

TEACHER-IN-ROLE AS A PROBLEM-POSING METHOD
FOR LEARNERS IN A SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOL IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

Paulo Freire's problem-posing pedagogy urges for a creative and collaborative educational environment between learners and teachers that encourages critical thinking and engagement. This research explores how special needs pedagogical approaches in South Africa can transform their classroom practices to embrace creative and collaborative teaching methods such as drama. Drama-in-education (D-i-E) is an area where the learner and teacher relationship is characterised by creativity and engagement. This qualitative study considers the uses of drama as a teaching and learning method for learners in the Skills Phase class at Kuyasa Special School, Grahamstown. The research aimed to provide learners with intellectual barriers to learning with access to D-i-E. This was done through a series of practical drama lessons, which broadly aimed to enhance life skills and work environment competencies such as communication, problem-solving and interpersonal relations. The lessons followed a cross-curricular approach that integrated aspects of the Life Orientation (Grade 10-12) curriculum and the Drama (Creative Arts Grade 7-9) curriculum.

This practice-led study reflects on how Dorothy Heathcote's teacher-in-role (t-i-r) drama technique was implemented to teach topics and themes extracted and adapted from the Life Orientation learning area. This drama-based pedagogy employs three elements of Freire's problem-posing education model, which are learner-centred, problem-posing and liberated pedagogy. The study discusses how these elements manifested in the lessons conducted, and how this approach benefited and improved the learners' critical thinking skills, self-esteem and confidence.

This study therefore provides a broad understanding of the possibilities of a drama-based pedagogy within a South Africa context of learning disability, proposing an alternative pedagogical approach in South African special schools. The findings contribute to the academic literature on D-i-E in South Africa and advocate for the inclusion of learners with learning disabilities within the performing arts education.

Keywords: drama in education, learning disability, cross curriculum, educational access, disability arts, teacher-in-role, inclusive education, barriers to learning

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For I know what I have planned for you,' says the LORD. 'I have plans to prosper you, not to harm you. I have plans to give you a future filled with hope.' – Jeremiah 29:11

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Acronyms

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CP	Cerebral Palsy
D-i-E	Drama in Education
DoE	Department of Education
EWPP1	Education White Paper Policy 1
EWPP 6	Education White Paper Policy 6
FAS	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
IQ	Intelligent Quotient
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LO	Life Orientation
MoE	Mantle of the Expert
RU	Rhodes University
t-i-r	teacher-in-role
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
SANASE	South African National Association for Special Education

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Personal motivation for the research

The motivation for this research came from both my training and experience as a Foundation Phase teacher and as an Applied Theatre Practitioner. As a Foundation Phase teacher, I was constantly searching for new and innovative ways of teaching because I often felt overwhelmed by the number of learners that were diagnosed with learning problems. I felt like I was disadvantaging them further by not finding practical pedagogical method. Hence, one of my personal goals was to gain experience in working with learners with barriers to learning.

Though I had a background in Applied Theatre, I did not implement any of the techniques that I had learnt during my undergraduate training. As a teacher with a background in Drama, thus I was tasked with coordinating the school's annual drama production. I treated the two (Drama and Education) as separate entities. It was only when I pursued postgraduate studies in Applied Theatre that I could, therefore, combine my passion for education and drama into research area interests. In 2015, I immersed myself in a Drama-in-Education (D-i-E) project at Kuyasa Special School in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape Province as part of my Bachelors of Arts (Honours) degree. I used this opportunity to improve my teaching practice and revisit my Applied Theatre practice. I extended the project into a Masters research project in 2016.

“Applied Theatre” is a term that describes a wide range of theatrical practices and processes that take the audience, participants and performers into unconventional theatre settings (Prentki & Preston, 2009:9). Unconventional settings refer to places like schools, hospitals, community halls and prisons. It is in these informal spaces that Applied Theatre projects take place, employing methodologies that “include theatre made with a community, theatre made by a community and theatre made for a community” (Snyder-Young, 2013:5). According to Hargrave (2015:34), Applied Theatre projects with people with learning disabilities can follow either a therapeutic model or a participatory model. My Bachelors of Arts Honours in Applied Theatre project in 2015 was a participatory project “orientated toward social change, personal development and community building” (Hargrave, 2015:35).

The project allowed me to embark on a journey: to establish my practice at Kuyasa Special School and build an educational relationship with the learners with learning disabilities. I chose to focus on using Drama to explore workplace readiness in the Skills Phase class, through a series of scenario and role-play sessions. The Skills Phase class is a transition phase class that prepares learners for the world of work.

The project served two purposes: to develop personally and professionally as a teacher and artist and to empower the learners with various skills. Taylor (2003:53) coined the term “teaching-artists”, which refers to Applied Theatre practitioners who have skills as theatre-makers, and the ability to act as educators who serve the pedagogical function of a group. Considering my skills as both a teacher and a theatre maker, my research positions me as a teaching-artist.

Owing to the concern that collaboration between learning-disabled participants and non-disabled practitioners are “inherently exploitative” (Hargrave, 2015:35), I structured my project to serve not only as a theatre project but also to have an educational benefit for the students and the school. As Nicholson (2005) maintained, Applied Theatre is a gift that needs to benefit both the practitioner and the participants. The project used drama as a ‘functional academics’ subject aimed at using storytelling techniques to improve personal expressive abilities and qualities, such as self-confidence, communication skills, and interpersonal skills; simultaneously enhancing the learners’ problem-solving and thinking skills. For me, the 2015 Kuyasa Drama project created an opportunity to learn how to work with learners with varying intellectual disabilities, and how to make learning relevant through practical uses of drama.

When I extended the Kuyasa project into a Master’s degree project, I was interested in adopting drama as a teaching tool to enhance the ‘School-to-Work Linkages Education Programme’ taught in the Skills Phase class at Kuyasa. I wanted to explore special needs education, and drama, as areas of research, within a South African context. This meant exploring how drama could be used as a creative teaching method, to facilitate the integration and extension of Life Orientation (LO) topics, which address important themes related to the transition from school, to the workplace environment. Thus, my research explores Drama as a practical method that will make this extension possible.

For the project, I decided to extend the learning beyond Grade 3 level. I adapted the Creative Arts: Drama and LO, curriculum from much higher grades to offer curricular engagement that is more rigorous. I used CAPS as a point of departure for curriculum objectives and guidelines on how to extend the Skills Phase learners' classroom engagement. I noticed in the CAPS document that the Department of Education (DoE, 2011) urges education in South African schools to facilitate the transition of learners from educational institutions to the workplace, while at the same time providing learners with sufficient competencies for life.

The following phrases sparked an interest: "transition of learners from educational institutions to the workplace" and "sufficient competencies for life" (DoE-LO, 2011:4). This led me to ask the following: What does transition to workplace mean for learners in special needs school? How are they impacted by this transition into the workplace? Do they have a platform to discuss what this transition means for them? How are they equipped to deal with the transitions?

1.2 Research questions

The aforementioned questions led me to explore the concept of workplace transition further, and how it is implemented in special needs schools. According to the Guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes, programme-to-work linkages are programmes that fulfil "the vision of the Education White Paper Policy 6 (EWPP 6) of providing more options for learners as ways to learn and to provide" work environment experiences (DoE, 2005:17). Moosa (2004:17) theorizes these programme-to-work linkages as learner-centred because they cater to learners' talents and interests. These formal training and learning programmes combine vocational skills with practical lessons on how to communicate and conduct oneself in a work environment (Moosa, 2014:24). As a learning platform, the programme has rich opportunities to extend special needs learners' curriculum engagement beyond the conformist teaching approach of learning how to 'fit' into the work environments, rather preparing their learners to challenge unfair practices in work environments. Accordingly, the project aimed to transform the way the learners engage with the learning programmes in relation to workplace environments by asking the following questions:

- How can the drama (creative arts) curriculum topics be used to teach LO in the Skills Phase at Kuyasa Special School?
- How can theatre games and activities be used to build self-awareness and self-esteem?

- How can role-playing be used to stage scenarios that stimulate discussions about responsibilities and the demands of the workplace environment?
- How can learners showcase their thinking and social skills using improvisation activity and story-making techniques?
- How can t-i-r be used to challenge the banking approach in a skills classroom?
- How can a semi-improvised performance by/with the learners with special needs be used to show the capabilities of these learners?

1.3 Overview of chapters

Because Applied Theatre projects need to be thoroughly researched, the first chapter provides a context in which the research is operating (Taylor 2003:10). The literature review chapter on special needs education in South Africa (Chapter 2) articulates the theoretical premise of my research, based on building an argument for inclusive and creative pedagogical practices. Drawing on Freire's theory on a problem-posing approach to education, the chapter explores Special Needs Education in a South African context. This includes defining learning disability across the three models of disability (Medical, Psychological and Social), and how those can either perpetuate or challenge disability stigma in schools. This is followed by an analysis of the structure of the current Special Needs Model, which includes the current nature and practices of Inclusive Education in post-apartheid South Africa. Additionally, the chapter provides a comparative case study between Kuyasa Special School, and Vista Nova School, both of which follow the school-to-work linkages model, commonly referred to as 'Programme-to-Work linkages'. Here, I discuss the challenges that most teachers experience in implementing inclusive education.

The third chapter contextualises my research context and methodologies, and how my study is designed as a D-i-E project, informed by a capability-based approach. The chapter also introduces Dorothy Heathcote, Melanie Peter and Ann Cattanach as three prominent Drama practitioners whose works serve as case studies that influenced my drama practice at Kuyasa Special School. With a focus on Heathcote's teacher-in-role (t-i-r) technique, I make theoretical links between t-i-r and Freire's problem-posing approach. Moreover, the chapter discusses the research design of the study and its methodological approaches. Set up as a practice-led research study, the study articulates the moments of success and failure during the process (Taylor, 2000:84-85). Informed by Freire's critical pedagogy perspective, I

proceed to analyse the data collected, to look for themes and concepts that validate my research findings.

The fourth chapter makes the link between theory and practice clear, achieved by a reflection on the project's structure. I reflect on how I planned and implemented drama lessons using Freire's problem-posing approach in order to empower and position learners as problem-solvers. In addition, I discuss the project's challenges and successes, and the impact of t-i-r as a teaching method in the Skill Phase class; thus engaging with how t-i-r effectively serves as a problem-posing approach in the Skills Phase class at Kuyasa. Furthermore, the chapter includes arguments towards adopting t-i-r as a creative and inclusive pedagogical approach that challenges the diagnostic lens – one that stigmatises learners with intellectual barriers to learning.

The final chapter serves to highlight concerns that the study has identified and addressed. I also identify limitations of the study and make recommendations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review on Special Needs Education in South Africa

2.1 Introduction

Paolo Freire's radical education theory positions learners at the centre of their learning, and it is still prominent in progressive teaching and learning practices (Bingham, 2016:184). It is radical because it challenges traditional classroom practices that favour teacher-centred teaching types and methods. According to Freire (1993:53), traditional classroom practices are characterised by what he has labelled "the banking concept of education". Freire uses a banking analogy to explain and compare learning in traditional classrooms, likening it to making a bank deposit. The learners are the bank, receiving, and being filled with information by the teacher (the banker), who deposits knowledge into the students. The learners store information as deposits to be regurgitated back later to the teacher (Freire, 1993:55). This approach does not prepare nor allow the learners to make learning meaningful or relevant, because it relies on a system that encourages uniformity and rote learning, instead of diversity and creativity. Much like Freire's banking concept of education, rote learning involves learning by repeating information. Hoadley (2012:192) added that this does not challenge the learners intellectually because it requires no reasoning or thinking skills. The learners are positioned as mere recipients of knowledge and information, and the teachers are empowered as authoritarian figures and producers of knowledge.

In my view, this system of learning is rigid and oppressive. It does not acknowledge the learners' abilities and talents. This hegemonic principle maintains the divide between the oppressed and the oppressor, which denies the learners opportunities to contribute towards the learning content that they are being taught (Altken, 2009:506). Unfortunately, learning and teaching still take place in this manner, especially in South Africa. Hoadley (2012:190) maintained that teaching styles and general classroom practice in South Africa are characterised by rote learning and teaching.

The problem with a teacher-centred approach is that it does not encourage the learners to think critically and to engage with the curriculum content creatively, in the classroom. It approaches teaching at a basic level, presenting the teacher's knowledge as the 'absolute truth'. Freire's theory argues that this presentational mode limits and undermines the learner's cognitive skills (Bingham, 2016:185). It causes student-teacher tension, because knowledge and engagement are one-sided, making learning abstract (Freire, 1993). This means that if learners are not critically engaging with the learning material (i.e. the

curriculum content); it becomes information that is abstract because it lacks personal application and understanding. This pedagogical approach can make learning difficult and possibly undesirable to learners, which can further exacerbate the gap between the educated, and the uneducated, especially in South Africa. According to Hoadley (2012:189), South Africa's education system is constantly criticised for its hierarchical classroom practices and curriculum content that is not challenging intellectually.

Transforming oppressive teaching practice like the banking education approach is necessary for neutralising unequal power relationships between the teacher and the student. Freire stated: "the solution is not to integrate them into the structure of oppression, but rather transform that structure..." (1993:55). However, this does not mean that the student-teacher relationship should be done away with; if anything, Freire encourages the relationship to be redefined by employing non-authoritarian methods that encourage a partnership between the students and the teacher. Freire suggests critical learning through discovery, through asking questions, and through the students making their own meanings and, therefore, decisions about the curriculum being taught. He refers to "Problem Posing Pedagogy" as liberal education because it asks both the students and the teacher to be co-intentional about their knowledge construction, through action and reflection (Freire, 1993:51). By engaging in this process, the learners are able to break away from the confined, passive banking approach. The learners become active participants in their learning, are given a space to challenging the status quo, and confront perceptions that undermine their cognitive abilities and knowledge. In doing so, the learner's personal agency is realised.

Considering South Africa's current education practices and teaching styles (as noted by Hoadley), how can Freire's arguments on liberated pedagogy and the Problem Posing Approach to education help us explore and analyse teaching practices in South Africa? How can learning programmes become more inclusive and critically engaging? Freire's theory provides a lens through which the thesis can explore liberated pedagogy in a South African context.

Moosa (2014:17) has used Freire to theorise programme-to-work linkages, presenting them as empowering, inclusive, transformative learning programmes. They are transformative because they position learners with disabilities to access education and economic services that they would have previously not been able to access. In South Africa, the school-to-work linkages are framed as creative and participatory programmes that use practical work

activities that explore the learners' career interest and talents (Moosa, 2014:18). Thus, I conducted a critical analysis of how special needs education learning programmes are structured, to understand the role they play in preparing learners to participate in economic and social life after completing school.

Moosa explained the role of special needs education as follows:

Education for special needs learners is a vital part of the **development** of a learner... because education provides learners with **knowledge, skills and values** to develop into **independent adults**. (2014:12) [emphasis added]

Using Moosa's explanation of what special needs education ought to be, I examine how special needs education frames the development of the learner, how it equips learners with skills, and determine whether this education truly develops a student into an independent adult, or not. To explore how the development of the learner is framed, I interrogate the different models that define and frame disability within the education field; namely, the psychological, medical and social models of disability. These models articulate what disability is, and how it affects the full development of the learner.

2.2 Approaches to and models of learning disability

Freire's theory on how the oppressed are "not marginalised people living 'outside' society, but rather people who are marginalised from 'inside' structures of society (1993:55) helps to explore how disability definitions have been used to classify learners with disabilities in school environments. Because disability is a broad-based term used to explain various differences, I have chosen to focus primarily on learning/intellectual disability as an area of interest.

Historically, studies on disability have often been conducted from medical and psychological perspectives, and are designed to assess and determine the full functioning (physical, sensory and cognitive) of the human body (Barnes, 2012:13). The assessments follow scientific methods and approaches, which social scientists in disability studies have used to make and determine models of disability (Conroy, 2009:2). Today, the medical and the psychological models of disability have become dominant diagnostic approaches. The medical model focuses on testing for physical impairments and chronic disorders that affect physical functions of the body, while the psychological model focuses on testing developmental abilities and mental health (Baroff, 1991:3-4).

A third model of disability, however, contests these models. The social model offers a more balanced view of disability. In my opinion, the psychological and medical models' diagnostic approaches view disability from a two-dimensional perspective, operating from an 'either' 'or' divide, which makes distinctions between the 'abled' and the 'disabled'. Conroy (2009:1) claimed that the medical and psychological definitions of disability are critiqued for excluding some criteria. These models of disability acknowledge biological and mental factors as deficits that hinder full functioning, but do not recognise socio-economic and cultural factors, and how systematic policies can affect how a person with a disability experiences life.

Unlike the medical and psychological perspectives, the social model views disability in a spectrum of factors that hinder one's daily functioning. The model approaches disability from a social constructivist perspective. Theorists consider disability to be the result of social and political constructs that limit people's access to education, employment, and social services (Watson, 2012:97). The social model contextualizes disability in how society frames and reacts to disability. Despite the reality that disabilities can impede upon one's quality of life, the social model posits that this perception should not exclude people with disabilities from economic opportunities and social relations (Barnes, 2012:22). The social model of disability, therefore, positions society's structures and practices as the root causes of disability (Barnes, 2012:17).

The model plays an important role in raising social awareness. It asks society to reflect on their unfair practices, which pertain to Freire's call for the oppressor and the oppressed to engage in praxis.¹ The social model of disability employs a critical perspective approach to understanding disability. In this regard, the social model offers a multi-dimensional approach to disability (Conroy, 2009:2). As a multi-dimensional approach, it considers a person's social and cultural contexts as factors that can influence how one lives and functions as a member of society (i.e. family and community). It is for this reason that the social model definition of disability is more inclusive because it recognises the medical, as well as social conditions of a person as contributing factors to disability (Stalker, 2012:123).

According to Freire, the oppressor engages in praxis to evaluate and consider how their actions (in this case practices and policies) have oppressed the other, whilst the oppressed

¹ A process of critical reflection and action, which is a necessary part of transitioning from oppressive structures to, liberated practices (Freire, 1993:48).

engage in praxis of how they can free themselves from structures of domination they have come to accept as the norm (Freire, 1993:27-29). Praxis is a activism in a sense because it potentially moves a person to change either their thinking or their practices (Freire, 1993:48). A social model approach is a useful tool for this. It encourages society to confront its own unjust practices, and in so doing, people with disabilities are empowered and motivated to continue challenging how they are treated and marginalised in society.

The terms "learning disability" and "intellectual disability" are often interchangeably used. Both terms refer to the diagnosis of intellectual barriers to learning that cause a significant imbalance between the mental, and developmental age of a learner, which in turn affects their ability to function cognitively, socially and emotionally (Baroff, 1991:35). Peter (1995:1) stated that learning difficulties can be identified by looking for “skills that the child can or cannot do”, in direct correlation to their developmental stages. There are cognitive evaluation and assessment procedures that help measure these skills against a standardised set of criteria. The medical and the psychological models use tests to ascertain Intelligence Quotient (IQ) to assess cognitive, communicative and social skills (Moosa, 2014:1; Baroff, 1991:55).

IQ tests are one of several assessments often conducted by a teacher, an educational psychologist, or a social worker, to determine a cognitive diagnosis. The diagnostic assessments often result in the identification of cognitive disorders² such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Cerebral Palsy (CP), Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Down Syndrome and Epilepsy (Baroff, 1991:63). Epilepsy and Cerebral Palsy are neurological conditions that children are born with, and they can affect a person’s cognitive and communication skills as well as sensory abilities. The diagnosis ranges from moderate to severe intellectual disability (Baroff, 1991:4-5).

The standardised nature of the IQ test operates from the assumption that all learners are the same, and therefore think the same way (Moore, 2000:155). If we read Freire’s criticism of the education system as being misguided in favouring the teacher as the main source of knowledge, then Freire proves that IQ “lacks creativity and transformation” (1993:53). Therefore, this method of testing is not inclusive, as it does not recognise other cognitive abilities such as “linguistic, spatial, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal and

² Cognitive or mental disorders are medical and psychological conditions that reveal a developmental delay between the learner’s chronological age and mental age, which then affect the learner’s ability to cope with academic work both emotionally and physically (Moosa, 2014:12).

intrapersonal intelligence" (Gardner in Moore, 2000:156). I argue that the lack of testing and consideration for the above-mentioned intelligence leaves learners vulnerable to the "intellectually disabled" label merely because they 'failed' to pass one set of standards. My argument is that the tests themselves fail the learners because they are too prescriptive and limited in their assessment approaches. South African schools rely heavily on this approach to determine the developmental and cognitive abilities of learners, but this is not serving the learners interests well because the tests are too universal, and do not take into consideration the different abilities of the learners.

Arguably, developmental stages are subject to change and serve as mere guidelines aimed at tracking progression. For instance, the theories of Vygotsky, Skinner and Piaget on developmental stages have served in large (school) and small scale (individuals) capacities to challenge the way children learn and progress in life (Moore, 2000:28). The medical/psychological definition of learning disability, therefore, has social, as well as political implications, in that it excludes people with impairments from opportunities and social interactions.

Accordingly, this section explores how definitions can influence the negative labelling of learners influences teacher perceptions and attitudes. IQ tests play a major role in perpetuating disability stereotypes, and negative labelling. As Conroy (2009:1) argued, disability as a term has a long history of "accepting restrictions for people with impairments" by positioning them as people who are feared, segregated and in need of help. This is especially true for people whose impairments are visible, such as those with Down Syndrome, and Cerebral Palsy who are labelled as needing specialised education. These conditions can influence people's perceptions about what a person with physical impairments can and cannot do (Peter, 1995). According to Oesterreich (in Moosa, 2014:14), the diagnosis of an intellectual disability results in the following classifications:

Learners who are cognitively impaired progress at a much slower rate; and often have short attention spans; are easily distracted; have difficulty with transitioning between different phases in life (potentially making them afraid of trying new things); have poor memory-retention (which can affect their ability to apply learning to new situations); and may find problem-solving and the comprehension of concepts difficult.

What is evident in the above classification is the emphasis on what the individual learner *cannot* do. No recognition or acknowledgement is given regarding the learners' *abilities*. The criteria serve as examples of how descriptions can often impose definitions that have a negative effect on how society views and treats people with disabilities (Stalker, 2012:128).

Moreover, IQ tests fail to take into account that social factors can cause developmental barriers. Shakespeare (2012:274) noted that health issues do not cause all disabilities. Some disabilities are due to social circumstances linked to lifestyle choices, and poor living conditions that negatively affect a child's developmental stages. An example of a disorder caused by social circumstances is Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). According to Inoue, Entwistle, Wolf-Branigin and Wolf-Branigin (2017:76), FAS is a developmental and intellectual disability caused by the consumption of alcohol during pregnancy. FAS has strong links to socio-economic issues³ such as poverty, lack of education, low wages or unemployment and substance abuse. In South Africa, FAS rates have been reported to range from 29 to 290 per 1 000 live births, thus making South Africa one of the countries with the highest FAS rates in the world (Olivier, Curfs & Viljoen, 2016:103). Children who are exposed to alcohol in the prenatal phase are at a greater the risk of experiencing intellectual barriers to learning in their later years.

