, each group taking responsibility for that part of the story. There was a challenge to integrate absentees and they also discovered that some performers were no longer in attendance. The rehearsal process was therefore also partly a devising session, as they tried to integrate people into roles which they felt confident performing. Students had minimal props and costume to help convey the story. MED also had to rehearse both a wet and dry weather plan ahead of the evening's performance.

The facilitators had a lot to cover within the limited time of the workshop. They did not raise their voices during the session or sanction students, despite the initial level of excitement and volume in the rehearsal room. They allowed students to be talkative whilst they distributed the props and identified who they had to integrate, giving students a period to 'cool down' upon arrival. Through gentle whole group questioning and humour which linked back to previous workshop activities, the energy was steered into the performance. The facilitators could recall the students' names, and offered hints and reminders about previous choices they had made, which inspired the students to recap

and develop their work. Rather than focusing on the fact that there was a tight schedule and an audience arriving that evening, questions and prompts were geared toward telling the story effectively. How could they show what a character was feeling? How could they come on stage in a way which indicated their relationships? Peer feedback was also elicited to help observers remain focused when not performing and develop the relationship between the two school groups, paralleling the peer feedback which SSF facilitators also elicit. Individual and collective verbal praise and constructive feedback were balanced to help motivate learners and develop the overall performance.

MED did not follow a highly detailed and prescribed workshop plan, facilitation choices were based on in-the-moment observations of what learners' needed. For example, the lantern procession which opened the evening was led by Stobart and followed a long path from the property entrance down the drive to the castle itself where the audience were waiting. To ensure that the learners were focused, engaged, and also working together as an ensemble, Stobart decided to introduce a call and response chant along the driveway without rehearsal. This functioned to minimise chatter, keep people walking and talking together, and introduce a new element which required focus. The chant of 'follow me' and 'come with me' in the darkness as part of the lantern procession heightened the performative nature of the event and ensured that the audience's focus was immediate. As facilitators "we need to reconsider both our methodology and our content [...] we have to invent, but not necessarily from scratch. Adapting materials to the language of" the learner so that we facilitate a shared understanding is essential (Prensky 2001: 3-5). In the performance Stobart identified the potential for students to become disengaged, talkative or nervous during the slow procession and used her initiative to adapt a drama exercise to ensure that they were listening to her. It also had the added benefit of getting the students to warm up their voices and project, which assisted them in their open air performance at the castle doors.

Identifying Outcomes

The negotiation of criteria can significantly impact upon the success of facilitated practice. Arguably, "[a]ssessment strategies [...] should be context-

driven and centrally concerned with giving voice to the participants: actors and spectators alike” (Prendergast and Saxton 2009: 24). However, often the voices documented and disseminated are selected or heavily edited in assessment as this stage of practice is not person-centred but geared towards another agenda. A triangulated approach, one that is inclusive of the voice of the facilitator, participant and organisers, is modelled by the facilitators examined in this thesis.

Assessment criteria in both formal and informal contexts can be challenging, in the sense that the demands placed upon the facilitator and participants can be significant, and the outcomes expected difficult to quantify.⁸⁰ However, the concept of *challenging* criteria, that is taking the decision to question, ignore, re-interpret, refine or add to the criteria, is also significant here. The valued outcomes in the criteria and the values of the participants may prove to be distinctive; therefore the negotiation of criteria will impact upon participation and the final product.

To what extent should the facilitator be prepared to prioritise the criteria over the person if truly professing to be a person-centred practitioner? Is their chief responsibility to honour the contract set by the employer and manipulate participants in order to satisfy the criteria set? If a facilitator does recognise a mis-match of needs what is the ethical response? Ultimately these questions can only be answered by the individual facilitator operating within a specific context as the variables which govern the ethical framework of each context may vary considerably. Our own ethical standpoint in relation to the demands and values of the criteria presented will also shift according to the individual project. Thus the power to make work bespoke, being skilled enough to operate reflexively and with a range of options, is a potent ally for the facilitator as they travel into distinctive and challenging working contexts. What also remains pertinent is that the facilitator *recognises* these questions and actively consider to what degree they are deviating or honouring a contract and the level of transparency they have when operating (or manipulating) with employers and

⁸⁰ For practitioners with a particular interest in the area of Theatre for Development Kees Epskamp provides a concise discussion of the main issues of identifying the impact of practice, both short term and long term in that context (2006: 101-105).

participants. The ethical implications of our in-the-moment responses should lead the facilitator to consider: how do we assess what is valuable? What are our personal criteria for success? Our own values informed by our previous facilitation experiences, and arguably our own experiences of drama and education, will influence our perception of criteria and how we evaluate.

Stobart: I feel a responsibility towards [...] making sure we get sort of repeat business as it were, whether that's getting a school to re-book us or [...] maybe we've done a free workshop at a youth centre to get their interest in the project we are doing at the moment. If loads came to that and none of them said they were interested in the project I think I would feel a bit like I hadn't done something quite right in order to capture their imaginations. So I think [...] that could be a challenge.

Here Stobart, like many facilitators, may be faced with the issue of honouring her personal criteria, in this instance securing interest and continuing participation, with an externally imposed criterion, that of engagement with a local heritage site. If participants in the free workshop indicated a lack of interest towards the heritage aspect then to satisfy the personal criteria the in-the-moment decision to steer content away from this may be taken. The facilitator would have to consider how to re-frame this component in future work so that the formal criteria were honoured and the continuing participation secured.

Stobart: ...for example once I led an outreach workshop at a youth club [...] the project [...] was again a very heritage focused project but [...] if I'd said to these young children, these young people, that this workshop was going to be about history or anything like that I think they would have never turned up. So I had to adapt, and that was one where the challenge paid off and that went well but I had to definitely think on my feet for that, that was quite a challenge.

Evans: Framing it so that they actually wanted it.

To sustain a working relationship and encourage repeat bookings facilitators need evidence to demonstrate that their work promotes learning. MED try to ensure that the mode of data collection can be personalised, so it is appropriate for a particular workshop, and try to triangulate their data to get a detailed picture of their practice.

Beeson: We have questionnaires always [...] we also sit down together and talk about what went wrong and what went right [...] which is the most important [...] for us and obviously we have the questionnaires to look at and people's comments to bear in mind. We are evaluating ourselves by having to report to our board [...] at two-monthly intervals.

Stobart: at the end of every project as well we have to write a report to the funder or give them statistics again, numbers, [...]

Evans: so it's that balance of qualitative informal methods that you do sort of day to day and then that more formal statistical process as well.

Beeson: At the school workshops we get the teacher's feedback form always, [...] alongside the pupils' feedback so we look carefully at what the teacher says. [...] And obviously we are videoing a lot of what we do, [...] When you are recording the stuff and it's there for people to look at and say, 'well that didn't work quite so well. I'd forgotten about that bit, that was a disaster, that bit was quite good' so there's that kind of evaluation that goes on.

MED apply a range of assessment tools including digital, verbal, observational and written approaches to identify their outcomes from different perspectives. Using a range of assessment measures helps them to identify how funders, participants, teachers/parents and the facilitators feel the process has developed. Arguably, facilitators cannot argue that praxis is successful and make effective changes to their work if the methods used to assess practice are excluding key voices in the process.

Conclusion

In this chapter MED are arguably framed as a theatre company *for* communities, as opposed to a Community Theatre Company. They create personalised praxis for negotiated participative communities that can be linked through geography, age, shared activity and/or social issues. The concept of community is contentious because it is not stable, which can make it difficult to justify how and why they conduct praxis to potential funders who will present their classifications of Community Theatre and education through their 'policy speak'.

MED, like SSF and Magic Carpet, are a charity which offer personalised and person-centred praxis. However their remit is much broader than both of these organisations, greatly diversifying the kind of learning outcomes they must negotiate. Whereas Magic Carpet work almost exclusively with an adult community, and SSF work with young students, MED are open to both of these

learning groups and other participant communities. They have the challenge of considering how to engage separate youth and adult groups in addition to trans-generational communities, making them unique within this study. The praxis of SSF and West Exe is partially prescribed by a global workshop template and the formal curriculum respectively; the scope of MED's praxis enables them to continually consider how they can offer unique and innovative projects. They do not have to adhere to set texts or follow what the National Curriculum defines as relevant PSHE issues. Instead they can utilise the stimuli which they feel will most benefit learners, drawing on a mix of local and global issues and material to structure their work.

As with Dave Salter at West Exe they strengthen the case for extended professionals collaborating with schools to close the gap between the kinds of drama offered within and outside the school. This is also extended so that the wider community can access a rich form of cultural education through their plays and workshops, which allows participants to learn about and construct their own peer culture before considering how this relates to bigger picture social issues. However, the breadth of praxis will come with its own set of challenges and the negotiation of prescribed criteria, from different funders and the formal education sector, remains an important concern.

Offering an education model which is so diverse, challenging and immediate is not a solid or secure venture. As Beeson points out, "MED Theatre faces a constant struggle for survival" (Schaefer 2012: 251). MED's education programme builds on the heritage of Theatre in Education provisions which were founded on the principle that companies should "provide well-researched, specially devised theatre pieces" in recognition of the value a personalised approach will bring (Ogden 1997: 48). However, "the nurturing of artistic and philosophical identity is entirely dependent on stability and adequate funding" (Ogden 1997: 57). Securing sustainable funding, particularly for the community-based output, is difficult. SSF and Magic Carpet have a comparatively narrow remit, with clearly defined target 'communities' which are attractive to funders. MED's learning 'community' is not so easy to define and subsequently analyse.

Anthony Jackson suggests that the drama facilitator may perceive themselves as operating “betwixt and between’ the traditional boundary lines of cultural practice” (2007: 7). MED’s practice is challenging the distinction between community-based and school-based drama through its aim to offer community plays to schools and university audiences alongside their rural residents. They try to create a space for these cultures to have a dialogue and consider how there is a reciprocal relationship between our formal and informal knowledge, enabling the learner to become a more autonomous and independent individual. Their work is situated between the boundaries of formal and social learning; the techniques taught and issues explored through performance and debate can be implemented both in and outside the formal curriculum. The socio-constructivist and non-didactic content of their work also places them ‘between’ different solutions to the issues explored, so that a range of cultural responses are included and interrogated within the performance space. Practice is based on problems and facilitators do not have the answers, these are negotiated between participants.

MED are continuing to examine how they can operate between different learning communities and find new ways of forging links between them. The Dartmoor Resource website offers a new research platform and virtual space in which to expand the initial cultural explorations initiated within workshops and performances. However, the facilitation of plays, film and dance projects remain at the core of their output.

Evans: Where do you think the future of this type of facilitation lies? What do you foresee for yourselves for other facilitators in the same field over the next few years? [...]

Beeson: ... a [good] scenario would be through recognition and better funding we have a far more decentralised performance establishment with more recognition in the provinces of unique and individual work from region to region, from place to place, so that the individual qualities of a particular area are recognised as being as valuable as anything that can be produced in the centre for the people there [...] it’s a bit like going on a travel, tour, then every place will have its unique quality. [...] I suppose that’s how I see the model of our kind of theatre, that we are giving the inhabitants of a particular kind of area the chance to express artistic thoughts about that area through their experience[.]

Here the person-centred ethos which informs Beeson's work is clear. However, facilitators must consider what support is required to enable them to sustain their output. MED have recently become involved with the Age of We, "a non-commercial network set up to provide support to creative clusters - groups involved in creative activities aimed at bringing about positive change in communities" (Age of We 2012: n.p.). This social networking site is an emerging platform for facilitators, artists and organisations who offer arts in different community and educational contexts to disseminate their praxis. This step towards developing links with other extended professionals highlights the importance of finding ways for facilitators to disseminate their work to justify and strengthen their praxis.

MED's developments invite the facilitator to consider how they can continue to secure their role within both formal and informal education settings. What 'communities' do they access and engage? What kind of evidence should they try to procure to sustain praxis? What do they need to do to remain ethical, effective and necessary? From the perspective of a facilitator, observing MED has highlighted the need to engage and respond to the changing face of education to remain sustainable. They demonstrate how learning has crossed the boundaries of formal institutions and is now firmly embedded and accepted as part of a diverse range of community based practices. They also very clearly show the facilitator the overlap which exists between what and how we learn socially and how these same lessons can be delivered in a formal setting. An appreciation and understanding of different kinds of learning and a commitment to seeking out the training and guidance to support different learning outcomes is essential to the continuation of MED's praxis. The informal 'mentoring' which has been a common theme in the cases examined is presented as an essential component to those committed to becoming extended professionals.

