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Power of Play:

Facilitating ensemble 'third space' for active citizenship in Shakespeare education

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Arts Education

University of Warwick, Centre of Education Studies

November 2018

Contents

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of an inspiring trio of women: my Grandmothers Kathleen Kitchen and Hope Hardwick, and my Great Aunt Ruth Mackenzie. The boundaries they broke, the knowledge they passed on and the love they showed led me to this path and I will be forever grateful to them for it.

Writing this thesis would simply not have been possible without the help and support of so many people. First and foremost my funders, the Economic and Social Research Council, not only for the doctoral studentship, but for funding my visiting studentship to Emerson College and two periods of maternity leave. Let it never be said I cannot maximise on a research grant! Closely followed by Shakespeare Schools Foundation, and all my participants for sharing their rehearsal process with such openness.

I have to thank my supervisor, Jonothan Neelands, for everything he has done to support and encourage me. My colleagues, teachers and mentors at Warwick: Joe Winston, Lali Dangazele, and the 2012 ESRC Doctoral Training Centre and CES cohorts have all been inspiring at crucial points. Special mentions to Tracy Irish and Cheryl Cane for being truly inspiring peers and generously reading chapter drafts, to Rachel Dickinson for offering invaluable opportunities to teach and work together, and also kindly reading drafts, and above all to Emily Temple for *everything* – we're out the other side sister! Endless thanks also to the hardworking Lila Tennent, Donna Jay and admin teams at ESRC DTC and CES.

I am so grateful for the open-minded and open-hearted theatre and drama education community; especially Anton Franks and Bridget Escolme for encouraging the first iterations of this project; Michael Finneran for his encouragement and advice; and Bethany Nelson for hosting my visit to Emerson. In the virtual world the amazing online community Women In Academia Support Network have been incredible, and Pat Thomson's academic writing blog has saved me hours, if not weeks of writing angst.

Finally thank you to my mum for teaching me resilience and self-belief; my dad for teaching me journeys and stories never really end; my in-laws for inspiring me with their commitment to conservation work, and for weeks of summer and Christmas childcare; my partner Tamin for never doubting I would do it; and to my beautiful children Rowland and Hope, for sharing me with my first 'baby' for so long. The Big Book is finished kids, lets' get out and play!

Declaration

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree

Two publications have arisen from this thesis and were published during my candidature:

Kitchen, Jennifer (2015) 'The ensemble domesticated: Mapping issues of autonomy and power in performing arts projects in schools' in *Power and Education* 7:1, 90-105

Kitchen, Jennifer (2018) 'Playfulness in performative approaches to teaching Shakespeare' in Mentz O and Fleiner M (eds) *The Arts in Language Teaching. International Perspectives: Performative – Aesthetic – Transversal* LIT Verlag: Berlin

Signed:

Date:

Abstract

Ensemble pedagogy - i.e. teaching and learning which is active, democratic and theatre-based – is increasingly recognised as a valuable approach to teaching Shakespeare, and more broadly as a pedagogy which fosters active and democratic citizenship. However, research has demonstrated when ensemble pedagogy is applied in 'default pedagogy' mainstream school contexts it can become 'domesticated' and lose its democratic focus.

This research draws on the long-held interest in children's play in theatre and drama education practice to suggest a focus on play in ensemble pedagogy could re-centre understandings of the approach around it's democratic genesis. In order to do this, concepts from the socio-cultural second 'paradigm' of play research were drawn on to conceive of playfulness as a subjunctifying mode of discourse.

Through a series of critical ethnographic studies of schools participating in the annual UK ensemble-based Shakespeare Schools Foundation performance festival this study seeks to explore and articulate the role of play as a subjunctive mode of discourse in ensemble pedagogy, particularly in relation to its democratic aims. The results suggest that participants utilised playful discourse to undertake reflexive identity work and to actively and collaboratively play with Shakespeare as a performative text. I theorise this can be understood as the creation of an ensemble third space for active citizenship within their school contexts.

Though there was variation in the extent to which this was achieved in the schools, the active citizenship enacted in these ensemble third spaces can thus be read as an act of social hope. With its co-constructive, generative quality, this framing of ensemble pedagogy resists the metric and miracles rhetoric of domestication and is the core contribution of this thesis.

These findings hold implications for further space, identity and discourse focused research in theatre and drama education, and for developing ensemble pedagogy training approaches in Shakespeare education and beyond.

List of Abbreviations

BTEC Business and Technology Education Council

CAPITAL Centre Creativity and Performance in Teaching and Learning

EAL English as an Additional Language

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education

LPN Learning Performance Network

MAAT More Able And Talented

NQT Newly Qualified Teacher

OfSTED The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

RSC Royal Shakespeare Company

SEN Special Educational Needs

SSF Shakespeare Schools Foundation

TIE Theatre in Education

List of Tables

1   Introduction

 "You can be an ensemble in the class during other lessons as well. And to outside when you go market, and when you see people, like that."

(Rohima, Statten Park Focus Group 1, 2013)

1.1   Research aims and core concepts

Ensemble approaches to theatre and drama education have gained popularity in recent years, particularly within active Shakespeare education, (Banks, 2014; Kitchen, 2014; Monk, Heron, et al., 2011; Winston, 2015) but also more broadly. (Enciso et al., 2011; Heron and Johnson, 2017; Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011; Munday et al., 2016; Neelands and Nelson, 2013; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012) The metaphor of ensemble as an approach to pedagogy in theatre and drama education seems to express many of the core aims and claims of the field by seeing potential for the embodiment of social justice as located in its collaborative, egalitarian and performative nature. This chimes with an increased interest in research and practice on the role of social justice in theatre and drama education. (Finneran and Freebody, 2016; Freebody and Finneran, 2018; Gallagher, 2016c; Gallagher and Jacobson, 2018; Hughes and Nicholson, 2016b; Nicholson, 2003) In particular, a recent edited volume on the topic points out while there has always been attention, and tension, in the field of theatre and drama education around social justice, it has noticeably grown in volume and complexity in recent years. (Finneran and Freebody, 2016)

 And yet, as I argue in this thesis, focusing on theatre in mainstream western school contexts, alongside this there is increasing evidence of the 'domestication' (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004) of these approaches, which sees them both translated into the narrow, audit-based structures of 'default' school pedagogies (Enciso et al., 2011; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012; Thomson et al., 2010, 2012) and positioned as simplistic claims of emancipatory 'transformation'. (Hunka, 2015; Neelands, 2004; Sahni, 2016)

This troubling gap between rhetoric and practice is what this thesis seeks to address. As scholars across theatre and drama education and beyond have expressed, this is a timely issue in light of the increasingly unequitable and undemocratic nature of social, political and economic relations in many contexts across the globe. (Hughes and Nicholson, 2016b;

Neelands, 2010a; O'Connor and Anderson, 2015) Gallagher highlights that sociologists now speak of 'social closure' to describe the unprecedented lack of social mobility, arguing this is tantamount to a picture of our world as 'democracy in peril'. (Gallagher, 2016b:53) In the weeks leading up to the submission of this thesis alone, UK news has reported a United Nations report into the outcomes of economic austerity policies in this country amount to the perpetuation of poverty by political choice, which has inflicted 'great misery' on its citizens. (Booth and Butler, 2018) While the readers' letters page of the same paper speaks of fears over "the global move to the far right" (*The Guardian*, 2018) If there exists, as ensemble pedagogy seems to be, an approach which can convincingly promise a pedagogy for active citizenship in a way that appears to speak directly to many practitioners' aims, yet is being compromised in practice at the very time education is arguably most in need of that active, democratic citizenship this approach is worthy of further study to understand and move towards remedying the issue. Thus, in order to address the issue of the domestication of ensemble pedagogy and other social justice-oriented theatre and drama education practices, I argue what is need is a reassertion of the critical social epistemology of these approaches, and a deeper exploration into the core teaching practices they require.

Specifically, the core hypothesis of this study is that utilising 'play' as a theoretical and empirical lens offers a way to respond to both of these needs; and can offer a conceptualisation of ensemble pedagogy which can avoid domesticating translation into the limiting languages of metrics or miracles and rather begin to make good on the complex promise of providing social hope in an increasingly unjust world. In order to develop and explore this hypothesis, qualitative empirical research was undertaken in the form of a critical ethnography of an inner London secondary school participating in the national school theatre education project Shakespeare Schools Foundation. This research was led by a dual set of specific and empirical research questions, (Punch, 2009) which first sought to frame and locate the scholarly enquiry by asking:

1. How can 'ensemble' as a theatre education pedagogy be defined?
2. How can the role of playfulness in ensemble projects such as Shakespeare School Foundation be conceptualised?
3. To what extent can this conceptualisation be utilised empirically?
4. What can this focus on playfulness reveal about the processes of ensemble theatre education projects?

And then to lead the empirical research by asking:

a) How is 'ensemble' understood by participants?
b) How is this enacted in practice?
c) Is playfulness evident and meaningful for participants in making sense of and enacting 'ensemble'?
d) What characterises this playfulness?
e) Does there appear to be any contextual prerequisites for playfulness?
f) What, precisely, do participants achieve through their playfulness? Why is this relevant to the understanding and enacting of 'ensemble'?

From analysis of the empirical data, and relevant literature, I have concluded that - viewing play as a subjunctive mode of discourse; both in teacher student interactions, and in discursive playing of a text – this playfulness can open up third spaces within normative school contexts. (Bhabha, 2004; Massey, 2005; Soja, 1999; Thomson et al., 2012) Utilising a Foucauldian model of discourses of power (Aitken, 2009; Foucault, 1975) this notion of ensemble pedagogy projects as playfully creating hybridising third space demonstrates how such practice can afford opportunities for active citizenship which can consciously navigate and recalibrate geometries of power. These ensemble pedagogy third spaces can thus be understood as sites of social hope, (Gallagher, 2015; Green, 2008; Nolan and Stitzlein, 2011) a generative model which resists both the metric and miracle rhetorics of 'domestication'. This critical social framework grounded on the notion of playing in spaces of power therefore offers a language of ensemble pedagogy which centralises its social justice aims; and offers an understanding of teaching practice framed by notions playful discourse.

1.2 Positioning the researcher

My search for a language for ensemble pedagogy is on one level a search for my own language as a theatre education practitioner and scholar. My core training as a practitioner was through the University of Warwick MA in Drama and Theatre Education, where the teaching and support was led by scholars deeply versed in ensemble pedagogy; (Neelands, 2009a, 2009b; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012) in notions of theatre education as collaborative and moral beauty; (Winston, 2005, 2010) and in understandings of theatre education as embedded in wider community spaces. (Turner-King, 2018) It was these

principles which shaped my experience of working collaboratively and actively with my coursemates.

I graduated in 2009 inspired to realise the possibility of egalitarian theatre education as a catalyst for social justice and change, but swiftly met an era of increasing cuts and austerity under the 2010 Conservative-Liberal Democrat government. However, I took this zeal forward into my first professional role as Practitioner in Residence at Shakespeare's Globe. At this heritage theatre venue I engaged more deeply with how a theatre's spatial affordances and cultural history can inform educational work, and was delighted to find resonances between my post graduate training and historical readings of Shakespeare and his troupe of fellow actors as an ensemble. (Banks, 2014) In work which owed a debt to the active Shakespeare ideas of Cecily Berry (2008) and Rex Gibson, (1998) and which sought to make Shakespeare accessible for the diverse London Borough of Southwark in which the theatre was located, I struggled with how to make sense of occupying a space which spoke to the cultural reverence of Shakespeare as elite art, whilst simultaneously opening up his texts as universal and accessible.

As my practice developed I increasingly worked in primary and early years' settings, whether delivering Shakespeare-related work, or later as a freelance storyteller, workshop and youth theatre leader. I became fascinated by the variety of ways play seems to cut across the most basic and complex of theatre education work and offered opportunities for engaging with multifaceted human and social issues through this playfulness. Yet my opportunities to actually engage in this rich work steadily decreased as I encountered trends such as schools booking whole-school 'interactive assemblies' rather than workshops in order to stretch limited funds; being required to work through large scale companies delivering standardised workshops; and supporting employers in gathering abstract and tangential data required by funders. These parallel experiences, against a background of a world in which, as referenced above, callous austerity policies were starting to yield casualties led me to consider what I felt – feel – is profound social power of theatre education was increasingly being lost, or miscommunicated.

This led me back to research; to shelter from the economic impossibilities which did not grant me space to question these issues which felt so central to my practice. In a research project which grew from early iterations framed around expressions of value, and processes and principles of evaluation and impact assessment it became clear I was above all searching for an authentic language to express the power of this work, and

simultaneously questioning what claims to power could be authentically made. I felt dissatisfied on the one hand by traditional process drama and theatre-in-education rhetorics, which seemed too often to rest on woolly and mystic claims; and frustrated on the other by a drive to uncritically translate the outcomes of the work into the positivistic, audit-driven models. This is my core positionality from which I have undertaken this project: grounded in the realities of theatre educational practice; yet yearning for a more informed space to reflect on them; committed to the potential power of the work; yet unwilling to accept discourses of this power which lack the richness and nuance to express its full strength, complexities and challenges.

1.3   Thesis structure

Chapters two and three of this thesis deal with the literatures surrounding ensemble pedagogy and play respectively. In chapter two I first map the scholarly genesis of ensemble pedagogy, grounded in the collaborative work of The University of Warwick's CAPITAL Centre with the RSC under the artistic directorship of Michael Boyd. This is followed by an exploration of the approach in practice; via RSC reports and other empirical studies I build a case for the threat of domestication. Chapter three offers play as a potential mediator to this issue; and opens with grounding this hypothesis in the long-standing use of play in theatre and drama education literature. Via Sutton-Smith's framework of play 'paradigms' and rhetorics I undertake a mapping of the uses of play and playfulness in theatre and drama education literature, through this I conclude first 'paradigm' developmental and psychological models commonly referred to in educational contexts fail to speak to the critical, social justice orientation of ensemble pedagogy; while the second 'paradigm' socio-cultural theories of play, particularly those positioning it as a subjunctivising mode of discourse, have potential as a language of ensemble pedagogy. These two literature-focused chapters are followed by the shorter chapter four, which contextualises the preceding two chapters in the field of active Shakespeare education, considering in particular the cultural value and positionality of Shakespeare within ensemble pedagogy approaches which seek to promote egalitarian active citizenship; and also introduces Shakespeare Schools Foundation as the site of my empirical research.

In chapter five I lay out my research methodology, beginning with what I have come to view as three starting principles of qualitative research, and from there discussing how the demands of my research questions led me to critical ethnography as a methodological

framework. Following this I consider how the epistemological demands of this approach prompted three core reflexive moves which informed my research design. I then discuss substantive issues of research such as ethics and validity; and the use of specific data generation methods. I finally offer a brief research outline of both the pilot and main ethnography studies.

Chapter six presents the analysis of the pilot study, consisting of four case studies of schools undertaking Shakespeare Schools Foundation in 2013. From a thematic analysis across the cases, I identify three core sensitising concepts: the exploration of identity through play; the creation of third spaces, and the playing of Shakespeare in third spaces. I take these forward into the analysis of the main critical ethnography in chapter seven, where I utilise them to explore the ways playful identity discourse was utilised by the participants to construct a sense of ensemble 'family'. I then go on to explore the affordances of this 'family' in terms of active citizenship as understood via civic caring. The second part of the chapter details the ways a playful approach to the Shakespeare text in rehearsal facilitated an autonomous, active and collaborative exploration of the text by the participants, whilst also highlighting where the teacher's hierarchical approach to directing and attempts to circumnavigate engagement with Shakespeare's complex language limited this playing of the text.

In the closing discussion of chapter eight I directly consider the contribution of this playful, spatial model of ensemble pedagogy with regards to the thesis' aims of rearticulating the critical social quality of ensemble pedagogy and deepening understanding of the teaching practices it necessitates. It is here I consider the implications for further research and practice; and also highlight some limitations of the study. From this, I ultimately conclude that the model of ensemble pedagogy as playful constructed third space offers a framework for centralising the potential for socially hopeful active citizenship in this work, and thus moves towards combatting its domestication and speaks to furthering social-justice concerned theatre and drama education in these times of 'democracy in peril.'

2   Ensemble Pedagogies

This research focuses on the notion of ensemble pedagogy as a specific area of theatre education practice. Hence this chapter sets out first to explore the genesis and development of the approach. Through close examination of a core group of theatrical and educational texts which develop the notion of ensemble as a pedagogic endeavour (Boyd, 2009; Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain, 2004; Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011; Neelands, 2009a, 2009b, 2010c; Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011; Winston, 2015) I will map the links this approach draws across the worlds of performative, constructivist, experiential and democratic education traditions, utilising Neelands' understanding of ensemble as a 'bridging metaphor' (Neelands, 2009a, 2010c). Having expanded on the intellectual traditions behind the approach, I will then address in more detail the necessarily processional and provisional nature of ensemble pedagogy as implied through these traditions and consider how the approach has been understood and applied in practice, as discussed in the core texts above and in further empirical research. (Enciso et al., 2011; Neelands and Nelson, 2013; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012; Thomson et al., 2010) Building on this, and drawing from evidence in the evaluation of the RSC's Learning Performance Network programme and other drama education research I argue ensemble pedagogy is at risk of 'domestication', (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004) i.e. a loss of connection with its rich progressive and critical intellectual heritage, when applied within the narrow, audit-focused contexts of current UK mainstream educational practice.