FAS not only affect learners' cognitive development, but it can also affect their social development, in terms of confidence, self-concept and self-independence (Kruger & Nel in Moosa, 2014:13). Thus, the learner is vulnerable to developing and experiencing additional barriers to their conditions. It is, therefore, worth noting that some disabilities can have invisible impairments that manifest as psychological or intellectual. For example, Inoue *et al.* (2017:275) claimed that children diagnosed with FAS have been known to develop other internal biological and psychological symptoms. Some of these symptoms include attention span impairments, behavioural problems and distractibility (Baroff, 1991:4-5). These symptoms are also present in learners who have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and are reported to struggle with attention span, good behaviour and discipline, as well as interpersonal relations with fellow peers. Often, learners with intellectual disabilities experience multiple barriers to learning which include "physical disabilities, deafness, partial blindness, behavioural disorders, autism and many others" (Ruscheinski, 2013:7).

³ These social and economic factors can affect how people experience life as individuals or community members. The examples provided in the discussion on socio-economic issues in South Africa are drawn from Sakhekile (2016).

One of the negative effects that arise from defining and describing disability in a two-dimensional manner is the stigma. This is often due to incorrect assumptions and attitudes that continue to oppress the intellectually disabled. Negative labelling and positioning that is not addressed become adopted as socially ‘accepted’ ways of describing and identifying people with impairments. This can develop into a form of prescribed ‘social identity’ for people with impairments (Conroy, 2009:1). This imposed social identity does not celebrate diversity, but rather highlights differences. Hatton noted that the "labelling on the individual will nearly always be detrimental [and evidence] structural oppression" (2009:91). This negative labelling tends to extend to classroom practices, thus influencing how teachers’ teach learners with learning disabilities.

2.3 Teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards learning disabilities

My own experience as a Foundation Phase teacher reveals how perceptions and judgements can play a role in taking an authoritarian approach when teaching learners with varying intellectual abilities. For example, I often made assumptions about what questions learners with ADD could answer on their own, and which questions I would intervene to help with completion of the task.

Moore (2000:157) claimed that this ‘spoon-feeding’ pedagogical approach⁴ is “inflexible” and not very helpful to the learner’s academic development. The teacher-student relationship in my class was, therefore, characterised by authoritarian characteristics that gave me (the teacher) power over how the curriculum was implemented in the classroom, and how the learners ought to interact with the learning material. This often meant that teaching and learning would follow the banking concept of education (Freire, 1993:53).

As Moosa said, the banking approach rejects negotiation and dialogue because its primary focus is to produce a learner who will conform to the status quo (2014:21). The more the teachers expose learners to the banking concept of education, the more they become accustomed to passive engagement. Freire said that the oppressed accept passive participant labels because they are often unaware of the oppression (1993:46). Arguably, it is easier to accept this passive state if there are no opportunities to challenge it. Freire (1993:54) stated that the result of this approach is: “the teacher thinks and the students are thought about ...

⁴ This refers to a method of teaching and learning, which can be teacher-centred, or learner-centred (Nompula, 2012:294).

the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it”.

The above example of the banking approach describes the realities of most classroom practices. Usually, students with intellectual barriers to learning are perceived as unable to think independently and critically. Consequently, teachers think that by avoiding a rigorous curriculum,⁵ they are protecting the students from failure, but instead, they are limiting students' access to social and cognitive skills such as problem solving, negotiation, and critical thinking (Lenakakis and Koltsida, 2017:2).

The banking approach is paternalistic and oppressive in nature because it prescribes what the oppressed should be (Freire, 1993:29). The school environment is one of the places where learners with learning disabilities can experience “structural oppression” in a form of disability labels and stereotypes (Hatton, 2009:91). Freire went on to argue that by prescribing to the oppressed what they can or cannot do, the oppressor assumes power over the oppressed (1993:29). Freire's argument and positioning of the oppressor help us understand the relationship between the abled and the disabled, and how this relationship, in itself, is based on practices that label and exclude certain individuals from structures of society. Prescriptions play a major role in how learners experience schooling.

The social model of disability encourages teachers to view teaching as a process of negotiation aimed at improving learners' ability to understand the curriculum content being taught, instead of *limiting* it by making pedagogy one-dimensional (Barnes, 2012:24). The danger with this one-dimensional (teacher-centred) pedagogical approach is that it offers a false representation of knowledge production because it limits how learners interact with the curriculum (Freire 1993:36). This false representation of learning is rooted in systematic oppression practices that seek to maintain political power, by positioning the teacher as the main knowledgeable subject in the classroom, while positioning learners as passive objects (Moosa, 2014:18). In this sense, knowledge acquisition that is teacher-centred and rigid is oppressive.

⁵ Here I am referring to a critical and engaged pedagogical approach that allows learners to learn through discovery, questioning and challenging the status quo. This relates to Freire's problem-solving approach to education, which is a learner-centred approach that encourages learners to engage in critical dialogue the curriculum content thus acquiring knowledge that is relevant to their needs (Moosa, 2014:21).

2.4 Challenging the banking approach: Using drama to tackle disability stigma

To challenge the banking approach, teachers need to adopt a problem-posing pedagogical approach that encourages various teaching methods that support the learners' abilities and capabilities. As Lenakakis and Koltsida (2017:2) stated, learners, need a space to explore social and cognitive skills such as problem solving, negotiation and critical thinking. For me, drama can create that opportunity in a classroom environment. Drama as a teaching and learning method embraces various strengths and capabilities. The legacy of using drama in the classroom now focusses on "dismantling the idea of teacher as regent" (Thompson, 2003:28). In this case, the drama teacher is not positioned as the expert in the classroom but rather a co-creator with her students. Subsequently, drama practices ought to reject the banking approach to education, which places too much emphasis on the teacher as an expert. As a capability approach drama as a teaching method focuses on "what the learners can actually do now that they are given a choice and provided with a suitable opportunity to engage in a drama practice" (Vorhaus, 2015:173).

In tackling learning disability stigma, drama in the classroom can play a monumental role in transforming how the teacher positions her learners to participate in their learning. The teacher ought to structure her lessons to use drama to enhance capabilities the learners already possess and help them discover new ones. Maintaining Freire's transformative education approach (1993:61), drama, therefore, can serve as a transformative learning technique that uses scenarios to pose problems and position learners problem solvers, all the while challenging the diagnostic lens. Though often set up in a temporary context, Hatton believed that

the adoption of alternative, fictional roles can be a useful tool in subverting the expectations attached to a diagnostic label. In a dramatic context, a participant can challenge the authority of medical diagnosis because they are engaging with, and critique, a much wider range of social roles, statuses and identities. (2009:92)

This valid observation is the basis on which my research stands. Drama methodologies such as role-playing, storytelling and playmaking techniques can be used to teach curriculum contents in a special needs classroom and invite the learners to engage in creative and practical ways. Here learners can showcase their cognitive abilities; enhance talents; re-define personal identities; and explore alternative capabilities and career interests. In this fictional context approach, scenarios can be structured to support the learners' various

strengths, which opens up possibilities and opportunities for learners to be empowered as problem-solvers, conflict managers and negotiators.

Drama, therefore, disrupts the constructed division between those who can and those who cannot engage in critical curricular by providing platforms to discover capabilities even though it is within an imagined context (Vorhaus, 2015:175). Drama with learners with learning disabilities needs to be set up in a flexible learning environment. This means that the drama facilitator ought to be intentional about what activities they want the learners to engage in, and how they will allow the learners to participate in various ways, whether in a collective group context or in an individual capacity (Vorhaus, 2015:180). It is in these interactions that the learners can showcase their abilities to work in a group, to contribute to ideas, and their ability to make independent decisions. For example, learners could work in groups to solve a problem or they could choose a representative or leader amongst themselves to guide them as a group. In its own right, this positions learners with learning disabilities as critical thinkers and decision makers. Thus, my study is set on a premise that advocate for the uses of drama in a special needs classroom.

2.5 A brief overview of special needs education in South Africa

Initially, the term ‘special needs’ came about because the medical model had “failed to describe the nature of learning needs [...] regarded as special” (Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit and van Deventer 2016:521). The term frames the learners in a manner that ‘others’ them. The term suggests that they *do no, belong* in mainstream schooling. In this regard, those who struggle academically in mainstream schools are sent to special schools that offer “specialised teaching methodology” that allows for the adjustment of the curriculum for specific educational needs (Ruscheinski, 2013:7). In South Africa, special needs schools pedagogy offers an extended version of the Grade 3 level curriculum, which is adapted from the mainstream schooling Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement ⁶ (CAPS) (Ruscheinski, 2013:13). The combination of practical learning and work linkages provide the learners with the opportunity to learn life skills in context and be in an environment that accommodates their various learning needs.

⁶ South Africa’s basic education policy and curriculum guideline for Grade R to Grade 12.

The origin of special needs schools in South Africa traces back to the 1800s, in Christian organisations such as churches and missionary schools. They were the first to provide “schooling for children with disabilities” (English, 2002:22). The ‘special’ schools were then absorbed into the education system. Under apartheid, the focus was on making special needs education more accessible to *white* learners with disabilities than to *black* learners with disabilities (English, 2002:22).

The Bantu Education Policy provided limited access to education for the black population so that the apartheid state could retain them as unskilled labourers in the workplace. This practice extended to special schools, which were often more under-resourced, and inaccessible to learners with disabilities (Donohue & Bornman, 2014:2). It was not unusual for the government to spend at least “ten times more on white learners than on black learners” particularly in education be it mainstream or special needs (Ally & McLaren, 2016). Not only did the country’s policies encourage racial segregation, but they also supported practices that highlighted differences, whether economic, social or physical. Apartheid South Africa’s education policy took on a non-reformist approach, meaning that it resisted change by maintaining systematic oppression through unfair practice (Laauwen, 2004:24). Schools for white learners with disabilities were well-funded (Department of Education, 2001), whereas support services for learners with disabilities who attended black schools were uncommon (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001, in Donohue and Bornman, 2014:2).

This contributed to the increasing lack of equal access to special needs education amongst the black and white communities (English, 2002:23). This meant that the white minority of apartheid South Africa had more access to special needs school education and education resources than the majority of the black South African population. To maintain segregation, the education policy delineated clear categories that identified and highlighted differences such as race and abilities.

2.6 Towards a South African definition

Post-1994, South Africa acted against oppressive policies by introducing new education policies that not only encouraged racial *integration* but also encouraged "society to take cognisance of disability within a human rights paradigm" (Laauwen, 2004:1). This human rights shift became a tool for educational transformation as well, as it offered *everyone* (regardless of their racial background and ability) equal rights and access to education. The policy became a celebration of diversity and social justice (Hornby, 2014:1). Part of their

new strategy was, therefore, to address discrimination and improve access to education, by limiting the number of special needs schools in the country, which the new policy viewed as exclusionary (English, 2002). Not only did this agenda encourage schools to accept learners of all races and ethnic groups, but it also meant that schools had to open their doors to learners with disabilities. By 1995, South Africa introduced a new education strategy called “inclusive education”. This new education approach was captured and documented in the Education White Paper Policy 1 (EWPP 1).

The EWPP 1 of 1995 was the first education policy to acknowledge that learning requirements needed to be assessed using a model that was more inclusive. This education policy on Inclusive Education kick-started the implementation process of transformation. The EWPP1’s mandate was to change disability identification strategies in schools and transform special needs learning programmes in South Africa. This realisation aligns with Freire’s (1993:29) call for active transformation. For this reason, South Africa adopted a social model approach in assessing and identifying educational needs (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2016:521).

Instead of testing for cognitive and developmental abilities, the WPP6 introduced a new method of assessment that was more concerned with identifying what they framed as *Barriers to Learning and Development*:

...a phrase that was coined during the NCSNET and NCESS⁷ the process broaden the scope of needs from the disabled few, to other learners whose *special needs* often arise as a result of impediments to learning and development. These barriers have been identified and may lie within the curriculum, the centre of learning, the system of education, and the broader social context. (Laauwen, 2004:14)

The above quote alludes to the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can affect a learner’s experience. Here South Africa’s socio-economic and political backgrounds are considered and included as key contributing factors that can make learning difficult for some learners. Moosa (2014:13) explained that extrinsic factors (which can be at school or in a home environment) become additional spaces where learners with disabilities experience barriers. These barriers are often due to a lack of access to government services, or policies and

⁷ National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) that took place on 28 November 1997 (Laauwen, 2004:14).

practices that do not support the development of a child with a disability. Within the education system, a perceived learning disability is one of six barriers that can affect a learner's schooling environment. I like how their definition does not focus on disability as the only challenge, but rather includes what they refer to as the "more frequent causes of barriers" (DoE, 2005:10). The frequent barriers are listed as follows:

- Disability
- Language and communication
- Lack of parental recognition and involvement
- Socio-economic
- Attitudes
- Inadequate opportunity for programme-to-work linkages. (DoE, 2005:10)

Unlike the criteria explored earlier, this list of causes does not focus on the individual by positioning them as a 'disabled body', but rather recognises that there are external barriers that may hinder their participation in school. This definition has helped combat the disability stigma in schools, which often results in isolating and having an irrational fear of learners with disabilities. As the DoE states, disability stigma develops from negative attitudes and conditions (2005:16). English suggested the stigma experienced by learners with barriers to learning does not stop at a school level, but rather goes on to affect the learners in their adult life (2002:23). The new education policy for South Africa is therefore committed to following "the international trend towards inclusive education" (English, 2002:18). Inclusive education refers to the full access and accommodation of "all learners in mainstream schools, regardless of their physical, intellectual, linguistic, social or emotional needs and differences" (Nel *et al.*, 2015:520). In other words, every learner in South Africa has the right to equal opportunities to participate in mainstream schooling successfully, with the support of the teachers.

2.7 Inclusive education in South Africa: Inherited challenges

One of the strategies that were implemented in 1996 was inclusive education as an education strategy t

hat increased the "proportion of children with SEND (Special Educational Needs) in mainstream schools, while maintaining special schools for those who needed them" (Hornby, 2014:23). Special needs schools' alternative approaches to learning were: varying teaching methods and styles; adapting lessons for each learning area/subject to fit the needs of the learners; and using multimodal resources and learning equipment in the classroom (DoE,

2005:7). Thus, teachers in mainstream schooling were tasked to “*design down* curriculum objectives” to accommodate the different learning styles, and to ensure progression during a year, so that the learners could master assessment standards by the end of the year” (DoE, 2005:28).

Guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes played an important role in guiding the teachers towards an inclusive education practice. It encouraged (and continues to encourage) teachers to maintain “the principle of high expectation for learners with barriers” (DoE, 2005:36). This is achieved by structuring learning that “empowers learners and assists them to reach their full potential” (DoE, 2005:36). On paper, the policy appears to be learner-centred, and it is a document of “good political intent”, aimed at making education and academic rigour accessible to learners with intellectual and physical disability (Laauwen, 2004:25).

At the time, this was perceived to be the best practice for learners with disabilities. Its implementation, however, is flawed in that many teachers in mainstream schooling are not adequately equipped to teach learners with special learning needs. As noted by Moosa (2014:2), many special needs children in South Africa still do not have access to education; those who do, face the challenge of inadequate implementation by the teachers. Furthermore, the 2016 GROUNDUP (Kelly, 2016) report revealed alarming statistics gathered from research done by the Department of Education and a survey from the Annual Special School Survey 2012 (Kelly, 2016). The report states that there are nearly 600 000 children with disabilities who are out of school (Kelly, 2016). This number also includes children who are still waiting to be placed in special schools (Kelly, 2016). Moosa’s (2014) observation about South Africa’s Inclusive Education practice is a valid concern, highlighting the urgency of improving access to equal education.

Arguably, the inclusion of all learners in the education system is an ideal and desirable approach, but reports such as the 2016 GROUNDUP report offer insight into some of the prevalent challenges that inclusive education practices in South Africa continue to face. In their study on *Teacher’s perception of education support structures in the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa*, Tlale, Engelbrecht and Nel (2016:2) stated that striving for inclusive education is a “never-ending process”, and that the teachers often find the continuous skills training and support to implement inclusive education demanding and

stressful. It is evident that teachers attitude towards the implementation of inclusive education in their pedagogical practices plays a major role in how learners with learning disabilities experience and participate in school life. The reality of South Africa's education system is that not all teachers 'buy' into the inclusive education practice, thus this contributes to the growing number of children who are 'left-behind' because their educational needs are not being met. To some extent, one can understand why South Africa has an alarming number of learners with disabilities out of school.

The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa walks a fine line between 'forcing' inclusion at the expense of the 'oppressed,' and being a liberating practice. The former positions learners with disability in a schooling system that does not fully embrace or support the learner's educational needs. The latter positions a learner in an educational system that is set up to fully embrace different educational needs based on learner's talents and interests. Freire (1993:33) asserted that liberation should not be forced, because if it is, then it is an action that promises false freedom, which is the worst kind of oppression. Reflecting on Freire's argument, perhaps, sometimes, what is viewed as the best practice is often not, especially in a system that does not fully embrace diverse educational needs and interests.

To address the concerns of inclusive pedagogical practice, the teachers in Nel *et al*'s study have expressed that they are committed to inclusive education implementation, but explained that the skills training they were receiving was lacking in "practical solutions and strategies" that could be useful to learners with disabilities (Nel *et al.*, 2016:11). Departing from this trajectory of teachers seeking practical strategies to implement inclusive education, in my view, Drama could serve as a practical and creative learning method that teachers and learners could apply to teach other curriculum subjects. The training in this regard could be focused on equipping teachers with strategies on how to use drama techniques such as role-playing, storytelling and t-i-r as tools for teaching and learning themes and topics covered in the curriculum.

The abovementioned suggestion addresses the concerns raised in another study conducted by Engelbrecht *et al.* (2016) on *The idealism of education policies and the realities in schools: Implementation of inclusive education in South Africa*. The teachers in the aforementioned study complained of a very real lack of resources that they were meant to use as multimodal equipment, as well as poor funding from government sectors to buy the necessary tools

needed to vary their teaching methods (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2016:523, 532). In response to their concern about not having the necessary tools to implement varied teaching methods, I argue that drama as a creative teaching method does not necessarily require extensive resources. Drama positions the teachers themselves as resources that can make varied teaching methods possible. It is common for a teacher to use techniques from other learning subjects to teach other curriculum themes.

As Elliot (2016) reported, most South African schools find themselves in a situation where the teacher usually has to teach areas they are not necessarily trained in and Creative Arts: Drama is often one such area where this happens. Though this may be perceived as a disadvantage by some critiques, in my view this could be an advantage for most schools. I am not arguing that teachers that are not trained in drama teach it as a subject, but rather that they use various drama techniques in their daily teaching. Hence, this study makes an argument for drama as a teaching method for Life Orientation.

Having presented an argument for drama as a creative teaching method, I also understand that one of the biggest challenges that South African government schools face is overcrowded classrooms. This plays a major role in the implementation of inclusive and varied teaching methods (Nel *et al.*, 2016:2). Understandably, teachers feel that they are not confident enough to try different teaching methods. I know drama is one of the teaching methods that teachers are not confident in trying. To teachers with no formal training in drama in education methods, applying and implementing drama in the classroom can be a daunting task. An interview with Elisma (personal interview, June 15, 2015), the Skills Phase teacher at Kuyasa Special School, revealed that learners at the school have very little access to drama at school. This is attributed to teachers not feeling confident enough to teach or apply drama in their classes because they are not formally trained in the area.

Teachers' anxiety about implementing different teaching methods has an impact on learners with learning barriers, especially those with intellectual disabilities. Moosa stated that the learners with intellectual barriers to learning struggle to cope with the "current continuous assessment policy statement (CAPS) because it is not tailored to their special circumstances, and progressive requirements" (2014:3). Learners with learning barriers become further disadvantaged in mainstream schooling because their educational needs are not being met. English (2002:2) added that if learners' (especially those with barriers to learning) basic

emotional needs are not adequately catered for, they can start developing a low sense of worth and self-esteem, because they often perform poorly, academically, at school.

The constant 'failure' to achieve and perform academically leads to the learners learning to associate "education with humiliation" (Levin in Wexler, 2009:87). Hornby argued that perhaps the policy of "full inclusion, with its vision that all children be educated in mainstream classrooms for all of their time at school, is theoretically unsound and practically impossible to achieve" (2014:2). This is the case for South Africa. Implementing differentiated teaching methods in support of inclusive education continues to be a challenge. This does not mean, however, that it is unattainable. Perhaps in a classroom with a small number of learners, a teacher can afford to be more creative with their teaching methods, and can, therefore, develop teaching methods that could accommodate large groups of learners. Further exploration of this area is, however, beyond the scope of this research.

2.8 Current special needs pedagogical practice in South Africa: Case Studies of Kuyasa, and Vista Nova

Kuyasa Special School and Vista Nova School serve as case studies that implement special needs learning programmes. The learning programmes are known as Programme-to-Work linkages (school-to-work linkages) and are designed to meet the individual needs of learners across the South African Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Moosa, 2014:24-25). Like any other society, South Africa "has many different ideas not only about the needs of children with disabilities but also about best practices and beliefs regarding how they should be educated" (Donohue and Bornman, 2014:3).

Since 2001, special needs schools like Kuyasa and Vista Nova have become training centres and resource schools that offer learners with intellectual barriers to learning the opportunity to partake in learning programmes that are skills-based, rather than academic knowledge-based (Moosa, 2014:15). The South African School.net (n.d.) database lists close to 500 special needs schools in South Africa, all aimed at catering for various learning programmes. There is, however, no formal special needs curriculum yet. A task team of teachers and researchers has been working on a formalised document that will serve as a guideline for special schools. This document is titled as follows:

An introduction to the background and use of the extended CAPS and skills programme for learners with intellectual barriers to learning. *Extended CAPS and skills programme for learners with intellectual barriers to learning*. Research by

South African National Association for Special Education (SANASE) and National Curriculum Task Team. (Ruscheinski, 2013)

This document is not yet accessible (either in print or online) as it is still under review. I was fortunate to get a copy from the Skills Phase teacher, Teacher E, at Kuyasa Special School. As a first attempt at a specialised curriculum document, the teaching guidelines offer practical strategies for teaching, tailored for each specific phase. Most special schools have adopted learning programmes that have work-linkages, whereby learners receive formal training and practical lessons in the work environment suitable for their needs, interests, and talents (Moosa, 2014:24). These school-to-work linkages are special needs education learning programmes followed in South Africa. Their purpose is to form partnerships between education and work industries, to facilitate job accessibility for learners with barriers to learning (DoE, 2005:17). This approach is currently perceived to be the best practice in South Africa because it offers inclusive opportunities that integrate learners with barriers to learning into the country's economic structures.

Although Moosa has conceptualised the work linkages as transformative pedagogy under Freire's banner of liberated pedagogy principles, the legitimacy of the implementation of these programmes needs further interrogation. Subsequently, I expose the limitations of the school-to-work linkages programmes in equipping the learners to participate fully in adult life. I make an observation on how the work-linkages fail to expose learners to a variety of viable economic opportunities, forcing learners to conform to low-status jobs that are deemed 'suitable' for people with disabilities.

I argue that though the school-to-work linkages include learners in South Africa's economy, they do not prepare them to deal with pertinent challenges in workplaces. The skills and vocational training offered as part of the learning programme only prepare the learners to 'transition' into the workplace environment physically, through practical skills training. They neglect to address the emotional and political side of this transition.