To conclude this research, a consideration of how the facilitators examined in this study are continuing to extend the ways in which formal and informal learning outcomes can be negotiated will be summarised. Moreover, how the current political and educational shifts that impact upon the facilitation praxis examined in my study may inform the development of the field is analysed to consider how the next phase of facilitation praxis may develop.

Conclusion

This research has 're-framed' the facilitator, presenting them as a vital and multi-faceted pedagogic figure in their own right. The drama facilitators analysed operate in a climate where recession, education cutbacks, reforms, and questions about the merits of both the arts and 'progressive' praxis impact heavily upon the pedagogic landscape. Their long standing relationship with education is one which has enduring points of tension that have challenged facilitators over the last century. The data captured has been shared to inform the decision making processes that help initiate the next phase of praxis. The inclusion and analysis of the interview data provides a distinct and contemporary voice to facilitators in the field, helping to clarify and give value to their role. By offering an objective examination of praxis to the facilitators it helps to inform their subjective choices as praxis continues to develop.

This thesis has explored the developing role of the drama facilitator in an increasingly diverse range of learning settings. Research has been grounded within my praxis, further reading, observations, and interviews with professionals and participants. I have explored how facilitators effectively negotiate the challenges presented in a diverse and demanding learning society, identifying commonalities and distinctions between innovative applications of drama facilitation, where there was comparatively little or no prior documentation to examine these cases. This thesis contributes to the field by presenting facilitators with diverse and thriving careers in the South West who are seeking out new ways of documenting and disseminating their work to inform future praxis. This research helps to construct the professional profile that the facilitators are trying to develop, which will enable our praxis to be situated within, and examined comparatively with, other cases of drama facilitation across the UK. Through making this contribution to the examination of drama facilitation in the South West I have been able to learn analogously; the data collected helping me to question and understand my own praxis in more depth. Beyond the regional impact, there is the potential for findings to contribute to the development of policy and procedure on a broader scale, for example in the development of SSFs training approaches. As SSF gain a wider public profile and attract large scale funding, how they adapt their processes to

evidence outcomes, and importantly, how the facilitator adapts within this structure will need to be examined. Ahead of proposed curriculum reforms this research provides a snapshot of current praxis, which can be compared and contrasted with later snapshots to identify how praxis is developing and facilitators orientate themselves within an ever-shifting landscape to remain sustainable. For example, this research can inform subsequent analysis of how the curriculum reforms, which will see fourteen to sixteen year olds study two Shakespeare plays and seven to eleven year olds learn about Shakespeare in history classes, impact on the facilitation of drama in SSF and West Exe.

Through my research I have completed an autoethnographic cycle. I draw to a close a distinct phase of planning, praxis and reflection documented and analysed to help initiate a new phase in my praxis. I have undertaken a journey, and have developed a greater appreciation for the processes which inform my praxis. This cycle has helped to develop my own facilitation choices, and enabled me to diversify my praxis further. I am now engaging with adults with challenging behaviours in a social care setting and am adapting my existing skills and knowledge to support informal learning in the formalised framework of the Care Quality Commission. This experience has reiterated further the potential for professionals to cross into related sectors to share approaches to the facilitation of learning. The drama facilitators examined alongside my praxis are situated in a context where notions of professional boundaries are complex and subject to change as they continue to enter into different sectors. My research argues for facilitators to be inquisitive, and consider how they may take a range of relative stances towards professional boundaries, where they may operate 'between', 'on' or 'within' them. To be successful within multiple sectors, the facilitator must question "their relationship to their participants, and theatre models that exist 'for', 'by', 'with' or 'about' their communities" (Preston 2009: 129). Facilitators can function to close the gaps in learning, whether it is between what school-based and professional drama offers learners or the gaps in lifelong learning provisions in the informal sector. In a learning society that has progressively "looser boundaries [...] to pick and mix ideas, to play around with conventionality and generate new ideas about practice" is increasingly important for the facilitator (Seymour 2009: 29). However, increased opportunities to personalise praxis must be accompanied with professional

integrity; there is purpose in this playfulness. As the case studies illustrate, practice should be personalised in the interest of the learner, but the interests of the system may also impact upon this process.

The ability to personalise praxis with integrity is arguably linked to the continuing professional development opportunities which facilitators must seek out and also offer others. These include formalised training, informal training between colleagues, and engagement in different professional networks. To look towards future resolutions, the forging of direct networks which minimise the demands of externalised criteria and requirements is being explored by SSF and MED, and West Exe has entered into these. This year Magic Carpet also managed to continue a project after the funding ceased by forging a direct relationship with the participants. The project was highly challenging for the facilitator who identified a tension between the participants' interests and the funding requirements. Participants have now agreed to pay themselves for the continuation of the provision into 2012-2013, and can now negotiate the outcomes directly with the facilitator.

Reflecting on my autoethnographic cycle, the importance of volunteer work and shadowing to professional development has emerged. In Magic Carpet volunteer work is integral to good praxis. The students who volunteered for the University Movement Group enabled a fruitful process of exchange to happen for me, the participants and themselves. MED have taken on volunteer workers from Exeter University as part of their commitment to exchanging professional skills and SSF regularly have volunteers from their sponsors to support staff. In addition the student marketing teams and backstage pupils act as voluntary workers alongside venue staff, which is another important strand of skill sharing and development. Voluntary facilitation experience enables facilitators to observe more experienced practitioners in-the-moment, contextualising existing research and knowledge of applied practices. It also enables facilitators to gradually develop and assume more leadership; working firsthand with a real client group is also a benefit. The volunteer is also not responsible for directly handling any challenging issues which arise, but may observe useful strategies to enable them to respond in future. To extend this research an examination of how other volunteer facilitators have developed into professionals like me could

help to develop the training provision and legislation which governs the role of the facilitator. As this thesis indicates, a CRB and a teaching qualification are not the essential requirements for a skilled facilitator. By examining the development processes of new facilitators in an emerging professional field this can help to identify how best we can train and support facilitators to give the best kind of person-centred care in a range of learning settings.

The recognition of the fundamental need for continuing professional development opportunities to support cohesion between formal and informal practitioners in education is reiterated at policy level. Darren Henley has argued for these opportunities, calling for the government to support:

- Stronger partnerships between providers both in-school and out-of-school and from the formal and informal sectors.
- Better training of those involved in delivering Cultural Education both in-school and out-of-school.

(2011: 22)

However, the facilitator cannot rely on government support to supply them with the access and skills they need; each government re-frames the role of drama in education, changing how it is implemented and valued both in and out of the curriculum. This research shows that the role of education in society is always changing, and with it we too must respond and adapt. As I reflect on what the landscape has been, this leads me to consider the next phase of professional development that emerges from this. The facilitator must maintain an understanding of the wider political and educational shifts that inform their professional territory. This enables them to identify skills, resources and approaches which are needed to secure funding and travel into new learning spaces. The current climate indicates that the minimum requirements and essential skills needed to sustain facilitation praxis will diversify, making the formation of professional networks through the dissemination of praxis even more desirable.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) states that:

Dissemination refers to the processes by which knowledge that is generated through academic research is made available to audiences beyond the immediate peer community. Methods of dissemination can be

employed to maximise the accessibility of the research to non-academic sectors.

(2008: n.p.)

This research has suggested that praxis can be usefully disseminated in person through verbal or practical means, for example in a conference or a workshop as in the case of MEDs exchanges with Exeter University postgraduate students. It can be disseminated through resources, such as books, DVDs, posters, pamphlets and journals and papers, for example Magic Carpet's report on *Moving On*. It can also be shared via digital means, presented online through a range of formats such as blogs, forums or specialist software such as MEDs Loricum game or SSFs interactive lighting state program for teachers. Increasingly online access to resources, such as e-books, and the online streaming of workshops or talks extends the potential audience - if the facilitator is able to access these tools. Many of these resources are labour intensive and can be costly to invest in.

In the area of assessment, this research highlights that one of the primary concerns to come out of utilising dramatic approaches to facilitate is that outcomes are highly subjective and successful learning is difficult to quantify. Facilitators can be challenged by "the notion of the artist's world of work as a marketplace" (Neelands and Freakley 2003: 51). The output disseminated can be subject to a process of commodification, tied to the focus on work-related learning which informs both curriculum learning and the lifelong learning agenda. When considering how praxis is disseminated the research here points towards digital literacy being an area for further investigation to aid the facilitator. SSF, Magic Carpet and MED have begun experimenting with digital resources which are designed for use by participants and/or facilitators. The increasing digital literacy of society is, perhaps, one way in which facilitation practice can travel. However, the selection of digital tools and networks in which the facilitator should engage with will be specific to each individual. Problematically, some networks which may be of use will not be accessible to some individuals and full access to resources may need to be purchased⁸¹. Qualitative material generated through discussion and observation, or traditional

⁸¹ SSF resources are password protected, and schools must have paid the registration fee before they can access all the scripts, teaching materials and interactive programs which have the potential to be of use to learners and facilitator not able to afford the festival.

products such as performances are not always the kinds of commodities that persuade or attract funding. Assessment can create a tension between ensuring the participant's needs are met and the needs of the funding agency or institution are also realised. This invites the facilitator to identify what assessment measures are the most useful for evidencing the full range of learning outcomes, ensuring that they have a range of methods to help capture and communicate their findings.

The unstable nature of praxis and the different areas of expertise which exist within dramatic facilitation have led to a fragmented network of facilitators who may not be aware of related professionals operating in their area. This lack of visibility can make facilitators isolated, limiting opportunities to develop extended professional skills through exchange with others who access and understand the learning communities within their locality. The future of facilitation is dependent on facilitators being pro-active and building better networks for themselves. Magic Carpet's *Time for Change* explicitly functioned to offer local professionals a platform to "discover ways we can work together supporting marginalised people to realise their potential in these changing times" (Magic Carpet 2012: n.p.). Dartmoor Resource and the emerging The Age of We network also demonstrate the importance of facilitation networks to support future praxis in the South West.

Within the context of a 'Big Society' of learning, a CRB and basic knowledge of drama in education is not enough to sustain praxis. Arguably, "the relationship nurtured by the facilitator [...] is crucial and therefore their sensitivity and skill in working 'with' participants and enabling democratic ownership of creative mediums is key" (Preston 2009: 129). To ensure they can continue to nurture the relationships they form with participants, MED Theatre have increasingly been developing digital resources, documentation and output to ensure that they can reach a broadening range of participants and offer an affordable and accessible service in their location. This has made digital literacy an essential facilitation skill to develop in their praxis. Magic Carpet's collaboration with the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) has enabled them to facilitate the formal NOCN courses. However to do this the facilitator needs to meet the WEA's minimum requirements, and hold a formal teaching qualification,

impacting upon the staff profile of Magic Carpet. Their projects in hospital settings with particularly vulnerable groups also require the facilitator to have an understanding of therapeutic processes, so additional skills and training in this area become essential to sustainability with some staff also holding a formally recognised qualification in arts therapy. In West Exe, Dave Salter has just introduced the Drama GCSE syllabus, changing the assessment requirements and content he needs to deliver. He will also be faced with the prospect of responding to reforms introduced by the Ebacc from 2015. The proposed changes to the structures in compulsory learning, redressing the balance between formative and summative assessment opportunities, will affect when and how drama is integrated into formal education. These reforms also impact upon the knowledge and assessment skills facilitators outside of the formal curriculum need to sustain partnerships.

The continuing professional development documented in this thesis also highlights that the established facilitator is in a position of privilege. They have the economic stability and funds to be able to travel into a range of locations and access resources and training integral to their continuing success. SSF are able to pay the expenses and arrange accommodation for their facilitators to work and develop their skills in a range of theatrical venues in a region, but an individual facilitator or smaller network would be challenged to provide the same professional privileges. Economic factors can inhibit the range and quality of training provided; MED had the budget to fund Stobart to go to London for training with the Oral History Society but this important investment would not be possible for all facilitators. In my own praxis I have identified that the city library, my University and the Exeter Global Community Centre⁸² all offer free training provisions which I can access, and are relevant to my own practice. Here however, the position of privilege again presents challenges to the emerging facilitator. Not everybody is eligible to access these resources; there is often an agenda or a target community. Trying to identify what 'communities' you may fit into can help direct the facilitator in exploring avenues for professional development. Training may also be part of a voluntary work experience

⁸² Details of the Global Centre's 'Global Learning' programme can be found on their website: <http://www.globalcentredon.org.uk/global-learning>. The programme is run by Devon Development Education is part of a UK wide network of education centres deigned to support children and people in compulsory education, college in addition to the wider community.

package, or offered by a company to new facilitators, for example basic first aid training or child protection training may be provided. To develop this research, identifying the ways in which emerging facilitators can sustainably address gaps in their skill set would further develop the contribution made to the field here.