2.1. The ensemble ideal

In this section, I set out the notion of ensemble as a pedagogic endeavour, as developed by Boyd, Neelands and others, and how it functions as a bridging metaphor for a variety of progressive arts education concepts. I use the term ensemble pedagogy to unite the subject of a range of interconnecting texts, though in the texts themselves this particular term is not explicitly used, to recognise the notion of ensemble as discussed within these texts amounts to more than a set of techniques or practices, but reflects a social and philosophical theory of education. (Grady, 2003) Within the texts 'ensemble' stands alone to refer more traditionally to a theatrical company (Boyd, 2009; Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain, 2004) or is utilised as a general theatre education 'metaphor'. (Enciso et al., 2011; Heron and Johnson, 2017; Neelands, 2009a, 2009b, 2010c; Nelson, 2011) Synonymous terms such as 'rehearsal room pedagogy', (Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011)

'open space learning', (Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011) Youth Third Space (Etheridge Woodson, 2015) and 'little republics' (Hickey-Moody, 2013) are also used. Briefly, ensemble pedagogy can thus be understood as a reading of theatre and drama education which sees its potential for the embodiment of social justice as located in its collaborative, egalitarian and performative nature.

I refer to the ensemble as 'ideal' here because of the 'bridging' positionality the literature gives the term; of connecting and channelling a range of progressive educational ideals in a way that has been understood as highly authentic and engaging by practitioners. (Enciso et al., 2011; Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011; Munday et al., 2016; Shakespeare Schools Festival, 2013a; Thomson et al., 2010; Winston, 2015) There is a sense therefore this concept communicates some of the field's most deeply held ideals; practitioners have been observed to hold a belief in ensemble pedagogy as "rooted in the soul of humanity." (O'Connor in Neelands 2010b: 117) It can be considered a core theatre and drama education 'myth' in Finneran and Freebody's definition, carrying a set of tacit understandings "about why and how applied drama works." (Finneran and Freebody 2015:17) This section therefore is concerned with mapping the theoretical and intellectual connections of the ensemble pedagogy ideal; establishing landscapes, routes and intersections that are indicated and drawn on in the existing literature. In seeking to map and articulate the framing of ensemble pedagogy as a theatre and drama education 'ideal' therefore, section 2.1 does not therefore deal in depth with problematising this theoretical framework; this is addressed in the following section 2.2 in which the applications and limitations of ensemble pedagogy in practice are considered.

The term ensemble has a long lineage in theatre and performance art traditions. The Equity Director's Guild conference gives the term a broad definition focused on the length of working relationships, stating: "Ensemble theatre occurs when a group of theatre artists (performers, artistic directors, stage management and the key administrative staff) work together over many years to create theatre" (Equity, 2004:3). Thus section 2.1.1 will consider how this basis in theatre as an art form has shaped the notion of ensemble as a pedagogic endeavour. In Neelands' writings he frequently cites the position of ensemble pedagogy within the lineage of social constructivist views of education. (Neelands, 2009b; Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) Therefore section 2.1.2 will explore how this intellectual tradition has informed ensemble pedagogy. Closely related is 2.1.3's consideration of ensemble as an experiential pedagogy, which focuses on the references to Dewey within

the literature, and presentation of the rehearsal room as an authentic framework for experiential education. Finally, section 2.1.4 explores how from both theatrical and education perspectives ensemble pedagogy theory ultimately converges on its democratic and social justice aims, which relies on an underlying critical social perspective across the core texts which map this approach.

2.1.1. The ensemble as performative

Boyd claims theatre as the "quintessentially collaborative art form" (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain 2004:18) centralising the aesthetic and disciplinary practices of theatre in notions of ensemble pedagogy. Neelands strengthens this claim via a historical contextualisation of the unifying and democratising potential of ensemble theatre; comparing post-Elizabethan theatrical realism with Brecht's politically active epic theatre. (Neelands, 2010c) While Boyd as a director may see the process of theatre-making as essentially collaborative, Neelands highlights that in terms of inclusion and democratic engagement with the wider public, some theatre traditions have been considerably more collaborative and active than others. He argues theatrical realism too often produces a limited and stultifying 'mirror' of reality; both appeasing and placating the audience. Whereas Brecht's Marxist epic theatre seeks to engage and provoke its audience, providing them with the energy and appetite for change. (Neelands, 2010c) This positions an understanding of ensemble pedagogy as aesthetically sympathetic to Brecht's epic theatre.

Boyd similarly positions himself within an European ensemble tradition with clear socialist implications when he references his commitment to returning to the RSC's founding inspiration of the Berliner ensemble. (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain, 2004) and when describing himself as being "profoundly sheep-dipped." (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain 2004:16) during his time as a trainee under the Soviet theatre director Anatoly Efros in Russia. Though Boyd is careful to be inclusive in his ensemble theatre definition, also name-checking a variety of current UK-based companies in his keynote (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain, 2004) nevertheless, within the ensemble pedagogy literature, the socialist traditions of early to mid-20th Century European theatre demonstrably loom large.

Yet, above these traditions, the theatrical model of ensemble Neelands repeatedly refers to in his texts is that of the role of theatre in the ancient Athenian *polis* (Monk, Chillington

Rutter, et al., 2011; Neelands, 2009a; Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) he draws from McGrath and Castoriadis' arguments that theatre represented a central crucible of the 'social imaginary' in Ancient Athenian democracy; i.e. the mutually constructive process of embodying current and devising new norms for living. (Castoriadis, 1997; McGrath, 2001) In this model, ensemble-based theatre is politically active not in the form of Brecht's agitating theatre, but functions as an essential institution of democratic civic life; providing a public forum for the consideration and debate of laws, rules and conventions, recognising they were "'social imaginaries', which could be transformed through the collective exercise of the social imagination of the *polis* [people]" (Neelands 2009a:185) Neelands does concede the notion of a participatory Athenian democracy formed and maintained through theatre is an ideal rather than a historical reality: membership of the *polis* was only open to men, and theatre gradually became less inclusive and active in civic life (Neelands 2009a:186) Nevertheless, the core premise of an ensemble-based theatre as a central and participatory civic institution within a democratic society stands as a compelling proposition.

The reference to these collaborative, politically engaged theatre traditions pushes against ideas of art or theatre as transcendent. (Neelands, 2009a) As Neelands argues the inclusive and pro-social process drama practices have been traditionally seen as antagonistic and even incompatible with theatre as an art form. The ensemble pedagogy approach, he argues, erases these polarities, as it does with easy binaries of arts as intrinsic or instrumentally valuable. By drawing from Ancient Athenian and modernist, Marxist theatre traditions; and by highlighting the unavoidably collaborative nature of the art form; within ensemble pedagogy theatre is understood as by definition socially and hence educationally engaged.

2.1.2. The ensemble as constructivist

Neelands states in several of his ensemble pedagogy texts that the concept exists within the legacy of social constructivist education thinkers, citing Dewey, Vygotsky, Bruner, Freire, Donaldson and Greene. (Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011; Neelands, 2009b; Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) Extrapolating from his citations of these thinkers it is possible to construct a clear understanding of how ensemble pedagogy draws on and extends its social constructivist legacy.

This begins with central social constructivist tenants such as Donaldson's argument for the recognition and respect of children's cognitive and humanist capacity as learners, (Donalson, 1993) The educator's position can thus be understood as providing a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) with appropriate scaffolding (Bruner, 2006) in order to curate a challenging educational experience in which this capacity can be utilised and developed. This chimes with Greene's focus on the need for a curriculum which sees things 'big' rather than 'small' (Greene, 1987) where seeing things small encompasses the bureaucratic, audit-focused processes of many current western education systems. Neelands marries this aim with Greene's recognition of the arts as holding a key role in a 'seeing things big' social constructivist curriculum, echoing the implications of Castoriadis' social imaginary:

> "[The arts] are for affirming the work of the imagination – the cognitive capacity that summon up the 'as-if', the possible, the what is not and yet might be… They are for doing all this in such a way as to ensemble those who open themselves to what they create to see more, to hear more, to feel more, to attend to more facets of the experienced world" (Greene 1987:14)

The role of the arts and imagination in learning is also emphasised in Vygotsky's constructivist theory, where, as Edmiston and McKibben state: "theorised, imaginative movement and social interactions are mental tools for making sense of language. Dramatising foregrounds the meaning of imagined events and objects and backgrounds the actual situation in the same way that children do when they play." (Edmiston and McKibben 2011:90) They further note this imaginative, co-constructed learning has a social perspective, as the learners are able to identify and follow the social rules of the given situation. (Edmiston and McKibben, 2011)

Ensemble pedagogy can thus begin to be understood as intersecting a variety of subject-knowledge and social learning through the imaginative power of theatre as an art form and the through the humanising pedagogy of social constructivism. Neelands draws in Freire here, highlighting his celebration of the vitality of knowledge generated in this way: "The kind of knowledge that becomes solidarity, becomes a 'being with'. In that context, the future is seen, not as inexorable, but as something that is constructed by people engaged together in life, in history" (Freire 1998:72) In this can be seen clear connections

with Dewey's recognition of the importance of an engaging and experiential education for the realisation of a participatory democracy (Neelands, 2009b), as I will explore in more detail in section 2.1.3 and 2.1.4. Suffice to say, via this brief review, that ensemble pedagogy is closely embedded in its social constructivist legacy and forefronts the connections between the notion of knowledge as co-constructed, the central role of the arts in education and society, and the democratic mission for both the arts and education in social constructivist thought.

This intellectual legacy is borne out via the focus of the primacy of both artistic and educational relationships throughout the ensemble pedagogy literature. Through the work of Leadbeater (2008), in particular, Neelands emphasises ensemble pedagogy is an approach built on the primacy of high-quality and trusting educational relationships above all else: "Drama… by itself does nothing." As he starkly reminds us "It is only what we do with drama that makes the difference." (Neelands 2009b:13) This focus on the relationships between ensemble members can be seen in Boyd's list of 13 qualities he argues are central to the enactment of ensemble, developed from his experience of directing the RSC ensemble casts. Numbers 1-11 of these: cooperation, altruism, trust, empathy, imagination, compassion, tolerance, forgiveness, humility, magnanimity, and rapport (Boyd, 2009) can all be said to be highly interpersonal, or discursive in nature. This resonates with Sennett's conceptualisation of the particular quality of empathetic dialogue; the ability to recognise and value the humanity of the other without being subsumed by it, whilst concurrently retaining a sense of our own self and being able to act in equitable ways through a recognition of this difference (Sennett, 2012) The complexity and challenge of the empathetic and trusting discourses of the ensemble is highlighted by Boyd's precise language in describing these qualities. Through phrases such as 'forensic' and 'appallingly honest' Boyd is careful to dispel any sense that a commitment to ensemble can be boiled down to liberal universals. There is rather an understanding in both Neelands' and Boyd's texts of confronting the complex discursive realities of embodying the ways of learning, creating and living together which ensemble pedagogy demands.

2.1.3. The ensemble as experiential

As mentioned above, as part of acknowledging the social constructivist legacy of ensemble pedagogy, Neelands highlights the particular applicability of Dewey's work on education

to understanding the authentic, experiential value of the approach, suggesting it owes most to his conception of "an experience-based, real-world problem-solving paradigm for teaching and learning." (Neelands and O'Hanlon 2011:242) Within this, he offers two models for creating an authentic 'situation of experience.' (Dewey, 1916) Firstly in the use of rehearsal room approaches, through which the learners are invited to approach a play or text as actors, "immersed in the practical problems of how to make social and personal sense of the language" (Neelands and O'Hanlon 2011:242) or as Shakespeare scholar Jonathan Bate, also involved with the RSC CAPITAL collaboration, describes in this interview:

> "Our idea was that the effective classroom bears analogy to the effective rehearsal room; that the rehearsal room is a learning experience; that in some senses the director is like a teacher… who brings on a class, the acting company, through collaborative work, through asking questions, playing games, through trust, through exploring ideas together and respecting different opinions" (quoted in Winston, 2015:11)

In this way, ensemble pedagogy is offered as an authentic 'real world' learning experience, modelling the processes of professionals in the same field. As Neelands emphasises, part of the pedagogic value of this rehearsal room approach is that it offers the opportunity of a shift in teacher-student relations: "It suggests a different pedagogic relationship… in which the expectation is that students will co-construct learning" (Neelands and O'Hanlon 2011:243)

Secondly, Neelands argues that drama in education methods can be understood as learning through imagined experience, citing Mantle of the Expert techniques and suggesting "learning through being in a dramatized situation and a role that requires researched and responsible action… allows us to engage with learning directly, physically, contextually, with real life purposes and motives" (Neelands 2010a:153) In this way, the experiential ensemble pedagogy can be understood as drawing from multiple traditions within theatre and drama education, not only professional theatrical practice. (Neelands, 2009a) This is borne out in the 'open space learning' projects, where ensemble pedagogy principles are applied to a variety of disciplinary contexts within higher education teaching, including English, Law and Chemistry. (Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011) What unites the experiential aspect of ensemble pedagogy is the action-centred, problem-

solving and meaningful nature of learning experiences in this approach. Again drawing on Dewey, Neelands emphasises the central role of action in ensemble pedagogy, as it opens up for learners the possibility that we can "change our worlds through our doing and we are active in forging our destinies" (Neelands and O'Hanlon 2011:243)

2.1.4. The ensemble as democratic

Cutting across all of the above-mentioned elements of ensemble is the potential of, and commitment to, democratic social change. For Boyd, this is implicit in the working model, when he speaks of the 'simple conspiracy' (Boyd, 2009) between the performers and the audience as a precious gift which reaffirms our interdependence as humans. (Equity, 2004) However it appears to be with the on-going experience of the ensemble members that Boyd places the real opportunity for democratic change, when he muses: "Can an ensemble ... act in some sense as a ... better version of the real world on an achievable scale which celebrates the virtues of collaboration?" (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain, 2004) Neelands, meanwhile, paints a more directly participatory and politicised ensemble pedagogy. Firstly through repeated references to the democratic and participatory role of the theatre in Ancient Athens, and to McGrath's (McGrath, 2001) argument that "theatre has a role to play in giving a voice to the excluded; in giving a voice to the minority… and in questioning the boarders of freedom" (Neelands 2009a:180) He also frequently references liberal democratic authors (Nussbaum, 2010; Sennett, 1986) to argue that that the arts and humanities allow students to develop the skills and resources to live a fully democratic life, highlighting Nussbaum's use of the term 'narrative imagination':

> "The third ability of the citizen… is what we might call the narrative
> imagination. This means the ability to think what it might be like to be in
> the shoes of a person different to oneself, to be an intelligent reader of
> that person's story and to understand the emotions and wishes and
> desires that someone so placed might have." (Nussbaum 2010:95-6)

This concept of 'narrative imagination' can be read as related to other terms from ensemble pedagogy's literary genesis such as 'social imaginary' (Castoriadis, 1997) and the enactment of 'as if'. (Greene, 1987) These notions of collaborative and generative imaginary practice point towards readings of art-making as a public and civic process, with the activity of art-making itself as citizenship in action. (Etheridge Woodson, 2015; Hickey-

Moody, 2013) In this way, it is possible to follow Neelands' argument that the equitable and authentically engaging processes of ensemble pedagogy offers the possibility for individual, narrative and social imaginations to be stimulated, giving students the opportunity to experience the autonomy and solidarity of such active citizenship. (Neelands 2009a:182) Holdsworth charts the use of this term in theatre and drama education, noting a shift from an earlier conception of citizenship as being primarily about rights to notions of 'active citizenship', which also stresses responsibilities, alongside the crucial aspect of participation. She states:

> "conditions and values necessary for an active citizenship culture [include] awareness of social, political and economic processes, engagement with the physical environment, self-scrutiny, public accountability, problem-solving and, above all, a sense of commitment to and responsibility for others, the local culture and community."
> (Holdsworth 2007:303)

Neelands gives examples of ensemble pedagogy's potential of facilitating these active citizenship values in practice, citing drama work in a previously struggling secondary school in post-industrial Leicester. (Neelands, 2009a) Describing a fleeting moment in which Hindu and Muslim girls gather purposefully together during a drama lesson on *King Lear* Neelands charts the positive change on educational and social outcomes, and reduction in racist incidents OfSTED note within the school, demonstrating the contextualised and tangible social justice outcomes possible through ensemble pedagogy. (Neelands, 2009a)

A perspective common across the ensemble pedagogy literature is a recognition of and antagonism to the aggressively individualistic and outcomes-focused economic and political perspective of neoliberalism, defined by an approach "that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms." (Harvey, 2005:2) Boyd creates an emotive vision of the neoliberal condition when he states:

> "But these [theatre] companies exist in a context of what I would call almost a crisis of individualism that… has its roots in the eighties: the emergence of the boring, famous phrase "There's no such thing as society"; the failure of consensus; a retreat into not just "number one-

ism" but portfolio careerism; a scepticism, a cynicism about possible causes around which it's possible to gather consensus; a failure of political consensus; false dawns of election days and senses of betrayal; a crisis of political, moral and spiritual authority resulting in a natural tendency to shrink and try and find the place where good faith is kept in your breast pocket, in your front room." (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain 2004:17)

Neelands similarly highlights the effects of the spectre of neoliberalism within education in his ensemble texts via references to Bernstein's notion of the rise of the 'collection curriculum' within twentieth century education, an approach which isolates knowledge into subject silos; cuts off the possibility of social critique by naturalising and essentialising the 'facts' of a ruling cultural elite; and places students in isolated competition by positioning knowledge as individual property. (Neelands 2010a:152) Against this background of the threat of neoliberalism to democracy, and its tangible effects Boyd and Neelands chart on their respective professions, the promise of ensemble pedagogy becomes clear: that working, teaching and learning in this way can become a model for not only acting artistically, but also acting socially in the wider world. For restoring our faith and interest in humanity as a collaborative endeavour, and to provide a scaffolded training ground where the skills and autonomy to action this humanitarian faith can be developed.