The exploration of work environment situations is a much-needed practice in special schools, and it can be done in a manner that encourages learners to actively participate in discussions about conflict, discrimination, unfair dismissal, wage negotiations and negative treatment in the workplace. These can serve as examples of themes that can be used to set up scenarios that confront the aforementioned workplace interactions.

Kuyasa Special School is a government school that follows South Africa's National Curriculum Statement (NSC) that has a structured Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)⁸ for Grades R to 12. Kuyasa caters up to a Grade 3 level education, whereby learners engage with Foundation Phase subjects such as Literacy, Mathematics and Life Skills. The school covers basic life skills needed to participate in daily life, such as how to count money, how to prepare basic meals, and how to cross the road safely (Rothman, 2013). The school, however, does extend their learning programmes by including work-linkage internships. These become potential job opportunities once the learners finish school. The learners come from different language backgrounds, are academically functioning at an IQ level of 70 or less, and are exposed to socio-economic barriers (Rothman, 2013). Though the school applies a reductionist approach here, they have also included a social model in their description, which I believe complies with the Inclusive Education Policy guidelines. Their approach is a part of the South African National Association for Special Education (SANASE) teaching programme, which encourages vocational skills training, taking into consideration the talents and interests of the learners (Moosa, 2014:27). This approach is specific to (but not limited to) the Kuyasa context.

I acknowledge that, to some extent, the learners miss other important elements of the curriculum that can help them in life after school. For example, the learners could benefit from exploring themes such as "conflict resolution, knowledge about self in relation to the demands of the world of work and socio-economic conditions, locating appropriate work opportunities in various sources" (DoE-LO, 2011:10). For me, the aforementioned themes play an important role in learners understanding that their work interests can extend beyond skill-based jobs, should they be given the opportunity to explore other work opportunities. I explore this point further in the proceeding paragraphs.

Vista Nova is a special needs school located in Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa. They also follow an adapted CAPS approach, but instead of limiting curricular engagement to the Grade 3 standard, they have extended their curricular programme to include Grade 12 subjects such as Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, English Home Language and Afrikaans First Additional Language, which are compulsory subjects in further

⁸ CAPS caters for mainstream schooling, but it can be adapted and extended to address the learning needs of learners with barriers to learning, for learning and academic report purposes (Ruscheinski, 2013:13).

education and training (Vista Nova School, 2014). Their approach is one that supports the learner to overcome barriers to learning, by providing them with the academic support they need to function in society. This school differs from Kuyasa because its learning programmes are set up to give the learners a chance to be re-integrated into mainstream schooling, or go on to further their education in Higher Education institutions. The success rate of the re-integration programme accounts for 10% of the student body each year (Vista Nova School, 2014). I argue that both schools are on par in terms of their skills-based approach, and its relation to CAPS. It is, however, evident that Vista Nova has more to offer regarding curriculum extension.

In my view, both schools need to explore the *emotional and political implications* of the transition to the workplace. Currently, it appears that school-to-work linkages are only focused on preparing learners to 'fit' into the world of work by learning practical skills transferrable to low skilled and low-income work⁹ environments. According to Ali, Schur and Blanck (2011:201), it has become common practice around the world for "job preferences for people with mental disabilities to be limited to vocational skills opportunities only". This contributes to the stigma around intellectual barriers to learning. This banking approach stance positions learners with barriers to learning to accept themselves as members of society who can only participate in low-income jobs because of their learning disabilities. As expressed by Ali *et al.* (2011:204), "contrary to expectations and popular belief, people with disabilities are more likely to desire flexibility, a high income, and job security". Again, we see how negative attitudes and perceptions can influence the treatment of people with intellectual barriers in economic and social arenas. Subsequently, being limited to low-income jobs can result in a lack of financial security¹⁰ (Ali *et al.*, 2011:199). A lack of financial security can expose one to socio-economic issues such as poverty and limited access to services. These issues are prevalent in South Africa, especially among those living with disabilities.

For this abovementioned reasons, I propose, therefore, those special schools consider how they frame their school-to-work linkages. I think that the school-to-work programme

⁹ I am referring to vocational skills-based jobs such as gardening, construction work and domestic work, which are embedded with unequal power relations and practices, which can further oppress people with disabilities.

¹⁰ "Financial security refers to the peace of mind you feel when you aren't worried about your income being enough to cover your expenses" (<https://www.quicken.com/what-financial-security>)

approach can afford to be more critically engaging by making the schools' internship programmes geared towards the exploration of a variety of professional developments and promotional positions in the workplace. The schools need to engage with *how* their learning programmes prepare their learners to engage in practices that challenge disability stigma and stereotypes, thus defying negative labelling and identity imposed by the medical model. Here Freire's (1993:61) Problem Posing model can be adopted as a pedagogical approach that encourages learners to question the status quo by thinking more critically about the various career options they can pursue regardless of their learning disabilities. For me, the educational potential of the school-to-work-linkages lies in positioning learners with intellectual barriers as members of society who can have access to better work opportunities in medium to high-income jobs range¹¹. Thus, learners can be in a position to make informed choices to "obtain and maintain successful employment" (Moosa, 2014:25).

Vista Nova is more progressive in this regard because their learning programmes have been successfully set up not to limit their learners' access to medium and high-income work opportunities. Vista Nova's learning programme allows for the flexibility of reintegrating learners into mainstream schooling to further their education, which is essential should they wish to continue to Higher Education institutions. This means that the learners' career options for after school are more varied, and they are not limited to low-income jobs only. Vista Nova, therefore, serves as an example of *how* what I am proposing is possible.

Using Vista Nova as a benchmark for progressive and inclusive school-to-work programmes, how then can Kuyasa improve their learning programme? I argue that the school should include medium to high-status job explorations in their learning programmes, to challenge disability stigma regarding low income/status jobs. Kuyasa learners can benefit from receiving an education that not only equips them with skills, but it also creates opportunities for them to explore the possibility of high-status jobs or ask important questions relating to the workplace environment. Another aspect to consider is to *up* the standard of their curricular content engagement to include curriculum concepts from other higher grades. Unlike Vista Nova that offers a selection of Grade 12 level subjects, Kuyasa only goes up to Grade 3 level. As established earlier in this chapter, lowering the curriculum standards can

¹¹ Ali *et al.* (2011:205) referred to medium to high-income jobs as jobs that offer better financial security, and these are in areas such as sales, technical services, agriculture and government service jobs.

also be a barrier that hinders equal access to economic and inclusive education (DoE, 2005:10). This is a concern I share given that Kuyasa only goes up to Grade 3 level. This, in itself, is a barrier. Consequently, special needs teachers have often been criticised for "holding low-expectations of children, creating barriers to learning that limit the perception of children as capable learners who are able to participate in rigorous curricula" (Kilinc, Chapman, Kelley, Adams & Millinger, 2016:3). This negative attitude perpetuates a disability stigma. I do believe that Kuyasa can benefit from adopting Grade 10-12 Life Orientation (LO) curriculum content to improve access to further education training subjects. For me, LO as a subject offers numerous concepts and content that can be modified to meet the educational needs of the Skills Phase learners. This will be discussed in more detail later on in the chapter.

I believe that in their approaches, both Vista Nova and Kuyasa should strive to teach their learners beyond the 'critical engagement' threshold and inadequate curricula that

...limits the learners' ability to successfully meet the grade twelve matric requirements and results in them being placed in adult protective workshops, becoming unemployed, and not being equipped with the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills that are essential to life after the completion of school. (Moosa 2014:24)

Moosa's observation prompts me to think about how learners with learning barriers are vulnerable to the possibility of receiving a poor education that does not prepare them for the workplace environment. If both schools accept skills-based jobs as the best approach, then both the Vista Nova School and Kuyasa Special School can afford to equip their learners to think more critically about what the workplace environment entails in formal and informal settings. Altken (2009:511) claimed that Freire's liberated pedagogy requires dialogue and action. Applying the Problem-posing Approach to work-linkages will give learners a chance to explore potential negative experiences, such as discrimination and unfair practices in the workplace (Freire, 1993:51).

To facilitate this dialogue, I would recommend that both schools consider drama as a pedagogical strategy that can serve their learners' academic interests, and as a framework to stage and discuss workplace scenarios. As a learner-centred approach, drama responds to Freire's (1993:64) call for the classroom to have opportunities for dialogue, critical thinking and active participation. It is important that drama is recognized as an essential teaching tool

that can enhance learners' competencies and critical thinking by challenging oppressive practices such as the authoritarian teacher-learner partnership at a school level. Drama becomes a lens through which the learners can rehearse how to challenge social injustices and practices (O'Toole in Davis, 2014:21), which they are sure to encounter in life after school.

2.9 How to improve work linkages in learning programmes – A Freirean approach

Though the learning programmes address the practical and learning needs of learners, they do not necessarily cater to the emotional needs of the learners, nor are they 'problem posing'. Moosa did not romanticise the school-to-work linkages as the perfect special needs education model. He acknowledged that it had areas that did not fully address inclusion, but stated that the errors should serve as motivation to challenge the curriculum content and pedagogical practices continue to meet all the needs of the learners who experience barriers to learning (Moosa, 2014:18).

Working from an understanding that the DoE (2011) expects South African schools to facilitate the transition of learners from educational institutions to the workplace, whilst providing learners with sufficient competencies for life, schools ought to consider how this can be implemented. The transition to work life is full of educational opportunities for action (practical) and reflection (critical thinking). For me, the transition needs to be explored in practical terms instead of abstract ones. As Freire (1993:62) maintained, "authentic reflection considers neither abstract nor the world without people, but people in their relation to the world". Bearing this in mind, if schools wish to explore and teach their learners about the transition into work life, then this exploration should be done in a way that encourages the learners to think critically about what that transition entails, and how it relates to them.

This is what the problem posing approach does. It "constantly unveils reality" (Freire, 1993:62). Thus, theorising workplace environments as a reality that needs to be unveiled, one cannot deny that workplaces are an extension of society. They are not neutral to negative attitudes that can further perpetuate disability stigma. Workplaces are not easy to navigate because they are not neutral to negative employer perceptions and attitudes, which may include: "prejudice, discrimination, and reluctance to make workplace accommodations, job offer promotions (*or wage increases*) and successful retention" (Ali *et al.*, 2011:205). The challenges explored are often encountered through interactions inevitably framed by the power dynamics between the employer and the employee. If not addressed, these issues can

lead to the abuse and exploitation of people with barriers to learning, which will be a direct violation of human rights. Teachers in special schools need to be cognizant of the fact that learners will encounter these challenges in the workplace. Learners, therefore, need to be adequately equipped to face these challenges.

The current LO curriculum is important in recognising human relationships and interactions that can lead to social injustices, and it is layered with themes that ask learners to engage critically with workplace situations. For this reason, it can serve the needs of the students, by posing questions that ask the learners to take a “critical look at who has power and what impact that power has on the lives of those without it” (Moosa, 2014:18). Thus, leading learners to make connections between reality and the themes explored in the LO curriculum. In adopting the problem posing approach, teachers take on roles of facilitators (Altken, 2009:517). They have the responsibility to lead (but not force) learners to explore power relations in human interactions.

To force this dialogue would be false liberation, but to facilitate gives the learners permission to question, challenge and even reject the status quo (Altken, 2009:516). Teachers, therefore, need to find a creative way to facilitate the integration and extension of LO topics, which address important themes related to life after school. This includes exploring how work linkages can make medium to high-status jobs possibilities for learners with intellectual barriers. Thus, my research has led me to explore drama as a practical method that could make this extension possible. At the same time, it explores techniques that resolve the student-teacher contradiction, by opening up dialogue for creative curricula implementation and application. Not only will this benefit my pedagogical practice, but it can also serve as a guideline towards the resolution of teacher training.

Thus far, the passive approach has not asked the learners to engage fully with reality. Freire (1993:55) stated that this is the consequence of the banking approach, especially in adult education. To break this cycle of passivity, special needs schools’ learning programmes must adopt an approach that prepares their learners to engage critically with workplace situations, and practices that are oppressive especially towards people with learning barriers. Therefore, special needs schools can afford to transform their learning programme structures, to address *all* the needs of their learners. Inclusive education is, after all, about catering to the holistic needs of a learner with barriers to learning. This includes implementing learning programmes that also support the emotional development of these learners (English, 2002:27).

So, if the special needs school structure *truly* wants to embrace inclusivity, especially in the school to work linkages programmes, then it should ask the following questions: What does the school to work transition mean for learners in special needs school? How does the school equip the learners to transition from school to the workplace? Do they have a platform to discuss the workplace as a new social environment? How are they equipped to deal with workplace challenges? Returning to Freire's notion of transformation, school to work linkages need to transform their pedagogical approach from being a passive approach to being a critically engaging learning programme that encourages critical thinking and application.

Hence, the flexible nature of the special needs curriculum allows for drama to be adopted as a pedagogical approach that empowers learners as critical and independent thinkers. Drama with learners with intellectual barriers to learning challenges teachers “working with young people with learning disabilities to resist seeing the child through the lens of their diagnosis”, by giving the learners the chance to discover and celebrate positive attributes in a drama context (Trowsdale & Hayhow, 2013:73). In this instance, positive attributes can refer to problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Here, theatre games, songs, and performances can serve as inclusive and creative ways of communicating and thinking about problems. As a result, giving the learners a chance to display their ability to make decisions, to work collaboratively, and to complete tasks (Vorhaus, 2015:179-180).

As Moosa stated, “a curriculum design is never final – it is a dynamic social construct made by people, for people, with a view to transforming the world in which they live” (Moosa, 2014:18). Drama can improve the way learners access education, and influence learning programmes for learners with intellectual barriers, to meet both their educational and emotional needs. Drama ought to be given a chance as a problem posing approach in the classroom, but also as an agent of Freire’s liberated pedagogy philosophy.

2.10 Conclusion

This literature review has highlighted how the banking education approach disempowers learners by not adequately address their educational and emotional needs. This is partly because the education system still relies on the medical model of disability to govern their pedagogical attitudes and practices. The reformed social model of disability is instrumental in

understanding contemporary pedagogical practices, especially when designing learning programmes for learners with intellectual barriers to learning.

As Freire said, “the solution is not to integrate them into the structure of oppression, but rather transform that structure” (1993:55). Adopting a problem posing approach to education is essential to fully transform and resolve the student-teacher contradiction that currently governs school-to-work linkages. An alternative pedagogical practice should expose learners to a variety of career opportunities, even if it is in a fictional context. Learners can practically explore and confront unfair perception and practices that hinder full participation in the work environment through scenarios, and role-playing activities. Different approaches and educational benefits of drama as a teaching tool and methodology in a special needs context are explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Context and Design

3.1 Research context

3.1.1 Drama with special needs

Drama as a teaching method in a special needs school setting emerged from early classroom drama practices that started as an experimental approach and later developed into pedagogical approaches known as Drama-in-Education (D-i-E) and Process Drama. Gavin Bolton and Dorothy Heathcote pioneered D-i-E in the early 1970s in the United Kingdom (Schonmann, 2011:8). As a medium of instruction, drama allows for active learning to take place through imagined roles and situations (O'Neill & Lambert, 1982:11). The imagined situations have themes and concepts that usually align with curriculum content, and introduce a 'problem' or a 'dilemma' that require the learners to engage in fictional situations through embodied interactions.

The situations are inspired by real-life events or personal experiences of the group, which are then explored in a fictional context through role-playing different outcomes and conceptualising alternative solutions to the problem. This fictional world gives the learners (especially those with intellectual barriers to learning) the opportunity to “achieve a sense of responsibility and confidence as decision-makers and problem-solvers in the real world” (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment -NCCA, 2007:4).

The D-i-E uses in a classroom context can go beyond theatre plays, as captured in the following:

For those of us with an image of drama as skits and scripts, the practice of drama in education can be difficult to grasp. To help explain their approach, practitioners of drama in education often point out their emphasis on process over product. (Andersen, 2004:282)

Drama can serve a more specific and valuable purpose, making curriculum content more relatable to learners through practical explorations, facilitated using drama strategies such as role-playing, scenarios, improvisations and theatre games. Understandably, drama experiences should take learners through a learning process, hence the term 'Process Drama'. Process Drama works through a series of episodes that explore either a theme or a text (O'Neill, 1995: xvii). Series of episodes refers to different theatre activities and strategies (as explained above), which are aimed at making learners active participants in the learning

experience and the process of making drama. The learners then can learn and gain more knowledge about a specific topic in practical terms.

Process drama is, therefore, effective as a pedagogical method, because it allows the learners to learn through active participation, all the while engaging as critical thinkers and problem-solvers in a classroom environment. As a result, process drama is an extension of D-i-E practice, and the two terms are interchangeable. D-i-E as pedagogical practice is also used in special needs schools, not only by teachers but also by theatre practitioners. The special needs education field has since become a rich area for arts and education research. International arts research conducted in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand has recorded the validity of drama as a learning tool since the 1980s (Anderson & Dunn, 2013:7). The next section explores some of the most influential drama practitioners in the special needs education field.

3.1.2 Dorothy Heathcote's approach

Dorothy Heathcote (1926–2011) was a British educator considered to be the “most influential drama teacher of the twentieth century” (Bowell, 2013:12). As one of the most prominent drama practitioners, her practice and reflections on the process are documented in a chapter called *Groups with special needs* in a revised version of Betty-Jane Wagner’s book titled *Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a learning medium* (1999).

In her practice, she was known for working with children from mainstream schools, learners with special educational needs, health care centres, and tertiary institutions. Not only has she worked in England, but she extended her practice and knowledge to countries like “the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe, Israel and South Africa [in the 1980s]” (Wagner, 1999:2).

Heathcote believed in a child-centred educational philosophy that focuses less on the teacher as an authoritarian figure (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984:42). She placed the learners at the centre of her lessons. According to Wagner (1999:217), Heathcote’s approach is the same when working with learners with special needs. An inclusive approach proves learners’ capabilities, against the medical model of disability, and negative labelling. She applied the same strategies and teaching stance. Her focus was entirely on what the learners can achieve, rather than what they cannot do. This means that she did not alter techniques and instructions to make them ‘too easy’ for the special needs group to engage. Instead, she trusted that the

group would be able to grasp and engage with whatever learning material she presented to them. If anything, she considered special needs groups as ideal populations for trying out new strategies because she believed that if the strategies worked with special needs learners, then they would work with other learners as well (Wagner, 1999:217).

In my view, her teaching strategies aligned with the capability approach, because they focus on what the learners can do once given the opportunity. Hayhow and Trowsdale (2013) defined the capability approach as a method of learning that moves away from the medical model of cognitive and intellectual limitations, to consider other diverse and personal capabilities of the learners. It draws on other personal capabilities of the learners as opposed to only focusing on cognitive and physical limitations (Hayhow & Trowsdale, 2013). Personal capabilities are natural abilities like thinking, imagination, creativity, and interaction. The capability approach, therefore, rejects the labelling of learners with intellectual barriers as learners who are unable to think, act, make decisions, and have an identity (Vorhaus, 2015:176). Instead, it questions structures that hinder academic development, while taking into account that impairments or disabilities are aspects of the natural diversity of humanity (Hayhow & Trowsdale, 2013:72). It aligns itself with the social model of disability, creating new possibilities for intellectual disability identity.

Heathcote would often start her lessons with an attitude that would show the learners that they could complete “difficult tasks”, by working with clear curious questioning strategies and constantly negotiating power dynamics (Wagner, 1999:218). For me, Heathcote embraced the capability approach as a practitioner who started by working from a person’s potential and abilities instead of focusing on their deficits. Subsequently, she placed the participants in a position of power in scenarios where they could make decisions, think, and act as they see fit for that situation (Wagner, 1999:225). Her learners with special needs would find their own way of approaching a problem or a scenario. She was not concerned with “sentimental or compassionate” problem-solving, or certain outcomes, but, rather, problem-solving that was practical and relevant to the group (Wagner, 1999:225). Her curious questioning techniques, therefore, are evidence of how it is possible for teachers to negotiate power and knowledge dynamics in a classroom context. This is what makes Heathcote’s approach attractive. As a learner-centred approach, Heathcote’s approach encourages the learners to explore and experiment with solutions, and it asks learners to step out of the fictional roles to reflect on the actions and decisions made while in the role. This aligns with Freire’s notion of praxis, which encourages us to evaluate and reflect on our

actions and how they either oppress other or liberate us from structures of oppression (Freire, 1993:27-29).

Moreover, Heathcote did not “use children to produce plays” (Wagner, 1999:3), but rather used ideas of play and improvisation to get the learners involved in drama experiences. She developed improvisation techniques such as the Mantle of the Expert (MoE), building belief, and t-i-r. Briefly, the MoE is a drama technique that positions learners as knowledge co-creators that make contributions, brainstorm ideas, and share information about what they already know about a certain concept or theme. This negotiated partnership between the teacher and the learners positions both participants as equal contributors of knowledge and work together to create a classroom space that transforms into a fictional world. This approach, therefore, evidently values learners as producers of knowledge and supports the learners’ role as experts who understand the context in which they are working. The technique calls on the learners’ “expertise as team problem-solvers” (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:122). Thus, the validity of this pedagogical approach lies in its central characteristic to challenge passive approaches to learning.

When using this technique, Heathcote did not correct misinformation or misconception shared by the children but rather approached the information with curious questioning (a wondering tone that seeks information instead of telling it), and in so doing, shared her feelings and responses not to dictate, but to prompt further thought (Wagner, 1999:97). This is what problem-posing education does: it takes learners through a process of thinking critically about reality, instead of asking them to find a ‘complete and final’ answer to the problem (Freire, 1993:65). The positioning of the learners as co-creators and fellow experts in the subject or theme they are exploring is essential in leading the learners into the critical thinking process. In this process, the learners get the opportunity to expand on their thoughts and decisions of a character/s they are building together. Teachers, therefore, can use this approach to assess how much knowledge their learners already possess regarding a certain subject or theme.

Hence, here I put forward the argument that the MoE technique is revolutionary as a cross-curricular strategy that can merge curriculum concepts and topics across different grade as well. As a cross-curricular approach, MoE challenges the traditional structure of the curriculum as a division of separate subject areas (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995:31). Learning should not be separated according to subjects because, very often, topics and themes overlap.

It is therefore beneficial to merge these and make learning contextual, and concrete, for the learners. For example, Mathematics, Science and English concepts can be fulfilled using fictional roles that position students and teachers as colleagues who seek advice from each other (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:123-124). By creating opportunities for interconnected learning, the teacher frees her students from abstract learning that is characterised by categorisations of topics and themes (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995:32).

However, for Heathcote's MoE and questioning techniques do not happen in a vacuum. They are carefully set up using a technique called building belief. As Bolton and Heathcote (1999:61, 64) state, role-playing requires investment, but you need to explore the group's perceptions and attitudes because, often, the learners make decisions based on their perceptions and experiences of the world. By building on the learners' perceptions and attitudes towards a certain theme/topic, the teacher creates a learning environment that helps the learners enter the fictional world they are building. Thus, the building belief technique establishes a situation, time, place and context in which the drama is going to take place (Wagner, 1999:63). The essence of the building belief technique lies in the fact that learners are positioned to have an opinion or a contribution by making decisions about the time, context, and situation in which the fictional setup is about to take place. Heathcote often used this technique in her pre-discussion phase, while sitting on the floor together with the children (Bolton, 1998:182). Again, this pedagogical approach shifts the power from the teacher by allowing the learners respond to questions relating to what should happen in the fictional world. At this point, the learners are empowered to think critically about how they perceive the world they exist and live in (Freire, 1993:64).