The blend of ethnographic and autoethnographic mode of enquiry I have applied in my research does not result in the presentation of a universal template upon which all facilitators can base good practice. More importantly this methodology offers an invitation to facilitators, urging them to respond to and extend the mapping of good praxis initiated here. The triangulated methodology provides a unique perspective on the facilitation process, but does have limitations. By utilising aspects of ethnographic and autoethnographic methodology I have connected “the personal to the cultural” (Ellis and Bocher 2000: 739). This offers the reader an opportunity to make links between the macro concerns for the facilitator by locating commonalities in praxis, and considering how these translate on a micro level. I have triangulated *between* methods, offering insights into the key issues for a facilitator at policy level, on a practitioner level and on a personal level. Echoing Tanner and Jones, it is prudent to note that this triangulated methodology still provides a series of ‘blurred snapshots’ of practice. Although I attempted to point the ‘camera’ in different directions, and invited a range of individuals to provide their own ‘snapshot’ to get a more comprehensive picture of practice, already some of the “tentative hypotheses” I have developed from this data may need to be updated (Rogers 2000).

However, in the spirit of *Assessment for Learning*, arguably the conclusions taken from the snapshots documented in this study can establish a formative baseline for future research and function to strengthen existing evidence. Arguably, “[t]he people best fitted to thriving in the world [...] will include people who have strong multi and cross-disciplinary expertise, who can cross-dress conceptually, theoretically and methodologically in order to come up with new rules and new games” (Lankshear and Knoebel 2003: 176). The continuing documentation and dissemination of drama facilitation is therefore essential, as it gives us the opportunity to better understand and extend the relationship between drama and learning in our society.

Appendix A

University of Exeter, School of Arts, Languages and Literature

Information and Consent Form for Research Projects

Title of Research Project: A Travelling Facilitator: Developing Dramatic Facilitation Practice in Pedagogic Contexts

Name and title of Researcher, and Details of Project:

Sarah Rose Evans BA, PGCE, MA

I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Drama. The research is documenting different approaches to facilitation in dramatic and pedagogic contexts. Facilitators who work in different settings and with a range of groups are of particular interest, to consider how they adapt approaches to be inclusive of the specific needs of different groups. The challenges and benefits of facilitating with a range of groups is the focus of the thesis. I am gathering evidence through observations, interviews, and my own practice.

Definition of invited participants: I have interviewed theatre directors, facilitators, teachers and other members of theatre organisations to get different perspectives on facilitating in dramatic and pedagogic contexts.

Data or information to be collected, and the use that will be made of it. I have recorded interviews or received feedback via email from the selected individuals. I have transcribed this material, and am quoting some sections to help clarify and support my ideas in the thesis where appropriate. Any names of participants discussed are omitted to preserve confidentiality.

How will the information supplied by participants be stored?

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Contact in the case of complaint or unsatisfactory response from the above named:

Professor Graham Ley SALL Ethics Officer Drama Department University of Exeter
Thornlea New North Road EXETER EX4 4LA 01392 724586 G.K.H.Ley@exeter.ac.uk

Consent:

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Note: Your contact details are kept separately from your interview data

Printed name of participant: Sarah Rose Evans

Signature of participant: [Handwritten Signature]

Preferred contact - email or telephone: 01771 272157

Signature of researcher: [Handwritten Signature]

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

University of Exeter, School of Arts, Languages and Literature

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Printed name of participant: *Sybil R. Beck*
Signature of participant: *Margie Campbell* Office: *Rob Wynne*
Preferred contact - email or telephone: *01392 622938*
Signature of researcher: *S. Rose*

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

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Printed name of participant: JANET CASKELL

Signature of participant: J.R. Caskell

Preferred contact - email or telephone: via Magic Grpst office (01392 422938)

Signature of researcher: S.R. Evans

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

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Printed name of participant: MRS CYNIA BOWEN

Signature of participant: [Handwritten Signature]

Preferred contact - email or telephone: Rob Wilson ~ Music Carpet office 01392 422935

Signature of researcher: [Handwritten Signature]

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

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Printed name of participant:.....**KEREN BECKETT**.....

Signature of participant:.....**KEREN BECKETT**.....

Preferred contact - email or telephone:.....**MAGIC CARPET 01392 422938**.....

Signature of researcher:.....**S. Evans**.....

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

University of Exeter, School of Arts, Languages and Literature

Information and Consent Form for Research Projects

Title of Research Project: A Travelling Facilitator: Developing Dramatic Facilitation Practice in Pedagogic Contexts

Name and title of Researcher, and Details of Project:

Sarah Rose Evans BA, PGCE, MA

I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Drama. The research is documenting different approaches to facilitation in dramatic and pedagogic contexts. Facilitators who work in different settings and with a range of groups are of particular interest, to consider how they adapt approaches to be inclusive of the specific needs of different groups. The challenges and benefits of facilitating with a range of groups is the focus of the thesis. I am gathering evidence through observations, interviews, and my own practice.

Definition of invited participants: I have interviewed theatre directors, facilitators, teachers and other members of theatre organisations to get different perspectives on facilitating in dramatic and pedagogic contexts.

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Note: Your contact details are kept separately from your interview data

Printed name of participant: *DAVE SALTER*

Signature of participant: *[Handwritten Signature]*

Preferred contact - email or telephone: *dsalter@westexetc.demon.sch.uk*

Signature of researcher: *[Handwritten Signature]*

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Printed name of participant: RACHEL VOLLES

Signature of participant: Rachel Volles

Preferred contact - email or telephone: 07810 552891

Rachv67@hotmail.com

Signature of researcher: S. R. Evans

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Printed name of participant:..... BONNIE AUSTIN

Signature of participant: Bonnie Austin

Preferred contact - email or telephone: bonnie.austin@ssf.uk.com

Signature of researcher: S. R. Evans

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

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Printed name of participant: MARK BEESON ABBY STOBART

Signature of participant: Mark Beeson Abby Stobart

Preferred contact - email or telephone: mark.beeson@medtheatre.co.uk

abbystobart@medtheatre.co.uk

Signature of researcher: S. R. Evans

One signed copy to be retained by the researcher, and one by the participant.

Appendix B

This interview with Clive Essame of Magic Carpet was designed to provide an insight into the way in which drama based facilitation is conducted in an organisation which offers informal, non-assessed groups. Essame organises one of the main outreach projects *Moving On* and also runs groups in storytelling, creative writing and visual arts himself.

Conducted 12th April 2011 at the Magic Carpet Office.

Ellipsis is used to indicate that the speaker paused and moved onto another point without completing the sentence fully. At times when personal data or a name has been discussed this has been omitted from the transcriptions to for confidentiality.

CE: Clive Essame **SE:** Sarah Evans

SE: The first thing I wanted to ask you was when did you first begin facilitating groups?

CE: About...must be ten years ago now.

SE: And what sort of groups did you start facilitating? Was it with Magic Carpet?

CE: Yes it was with Magic Carpet; yes it was...I think probably the first groups were the Honiton groups where groups for adults with fairly severe learning difficulties meet every week. Yeah, I started doing them and then I did other things in that year with Exeter Drugs Project through Magic Carpet and home educated children and various other groups like that on an ad hoc basis.

SE: Ok, so what kind of training or preparation did you go through to start facilitating those groups?

CE: Well I'd done...at that time I'd just got my adult education teacher's certificate thing so I was doing that and I was working for Mind⁸³ and I was facilitating some groups there for some people, obviously with mental health problems and that was around the creative writing side of things along as well as a bit of IT, but I was getting more into the creative writing side of it. So I thought, well I'd had quite a bit of experience working with people with mental health problems and some working with people with learning difficulties but not a great deal so it was almost like being thrown in at the deep end a bit with the learning difficulties folk. So I'd had no formal training in the actual client group but I had had a one to one experience and one to group experience in different settings.

SE: So what then would you identify as the main challenges for you as a facilitator going into different groups?

CE: When? In the early days or now?

SE: Perhaps you could say how it has changed for you?

CE: How's it changed? Um, yes I think one of the interesting challenges that I've found was that ...in an adult education setting you go in with a lesson plan

⁸³ **Mind** is the leading mental health **charity** for England and Wales.

or scheme of work and you go in and deliver that lesson plan or scheme of work. Going into groups that I then worked with through Magic Carpet you go in with a lesson plan and within ten minutes you realise that they don't want to do it, not interested, no energy - they've got a different agenda and therefore I relaxed quite a lot about lesson plans and what I was going to do and I felt well, ok this is what I think I'm going to do and this is how I think I'm going to do it but I've also got two other ideas up my sleeve if that doesn't work. And I very firmly believe that my role is to listen to what the participants say so therefore they may be saying things that are completely- not completely- unrelated to what I'm trying to achieve in the session but I may not get where the link is so therefore I need to try and bring that in. It's not my group it's their group and I think it took me a little while to actually get my head around that. Because in an adult education setting, ok you may have a syllabus to deliver therefore it has to be led whereas with these groups it doesn't have to be led as such, not really, it can wander all over the place as long as people feel heard. That's one of the most important things I feel is that people need to feel heard so that was a pretty big challenge and now I think I've- I like to think ten years on that that's my priority ...to hear them so it may sort of seem as if I go in completely unprepared but I don't. I just know that I want them to get out of it what they want to get out of it. In every group you get them [participants] that want to talk a lot and you get them that say nothing and I think with the groups I work with now it tends to be amplified and I think it's very important to quieten the noisy ones down and increase the opportunities for the quiet ones. So that's been interesting and quite challenging.

SE: Why do you think such a broad range of people are drawn to the kinds of facilitation that we offer in Magic Carpet? What do you think are the outcomes for them?

CE: I think the outcomes for the people we work with are varied; but I think they go right the way from having somewhere where they forget about the pressures of life, the hassles that go on in their lives, the challenges that they face every day as soon as they get up, you know. I think it's an opportunity to switch off that side of their life for a couple of hours. Probably quite important for some people is to be able to do something different and stress free, I think it's a social opportunity. I think it's really important for a lot of people to feel they've achieved. They've actually done something, they've created something which is often an opportunity that you have to go and look for as it's not easy to do it in the home; and this actually gives people an opportunity to make, draw, paint - create something that they can feel proud of. Especially people with mental health issues; often their self-esteem is so low they've had it battered out of them by life, other people, whatever, and they don't actually feel they can do anything. They come to us and they're given the opportunity, the facilities and the space and the encouragement to actually achieve and I think they often go away thinking, 'I didn't think I could do that but I can so now I can now do something else,' and I think that's really important. I think that maybe people with learning difficulties do an awful lot of it for fun which is great; I think the

strains on them are probably not so great as the people with mental health problems so therefore they're doing it for fun, they're doing it for the social side and some of them are obviously achieving things they never thought they could. I think that's the key of why I do this work; it's actually giving people the opportunity to achieve something they actually didn't think they could and that's just what life should be about really.

SE: At the moment you're working almost exclusively with adults and probably quite a broad range of needs across the groups. How do you adapt your approaches and your practice to be inclusive, particularly if you've got a group with quite mixed needs?

CE: Yes, how do I do it? [Pause] I think we do get groups that are sort of mixed ability groups and we do get different groups of different abilities and the groups that are roughly the same level are relatively easy to gauge. The level of activity, the level of input they need, the subject matter, the process and the product, sometimes I don't get it right, sometimes I actually challenge people a bit too much, maybe sometimes I don't challenge quite enough but roughly I get that right. The ones that are actually mixed ability like the Wednesday one that's changing as you said the other day, that's changed enormously in the months since you've been with us and I think that's about picking up what people say and encouraging them to develop those ideas at their level. Like what we did last week with the two guys [names omitted] we hopefully had them working at a level they were comfortable with and the two ladies hopefully working at a level that they were comfortable with. And I don't quite know how that worked but it just felt that that was the right way to actually encourage them to do it. So I think it's about listening to what their saying and picking up...for example [name omitted] for some reason he came up with a crocodile in the story and so I thought ok that's what he wants to do let him run with that and then we can see how [name omitted] fits in with that. And then ok we've got that base in, they're happy with what they're doing and then I thought about the other layer and then how could we push the guys to achieve that bit more, to take it that bit further so it's about listening and feeling what they're comfortable with, watching their body language, just seeing whether they are switched off. So it's watching, listening- I think that's what a facilitator needs to do, to be the eyes and ears and also the gut feeling as to whether they [the participants] are actually comfortable with what they are being asked to do, and if not you just roll it back a little bit.