Both Neelands and Boyd express this possibility through the language of hope. Neelands cites Freire's notion of a 'pedagogy of hope', (Neelands, 2009b) quoting "I do not mean that because I am hopeful, I attribute to this hope of mine the power to transform reality all by itself… No, my hope is necessary, but it is not enough" (Freire 2000:2) and when Boyd speaks of his continuing hopes for his ensemble company, he states this hope will not in itself "ensure success for our work, but [it does] describe the ambition behind our next risk" (Boyd, 2009) In this, both speak of hope as 'essential' and 'descriptive' but as faciliatory of more specific goals, not an end itself. Pragmatist Green would term this a social hope; (Green, 2008) recognising its *generative* quality – a commitment to a better world based not on generalised optimism, but the dynamic and action-focused pragmatist concept of meliorism: "the idea that at least there is a sufficient basis of goodness in life and its conditions so that by thought and earnest effort we may constantly make better things." (Nolan and Stitzlein, 2011:3) Gallagher, in her recent work exploring hope in

theatre and drama education contexts, emphasises this social hope is "Not sentimental, saccharine fantasies of an unlikely future, but hopes grounded in present social relations, politically clear-eyed, critically and affectively engaged." (Gallagher 2015:424) This sense of social hope, as both an expression of a future ideal and a grounded, contextualised outcome of collaborative active citizenship can thus be read as the democratic vision of ensemble pedagogy. Furthermore, via Neelands' and Boyd's comments, this democratic vision can specifically be seen as an alternative to neoliberal values.

To summarise, in this section I have mapped the intellectual influences behind these ensemble pedagogy texts, arguing that through their theatrical, constructivist, experiential and democratic legacies they present a cohesive narrative of the potential of ensemble pedagogy as a pro-social theatre-based teaching process. This is grounded in the model of the twentieth century modernist western theatre tradition of a collaborative, politically active theatre; and draws on notions of the theatre as a crucible of democracy going back to Ancient Greece. The intersecting ideas of social constructivists and liberal educationalists provides a strong theoretical basis for integrating the theatrical model of ensemble within a broader progressive education model. As Neelands states, this allows ensemble pedagogy to act as a bridging metaphor across a range of pro-social education ideals. Thus, the notion of ensemble pedagogy ultimately provides a theoretical basis for a way of teaching which engenders social hope through active citizenship and thus presents the potential of robust resistance to neoliberalism. In the following section, I will consider the implications this holds for ensemble pedagogy as a living teaching practice.

2.2. The ensemble enacted

The ensemble ideal can be defined as the understanding of collaborative creative endeavour as an expression of social hope via active citizenship. Yet, as Gallagher observes, theoretical notions of drama and social justice "only come into meaning through the ways in which we use them in our drama practices, they do not hold meaning outside of this."(Gallagher 2016:63) Thus in the following sections I explore what the theory and research surrounding ensemble pedagogy suggests about the approach in action. Firstly, I consider the essentially processional, unfinished and risky nature of ensemble (2.2.1 and 2.2.2) in which I discuss how the social constructivist and progressive traditions which inform ensemble pedagogy demand the recognition of the approach as a socially risky process. Citing Foucauldian models of power discourses, I argue this recognition reveals

and thus resists the normative discourses of institutional school power via collaborative active citizenship. As part of this I explore what the literature offers in terms of concrete pedagogical practices, focusing on the central idea of the teacher uncrowning and distributing power. Section 2.2.3 then considers evidence of ensemble pedagogy projects as under-realised in practice, setting up the conclusion in 2.2.4 that ensemble pedagogy, within the current audit and outcomes focused western education systems, is at risk of 'domestication'. By which I mean at risk of being stripped of its rich social constructivist basis and being reimagined in a narrow 'metrics and miracles' variant which abandons this focus on resisting neoliberal discourses of power via the socially hopeful process of active citizenship.

2.2.1. The ensemble as processional and the processes of ensemble

Neelands recognises the promise of a collaborative, egalitarian and democratic theatre pedagogy can only remain an 'idealised abstraction' (Neelands, 2009a:181) which must be realised in the lived reality of the classroom or student rehearsal space. Inherent in the four aspects of ensemble pedagogy identified above is an understanding of education, art-making, and by implication our lives, as processional. Thus the notion of ensemble pedagogy as defined by process is not just a caution to ground its democratic ideals in the reality of educational contexts, but a recognition that this process *is* the enactment of democracy. As Neelands describes it, ensemble pedagogy is a 'living practice' (Neelands, 2009a:180) in which "The process of active, civic engagement in the belief that the world is changeable [is] the lasting legacy of the struggle not its immediate outcome." (Neelands 2009a:182) This emphasis on the *unfinished* and *processional* natural of both the social world and ourselves (Neelands, 2010c) drawn from ensemble pedagogy's constructivist and progressive genesis can, as argued above, be understood as the generative enacting of social hope via active citizenship. (Freire, 2000; Gallagher, 2015; Green, 2008)

As Neelands' highlights in his citation of Freire in 'Mirror, Dynamo or Lens' the knowledge gleaned through ensemble pedagogy is thus "knowledge that sees history as possibility and not as already determined – the world is not finished. It is always in the process of becoming." (Freire 1998:72) The knowledges of ensemble pedagogy are generative and inquisitive, not finite and acquisitive. Furthermore this focus on the processional and the necessary compromise in real life contexts is not a vague idealist rhetoric, but recognises the dynamic tension, or even conflict-based routes of change and development. (Enciso et

al., 2011; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012) It is perhaps because of the idiosyncratic processes of ensemble pedagogy in practice that the literature stops short of dictating a cohesive set of educational practices or procedures within the approach. Nevertheless, reading across the texts it is possible to build up a sense of how the processes of ensemble pedagogy can function and has functioned in practice.

In an early fieldnote from an RSC ensemble rehearsal room observation, Neelands identifies the central ensemble pedagogy action of 'uncrowning' the director/teacher and a distribution of their power amongst the group. (Neelands 2009a:183) In a later description of an RSC *Hamlet* workshop this notion of uncrowning is contextualised alongside the use of active, theatre based techniques which are described as creating an 'authentic' journey through the text and which foregrounds the participants collaborative agency via cycles of discussion and action. (Neelands and O'Hanlon 2011:241-244) The emphasis here is on the cyclical and open-ended journey of the session; the moves between active experience and group discussion embodying a shared learning process in which the students' contributions are valued through their being put to immediate use in the live interpretation of the play text.

In *Open Space Learning* Monk et al. further explore the application of ensemble pedagogy practices in a variety of trans-disciplinary higher education settings. In addition to the pedagogic focus on the creation of learning journeys in the way Neelands and O'Hanlon discuss above, they highlight the importance of assessment methods which are commensurate with the principles of open space or ensemble learning. In presenting the innovative undergraduate law module developed as part of the CAPITAL project 'On Trial: Shakespeare and the Law' Monk et al. describe the use of formative assessment methods such as the production of a Tudor-style 'common book, a group demonstration of a trial based on a Shakespeare text, immediately followed by an oral viva and a written reflection submitted 24 hours after the demonstration. The authors argue that because the assessment practices take seriously the educational principles under which the course was designed, the students' likewise undertook the assessment tasks with commitment and enthusiasm; demonstrating the processional nature of ensemble pedagogy need not mean drawing a dividing line between 'process' and 'product'. (Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011)

As part of Enciso et al.'s study, they create a matrix of ensemble teaching practices, with 12 individual processes collated under four key themes, detailing ways to enact 'uncrowning' and foreground discursive collaboration. These key themes are expressed as actions and values of ensemble pedagogy teaching: "Values risk and the emotional dimensions of learning. Facilitates connections and mutual respect. Values contradiction and uncertainty. Negotiates formation of learning space" (Enciso et al. 2011:222) Focusing on a variety of supportive questioning techniques, this matrix offers a framework through which researchers and teachers might forefront the discursive educational practices of ensemble pedagogy. All of these techniques, from the focus on learning journeys, through the valuing of emotional dimensions, mutual respect and uncertainty through the use of formative assessment processes echo the core commitment of teacher uncrowning to value the cognitive and humanist capacity of students and thus seek to distribute genuine power and agency to them through the teaching and learning process.

2.2.2. The potential risks of ensemble

In highlighting this core ensemble process of uncrowning and redistributing the teacher's power, the ensemble pedagogy literature also emphasises the inherent riskiness of this undertaking. The notion of risk-taking can be seen as intrinsic in ensemble pedagogy work, abandoning the certainties of narrow teaching to the test and the centrality of the teacher as the single font of knowledge. (Irish, 2011) Neelands' focus on the social nature of risk in ensemble approaches draws direct links with the critical social perspective of his and Boyd's critique of neoliberalism built into ensemble pedagogy theory, as discussed above in section 2.1.4. Neelands thus states these risks include: participants challenging normative power structures, appropriating space, opening up creative decisions, and making themselves visible and vulnerable through this process. (Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011: 247) This definition of risk foregrounds spatially and discursively constructed power relations as they occur in the classroom. The work of contemporary arts education scholar Adams offers a theoretical model of the risky social power disruptions inherent in ensemble pedagogy uncrowning. Adams echoes Neelands' identification of risk when he argues the radical and marginal nature of ensemble-based arts education practices reveal and disrupt the power structures that normative schooling relies on in reproducing the status quo. Adam's thesis is therefore that creative arts practices are inherently difficult to integrate into schools because of their "socially contingent character, which threatens to disrupt the ideological underpinnings of orthodox school practice." (Adams, 2010:683)

Expressed in this way, it is possible to understand the reality and weight of the social risks undertaken in engaging with ensemble pedagogy in mainstream western schooling practices.

Adams' understanding of school power is essentially a Bourdieuian one however; drawing on Bourdieu's argument that the dominant power structures within schools – and by extension within society - are maintained by their naturalisation. (Bourdieu and Passerson, 2003) Adams suggests that creative and collaborative arts pedagogies contrast, make visible, and therefore question these dominant power structures. He emphasises this throws up 'regulatory dilemmas' for the teacher engaged in such practices. In this model, the collaborative, ensemble approach to teaching and learning is a radical departure from the normative power structures of the school context; and therefore exposes and reshapes those power structures, which the teacher is then forced to attend to. In this conception of school power structures and ensemble pedagogies, the teacher can be seen as operating on a precarious axis, having to balance the normative role of 'teacher' with the potentially more radical requirements of 'ensemble facilitator'. Adams' implication seems to be that the rift between these roles is very rarely bridgeable, with the dominant school power structures inevitably reasserting themselves. The result, Adams argues, is that collaborative arts endeavours remain marginalised.

However, there is an alternative understanding of normative pedagogies within schools, in contrast to the static ecologies Adams presents. A Foucauldian model of power is rather multidirectional and plural. As Foucault explains it: "power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations." (Foucault, 1978:94) In this "diverse, ambivalent web of relations" (Gallagher, 2008:144) there is, as applied theatre scholar Aitken has argued, no inherent understanding of power as oppressive, thus there is always potential within this intricate web of relations for "creative action, interplay and agency." (Aitken, 2009:506) In fact, Foucault goes as far to state power discourses produce reality; (Foucault, 1975) a perspective which chimes with ensemble pedagogy's grounding in constructivist understandings of the unfinished world. (Castoriadis, 1997; Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1998) Yet, in his examination of the development of the 'disciplinary' mode of power since the nineteenth century, which enacts the control of populations via various institutional practices (Foucault, 1975) there remains central within the Foucauldian model an understanding of the insidious and oppressive possibilities of dominant power structures. A Foucauldian model of social power relations thus allows for both the

recognition of the weight of social risk undertaken in seeking to realise the critical democratic aims of ensemble pedagogy; and the possibility of its success. Thomson and colleagues express these dominant but permeable institutional power relations of mainstream western schools via the notion of 'default pedagogies' when they state: "We know the default is just that. It is not necessarily exactly what happens, it is a fall back model which is regularly and systematically overridden." (Thomson, Hall, Jones, & Sefton-Green, 2012:11) The disciplinary weight of default pedagogies, but the potential to act with agency through and against them demonstrates how a Foucauldian model of power can help chart both the social risks and opportunities of ensemble pedagogy.

2.2.3.   The ensemble limited

The social riskiness of undertaking ensemble pedagogy in practice is reflected in research which has shown the challenges of training and empowering mainstream school teachers in these approaches. (Enciso et al., 2011; Irish, 2011; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012; Thomson et al., 2010) A study of the RSC's Learning Performance Network (LPN) (Thomson, Hall, Thomas, Jones, & Franks, 2010) found a gap between teacher training and take up. While evaluations of this programme have generally reported positive outcomes, (Galloway and Strand, 2010; Neelands et al., 2009) and Thomson et al.'s report found teachers within the core schools, who worked extensively and directly with the RSC "Without exception… significantly changed their teaching practices." (Thomson et al. 2010:5) Yet, the 'radiation' effect intended between core and cluster schools, who received less direct training from the RSC, did not happen consistently, and the take up of ensemble approaches was described as patchy in these contexts. (Thomson et al. 2010:6) What was observed was that, while finite outcomes of involvement with the LPN, such as knowledge of Shakespeare plots and vocabulary, and performance skills, continued to be valued, what faded was a commitment to the pro-social value of Shakespeare. (Thomson et al. 2010:26) Furthermore, the ensemble sense of the rehearsal text as something actively and collaboratively interpreted over time was more limited or absent in some cluster schools. (Thomson et al. 2010:26)

 Similarly, in Enciso et al.'s study, the high school drama course was unexpectedly disbanded after one semester due to "predictably rigid and unpredictably chaotic" school management structures. (Enciso et al. 2011:220) Pigkou-Repousi echoes and critically considers these limiting institutional power structures as they impacted on her study of an

ensemble pedagogy theatre project when she observes "The lack of essential pre-conditions for theatre-making and active participation rendered the development of students' dramatic literacy and of self-instituting abilities singular incidences, rather than recurring contents in students' theatrical and social actions." (Pigkou-Repousi 2012:261) Taken together then, these observations demonstrate how the central ensemble pedagogy aim of facilitating active citizenship is frequently curtailed or fails to become part of broader teacher or school practice over time.

 Enciso et al.'s concluding comments appear to place this un- or under-realisation of active citizenship at the feet of the participating teachers when they comment the approach requires: "patience and expert direction that may elude teachers who have every intention to develop ensembles, but find it difficult to reflect on or identify the teaching decisions that may be eroding a group's commitment to change." (Enciso et al. 2011:230-1) Other research in theatre and drama education more broadly with similar findings of patchy or hesitant take-up of techniques in school classroom has similarly suggested this is a matter of further training in the techniques of drama education. (Araki-Metcalfe, 2008; Stinson, 2009) This deficit model of non-drama specialist classroom teachers, I would argue, fails to address the nature of the issue as it ignores precisely the complex institutional and social discourses of power which such approaches reveal teachers are subject to, echoing a parallel rhetoric in critical pedagogy literature positioning teachers as requiring 'transformation.' (Pittard, 2015)

Thomson et al. go further than this in their evaluation report on the RSC's LPN. In developing a more complex response to the 'dilution' effect between core and cluster schools, they focus on the dynamics of institutional change and school-arts sector partnerships. For example in addition to recommending changes to the LPN's post graduate certificate, to encourage teachers to focus on more critical elements of ensemble pedagogy they also suggest supporting the teachers via training in change and leadership techniques; (Thomson et al. 2010:33) and highlight the need for greater institutional commitment from school management in terms of allocating adequate time for collaboration and reflection, recommending the development of partnerships with local educational authorities and other supportive partnerships. (Thomson et al. 2010:36) As the *Signature Pedagogies* report comments, issues of *how* teachers can deliver arts pedagogies is a naïve focus which works only at the level of practice, while a full understanding of inclusive arts pedagogy is a question not just of understanding practice

and content, but also of framing and purpose. (Thomson et al. 2012:47) Thus, as I argue in the following section, in order to facilitate this critical and reflexive development work of both teachers and institutions, what is required is to problematise this issue of un- and under-realised ensemble pedagogy directly within the ontology of power discourses which it operates within.

2.2.4. The ensemble domesticated

The practices Thomson et al observe as part of the 'dilution effect' in the LPN evaluation focus on a reframing of the project's aims around formal curriculum outcomes, as they note there was a "tendency of some teachers' research projects to emphasise the immediate impact of the RSC approach on students' performance in tests and examinations, or on the alignment of ensemble work with the behavioural aspirations of 'Every Child Matters'" (Thomson et al. 2010:39) This coincided with a disinterest in the critical, interpretive elements of the project, for example understanding text editing as a practical process of reducing the scale of content, rather than an active or collaborative process of interpretation. (Thomson et al. 2010:26) This process can be read as a translation of the initial aims of the project into the default pedagogies of the schools' contexts. (Thomson et al., 2012)

Making sense of the nature of these limitations within a framework of social power I argue what is important is less the fact the approach *is* limited and more the *specific elements* which are limited. In all the examples in section 2.2.3 it is the socially critical and resistant elements which are underplayed, and the opportunities to embed practices of active citizenship into the wider school communities which are lost. In this section I therefore argue this amounts to a domestication (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004) of ensemble pedagogy which obscures the core notion of relational, discursive co-construction of knowledge, and its enactment of generative social hope. Similar process of critical techniques being 'professionalised' and made 'docile' have been charted in forum theatre; (Bala and Albacan, 2013; Snyder-Young, 2011) and in education inclusion more generally were for example Dunne describes once radical rhetorics becoming "generalised and diffused, domesticated and tamed." (2009:43) This notion of domestication thus seeks to describe how the nature of current western education systems allows the emancipatory, democratic potential of ensemble pedagogy to be frequently both

minimised and idealised due to the system's overwhelming focus on measurable outcomes.