Another commendable technique that Heathcote used was her iconic 't-i-r' strategy of questioning, to invite the learners to play along while she was in-role (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:121). The questioning happens in the context of the role the teacher is playing. For Heathcote, t-i-r activates learning- and meaning-making through questioning, and thus serves as an effective tool for activating learner participation in the classroom space. Not only does this change the learner's position from passive to active, but it also changes the teacher's position from the "one-who-knows" to the "one-who-seeks-to-know" (Wagner, 1999:65). By positioning herself as a curious co-creator, she built up the learners' confidence to participate in the improvised interactions and scenarios. The participation was therefore not merely for fun's sake from the beginning of her lessons; she established a problem-solving approach to learning (Bolton, 1998:196). This method draws in the learners and gives them a clear

indication of the importance of active participation on their part. Here, learners are able to try new things, because Heathcote's activity structure gives them the confidence to try.

To adopt this teaching technique in a South African context would free teachers from the banking concept of education practices. In my view, t-i-r offers an alternative teaching and learning experience to the authoritative banking concept of education. I am, therefore, theorising t-i-r as a 'problem-posing education approach' because it "responds to the essence of consciousness" by "intentionally rejecting passive participation" in a classroom setting (Freire, 1993:60). T-i-r, therefore, is a key strategy that speaks to my argument about recreating a balanced teacher-learner relationship in special needs classrooms.

As a problem-posing approach, t-i-r moves the teacher from being the 'main' source of knowledge to making her co-creator and co-partner with her learners. By making this transition, the teacher takes on a learner-centred approach to teaching, which maintains a non-authoritative stance that guides learning to enable capabilities and possibilities of knowledge-acquisition. Accordingly, t-i-r upholds Freire's (1993:64) learner-centred approach. By creating the space for active participation, t-i-r raises the level of academic rigour of the content being taught, by asking learners to critically engage and think about the learning materials (Bolton, 1998:188). The teacher needs to encourage a partnership with her students, by posing questions of how the curriculum content relates to the world outside the classroom, and their own real-life experiences (Freire, 1993:67).

This establishes a new relationship of power and status between the teacher and the students, where the teacher can use the t-i-r technique to play down her own authority, interrogate content, and shift status to promote action among the group (Wagner, 1999:128). In the t-i-r relationship, the learners' status shifts from "passive responders" to "fellow makers" working in partnership with the teacher to acquire knowledge (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:119). The more varied the roles, the more different statuses can be used to practise for different scenarios of what happens in the real world.

For the Skills Phase class, t-i-r offers a practical way of staging workplace scenarios in a fictional world to explore conflict management, leadership, and interpersonal relationships, as encouraged by the LO curriculum.

3.1.3 Ann Cattanach's techniques

Ann Cattanach is another well-known London-based drama practitioner and therapist who works with people with special needs. Her practice is described in a book entitled *Drama with People with Learning Disability* (1992) and her techniques are still relevant today. Although Cattanach is not a trained teacher, she has worked extensively with schoolchildren. Her approaches are focussed on using drama as a strategy for developing self-esteem (Cattanach, 1992:65). She employs the creative-expressive model, which is a drama model that uses verbal and non-verbal improvisation techniques aimed at enhancing social and communication skills (1992:11). The techniques used are task-based drama activities such as movement, games, role-playing, art, puppetry, and storytelling. There is value in using these techniques to build the learners' sense of comfort and security within the workshop space (Cattanach, 1992:67, 77). Not only do these techniques build the learners' confidence, they are also useful in allowing the teacher or workshop facilitator to build a working relationship with the group. As maintained by Freeman *et al.* (2003:133), "the classroom space needs to be a non-threatening space that encourages the power shift between teacher and students to take place".

Cattanach creates a non-threatening space by using activities that are fun to engage with, and are mostly suited for people who are not drama-trained, as they build up the confidence to participate first. I like that Cattanach starts the groups off with pre-selected activities aimed at eliciting participation. Like Heathcote, she thinks carefully about the activities that she chooses. Cattanach often works with the idea of rituals, through song and games with a specific focus on orientating the group in the space, and she uses these to build the participants' confidence (1992:78). At the same time, these activities allow the teacher and the students to enter a non-authoritative space where they play and interact with each other in an 'unusual' but fun way. This careful structuring of group activities is important in 'winning' the participants over, especially those who are shy. Building the confidence to participate in class through games and art activities is an approach that can benefit most South African teachers who are not theatre-trained themselves. This can serve as a starting point to introduce both the learners and the teachers, to the idea of a balanced, co-intentional relationship wherein the teacher interacts with the learners in a non-authoritative way. This could encourage teachers to turn their classroom into non-threatening learning spaces where the teacher and the students share pedagogical responsibilities. I will return to this point in the conclusions and recommendations in the closing chapter.

Because Cattnach often works with non-drama trained participants, it was important for her to build her participants' confidence through games and activities that she already decided on as stepping stones towards performing (1992:11). Cattnach's confidence-building games and activities are more aligned with play therapy techniques, which focus on establishing and creating relationships. Understandably, she paid more attention to how she set up the activities, to make (like in therapy) everyone's experience comfortable. While Cattnach's approach was more therapy-based, and Heathcote's approach was education-orientated, both their approaches employ strategies that seek active participation. Heathcote's focus on creating a learning space where the teacher works together with the learners makes learning materials more relevant and relatable. This strategy can be useful in positioning the teacher to use the learning material (curriculum content) as a source of inquiry to give the students the opportunity to interrogate, explore, and engage with it.

Notably, Cattnach uses activities to elicit participation, whereas Heathcote used questioning, action, and reflection techniques to provoke responses and active participation,¹² making her participants more 'informed'. For me, both approaches have merit, as they can be used to build the progression of the lesson. In my practice, I use games as tools to invite the learners to participate and to make them comfortable enough to engage, and then I use Heathcote's methods to move learners from passive to active participants.

3.1.4 Melanie Peter's strategies

Melanie Peter's book on *Making Drama Special* (1995) offers earlier accounts (albeit still relevant) of the practical uses of D-i-E in, and outside, the special needs classroom. As a drama practitioner and researcher, her interest lay in developing a professional framework for drama-based pedagogy when working with learners with learning difficulties (Peter, 1995: iv). Peter's approach to drama with special needs children also follows an inclusive attitude that seeks to make drama a meaningful learning method. Peter has criticised the use of drama in special needs education for always being conducted in what she calls "blind faith", whereby art is carried out with learners with special needs because it is "good for them" (1995:3). For me, her observation should be the driving force for teachers to make drama education more than a fun experience and rather a learning experience. As she advocates, teachers should develop an understanding of arts pedagogical practice that is aimed at

¹² Active participation is about reflecting on the scenarios, activities, actions, decisions and roles in order to understand the nature of the task they asked to engage with (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:122).

addressing learners' educational needs (Peter, 1995:3). Altken (2009) argues that an art practitioner (in this case, a drama practitioner) operating in a school environment must be ready to understand that their pedagogy must be one of *sharing* power and agency. To do this, the teacher must engage her students in a dialogical creative exchange of knowledge, solutions, and ideas (Altken, 2009:505).

Much like Heathcote, Peter's drama pedagogical practice is focussed on using drama as a tool for making meaningful connections between the social world and the imaginary world in a classroom setting (Peter, 2003:21). Her work proves that drama work with learners with learning disabilities can take a cross-curricular approach that merges certain themes and topics from the curriculum to serve the interest of the learners, but also to serve as a focus lens for a specific learning subject (Peter, 1995:13). For example, drama can be used as a teaching method to teach Geography, English, Mathematics, Science and other related subjects.

Drama can assist the learners either with understanding difficult concepts or to raise academic rigour with certain concepts and curriculum content. This relates to the MoE technique. The approach can still be implemented in schools with limited resources. It is dynamic in that it encourages teachers to consider how they can plan their lessons with the resources they already have, such as outdoor learning, community relationships and partnerships, subject-based knowledge and skills, and experiences (Barnes, 2011:232). Heathcote and Peter's cross-curriculum approaches emerge from a British context but applying them in a South African context will offer opportunities for the curriculum to be carefully set up to support learners with intellectual barriers.

I have argued in the previous chapter that special schools that do not offer LO at Grade 10-12 level can introduce the subject by integrating it with drama teaching strategies, as a cross-curricular approach, which will extend their academic programmes and curriculum content. This furthers supports the school's internship programmes, which rely on community partnerships. This then creates meaningful and shared experiences that make learning about the workplace environment's challenges concrete rather than abstract. This experimental approach is worth pursuing in South African special schools.

Recent D-i-E research on the uses of drama in the classroom, and with people with barriers to learning, also serves as evidence of the efficacy of drama as a pedagogical practice, in particular, research conducted by Freeman, Sullivan and Fulton in their study *Effects of*

Creative Drama on Self-Concept, Social Skills, and Problem Behaviour (2003); Andersen's research study on *Learning in "As-If" Worlds: Cognition in Drama in Education* (2004); and Altken's research on *Conversations with Status and Power: How Everyday Theatre Offers 'Spaces of Agency' to Participants* (2009). The focus ranges from drama as a tool for self-awareness, to the effects of drama on social behaviour, and drama as a tool for exploring power relations in the classroom. These case studies on D-I-E support arguments made for the uses and relevance of Heathcote, Peter and Cattanach's pioneering drama approaches and methodologies.

3.1.5 Locating drama in special needs schools in South Africa

Though widely practised around the world, the use of drama in education with people with learning disabilities continues to face the challenge of accessibility, and training opportunities (Calvert, 2009:77). South Africa is one of the countries that continue to face the challenge of drama accessibility and training, more so in the context of learning disability. Even finding research on drama with learners with intellectual barriers to learning is a challenge. This observation, however, does not suggest that the practice is non-existent, but rather that it is rare within the educational context.

Outside the school context, there are theatre companies in South Africa that embrace theatre practices with people with both learning and physical barriers to learning. Sutherland (2017:428) has highlighted seven professional contemporary theatre companies formed in post-1994 South Africa that work with people with physical and intellectual barriers, namely: LeftfeetFIRST Dance Theatre, Flatfoot Dance Company, Remix Dance Project, Unmute Dance Company, African Sinakho Arts, FTH:K (From the Hip: Khulumakhale) and Drama for Life (DFL). At this level, it is evident that drama practices with people with disabilities are explored as ways of improving access and inclusion in performance art, as an area for varied career interests and economic opportunities. In education, research in drama with learners with intellectual barriers to learning is often conducted so that "university-based applied theatre practitioners work with young people in special needs schools" (Sutherland, 2017:248).

The scarcity of research productivity in the area of drama with special needs still exists, thus making it a desirable area of research in South Africa. As captured in the quotation below:

“... research concerning psychological support for LSEN [Learners with Special Educational Needs] and action and drama techniques are scarce within the South African context” (English, 2002:8)

In response to English’s concern about the lack of drama research with learners with special needs, I set out to explore special needs education and drama as areas of research in the South African context.

3.1.6 Case study: Kuyasa Special School Drama project

As mentioned government school, which therefore follows the CAPS education policy. The school was founded in 1981 and accepts learners who have an IQ of "70 or less and are only capable of acquiring a grade 3 standard of education" (Rothman, 2013). The school runs a strong extended learning programme that follows SANSE¹³, adapted curriculum and school-to-work programmes linkages, which are in line with the EWPP6. The different groups cater for the learners’ barriers to learning according to their developmental age, and their emotional maturity (calculated against their chronological age). The functional academics programme runs across seven different educational groups, namely: Primary phase, Junior phase, Middle phase, Senior phase, Vocational phase, Skills phase and Practical phase (Rothman, 2013).

My project took place in the Skills Phase classroom, which consisted of five females and seven male students with varying intellectual barriers to learning such as ADD, Epilepsy, Down Syndrome and FAS. The learners speak varied languages such as isiXhosa, Afrikaans, and English. Thus, the medium of instruction coincides with the different levels (Rothman, 2013). The Skills Phase is set up to equip the learners with practical skills and abilities such as cooking, art and craft making, gardening and so forth. The learners spend three years in training, acquiring practical vocational skills and they are subsequently placed in work internship programmes organised by the school, in collaboration with local businesses in Grahamstown.

I chose to focus on the Skills Phase class because, as the last phase of the school, it serves as a good area for exploring school-to-work environment transition. We met twice a week and followed a structured lesson plan format that explored a different topic and theme weekly. I

¹³ South African National Association for Special Education

conducted 13 lessons using the Grade 7-9 Drama curriculum interchangeably with the Grade 10-12 LO curriculum objectives, to prepare and practice for workplace readiness in the Skills Phase class. The language used during the workshop was not limited to English but was rather flexible, and the class assistant, Teacher T served a vital role in interpreting in isiXhosa and English.

This ‘cross-curricular’ learning extended the teaching beyond vocational skills, exploring the social and emotional aspects of this transition. This meant that my drama practice had to feed into the school’s functional academic pedagogy. Drama elements and ideas from Heathcote, Cattanach and Peter were adapted to serve my study. Recognising that their methods and techniques are UK-based, I adapted some elements to explore in a South African context for the Kuyasa case study. Cattanach’s creative-expressive activities model and Peter’s cross-circular approach are valuable techniques that support the setting up of t-i-r activities that require active participation and critical thinking. Ultimately, Heathcote’s t-i-r technique was the primary technique for my study, as it embraces the essence of a liberated pedagogy that is problem-posing and learner-centred.

3.1.7 Why drama at Kuyasa?

Schools in South Africa face the challenge of teachers who “lack the content knowledge and skills needed to effectively teach”, especially in specialised areas such as drama (Nompula, 2012:296). This is true for the Kuyasa teaching staff that does not have the skills to provide access to D-i-E. This project created an opportunity for the learners to have access to D-i-E. In my interview with Teacher E, and the teaching assistant, Teacher T, both teachers confirmed that learners at the school do not have much access to drama. This is because the teachers feel that they are not qualified in the drama field. Furthermore, they added that they do not necessarily feel confident to teach full drama lessons, but apply some aspects of drama when teaching (Teacher E and Teacher T, personal interview, June 15, 2017). Though drama is a specialised field, non-drama trained teachers can use some drama methods to effectively teach other curriculum contents. I explore this view further in the concluding chapter to address the concerns around teacher training in South Africa.

I chose Dorothy Heathcote’s t-i-r technique as one of the most effective ways of establishing a problem posing education approach, which encourages partnership and dialogue between students and teachers (Wagner, 1999:128). Furthermore, t-i-r’s educational power lies in

creating a shared learning experience, which can be created by working in- and out-of-role (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:178). T-i-r became an effective tool for preparing learners in the classroom for active participation and problem-solving, by setting up fictional scenarios, which encouraged them to navigate the workplace transition creatively, and from a capability, rather than disability, approach. T-i-r transformed the Skills Phase classroom space and the usual hierarchical teacher-student relationships (Wagner, 1999:132).

3.2. Research design

3.2.1 Methodology

In South Africa, research in performance is often linked to education and performances in communities and schools (Baxter, 2013:174). For my Master of Arts coursework practical project, I conducted a practice-led research project with a group of 12 learners, between the ages of 18-21 from Kuyasa Special School. According to Nelson (2013:9), practice as research is a method of inquiry set out to find practical ways of knowing, by doing. Starting up a practice-led research case study was the first phase of my qualitative research. Practice-led research as a method of research is growing in South Africa, as it is more suitable for Applied Theatre practices, and theatre performance (Baxter, 2013:163). Due to the nature of my project being an Applied Theatre project, the methodology offers a rich potential for practice and reflection. Here, the methodology becomes a way of exploring embodied knowledge, lived experiences, and understanding the knowledge in D-i-E with people with learning disabilities, from a South African viewpoint. The method itself does not rely on practice alone but also has a relationship with theory (Barrett, 2010:1).

For the Kuyasa Applied Theatre drama project, the methodology offered a practical way of teaching LO concepts, using drama as a tool to explore workplace environments. The practice-led methodology is unique and it has a potential for practice, theory and reflection. Considering that the method itself does not solely rely on practice, I also had to research similar case studies that deal with establishing drama with people with learning disabilities, to make connections between theory and practice (Barrett, 2012:1).

Heathcote, Cattanach and Peter's drama processes with people with intellectual barriers to learning serve as case studies that contextualise my research interest. Their techniques and strategies have influenced and informed my capability-based drama practice. Leighton (2009) maintained that research methods need to be carefully selected and set up, to *showcase participants' abilities*, and not *further disable them*. Thus, my research set out to find a

drama-based pedagogical method that could be adapted to showcase learners' critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. For me, Heathcote's t-i-r approach as a tried and tested pedagogical approach is a desirable method to explore in a South African context.

As a qualitative study, the Kuyasa case study provides a contextual framework in which the drama research with learners with intellectual barriers can be understood (O'Toole, 2006). Carroll (1996:77) claimed that case studies are descriptive and role-based, where the researcher is involved in the structures and processes of a group. The role of the researcher is to examine and interpret the relationship between theory and data collected from interactions with participants (Carroll, 1996:78). As a descriptive case study, the research describes and analyses how the t-i-r technique was used to help enhance the Skills Phase learners' problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The research focuses on the learners themselves as key participants of this research, acknowledging, as Leighton (2009) promotes, the research subjects as capable of thinking cognitively, and being able to make decisions despite their disabilities. The information makes an argument for t-i-r to be adopted in South Africa as a creative teaching strategy to help teachers improve their pedagogical practices and strive towards inclusive education. The Kuyasa case study serves as a premise in which t-i-r is used to challenge traditional student-teacher relationships in a special needs classroom.

The second phase of this qualitative case study provided an in-depth analysis of the D-i-E practice in a special needs context (Bertram & Christiansen 2014:42). Following an interpretative approach, an analysis of the "structures, processes and outcomes" of the Kuyasa drama project offers a deeper understanding of drama in a special needs school context in South Africa (O'Toole, 2006:21). In this phase, I examine and interpret the relationship between t-i-r theory, and Freire's theory and data collected from interactions with participants (Carroll, 1996:78).

As Nelson (2013:40) argued, the thought-process behind this practice lies in Schön's notion of praxis, whereby the researcher reflects on the knowledge acquired through practice. Bertram and Christiansen (2014) argued that the critical paradigm implicates the researcher within the research because they are part of what they are researching.

As Schön in Taylor (1996:28) stated, it is important to "reflect-in-action and reflect-on-action". As a teaching artist, I reflect on my practice through a self-study method, gazing inward to my pedagogical convictions, curriculum application, and assumptions about my

students' learning process (Mitchell & Weber, 2005:3). As Freire asserted, in education, praxis is a constant dialogue that makes education itself transformational (1993:65). Reflecting on how I used the t-i-r technique to challenge the teacher-student contradiction maintains and supports the learner-centred and problem-posing pedagogy in my pedagogical practice. It is, therefore, a necessary part of my study as a teaching artist. Following a critical pedagogical perspective, I engage with the challenges and success of my pedagogical practice in the Skills Phase class (Preston, 2016:23).

I refer back to my practice-led research evidence box, collected during the project to account for the credibility of the research (Baxter, 2013:173). The evidence box contains 13 lesson plans, three video recordings of our drama workshops and digital photographs of our interactive exhibition/performance. This also includes field notes from each lesson such as learners' reflections, my own observations and reflections as well as teacher feedback. These serve as sources for data analysis. I have analysed these critically, to understand how the lessons were structured to use drama to empower and situate learners as critical thinkers, problem-solvers and active participants in the learning process.

My analysis and interpretation of the data collected draw on both Freire's problem posing pedagogy and the capability approach as theoretical frameworks and lenses to explore how t-i-r served the educational needs of the Skills Phase learners.

Thus, this study follows a deductive reasoning approach to analysing data, by working from a theory and theoretical framework toward a specific theoretical interpretation and focus (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014:117). While Freire's theory of a problem posing pedagogy served as the main theoretical framework that governs this study, the t-i-r and the capability approach conceptual frameworks¹⁴ offer specific categories, connection and themes needed for the discussion. According to Lenakakis and Koltsida (2017:6), "theoretical concepts provide guidance for data analysis". Hence, the t-i-r conceptual framework serves as a source for locating subcategories and theoretical extension, "generated by means of looking for similarities and common references to words, feelings and thoughts" (Lenakakis & Koltsida, 2017:6). From these, I analyse how I used drama strategies to teach the LO and Drama CAPS guidelines, and analyse how the students responded to the drama-based pedagogy as new classroom practice. Following an interpretive analysis approach, I am able to reflect on the

¹⁴ Conceptual frameworks are sets of ideas and key concepts from different theories that inform a study.

implementation of t-i-r as a D-i-E technique used to explore teacher-student partnerships in a special needs classroom. In doing so, I provide evidence and argue for why t-i-r conceptually aligns with the capability approach in disability studies. Located in both the practice and the theorising of t-i-r, I ask how effective t-i-r was as a learner-centred pedagogical method in the Skills Phase classroom at Kuyasa Special School.

3.2.2 Ethics

Though the learners were all above the age of legal consent and I considered them capable research participants, the school principal requested that I send out consent letters to parents, requesting formal permission to be granted. A written informed consent (Appendix A) to implement drama lessons and collect data (creative materials, photographs and videos) as part of a practice-led research process was granted by the learners, the school, and the parents. This was done in accordance with the drama department's ethical clearance procedures. Thus, in the thesis, I use pseudonyms to refer to participants in my research to protect individual experiences, however, the participants agreed to have their photographs presented in this thesis to capture the group experiences during the process. Permission (Appendix B) to write about my practice-led research, to observe the teachers, and to conduct an in-depth interview with the teachers was granted by the teachers concerned.

Chapter 4: How was t-i-r Implemented in the Skills Phase Classroom?

4.1 Introduction

The drama process in the Skills Phase class followed t-i-r conceptual ideas of using questioning, MoE, building belief and role-playing. I implemented Heathcote's technique of using questioning to start the drama and set up the platform for the dramatic action to take place (Wagner, 1999:63). According to CAPS, in LO, learners should have:

... opportunities to engage in the development and practice of a variety of life skills to solve problems, to make informed decisions and choices, and to take appropriate actions to live meaningfully and successfully in a rapidly changing society. It not only focuses on knowledge but also emphasises the importance of the application of skills and values in real-life situations... (DoE, 2011:8)

I intentionally structured the lessons to include real-life situations and environments to help learners make the links stated in the above-mentioned learning objectives of LO. The lessons offered the learners the opportunity to learn and practice problem-solving in real time. Creating the space for active participation and critical engagement with the learning material is crucial for t-i-r to raise the academic rigour of the learning programme (Bolton, 1999:188). Throughout the study, learners were learning about the following CAPS LO (Grade 10 -12) themes:

- Relationships with the people around us and their influences on well-being;
- Status, power, and conflict resolution;
- Biases and unfair practices in the workplace;
- Decision-making and problem-solving; and
- Diversity of jobs. (DoE, 2011:10)

Situations were set up to practice (through embodied action and learning) the following skills:

- Social skills such as communication, conflict management, interpersonal skills;
- To build confidence, understand own abilities and what we can offer to the real world i.e. in the workplace, at home, and at school; and
- To promote and practice problem-solving skills

The sessions were planned through a cross-curricular approach, using the subject topics and sub-topics from LO, Grade 10-12, and the creative arts (drama), Grade 7-9 topics and sub-topics. Each one-hour drama lesson was planned effectively with a clear outline to include an introduction, focus activities, and conclusion, in relation to the topic(s) and sub-topic(s) clearly stated in the CAPS document. The LO topics and sub-topics served as guiding principles for different themes. The Drama topics and sub-topics served as a dramatic focus for achieving the LO themes.