SE: Within Magic Carpet you have facilitators from quite a broad range of backgrounds I think.

CE: Definitely.

SE: Definitely. Following on from that what would you define as their key role? What are the functions that they all need to be able to deliver or perform?

CE: That's an interesting one because I've been having conversations about a new person whose become involved as a volunteer who is extremely good at his art form but has no experience of working with the people that we work with and so that's made me think about, ok what is it that he needs to do to enable

him to work as an artist instead of being a volunteer? And I suppose the core thing is they need to be good at their art form. That needs to be the sort of rock on which it's built; but equally important is that empathy with the people that we're working with. They need to put away any sort of idea of 'I am the great artist' that ain't gonna work. So they need to be the right character, they need to have the flexibility to change things at the drop of a hat. And they need to be patient and quite happy if their lesson plan, whatever they call it, goes out the window in the first ten minutes, not to get too precious about it. They need to be 'people people' definitely. You can have the greatest painter, drawer; whatever, but if they're not right with people they're not going to work with our client group.

SE: How do you go about assessing the success or the failure of the things we're doing? What are the main methods of that are used?

CE: Listening to what people say. Observation, I mean sometimes you just know that things aren't working or haven't worked and sometimes it's incredibly surprising as to what doesn't work and sometimes I can pinpoint why they haven't worked and other times it's more difficult so there's an awful lot of – well I suppose I'm the sort of person who naturally says 'give me a stick I'm going to beat myself!' because I haven't done well enough you know, so I'm always looking I'm quite self-critical about things and I don't get complacent. I don't do a formal evaluation of each session but I do always think at the end I think yeah that was good, now why was it good or that was bad, now what went wrong what could we have done differently? I think if people go away with a smile on their face at the end of the session we've obviously done good but yet again it's about listening, listening to people. Hopefully everybody feels they get heard and once they're heard I can take that on board and process. I think it's good at the end of the session if we get a chance to - I don't think we actually get enough chance to chat about things at the end in some groups. Like in my Friday group, my writing group it's very difficult to grab a chance at the end to actually talk and say 'that went well, that one didn't because for one thing some of the participants hang about because they want to be there and talk to you. Myself and the guy I work with we want to have a chance to chat but you don't get that and I think that's quite important. Not in great depth, not half an hour, but five or ten minutes or even five minutes is good, yeah.

SE: Do you find it easier working with informal methods of assessment?

CE: Yes, very definitely because the whole business is about emotions and people. It's not about ticking boxes and filling in forms and I'm crap at that anyway because I don't want to do it. So I think it's much better to just talk and say how did that go, that was good, that was bad, that wasn't quite so successful and why and then stack it away and hopefully remember next time.

SE: Magic Carpet is very much about using arts of all kind. Why do you think that offering arts based techniques or approaches are effective or appropriate with these groups? What is it about this way of engaging people that is so appealing?

CE: I think that creativity is a core part of human nature I think it's actually what sets us apart I suppose, in many ways. It's a release for an awful lot of people.

They can express themselves in a much freer way through creativity than through a therapy or something like that. I mean therapy obviously has its place and other treatments but I think [art] it's a way that people can just let go. We do it in a very non-judgemental way and I think that is really important for a lot of people because they have been judged an awful lot during their lives and found wanting or they feel they've been found wanting whereas this is non-judgemental and it's...I think its liberating, creativity is liberating and...I think that's what's really important, the space to go and free up and also with the Moving On⁸⁴ project it's almost about learning new skills which builds up confidence and it's a good non-threatening way of doing that through creativity rather than doing English or Maths you know stuff like that which is actually quite challenging and you can succeed and fail whereas with art everybody gets a certain level of success and I think it's really important. It's a core part of being human and also a lot of people have been told at school you're crap at art, you can't possibly do art and they're actually rediscovering it later in life and they think, 'I can actually do this!' that's great, yeah.

SE: And where do you think the future of Magic Carpet and this sort of facilitation lies? What do you think we need to be doing as facilitators to keep it sustainable, to keep it relevant? Where do we need to be taking it?

CE: That's a six million dollar question isn't it? I'm not sure I'm on the right pay scale to be answering it!

SE: Me either!

CE: I think it's very important that we bang the drum about the benefits of creativity to the powers that be because it could very easily slide off the agenda as money gets tighter.

SE: Of course.

CE: People could say it's only a little bit of art; it's *not* only a little bit of art. We need to be constantly saying that; it's part of people's recovery it's a vital part of people's sense of identity, their self-esteem and all the benefits that that brings...and as such it can reduce the costs of other parts of their life, by actually making them feel better about themselves getting them out of the rut cos life ain't just about work even though we keep on being told that work is all important. It's not just about that it's about all these other bits as well. I don't know whether it is possible for Magic Carpet to do some research into the... quite long term research, into the benefits of the arts in keeping people with mental health problems out of hospital, the benefits to people with learning difficulties. Not quite sure what measure you would use for that group-

SE: This is the issue isn't it?

CE: Yeah that would be a bit more difficult to identify but maybe some more- I think perhaps as an organisation we might need to, like I say, bang the drum a bit more about actually the benefits to the people. It's not just a bit of art and I think maybe one of the things I try and do with people [facilitators] involved with *Moving On* in groups that I'm not involved in, I ask them to make notes of things

⁸⁴ A three year Big Lottery funded project designed to support up to seven weekly arts groups in Exeter including creative writing, dance, drama, music and visual arts.

people say like 'I really enjoy this because it...' you know people just chat. I haven't succeeded in getting many people to do that yet but I think that sort of evidence can be really used effectively because then you can say look people have been saying this to us for the last two years and I think we need to be a little bit firmer about shouting about what we're doing.

SE: The other thing I've noticed is that we're starting to take our work out of private spaces and make it more public, like putting videos on the website; you've got a display in an art gallery coming up of participants' work.

CE: Yes we've got an exhibition coming up.

SE: And also the Respect festival⁸⁵ this summer.

CE: Respect, we'll be there.

SE: Which is open to the public.

CE: And I think that's really important and that's something that *Moving On* has to do as well as Magic Carpet as an organisation as a whole. One thing that I haven't done but which I'm going to do over the next two or three months is actually do much more press stuff so actually shout about it in the press as to what we've been doing. I need to get that right, that needs to be gauged at the right level because we don't want the 'poor them' syndrome but we do want the 'wow! I didn't know they did that' thing I reckon. So all in all we need to raise our profile and shout about what we do, be proud of what we do. With an organisation like this which employs a lot of people on a very part time ad hoc basis that's very difficult because you don't see people you don't talk to them. They go away, run their groups and you may not see them for a month. So getting that feedback is hard by the structure of the organisation. I was talking to [a co-worker] yesterday about it a little bit and the restructuring of the health service, GPs have now got more power over where they spend their money. I think we need talking to them.

SE: Thank you for your time.

CE: Thank you.

⁸⁵ Since 1997 Exeter Respect has been an annual celebration of diversity which utilises performing and creative arts to promote multi-cultural understanding and say no to racism and all forms of prejudice.

Appendix C

RV: Rachel Vowles SE: Sarah Evans

6th May 2011

SE: How did you get involved in facilitating the sessions with West Exe and how many you did with that group?

RV: Well, I had previously worked with RAMM when I was Associate Director for Education and Community at the Northcott Theatre. Because I'd worked with them before and they knew how I work and what I do, and as I was now freelance this is how I got the work with the RAMM project. I spent six sessions in total with the West Exe guys at the museum and in the school.

SE: What training or qualifications have helped you to become a facilitator?

I've got a BA Hons in Drama and Theatre Arts from Royal Holloway, University of London, a City and Guilds Cert Ed FE. I've worked in theatre and education since 1993. First I was an A Level/BTEC lecturer for eight years and then I moved into professional theatre and also participation and education in 1999. I was doing both of these jobs part time at one point hence there was an overlap. I'm also an associate of Actor Factor, a company that does training and role play in corporate settings as you know.

SE: What kind of preparation you did for facilitating this project with a group of BTEC students?

RV: Well, if I'm really honest I didn't do a mass of preparation for this particular group.... I guess because I have been working with this sort of group for over eighteen years I have learned many things along the way that I now do without thinking. I sort of 'know the beast' and I think I have amassed quite a practitioners 'tool kit' over the years. Although I did do a lot of thought and preparation on the subject matter itself, and I also spent time looking at what our aims were for each of the sessions. Does this make sense?

SE: Yes, so how do you assess whether a session of this kind is successful in achieving its aims?

RV: Yes, it doesn't matter how long you have been doing this work it is always very important to get feedback and evaluate otherwise you would get complacent and then start making assumptions and ultimately mistakes. I tend to do it in various ways, informally by discussion with students along the way, getting their verbal feedback and then also by observation. If I see that something doesn't seem to be going well then I will change what I am doing mid workshop. On this particular project we also got feedback by asking the young people to use the Flip cameras and sound recorders to record thoughts as they were going along which was good. We also got them to use post it notes with a 'one thing I have learned that I didn't know before' and 'one thought about the event' and this could be a positive or a negative comment. I also always get feedback from the lead tutor of the group as well, so in this case talking to Dave each session.

Appendix D

DS: Dave Salter **SE:** Sarah Evans

15th April 2011

SE: When did you first begin facilitating groups?

DS: I have been teaching twenty years, and have always used the technique as a way to enhance learning. Prior to teaching, I was involved in many other groups, and have always tried to facilitate and allow others to work stuff out. I guess, it was first properly done by me as a teacher using group presentations for discussion when I taught A level History and Politics.

SE: What kind of training, if any, did you undertake to begin facilitating groups? How do you keep your approaches up to date?

DS: My initial training was as a member of my university's student union, where, as an elected officer, I undertook training on facilitation as part of my induction, both internally and at NUS run national courses. My initial experience was seeing the John Cleese videos, "Meetings Bloody Meetings", and these acted as a guide of how to proceed. I have had professional development on managing groups as a team leader and have adapted those to working with young people. I have also taken on board strategies offered by being involved in events such as Shakespeare Schools and NT Connections.

SE: What would you identify as the main challenges for you?

DS: I guess, in the context of facilitation, it is keeping things fresh. Sometimes, especially when directing, it is hard to think of new approaches to move stuff on, and there needs to be some time for reflection before attempting a strategy. Sometimes I need to look at the overall picture and not get distracted by minutiae.

SE: Why do you think participants are drawn to the kinds of facilitation you offer? What would you identify as the outcomes for them?

DS: Best to ask them I guess. Certainly, I am a believer in empowering others to "find" the answer themselves, and this was less well shown in the SSF project, mainly due to three things, my lack of confidence and experience, the short time frame, and the nature of the group. However, with the NT Connections project, the best work came from the students discovering their own abilities and solutions. By having that sense of ownership, the people that I facilitate with are able to feel that they are the ones who have made progress, and usually it is done by a sense of "deep" learning rather than just getting the job done.

SE: What kinds of groups do you facilitate in? How do you adapt your practice to support each group?

DS: Nowadays, mainly young people in drama ages eleven to sixteen, but some adult work within a sporting context, and of course, as leader of a diverse department. I am generally more flexible with young people as they are often more willing to take risks. The key thing is that they must be allowed to fail and understand that as long as they can reflect on the experience and have the opportunity to improve, then that is good – and that's based on Kolbs' Learning cycle. Adaptation of practice depends on the nature of the group, and whether

they are developing independent learning skills. It will also depend on the end task; SSF was less about them doing it for themselves, and more about direction. The Sex and History Project allowed for much more independent learning, and actually led to a more impressive outcome in some cases, but time was on our side there.

SE: How would you define your role? What are the key functions you must perform?

DS: My main job is Head of Expressive Arts - the job is to lead a team to ensure the best possible outcomes for students studying our subjects. This is done by ensuring that good practice is shared, and that lessons are observed to ensure consistency of high level practice. At a base level, I am the only full time drama teacher, so it is my role to ensure that the students get the best opportunities they can, and that the high profile of the subject is maintained.