This default model of educational research, practice and evaluation, (Thomson et al., 2012) also referred to as the banking model (Freire, 1972), the deficit model, or medical model (Hargreaves, 1997; Holligan, 2010; Thomas, 2009; Wright, 2012) emphasises an ontological understanding of knowledge as a pre-ordained information, delivered by teachers and received by learners who arrive into the education system deficit in knowledge. The better the mechanism, the educational product or 'intervention' by which this knowledge is delivered, the more knowledge students will retain. Therefore, it is understood and assumed that the value of an educational product can be ascertained by measuring students' knowledge levels before and after the intervention is delivered. In recent years there has been a distinct swing in educational policy to this understanding of education as a process of 'interventions' measurable by pre- and post-testing. (Goldacre, 2013; Hargreaves, 1997; Higgins et al., 2014) Thus, for institutions engaged in ensemble-based projects such as the RSC's LPN there is little often choice but to engage in the language of this dominant paradigm of assessment and express your benefits within these terms in order to secure funding and bookings.(Thomson et al. 2010:30)

Neelands echoes this requirement in his ensemble pedagogy texts, where he states drama education "must be seen to serve the wider interests of the particular and dominant ideology in the field of power if it is to be given any legitimate space at all." (Neelands 2009b:11) Neelands cites the then-current child- and culture-focused educational policies of New Labour such as 'Every Child Matters' (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003) and the Creative Partnerships initiative (Thomson et al., 2015), as a policy context which supports this reconciliatory approach. This reconciliation is echoed in a broader move within the theatre and drama education field to provide 'hard' evidence of the advantages of the approach. (Cultural Learning Alliance, 2017; DICE Consortium, 2010) However, as the LPN 'dilution effect' demonstrates, this readiness to engage in audit-based systems of educational value can fundamentally change the scope of approaches such as ensemble pedagogy.

This is one branch of domestication, a parallel outcome of this pressure to translate the work into the positivistic language of educational interventions and outcomes is that the rhetoric of democratic social hope in ensemble pedagogy is thus rendered 'miraculous' or

mythologised. (Finneran, 2008; Neelands, 2004) This rhetoric of the miraculous is demonstrated in the following 2014 quote from Shakespeare Schools' Foundation's website:

> "The power of theatre to change the lives of young people who take part is familiar to any drama teacher. When you add the greatest genius of the stage, and give children the chance to inhabit his immense characters and dramatic situations in a setting where the highest professional standards are a matter of daily practice, *the result is almost miraculous*". (Pullman, 2014, emphasis mine)

This statement, which is posted alongside a range of inspiring stories of student's dramatic improvements in educational outcomes, confidence and articulation as a result of participation in the project demonstrates how ensemble pedagogy, divorced from its critical social explanatory framework, becomes 'magical' in its outcomes. This demonstrates, as Gallagher argues, the insidious capability of neoliberal rhetoric to not only demand narrow audit-based discourses of attainment but to also take our own deeply held values and allow them to be "effectively co-opted by the market and sold back to us, disguised as transformative in and of themselves, when they may be no more than powerful agents of the status quo." (Gallagher 2016:64) In this case, this domesticated co-opting offers back to the market a model of ensemble pedagogy not as complex discursive models of knowing creating and living, grounded in multifaceted power ecologies; but a universalising proposal of making theatre as transformative in and of itself.

 These two branches taken together therefore represent a domestication which ignores the risky and radical nature of ensemble pedagogy and erases its critical, socially reflexive intellectual legacy grounded, as I discuss in section 2.1, in a particular theoretical and political tradition. In drawing focus away from this inherent risk, the expression of ensemble pedagogies' 'impact' ignores these elements. Thus the results seem 'miraculous' in addition to being finite, measurable, and predictable. This firstly misrepresents both the opportunities and challenges of the approach to teachers, with research frequently suggesting they need only upskill themselves, (Araki-Metcalfe, 2008; Bala and Albacan, 2013; Dunn and Stinson, 2011; Enciso et al., 2011) ignoring their positionality in complex discourses of institutional power. Secondly, this domestication obscures and thus

constrains the potential of ensemble pedagogy to facilitate the enactment of democratic social hope via active citizenship, as it becomes positioned as just another intervention to be fed into the 'black box' (Delamont, 2014) of normative educational practice.

As highlighted above, Neelands has previously advised a reconciliatory approach through these issues. (Neelands, 2004, 2009b) However, while this may have resonated with the policy context of the core ensemble pedagogy texts, when New Labour's pragmatic 'What Works' educational aims led to an open-minded perspective on arts and cultural education (Thomson et al., 2015) in the current post-Trump, post-Brexit world policy context a different approach is called for; an approach to theatre education research and practice which radically foregrounds the humanising and democratic power of ensemble pedagogy. (Neelands, 2010a; O'Connor and Anderson, 2015) Or, as theatre education scholar Saxon asserts "in our desire to get through the door, we can be distracted. In our anxiety to be heard, we can learn others' language and sometimes forget the power of our own" (cited in O'Toole, 2009:viii) Ensemble pedagogy, as the findings of this chapter suggests, holds within its genetic structure much of what is powerful and specific to the language of drama and theatre educational practice, and while its domesticated variant may easily get us through the door, I suggest ultimately the power is lost.

2.3   Conclusion: Resisting domestication, finding our language

In this chapter I have mapped the intellectual genesis of ensemble pedagogy, demonstrating how it draws on democratic, collaborative, politically-engaged models of theatre to build a 'bridging metaphor' for a variety of progressive educational ideals. At its heart, the rhetoric of ensemble pedagogy relies on a critical social perspective, which seeks to provide humanistic and collaborative alternatives to aggressively individualistic neoliberal perspectives via the notions of discursive co-construction of knowledge and theatre as an embodiment of active citizenship and hence democratic social hope. Via the core ensemble pedagogy practice of teacher uncrowning, the enacting of such discursive active citizenship reveals and therefore resists broader discourses of social power; particularly as they function within the increasingly reductive and neo-liberal institutional models of western schooling. Thus, the necessity of social risk is highlighted in the undertaking of ensemble pedagogy.

However, as research has shown, beyond the necessary processional application of ensemble, in practice the approach often becomes limited in scope when applied in practice. I have argued this is tantamount to a domestication of ensemble pedagogy, which overinvests in expressing the approach's value in the 'black box' rhetoric of audit-based understandings of education, and foregrounds a sense of 'miraculous' transformations, rather than socially-engaged art making. While this may have been expedient during the New Labour era, where government was at least partially amenable to funding and engaging in cultural and arts education, the current increasingly aggressive neoliberal western political context requires a radical reassertion of the humanistic, democratic value of ensemble pedagogy and its promise of generative social hope via discursive active citizenship. I therefore conclude by proposing what is required to resist the domestication of both ensemble pedagogy and emancipatory arts education practices more generally is firstly a reassertion of the power (Saxons, cited in O'Toole, 2009:viii) and specificity (Gallagher, 2016b) of the language of ensemble pedagogy and secondly a deeper and more nuanced understanding of its core process of discursive teacher uncrowning. As Freebody and Finneran observe "Only when these issues [of describing this complex theoretical terrain] are substantively engaged with can our praxis steer away from mythological understandings and towards a more desired dialogic manifestation of purpose and outcome in our work." (Finneran and Freebody 2016:20) Therefore, within this study I will seek to explore how this reassertion of value and more nuanced understanding of practices may be achieved.

3 The role of playfulness

In this chapter, I offer the notion of playfulness as a lens through which to explore the processes of ensemble pedagogy in practice. Utilising Sutton-Smith's framing of two 'paradigms' and seven rhetorics of play research; I consider what each of these paradigms offers drama and theatre education research and practice in general, and an understanding of ensemble pedagogy specifically. Whilst drawing out several valuable aspects of the first paradigm in this respect in section 3.2, such as its shared genesis with progressive educational and liberal cultural ideals, I ultimately conclude the oft-cited progress rhetoric offers a model of the playful child as idealised noble savage and is increasingly concerned with play as individual aesthetic development. I argue these concepts contribute to the educational discourses which facilitate the domestication of ensemble pedagogy.

Moving in section 3.3 to consider second paradigm theories, I again map how these have intersected with drama and theatre education literature. Considering the collaborative, transgressive, and ultimately discursive elements of these theories, I draw out several useful components which chime with the focus on artistic collaboration, active citizenship, and social justice within ensemble pedagogy. I conclude the chapter therefore by offering an integrated theory of playfulness as a theoretical lens for studying and discussing ensemble pedagogy, cutting across several rhetorics of play research to frame a conceptualisation of play as a discursive and subjunctifying act of shared public citizenship and potential social resistance.

3.1 Playfulness in ensemble pedagogy: a rationale, two paradigms and seven rhetorics

In Neelands' most recent writing on ensemble pedagogy, he argues children's social play represents a form of proto-democratic behaviour, which can be replicated within both theatrical and political spaces. (Neelands, 2016) Neelands draws a developmental through-line from childhood social play behaviours, through the egalitarian playfulness of the ensemble pedagogy space, towards current and historical models of theatre as an arena of democratic citizenship. In mapping this through-line, Neelands echoes a long tradition of making links between the play of children and dramatic activity; (Bayliss, 1999; Bolton, 1986; Caldwell Cook, 1917; Courtney, 1990; Dunn, 2010b; Finlay-Johnson, 1912;

Slade, 1954; Way, 1967) with the key implication that theatre and drama education functions as a bridge between children's natural playfulness and the skills of professional theatre. (Somers, 2013) This sense of resonance between drama education and children's play is evident across current research, with scholars such as Dunn making it the central tenant of their work (Dunn, 1996, 1998, 2006, 2008, 2010b; Dunn and Stinson, 2012) and recent large scale reviews such as the *Signature Pedagogies* report identifying 'serious play' as a key element of arts education practice, (Thomson et al., 2012) alongside a plethora of other studies which make more fleeting or implicit references to play. In particular, as I will explore further in chapter four, links have been drawn between Shakespeare and playfulness within theatre and drama education scholarship, (Cheng and Winston, 2011; Monk, Heron, et al., 2011; Winston, 2013) broadly expressing variations on Boyd's statement in the *Stand Up For Shakespeare* RSC education manifesto: "Shakespeare wrote plays and young children are geniuses at playing." (RSC 2008, 1) Play is therefore a recurring theme across the field.

Alongside this, Neelands' particular focus on play not only as a building block of dramatic or theatrical endeavour, but of democratic citizenship points towards a central, yet complex positioning of 'play' within the field of theatre and drama education which bears unpicking. In the previous chapter, I explored the genesis of ensemble pedagogy and argued there is a need to discover and reassert the essential language of this democratically engaged approach to education, and to more deeply explore the central proposition of teacher 'uncrowning' in order to combat the increased domestication of the approach. In light of the reoccurring presence of playfulness in the drama education, active Shakespeare education and ensemble pedagogy literatures, I suggest a deeper exploration of the role and function of playfulness within ensemble pedagogy could address these needs and offer a language through which we can speak of the processes and power of the approach.

In order to do this, a broad review of the literature on play and how it has been interpreted and utilised within the field of theatre and drama education is necessary. Play research is often noted for its complex and disparate nature, and resistance to generalised definitions. (Burghardt, 2011; Moyles, 1989; Schechner, 1993; Sutton-Smith, 1997) In order navigate this nebulous field I will draw on the work of play scholar Sutton-Smith. Sutton-Smith has suggested the existence of two 'paradigms' of play research (I use quotations here as the term is not used in the full Kuhnian sense of epistemological

outlook, but rather a set of disciplinary perspectives): the first paradigm concerned with developmental and psychological understandings of play, and the second paradigm dealing with socio-cultural explorations of play. (Sutton-Smith, 1979) As Sutton-Smith defines it, the first paradigm has a cognitive or creative focus, where the player is conceived usually as a solitary individual, voluntarily playing, with that play defined by action or 'fantasy'. While he sees the second paradigm as the subject of "anthropology, folklore and sociolinguistics', where play is conceived as a collective organisation of behaviour which is both communicative and reflective of the larger society. (Sutton-Smith 1979:1) The separation of play research along these lines has been noted by others within the field (Smith, 2010) and in relation to drama education research. (Dunn, 1998)

Additionally, Sutton-Smith built on this earlier binary definition in *The Ambiguity of Play,* identifying seven separate rhetorics of play. Sutton-Smith highlights the persuasive discourse of rhetorics, whether conscious or not, to enforce a particular world view. His thesis being that a rhetorical analysis of play literature demonstrates the divergent epistemological, cultural and sometimes political perspectives at work. These differing rhetorics of play therefore have relevance for those of us concerned with social justice and education. (Shimpi and Nicholson, 2013) Sutton-Smith divides the seven rhetorics into two categories, ancient and modern, arguing the modern rhetorics of process, imaginary and self stem from an Enlightenment tradition, ultimately focusing on the function of play within individuals, and are particularly concerned with childhood play. While the ancient rhetorics of fate, power, identity and frivolity, Sutton-Smith argues, are more concerned with the role of play in groups or communities and take a broader view of playfulness as relevant across our lives. (Sutton-Smith, 1997) In this way, it is possible to see the first and second paradigms as mapping onto these modern and ancient rhetorics.

Modern/First Paradigm	Ancient/Second Paradigm
Rhetoric of Progress	**Rhetoric of Fate**
Rhetoric of Imaginary	**Rhetoric of Power**
Rhetoric of Self	**Rhetoric of Identity**
	Rhetoric of Frivolity

Table 3.1 adapted from Sutton-Smith (Sutton-Smith 1997:215)

In the following two sections I will use this framework of paradigms and rhetorics to explore how play literature has been utilised within theatre and drama education research and consider to what extent this allows for a deeper articulation of the values and processes of ensemble pedagogy.

3.2   Theatre and Drama education and the first paradigm

First paradigm understandings of play have frequently been utilised within theatre and drama education research from its earliest days. In the following section, I will explore this relationship. I begin with early twentieth century theatre/drama education scholars and the notion of the naturally playful child, which primarily occupies the child-development focused progress rhetoric, though notions of inherent 'fair play' touch on the contestive power rhetoric. In the following section I move on to the mid twentieth century drama education theorist Slade and chart how his notion of child drama moves from the progress to the aesthetic and fanciful imaginary rhetoric of play, stifling concerns of social justice articulated via power rhetoric concepts in earlier literature. Finally, an analysis of contemporary play and drama education scholar Dunn further demonstrates the Eurocentric biases and erasure of theatre as a socially engaged art which can occur within the first paradigm progress and imaginary rhetorics of play. Thus, despite the initial promise of links with power rhetoric understandings of play as a form of protest and redress to pre-Enlightenment autocracy, the capitalist excesses of the industrial revolution and the violences of the First and Second World Wars within these works, ultimately I conclude that the first paradigm's use of certain romantic and idealised tropes within the rhetorics of progress, imaginary and self limit the nuance and richness it can contribute to the ensemble pedagogy vocabulary, and moreover could actually contribute to domesticating conceptualisations of the approach.

3.2.1   Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook: play as an instinctive childhood and social good

Early twentieth century drama education advocates Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook are both influenced by contemporary understandings of children as naturally playful and as instinctively learning and developing through their play. Sussex head teacher Finlay-Johnson, writing in the early 1900s suggests children's play as the expression of a natural and enquiring mind, and argued for the creation and performance of theatre and dances

to support learning across the curriculum. (Finlay-Johnson 1912:7) Likewise Cambridgeshire teacher Caldwell Cook, who also drew heavily on the performance of plays and use of role playing exercises, states: "The natural means of study in youth is play." (Caldwell Cook 1917:1) In order to understand these statements, a deeper exploration of their context is required.

As Nicholson argues (Nicholson 2011:38), these perspectives stem in part from Enlightenment and Romantic literary and cultural tropes of the child as innately imaginative, playful and suited to outdoor, rural environs (Froebel, 1887; Rousseau, 1762; Schiller, 1795); and in part from contemporary understandings of child development. For Sutton-Smith, this perspective is at the heart of the progress rhetoric. Sennett has argued the development of this rhetoric hinges on the binaries eighteenth century Enlightenment built between public and home, civilization and nature, adulthood and childhood and play and work. (Sennett 1986:89-91) Within these binaries children are therefore positioned within the interior, naturalised sphere of the home or garden, and concerned entirely with their play, which becomes seen as the primary, ideal means of their development. It is this rhetorical commitment to the value of play which thus underpins the majority of play research in the fields of education and psychology. (Sutton-Smith 1997)

By the early twentieth century play research, in particular evolutionary perspectives, were drawing parallels between human and animal play to support this notion of childhood as an essentially playful developmental stage. (Groos, 1901; Hall, 1906; Spencer, 1896) A typical statement taken from *The Play of Man* states "perhaps the very existence of youth is largely for the sake of play." (Groos 1901:76) Via the framing of play therefore, cultural and developmental ideas together funnelled into the field of education, and thus the newly developing practices of drama education. (Fleming, 2010) As Smith has noted, perspectives from this era "show the beginnings of a 'play ethos' that took a very strong and unquestioned view of the importance of play" which he argues continues to influence play research. (Smith 2010) Within western educational practice in particular the progress rhetoric continues to dominate early years' education practice, (Broadhead et al., 2010; Department for Education, 2014; Macintyre, 2012) though some research suggests a recent push back against this tradition. (Gleave and Cole-Hamilton, 2012)

However, there is another element to these play-focused early twentieth century influences on drama education from cultural thinkers such as William Morris. As a socialist

and leader of the arts and crafts movement, Morris sought to promote a communitarian social focus as an alternative to Victorian cultural dichotomies such as organic vs mechanical and traditional vs modern. (Vaninskaya, 2018:1) With his own interiors design business combining with literary and political advocacy work – Morris was active in the settlement house movement of the late nineteenth century (Nicholson, 2011; Sennett, 2012) – Morris saw the communitarian and moral value of 'art of all'. However, by rejecting elite models of high art, Morris' perspective also misses the specifically political and agititory potential of the arts. (Nicholson, 2011:26) Despite this, the notion of creative practice as by turns 'improving', liberating and uniting society thus creates a parallel with the early twentieth century understandings of the 'naturally' playful child, adding an aesthetic and communitarian aspect to this concept.