According to Barnes (2011:232-236), a cross-curricular approach is rich in creativity, and creative teaching methods can motivate learners to think, act and reflect while boosting learners' confidence, self-esteem, and self-image. Theatrically, I introduced the learners to elements of performance through group showings that would include a small invited audience (the teacher or fellow peers from other classes in the school). According to Neelands (1984:61), group showings summarize the work that the participants have been exploring together with the teacher. The showings were performed in front of a small audience to help the learners develop “confidence to work as artists, finding shape and language for their own ideas” (Neelands, 1984:61). The showing for fellow peers served as a dress rehearsal performance that prepared the learners to perform in front of a larger audience made up of invited Rhodes University (RU) students and staff members from the Drama Department.

Following a drama-based pedagogy, I used theatre elements and drama strategies that would allow participation for both the teacher and learners. Here, I used Heathcote's t-i-r strategy, as well as other elements such as role-playing, storytelling, and theatre games. These activities allow for active participation and are mostly suited for people who are not drama-trained. Cattanach (1992:79) noted that some learners are afraid to have fun and play. Working from Cattanach's trajectory of understanding that not all participants are 'drama ready', warm-up games and focus activities became important tools that prepared the learners to participate in the drama lessons. The participants were shy initially, but so too was the teacher assistant. There were new faces that had moved up from the Vocational Phase class and were now in the Skills Phase class. They had not done drama before, so understandably they were reserved at the beginning of the sessions.

There were some familiar faces that I remembered from the previous workshops conducted at Kuyasa in the previous year. I used this to my advantage, by asking the learners who had been part of the workshops before, to explain to the new learners what the lessons entailed. I

like how Cattanach structured her sessions to include an imaginative play that involves group improvisations, such as bus trips and journeys (Cattanach, 1992:78). Though I did not always start my sessions with group improvisations, I used theatre games and activities as group participation strategies that encouraged and invited the learners to play and participate in a group context. I used these activities to make the drama experience comfortable for the learners.

For example, I used the Threat and Protector game to introduce the themes explored in the lesson plan found in Appendix C. Threat and Protector is one of Augusto Boal's (2002) games aimed at exploring relationships between the oppressor and the oppressed, which is often based on navigating fear and power dynamics (Boal, 2002:141). I used the game as both a physical warm-up and a focus activity task to encourage concentration. The game requires the participants to choose two people (without letting them know) to serve as a threat (bomb) and a protector who will shield them from the bomb. They need to make sure that the protector is between them and the bomb, but this is no easy task as everyone in the room has the same objective. As a decision-making strategy, the game changes the space by encouraging the participants to work with or against each one another in navigating the spaces between someone who can protect you, and someone who can harm you, while building group dynamics. I used the game to encourage the learners to explore the development of relationships, by understanding the status of characters in the story (DoE-Creative Arts, 2011:37). This game positioned the learners to think about how they relate or approach someone who has more or less power, and how that influences whether they approach them with fear or with confidence while in and out-of-role.

This careful structuring of group activities was important in 'winning' the learners over, especially those who were shy and hesitant. I became intentional about positioning learners as fellow contributors. It was important to use the activities to build trust and establish a working relationship with the learners, thus positioning them as important contributors in the lessons. I created a space for equal power and knowledge sharing, as captured in Teacher T's reflection on the process:

I remember when I saw you I was scared about what you were going to do... However, I saw that before you start the lesson, you make their bodies and their minds warm, you start with jokes, call them by their nicknames. (Teacher T, personal interview, June 15, 2017)

By creating a comfortable space, one creates an atmosphere that encourages people to try, and not to be scared to take risks in interactive theatre games. I planned each lesson with Heathcote's balanced power dynamics in mind, thus staying true to the learner-centred pedagogy. This careful setting up of participation correlates with Heathcote and Peter's methods of building the participants' confidence to play. The structures were usually as follows:

- A warm-up game involved a physical and vocal warm-up task that prepared the learners to actively participate in the workshop.
- A focus task activity used to encourage concentration while working in pairs or a group. This activity also builds the learners' confidence to 'perform', take on personas and make decisions, as explored in the Threat and Protector game.
- A knowledge investment activity structured to encourage participants to share their ideas and knowledge on a specific theme. This is guided using research materials such as books, songs, videos and print media resources. The teacher works with the group to identify a problem, a storyline and characters. Here, I would use questioning techniques out of role to help the learners with the knowledge production.
- For the drama skill activity, learners worked in paired or group improvisation tasks. The material from the knowledge investment activity is used to develop characters and strengthen the storyline. The improvisation was either in a physical expression mode such as movement or in verbal expressions such as vocal gestures, monologue and duologues between characters. Here, the teacher has the opportunity to work in-role to encourage critical thinking, decision-making and problem solving.
- A showing and feedback activity usually happened towards the end of each session. Learners are encouraged to show their improvisations and interaction to fellow classmates. Here the learners got the opportunity to reflect on the decisions and actions t made while in or out of character during the workshop process.

The following section provides more examples and reflections of how theatre activities were used to promote a learner-centred and problem posing pedagogical approach that decreased the teacher's authoritative position and increased the learners' abilities to problem solve, make decisions, and think critically, through drama as a creative lens.

4.2 Building up the confidence to perform: Reflections on t-i-r

T-i-r becomes a “different order of experience” because it is unexpected, yet intriguing, curious, and all the while, inviting. (Bolton, 1999:183)

Initially, transforming the classroom space and the usual hierarchical teacher-student relationship was very challenging. The learners’ apathy towards the new relationship challenged me to come up with interesting ways of inviting the learners to participate actively in the lessons. Understandably, it took learners a while to trust the method and to buy into it. It was not an easy transition. It took sitting in the uncomfortableness of unresponsiveness and awkward silences to establish a new relationship of power and status between the students and myself.

I would use costumes to en-role¹⁵ and transform the learners physically into the characters they had created. This transformed the classroom environment from being an everyday learning space, to be a fun, interactive space. In our first improvisation activity, I used costume activities as decision-making strategies, which created opportunities for action and reflection. The learners made choices based on their career interests or talents (see Appendix D). The participants' career interests ranged from priests and doctors to cooks and teachers. I used costumes as a strategy for learners to create aspects of the character in relation to their own abilities and interests (DoE-Creative Arts, 2011:37). They enjoyed working in costumes; even the shy personalities became more confident in an improvised interaction with all the characters. This is how the story of Gogo Dhlamini developed. Gogo Dhlamini is a well-known member of the community, she is an elderly woman who lives alone, but enjoys interacting with members of her small community. I worked in-role as Gogo Dhlamini, who was a t-i-r character I used to pose questions that evoked learners to communicate aspects of their characters in relation to their personal qualities. This gave the learners the confidence to embrace their new roles.

Gogo Dhlamini was a ‘low status’ role, who was positioned to ask for help because she has arthritis. I used Gogo Dhlamini’s role to position the interaction and improvisation so that learners could effectively engage with the new roles, and keep the improvisation going. By using a ‘needing help’ role, the teacher places the group in a “position of responsibility and

¹⁵ To invite the learners to take on a different role that embodies distinct fictional characters. Here the teacher invites the learners into a dramatic context by asking them to negotiate who they are in the ‘as if’ world in order to make learning material more relevant (Neelands, 1984: 46-47).

power in relation to the teacher as their status is raised above their actual status as pupils” (Neelands, 1984:52). Most characters came to greet Gogo Dhlamini, and I could use questions in-role, to gather information about their career choices, but also to pose a problem. Gogo needed arthritis remedies to help her sleep at night. They started referring Gogo to doctors, to get help for her sore knees, and other participants called a priest to come pray for Gogo to get better. At one time, the group burst into a church song, which turned into a church service, and the priest prayed for all the sick people. At this point, I had to yield my authoritative powers and let the improvisation go in the direction the learners wanted it to go.

As Neelands (1984:52) maintained, when working in a ‘needing help’ role, the teacher has “no direct control”, and has to allow the story to unfold, and see what decisions and solutions the learners in-role present. Throughout the process, the learners maintained the quality of the make-believe context, working in character to make decisions and solve Gogo's problem. This made learning about self-awareness and making choices relevant to their own personal experiences. Playing a ‘needing help’ role was effective with the Skills Phase group, as it gave them a sense of achievement because they could help, make decisions, and work together while in-role (Neelands, 1984:2)

4.3 From “passive responders” to “fellow makers”



Figure 1: Building belief discussion (Photo credit: Paul Greenway)

The learners became more confident in the third session as their confidence to make decisions and actively participating in the activities increased. Having built the group's confidence to play and interact while in-role through the Mirror activity. The Mirror activity (see Appendix E) is a physicalized activity done in pairs and it requires the pair to work together to mimic each other's movements while paying attention to behaviour and attitude traits (English, 2002:73). The pair takes turns to be leader or follower as the activity progresses, allowing their ideas and creativity to develop. I used the Mirror activity as an effective strategy in getting the learners to work in pairs to create a daily routine for the characters established in Gogo Dhlamini's story. The pairs worked well together, negotiating leading and following roles. This activity prepared us to take on a story-making activity.

I re-introduced the Mirror activity again in Session 3 as a focus activity and a building block for the Photograph story activity (see Appendix I). Greig (2008:74) explains that photograph stories help the group decide on an activity that includes everyone in the group, and this helps the group develop a story that has a progression of events that happen. For this activity, I used a newspaper picture as a source to start story discussions. The aim was to introduce the participants to story-making possibilities. At first, the group thought that the people in the picture were protesting about Afrikaans in schools, and then someone suggested that the community was protesting about food prices. It was difficult to get a working order of the story, but as I reflect on this exercise, I realise that the learners found it difficult to create the story because it was not their story – it was my story.

In this regards, I should have chosen a picture that is not 'over-dramatic' as Greig suggests, rather go with "something that is quite ordinary and daily" (2008:74). I believe that an ordinary picture would have given the learners more room to think and develop their own ideas. The protest picture was too suggestive, and that limited the learners' creative options and suggestions to bring about a superficial group conflict that lacks critical backing and buying-in from the learners themselves. Having fallen back into the banking concept of education, it made sense that the learners were not fully confident and comfortable with the story. I had missed my moment to find learning material that encouraged dialogue; instead, I chose a picture that compromised the democratic learning space that I was trying to create. Having noticed how the developing storyline was not truthful to them, the learners requested a new storyline but maintained that we keep the characters they had developed. Their participation in this sense highlighted how they were developing as problem solvers and as active participants in their own learning process and engagement with curriculum content.

Because I maintained an open stance approach to teaching, always inviting learners to make suggestions and negotiate the learning space, this gave the learners the confidence to speak out and express their thoughts about the story. Therefore, we returned to the drawing board to create a new story together in a manner that seemed true to them. As seen in Figure 1, building belief requires a certain style of gaining participation. The teacher needs to position themselves at the same level as her students, usually on the floor. By being at the same level as the learners, the teacher positions herself to be non-authoritarian, which is an inviting teaching technique. This teaching technique gives the learners the platform to share their own ideas. I took on the role of a scribe in the Kwa Nombi story creation process because it was what the group needed at the time.

Instead of focusing on the food price increases, the learners expressed that they would love to revisit the story they had explored during the first initial improvised interaction between the women in the community and the well-known town gossip. As Wagner (1999:62) maintained, yielding authority allows a new relationship to develop. This relationship unfolds as learners “offer their fresh way of looking at things, and the teacher offers the learners the experience of the extra life experience of the adult” (Wagner, 1999:62). Indeed, the learners became more vocally interactive in the storyboard discussion activity, as they expressed that the story should be about the negative effects of alcohol use, such as gossiping and fighting. Through further questioning, I gathered that the learners wanted to talk about this issue because they had noticed that it was a prominent problem in Grahamstown. Learners at Kuyasa come from socio-economic backgrounds that have exposed them to social environments where alcohol abuse is a daily occurrence in their community. From this discussion, we built a solid storyline with the existing characters from the first and second lessons.

The Kwa Nombi’s story was explored in a series of lessons. With a questioning tone, the learners established that the story took place in Fingo Town, and has a local shebeen¹⁶ called Kwa Nombi, where most of the people in the community go after work to enjoy refreshments and socialise with other community members. The group decided that Lutho should be the shebeen owner. Though the shebeen is a good place to socialise after work, the people of Fingo Town face the issue of alcohol abuse as it makes them fight, gossip and causes health issues such as headaches and liver problems.

¹⁶ An informal and unlicensed house selling alcohol (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/shebeen>)

Following Heathcote's questioning style and technique, I led the group through a series of questions to create a town map. I worked in- and out-of-role. While working out-of-role, I used the building belief technique to ask questions that made the learners think critically about the story that was building together as a group. We created a town map as a visual and physical context in which the story would take place. The map led the learners to develop opinions and ideas about the town and its people. Here, the group was the most vocal they had ever been. Learners were positioned as experts responsible for "building the past, present, and the future" of Fingo Town (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995:30). It was encouraging to see them grow in speaking confidently, and in making choices and decisions about the community that lived in this imaginary town. From the discussion, the learners decided that Fingo Town was a small town with one school, a hospital, many shops and restaurants where people go to work every day.

Though the learners were creating this 'imaginary' world, their ideas were significantly linked to a real place in Grahamstown, known as Fingo Village. The place has a colonial history of forced removals that led the Fingo community to relocate and settle on Old Fingo Cemetery¹⁷ land. Though the learners had created an imaginary town, they drew on their experiences of Fingo Village as some of the learners are from that area. For example, in Fingo Village there is a local shebeen where people go for refreshments after work, a primary school and a TB (tuberculosis) hospital.

At a surface level, the improvisation led the group to create a story based on familiar community narratives and personal lived experiences. I used the out-of-role questioning technique to encourage a deeper understanding of how work opportunities in a shebeen setting can be explored further in the story that we were creating. There were other aspects to explore regarding alcohol abuse, but I was more interested in how the group chose to explore the shebeen work situation as a possible work opportunity in this context. To help the learners explore this concept further through reflection, I asked them the following problem posing questions:

1. If we were exploring the negative effects of alcohol use, how does Nombi feel about her place of business?

¹⁷ Further discussion on the subject can be found on <http://fingovillage.blogspot.co.za/2007/05/i-dont-think-living-on-top-of-your.html>

2. Why is it important for the pastor to pray for people to stop abusing alcohol?
3. How will Nombi's business be affected if people stop drinking alcohol?

According to Neelands (1984:38), questions can be used to seek participants' opinions and views on a particular topic. I used the above questions to encourage the learners to express their individual opinions and views on the use of alcohol. From the above questions, Lutho expressed that his character should not stop selling alcohol, because that is her business and she loves it, but to help accommodate the community's plea for drinking responsibly, she would make sure that people do not drink and drive by offering a taxi service.

Other learners expressed that their characters were not going to stop drinking because they enjoy relaxing and catching up with friends at Kwa Nombi. For the pastor's character, Lukhanyo expressed that he would continue to talk to the community about the effects of alcohol abuse because he had seen how it makes people spread rumours about each other, which causes them to fight. One could regard the learners' suggestions and responses as too simplistic, but for me, these reflections showed that the learners were applying their own authentic responses to the situation. Like Heathcote, I also had to allow the learners the space to express their own opinions and ideas about what they perceived to be the most suitable response to the Fingo Town situation.

The t-i-r approach served my classroom practice well by making it a democratic space where learners could apply their own knowledge and make suggestions. I used their ideas and suggestions to help them make learning relevant, and their solutions to a problem realistic, based on their own understanding of their communities. From their responses, we can see that they have thought about the responsibilities their jobs entail, and though their thinking is taking place in an imagined context, the knowledge gathered from this improvisation and discussion is applicable and transferable to real-life situations.

The story came up in my post-drama project interview with Teacher T who was present during the lessons. Teacher T expressed that the learners enjoyed creating that story, because it was their own story, with their own ideas. She said the following about the creative process that led to the story:

The special school children they don't like to write, they like what you were doing, they like acting, the thing of that you don't tell them how to act, how to do. You make them think. I learned that from you. First, you sit down, you make an example, you

talk to them, and you ask them about the things, like the shop. They get an idea about they are going to act because you sit down with them and then you draft it. (Teacher T, personal interview, June 15, 2017)

The above observation validates the importance of making a classroom space a democratic space that allows the learners to contribute in a way that feels comfortable to them. Teacher T's observation also highlighted the effect the building belief technique can have as a strategy for collective knowledge production.

By being attentive to this, I created an opportunity for the learners to take the lead. Teacher T referred to this in her interview, stating that she liked how I used the questioning techniques because she saw that I did “not to force them to write, ask them questions because they have ideas” (Teacher T, personal interview, June 15, 2017). As a teacher, I know that relinquishing power to the group can be uncomfortable, but it is a necessary act. Teacher T realised the power drama has a capability approach, especially with a group of learners who are not confident to read or write. Teacher T's observation captures the essence of drama as a capability method because it embraces multiple modes of expression, participation, and learning.

Though Teacher T witnessed the t-i-r questioning techniques, she explained that she did not feel confident to run the drama lessons on her own, because she was still not sure what to do. She added, however, that she would definitely play games with the learners because she noticed that they liked having fun. For me, her honest reflections provide a premise for my argument for why t-i-r training ought to be pursued in special needs classrooms to improve the teacher-learner relationship.

4.4 Discovering own capabilities

For the Kwa Nombi story session, I encouraged the learners to think more critically about the kind of jobs their characters occupy in this imaginary world. Here, the approach led them to make choices and think about these choices beyond their ‘present capabilities’ (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995:32, 35) as students who are only exposed to skills-based job opportunities. For instance, one of the learners was selling funeral policies. When sharing his idea with the group, he explained that his character sells funeral policies because he knows he is a good salesperson. The idea to sell funeral policies was inspired by a leather jacket that he chose as a clothing item that represents his character. He further explained that his plan was to sell

funeral policies to the priests and the elderly, and he strategically placed his funeral policy company next to the hospital. Accordingly, he added the funeral policy company on the map. Here was a learner interested in an alternative career choice, and at that moment, he was an expert who understood the funeral policy enterprise, and he was given the opportunity to express his interests and entrepreneur skills. He displayed confidence in his choice, by choosing a career that played to his strengths as a good salesperson, he recognized that he has strong interpersonal and communication skills. As Mimick noted, this is what drama does: it enhances "inter and intrapersonal development" (1999:281-282).

Another interesting character from the Kwa Nombi story was the pastor. Lukhanyo who has Cerebral Palsy (CP), and as a result, he has a severe speech impediment that makes it difficult for him to express himself, verbally played this role. He did not allow his speech impediment to limit him; instead, he decided to play the priest, which required him to lead and address a large crowd. Lukhanyo communicates confidently as he led his fellow peers in an improvised church scenario. His role was instrumental in the improvisation as a voice that *opposed* the use of alcohol. His fellow classmates supported him in making the character worthwhile and believable. For instance, each time he spoke or read the Bible, they (community members) would encourage and support him by shouting 'Amen!'. This gave him the confidence to carry out his role without reservation, even though communicating verbally was challenging. Taking on a different role gave Lukhanyo the confidence to stand in front of his peers and lead them in prayer. It may seem insignificant at a surface level, but I viewed it as a profound challenge to the medical model of disability labelling. Lukhanyo demonstrated his ability to communicate, employing both verbal and non-verbal (gestures) forms of communication, to lead his fellow peers through the church improvisation scene.

Other career interests came up in the Kwa Nombi improvisation that I had not thought about before. This new development gave the other participants who were not as confident in making clear choices and decisions during the improvisation something to invest in actively. As the story developed, opportunities came up for characters to choose which part of the shebeen they wanted to work in. The two physically well-built learners volunteered to be security guards because they had 'big' muscles, while David, whose character sold funeral insurance, volunteered to work behind the bar as well as the in-house DJ. Upon reflection, David explained that his character had to take on extra work to make money because his business was not going well. For me, his reasoning displays his ability to think critically

about economic opportunities and financial security, which is a competency he has the potential to apply in a real-life context.

4.5 Problem-solving in a group context: Teamwork capabilities

To enhance the learners' thinking and reasoning skills, I used indigenous storytelling as a tool to explore conflict and unfair treatment of individuals in society (DoE-LO, 2011:10). I used a story called *Horns Only* (2002) by a well-known South African storyteller and author, Gcina Mhlope in collaboration with Dada, Hofmeyr, Moore and Snaddon-Wood to explore working with role-playing in storytelling. The session started with the Threat and Protector activity (refer to Appendix C for an explanation of the activity). This is one of Boal's (2005:141) activities, which I used to explore social relationships with the learners by understanding the status of characters positioned as the threat and the protector. The activity positioned the learners to make quick decisions on the spot on how to stay clear of the threat while being strategic about having the protector between themselves and the threat. Thus, this activity was the perfect catalyst for exploring *Horns Only* (2002). Additional activities as seen in Appendix C were used to support and facilitate the learners communicate aspects of the characters in the story while understating their status and the different roles that they play accordingly. The story is about a big party that is taking place in the animal kingdom, but not all the animals were invited to the party, only the ones with horns are invited. Therefore, the Zebra and the Monkey decide to make themselves fake horns in order to attend the party. Their horns fall off while they are dancing at the party and other animals confront them.

As a follow-up session from the above-discussed session, session eight (refer to Appendix F) followed a similar process of a warm-up activity that was focused on building the confidence to make quick decisions and take on a leadership role. For this session, we were developing forms of dialogues through indigenous storytelling. In this sense, the *Horns Only* story provided another dimension and mode in which to explore conflict management within a storytelling context. Stories, whether contemporary or indigenous, are full of unfolding events that involve decision-making and problem-solving (Peter, 2003:24). I adapted the story to stage a conflict between carnivores and herbivores, thus providing a rich potential to explore and develop a dialogue about power, status, and relationships. Even through storytelling, I worked in and out-of-role to facilitate the critical thinking and decision-making process by using curious questioning to get the learners to consider their animal choices and how those relate to them as people in a non-fictional world. The choices ranged from animals as small as the chameleon to big animals, such as the lion and the elephant.

Again, employing the critical reflection strategy, I asked learners to share and explain their character choices with the group. David chose to be a chameleon because it is small, is good at camouflaging itself, and he is the least likely to be attacked by lions. He further explained that he is also good at hiding when he is in trouble, and because he is also small, he can hide in small spaces too. Though the story and other resource books on wild animals were available as tools that could help the group create masks accordingly, the learners' own knowledge about the wild animals contributed significantly to the process of building belief. I did not give them 'direct facts' about their wild animals; through posing questions, I led them to think and share as much specific information as possible about what they knew to be true about the animals they had chosen to portray (Wagner, 1999:63). Some learners chose to make animal masks that linked to their traditional clan animal totems¹⁸ such as buffaloes, elephants and baboons. This link to traditional totems was another opportunity for the learners to draw on their own indigenous knowledge about wild animals and their relevance to specific communities. This shows how using t-i-r questioning strategies can effectively take the "dialogue further than what the curriculum content requires" (Bolton, 1998:192).