SE: How do you plan and assess your practice?

DS: Planning depends on time, but I always look to adapt lessons from previous occasions at Key Stage Three. This year, I have taken three modules done in Year Nine and extended them from six to approximately fourteen lessons worth, as a result of curriculum changes. I look at the overall aim, and try to ensure that there is adequate coverage of content and skills development across the module. Key Stage Four is harder, as the way I deliver BTEC depends on what is available at the time. It is also relatively new to me in drama but I have had previous BTEC experience. And assessment is based on the relative success of the lesson. If I feel that the students have made good progress, then, for that group, it will have worked. However, I am also aware that not all groups behave in the same way, so I will ask the students what they think, especially if I have tried something new.

SE: How do you identify whether your intended outcomes are being achieved?

DS: Well, I set up learning intentions and intended outcomes at the start of the lesson, and make those explicit to the students. I then check on understanding either orally or by performance at the end, and throughout the lesson against the intentions. Again, peer assessment in drama is excellent for that, as students have to articulate against the outcomes, demonstrating their own understanding to me.

SE: Why do you think that arts based facilitation practices remain relevant today?

DS: My students need to have a grasp of the theory and frameworks surrounding what they do, but I think arts based practice is interactive and there's research which has shown that students recall:

10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they both see and hear, 70% of what they say, 90% of what they simultaneously say and do. So I think it is for other practitioners to adapt arts based practice as the research suggests that deeper learning and greater retention is a more likely outcome.

Appendix E

SE: Sarah Evans (Facilitator and researcher)

Participant A: – Female

Participant B: – Female

Participant C: – Female

Participant D: – Male

Participant E: – Male

Participant F: – Female

13th December 2010

SE: So the first thing I just wanted to ask is if people could say what they thought the aims of this group were when they first came.

Participant A: Um, here or back in...?

SE: In here, in the university over the last few months...anyone can kick off.

Participant B: We are expecting something similar to what we have with [previous facilitator].

SE: Yes.

Participant B: And fortunately we gained something more, I mean we...in a very surprising, in a positive surprised manner because we expect little but we came here and we are very glad and happy and we gained more – we expect less but we gained more.

SE: Ok.

Participant B: It's a very happy surprise and I would say that...and very enjoyable and I think our wellbeing has been reached to the maximum. It's excellent, I'm very glad I joined this group.

[Pause]

Participant C: I feel it that has been a really good experience to be able to choose the music and that's been a theme we didn't have with [*Stepping Stones*] and there's been more freedom and I've just enjoyed the drama aspect of it as well, interacting with people trying out things that I haven't done before and I've enjoyed them.

SE: And you've also been able to make feedback suggestions more regularly. Is that something you think is quite useful? Is that something you'd like to see more of in the future?

Participant C: I like the fact that there was more fluidity with expression of our own choice; we could choose what we wanted to listen to in some ways and... Just the circle dances pushing them a little further doing things that were a little bit longer, more stretching and more challenging I feel that we've done that here. So it's been a continuation ... more testing, more challenging so that's been therapeutically good.

Participant A: I agree with [**Participant C**] because this looks after our wellbeing and our learning opportunity is also taken care of. We like to take some 'can- do' challenge and in this group we achieved that.

SE: What do you think are the most challenging things we do in here? What do you find the most difficult aspects of the group? And also maybe it's easier to

say what's the most rewarding... what do you enjoy the most? So maybe the two.

Participant A: I think for me sometimes there's a transition because when I come sometimes and you're in a different space. I've been on my own quite a bit maybe or there's a lot going on and sometimes I've come and I've probably been feeling not very...a bit inner. So when you first come here I'm aware of that point where there's a kind of ...it's not like I come and 'go wow I want to do all this,' it's a bit of a stretch to have to emerge from some kind of state and engage with it but it works. It doesn't feel too forced it's not like you have to come and join in so it's possible for that transition to come and you find your space but there's an encouragement to have to relate to people so I find that helpful. It's difficult at the beginning and sometimes you're aware of a transition period when it feels a bit awkward and I don't quite want to do it but it changes. I think for me when we came here I thought we might lose some of the feeling because it's a different place and it was really nice that that feeling was still here. I think partly the room is more enclosed somehow so it's actually felt quite womb-like and quite intimate really it's a safe place that's felt really lovely. I think it's even gone a bit deeper some ways that sense of...close knit...for me.

Participant F: There's a more laid back attitude in this group. I don't feel I've got to sort of...you can just do anything and that makes it feel better.

Participant D: I don't think there are really any bits which are better than other bits I think because you seem to have achieved or make it so fluid we don't get those cringe moments when you suddenly have to stop it just seems to flow; you go from one relaxation and flow from one to the other. I think maybe it's partly the room but I think it's more the way your very fluid in your instructions and say to us so we don't get those odd moments where they say get a partner and we have to wait three minutes and worry about it, it flows which is nice. I think we've progressed from the beginning which is nice, to actually learn some of those routines I quite like that because it's moving on a little bit we're all much more comfortable with each other I think. We're not conscious of being stared at, that seems to have gone.

Participant B: I agree with you, the atmosphere of flowing which is also partially dictated or decided by the clarity of the leadership which you yourself Sarah give very clear direction to us where we can follow easily and I think that is very essential. [In previous groups] sometimes we felt a bit lost I think the leadership skill in this aspect is very important. I want to comment about the choice of music, I think the choice of music also dictates our mood and it also leads us to the stage whereby how we want to engross ourselves in the music or...in short it affects the way we dance, the music leads us to the emotions. The choice of music is important some slow, some fast, some sentimental.

SE: I wanted to ask you think the group leader or the facilitator's job is? What do you expect from your group leader? If you had a wish list of what you want them to be able to provide you what would it be? What do you value most of all?

Participant D: Clear, calm well thought out sessions. Keep it flowing, keep it nice and smooth.

SE: Ok.

Participant F: Consistency.

Participant D: Consistency.

Participant C: Guidance.

Participant B: I expect that the leadership skills should be able to manage our expectations. Like what is going to happen next, give clear indications of what is going to follow. It would reduce our anxiety so we can really enjoy ourselves. I think people always want to be kept informed, what is going to happen next which I think is essential as a leadership skill.

Participant E: I think also setting the pace, setting the scene that's important. If you had someone who just sat there and gave directions it would not be so good. It's setting the scene, setting the pace and being a role model. I'd like to say I've found the group very helpful, I've been a bit wobbly and I've find the group really helpful and centred. I find the class is a place to come to get centred and connected with the world.

SE: Are there any closing comments about any aspect of the group? Or something you think would be important to pass on as feedback?

Participant A: Something that you just said reminded me...I think it's a balance. Sometimes it's good to get things that are quite energising but not too much. It's like so that when you leave...so that we're in a state that we leave in but we're not too kind of...

[Makes frantic gesture with hands. Laughter.]

SE: Yes.

Participant A: There's a kind of integrity to the whole thing that you go through a process but you arrive at a place when you leave where I think...that's when I've enjoyed it; you go away feeling ok and not kind of too churned up.

Participant C: I'd quite like to do more intricate things to have a focus on something. You can have an energetic part and you can have a detailed, different type of energy like we did the machinery with the other two students who came, I quite liked that. That was quite focused and it would be nice to do that for a long time to see how it goes. Yes I quite liked that.

SE: That's useful, thank you.

Participant A: I think different things, a selection of things; like we haven't done it as much here maybe that's more [previous facilitator's] thing but I like the kind of World African [music] thing. The other thing and it's not a criticism but it's really made me appreciate what you do. When the students came, and they were great but it wasn't quite...the relaxation and that. It's not a criticism at all because we really enjoyed it, it was just it really made me realise you've got a pace, the slow – you know the right pace. It's unobtrusive it's kind of not obvious; we could overlook it almost because it just happens. When you realise what it takes you appreciate it, what goes in.

Participant F: This group feels uplifting.

Participant D: What might be useful just as a throw in, I don't know what anyone else thinks, but for you it would be good for other people to come in and see how you do it.

SE: Ok.

Participant D: Because then it [your leadership style] could go into other groups.

SE: That's good to know.

Participant C: Your pacing is very, very good not too long, not too short. You do the relaxation time just right, I just feel that your balance is very centred it's good; it's not too light or too heavy it's kind of grounded it's solid.

SE: I have to draw it to a close there but thank you.

Appendix F

SE: Sarah Evans

BA: Bonnie Austin
20th. February 2012

SE: I wanted to ask a little bit about your facilitators from the NYT. So you arranged a four year deal with them for them to run workshops for you?

BA: That's correct yes.

SE: I was wondering before that, had they been running workshops prior to that or was that a new initiative?

BA: Had they been running workshops for us?

SE: For you specifically.

BA: They hadn't been running workshops for us.

SE: OK.

BA: Before that we worked with a company called Dramarama, and Dramarama delivered our cast workshops in the schools so it was a slightly different model. So each school that took part as their cast workshop happened in their school it was just them and they weren't alongside another school. And the NYT, as far as I understand it, came in as partners in order to kind of reach hundred of schools that they wouldn't otherwise be able to reach.

SE: Yes.

BA: Because the NYT is you know it is fairly selective it's about an audition process. That's how you join the NYT although they do do some outreach work that outreach work is a bit more kind of topical and a bit more specific it's about knife crime or you know.

SE: Yes.

BA: Whereas being partners with us gave them the option to reach up to 14,000 young people across the country. However, we are actually just ending our partnership with them, they are not going to continue it, because that's not what they really need anymore.

SE: No.

BA: They want to focus more on their artistic integrity, and producing performances with young people. So actually although it got their name out to hundreds of schools and thousands of pupils actually what turns out is that our pupils are not interested in auditions for the NYT because actually they weren't interested in doing acting as a career.

SE: They wanted the social side.

BA: The reason kids take part in Shakespeare Schools Festival SSF is actually not because they want to be actors.

SE: No, not at all.

BA: You know the reason teachers get kids to take part is to boost their confidence, to help their academic ability, to boost their literacy all that kind of stuff which and it certainly is very few who go through to be actors. So in actual fact I think the NYT and SSF partnership was very good but actually haven't you know...I think really that the two organisations try to do something different. But

what the NYT did bring to our cast workshops was an amazing range of facilitators and skills.

SE: Yeah.

BA: And people that were desperate to you know, all the people who delivered those workshops they loved delivering that work and they loved being out with the school and the kids. Because I think they are very aware that being an actor these days isn't just about acting.

SE: Yeah.

BA: It's about so much more.

SE: Yes. When you were giving them training you had whole days in London where every facilitator would come and have a training day. What were the main things you wanted them to take away from the training for them to deliver these workshops?

BA: The main thing we want them to take away is the skills and the ability to empower the young people. So if you like the kind of main aims of the cast workshops are to kind of make the SSF process real, to make the performance seem real, and that really is what they're tasked with. Kind of exciting, boosting confidence and also, almost by a kind of by-product empowering those young people to make their performances better and show- worthy.

SE: Yeah.

BA: It's a big ask, in two and a half hours.

SE: It is.

BA: A really big ask.

SE: And I guess following on from that then what would you say are the absolute key functions or skills you'd want from a facilitator? If you are hiring someone what are you looking from them as an individual?

BA: I think opposed to other projects out there we really, really require our facilitators to be able to, I guess... not sure flexible is quite the right word, but they have to work with such a range of pupils and schools and on any one day they could have a special school, with a very smart independent school, and then a primary school and a local secondary school.

SE: Yes.

BA: This throws up so many things you know potential behavioural issues, different standards, quality of work and different ways of learning that they have to be very able to respond to whatever is in front of them in that very moment whereas I think other projects the facilitators are tasked with something quite specific and they know what type of group they are going to be working with. We are not really able to offer that.

SE: Not at all.

BA: As you well know Sarah.

SE: As I well know! One of the things I wanted to ask as well, you've got such a great range of schools, different participants, why do you think you get such a broad range of people drawn to the kind of work you offer? Why do you think so many different kinds of abilities can come and engage with what SSF does?

BA: I think firstly we make sure that that happens.

SE: Yeah.

BA: So you know we have certain targets that we set ourselves at the start of each year. So we make sure that 15% of our schools are inclusions schools where over 30% of the children are on free school meals because that way we know that we are reaching deprived schoolchildren which feeds into the way we develop, the way in which we work. We pride ourselves on kind of providing like an equal playing field for every school ...I think that our focus is on inclusivity. And you know the key to what we do is that it is non-competitive and I think as soon as you do that you appeal to all those groups in a way. But we somehow manage to do that whilst also remaining excellent. So what we don't want to say is 'we're for everyone you can do whatever you want'.