 The convergence of these ideas around children's play, art and social liberation can be seen in the work of these early drama education practitioners, with Finlay-Johnson in particular influenced by Morrisonian ideas. (Nicholson, 2011) In Finlay-Johnson's work she describes how her playful, drama-focused approach creates a self-governing community of learners. Foreshadowing Neelands' 'uncrowning', she suggests that through positioning the teacher as a fellow citizen or game player, their authority is 'naturally' abided without the need to rule as an 'absolute monarch'. Here there is thus a clear sense of play as a democratically communal and creative activity. Yet, as Nicholson comments, this learning community is ultimately understood by Finley-Johnson as a utopic garden, set in an a-political landscape. (Nicholson, 2011) Caldwell Cook's perspective on the relationship between play and community hold more traction with the wider political and social world when he describes classrooms as 'little republics' and envisions an ideal society growing from these principles:

> "We must let ourselves live fully by doing thoroughly those things we have
> a natural desire to do... Right and wrong in the play of life are not
> different from the right and wrong of the playing-field. We must obey the
> clear rules; and what is more, have a sense of fair play, and, in chief, play
> with all our hearts in the game" (Caldwell Cook, 1917: 4)

In this statement, Caldwell Cook refers to an understanding of common sense liberal values of the 'playing-field': a view of mankind (and Caldwell Cook is concerned with the teaching of boys and the lives of men) as holding an innate sense of fair play. The First

World War, in which Caldwell Cook participated on the front line, is referenced as a catalyst for his interest in the need for a new society, he argues of the war: "nothing could more plainly show the need of a better education in all countries than a tragedy of this magnitude." (Caldwell Cook, 1917: 24) Here we can see Caldwell Cook drawing on the early twentieth century notions of childhood play as central for growth, liberation and citizenship; and mobilising these ideas through drama education practices as an immediate and necessary response to the dehumanising violence of the First World War.

This notion of 'fair play', i.e. the potential through play to develop just and equitable social relationships is highlighted by Sennett. As he describes it, the 'self-distancing' possible via play allows for the negotiation of rules to establish social equity, giving the example of children of different ages playing marbles establishing varying 'handicaps' in order to play a fair game (Sennett 1986:318-9) This is the same idea is behind Neelands' argument of child play as a proto-democratic act, (Neelands, 2016) echoing other cultural thinkers' focus on the importance of self-distancing for social justice. (Castoriadis, 1997; Sen, 2006) While in the works of Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook this 'fair play' principle appears as synonymous with the progress rhetoric of play as naturalised child development, Sutton-Smith would argue it is a distinct element, and sits more within the second paradigm power rhetoric; in which play is seen variously as expressions of social power, conflict, mediation and solidarity. (Sutton-Smith, 1997) In particular there are resonances with the nineteenth century British expression of this rhetoric in which games provide an "essential moral training ground for the gentlemen of the future." (Sutton-Smith 1997:96) This does suggest a colonial flavour to Caldwell Cook's equitable playing-field therefore, which alongside his all male class 'republics' prompts questions on who is included in the game?

However, in the work of these early drama education scholars it is possible to see how ideas collating around turn of the century understandings of children's play provide a cornerstone of drama education practice within which implications of both autonomous expression and democratic community-building were innately woven. Their appreciation of the 'naturally' playful child; and the aim to capitalise on this playfulness to create an effective, egalitarian learning space seems as a single thought. But through applying a rhetorical lens it is possible to see these are two separate concepts. Sennett suggests that through the eighteenth century division of play into the realm of childhood this second more 'public' function of play as a socially equitable action has potential to be lost.

(Sennett 1986:320) As I will demonstrate in the following sections detailing how these early first paradigm conceptions of play came to be uncritically referenced in theatre and drama education scholarship; there is a need to tease out universalistic notions of personal development from claims of the communitarian and democratic potential of play in order to fully discuss the implications of play for ensemble pedagogy.

3.2.2   Slade and Child Drama: Child-led dramatic play and its issues

As the twentieth century progressed, so did perspectives on children's play, education and cultural lives, with key implications for the developing field of theatre and drama education. As Nicholson charts, notions of a naturally playful child met Modernist perspectives on artistic practice which increasingly championed aesthetic individualism, as a response to witnessing art of the First World War celebrating patriotism and communal duty only to incite slaughter on an industrial scale. (Nicholson 2011:50) This built on existing Enlightenment ideals to conceive of the child as an innate artist, and of child art as a distinct aesthetic product reflecting purity and emotional freedom. (Read, 1943)

These ideas continued to be utilised within drama education discourse of the time. On the one hand, the basic evolutionary perspective of play as developmentally adaptive was expanded through the work of child psychologists and educationalists. As Sutton-Smith notes, this research and resultant theories were typically expressed within the progress rhetoric ideal of normative developmental stages - be they stages which generate a sense of mastery and competence, (Erikson, 1950) which consolidate cognitive development, (Piaget, 1962) or which anticipate new cognitive developments (Vygotsky, 1978) – the constant is a recognition that play is a form of activity essential to, yet thus also unique to childhood (Sutton-Smith 1997:50) Alongside this a more aesthetic understanding of children's play, via Romantic and Modernist perspectives suggested that a rediscovery of ones 'inner child' was essential for releasing the creative adult self. (Nicholson 2011:50) This is closer to the first paradigm rhetoric of the imaginary, which Sutton-Smith describes as concerned with play as an artistic, imaginative expression. (Sutton-Smith, 1997)

Though not the only mid-century theatre and drama education practitioner to take this perspective, Peter Slade's work offers a prime opportunity to explore this approaches affordances and limitations. Slade applied these dual perspectives of children's play as developmentally adaptive and an expression of inner aesthetic feeling to drama education practice, adapting the model of 'child art' in his book *Child Drama.* His key argument is

that there is a unique art from of child drama, borne of natural, unconscious instinct and it is essential to the creation of "a happy and balanced individual." (Slade 1954:105) Like Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook, Slade holds the interests and instincts of the child in high respect. 'Children' are capitalised in reverence throughout the text. As with these earlier writers, ideas of children's play are central to his thesis; Slade presents drama not only as an appropriately playful activity, but as a complete expression of play itself. (Slade 1954:29) Hence Slade argues for a developmental understanding of child drama as an art from, which has its origins in the intrinsic play of children and can be developed appropriately over time by a sympathetic and knowledgeable teacher through key phases until concluding, for children aged around 15 years, with 'adult' drama of writing and performing scripts.

 Despite the centrality of Slade in the theatre and drama education canon, when seeking a reassertion of the social justice potential of ensemble pedagogy Slade's developmental theory of child drama becomes a problematic text. For example Slade argues for children as noble 'primitives'; drawing links between early stages of child drama and plays of ancient Egypt and 'African tribal dances'. (Slade 1954:88) While elsewhere he suggests children's mask designs show "unconscious knowledge of the drama of other periods and lands." (Slade 1954:304) These statements imply that young children *unconsciously* hold an innate aesthetic knowledge, not only of 'Drama' in general terms, but of specific theatrical conventions from a variety of non-western cultural traditions. This is a problematic colonialist claim, echoing the troubling but resilient (Sutton-Smith 1997:35) 'recapulation' theory of American child psychologist Stanley Hall, (Hall, 1906) who argued child play was a way to work through 'primitive' instincts from our evolutionary past. (Smith 2010:26) Clearly, an understanding of play based on this colonial perspective has limited value for speaking of the social justice remit of ensemble pedagogy.

As Sutton-Smith highlights, perspectives on play within the rhetoric of the imaginary can lead to this understanding of the child as 'noble savage', (Ellingson, 2001) and he rightly emphasises this universalistic understanding of childhood play is not borne out by the growing area of international play literature, which demonstrate the variety and cultural specificity of play across the globe. (Göncü and Gaskins, 2011; Roopnarine, 2011; Shimpi and Nicholson, 2013; Sutton-Smith, 1997) This gives a strong counter argument to Slade's conflation of western child development and various other 'ancient' 'tribal' traditions. As Etheridge Woodson states, within arts education claims towards the 'natural' or

'universal' are inevitably "code for naturalized, dominant cultural practices." (Etheridge Woodson 2015:108)

Nicholson's critique of this perspective specifically focuses on how the increasing interest in notions of the individuality and unfettered aestheticism of childhood contributed to the twentieth century preoccupation with the interiority of self, thus moving away from the possibility of a socially or politically-engaged aesthetic education. (Nicholson 2011:51) Where Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook concern themselves with the development of the classroom as a community for example, Slade's focus is much more on the developmental of the individual. While this has a moral facet – Slade emphasises his understanding of drama's capacity for experiencing sympathy and unity when working through 'moral choices' (Slade 1954:73) – he does not consider either education or theatre's potential for egalitarian discourse and social justice. As Hornbrook has identified in his critique of the drama in education movement, this understanding of the child as the universalised 'noble savage' has prevailed in drama classrooms into the late twentieth century. (Hornbrook 1998:95) Hornbook likewise argues this has turned:

> "teachers away from seeing art as a matter of making and interrogating socially valued products and towards the idea of art as a therapeutic engagement with the inner world of individuals" (Hornbrook 1998:70)

Despite Slade's undeniable significance as a pioneering drama education practitioner (Bolton, 1998; Fleming, 2010) this preoccupation with drama as therapeutic individual engagement is his legacy. Tracking his theories from their child play and child art genesis, we can see how first paradigm progress and imaginary rhetorical understandings of play within drama education can erase cultural specificities; can position children as mythologised noble savages rather than active citizens of our communities; and can understand social change as achieved through individual fulfilment, rather than communal action. Perspectives which all serve to limit the scope of ensemble pedagogy, which seeks precisely this communal pro-social action.

3.2.3   Contemporary first paradigm perspectives in drama education: Myths of universalism

The play rhetorics of progress and imaginary in theatre and drama education, emphasising child dramatic play as an innate quality, and focusing on the therapeutic

development of individual aesthetic expression popularised by Slade in many cases remain and have become naturalised in contemporary theatre and drama education scholarship. The work of Dunn on the role of child-led dramatic play is a key example of this, though again she is not alone in these perspectives. Her work prioritises child-led dramatic play as a valuable and under-utilised element of dramatic education. Her claim for this rests on the Sladian understanding that this free dramatic play shows an innate knowledge of 'dramatic structures'. (Dunn 2006:52) By claiming these rules of drama are 'unwritten' and 'universal' (Dunn 2010:29) yet elsewhere emphasising the necessity of narrative pace, tension (Dunn, 1996) and 'reality' of the dramatic play (Dunn, 2006) Dunn naturalises the cultural specificities of western, naturalistic theatre. Finneran has critically explored how these 'mythic' connections between children's play as a universal developmental process and western theatre modes can become naturalised in school curricula. (Finneran, 2008) This is particularly relevant when considered in light of the argument that western, naturalistic theatre forms typically reduce the impetus for social action in their structure and content. (Etheridge Woodson, 2015; Gallagher and Jacobson, 2018; Neelands, 2010c)

Indeed the main value Dunn places on this child-led play is the creation of more individualised meaning making within the drama, which she suggests as being more developmentally valuable than the communal understandings arrived at through whole group, teacher-led process drama practices. (Dunn, 1998) Through this again we can see how the high valuing of self-expression removes the possibility of seeing theatre as a socially-engaged artform (Finneran, 2008; Hornbrook, 1998; Nicholson, 2011) Furthermore, in citing the play-based work of Bateson, Vygotsky and Sawyer, (Bateson, 2011; Sawyer, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978) in support of the notion of individual meaning as created through play, I suggest Dunn misses the discursive, co-constructed, i.e. social nature of knowledge production, as understood, for example through Bateson's notion of meta-communicative play signals, or Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. In these models, the emphasis is on the social nature of knowledge; an individual's sense of meaning cannot be considered wholly 'internal', or more valuable for any perceived individuality or interiority, as meaning is by necessity arrived at through the co-production of knowledge, involving both the diverse views of those present and the orientation towards relevant social and cultural discourses of knowledge.

To summarise, first paradigm perspectives of play, particularly drawing on the progress and imaginative rhetorics, have been central in the genesis of drama education as a form

of pedagogy. That these theories allowed for a range of drama and progressive educationalists to develop and advocate for their child-centred practices, and that they continue to function as a unifying and inspiring touchstone should not be underestimated when considering their relevance for deepening understandings of ensemble pedagogy. Furthermore, connections with turn of the century cultural reformists, echoing the second paradigm play rhetoric of power via understandings of 'fair play', demonstrates a key link with concerns of social justice. However, when the universalising, and internalising first paradigm perspectives are utilised without reflection and critique within theatre and drama education this demonstrates the first paradigm's limits in terms of mobilising play as a language to express the richly processional, collaborative and social justice-oriented nature of ensemble pedagogy. In fact, I would argue this focus on play in drama education as an individual expression of autonomy, aesthetics and development, and reliance on universalistic moral models untethered to historical or cultural specificities actually opens the door for the domestication of ensemble pedagogy and other theatre and drama education approaches via reliance on the language of individual transformation.

By charting how the liberal ideals of the Enlightenment, Romantic and Modernist perspectives led to this progress and imaginary rhetoric of play within theatre and drama education and highlighting how uncritical reproduction of these ideas can threaten the very ideals which generated them, I echo Gallagher's warning of the power of neoliberal discourses to recruit "our most treasured cultural values and desires" as unwitting foot soldiers in their own perpetuation. (Gallagher 2016:56) In order to combat this, a useful distinction can be drawn here between notions of play and art as 'civilising' (Nicholson 2011:35) or as promoting and developing active citizenship; a distinction I will build on as I move forward to consider what second paradigm perspectives on play can offer the search for a language of ensemble pedagogy.

3.3   The promise of the second paradigm: socio-cultural notions of play

Within this section, I turn to the theorists who populate Sutton-Smith's second, socio-cultural paradigm of play research, arguing within the variety of perspectives they offer it is possible to draw out an understanding of play as a transgressive, subjunctive mode of discourse, which can be utilised to both consolidate and destabilise social spaces via ensemble pedagogy.

Beginning by considering the work of several prominent socio-cultural play scholars (Bakhtin, 1984; Caillois, 1958; Huizinga, 1949; Turner, 1982) I chart how these theories have contributed to theatre and drama education scholarship, whilst also drawing on a rhetorical analysis to unpick ways in which their frameworks of play ultimately serve the perpetuation of a dominant set of cultural norms. I therefore then turn to Schechner's Eastern concept of Maya-lila to develop an understanding of play as a more unpredictably dynamic and transgressive social force. Again, I map how these ideas have been applied within drama and theatre education, particularly focusing on Schechner's concept of dark play. Finally I turn to the social-linguistic notion of discourse as offering an empirical framework for expressing and studying an understanding of play as a dynamic and destabilising social force within drama pedagogy. In this I draw on the dialogic theories of Bakhtin and Sennett, and present examples of this discursive understanding of playfulness within applied linguistic education research. I conclude by offering the notion of a subjunctive, discursive mode as a framework for utilising playfulness as a lens for exploring ensemble pedagogy.

3.3.1   Play as community: contest, cohesion and carnival

 Huizinga, frequently recognised as the father of socio-cultural understandings of play, (Henricks, 2015; Schechner, 1993; Sutton-Smith, 1997) argues civilisation "does not come *from* play like a babe detaching itself from the womb: it arises *in* and *as* play and never leaves it." (Huizinga 1949:12) His book *Homo Ludens* is concerned with play not as a childhood developmental stage, but a constant factor of cultural and social life. Huizinga's definition of play emphasises that it occurs "outside the sphere of necessity or material utility" and is governed by "rules freely accepted." (Huizinga 1949:10) Huizinga argues this voluntary play is concerned with contest and competition, as Sutton-Smith summarises "his argument here is that the urge towards contest, motivated by a sense of honour has prompted citizens throughout history to engage in a range of playful contest forms, with the result that civilisation as a whole is driven to greater heights." (Sutton-Smith 1997:78-9) This notion of play as rooted in the need for contest but removed from the 'material utility' of everyday life provides a clear sociological explanation for playfulness within Huizinga's argument, it also prompts his focus on what he considers to be the 'higher' expression of the 'play factor' in various historical and anthropological examples. His sympathies with Romantic readings of culture become clear when he identifies the

industrial revolution and the nineteenth century more broadly as a period singularly lacking in the play factor.