The learners' mask creations, therefore, could be either totems or their favourite wild animal. To contextualize this idea for the reader, clan totems are common in African culture. They symbolize family, identity, and kinship, and many communities establish strong connections and a sense of unity based on them. For me, this idea could be explored within a historical context, which is another rich learning area for encouraging dialogue on conflict and unfair treatment. Though I recognize this potential, I did not explore it during the lessons, but it has the potential for future cross-curricular teaching opportunities. We proceeded to use the masks in an improvised interaction between the carnivores and herbivores. To transform ourselves physically, and locate ourselves in a wilderness context, I used music to help set the mood for movement, sounds and gestures.

The use of role-playing and storytelling allowed each group to come up with creative problem-solving strategies, and to practice teamwork and participation skills. I presented the following scenario to the learners: the carnivores are having a party to celebrate the rainfalls after a long drought, but not all animals are invited to the party, only the meat-eaters are invited. The party is taking place at the main watering hole during the day, but the herbivores

¹⁸ Totems are traditional and cultural animal representations associated with different clans and ethnic groups in black African communities (<http://www.wilderness-safaris.com/blog/posts/african-totems-kinship-and-conservation>)

would not have access to the watering hole because they cannot be at the party. I tasked the herbivores to find a way to access the drinking hole, while I instructed the carnivores to devise a strategy to get fresh meat for the party.

The carnivore group decided that they were going to lay out dry bones from previous hunts along the drinking hole, to make the herbivores think that they had eaten and were full. They would then invite them to drink from the waterhole and pounce to catch the zebra. The herbivore group's plan involved creating a distraction that would shift the carnivores' attention. The zebra was going to play dead to trick the carnivores into thinking that she was easy meat. The chameleon would camouflage himself to put alcohol in the water to get the carnivores drunk, the elephants and the buffalo will use their big bodies to chase the carnivores away. Though I could have encouraged the learners to explore other solutions to this problem, I was more interested in getting them to engage in a dialogue about identifying moments of conflict and reflect on how the actions and decisions we do and do not take, affect us. After acting out their solutions, I invited the learners to reflect on the inter-group conflict that unfolded and their choices towards to the identified problem.

Upon reflection, the herbivore group explained that for their group, it was more important to teach the carnivores a lesson about excluding other animals, so that they did not do it again. It was better to sacrifice not having water for one day and teach the carnivores how to share water. In the carnivore group, Sibusiso expressed that their group learned that it is not good to exclude other people because it makes them sad and then they will want to change who they are or do something bad to fit in. For me, the storytelling technique offered strong distancing framework that gave the Skills Phase learners flexible choices; the confidence to improvise; and a safe way of projecting anxieties and desires (Freeman *et al.*, 2003:132). The storytelling, therefore, became a safety net for symbolic representations of how to interact with one another, how to make decisions, and how to communicate with one another (Peter, 2003:26).

To move from symbolic play to actual representations of interactions and relationships, I asked the learners to think about other places or situations that evidenced conflict or unfair treatment. Therefore, the process outlined in Appendix G explored to use personal experiences or encounters with conflict to shape and develop the scenes and allow the group to the platform to engage in dialogue about what conflict means for them, and share strategies on how to approach it. Working in pairs, the learners created a group image of a moment of

conflict the learners had witnessed, which developed into short improvised scenes. A group image technique aims to explore tension and conflict through a still image, which, in itself, is a “reflection of what problems there are, and a pointer to the possible solutions” (Boal, 2002:192). For this lesson, I gave the learners time to develop their stories on their own. This, however, does not mean that I took a passive role, but I chose to afford the students the opportunity to explore and engage in conflict management, through their own lenses. As Freeman *et al.* (2003:132) maintained, teachers should guide and facilitate, rather than dictate, how their learners engage with the material by making a suggestion that encourages independent thinking.

I still maintain that the t-i-r quality leading through questions allowed me to be more attentive and sensitive to the mood of the group (Bolton, 1998:188). The pairs would perform, while other learners would watch and then share their opinions and thoughts on what they had just witnessed. In this regard, we were exploring different approaches to conflict management, and my role was to prompt learners to think critically about the images, by asking those questions, and encouraging them to share their opinions. The first pair shared a witness account of the conflict between two thieves and a shop owner (played by Lukhanyo and David). The conflict took place in a shop, which two thieves robbed, and ran off with the shop owner's money. The two thieves started fighting over how to share the money. From this account, the learner-audience members expressed that for them, the two thieves were co-workers who were not agreeing on how to share the money. They felt that fighting about it physically would cause more problems. Jabu added that to avoid fighting when faced with conflict, people must walk away, and then talk about it later when they are no longer angry.

The second pair's image was about a conflict between friends. The audience responses gave insight into the learners' understanding of how some conflicts need to be resolved in a private space, especially if the conflict is between two close friends or people with a personal relationship. Kamva explained that sometimes resolving conflict in public makes matters worse because other people get usually involved in the conflict. The third group's scene was a conflict between lovers. The scene explored how excessive alcohol consumption can cause people to argue or even fight. In their scene reflections, the group also added that this type of conflict is a violation of human rights, as it is domestic violence related conflict. They stated that this type of conflict must be reported to the police. The learners' explanations and opinions on the subject matter for me speak back to the learners' ability to make learning

relevant to their own personal experiences. It is in these moments of learning through a drama medium, that the learners in the Skills Phase class had the opportunity to engage in dialogue and share stories from their community. Evidently, drama activities provide an element of imagination, but they are a good starting point for self-awareness because they ask participants to ask themselves where they fit in a particular situation and consider what they are required to do at that moment (Freeman *et al.*, 2003:132).

My argument, therefore, is that the transition from symbolic play to the actual representation of conflict became an effective tool that allowed the learners to transfer their conflict management skills, learned in an indigenous storytelling context, into a more specific and realistic context. The evidence provided in the above-mentioned scenarios demonstrates the learners' abilities to transfer learning to a new situation even if the context is different. Lessons 8 and 9 laid a foundation for learners to grow confident in problem-solving in a *group* context, before exploring it in an *individual* context (Bolton, 1998:186).

4.6 Drama as a tool to challenge social injustice

Drama is a tool to challenge social injustice, not a tool to conform to the economic market (O'Toole in Davis, 2014:21). To establish a platform for challenging social injustices, I used the t-i-r process to transform the classroom space into a Home Affairs Office. The Home Affairs Office provided a real-life environment that most residents encounter when needing official documentation services, such as birth certificates, passports, identity documents and other official documentation. Thus, the Home Affairs Office became the context in which to explore unfair treatment, because, in South Africa, it is common for citizens to receive unfair treatment and poor service from government officials.

This session (see Appendix H) was structured to prepare the learners to think about how they would approach and cope with, confronting unfair treatment and receiving poor service from government offices, independently. To help the learners 'buy' into the 'as-if'¹⁹ world, the learners and I worked together to transform the classroom space *physically* into a Home Affairs Office, using furniture from the classroom. Working out-of-role, I facilitated an identity card creation process that invited the learners to choose a picture from a magazine of a person that they liked (not limited to gender). To deepen the connections with the newfound characters and identities, I asked the group questions to provoke them to think critically about

¹⁹ According to Andersen (2004:284) as-if is a drama frame that provides learners with the platform to learn and make a meaningful connection through a fictional set-up of roles and situations encouraging cognitive engagement.

their characters. When working out-of-role we conceptualized what constituted as unfair treatment in this context and the learners shared their personal experiences of their visit to the local Home Affairs office. Most recalled receiving good service, while others reflected on the unpleasant treatment they received from the unfriendly staff. However, the learners also expressed that they had never been to Home Affairs alone – their parents or guardians often escorted them to the offices.

The questions were guidelines that made the fictional Home Affairs journey a success. I used these questions to bring the learners into the drama through creating characters and roles that would help them believe the Home Affairs context (Neelands, 1984:51). The learners took turns being people who needed a service from the local Home Affairs Office, such as applying for a new identity document, marriage certificates, passports and birth certificates. I wanted the learners to adopt new identities so that they could explore thinking and problem solving by working in character. I played a high-status role as an employee. In this case, I was using an oppose-authority role, which is a high-status role that is often used to introduce opposition or conflict as a "motivation to get the learners to respond" to the drama (Neelands 1984:51). The improvisation started with me in-role as Home Affairs official. I chose to start the improvisation with this high-status role that would encourage the learners to participate in the activity. Teacher T and my supervisor, Prof. Alex Sutherland, and learners in the group took turns to play the official's role.

At first, the learners' responses were 'safe' and they did not assert themselves as young adults and citizens who have the right to receive good services regardless of their abilities. Most learners did not challenge the officials' refusal to help them as the lunchtime hour was approaching. Instead, they returned to their seats to carry on waiting in the long queue. This situation depicted the power imbalances that exist in society. Though the learners had the option of replacing each other through a freeze frame technique (see Appendix H), they were shy to try alternative responses. Recognizing this as one of the limitations²⁰ of working with an *oppose-authority role*, it was important for me as a facilitator to find a strategy that would encourage the learners to rehearse asserting themselves in situations where unfair practices that seek to oppress human rights. To encourage this, I would briefly stop the interactions to get the learners to think carefully about the treatment each character was receiving, asking

²⁰ Once the relationship based on the opposition is established using the opposer-authority role, it can be difficult to get the participants to move the drama in other directions (Neelands, 1984:51).

them whether the character should accept the bad treatment or challenge it. This technique is an example of the Forum theatre model. Boal (2002:241) defined Forum Theatre as a theatre strategy that is aimed at increasing audience participation by raising consciousness about issues or themes explored through theatre.

In addition, I encouraged the learners to reflect on the consequences of each option. For example, one of the interactions between the official (played by Prof. Sutherland) and Lukhanyo's character involved an argument about having incorrect proof of documentation. The official explained that they could not help Lukhanyo's character because he does not have the original identity document. Lukhanyo responded by showing the Official the sign that says the officials must accept certified identity copies as proof of documentation when applying for another identity document. The group reflected on this interaction before saying that Lukhanyo's character must challenge the official because the officials make the rules on the wall and should follow them. They also added that Lukhanyo's character should not be rude when talking to the official; if he was rude, the official would not help him and would make him wait longer.

For me, this moment highlighted the learners' capabilities in two ways. Firstly, I commended Lukhanyo's improvisational abilities because there was no sign on the wall that had rules; he added that detail to the interaction. Upon reflection, he indicated that he knows from having been to the local Home Affairs offices, there are signs and notices on the wall that tell people about important information papers needed for documentation. Here, the learners had the freedom to interpret the LO content (DoE-LO, 2011:10) through discussion, acting as well as reasoning (Wagner, 1999:66). Working through a drama model created opportunities for them to make connections between the real world and the LO curriculum concepts. Secondly, the learners' reflections on this scenario were evidence of their ability to think critically about how they ought to confront oppressive practice. They recognised that confronting unfair practices did not necessarily have to be confrontational; there are other ways of pointing out ill-treatment by referring to the 'law' or 'rules' that govern a certain institution.

Though I recognised the limitation of problem solving in this context, I believe that the learners were able to share useful knowledge with each other, as demonstrated by Lukhanyo. As Cattanach (1992:20) said, applying lived experiences to questions and discussions about a certain scenario or theme in the class creates opportunities for connections to be made between the real world and curriculum content being explored. In this instance, learners have

indirectly learned life skills (being aware of notices or information boards) that can help them assert themselves in situations or environments that are unjust. This then supports my argument for teaching learners about labour laws, rights, and any other important information that might be useful once in the work environment or in life as young adults.

4.7 Performing capabilities: Fish ‘n Dip restaurant exhibition and performance

The above-mentioned experience prepared us to explore and rehearse alternative responses to situations and circumstances learners could face in real life. Accordingly, this prepared us to experiment with how drama can become a political tool to interrogate oppressive values and practices in the marketplace (Davis, 2014:4). According to Groce (2004:16), historically, young adults with disabilities have been disadvantaged and discriminated against when it comes to the workforce arena due to the "lifelong cycle of stigma, prejudice, and social isolation". Hence, I saw the Fish ‘n Dip restaurant experience as an opportunity to empower the young adults in the Skills Phase to participate in a different work environment even though this was set up in a fictional world. As Groce (2004:20) says, young people with disability are often denied the chance to explore apprenticeship opportunities because "those around them are quick to label them unemployable and refuse to let them try again". Therefore, I worked together with the learners to create a fictional world allowed for experiments, explorations and the excavation of discoveries, abilities and interests, free from discrimination, prejudice and social exclusion.

The process of the making of Fish ‘n Dip employed strategies such as building belief, T-i-R and role-playing as activities that were geared towards giving the learners the much-needed confidence to relate "problems to themselves in the world and with the world" based on their lived experiences (Cattanach, 1992:20). I explored the idea of a semi-improvisation restaurant performance and exhibition as a way of disseminating both the process and the product, elements of my research project to capture the progress that the learners had made but also to showcase their abilities story maker and performers. I used the restaurant scenario as an educational set-up, and theatrical performance, to highlight their abilities and capabilities. The educational element of the restaurant was in the process that led to the creation of the performance.

4.7.1 The process

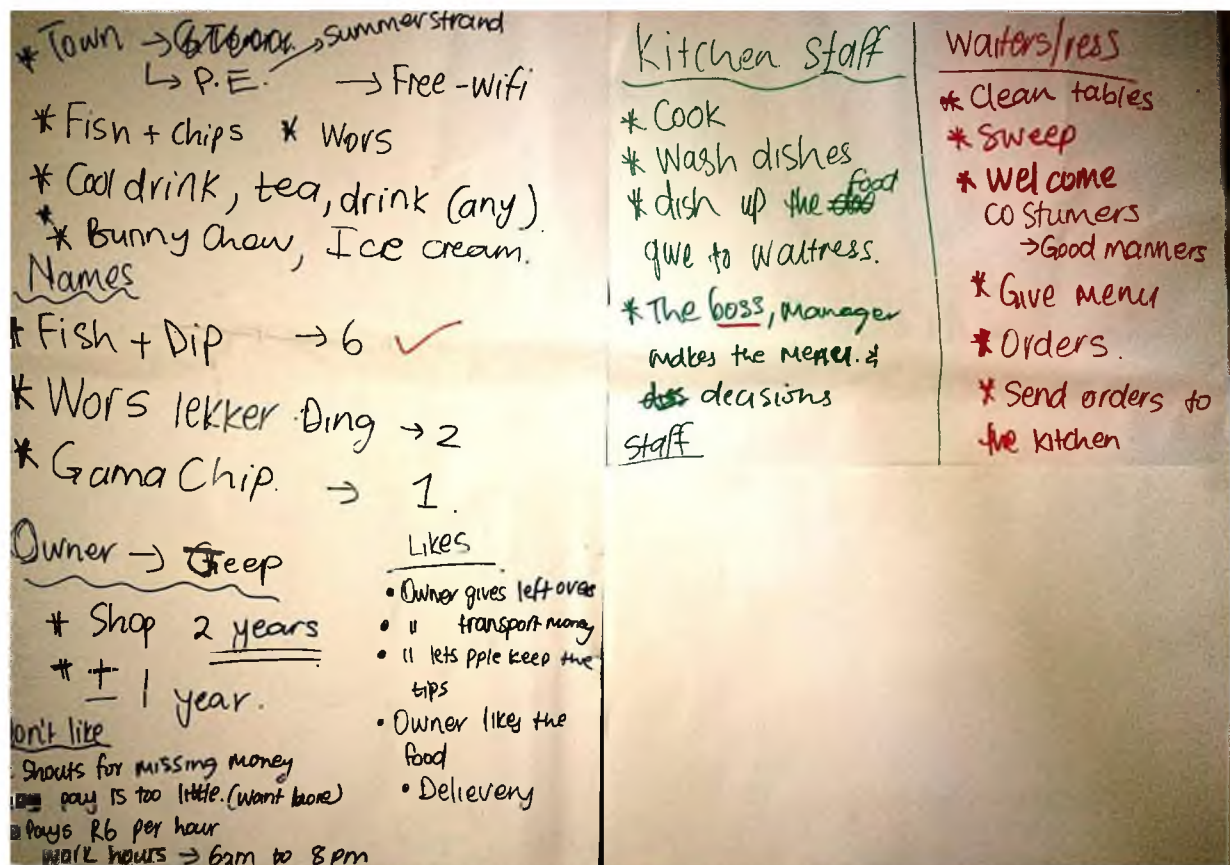


Figure 2: Fish 'n Dip discussion process (Photo Credit: Jonathan Hellemann)

To continue the empowered learner approach, I placed the responsibility of conceptualising and contextualising the restaurant on the learners. I facilitated the process through a series of questions aimed at helping the learners establish the location and the context of the restaurant. At this stage, the building belief strategy helped the learners to invest and buy into the fictional world of drama we were creating together. T-i-r, therefore, offered the flexibility of asking questions in and out-of-role (Wagner, 1999:128). While out-of-role, I asked questions that helped the group decided on the name of the restaurant (Fish and Dip Lekker Ding!); the characters; the working conditions of the workers i.e. wage negotiations; and transport arrangements for the late shift. This interaction transformed the classroom space into a democratic one.

As demonstrated on the discussion board in Figure 2, the building belief technique helped everyone involved buy into the shop idea. Questioning shifted the learners' status from "passive responders" to "fellow makers" while positioning them to work in partnership with me, as the teacher, to acquire knowledge (Bolton & Heathcote, 1999:119). The group made

clear choices about who works in which section of the restaurant. For example, those who were known to be impatient, volunteered (themselves and by others) to work in the kitchen, while others volunteered to work in the front as waiters because they knew they were good with people.

Without having to ‘teach’ them about the roles each person had to play, the learners were able to draw on their own experiences to articulate the job responsibilities of a waiter and what working in the kitchen involves. The group decided that the front of house people needed to be friendly and have communication skills, while kitchen staff had to be able to cook, be fast, and clean up very well. This knowledge enhanced the roles of the characters they played. I introduced the improvised interaction during the rehearsal process where learner in-role had to approach customers. I played the different roles of customer-in-role. This gave me the opportunity to ‘work within the group’ and provoke responses through different characters (Neelands, 2004:51).

During the rehearsal process, approaching the customers (played by myself) in a restaurant was often unsettling for some participants, as they often withdrew from making any decisions or confrontations. The process was, however, set up to get everyone to think about how they would react to unsettling interactions in the workplace; so, to help the participants, I used multiple characters (grumpy, happy, unhappy, difficult) to pose problems, either asking for help, or being unhappy with my order, or refusing to pay the bill and asking for the manager. As Mimick (1999:286) suggested, “drama can be used to cope with unsettling experiences”. The advantage here is that learners can try as many ways of approaching the situation as possible, as they are not limited by real life.

Through various t-i-r characters, the learners got to rehearse alternative responses to each situation in preparation for the two audience groups. I invited the Kuyasa audience (with the permission of the Skills Phase learners) for a dress rehearsal interaction/performance, which gave us the opportunity to “test, shape and develop their drama abilities” (Hayhow & Trowsdale, 2013:75). We also used it as an opportunity to reflect on what worked, what other ways one could respond, and determined what the consequences of each response would be. Moreover, this exercise built the learners' confidence to perform, and to approach customers, as well as how to solve problems at the moment.

4.7.2 The product: Interactive exhibition performance



Figure 3: Dress rehearsal run for the Kuyasa staff and fellow peers (Photo credit: Paul Greenway)

For this performance, I had to consider the disability arts representation politics that surround performances by disabled performers, especially learning-disabled performers. Historically, disability theatre practices framed as ‘freak show’s performances often portrayed disabled performers in a manner that shames and ridicules performers physical impediments (Kuppers, 2003:46). This meant that disabled performers were presented as grotesque figures, often trapped in a cage, and they would have to perform unsuccessful tricks to escape (Kuppers, 2003:47). This passive positioning and presentation were not only disempowering but it also perpetuated disability stigma and stereotypes. By positioning disabled performers as bodies with no opportunities for success and change, the performers become objects of the audience's attention in a manner that does not celebrate their talent and abilities, but rather mocks the performers and presents them as victims of their differently abled bodies (Conroy, 2009:7). The perpetuation of stereotypes that arose from this problematic gaze is an example of how society further disables people. Thus, with the development of the social model of disability the need to redefine disability also influenced the need to revisit how theatre companies present and represent disabled bodies on stage.

In contemporary theatre practices, the gaze has since progressed to focus on a liberated and respected disabled performer who is empowered, through active participation and decision-making. Contemporary practices are more aware of politics of representation, especially of bodies that are culturally and socially oppressed (Kuppers, 2003:69). Now, theatre is progressively becoming more inclusive, as it is no longer a profession reserved only for able bodies, but also a space to encourage positive public visibility of disabled performers (Kuppers, 2011:86). The more inclusive theatre has created opportunities for disabled artists to be part of mainstream theatre programmes and companies (Kuppers, 2014:99).

Theatrically, as a semi-structured restaurant improvisation, the performance captured the essence of a real-life social event, open to an audience consisting of Kuyasa learners and staff, RU staff, as well as an external examiner. I became intentional about using this performance to highlight capabilities, instead of reinforcing misconceptions, about learners with intellectual barriers to learning (Hargrave, 2015:38). As a non-disabled facilitator and teaching-artist, I needed to ensure that the learners were empowered as fellow story-makers in the process so that together we could create a performance that would "meet the expectations of the audience and the examiners" (Hargrave, 2015:37). As a problem posing framework, t-i-r offered a practical way of staging workplace scenarios in a fictional world (Freire, 1993:67).

The restaurant scenario reflected a real-life situation, regarding relationships, interactions, and everyday tension. The classroom space was physically transformed into a 'make-believe' restaurant environment. Positioned as experts, the learners made decisions about practicality, functionality and overall 'look' of the restaurant. They added tables and chairs, made menus (Appendix J) as well as a signage for the restaurant. The transformation also extended to developing the characters and the performance space, which included incorporating 'costumes' (aprons they made at school) and props (cups and serviettes). The learners also made lemonade as part of their skills development, which we served during the interaction/performance.

The tension of this drama performance was in the unknown outcome of the interactions (as in real life) and this uncertainty allowed the participants to build relationships, whether negative or positive. Bolton and Heathcote (1999:181) claimed that the "unknowness" [sic] of the process drama frees participants from the need to master skills, thus allowing them to make

the story up as it happens, without personal judgment about their creation i.e. am I doing it right or wrong.

Though the learners were not theatre trained, they did very well in maintaining the integrity of the improvisation. For the final product/performance, the learners approached the ‘real’ customers (RU drama department staff, students, as well as Kuyasa grounds and teaching staff). The interaction started off with a warm-up game chosen by the learners. The game is a well-known African children’s game called ‘Molo MaDlamini’, which is a call and response song and action activity between two participants. I used this game as a method of warming the audience up for participation, and to introduce them to the performers. The activity played an important part in positioning the audience and the performers as co-creators and active participants in the exhibition/performance.