SE: Yeah.

BA: Because that actually gives the impression that you don't have to work hard and you don't have to produce something that's really excellent. And that's the benefit of you know something like NT Connections which is a competition. The benefit of that is because it's a competition people work really, really, really hard for it. The kids and the teachers because they know they are in competition with other schools. But what we do is we try to find that balance between quality and excellence and kind of inclusivity and non-competitiveness, and I think that's what allows us to have that range of participants. We also offer an awful lot of care, although there isn't a huge amount of time with pupils we offer an awful lot of care to teachers so I think that also empowers them to perhaps take more risks. They know we are always on the end of a phone-line or we can offer them additional resources to work with kids who have disabilities and difficulties or whatever. I think that gives them more courage to use different groups.

SE: Ok. In addition to the questionnaires that you offer, what kind of ways to you assess what you've done?

BA: The first point is the teacher workshops. Every teacher fills out a form there and that is very much about the content of the workshop and the logistics of the day, the arrangements of the day. That's very simple because its just finding out about what works and doesn't work for a teacher in terms of content and the practicalities of the day and then that feeds into the development of next year's workshops, always, which is great. Second stage - oh I should mention we also do that in primary school teacher workshops and SEN teacher workshops.

SE: OK.

BA: And then the second stage is during the festival every teacher fills out a form and then a selection of pupils, so we choose about fifteen schools across the country and we target them to get a range of schools across the country. And we get each of those schools casts to fill out a form so we get about twenty pupil evaluation forms from fifteen schools. And that forms our pupil feedback. And then in addition to that we do interviews with schools. So we do what we call case studies. Each year we'll do about- well between five and ten case studies. Again we try to choose a range of different schools and what we try to do is choose a range of different approaches. So we usually do these case

studies after the festival and they're usually based on stories that we've picked up throughout the festival. So we'll have found out that there's a school in Devon that has embedded Shakespeare Schools Festival into their drama curriculum and that's something we're really interested in and we go follow it up and we find out how they've done it, how it works etc. and we'd write it up. There might be another area of the country where we've heard that there was a bottom set English group that were taking part and actually they've all managed to get a C or B in their GCSE or something. So we'll go and follow that up, so we do those and then we write them up and they become part of our final documents. So our documents are created by the statistics that we get from the teacher questionnaires and the pupil questionnaires and the softer stuff that we get about the wider impact, the impact it's having on academic attainment and social skills, and then the case studies supplement that to give it more of a real flavour if you know what I mean.

SE: Yes.

BA: So the personal stories come through a little bit more. And then we also run teacher steering groups throughout the year. So all the teachers that took part in 2011 are invited to join steering groups for 2012. It used to be that we had an actual meeting twice a year in London that we invited people to. In 2012 we are going to run virtual steering groups. We might have a steering group that helps us with the development of our web site, and we'll have another that helps us look at marketing, and another that helps us look at teacher workshop content and it will be done virtually online reach online. And that enables us to reach all the teachers across the country which is great. And then we recruit hundreds of staff each year.

SE: Yes.

BA: In the form of venue managers, venue directors, workshop providers and when we've worked with someone in an extended way we will have a de-brief so when we work with the NYT to devise the workshops once all the workshops over we would then ask the NYT to gather feedback from their facilitators, we'd gather feedback from our facilitators and then we'd have a half day debrief with them and note what the feedback has been and we do the same with the NT and we do the same internally. We do a fair amount of de-briefing but obviously a de-brief is no good unless you actually do something with the findings and part of my role is to make sure that whatever is discussed and explored in those de-briefs is carried through meaningfully the following year. There are a few gaps in our evaluation that we are unable to fill until we have more funding. We do currently have a desire to get some proper research funding to look at academic attainment in particular. Our biggest problem at the moment is that we are full of fabulous stories and stuff about what happens to people and we know that what we do works, but we can't prove that. We can write really strong documents however there is not a huge amount of proof. So we are currently looking into getting some research funding for proving what we do does actually work. We hope that will help us to sell the project to more people because we ask for a registration fee. Actually that's really important because often a school

isn't willing to part with money unless they know that they are signing up to something that's definitely going to have a positive impact. The teachers that we work with at the moment they know that already. The people like [name omitted] that you see coming back time and time again they know that it works they don't need any proof. But a school that isn't that interested in Shakespeare isn't that interested in drama, and is not that fussed about performing in a professional theatre; we need some more proof to give them. You should really be doing this you shouldn't be denying your young people. Does that answer that question?

SE: Yes that's really helpful. I guess the last thing is what are the main challenges on ground level that the facilitators keep telling you time and time again, this is something that we're trying to negotiate?

BA: Do you mean generally or the challenges with the kids?

SE: With the actual children themselves, yes.

BA: I think that a lot of the challenges, because we're so inclusive and therefore so diverse that the biggest challenge like I said before the biggest challenge is actually meeting the needs of all those diverse groups. And certainly as we extend our numbers of primary schools which we are this year from fifty to two hundred that becomes even more apparent for us. Its all very well being inclusive and diverse which we definitely want to be and we pride ourselves on but what we don't want to do is dumb down the experience for anyone. No matter where they're coming from, what school they're coming from, what ability they are, we want to be able to offer the very best that we can to each individual. So that's our on-going challenge really and that's what we are always striving to improve.

SE: Why do you think that so many people in schools want to go outside of school and participate in things like this?

BA: That's very unique about what we do take them out of schools. I think that the majority of kids actually are not even going to the theatre to see a show, so there's one thing about actually getting young people out of school and into a real environment, a professional environment where they can feel like they are part of something bigger which is really important. And that's why it's a festival, we don't want schools to perform in isolation we want schools to perform with other schools in a professional venue where they meet professional technicians; they meet theatre directors, theatre producers, marketing teams. And they feel like they are part of that cultural landscape around them and by turn they become more aware of it and hopefully they engage with it longer term, I think that's the main reason really.

SE: Thank you for that.

Appendix G

SE: Sarah Evans

MB: Mark Beeson

AS: Abby Stobart

23rd. June 2011

SE: So I'm here with Mark and Abby from MED theatre, the first thing I wanted to ask you both really, was when did MED theatre first begin facilitating with groups?

AS: Well, so facilitating would mean, um - well would you count doing community plays as facilitating?

MB: I think so.

SE: Yes, I guess what would you define that as, really?

MB: From the very beginning facilitating people's experience of drama to...I don't know, take part in community plays, but also we facilitated skills learning through workshops from the very outset of MED theatre. We had this series of music and dance workshops in 1990-1991 when MED theatre first began.

AS: And the very beginning is - how old are we now? Twenty?

MB: Two.

AS: We're twenty two now. But as far as sort of facilitating in schools that's been- that came at a slightly later stage, but still quite a while ago. What date, what year was that?

MB: Um, well I began working in schools in 1991 I think so that was a long time ago as well; but that was just Morton school at that point.

SE: And that's grown out [to include other schools]? Yes?

AS: Yes.

MB: And I worked in Morton school for six or seven years and then Widdecombe and then Bovey then lots and lots once we had an education programme; in 2006 that's when the major expansion happened.

SE: I guess following on from, like you say quite a major expansion one of the things I've been asking people is exactly what kind of training or preparation you do before you begin facilitating with a group so that you feel your approaches are up to date really, or correct for that particular group?

MB: Do you want to answer that?

AS: Um, what sprang to mind was the most recent one which I was just talking about, the oral history project that we are doing and in order to make sure that we felt up to date we funded me to go to the oral history society in London which was great to get some training in that so that I had all the relevant legal forms etc. that goes with that. So that's an example of needing to get training in order to feel that we were really passing on the right, um - well being able to facilitate that session properly. But as far as for- that's quite an exception of something where we had to go and get formalised training for it. As far as everyday workshops in schools the preparation we do is perhaps research on the particular subject we're looking on like if they want us to look at their local area we might have to do a bit more research on that or we - some places we know that stuff off the top of our heads because Mark's such an expert on

Dartmoor. He might tell me about it or inform me of some of the stories so we're both singing off the same hymn sheet and starting from the same place but other places we need to do a bit more research on that and then we'll prepare for that session by just producing our workshop plan and...is there anything else to add to that?

MB: Um, well I think there is quite a lot of training that goes on with you [Abby].

AS: Yeah.

MB: You've been to first aid, there's child protection.

SE: Yes.

AS: That's true, yes.

MB: And I've done at least two child protection courses over the last five or six years.

AS: I did a working with children with difficult behaviour course.

MB: Yes.

AS: Yes, that's true.

MB: I spent a week with Chicken Shed as part of a course on inclusive theatre in 2002, um before that I've been to numerous workshops with various different professionals. Playwriting, acting, directing, voice work, movement back in the nineties when I was training myself and to some extent being trained by my sister who trained with LeCoq and Gaulier in Paris for doing what I do now I suppose.

AS: And also if we want to deliver, or if we want to have a workshop as part of something we're delivering and neither of us feel that we are professional in then we will get professionals to deliver that in. so a choreographer or a composer, so essentially I often feel that I'm lucky enough to learn from them as well which is great.

MB: Yes, and the film work we do the training we've got to do that has come from professionals that we've used to help or we've partnered with; we've learnt from them and sometimes had one to one sessions on editing etc. so we learn from the professionals that we employ at the same time as they're facilitating our young people they're teaching us.

AS: Which is very handy, yes

MB: We do get a lot of input in that way.

AS: Yes.

SE: Following on from that, what would you identify-and this is quite a broad question- but what would you say are the main challenges for you as facilitators?

And you might actually think that that depends whether you are working with children or adults or maybe you'd say that there are some shared challenges?

AS: That's a hard one.

SE: Yes.

MB: Could you repeat the question?

SE: What would you identify as the main challenges for you as facilitators?

AS: [Pause] I'm just going to say things as they pop into my head

SE: That's fine.

AS: Ok, one thing that I always want to make sure- I feel a responsibility towards is making sure we get sort of repeat business as it were, whether that's getting a school to re-book us or whether that's, maybe we've done a free workshop at a youth centre to get their interest in the project we are doing at the moment if loads came to that and none of them said they were interested in the project I think I would feel a bit like I hadn't done something quite right in order to capture their imaginations. So I think I'd feel maybe that's a pressure, so that could be a challenge.

SE: Yes, sustainability's always- it is a pressure I think that's right.

AS: whilst also needing to fulfil other things like what the funder needs so...for example once I led an outreach workshop at a youth club over on the other side of the moor the project- the previous project- was again a very heritage focused project but if I'd worked, if I'd said to these young children, these young people that this workshop was going to be about history or anything like that I think they would have never turned up. So I had to adapt, and that was one where the challenge paid off and that went well but I had to definitely think on my feet for that, that was quite a challenge.

SE: Framing it so that they actually wanted it.

AS: Yes. I'd say another challenge as far as school stuff goes is that sometimes I can't always deliver it as a one person job which would make it more sustainable. For example, we were talking about me- or I had grand ideas about running a radio play workshop on my own but after discussing that with Mark I realised that would be impossible because with young children or young people when you're doing something like a radio play there's a lot of time when you as a professional need to be focused on the technical aspects of actually getting a good recording whereas also you need someone also to be managing...

SE: Dealing with all the other aspects.

AS: Yes, yes, and the other creative stuff so that's a challenge trying to find ... trying to find workshops where you can deliver it as a one person or trying to- if you have to deliver it with two trying to make it affordable for people to go along because often it will then get more expensive and there's no point in delivering it because you won't get- you have to charge them less because they can't afford it and two of us have to go along and it's not sustainable, if you see what I mean. That's a challenge. Can you think of other challenges?

MB: Mainly, trying to get as much as you can from participants in terms of them getting enthusiastic or committing to the process.

SE: Yes.

MB: And making sure that the ones who are least engaged become more engaged, it's easy to deal with the ones who are very keen but it's the ones who aren't that you measure your success by. Sometimes you don't succeed but sometimes you do.

AS: I'd also add to that a challenge. Another challenge connected to that is- as I've become more experienced I find dealing with a child who is perhaps having behaviour problems I'm finding ways to deal with that so that – I mean that in itself is a challenge but you find ways around that and ways of working with

them the bit which I start to worry about now is ok so I'm dealing with that child or that group of children but then I'm not giving the ones who are you know who are doing ok enough attention so that's a challenge for us I think.