  Perhaps the strongest statement towards this celebration of 'higher' forms of cultural play is an extended discussion of seventeenth century aristocratic wig-wearing "as one of the most remarkable instances of the play-factor in culture." (Huizinga 1949:211) Though making a parallel point to Sennett's observance of the relegation of play from adult, public life in the west from the eighteenth century onwards, in such emphatic statements it is possible to see why Huizinga has come under critique for pursuing a "selective and nostalgic view of civilization" and failing to take account of "the toiling mass of humanity" (Steiner, in Huizinga 1949:13) This is emphasised by Sutton-Smith in his positioning of Huizinga's thesis as partly within the first paradigm rhetoric of imaginary, the rhetoric of 'aesthetic creativity' prioritised in Slade and Dunn's work; and partly within the second paradigm rhetoric of power, the 'fair play' perspective of Caldwell Cook. (Sutton-Smith 1997:74)

  The ambiguities of the power rhetoric become visible within this, as when Huizinga speaks of poets' need for a "restricted circle of readers who understand… their special language." (Huizinga 1949:158) it becomes clear that while civilisation may be created through play, play is not necessarily for every citizen. As Sutton-Smith observes, there is present within the rhetoric of power a preoccupation with machismo and noble transcendence, and a reliance on colonial notions of the morality of the 'gentleman player' as well as a focus on egalitarian negotiation. (Sutton-Smith 1997:85-6) Huizinga's crediting of nineteenth century concerns for social welfare, the rise of socialism, and liberalism more generally as all contributing to the downfall of play's role in western society (Huizinga 1949:218) demonstrates a cultural perspective of play is not by necessity a pro-social perspective of play. Thus, despite the compelling possibilities of his underlying thesis, which has been cited in drama education and applied theatre literature as resonating with the community-building power of theatre practice, (Bayliss, 1999; Chinyowa, 2012; Dunn, 1998; Neelands, 2016) his power rhetoric of play as cultural contest and transcendence comes something closer to notions of culture as 'civilising' (Nicholson, 2011) than of ensemble pedagogy understandings of active citizenship.

  Yet, in order to understand Huizinga, it is vital to contextualise his writing during the rise of Fascism in Europe. When he speaks of the degrading of the play form into 'mass

demonstrations' (Huizinga 1949:231) it is clear he is referring to the rallies of the Nazi party. This only becomes more relevant and poignant when you learn Huizinga was, along with several other prominent Dutch academics, arrested in the early 1940s and died whist in custody. (Henricks, 2006) Like Caldwell Cook, who faced the trenches of World War One, and died a vagrant following a nervous breakdown in the 1930s, (Bolton, 1998) Huizinga ultimately held a belief in the "honour, decency and good form" (Huizinga 1949:235) of humanity possible through play. Thus the promise of play within the power rhetoric as a form of negotiation or bloodless contest, while embodying some elements of western machismo and colonial notions of the 'gentleman player', is nevertheless a powerful one, in light of these lived experiences and speaks towards ensemble pedagogy aims of engaging with genuine social conflicts and its essentially contestive nature, as the approach does not seek to avoid or resolve conflict, but actively find ways to live together around and through it. (Pigkou-Repousi, 2012)

Robert Caillois, a French sociologist writing in the 1940s and 1950s offers a broader model of cultural play than Huizinga. His most relevant contribution from this study's perspective is in his two-way metric of play types. Firstly, he identifies four types of playing: *Agon*, defined by competition; *Alea*, defined by chance and fate; *Mimicry*, defined by simulation and illusion; and *Ilinx*, defined by a sense of unbalance or vertigo. In addition to these four horizontal categories, Caillois proposed two further vertical categories, functioning as either end of a continuum: *Paidia*, meaning play which is improvised and unstructured; and *Ludus*, for play which is structured and rule-bound. (Caillois, 1958) This metric, in opposition to Huizinga's focus on rule-bound competition – *Ludic Agon*, within Caillois definition – offers broader, yet also more specific opportunities for understanding the nature and role of playfulness within ensemble pedagogy. Winston has applied Caillois' metric as an analytic tool within a drama education context, utilising the categories to chart the range of play-based activities, and the moves from more structured, teacher-led moments of *Ludus*; to more spontaneous moments of *Paidia* within an early years' Shakespeare project. (Winston, 2013) This suggests a clear use for Caillois' model to explore the 'uncrowning' moves central to ensemble pedagogy. (Enciso et al., 2011; Neelands, 2009a)

 However Caillois conceives of his metric as hierarchical; suggesting *Ilinx* and *Mimicry* as associated with pre-industrial cultures, and argues these are gradually replaced with the dominance of *Agon* and *Alea* as a culture becomes more 'civilized'. (Caillois 1958:97)

Elsewhere he emphasises the risk of the 'degradation' in play activities particularly around the dangers of gambling. (Sutton-Smith 1997:65) Gambling, Sutton-Smith argues, is the classic activity of play within the second paradigm rhetoric of fate, which conceives of play as mystic and chaotic. Sutton-Smith emphasises fate's destabilising effect on the rational promise of self-control within the progress rhetoric and highlights the subsequent fear of fateful playing within western societies. (Sutton-Smith 1997:96) Thus, while Caillois' play metric has clear value for developing the language of ensemble pedagogy, his perspective that play is potentially degenerative to the function of the individual in society limits the relevance of his broader theories to developing a language of ensemble pedagogy.

If Huizinga and Caillois share an understanding of play as a clearly delineated realm within cultural life, two theorists which have conceptualised a more embedded, disruptive role of play in society are Turner and Bakhtin. Anthropologist Tuner theorised that many social rituals can be understood as playfully liminal 'social dramas' – i.e. taking place in a socially constructed 'between' space, outside the typical boundaries of a society, where new identities and behaviours are possible; a "kind of institutional capsule or pocket which contains the germ of future social developments, of societal change." (Turner 1982:45) Turner built this theory from his study of coming of age and other social rituals in the Ndembu tribe of Zambia, and was heavily influenced by ideas from performance theory, in particular the work of Schechner and the experimental US theatre of the 1960s and 70s (Turner 1982:15) He argues the roots of theatre as an aesthetic form are in social drama (Turner 1982:11) and focuses on the 'plural reflexivity' possible through dramatic exploration and action. For example while the character of Hamlet can only brood on his own motives, *Hamlet* the play can reflect on broader themes within the text and beyond (Turner 1987:106) Turner goes on to argue this plurality of liminal spaces created through social dramas is a key element of the 'play frame', where you can paradoxically be in 'flow' yet also hold awareness of secondary cognitive processes (Turner 1987:87)

  With his focus on community rituals, Turner's work resonates with the second paradigm rhetoric of identity, which Sutton-Smith defines as an understanding of play as a form of "bonding, including the exhibition and validation or parody of membership and traditions in a community" (Sutton-Smith 1997:91) The inclusion of 'parody' is essential to understanding Turner, who emphasised the 'paradoxical plurality' of play throughout his writings. As Schechner comments "in Turner's terms, play is categorically uncatorizable, the 'anti' by means of which all other categories are destabilised." (in Turner 1987:17)

Turner refers to play as a "shadow monster" and argues, like other liminal phenomena it occurs in "the subjunctive mood." (Turner 1987:169) From this position, he critiques what he sees as Huizinga and Caillois' more static models of play in social life, commenting they fail "to take into account the dialectical nature, which moves from structure to anti-structure and back again." (Turner 1987:127-8) In this way, alongside emphasising the paradoxical, elusive qualities of play in social life, Turner also specifically foregrounds the notion of play as a vehicle for both social bonding and social change. (Turner 1987:170) This notion of the playfully liminal space as a crucible for social change, particularly as it draws so directly on theatrical models and notions of performativity, has become a key concept in pro-social drama education literature. (Balfour, 2009; Chinyowa, 2012; Gallagher and Wessels, 2013; Hughes and Wilson, 2004; Hunter, 2008; Newton, 2014; Nicholson, 2003; Rodricks, 2015; Sloan, 2018; Smithner, 2010)

While sitting close to the power rhetoric through which play is seen as social cohesion through ritualised debate and contest, the identity rhetoric emphasises the "transcendent and integrative character of group play." (Sutton-Smith 1997:92) For Turner, it is this capacity for shared transcendence through play which gives it the dynamising and destabilising quality with the potential to drive social change. This being said, Turner notably cautions against overconflations of social ritual and theatre when he states the satire of social drama is ultimately a reflection, rather than a smashing, of social order: "It does not break it down into constituents in order to remould it, far less does it annihilate and replace that object." (Turner 1982:41) In particular he cautions theatre as an aesthetic form has moved beyond this sole purpose of social drama, and does not feel comfortable about attempts to 'regress' theatre's social positionality in this way. (Turner 1987:106) Sloan has similarly recently echoed Turner's caution in this area, critiquing tendency in applied theatre to make transformational claims of liminal theatrical experiences, (Sloan, 2018) hence the limitations of direct application of liminal spaces as playgrounds of social justice is highlighted.

Closely related to Turner's notion of playfulness as occurring within the liminal spaces of social dramas is literary theorist Bakhtin's conceptualisation of the carnival as a key social play activity of medieval Europe. As Bakhtin describes it:

> "a person of the Middle Ages lived, as it were, two lives: one was the
> official life, monolithically serious and gloomy, subjugated to a strict

hierarchal order; full of terror, dogmatism, reverence, and piety; the other

was the life of the carnival square, free and unrestricted, full of

ambivalent laughter, blasphemy, the profanations of everything sacred,

full of debasing and obscenities, familiar contact with everyone and

everything." (Bakhtin 1984:129-30)

Compare this to Huizinga's ideal of the aristocratic poet, or Caillois' fear of the gambling den: Bakhtin's social play of the carnival is an essentially populist notion, occurring in the marketplace and full of obscenities and 'familiar contact'. This takes Turner's notion of play as a driving force of liminal social structures and grounds it firmly in earthy materiality; Bakhtin's play is much more recognisably the play of the people at large. This is again play within the communitarian identity rhetoric, though Sutton-Smith also speaks of Bakhtin's work in the modern rhetoric of the imaginary, in its 'darker' element, foregrounding the "pretence, deconstruction, heteroglossia" of play rather than "creativity, art, romanticism" (Sutton-Smith 1997:127) as in the imaginary rhetoric theories of section 3.2.

The work of Tam directly explores the implications of Bakhtin's communitarian yet heteroglossal carnivalesque for drama education pedagogy. (Tam, 2010, 2016) Through a case study analysis of Chinese primary schools undertaking an active drama project, she characterises the carnivalesque classroom as one where the teacher 'decrowns' themselves and is open to the students' contributions. This encompassed the inclusion of multiple 'languages', for example the use of slang to the teacher during in-role exercises; the 'unbounding' of the body via physical contact and free use of the classroom space; and the sanctioning of 'imaginative violence'. Tam argues the pedagogical construction of these moments can be mapped out across four elements: teacher power, student power, social space and physical space. She emphasises that in undertaking to create a communal, carnivalesque classroom space "as a resistant and transgressive pedagogic form" (Tam 2010:190) teachers must recognise their 'decrowning' as an ongoing, generative project, in which the carnivalesque classroom acts "as an open and unfinished space for languages, knowledges and cultures of the teacher and students to collide and intersect with one another, producing new hybrid forms." (Tam 2010:187) This dynamism and hybridity clearly relies on the subjunctive power of social play which Turner and Bakhtin emphasise. This prompts a reconsideration of the potential of the imaginary rhetoric of play within ensemble pedagogy. When encompassing the dark potential for

deconstruction and pretence as well as idealisations of aesthetic flights of fancy; and when tempered with issues of community and conflict from within the identity and power rhetorics the significance of the imaginary rhetoric in conceiving of a subversive play of social cohesion and critique becomes clear.

However, Tam also highlights Eco's (1984) argument that the carnival is ultimately under the surveillance of the authorities. In the historical medieval carnival the fact remains that "without a valid law to break, carnival is impossible." (Eco 1984:6) Likewise, the power of the transgressive release of the carnivalesque can be seen as contingent on the very fact that such periods of lawlessness are clearly confined; and represent a brief release from a broader system of social order. From this Tam draws cautions that the teacher's authority is always relevant, and shifts only intricately by careful pedagogical approach. (Tam 2010:183) A reflection which Aitken echoes, drawing on Foucauldian power discourses to highlight the constancy of power negotiations in the theatre education classroom. (Aitken, 2009)

Through this initial analysis of four central second paradigm play scholars, what emerges is a rich, though often conflicting set of perspectives. If Huizinga and Caillois over-rely on the colonial, patriarchal structures of the power rhetoric, Turner's liminality opens up the potential of social play within the communitarian identity rhetoric. Through Turner's emphasis on the subjective power of play, and Bakhtin's celebration of the carnivalesque, the dark elements of the imaginary rhetoric are introduced. Yet the rationalist western preoccupation with binaries of order/disorder, play/work remain in these models; limiting, as Sennett has observed, (Sennett, 1986) the potential for framing understandings of an active and egalitarian public citizenship through play. Within second paradigm play scholarship are suggestions that play theories outside of western orthodoxy embrace more morally ambiguous and more paradoxical theories of play's role in society, which could add depth to this understanding of play as a uniting, yet transgressive and dynamic force. It is these to which I turn in the following section.

3.3.2   Play as transgressive: Dark and Maya-lila play

Performance theorist Richard Schechner has drawn extensively on ideas of play. (Schechner, 1988, 1993, 2012) His view echoes that of his colleague Turner when he states "performance may be defined as ritualized behaviour conditioned/permeated by play." (Schechner 2012:89) In this he emphasises Turner's understanding of play as a

paradoxical, subjunctive mode of behaviour, cutting through ritual social events. Expanding on this viewpoint, Schechner draws our attention to differences in western and Indian philosophical conceptualisations of play, (Schechner, 1993, 2012) arguing that western understandings of play are essentially positivist, seeing play as clearly framed off from everyday life and existing in a disadvantaged hierarchy with it; as a temporary state which is clearly communicated to others; and as "low status… Female and infantile." (Schechner 1993:35) This analysis chimes with Sennett's observations on the post-Enlightenment binary divisions which serve to relegate play to private, interior, childhood world; simultaneously idealising play and lowering its status. Schechner contrasts this with an Indian approach to play based on an analysis of Hindu religious lore and cultural conventions, which he terms Maya-lila, the Sanskrit words for illusion and play. In Maya-lila, Schechner argues, we lose the western positivistic conviction of a single, provable truth and rather move through multiple, cyclical instances of play which are both creative and destructive. He argues play is thus seen as a divine process; yet also deeply morally ambiguous and with intentionally blurred boundaries; cutting across gender roles, the sacred and profane, and the 'real' and the 'fun'. (Schechner 1993:35)

Thus, Schechner's key contribution to an ensemble pedagogy language of play is to offer a cultural model for playfulness which clearly demonstrates the paradoxical, subjunctive possibilities of play in a way which, unlike the scholars cited in 3.4.1, does not place play in a separate category from 'everyday' life; but is rather capable of cutting through 'everyday' life at any point. This expands the possibilities of playfulness as a dynamo for social change and social justice. Schechner goes on to seek examples of the Maya-lila play mode in our own culture by defining and exploring the notion of 'dark play':

> "Dark play may be conscious playing, but it can also be playing in the dark
> when some or even all of the players don't know they are playing. Dark
> play occurs when contradictory realities coexist, each seemingly capable
> of cancelling the other out… Dark play subverts order, dissolves frames,
> breaks its own rules." (Schechner 1993:36)

Through examples given of episodes of dark play, including a drink- and drug-fuelled road trip, the performance of ballet arabesques on cliff edges, and the creation of alternative personas during holidays, Schechner emphasises dark play is not necessarily violent or dangerous but "Unlike the inversions of carnivals… and so on (whose agendas are public),

dark play's inversions are not declared or resolved." (Schechner 1993:36) While Schechner emphasises dark play often relies on anonymity and is highly personal playing, Winston has highlighted the social justice applications of dark play within drama education contexts.

In an evaluation of TIE sex and relationships project *Changes* Winston notes that the mutual, and sometimes dark, playing of both the project facilitators and student participants contributed to a richer and more autonomous engagement in the ethical issues covered by the project. (Winston, 2005) Firstly, Winston observes that a playful and humorous tone of transgression was established in the aesthetic conventions of the *Changes* performance, both in the content and forum theatre structure, with no scripted resolution. This, he argues, along with the expertise of the programme's players at managing the artistic and pedagogic skills necessary for striking this tone, supported a deeper engagement in the ethical dilemmas of the piece. (Winston 2005:317)

More critically however, this transgressive and playful framing invited the students' own dark play through their engagement with the forum theatre portion of the programme. Winston noted a tendency for a vocal minority of participating students, often boys, to voice exaggeratedly sexist and illiberal suggestions for the characters. This was initially perceived by the actors as sabotage, though they nevertheless took up the 'game', utilising their skills as actors "to respond to the 'extreme' suggestions with 'extreme' representations." (Winston 2005:316) Winston thus suggests this is dark playing on the part of the students, and moreover a 'subaltern' (Spivak, 1995) response which allows the students, notably those from a Muslim cultural background, to resist and repurpose the western liberal 'agenda' of the TIE programme. This takes us closer to the stated aims of ensemble pedagogy, whereby autonomous, collaborative dramatic play can provide not only a much-needed release from the norms of society, but mechanisms to challenge and reimagine those norms. Through dark play these students are able to be active citizens of the classroom, rather than passive recipients of any 'civilising' message of the TIE programme.