I used emoji²¹ stickers (Appendix K) with distinct emotions that determined the type of customer each audience member ought to play. This made the responses unpredictable, which gave the learners opportunities to try as many problem-solving strategies as possible. The learners’ strategies ranged from offering customers new orders, calling the manager to help, being polite, being rude, and so forth, which they had explored during the rehearsal process. According to Bolton and Heathcote (1999:272), the final product offers a reflective opportunity for the participants and the audience to engage with how they saw themselves before the playmaking, and who they are after it. The performance highlighted the learners’ cognitive abilities and problem-solving skills in a work environment. Seeing the learners grow in decision-making and interpersonal confidence was a privilege. They shared their thoughts and reflections as follows:

“Drama was fun I learned how to talk to people out loud in front of other people I learned that if you are in charge you cannot sit and do nothing.” Jabu

“Drama has taught me about acting, singing songs and dancing. It made me believe in myself that I can have fun.” David

“Drama has been nice – we wrote menus helping each other – using real lemon juice was fun.” Kamva

²¹ These are electronic characters commonly known for their varied facial expressions displaying human emotions (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoji>)

Hatton (2009:91) claimed that role-playing in a drama workshop allows social stereotypes to be challenged, by providing alternative stories/realities. We invited the teachers and fellow peers to witness ‘what the learners can do’, and reflect on what they had witnessed. This interaction offered a space for “dialogue and connections with others in an imaginary world” (Hayhow & Trowsdale, 2013:75).

Participating in an activity that allows one to succeed adds a sense of achievement and boosts self-esteem as well as self-awareness. The Skills class teacher shared her observations as follows:

Drama lessons have made the learners outspoken and more prepared to challenge decisions made by me as their teacher. Some were hesitant to partake but then changed their attitudes and could not wait for drama days. The upcoming school concert is also less of a challenge and the learners are eager to show off. (Teacher E)

Moreover, Mimick (1999:283) argued that learners get to discover who they are, what they like, and who they can be, thus destabilising status quo thinking. Drama served the project by creating a space for the real world to meet the imagined world through make-believe contexts that drew on real experiences (Neelands, 2004:49-50). For the learners at Kuyasa, the restaurant interaction was an example of how status quo thinking can shift not only in their own thinking but also in how others view them in relation to the social world. Positioned as experts, they understood the demands of a hospitality career in a practical learning context. The performance served as a practical learning method that taught learners functional skills. They performed well in a drama context, and there was an audience to witness them do something well (Hayhow & Trowsdale, 2013:75). According to one of the audience members,

At first, I was nervous because I played the grumpy customer so I kept throwing tantrums and not once did my waiter retaliate, instead they kept meeting my demands. Overall I was impressed with their interaction and confidence as they served quite a difficult customer. (‘Grumpy customer’)

In the live performance, nothing was hidden as the audience saw the learners in action, making decisions, interacting with different people, communicating, all the while engaging in a situation they have not been exposed to before (Kuppers, 2003:68). The audience witnessed how the performance gave the learners a new language of expression and individuality (Karafistan, 2004:266). I have had the privilege of seeing the learners develop this new

language of expression, but I wanted the audience to understand the journey we had taken as a group to get to this final performance. The documentation of the drama process had to be part of the live performance and interaction, to show the progress the learners had made. The material explored during the process were put on display as part of the exhibition. It was also important for the learners themselves see how far they had come, and “reflect, recall and assess” some of the theatrical choices they had made on the stories told (Zatzman, 2003:36).

The interaction ended off with the learners inviting the audience (RU staff and students) to view and purchase the art and craft products which the learners made throughout the year. These were on display, together with video material and photographs that I collected during the research, to capture the drama process with the Skills Phase class. The drama experience opened up other ways of showcasing capabilities and abilities, which incorporated the learners’ strengths and skills they had learned at school and the skills they had explored throughout the process.

4.8 Reflection: How effective was t-i-r as a problem-posing approach in the Skills Phase classroom at Kuyasa Special School?

For this section, I propose that instead of trying to prove whether the learners now view themselves differently, it would be more fitting to reflect on how the exposure to drama techniques such as t-i-r, storytelling, and role-playing, helped the learners find new confidence and discover their abilities. Thus, reflecting on drama teaching methods that were used as in experimental learning activities to bring out learners other capabilities is a necessary task (Sellman, 2012:5). My argument is that drama addressed the learners’ academic needs by allowing them to solve problems in practical contexts such as role-playing scenarios, which were set up to mirror societal relationship and interactions. Then the learners had the opportunity to explore and discover different ways of problem-solving.

This argument is the foundation from which I argue how drama benefited the Kuyasa Skills Phase learners. Academically, drama put the learners in a position to challenge the medical model classifications explored in Chapter 2. TO remind the reader, these classifications characterised learners with intellectual disabilities as having “difficulty with **transition**; being afraid of **trying new things**; having difficulty in **problem-solving**; having difficulty **remembering things** well; being unable to **transfer learning to a new situation**; finding it difficult to **comprehend**” (Oesterreich, in Moosa, 2014:14) [emphasis added].

In response to the abovementioned quote, the drama sessions at Kuyasa demonstrated that learners with intellectual barriers to learning are in fact able to

- Deal with transitions as every week we explore different aspects of the Grade 10-12 LO curriculum. This improved the learners' access to at least one further education training subject. Scenarios were used to explore high-status jobs, where learners had to play empowering roles and characters that are not limited to low-status careers. This extension served to challenge negative perceptions that teachers have on what learners can or cannot do in the classroom.
- Try new things as every session included participatory activities that required the learners to learn new drama skills such as role-playing, movement and vocal explorations in forms of songs and sounds. In this regard, all activities were carefully planned and executed to maintain Freire's problem-posing teaching approach and they align with the capability approach.
- Problem solve in and out of role through action and reflection strategies. Learners engaged with workplace scenarios “relating to themselves in the world and with the world, thus, they felt increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to the challenge” (Freire, 1993:62).
- Remember things well as each session was structured for progression building on previous sessions. Therefore, the learners were always positioned as experts who know the details of the story or the scene that they were creating.
- Transfer learning to a new situation as we explored different scenarios aimed at making informed decisions. Using t-i-r positioned me to confront the “paternalistic thinking and practice” that encourages one-dimensional learning (Freire, 1993:55). The learners were motivated to suggest, and try different solutions based on scenarios and fictional work situations. Their responses were unique and ‘authentic’, in the sense that they did not seek ‘superficial’ solutions but rather solutions that were relatable to the learners' lived experiences. Therefore, I believe that the skills they learnt in that context are transferable to a real-life hospitality career environment.

Emotionally, drama with the Skills Phase class addressed the needs of the learners as a tool for expression and a medium that moves between what learners understand to be true about

themselves, and what the community or society perceives to be true about that learner (1999:281). The creation of characters and roles allowed learners to form new identities that were different to the negative labelling and perception that society had imposed on them. Thus, “the adoption of alternative, fictional roles became a useful tool for subverting the expectations attached to a diagnostic label” (Hatton, 2009:92).

Applying Hayhow and Trowsdale's (2013) capability approach, the project incorporated the learners' diverse and personal capabilities such as public speaking, leadership skills, teamwork and participation skills. Drama mediums of expression and communication made the learners' personal capabilities recognisable. As Hayhow and Trowsdale (2013:74) stated, it is through physical action (as well as the oral and visual modes) that the "theatrically untrained" can engage in expressing ideas and feelings in ways individual to them. Therefore, drama as a multimodal experience for the Skills Phase learners embraced various strengths and capabilities.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

International practitioners like Heathcote, Peter, and Cattanach have paved the way for drama as a pedagogical practice within the special needs community. Their practice highlights the importance of *active* learning and participation in the classroom, thereby validating drama as a rigorous methodology. Drama not only encourages learners to think and participate, but it plays a crucial role in challenging the traditional student-teacher relationship, founded upon authority, power, and submission. This pedagogical practice helps us to understand the importance of adopting a problem-posing pedagogy, which is creative and co-dependent. Accordingly, the strategies and techniques of the newer teacher-student model embrace the classroom as a democratic space, wherein liberated pedagogy can take place.

Arguably, education can never be purely learner-centred or teacher-centred. Instead, it requires a partnership, negotiation, and a non-authoritarian relationship between the teacher and the students. Drama becomes a tool that allows and sets up this student-teacher relationship exchange – an exchange that every learner in South Africa should be afforded.

Drama research with learners with intellectual barriers to learning remains an untapped field in South Africa. It offers opportunities for a liberated pedagogy in South African special needs schools. The case study has shown how drama strategies such as t-i-r can be effective as creative teaching methods. As a learner-orientated and empowering strategy, t-i-r benefitted the Skills Phase learners in that it promoted co-relational teaching and learning partnership that was multi-layered with practical, and accessible ways of teaching and learning the LO Grade 10-12 curriculum concepts and topics. Employing a cross-curricular approach in the Skills Phase classroom practice resolved the issue of dividing the curriculum into separate subjects, with separate “intellectual processing categories”, which makes learning abstract (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995:31). As an added benefit to the learners' experience, the cross-curricular pedagogical strategy afforded the learners with the change to engage in rigorous learning experiences that invited the learners to draw upon their own experiences and knowledge in order to make the learning material relevant and relatable to them. In this regard, the learners learnt the following skills:

- Problem solving skills.
- Communication of ideas and opinions regarding the topics explored in the lessons.

- Critical thinking about the choices they made and understanding the responsibilities that come with apprenticeship opportunities such as the one set up in the fictional restaurant interaction.
- Story making and playmaking skills.

The careful crafting, of the semi-improvised interaction/performance and exhibition, ensured that no further disability stigma can be unwittingly perpetuated. Instead, the interaction/performance and exhibition sought to empower learners, by showcasing their capabilities as experts that conceptualised and ran a restaurant. This started the process of thinking about alternative career interests while understanding the demands of that career in a practical context. Improved access to drama opportunities such the one the study presents is needed in order to create spaces for learners to participate in real-life scenario interactions. The sustainability of this approach depends on the teachers themselves, as facilitators who are willing to create a space where such interactions are encouraged.

Adopting a cross-curricular approach is an essential step towards embracing inclusive pedagogical methods that make learning interconnected and relevant for the learners as seen with the learners at Kuyasa. Through a series of workshop training, teachers can be shown strategic ways of planning lessons that combine curriculum subjects with similar themes and concepts. Although I am making an argument for teachers to adopt t-i-r as a teaching technique to improve practice their classrooms, I recognise that they would require extensive training on how to implement t-i-r.

Notably, teacher apathy towards training is a challenge in South Africa, therefore, t-i-r training would have to follow a different training approach that takes teachers' apathy and time constraints into account. I suggest that collaborations between drama practitioners and special needs educators be considered as a beneficial approach that will improve learners' access to D-i-E practices. This pedagogical approach could work, especially with drama practitioners who are considering using drama for educational purposes, either by running workshops in schools with children or by running workshops with teachers during school hours. The collaborations also become opportunities for further research in the area of D-i-E and special needs teacher training.

Collaborations with drama practitioners can be geared towards bridging the gap between those who are drama trained and those who are non-drama trained. For instance, drama practitioners who are well skilled and experienced in drama techniques such as games, storytelling and t-i-r could show teachers how to use these creative strategies and tools to teach different subjects topics and concepts. My own research project with the Kuyasa Special School learners offers insight into how collaborations between Applied Theatre practitioners and special needs schools could work. This approach needs to be sustainable. However, the collaboration ought to include the learners, themselves, as they should also be afforded the opportunities to experience and participate in the proposed drama workshops being created for them, first hand.

For example, teachers could go for workshops on how to use t-i-r together with storytelling in their classroom practice. Here, the teachers could learn how to use different roles, such as low, medium or high-status roles as tools for asking questions when teaching specific themes. In this way, teachers could use t-i-r to challenge traditional student-teacher relationships and challenge the complacency of a teacher-centred pedagogy as narrated by Freire.

However, I also have to acknowledge that this suggestion might be not easily achievable because as expressed in Chapter 2, teachers often have anxieties about implementing drama strategies in their daily teaching. I recognise that this is where this research could be expanded. One of the limitations of my study lies in the fact that I only worked with the teacher assistant, Teacher T, who in reality does not determine the teaching programme. The class teacher, Teacher E, observed only a few lessons and her interaction and participation during the study was limited. I believe that the teachers should they be given a chance to engage with the drama methodology in collaborative workshop sessions with Applied Theatre practitioners in order to overcome their anxieties about teaching through drama techniques. Through t-i-r workshop training, teachers could establish and grow a culture of 'playing' and participating with the learners in a neutral space, thus learning how to use t-i-r to pose problems and create a democratic and empowering learning space.

The workshops could cover themes linked in with the teachers' weekly learning programme (school-to-work linkages structure), incorporating and applying relevant LO themes to the lessons, allowing curriculum extension to occur. In this way, teachers will get practical training that relates to their teaching schedule. The training could start with a series of lesson demonstrations with the learners themselves, with the teacher present, observing, and

participating in the lessons. This would progress to teaching the teachers how to implement t-i-r, starting with how they can use games in their lessons to neutralise the idea of themselves as authoritarian figures. Finally, the teachers would be presented with creative ideas on how to use the t-i-r technique to teach aspects of the LO curriculum to their lessons. This can benefit any special needs classroom practice, and it certainly could have benefitted Teacher E and Teacher T's pedagogical practices in equipping them with tools to find a balance between a teacher-centred pedagogy and a learner-centred classroom practice.

Regarding the apathy of some teachers towards training, I suggest that the t-i-r training is adopted as part of the school's Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)²² teacher development training. This can motivate teachers to participate in the training sessions, thus improving their IQMS ratings. I understand that teachers need the motivation to engage in further training programmes, and, from my personal experience as a teacher, IQMS rating programmes motivate teachers to improve their teaching practice. Returning to Nicolson's idea of Applied Theatre as a gift exchange, the partnership between practitioners and special needs schools needs to continue. Practitioners will benefit, by conducting research that contributes to the growing demand for South African-based case studies in the area of D-i-E. Finally, the primary people who will benefit from this model will be the learners themselves. Access to drama as a creative teaching and learning method allows them to learn through discovery, solve problems, and critically think and engage with the learning material from a practical, instead of abstract, angle.

As a teaching artist, I went to Kuyasa Special School seeking to use my theatre skills as complementary skills that can enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills in special needs classroom. My experiences at the school proved to me that collaborations between theatre practitioners and teachers are a positive move towards inclusive education practices that encourage practical and creative teaching methodologies. Adopting drama as a creative and problem posing teaching method is desirable, especially if you are a teacher who believes in cross-curricular teaching and learning. The project challenged my practice, motivated my teaching approaches and positioned me to witness capabilities, thus changing my views on how a learner with intellectual barriers to learning ought to participate in their learning.

²² A teachers' performance evaluation system developed by the Department of Basic Education aimed at assessing teacher effectiveness in schools, while promoting personal growth, accountability and professional development through further training (DoE, 2014:6).

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Appendices

Appendix A

Dear Parents/Guardians

My name is Phemelo Hellemann and I am a Master's drama student at Rhodes University. I am currently teaching drama in the in the Skills class at Kuyasa School as part of my research. My project is about using drama as teaching method to help with critical thinking and problem solving skills. I am writing this consent letter to request for your permission as parent/guardian of the learner involved in my project because I need to document my research by doing the following:

- Taking pictures and videos of our rehearsals and performance processes.
- Collecting creative materials such as art work to be used for the exhibition
- Put on an Exhibition (open to parents/guardians, teachers, learners, examiners and supervisor) to display our learning process and drama journey

Please note that the recording taken during the lessons will not be shared on social media or any media platform. All recorded material and art work will be returned to the school after the completion of the exhibition. In the research outputs (thesis, academic papers etc), I will not use participants' names, and will make every endeavour to protect your identity by using pseudonyms. I will only use photographs taken during our process with your permission. Before any results are published, you will be able to see them and discuss any changes that you feel are necessary. You are also able to withdraw your child as a participant from the research at any time.

Attestation of agreement and confidentiality:

I, Phemelo Hellemann (the researcher) do hereby swear that all information obtained as a result of this research will be treated in such a way that the confidentiality of the provider of that information will be maintained.

Signed:

Date:

I, (research participant's Parent/Guardian) do hereby acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature, method and purpose of this research project, and have given my informed consent for my child to participate in the project.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix B

Academic Research Information and Consent Form - TEMPLATE

Informed Consent Sheet

**** To be signed in duplicate – one copy to be returned to the researcher and one copy to be retained by the participant.**

Thank you for your participation. By submitting this form you are indicating that you have read the description of the study, are over the age of 18, and that you agree to the terms as described in the short questionnaire that follows:

I have read this form and received a copy of it. I understand the purpose and nature of this study and I am participating voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without any penalty or consequences.

I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction.

Yes

No

I agree to take part in this study and I hereby grant permission for the data generated from this research to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic.

Yes

No

I grant permission under the following conditions:

I grant permission for the research to be recorded and saved for purpose of review by the researcher, supervisor / principal investigator, and ethics committee.

Yes

No

I grant permission for the research recordings to be used in presentations or documentation of this study.

Yes

No

Participant's names and signature _____

Date _____

Researcher names and signature _____

Date _____

Contact If you have any questions at any time about this study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher ****provide your contact details or details of the principal investigator.**

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Appendix C

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 8)

Topic 1: Drama skills development

Topic 3: Interpretation and performance of selected dramatic forms

Life Orientation (Grade 10)

Topic 3: Democracy and human rights

Level: Skills

Session: 7

Date: 19 September 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- Learners can communicate aspects of the character (age, background, aspirations)
- Exploring relationship between characters
- Apply various life skills as evidence of an ability
- Group movement working as one and body percussion
- Interaction- staying in character when not speaking

Content/Concept/Skills:

- ✓ Development of Relationships by understanding status of characters, relationships grow, develop and change appropriately.
- ✓ Explore storytelling through physical characterisation
- ✓ Storytelling: Physical expressiveness: appropriate use of movement and /or stillness

Assessment Standards:

- Improvisation during the process (individual)
- Group work (improvised scene)
- Reflection on own and other's performance

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners' engagement in warm up through observation.
- Individual assessment will be done to see learners' level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task (mask work).

Theme: Explore nature and source of bias and impact of discrimination on individuals and society

Aim: To create character and mood through movement through movement and mask work.

Activity	Description	Skill/motivation	Materials
<p>1. Threat and Protector activity (5 min)</p>	<p>Walking around the room, being aware of each other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make eye contact with as many people as possible. • Now greet as many people as you can. • Without letting anyone know, choose person who is a bomb and the aim is to stay as far as possible from them. • Choose one person to protect you. They have to be between you and the bomb. 	<p>Development of Relationships by understanding status of characters using threat and protector as an introduction.</p>	
<p>2. Magic hat (5 min)</p>	<p>A hat that has a life of its own It's a magic hat. When someone puts it on, the magic begins. The facilitator can decide what the magic properties are. For example, they make you big, small, happy, dance, jump, write, draw, and students respond accordingly.</p>	<p>Use the hat as a tool to develop and change characters/roles appropriately</p>	

<p>3. setting up the characters: discussion (5 min)</p> <p>4. Mask creation (20 min)</p>	<p>Play the song: King of the Jungle What is your favourite wild animal? Is it maybe your clan animal? What are some of its physical features? Can you think of the sounds that it makes? What do you think are some of its favourite things to eat ? Why do you like it? Does it get along with other animals? Is it scared of any animals or other animals scared of it?</p> <p>Now create masks that show cases your animal and its characteristics. Encourage paying attention to details (Have books/pictures ready as reference to details)</p> <p>Each person to show case their mask and explain their choices.</p>	<p>Get the learners to communicate aspects of the character/ animal and how it relates/inspires them.</p> <p>To build on the character development and to encourage independent research.</p>	<p>Wild animals CD Comber</p> <p>Books with pictures of wild animals. Paper plates (with pre-cut masks) Wood glue Stapler Newspaper Scissors</p>
<p>5. Scene Improvisation 15 min</p>	<p>Setting up the space—where are the animals? What kind of day is it. Hot cold? What time of the day, morning night or afternoon?</p> <p>Stand in a circle facing out. Put Masks on and turn around to face into the circle and embody the animal by showing how it walks. Walking around the room with other animals. Does it bump into other animals that it likes or dislikes? How does it react to other animals?</p>	<p>Use questioning to encourage context/location development.</p> <p>Explore storytelling through physical characterisation</p>	<p>Use chairs and cloths to create the environment</p>

<p>Reflections and Closing 5 min</p>	<p>Using animal characters as source of discussion, reflect on the nature and source of bias and impact of discrimination on individuals and society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which animal got along with and why? • Which ones did they not interact with and why? • As an animal that was avoided by others how did you feel about that? 	<p>Using the reflection as a tool to understand and question status of characters and relationships and to explore the reasons behind the decisions/choices made during the interaction.</p>	
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Appendix D

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 7)

Topic 1: Drama Skill development

Topic 2: Drama elements in play making

Life Orientation (Grade 10)

Topic1: Development of the self in society

Level: Skills

Session: 2

Date: 18 August 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- Learn can create aspects of character by using personal information (the self)
- Make clear vocal and physical choices to create personal narrative

Content/Concept/Skills:

- ✓ Vocal expressiveness in spontaneous conversation
- ✓ Explore Self-awareness, self-esteem and self-development
- ✓ Characterisation: observe, imitate and invent detail
- ✓ Changes towards adulthood

Assessment Standards:

- Involvement in the games and focus task(individual)
- Engagement and interaction with others

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners' engagement in warm up through observation.
- Individual assessment will be done to see learners' level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task
- Feedback on individual role will be given by both the facilitator and peers.

Theme: self awareness and identity (getting to know each other)

Aim: Making clear vocal and physical choices to create a personal narrative (critical thinking)

Activity	Description	Skill	materials
Warm-up game Pass the energy (5 min)	One person starts the energy (action and sound) with any part of their body, then they pass it on to another participant. The receive it using the same body part and sound, then change it into their own by making the energy travel to another body part and include a different sound and pass it on to a different participant.	To build up confidence in making creative decisions through imitation and inventing new detail	
Focus task (10 min)	<p>Spell/write your name using any body part. Choose the first three letters of your name and put it into a sequence. Practise a few times to a rhythm and sequence going.</p> <p>Now find a partner and teach them your sequence and them yours. Then put them together to create a movement response.</p> <p>A showing for those who would like to show.</p>	To pay attention to partner's choices and learn their moves	Music CD player
Return to body map (15 min)	Finish body maps from Tuesday	To make clear choices about characters and build up self-awareness.	Fabrics
Choosing costume And home base (10 min)	<p>Choosing a costume for your character based on your body map e.g. maybe similar colours OR A costume that is linked to what you would like to be.</p> <p>Find and create a personal space for you and your body map (your home base) . Where is your home base? It is a bedroom; kitchen, lounge etc. lay out your costume down first.</p>	To build on emotional investment of the character.	Costumes and props Chairs

<p>Embodying the character Individual work (5min)</p>	<p>Discuss daily rituals ie. getting ready in the morning Do it at their personal space in the room. The ritual of putting the clothes on –what do you do before you put the clothes on. They physically get ready to put on the costumes. Afterward, think about the following: How does it make you? If you were to have a different name what would it be? Write it down on a tag and put it on. And your age? Has it changed? What kind of job does your new character do?</p>	<p>Developing ability to communicate aspects of the character.</p>	<p>Name tags Pens and crayons</p>
<p>Keeping the Space Alive with costumes (5 min)</p>	<p>Walking around the room by filling in the empty spaces (we are all walking in town) Pay attention to physical attributes: posture, walking pace (fast slow), are these connected to your age? Make eye contact with first person, greet the second person, third person invite them into your space. (each time it's a different person).</p>	<p>To build up the confidence and bond with the new character before stepping into make-belief world.</p>	
<p>Reflection 5min 5 min pack up</p>	<p>Invite one person to your space and tell them about your world ie. Show them your body map, tell them your new name and age and what you do. Report back to the group (voluntary to those who would like to say what they learnt about each other's new characters. Return costumes and pack body maps safely.</p>	<p>To develop a verbal expression in spontaneous conversation with other character in the room. Also to build the learners self-esteem.</p>	

Appendix E

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 7)
development)

Topic 1: Drama Skill development (phys.