MB: To get the balance right you have to make sure that the ones that are not engaged are not too disruptive and that's why getting the balance is so hard really because if you give attention to the ones that seem to be responding and there are some that aren't engaged then they will often be quite disruptive but if you give all your attention to the ones that are not engaged then the others who've probably behaved quite well will not have got as much out of it as they might have done and they'll be disappointed so you have to strike a balance and be very, um, you have to multitask.

AS: But that's why it's good when we can work together.

SE: Yes, absolutely.

AS: Because you can split. Something I thought about on the flip side of that is trans-generationally when we work with people facilitating for example a community play a challenge with that is –well there's lots of challenges- not asking for too much of people's time otherwise ... At the end of the day they're volunteers.

SE: And differently to the schools it – they don't have to attend, they're not contained.

AS: They don't have to be there but they're usually quite committed because they are choosing to be there so you have to be careful not to take the mick especially with teenagers who might have exams around the time.

SE: Of course.

AS: And it's not just them, it's their parents you have to worry about and all that stuff and the adults who are working you know they're completely pushed so making sure that you don't take up too much of their time whilst also giving them enough like I had some of the teenagers complaining last time that they weren't having enough rehearsals they wanted more because they didn't feel it was getting to the standard they wanted so its striking that balance and also striking a balance with performances of the community play. We often do, we usually do six which some people find quite tiring which is understandable if you've got to hold down a full time job. In the past when it's been done before my time, you know not many times, then they're like well we've done all this rehearsing we want to do more! So I think lots of the challenges come with balance, trying to find the balance.

SE: You have established relationships with quite a network of schools, you have established community groups, and you have quite a long standing relationship with certain participants I was wondering why do you think participants are drawn to the kinds of facilitation you specifically offer? Why do you think they keep coming back?

MB: My take on that is that they like the combination of material that is some way related to where they live and the sense of a harmonious generally group to belong to.

SE: Yeah.

MB: And thirdly they like the challenging nature of a lot of material which is not obscure but I am always introducing stuff that pushes people higher and puzzles them in small doses I think that's one of the reasons why they find it a stimulating activity because we are always trying to do new things at the same time as making it enjoyable but with a deeper educational stroke social agenda too.

SE: What would you say are the outcomes then for the participants who maintain that relationship with you over time?

AS: Well I think we're talking more about the community group participants more at the moment aren't we?

MB: or the young people.

AS: Yes, sorry but our group as opposed to the schools.

MB: Because I think that's implicit in the question, 'why do they keep coming back?' because we tend not to work with the same school class.

AS: No but we work with the same school who keep re-booking.

MB: We work with the same schools but it's not the same children.

AS: Not the same group of people.

MB: It's the teacher there.

AS: No it's the same teacher there. What's the outcome then of that? Well I know a reason why, one of the reasons why they keep coming back is that they all get good parts, they never just become like third chorus member from the back or whatever. That's something which Mark's always done, written in at least something for each person which makes their role interesting. So I guess their outcome of that ...oh sorry, also connected to that they don't have to do auditions to get them it's quite a fair process but also quite a sensitive process that's gone through to when things like casting happens so an outcome I think is when they do a performance they feel very- they feel like it's an achievement they're very proud of what they've been a part of and they are very important to it. We don't have sort of understudying so if someone's ill we've got to rearrange everything somehow so it works.

SE: Ok.

AS: So they are all sort of integral to what happens. Um, I don't know if that's an outcome or not.

MB: I think they get a sense of confidence about appearing in front of people, particularly in the round where they're very close to the audience. I think there's a sense of increased confidence of presenting themselves in public particularly for the younger ones.

SE: And that is something you use a lot, staging in the round with close proximity.

MB: Yes, we .do that as a rule for the moment anyway. I think they also get on a number of occasions get the chance to take part in the creation of the material for the community plays and they oversee the young people's plays for themselves entirely and I think a lot of them get a lot out of creating material, the young ones enjoy creating material which the older-the adults are going to deliver.

AS: And then directing them in that.

MB: Directing.

SE: Great.

MB: Directing, that gives them a great sense of achievement and ownership and a sense of being part of something that's different and unique. I think a number of them feel that they are doing something that is different from other things that are going on.

AS: Yes, I feel like someone like [name omitted, community adult participant] gets, who's one of the adults, when she comes along she doesn't just come along and do a part she likes to, or seems to like to get involved with commenting directorially.

SE: Great.

AS: Because we invite them to do that, and the reason I think why she likes MED theatre and likes that process is that she gets to be, gets to exercise her brain in that way and start analysing things which is different from what she would get if she was going to go and be directed in the local pantomime.

SE: Absolutely.

AS: Or something like that. And something else they get from it, which I've heard another local lady say before is that she doesn't know any other activity; like whether it's going and doing the local football club or whatever it is where one she can as an adult woman interact with other adults including men.

SE: Right.

AS: In an equal environment.

SE: Sure, very true.

AS: As well as with their children. One woman said it was so great to be able to work with her teenage son as equals. He was helping her learning her lines or giving her tips directorially, so I think another outcome is that they get to build on their relationships in maybe their own family or with other people in the community.

SE: Ok.

MB: Yes, there's a huge social payoff for a lot of them in the winter months that this is a community play. And the young people's play to some extent but obviously that's not inter-generational.

AS: The January to March because there's always so much going on before Christmas the October to December time.

SE: Yes.

AS: Lots of people have said that they feel a real low in that January to march, maybe particularly on Dartmoor perhaps because the weather can be so depressing at that time of year and isolating that people have said, you know, I don't know what I'd do without having something like this to come to I'd feel at a bit of a loss. Is that fair to say Mark?

MB: Yes I think a lot of them have said that it's very important for them to have something to do after Christmas this makes life more bearable, the dark days after Christmas.

AS: SO what's the outcome of that?

MB: Well it's social; it mitigates social isolation in a rural area I suppose. Because winter is a more isolated time of year for people living rurally the snow and the wet.

AS: That's challenge weather. Oh, and that's another challenge we missed out, transportation when facilitating people.

SE: Yes, particularly in this geography

AS: Exactly.

SE: It's very difficult. Ok, this is a question which I think everyone has their own take on but how would you define the facilitator's role? What do you think your key functions are when you're facilitating?

AS: I would say from my point of view it sort of crosses over with the word enable.

SE: Very much so, yes.

AS: To enable participants to create whatever they're creating so it's not to lead them or do it for them it's about giving them the tools or the confidence or the guidance to come up to create their own product or whatever it is they're creating.

MB: Yes its relay like facilitating, facilitating is like bringing up children. You start off by having to do quite a lot for them in order to give them the skills to assume as they feel ready to, to do it entirely for themselves better than you do it. I think that's how I look at it, facilitating is an educational process and at its deepest level educational processes are about bringing up children to take your place with an improved outlook or improved skills or whatever and that's have I look at it.

AS: But in my - I definitely see, I personally think of it differently if someone asks me to lead a workshop, so to be a workshop leader compared to facilitating a project.

SE: Yes.

AS: Or even being a facilitator for one off workshops, I see that as slightly different from just completely leading a workshop. Yes leading a workshop may be part of a bigger facilitating process but often they do sometimes cross over but in my head personally I see-

MB: There are workshops that you do where you're not really facilitating skills.

SE: Yes.

MB: You're communicating skills as part of a facilitating process but often you're in a teaching role.

AS: I think that's what I was meaning yes.

MB: Facilitation is, often facilitation is a longer term thing and there are times when we are just teaching stuff to younger ones but in order for them to create their own plays, direct their own plays, go off into the world and set up their own...whatever they're going to do, that's how I look at it.

SE: Ok, in MED what are the main methods you use to plan and then evaluate your practice? I guess you've spoken a little bit about planning I guess mainly more about what methods you use to evaluate.

MB: We have questionnaires always.

SE: Yes.

AS: Sometimes with a group if I think a questionnaire is not going to be suitable or there's not going to be a massive amount of time at the end for them to fill it in other things like the game where say a statement like 'I enjoyed the workshop today,' go to that end if you agree with it, that end if you don't.

MB: Did we do that at the end of the orchard workshops?

SE: Yes the storytelling workshop.

AS: Oh did we do that there, yes I quite like using that one because people don't feel like 'oh, I've got to sit down and write stuff down' or write a thought on a post it note and pin it down on a good or bad side.

MB: Yeah we also sit down together and talk about what went wrong and what went right.

AS: Yes.

SE: Absolutely.

MB: Which is the most important type of evaluation for us and obviously we have the questionnaires to look at and peoples comments to bear in mind. We are evaluating ourselves by having to report to our board.

SE: Yes.

MB: At two-monthly intervals.

SE: Writing reports, yes.

MB: We have a chair that comes in between those times and we have to report to her and discuss what we're doing with her. We have a business plan schedule which we have to match what we are doing against. Obviously at a crude level we numbers of beneficiaries and I suppose also at a larger level annual reports and we are currently having Kerrie Schaeffer actually writing a study on us. So that's another form, of that's external evaluation I suppose. We haven't asked her to do that but she wanted to do it so she's looking at what we do and writing about it.

AS: At the end of every project as well we have to write a report to the funder or give them statistics again, numbers, so that's...

SE: So it's that balance of qualitative informal methods that you do sort of day to day and then that more formal statistical process as well.

MB: At the school workshops we get teachers feedback form always and alongside the pupils' feedback so we look carefully at what the teacher says.

AS: And also along the way for example in something like the community play we might have mid-way through not necessarily a formal assessment but we might say to the participants what do you think about this so far?

MB: And obviously we are videoing lot of what we do that's a kind of evaluation in itself when you are recording the stuff and it's there for people to look at and say well that didn't work quite so well I'd forgotten about that bit that was a disaster, that bit was quite good so there's that kind of evaluation that goes on as you look back over the work you've done in your videos.

SE: Can I ask why you choose to offer arts based techniques and approaches to the groups you work with? Why are arts based techniques and approaches so appropriate and so effective with the kinds of people you're working with.

MB: Appropriate for what aim?

SE: Well I guess that will depend on what you're aiming to do.

MB: Why do we offer arts based approaches full stop, is that the question?

AS: Well, why does it work well with our participants so I guess why do we offer is because it's a speciality that we both have or a background that we both have but why does it work well with our participants? Why do they benefit from that as opposed to going off and playing rounders? Or going fishing?

MB: well they'd probably form playing rounders as well. But people as far as I understand the feedback is get a lot out of story, and presenting it dramatically so there are lots of young people and older people who like drama full stop they like the idea of getting up on stage a part of a performance and the adrenaline that comes with the possibility that it might all go wrong. The adrenaline I think the adrenaline is very important. And whereas I suppose in a sports situation, playing a match is similarly filled of adrenaline it is a better; well not necessarily better, it is a more obvious mixer of boys and girls than most sport.

SE: Which is kind of linking back to what you were saying earlier about how there are limited opportunities for men and women and also children to mix and interact.

MB: Yes, a lot of the sport activities you find a lot of the teams are all boys or all girls, whereas in drama it's all equal although we get more girls generally but they feel they are equals and they mix through working together in a way they couldn't do if they were just hanging out on street corners together because if you're working together in that structured way you don't have the pressure on the girl-boy interface in the same way and they get a lot from that.

AS: The man-woman interface.

MB: We talk about adults as well I suppose yes, yes. Well men and women are supposed to be able to kind of deal with that kind of thing.

SE: And then [laughter]

AS: Something else another thing which I think...what's the question again because I had something for it.

SE: Why you think-

AS: Why art?

SE: Yes why you think artistic as opposed to-

AS: Well I think whatever it is that they're creating so if it's a play or a film or a dance there's usually um some product which has to be produced and then is going to be shown publicly to some other people so having that pressure to produce something of an artistic is quite exposing and it takes quite a lot of guts but I think, I guess it leads on from e kind of adrenaline thing

MB: Oh as a practical thing, yes.

AS: I think having that pressure that you know you've got to produce a product at the end of it can be quite a useful tool.

SE: Yes.

MB: There's an artistic instinct that's in all of us, one of those I think whether it comes out or not. It's a human instinct to want to create, and to want to create for live performance in some way or other I think that's a very strong instinct. At

the root of it is that instinct otherwise we wouldn't be doing what we're doing and nobody would be coming along to it.