Winston highlights the artistic and pedagogic skill of the workshop facilitators in modelling and engaging with this dark play. Alongside play-based frameworks of describing ensemble pedagogic processes already explored within this chapter (Tam, 2010; Winston, 2013) another possibility, echoing Schechner's Maya-lila dynamism, is suggested by

O'Toole when he talks of the importance of 'moments of guffaw' alongside the more classic Heathcotian process drama 'moments of awe' within drama education pedagogy. (O'Toole, 2001) O'Toole characterises these moments of guffaw as "fragmentation, unexpected contingency of chaos, and comic juxtaposition" (O'Toole 2001:98) whilst also admitting "The guffaw certainly exists right on the edge of the drama, and we fear it – I know I do. It punctures pretension, and challenges certainty… and it challenges the power of the drama leader." (O'Toole 2001:99) While Tam's characterisation of the carnivalesque classroom gives concrete imagery of how the ensemble pedagogy space might look and feel, and Winston's use of Caillois' framework gives a scale of playfulness upon which ensemble practitioners might play, what O'Toole identifies here is how playfulness might function alongside other qualities of the ensemble process.

The transgressive, but dynamic quality of Schechner's Maya-lila play, clearly chimes with the darkly destructive aspect of the imaginary rhetoric. However, as when he speaks of play as a "transcendent force or energy" (Schechner 1993:43) Schechner moves closer to the second paradigm rhetoric of fate, encompassing games of chance, and notions of play as a metaphysically chaotic force. As I touched on in section 3.3.1, Sutton-Smith speaks of the rhetoric of fate as "a real threat to the rhetoric of progress, because [it] promises to put adults and children in the same ludic world." (Sutton-Smith 1997:54-5) This hints at the power of Schechner's fateful dark play within ensemble pedagogy; to repair the Enlightenment dichotomy which places play in a narrow, internalised childhood realm and open up the full richness of second paradigm rhetoric perspectives on play as a contestive, collaborative, subjunctive social force within arts education. However, the highly mystic perspective towards play suggested by Schechner's Maya-lila play as a 'transcendent force' is in and of itself resistant to empirical study. Is there a perspective within second paradigm scholarship which allows for the combination of fateful and dark Maya-lila with the communitarian promise of the identity rhetoric in such a way to open it up to empirical research? In the following section I suggestive discursive understandings of play offer just this synthesis of perspectives.

3.3.3   Play as discursive: the power of dialogic empathy

A growing number of play scholars have suggested play can be best understood not as a set of activities, but as a mode of interaction. (Tizard and Harvey 1977; Bruner 1983; Schechner 1993:41) This view has even begun to permeate typically progress rhetoric

early years' research on playfulness, (Stetsenko and Ho, 2015; Walsh et al., 2011) which has previously relied heavily on typologies of play *actions*. (Hughes, 2011) Though there are evidently many valid instances of individual play – Sutton-Smith lists 40 possibilities merely by way of an exploratory exercise (Sutton-Smith 1997:4) - this focus on an interactive mode suggests an empirical lens for the ways in which playfulness operates in pedagogic contexts. In this final section I argue that playful discourse, in particular a mode of discourse Sennett terms 'dialogic empathy' is fundamental to playfulness under the identity rhetoric, i.e. play understood as the mode in which active membership to communities is enacted; and is thus central to a developing a playful lens on ensemble pedagogy.

The socio-linguistic theories of Bakhtin have frequently been used to study uses of playful discourse in classroom contexts and offer an opening perspective here. His theories of the dialogic, heteroglossia and speech genres seek to recognise that language relies on a constant interplay between a variety of historical and contemporary meanings, (Bakhtin, 1981) and that via 'active double voiced utterances' (Bakhtin, 1981) we can consciously play on these multiple meanings, addressing and exploring the "intertextuality and hybridity in both spoken and written texts." (Maybin and Swann 2007:543) These identity-focused discursive modes can be seen as concerned with navigating the specificities of community forming, particularly addressing issues of difference and unequal power structures. Bakhtin's socio-linguistic theories have provided a framework for describing how students can use language actively and playfully in order to explore its social power in both drama education (Cheng and Winston, 2011; Tam, 2010) and classroom studies more broadly. (Cohen, 2011; Maybin, 2005; Stetsenko and Ho, 2015) For example Cohen demonstrates through a Bakhtinian analysis of conversations during free play in an Early Years' setting that the dialogic and heteroglossal nature of these interactions allows the children to both appropriate and satirise experiences of authoritative adult discourse. (2011)

 Sennett provides an extended theorisation of the social power of dialogic discourse in his book *Togetherness*. (Sennett, 2012) Here he discusses the position of dialogic empathy, defined by firstly distinguishing between *dialectic* interaction, in which the aim is to reach a mutual understanding and *dialogic* interaction, in which there is no intention to reach a common ground, but rather for the speaker to become more aware of both themselves and others. He similarly distinguishes between the quality of *sympathy* as the 'emotional

reward' of dialectic, the mutual identification of 'I feel your pain'; and *empathy* which in line with dialogic encounters, is a more distanced experience of 'seeing' the other without losing your own positionality. As Sennett argues "Both sympathy and empathy convey recognition, and both forge a bond, but one is an embrace, the other is an encounter… Empathy is [the] more demanding exercise… the listener has to get outside him- or herself." (Sennett 2012:21) He goes on to suggest this quality of dialogic empathy engenders a 'subjunctive mood' which opens up "an intermediate mutual space… in which strangers dwell with one another." (Sennett 2012:23) These notions of subjunctivity and space-making demonstrates resonances with the play theories discussed above.

Amongst other social, cultural and historical vignettes, Sennett highlights the playful Early Modern Italian social convention of *Sprezzarura*; affecting a 'light touch' to social interaction, to avoid taking oneself too seriously (Sennett 2012:117) as a model for this dialogic, empathetic discourse. Though similar in many respects, this theory goes beyond the explanation of play in Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man*, which relies on power rhetoric notions of the morality of the 'gentleman player' and 'fair play', in which an ultimately universal commitment to egalitarian justice is assumed. This more tentative, but hence infinitely more flexible model makes no assumptions of a shared moral premise, or of an eventual common goal. It rather offers a way in which individual variations can be made visible and navigated in order to create an active community, albeit one where there is nevertheless no expectation of uniformity and can therefore be seen as residing within the Identity rhetoric of community formation. The notion of working within and around difference which Sennett's dialogic empathy suggests is echoed in Sutton-Smith's observations of play within this rhetoric: "Thus by performing mutually before each other in these play events… we humanize ourselves and soften the contractions that might otherwise spell disaster." (Sutton-Smith 1997:92)

Winston and Strand have made links between Sennett's ideas and theatre and drama education in their analysis of the TIE programme *Tapestry*, which addressed issues of radicalisation and extremism. (Winston and Strand, 2013) In this, the authors highlight the dialogic empathy and *sprezzatura*-like charm of the programme, realised through the consciously bantering, performative nature of the piece achieved partly, as in *Changes*, by the discursive skill and charm of the actors, and the open-ended pedagogic techniques of TIE; and partly by the deliberately subjunctive nature of the script, which saw characters role-playing each other and a variety of other characters. Drawing on the work of Sen

(Sen, 2006) Winston and Strand argue this creates a subjunctive space in which the essential plurality and diversity of our identities is brought to the fore, emphasising the choices we have in how we see and position ourselves within society. In this, they highlight the role of playfulness in establishing this autonomous, subjunctive space in which even high-stakes social and political issues can be considered, arguing Sennett's model of discourse demonstrates how the subjunctive 'game playing' of participatory theatre "when done well, is fruitful as a social as well as an aesthetic encounter." (Winston and Strand 2013:76) Malaysian scholar Rajendran has likewise highlighted the role of playful multi-roled, multilingual theatre practices in engaging diverse student populations in what she calls 'postcolonial conviviality'. (Rajendran, 2014, 2016)

 Interestingly, what is not foregrounded in Winston and Strand's study is the 'subaltern' element of transgressive play Winston noted in students' response to the *Changes* programme. It would have been interesting to discover if any similar instances occurred during the *Tapestry* project, and if so how these were negotiated within the dialogic space of the programme. Winston and Strand instead emphasise the 'charming' quality of the programme, a specifically defined notion in this case which references Winston's earlier work contrasting the moral aesthetics of the 'beautiful' versus the 'sublime' (Winston, 2010) in which "the beautiful [is] an aesthetics of charm, associated with liveliness, gaiety, cheer and good heartedness, the sublime an aesthetics of power, of shock and awe." (Winston and Strand 2013:70) This holds echoes of O'Toole's moments of guffaw and awe, with charm-like beauty here holding the more subjunctive, playful quality. This framing opens up key possibilities for the power of play through gentle charm as well as 'dark' transgression.

 Returning to the socio-linguistic basis on which this section began, it is interesting to note that this discursive understanding of playfulness has been increasingly utilised within applied linguistic educational research in recent years. (Bell, 2005; Bell et al., 2014; Bushnell, 2008; Cekaite and Aronsson, 2005; Forman, 2011; Stetsenko and Ho, 2015; Waring, 2012) These studies have largely built on the work of linguist Cook, (Cook, 2000) who as Winston describes, is distinctive in his utilisation of cultural as well as cognitive theories of play, and his inclusion of the darker elements of language play. (Winston 2013:4) Cook emphasises the social power of play via Wolfson's 'bulge theory' (Wolfson, 1990) suggesting play is more readily present in interactions of unequal power relations, such as authority on the one hand, and intimacy on the other, (Cook 2000:62-3) which

chimes strongly with the dialogic models of Bakhtin and Sennett. Applied linguistic studies of classroom language play have drawn links between students' language play and pro-social outcomes. For example in Waring's study of adult English language classrooms they demonstrate how instances of linguistic play provide students with a safe space to "engage in… subversive acts such as critiquing the teacher's tasks." (Waring, 2012: 203)

The findings of these studies would seem to bare out the claims for the dynamic, collaborative potential of playful discourse made by Sennett and other theorists. This suggests an understanding of ensemble pedagogy via play as most fruitfully centralised in the second paradigm identity rhetoric. This offers an alternative to the patriarchal undertones of the power rhetoric notion of 'fair play' and play as contest, which I have suggested guides the works of Huizinga and Caillois; and grounds the subjunctive, transgressive power of play hinted at in the dark imaginary and fate rhetorics employed by Turner, Bakhtin and Schechner. Via this emphasis on play as a processional, open-ended mode, Sennett's dialogic empathy and Cook's pro-social language play offers the possibility of speaking of the power of ensemble pedagogy as a communal endeavour, whilst simultaneously highlighting the rich processional work which participants must undertake. In other words, in this way we can see play as a process of active citizenship, rather than passive 'civilization'.

3.4   Conclusion: A working concept of playfulness within ensemble pedagogy.

What, at the end of this rhetorical analysis of the uses of play and playfulness in theatre and education scholarship, can be claimed for play as a language for discussing the principles and processes of ensemble pedagogy? Returning to Neelands' initial proposition of play as a proto-democratic behaviour; through the perspectives explored above it is possible to interrogate the interpretation and implications of this statement for ensemble pedagogy. Combining ideas of developmental and educational psychologists Bruner, Winnicott and Erikson, with notions of social play from Huizinga, Caillois and Sennett Neelands' central proposition here is of pro-social play as a 'space of potential' in which we "learn to find the balance between freedom and restraint of speech and action and to develop dis-interested involvement with others." (Neelands 2016:35) In this model of active and collaborative democratic participation Neelands echoes Sennett and speaks of disinterested empathy rather than cloying sympathy in these playful interactions, positioning the role of play within ensemble pedagogy as primarily within the second

paradigm identity rhetoric. As I have discussed above, within this rhetoric, play can be seen as an ongoing social discourse by which we position ourselves into or out of memberships of social groups.

However, alongside the cohesive quality of play through Identity rhetoric, equally important from a social justice perspective is the balance of this with the darker imaginary and fate rhetorics of play: inviting dissent and disorder in order to allow for the possibility of resisting oppression and challenging specific social norms. Drama education scholar Wright speaks of this element of practice as 'rupture and repair' in highlighting its centrality in the creation of pro-social theatre education spaces. (Wright, 2015) Faced with the brutal inequalities and social injustices Neelands highlights in this most recent ensemble pedagogy piece (Neelands, 2016) I argue any 'undomesticated' expression of ensemble pedagogy must look towards inviting models of active citizenship which seek to disrupt systematic oppression, radicalisation and violence. By combining Schechner's dark play with Sennett's dialogic empathy, a conceptualisation of playfulness within ensemble as a dynamic, dissenting force offers a powerful framing for discussions of principles and practice. Bruner, in many ways a play theorist of the progress rhetoric, (Sutton-Smith 1997:40) nevertheless argued for the foregrounding of the potential of deep and dark playing within education, speculating it could hold the power to force new forms of behaviour and culture in response to the most profound problems facing contemporary society. (Bruner, 1972)

The theatre and drama education classrooms described by studies cited in this chapter offer a model of playful teaching practice as a route to Neelands' central ensemble pedagogy move of teacher 'uncrowning'. The mix of communitarian identity rhetoric and transgressive imaginary and fate rhetorics is present in Tam's carnivalesque classrooms of unbounded physicality, multiple languages and imaginative violence; in Winston's recognition of the value of welcoming dark play, particularly as a way to give space for 'subaltern' voices; in O'Toole's celebration of the juxtaposition of moments of awe with those of guffaw; and in Winston and Strand's focus on utilising a discourse of dialogic empathy in order to create a subjunctive space in which the essential plurality and diversity of our identities is brought to the fore. (O'Toole, 2001; Tam, 2010; Winston, 2005; Winston and Strand, 2013) To conclude, applying the lens of playfulness as a dynamic mode of discourse capable of fostering both togetherness and dissent to ensemble pedagogy offers both opportunities to rearticulate its radical, critical

epistemology, and a wealth of opportunities for grounding this critical work in the central classroom practice of teacher uncrowning.

4. Context of the Research: Shakespeare Schools' Foundation and The Playful Ensemble

In the previous two chapters I have explored the scholarly genesis and practical application of ensemble pedagogy within theatre and drama education; highlighted the threat of 'domestication' to this approach in current western schooling norms; offered 'play' as a lens through which to address this domestication and deepen understanding of ensemble pedagogy in practice; and developed a framework of discursive playfulness, balancing communitarian identity-building with 'dark' dissent with the aim of enabling deeper discussion of ensemble pedagogies as dynamic spaces for pro-social active citizenship work.

In order to explore and develop the potential of this discursive playfulness as a language to describe the values and practices of ensemble pedagogy, it is useful to apply them in an empirical context. Considering the enacted, processional nature of ensemble pedagogy, (Neelands, 2009a) a sustained qualitative empirical study is preferable. At the outset of this project, an opportunity arose to work with the UK cultural education charity Shakespeare Schools Foundation (SSF), who recommend teachers in their annual flagship festival project work with their students to create a "playful ensemble." (Shakespeare Schools Festival, 2014) In this chapter I therefore contextualise my focus on this project firstly by exploring the notion of Shakespeare education practice as a playful ensemble endeavour, building on the potential of playful discourse as a language of ensemble pedagogy via this analysis, and by furthermore providing a detailed introduction to the work of SSF.

I will do this by considering the claims to Shakespeare education as an ensemble endeavour; and drawing out the role of playfulness implicated in these claims. In order to further contextualise the work of SSF, I explore in more detail the implications of the notion of Shakespeare education as a 'playful ensemble' endeavour and draw on the debates of the preceding literature review chapters to consider where this rhetoric may be at risk of perpetuating the positioning of Shakespeare as an object of exclusive elite culture. I focus on this as a study of ensemble pedagogy, committed to valuing the cognitive and humanist capacity of students, (Donalson, 1993) and of engendering active citizenship via the distribution of hierarchical teacher power, (Neelands, 2009a) must take

account of the power discourses surrounding Shakespeare in educational and cultural contexts. Through this exploration I highlight the value a focus on the role playful discourse can hold in disrupting this and offering an ensemble pedagogy of Shakespeare which more deeply resonates with the pro-social claims of the approach.

I follow this by introducing Shakespeare School Foundation as an organisation, offering a brief overview of its history and current work, demonstrating how the charity's core national festival project offers an ideal field context for empirical study of these ideas.

4.1 Shakespeare and 'the playful ensemble'

As I discussed in chapter two, ensemble pedagogy as defined by Neelands (Neelands, 2009a, 2009b; Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) owes a great deal to the ensemble focused performance and education work of the RSC during Michael Boyd's Artistic Directorship. This chimes with a long tradition of education scholars and practitioners making the case for the centrality of ensemble approaches to teaching Shakespeare's work with young people. (Banks, 2014; Gibson, 1998; Shakespeare Schools Festival, 2014; Winston, 2015) Thus while as I explored in chapter 2, ensemble pedagogy can be understood as a theatre and drama education 'bridging metaphor' it is often discussed as holding particular relevance for theatre-based teaching of Shakespeare.

Fiona Banks, learning manager of Shakespeare's Globe, highlights elements of theatre practice commonly attributed to the Early Modern period which can be read as ensemble focused. These include the use of cue sheets, where the practice of actors rehearsing from scripts containing only their own lines and short cue sentences is read as prompting actors' inter-reliance and active listening skills; and the company tradition, where troupes would together over a period of years suggesting a theatrical art form characterised by performers' reflexive and collaborative engagement with the text. (Banks, 2014) Along with an appreciation of the Globe theatre as an egalitarian space, which invites active participation from its audiences via the shared light and circular space of the open-air venue, this notion of collaborative ensemble as inherently suited to Shakespeare is a core tenet of Globe Education practice, whereby this reading of the textual, historical and architectural context points towards a democratically collaborative approach.