Topic 2: Drama elements in play making

Life Orientation (Grade 10)
responsibility

Topic 2: Social and environmental

(Grade 11)

Topic 3: Democracy and human rights

Level: Skills

Session: 3

Date: 23 August 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- Learner can create aspects of character by using personal information (the self)
- Make clear vocal and physical choices to create personal narrative
- Characterisation: observe, imitate and invent detail
- Explore Self-awareness, self-esteem and self-development
- Vocal expressiveness in spontaneous conversation

Content/Concept/Skills:

- ✓ Changes towards adulthood
- ✓ Explore character relationship
- ✓ Explore Controlled focused movements through mirror work
- ✓ Social skills and responsibilities to participate in civic life
- ✓ Democratic participation and democratic structures

Assessment Standards:

- Involvement in the games and focus task(individual)
- Engagement and interaction with others

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners' engagement in warm up through observation.
- Individual assessment will be done to see learners' level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task
- Feedback on individual role will be given by both the facilitator and peers.

Theme: the world around us and the relationships

Aim: Making clear vocal and physical choices to create a personal narrative and exploring character relationships

Activity	Description	Skill/motivation	Materials
Warm up Physical and vocal warm up (5 min)	1. Do like I do One person in the centre singing—it's a call and response game Do an action and sing playing with pitch and levels.	To develop self-esteem and awareness and ability to contribute to a group activity.	
Focus activity mirroring 10 min	In pairs About daily rituals ie. getting ready in the morning	This is about making clear physical movement choices to tell a personal narrative. It about physical expression.	Comber and CD
Character and costume reunion (5 min)	After morning ritual, participants can put their costumes on from last week. In a circle recap what we remember about the character we interacted with last week i.e. their names their new age, what they did for a living.	This is about finding the truth about each character and revisiting the connection each participant made with their costumes and how they helped them create these characters.	Costumes

<p>Finding the community narrative/story</p> <p>10 min</p>	<p>Ask the following questions.</p> <p>What kind of town do they live in? big/small?</p> <p>What is the name of their town?</p> <p>Who are the people who live in the town?</p> <p>What kinds of jobs do they do?</p> <p>Is there a leader in the town? Who is it?</p> <p>Who gets along and who doesn't ? why?</p> <p>Where do they meet if they need to have a meeting?</p> <p>Who runs the meetings?</p> <p>Select one person to be the scribe to draw the map of the town, facilitator can add other details that need to be written.</p> <p>Now create the world physically using chairs as land marks.</p>	<p>To encourage Learners to create aspects of character by using personal information (the self) and experiences of the world around them. Also making connections to the change to adulthood...ie. 'grown up responsibilities' Social skills and responsibilities to participate in civic life</p>	<p>Newsprint Pens Chairs</p>
<p>Picture and story board</p> <p>Reflection happens at the end of each still image</p> <p>30 min 10 min for each still picture</p> <p>conceptualisation, creation and reflection</p>	<p>Now meeting at the community meeting place. You are now part of the community of people in the picture.</p> <p>Using the protest picture establish a point of conflict in the community.</p> <p>Dividing the paper into three parts to establish a beginning middle and end to track the progression of the story. Add as much detail as possible.</p> <p>What is happening in the picture? Why do we think the people are unhappy?</p>	<p>To help the learners build their imaginary world into a physical world through the use of still images.</p>	<p>Picture News print board markers</p> <p>Take a picture of each still image for documentation and recap purposes</p>

<p>Pack up and clean up</p>	<p>(facilitator to write down the details)</p> <p>Image 1: Lets create our own image of what it happening in the picture. Our picture needs to show who is the leader, who gets along with who and who we are ‘angry’ with? This becomes the middle part of our story. Invite one person to position bodies based on discussion.</p> <p>Image 2: first discuss what can go in the before image. Let the participants make suggestion ie. how where the people before they started striking? Where in the town where the different people (facilitator to write down suggestions) We create another still image that shows a before picture (the beginning) --- invite a different person to position people in the image. They can include themselves in the image.</p> <p>Image 3: what happens after they express their unhappiness? does someone listen to them? Do they get what they want? What happens to everyone after the protest? Do they go back home or clean up, if so who does the clean up? (facilitator to write down details)</p> <p>Create a still image that shows the aftermath of protest?</p>	<p>Exploring democratic participation and democratic structures</p>	
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Appendix F

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 8)
selected dramatic forms

Topic 3: Interpretation and performance of

Life Orientation (Grade 10)

Topic 3: Democracy and human rights

responsibilities

Topic 2: Social and environmental

Level: Skills

Session: 8

Date: 27 September 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- Learners can communicate aspects of the character (age, background, aspirations)
- Exploring relationship between characters
- Apply various life skills as evidence of an ability
- Group movement working as one and body percussion
- Interaction- staying in character when not speaking

Content/Concept/Skills:

- ✓ Development of Relationships by understanding status of characters, relationships grow, develop and change appropriately.
- ✓ Social, constructive and critical thinking skills necessary to participate in civic life such as making informed decisions and taking appropriate action
- ✓ Explore discrimination and unfair treatment
- ✓ Storytelling: Physical expressiveness: appropriate use of movement and /or stillness
- ✓ Develop forms dialogues through the use of indigenous storytelling

Assessment Standards:

- Improvisation during the process (individual)
- Group work (improvised scene)
- Reflection on own and other's performance

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners’ engagement in warm up through observation.
- Individual assessment will be done to see learners’ level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task (mask work).

Theme: Explore discrimination and unfair treatment of individuals in society

Aim: To develop dialogue through storytelling

Activity	Description	Skill/motivation	Materials
6. Applause (5 min)	<p>Everyone stands in a circle. One by one volunteer go into the circle. Each volunteer does or says something that lasts for about five seconds. The rest of the group applaud wildly, whatever the volunteer does. Then the volunteer leaves the circle for the next one to continue the game.</p> <p>To encourage one another and applaud qualities.</p>	Improvisation strategy to build confidence in self and others:	Drums, shakers.
7. Follow the leader (5 min)	<p>Students are invited to form a line behind the teacher and when the music starts, the teacher leads them around the room, wagging a finger, nodding or shaking his/her head, wiggling his/her hips, jumping, hopping, turning, going around furniture (or under, over or through if desired), sliding along a bench, etc. Large, exaggerated movements are used, but care is taken not to encourage them to wave their arms about, or at least not too wildly, so that they avoid injuring someone else in the line.</p>	To develop the confidence to make decisions and take on leadership roles.	Wild animals CD Comber

<p>8. Setting up the characters (15 min)</p>	<p>Revisiting masks from last week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Before putting masks on each person will step into the circle and show their animal moves. □ Stand in a circle facing out. Put Masks on and turn around to face into the circle and embody the animal by showing how it walks. <p>Walking around the room with other animals, avoiding contact at first. For a real challenge to students, and to inject a sense of humour and fun, they can be encouraged to greet each other in silly ways, such as shaking fingers instead of hands, rubbing backs together (gently—a demonstration may be necessary first), touching knees, shoulders, hips, elbows, wrists, feet, etc.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Appropriate music can be played softly in the background. It will help students to move or walk more easily around the room, and may lessen the feelings of self-consciousness on the part of some students</p>	<p>To explore character relationships and let them grow, develop and change appropriately.</p> <p>To also re-establish the make-belief situation created in the last session.</p>	
<p>9. Storytelling: Horns Only) Gcina Mhlope (10 min)</p>	<p>Facilitator/teacher to take on role of storyteller.</p> <p>Out of character, students to gather around and sit on chairs.. Pause the story to allow for next section.</p>	<p>To develop forms dialogues through the use of indigenous storytelling.</p> <p>Therefore the story serves as pre-text in which dialogue will be explored in an improvised interaction between the animals.</p>	<p>Storybook Wild animals CD Comber</p>

<p>10. Animal meetings</p> <p>15 min</p>	<p>The group divides into two...meat eater and non-meat eaters</p> <p>Meat eaters plan the party and must decide on the following: Where is their part happening? Set up the space to show. What day of the week is the party? What is the weather like, Hot cold? What time of the day, morning night or afternoon? Why don't they want non-meat eaters at the party? What will they do if they come to the party? How will they react when they see them? The group must come up with a plan of action.</p> <p>Non-meat eaters How do you feel about not being invited to the party? Is going to the party important for you? Why? What can you do to make sure that you go to the party? Will you be safe? What will you do to make sure that you are not seen? What will you do if the meat eaters catch you there?</p> <p>Group must come up with plan of action</p>	<p>Use questioning technique to encourage dialogue and discussions about how to approach the situation. The groups will be encouraged to come up with problem solving strategies.</p> <p>To explore/enhance Social, constructive and critical thinking skills necessary to participate in civic life such as making informed decisions and taking appropriate action.</p>	<p>Use chairs and cloths to create the environment</p>
<p>Re-enact the party scene:</p> <p>Closing 10 min</p>	<p>Play music to start the party scene. Let group strategies play out. Using animal characters as source of discussion, reflect on the nature and source of bias and impact of discrimination on individuals and society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on their roles, feelings and strategies. 	<p>To critically think about the choices and decisions made during the improvised interaction.</p>	

Appendix G

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 7)

Topic 2: Drama elements in playmaking

Life Orientation (Grade 11)

Topic: Democracy and human rights

Topic: Social and environmental responsibilities

Level: Skills

Session: 9

Date: 11 October 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- Learners can communicate aspects of the character (age, background, aspirations)
- Exploring relationship between characters
- Apply various life skills as evidence of an ability
- Group movement working as one and body percussion
- Interaction- staying in character when not speaking

Content/Concept/Skills:

- ✓ Development of Relationships by understanding status of characters, relationships grow, develop and change appropriately.
- ✓ Shape and development of the scene
- ✓ Reflection on drama: give and receive feedback constructively
- ✓ Respect different opinions

Assessment Standards:

- Improvisation during the process (individual)
- Group work (improvised scene)
- Reflection on own and other's performance

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners' engagement in warm up through observation.
- Individual assessment will be done to see learners' level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task (mask work).

Theme: To explore how theatre can be used to explore different forms of conflict management

Aim: To explore use scene building

Activity	Description	Skill/motivation	Materials
1. Tail collection (5min)	<p>Each participant will be given material to use as a tail. The idea is that you protect your tail but at the same time you are trying to collect as many tails as possible from other participants.</p> <p>Working with what is at stake.</p>	Exploring relationship between characters i.e. protecting what's yours and taking risks to collect more.	Cloth material
2. Tableaux building (10 min)	<p>In threes. One person becomes the person who positions people into the tableaux (a still picture that tells us a story about what is happening). The students take turns to become the person positioning others (the two) to show still pictures of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are sad • People who are happy • People who are upset or mad at each other <p>Note: the teacher/facilitator can use pictures from magazines to start the discussion on how do we read that people are happy or sad or what do they think is happening in the picture.</p>	<p>Develop an understanding of status of characters and relationships.</p> <p>Explore physical representation and expression of emotions.</p>	Magazines (if needed)
3. Conflict discussion (15 min)	<p>In groups of three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students to share an incident they have witnessed of people in conflict ie. Arguing, fighting or having a disagreement, a protest. (careful attention must be paid to details i.e. what where the people fighting about (if known) or how was the conflict resolved (if it were ever resolved) • Each person gets a turn to share his or her story. • The group chooses the story 	To encourage participants to respect different opinions and stories and make a group decision.	

	that they like the most.		
4. Scene building (20 min)	<p>First: the person whose story it is must (together with the other group members) set up the space where the conflict took place. (Can use available furniture in the class).</p> <p>Secondly: Working together the group must re-enact the story in three still moments showing a beginning, middle and end.</p> <p>Thirdly: Add words/dialogue to the three tableaux to build a scene.</p> <p>Note: Please ensure that students with care and sensitivity not to hurt each other physically.</p>	Use personal experiences or encounters to shape and develop the scenes that explore conflict management	
5. Tableaux showings and Closing (10 min)	<p>Each group will show their three tableaux. Other Groups become audience members reflect on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who do they think is right or wrong? • How can the people in the scene resolve their conflict? or suggest an alternative ending of the scene 	<p>Develop an understanding of status of characters and their relationships</p> <p>Encourage Reflection on drama: give and receive feedback constructively</p> <p>Respect different opinions</p>	

Appendix H

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 8)

Topic 1: Drama skills development

Drama (Grade 9)

Topic 3: Dialogues

Life Orientation (Grade 10)

Topic 4: Appreciation and Reflection

Topic: Development of Self in Society

Level: Skills

Session: 6

Date: 15 September 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- Learners can communicate aspects of the character (age, background, aspirations)
- Learner has used Improvisation through the non-spoken i.e. tableaux/ still images
- Exploring relationship between characters
- Listening and responding to cues
- Apply various life skills as evidence of an ability
- Storytelling: Physical expressiveness: appropriate use of movement and /or stillness
- Group movement working as one and body percussion

Content/Concept/Skills:

- ✓ Interaction- staying in character when not speaking
- ✓ Development of Relationships by understanding status of characters, relationships grow, develop and change appropriately.
- ✓ Strategies to build confidence in self and others:
- ✓ Communication, successful completion of tasks or projects, participation in community organisation or life.

Assessment Standards:

- Improvisation during the process (individual)
- Group work (improvised scene)
- Reflection on own and other's performance

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners' engagement in warm up through observation.

- Individual assessment will be done to see learners' level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task (object exploration task).
- Feedback and interpretation of improvised scene will be given by both the facilitator and peers.

Theme: Exploring social relationships and interactions in a social setting.

Aim: To use improvisation as a tool for communication and participation

Activity	Description	Skill/motivation	Materials
11. Touches (5 min)	One person is on and their main objective is to touch someone else so they can be on. Everyone else's objective is to run around the room and away from the person who is on and make sure they are not touched. Whoever gets touched is on immediately.	Warm up to build spatial awareness and fun atmosphere.	
12. object placement (5 min)	Objects to be placed in front of participants. Invite participants to step forward and take turns to rearrange the objects one at a time. A person can only move one item at a time and step back to allow other participants a chance.	To explore the development of Relationships by understanding status of characters/objects, let relationships grow, develop and change appropriately.	Chair A hat and a scarf (or any different three objects)
13. setting up the characters (15 min)	Invite participants to choose magazine and choose a picture of a person that they like (not limited to gender). You are going to become that character. Reflect on the picture choices. Cut the pictures into a head shot and stick it onto the name tag. Then proceed to think about and do the following: ✓ What name would you give them? Write their name on the tag ✓ How old do you think they are?	Extension of the above skills, now applying the skill to character development. Strategies to build confidence in self and others.	Magazines Scissors, glue Name tags Pens/pencils Props (handbags, sunglasses, scarfs, books, phone.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What kind of job do they do? ✓ Choose an item (prop) that would best suit/describe this person in the picture. ✓ How do they walk? Now walk around the room as this character. ✓ Greet the people around you then find one person to introduce yourself to. 		
<p>14. Scene Improvisation 20 min</p>	<p>Scene discussion (5 min) first: Scene is set at Home Affairs</p> <p>What do we need, i.e. Furniture? (Set it up as we discuss)</p> <p>Anyone can go to Home affairs? Why do people go to Home affairs?</p> <p>What do you need to take with you?</p> <p>What happens when you get to Home affairs?</p> <p>Who are the people that you will find there?</p> <p>Do you like standing in a queue?</p> <p><u>Scene</u></p> <p>Teacher T and Prof. Alex are to be in role as front desk character (it's almost lunch time). Anyone in the group enters the scene: They can speak/not, meet someone they know or do something by themselves. The scene can develop and grow with four people at a time.</p> <p>Participants can replace each other at any time but only one person/character a time. The person who wants to go replace someone has to call out freeze and come forward to tap the character they want to</p>	<p>Interaction through improvisation. Opportunity to confront unfair practices/treatment. Also practicing staying in character when not speaking.</p> <p>Improvisation strategy to build confidence in self and others.</p>	<p>A 4 paper Name tags activity</p>

	<p>replace on the shoulder and take their position and let the improvisation carry on. (Please note: here the storyline is not the most important part, the focus is on creating moments of communication and dialogue).</p>		
<p>5 min reflection</p>	<p>Use the front desk character as a point of reference for the reflection.</p> <p>How did that character relate to other people?</p> <p>Did they treat everyone the same?</p> <p>How does their job require them to treat people?</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>To explore different ways of confronting unfair treatment. Try alternative problem-solving methods.</p>	
<p>Closing 5 min</p>	<p>In a circle- take a few deep breaths and release. Pack up props.</p>	<p>Debriefing participants and returning to the 'real' world.</p>	

Appendix I

Learning Area: Drama (Grade 7) development)

Topic 1: Drama Skill development (phys.

Topic 2: Drama elements in play making

Life Orientation (Grade 10) responsibility

Topic 2: Social and environmental

(Grade 11)

Topic 3: Democracy and human rights

Level: Skills

Session: 3

Date: 23 August 2016

Duration: 1 hr

Prior Knowledge:

- **Learner can create aspects of character by using personal information (the self)**
- **Make clear vocal and physical choices to create personal narrative**
- **Characterization: observe, imitate and invent detail**
- **Explore Self-awareness, self-esteem and self-development**
- **Vocal expressiveness in spontaneous conversation**

Content/Concept/Skills:

- **Changes towards adulthood**
- **Explore character relationship**
- Explore Controlled focused movements through mirror work
- Social skills and responsibilities to participate in civic life
- Democratic participation and democratic structures

Assessment Standards:

- Involvement in the games and focus task(individual)
- Engagement and interaction with others

Method of assessment (including who you will assess) Informal assessment

- Whole class assessment involves the learners' engagement in warm up through observation.
- Individual assessment will be done to see learners' level of engagement in thinking creatively during the focus task
- Feedback on individual role will be given by both the facilitator and peers.

Theme: the world around us and the relationships

Aim: Making clear vocal and physical choices to create a personal narrative and exploring character relationships

Activity	Description	Skill/motivation	Materials
Warm up Physical and vocal warm up (5 min)	1. Do like I do One person in the centre singing—it's a call and response game Do an action and sing playing	To develop self-esteem and awareness and ability to contribute to a	

	with pitch and levels.	group activity.	
Focus activity mirroring 10 min	In pairs About daily rituals ie. getting ready in the morning	This is about making clear physical movement choices to tell a personal narrative. It about physical expression.	Comber and CD
Character and costume reunion (5 min)	After morning ritual, participants can put their costumes on from last week. In a circle recap what we remember about the character we interacted with last week i.e. their names their new age, what they did for a living.	This is about finding the truth about each character and revisiting the connection each participant made with their costumes and how they helped them create these characters.	Costumes
Finding the community narrative/story 10 min	Ask the following questions. What kind of town do they live in? big/small? What is the name of their town? Who are the people who live in the town? What kinds of jobs do they do? Is there a leader in the town? Who is it? Who gets along and who doesn't ? why? Where do they meet if they need to have a meeting? Who runs the meetings? Select one person to be the scribe to draw the map of the town, facilitator can add other details that need to be written.	To encourage Learners to create aspects of character by using personal information (the self) and experiences of the world around them. Also making connections to the change to adulthood...ie. 'grown up responsibilities' Social skills and responsibilities	Newsprint Pens Chairs

	Now create the world physically using chairs as land marks.	to participate in civic life	
<p>Picture and story board</p> <p>Reflection happens at the end of each still image</p> <p>30 min 10 min for each still picture conceptualisation, creation and reflection</p> <p>Pack up and clean up</p>	<p>Now meeting at the community meeting place. You are now part of the community of people in the picture.</p> <p>Using the protest picture establish a point of conflict in the community.</p> <p>Dividing the paper into three parts to establish a beginning middle and end to track the progression of the story.</p> <p>Add as much detail as possible.</p> <p>What is happening in the picture? Why do we think the people are unhappy? (facilitator to write down the details)</p> <p>Image 1: Lets create our own image of what it happening in the picture. Our picture needs to show who is the leader, who gets along with who and who we are ‘angry’ with? This becomes the middle part of our story. Invite one person to position bodies based on discussion.</p> <p>Image 2: first discuss what can go in the before image. Let the participants make suggestion ie. how where the people before they started striking? Where in the town where the different people (facilitator to write down suggestions) We create another still image that shows a before picture (the beginning) --- invite a different person to position people in the image. They can include themselves in the image.</p> <p>Image 3: what happens after they express their unhappiness? does someone listen to them? Do they get what they want? What happens to</p>	<p>To help the learners build their imaginary world into a physical world through the use of still images.</p> <p>Exploring democratic participation and democratic structures</p>	<p>Picture News print board markers</p> <p>Take a picture of each still image for documentation and recap purposes</p>

	<p>everyone after the protest? Do they go back home or clean up, if so who does the clean up? (facilitator to write down details)</p> <p>Create a still image that shows the aftermath of protest?</p>		
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Today's Special:

Homemade Lemonade



Drink's Menu

Lemonade

Homemade lemonade served with
soda water

Medium R 10.00

Large R 15.00

Rooibos Tea

With Milk R 5.00

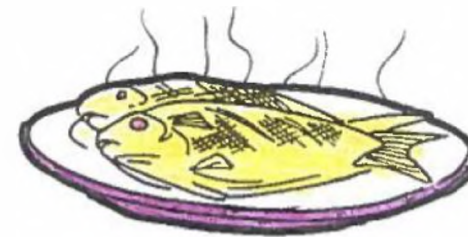
With Lemon

Fruit Juice R 10.00



Food Menu

- Fish
 - Medium.....R 20.00
 - Large Hake....R 30.00
- Chips (small)..... R 15.00
 - Medium..... R 20.00
 - Large..... R 30.00
- Bunny chow..... R 20.00
- Ice cream..... R 10.00

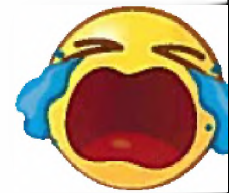


Appendix K

The work presented is a devised and applied Theatre project conducted in collaboration with the learners in the Skills Phase at Kuyasa Special School. The journey that led us to arrive at this interactive exhibition has been one of discovery, vulnerability and self-exploration. This experience captures our processes of learning, and how drama served as a learning medium. We invite you to join our creative world through the following experiences:

1. Improvised interaction/Performance

This is a devised performance with an improvisational interaction experience designed to facilitate the interaction between the audience and the performers through a 'make-believe' world.



2. Exhibition

This experience is set up to show case our creative and learning journey through a collection of rehearsal materials, research discoveries and artifacts created as part of the school's eco-school programme.

Thank you for your support, it is highly appreciated.

A special thank you to the following:

Kuyasa Special School (Principal and Staff)

Kuyasa Skill class