SE: I think you've actually answered started to answer my next question which is quite interesting, because we're living in a climate where there are a lot of cutbacks in some ways less opportunities for arts based practices to be instigated and I was wondering why you think arts based facilitation practices or drama based facilitation whatever you want to say remains relevant today? Why we see them continued to be offered and taken up and I think you were really tapping into that a little bit.

MB: You only have to go into a primary school and talk about doing a performance and there are a lot of people leaping up and down.

SE: Yes.

MB: Possibly more girls than boys but even the boys they're keen and it's a very natural and exciting thing to do and if you bring up children they start hiding behind screens and coming out in clothes and presenting things at a very early age and even little babies will play peek a boo with you which is a kind of dramatic performance it's just something very natural and you can talk about film and all the other media, video games but I think performing in front of someone live is always going to be there and there's a huge need for it and sometimes in an area like this there isn't much outlet.

SE: True.

MB: And the outlet there is such as pantomime might not appeal to some people so it's important that there is, that there are other kinds of performance outlet and that's what we try to offer and people seem to want it so that enables us to do what we do if there wasn't that demand if the participants weren't there we would cease and just close. Ultimately you can talk about funding and all the rest of it but the most crucial thing for an operation like is that we have participants who want to do it.

AS: And I think with all the cutbacks and everything sometimes the arts side of thing is seen as a luxury which is why it's easy to get cut but I do think that society realises that if you were to take it all away you'd leave a massive hole. Some people who aren't necessarily interested in sport or other things there would be nothing for them and I think that is recognised so in relation to the cutback side its recognised that something has to whole that hole.

MB: I remember reading a statistic, it may be out of date that back in the nineties, that there are actually more people that go to see a live performance than go to see football matches so...

AS: That's interesting.

MB: That probably includes nativity plays but it's all live performance isn't it? It's a huge part of life and culture some kind of live performance some kind of creation of that performance and some sort of audience to go and see it.

SE: Where do you think the future of this type of facilitation lies? What do you foresee for yourselves for other facilitators in the same field over the next few years?

MB: Do you want me to talk about our model or what I think will happen?

AS: What you want to happen and what we think will happen are two different things sometimes. The question is what do you think will happen isn't it?

MB: Well I think live performance and live dance and drama training will go on as they more or less as they go on at the minute, it's just the nature of it might change. If the worst scenario happens then it will become less challenging less broad and more functional there will be more stagecoach type-stage school type-

AS: Like a national generic -

MB: Directed at providing material for talent shows on television I suppose and other the variety will be drummed out of the ecology of theatre if you can use that analogy through lack of funding and lack of recognition but if a better scenario would be through recognition and better funding we have far more decentralised performance establishment with more recognition in the provinces of unique and individual work from region to region from place to place so that the individual qualities of a particular area are recognised as being as valuable as anything that can be produced in the centre for the people there and have qualities that may be people elsewhere can never reproduce so that you get a much more- it's a bit like going on a travel, tour, then every place will have its unique quality. You may not want to live there but you respect it you say well I saw this special, um church in one place or I saw a beautiful riverbank in another place and they are not necessarily the biggest river or the largest church but they had a quality that was given to them by their location and I suppose that's how I see the model of out kind of theatre that we are giving the inhabitants of a particular kind of area the chance to express artistic thoughts about that area in a way through their experience that they are entitled to feel is special, in a certain way.

SE: Well those were the last of my questions, thank you.

AS: I've never heard you using that analogy before, I liked that it made it feel relay clear. You should remember that the analogy of travelling across the world and seeing different, special places that's...

MB: Well it's about respect.

AS: And identity.

MB: yes.

AS: I do have hope that that can happen, even without loads of funding coming into the arts because I do feel at the moment or over the past few years there has been a move within sort of society's mind to recognise the importance of community and local identity and local areas. I feel that that is something which is more bandied about now, people are more used to it as opposed to just trying to create a generic- I feel hopeful for that.

SE: Yes, it's whether that is honoured within something that is often framed as this concept of a big society whether there is space and as you say respect for the variation the diversity which exist within that bigger picture I don't know.

MB: And England or Britain is an incredibly centralised place culturally because London has such a disproportionate share of everything cultural. And it's probably the most centralised place culturally in the whole world Britain which is

not good. For the people who don't live round London then you can't get things reviewed properly you can't get people to take anything very seriously as a rule which isn't connected to London.

SE: I think it's very interesting that your model of practice is tailored to the community and that's probably why it's so successful but you have these organisations like Stagecoach or whatever they may which have that standardised London mentality or curriculum and that isn't always the best fit for a very different demographic.

MB: No, and as for Wales and Scotland and Northern Ireland they suffer even more from London I think, though they've got a better chance now I think of re-dressing that.

Glossary

Advanced Level General Certificate of Education (A-Level)

The Advanced Level General Certificate of Education is a course of further education, generally studied between 16-18 years of age (Key Stage 5). This qualification is the most popular exam taken as an entry requirement for university study, with three-five subjects usually being studied by learners in either a sixth-form setting (where a Key Stage Five provision is offered in their comprehensive school) or at a college.

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

This strategy was implemented in 2008 with an emphasis on getting learners to work with teachers to understand and inform assessment so that they could set fairer targets together. By working with teachers it enabled learners to better understand how and why they are assessed to produce more comprehensive and reliable data. For more information, see Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008) The Assessment for Learning Strategy [Online] <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00341-2008.pdf> [07 June 2011].

Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC)

The Business and Technology Education Council is a British examining body. They provide a range of qualification options that are seen as a vocational alternative to other courses such as GCSE (BTEC level 1-2), A-Level (BTEC level 3) and degrees (BTEC level 4-7).

Children's Theatre

This term refers to the development of plays specifically designed and performed to young audiences.

Compulsory Education

Full-time education is compulsory for all children aged between five and sixteen years. Students can be home schooled or attend a range of institutions including primary schools, faith schools, academies, free schools, and specialist schools such as Steiner or Montessori schools.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

The Department for Children, Schools and Families was a government department active between 2007-2010, monitoring education and children's services.

Department for Education (DfE)

The Department for Education was created in 2010 and is now responsible for all education and children's services. It replaced the Department for Children, Schools and Families which had previously overseen these services.

Drama in Education (DiE)

Drama in Education refers to the explorative practice in which learners participate and create their own stories as a group in an educational context. They are not presented with a play or performance at the outset, instead they may be provided with a theme, story, character or other stimulus to 'frame' the learning.

English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)

The English Baccalaureate comprises of the study of a set of academic subjects: English, mathematics, history or geography, the sciences and a language. If students attain a certain level in each subject they are awarded the baccalaureate. The Ebacc does not have coursework except in science and also recognises oral exams in language courses. Ebacc will be made compulsory from 2015 in schools in England.

Exam Boards

To see the range of exam boards currently used in the UK visit: Educational Resources [Online] <http://www.educationalresources.co.uk/examboards.htm> [08 August 2012]. Boards offer different degrees of practical work, coursework, written and oral exams and textual analysis as part of their syllabus. Each country also has a specific exam board which schools can opt to follow, such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC).

Formal Learning

This is explicitly recognised and designated as a learning experience. It will be structured and measured against some form of criteria to measure and assess the outcomes of this learning process.

Further Education (FE)

This refers to a range of courses of study after post-sixteen education. Usually it will refer to A-Level or BTEC study, but can also include foundation courses and diplomas in specific industries.

General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

The General Certificate of Secondary Education is currently studied between fourteen-sixteen years of age (Key Stage Four). Learners will usually have to study mathematics, English and sciences, but may also choose from a wide range of other subjects, usually completing between nine-thirteen GCSEs. Schools can choose to follow the syllabus prescribed by different exam boards.

Green Paper

These are consultation documents produced by the Government. They are created during the formation of a new law by a specific department, and are described as “a discussion document” (Parliament UK 2012: n.p.). They function to generate a debate within and outside parliament, gathering a range of feedback from people to help formulate the law.

General Teaching Council (GTC)

The General Teaching Council for England closed in April 2012 and its duties were assumed by the Department for Education. The GTC is designed to monitor the legislation which regulates the teaching profession. The GTCs for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are still active.

Higher Education (HE)

This refers to post-eighteen study which can occur in a range of spaces, most commonly within university institutions, but this can also include vocational study in further education institutions.

Informal Learning

This is an umbrella term which refers to learning that is not organised, delivered and measured against a set of pre-agreed criteria. It can occur anywhere, at any time and occurs when an individual develops new skills or increases their understanding.

Key Stages

This term refers to a period of study within the curriculum. These are usually ended with a formal assessment to measure student attainment during that period SATs at Key Stages One and Two, GCSEs/ BTEC at Key Stages Four and A-Level/ BTEC at Key Stage Five. Key Stage Three is the point at which students are able to opt for subjects and therefore will have to demonstrate a certain level of ability through informal assessments to be accepted onto the GCSE/ BTEC course.

Key Stage One four-seven years of age

Key Stage Two eight-eleven years of age

Key Stage Three eleven-fourteen years of age

Key Stage Four fourteen-sixteen years of age

Key Stage Five sixteen-eighteen (two years of post-compulsory education)

Modular Learning

A syllabus will be split into sections that cover particular aspects of study and each module will be evidenced with an assessment to measure outcomes. The assessment results will be added together to count towards a final grade or award. In some cases, particularly in adult learning settings, a learner may opt to study a module independently and can then decide to complete other modules at their own pace to achieve a full award.

National Curriculum

“The National Curriculum is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject” (GOV.UK 2012: n.p.). See the GOV.UK website for a clear overview of the curriculum and key stages.

Personalised Learning

This was an initiative linked to Every Child Matters and introduced in 2004. It advocated assessment for learning and argued for more choice, links to learning outside of the school and advocated an increase in personal targets and approaches to engage individual learners. For more information, see Pollard, A. and James, M. (eds). (2004) Personalised Learning [Online] http://www.tlrp.org/documents/personalised_learning.pdf [21 June 2011].

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

The Postgraduate Certificate in Education is a course of study during which the trainee must achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to teach in schools. Trainees will select to train in a particular area such as primary or secondary teaching. If they opt for secondary they will have to particular in a particular subject. They must follow this by completing a period of induction (usually one academic year) where they are termed a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT).

Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

These specify exactly what learners must know, or be able to demonstrate independently by the end of a particular period of study such as a module.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE/ PSHEE)

This comprises of both statutory and non-statutory components and is designed to give learners an understanding of the wider social skills they need to be an independent adult. The requirements are heavily informed by the Every Child Matters 2003 legislation.

Qualifications and Curriculum development Agency (QCDA)

The Qualifications and Curriculum development Agency was a government body responsible for monitoring how exams and assessments are delivered in schools, closing in 2012. Their role has been assumed by the Department for Education.

Quality Improvement Agency (QIA)

This was formed in 2006 and designed to improve the quality of fourteen-nineteen education and training provisions. The majority of its powers were transferred to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service in 2008.

Syllabus

This is the outline or overview of the specific topics that must be covered during a particular course of study. This will usually be prescribed by the examining body or funders may stipulate what learners must learn and engage with during an informal project.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Special Educational Needs is an umbrella term for a mix of requirements that affect how students learn including: behavioural/social issues, reading and writing issues such as dyslexia, concentration issues such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, physical needs or impairments (GOV.UK 2012: n.p.). Parents will have to apply to get a statement which declares the SEN and entitles learners to further support. Schools will have a SENCO (special needs co-ordinator) who ensures that students are getting the right support, including one to one teaching assistants in class or extra time and resources.

Standard Assessment Tests (SAT)

Standard Assessment Tests are currently a National Curriculum required to formally ascertain pupil progress at Key Stage One and Three. They were abolished as a formal requirement for Key Stage Three in 2008 enabling teachers to use their own preferred modes of assessment at this stage.

Tripartite Education

This was implemented in 1944 by the Butler Act. It established three tiers of education: grammar schools, secondary technical schools and secondary modern schools which were replaced by the comprehensive system in 1976.

Theatre in Education (TiE)

Theatre in Education offers learners a performance which is then usually accompanied by a workshop, an opportunity to interact with characters or additional resources to extend the ideas presented in the performance within a classroom environment.

White Paper

These are created by the Government to outline intended changes in policy, and “often be the basis for a Bill to be put before Parliament” (Parliament UK 2012: n.p.). Similarly to Green Papers they also offer the government “an opportunity to gather feedback before it formally presents the policies as a Bill” (Parliament UK 2012: n.p.).

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