Literary scholar Thomson, reflecting on the comic performance of Shakespeare, likewise emphasises the active quality of the text itself in terms of its historical context, arguing

space for collaboration is literally written in: "Shakespeare was not writing plays for posterity, but texts for performance by people he knew well. He relied on their competence, composed towards their capacity" (Thomson 2002:140) This notion of an assumed capacity (Donalson, 1993) in the performers of Shakespeare's work, and that he thus wrote in space for it to be exercised chimes with the principles of ensemble pedagogy and can thus be understood by reading within the texts a very concrete invitation to *play* together.

A common reference in considering this discursive, playful quality in the work of Shakespeare is Keats' comments on his 'negative capability'; the ability to hold contradictory ideas simultaneously and remain in a state of uncertainty. This is seen, for example in *The Tempest*, which contains the contrasting 'truths' of both Prospero and Caliban. (Bate, 1997:330) In this way, as Bate argues, the enduring appeal of Shakespeare is in his profound plurality. Bate highlights a sense of the playfulness in this 'negative capability' by suggesting Shakespeare can thus "be thought of as a vast collection of games in which the oldest and most enduring stories… are made new." (Bate 1997:327) This enduring plurality and propensity to make new has been recognised both in his positionality as a 'popular adaptor' of stories from a variety of source materials (Irish, 2016) and as the key factor behind the continuing reinvention of Shakespeare's works. (Taylor, 1991) Yet successive eras have not just reworked Shakespeare, they have worked *through* him, as various social and cultural theorists reached for Shakespeare as a touchstone, establishing a hermeneutic relationship between Shakespeare and traditions of western thought. (Gregory and Gleyzon, 2013)

This perspective resonates with the 'play as discourse' perspective explored in the previous chapter, and it is possible to undertake an Identity rhetoric reading of Shakespeare's playfulness and our playful work with him as profoundly community-forming and community-critiquing endeavour. In this way, I would argue that in the proposition of playing together though Shakespeare, there is a rich offer to play with some of the most central ideas of our collective humanity; grounded in Shakespeare's profound skill of 'negative capability'; his craft as a playwright in a collaborative theatrical company; and the enduring symbiotic relationship his works hold with the world's intellectual traditions.

4.2 The playful ensemble in education: Active citizenship, or civilising?

This increasingly interconnected relationship between Shakespeare and western thought was often presented as synonymous in writings and policy on Shakespeare in education from the Victorian era onwards; i.e. that Shakespeare's ideas did not only symbiotically intersect with, but intrinsically expressed the central values of our universal humanity. (Irish, 2008) This perspective arguably reached its high point in Matthew Arnold's comments that Shakespeare's work holds universal value because of their consistent moral perspective that 'good should prevail'. (Irish 2016:42) This colonial perspective on Shakespeare as inherently civilising grew alongside understanding of art, in the post-enlightenment age as "a humanist surrogate for religion" (Irish 2008:2) with Shakespeare often positioned as the central prophet, if not god, of this atheist humanism. This perspective, while nominally relying on the understanding of Shakespeare's negative capability, stops short of engaging in the discursive reality of active and continuous interpretation which that capability both facilitates and requires.

It is possible to see the development of 'active approaches' of teaching Shakespeare (Gibson, 1998) as seeking to puncture both this universalising and conservative moralising of Shakespeare; and the stultifying desk-bound teaching strategies associated with perpetuating it. Such collaborative, active approaches were offered as a route to avoiding this 'baldolotry'. (Irish 2008:5) As Winston describes it, by recasting the plays as scripts to be played with, rather than pieces of literature to be read Gibson opened up an active exploration, rather than passive appreciation of the texts. (Winston 2015:42) Gibson explicitly argued for the 'emancipatory principle' of this approach, in that it claimed "a clear democratic entitlement for all students to study Shakespeare, but also a democratic responsibility to understand other points of view, the 'other-sidedness of things', and to question 'what societies are or might be." (Irish 2016:96) It is this connection between active Shakespeare education and social justice which ensemble pedagogy literature draws on. (Cheng and Winston, 2011; Monk, Heron, et al., 2011; Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011; Winston, 2015)

However, this premise has not been without critique. Shakespearean scholar Olive argues that far from dethroning models of Shakespeare as universalised high culture there is actually a link between active approaches and a de facto perpetuation of Shakespeare as a 'natural' object of high culture. (Olive, 2011) This is argued via a critique of both Gibson's

and the RSC's active approach as an ultimate appeasement of the conservative establishment, framed by an uncritical application of government-sanctioned curriculum outcomes couched in a rhetoric of 'faux-progressivism'. (Olive, 2011) Coles makes similar points speaking to 'active' and 'accessible' Shakespeare approaches more broadly; arguing they draw on well-meaning readings of Shakespeare's universal appeal, and of young people's cultural entitlement which, when combined with the high-stakes testing regimes of UK schooling only serve to perpetuate an uncritical reproduction of oppressive norms of cultural dominance. (Coles, 2013) A recent study of Dyches concludes that even the most 'culturally responsive' pedagogy may not be enough to overcome the oppressive canonical positionality of Shakespeare for diverse and marginalised student groups. (Dyches, 2017) These critiques are complex, and have elsewhere received the in depth consideration there is not space for here. (Irish, 2016; Winston, 2015) What is clear however, is that both the proponents and the critics of 'active' approaches appear to share a commitment to widening access to Shakespeare, to complexifying narratives of his cultural value, and to teaching approaches which embody the works' potential for negative capability. A play-based analysis of the claims of active, ensemble pedagogy approaches of teaching Shakespeare as enacting an 'emancipatory principle' help move out of this stalemate.

4.3 Playing the word and the world for active citizenship

 "Shakespeare wrote plays and young children are geniuses at playing." (Royal Shakespeare Company 2008:1) is Boyd's emphatic statement in the RSC's *Stand up for Shakespeare* manifesto. In highlighting the apparent ideal fit between the playful child and Shakespeare as the ultimate player of human thought, Boyd echoes some of the core play-based claims of theatre and drama education as discussed in chapter three; drawing a continuum between children as natural players and the play of theatrical performance. There is thus within this more than a little of the imaginary and progress rhetorics of play in which children's play is 'natural', developmental and essentially aesthetic. This highlights the risk of over-conflating humanist notions of Shakespeare with these perspectives on child's play and thus missing potential for more problematised, sociological readings of the relationships between young people and Shakespeare; and for offering a pedagogy grounded in a focus on complexity and ambiguity within texts. As Irish describes, this conflation of the natural fit of the humanist Shakespeare and the playful

child can be read as part of the long shadow of paternalist liberal Victorian values in Shakespeare education which sees his work as upliftingly 'civilising'. (Irish, 2008)

Certainly, those early pioneers of drama education, and firm progress rhetoric play thinkers, Finlay-Johnson and Caldwell Cook, paint pictures of an approach to Shakespeare education which, while very much grounded in a collaborative performative pedagogy, could also be argued to perpetuate a 'civilising' perspective on behalf of their young charges. This can be seen in Finlay-Johnson who, whilst determined her students should encounter Shakespeare, also argues for this from the perspective that Shakespeare offers an alternative to more 'sensational' literature and an "escape from a sordid world of toil and worldly gain." (Finlay-Johnson 1912:85) Caldwell Cook meanwhile understands active approaches to Shakespeare as implicit in the texts when he emphatically states:

> "He who has not tried putting himself and his players [students] entirely
> into Shakespeare's hands and playing all his games exactly as he directs
> they should be played, has missed half the fun so generously given by this
> amazing craftsman." (Caldwell Cook 1917:208)

Yet for Caldwell Cook, the Shakespearean games are of a piece with other games of his 'little republics' and are ultimately framed by the gentlemanly, 'fair play' of the cricket pitch or colonial battleground. It is this progress, normative imaginary and power rhetoric of play as facilitating smooth developmental progress into the values of adulthood, and of offering only an internalised, individualised space for expression, which I believe critics of 'active' approaches are reading into the practice. (Coles, 2013; Olive, 2011) This is partly a problem of perception then but, as I highlight in chapter two, also a symptom of the process of domestication (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004; Thomson et al., 2010) which strips active, ensemble approaches of their critical collective epistemology, their 'emancipatory principle' in Gibson's terms. I argue, therefore, there is within an understanding of ensemble pedagogy approaches to Shakespeare as led by the social, discursive play of Sutton-Smith's second 'paradigm' (Sutton-Smith, 1979) the potential to recentralise the 'negative capability' of Shakespeare's texts and thus the potential they hold for facilitating the embodiment of active citizenship.

A specific and practice-grounded reading of the collaborative playing possible within Shakespeare education is offered by the work of RSC voice coach Cecily Berry. As Winston describes it, the core principle of her work is that the language of Shakespeare has the

ability to move and affect us beyond intellectual readings and that we can "connect with the sounds, the rhythms, the music of Shakespeare's language at a very deep level of feeling." (Winston 2015:38) This collaborative, intensely bodily and 'hugely playful' (Winston 2015:38) approach to voice and language work thus offers a way to circumnavigate issues of uncritical reproduction of elitist cultural values through Shakespeare education. As Berry states:

> "because Shakespeare's writing if our literary heritage, we too often feel
> we have to honour its literary status, thus forgetting… all the heat in the
> language… and therefore we lose the immediacy of its impact – its basic
> reality." (Berry 2008:6)

The possibilities of this are suggested in Winston's study of an Early Years' RSC education project, in which he draws on ideas of language play from linguist Cook to analyse how the project opened up opportunities for the participants to play through and with the rich and ambiguous language. (Winston, 2013) Echoing Berry's approach, Cook posits that young children engage in playful language learning through *form* as readily as with *meaning*, suggesting the rich and complex language of Shakespeare can be made accessible and enjoyable to them without typical accessibility concerns of comprehension and social relevance.

If this language play offers a close focus on the texts which circumnavigates conservative cultural readings, Neelands' own pedagogic approach can be seen as a more macro lens playing in the *world* of the texts. (Winston 2015:48) In *Open Space Learning* Neelands speaks of this as a literal 'playing' of the text in order to bring it to shared life (Monk et al. 2011:86) As Winston highlights, this approach chimes with constructivist theories of learning which prioritise the knowledge and experiences students bring to the classroom. While Neelands' descriptions of his practice demonstrates how this understanding chimes with the social justice focused playful exploration of forum theatre approaches. (Neelands, 2016) This is an approach grounded in the performative plurality of the texts by exploring the events of the play as immediate, multifaceted issues, rather than as totalising or moralising themes. Thus, as Winston observes, the playfulness which is most directly drawn from ensemble pedagogy approaches to teaching Shakespeare is emphatically not "the Romantic vision of childhood and play" or "the touchy-feely rhetoric of personal development" but borne of practical necessities grounded in the "demands of the

rehearsal room." (Winston 2015:113) Thus, the rehearsal room playing with the world and the word of the texts can be located within second paradigm rhetorics of play as a subjunctivising communal discourse, rather than first paradigm models of personal aesthetic development.

To summarise, active ensemble approaches to teaching Shakespeare grounded in the 'immediacy' and 'heat' of playing the word; and all the constructivist contextuality of playing the world offers an understanding of the practice which factures any 'faux-progressive' universalising claims to engagement with Shakespeare. Returning to these critiques of the approach, (Coles, 2013; Olive, 2011) while they may ultimately stem from a mis-reading of the lived complexities of active and ensemble approaches, (Winston, 2015) the threat of domesticated claims to progressivism as perpetuating dominant cultural discourses of Shakespeare they describe is to be taken seriously. This can be seen in Coles' analysis which focuses in on the UK backdrop of a narrow high-stakes testing regime as a key catalyst in this reductively 'progressive' rhetoric. (Coles 2013:63) This 'domesticating' context directly echoes the trends noted by the 2010 RSC Learning Performance Network evaluation, where the requirements of high-stakes testing pushed participating schools away from the more critical and pro-social elements of the RSC work. (Thomson et al., 2010) The nature of this threat therefore, is not as these critiques suggest inherent in the approach; but is waiting in the wings of the educational landscape in which it is applied. Yet, if the notion of play, in its uncritical universalising progress rhetoric, causes issues in the realisation of a pro-social ensemble pedagogy of Shakespeare, playfulness in more complex and specific social modes also offers solutions.

4.4 Shakespeare Schools' Foundation

Shakespeare School Foundation (SSF) is a UK charity whose flagship festival project offers the opportunity for school groups to develop a 30 minute performance of a Shakespeare text and present it to a public audience in their local theatres. Their website describes the organisation as "a cultural education charity that exists to instil curiosity and empathy, aspiration and self-esteem, literacy and teamwork - giving young people the confidence to see that all the world is their stage" (Shakespeare Schools Foundation, 2018) The festival performances are directed by classroom teachers, supported by SSF teacher training days, resource packs, and a SSF practitioner-run student workshop day. (Shakespeare Schools Foundation, 2017)

In searching for a field site to explore the implications of viewing ensemble pedagogy through a lens of playfulness I alighted on SSF's festival in 2012 firstly as it explicitly framed the project in terms of developing 'playful ensembles' during rehearsals (Shakespeare Schools Festival, 2014) and secondly as a school-based, classroom teacher directed performance project it represented an ideal opportunity to explore issues of 'domestication' and how the ensemble pedagogy practices encouraged by SSF met and navigated resistance in the 'default pedagogy' (Thomson et al., 2012) practices of schools. Furthermore, in 2012 the charity was poised at a period of growth, having just received £140,000 of Department of Education funding. (Merrifield, 2012) Growing from 178 participating schools in 2012 to over one thousand in 2017 (Shakespeare Schools Festival, 2013b; Shakespeare Schools Foundation, 2017) SSF thus represents a key voice in the national conversation of ensemble-based approaches of teaching Shakespeare.

 Furthermore, whilst not claiming direct or instrumental social justice outcomes, it is possible to read SSF's rhetoric of the empowered student participant as comparable with ensemble pedagogy's active citizen. In their 2012 annual report, this was expressed through emphasising the project as boosting articulacy and confidence, offering democratic community access to professional theatre spaces, opportunities for disengaged students and a community celebration of youth creativity. (Shakespeare Schools Festival, 2013b) These aims are arguably more sophisticatedly expressed in SSF's more recent annual reports; their 2017 statement of 'aspirational, experiential, diverse, uniting, thrilling and transformative' values suggest a more dynamic and pluralistic model of ensemble pedagogy. (Shakespeare Schools Foundation, 2017) Taking the header of their website's 'about us' section as a single example: "Transforming lives through the unique power of Shakespeare." (Shakespeare Schools Foundation, 2018) there is undoubtedly much to unpack in the charity's claims of Shakespeare as culturally 'transformative' in light of the risk of reproducing 'civilising' narratives of Shakespeare as discussed above. However, it is worth noting at this point the focus of this study is not on an assessment of the SSF festival as a progressive or accessible active Shakespeare education project, but on utilising the context of the festival project to explore the role of playfulness in pro-social ensemble pedagogy approaches to teaching Shakespeare. Thus, the issue of the positionality of Shakespeare as a cultural object, and how that is navigated both in the organisation's framing of the project, and the participating schools'

enactment, is by implication a key theme of the research project though not the core focus.

 I first approached SSF in late 2012 with a proposal to undertake a qualitative study of a small number of schools, following them through the process of the festival project. Through doing this, I was initially interested to discover to what extent participants responded to and engaged with the ensemble pedagogy aspect of the project, and beyond this if and how playful discourse was a part of this take up of ensemble approaches. From this I was keen to explore what insights viewing this ensemble pedagogy theatre education project through the lens of playful discourse could be revealed in terms of expanding an understanding of the core ensemble practice of 'uncrowning', and in deepening expressions of its pro-social scope and value.

5. Research Methodology: Reflexive journeys to and through critical ethnography

The two literature review chapters of this thesis have built a rationale for the focus on ensemble pedagogy as a 'bridging metaphor' of a variety of theatre and drama education principles and practices; identified the domestication of these principles to the languages of narrow metrics and universalising miracles as a key issue to address; and proposed a theoretical focus on the role of playfulness in ensemble pedagogy practice in order to achieve this. Recognising the roots of ensemble pedagogy theory in active Shakespeare literature and research, the following chapter explored the implications of Shakespeare education within a theatre-based pedagogy of social justice by way of contextualising the introduction of the empirical research focus on Shakespeare School Foundation's flagship annual school performance festival project. This chapter thus sets out the methodological framing and design of this empirical research element, consisting of critical and discursively-informed ethnographic studies of schools taking part in SSF. Four school cases made up the pilot study, and one school was returned to in more depth for the main research cycle.

Section 5.1 begins by presenting my three starting principles of research design; a focus on substantive issues of research design, researcher reflexivity, and attending to the role of mess in research. These principles are considered in light of current trends in theatre and drama in education research. In section 5.2, I restate the research questions presented in the introduction of this thesis and demonstrate how their affordances led me to a research design of critical ethnography. Through this I identify three key epistemological strands of this approach; constructivism, criticality, and discourse and consider how each prompted a reflexive question of my research framing and design. (Britzman, 2002) Following Symonds and Gorard's call for a focus on the substantive issues of research design (Symonds and Gorard, 2010) section 5.3 addresses considerations of validity, ethics, and finally of data analysis within the epistemological framework of critical ethnography. In a key sub-section (5.3.3) I explore and critique current tenants of ethnographic data analysis, and through this alight on set of analytical processes which are iterative, critical and hermeneutic.

Section 5.4 then moves on to identify the data generation methods used within the study; observation via fieldnotes and video recordings, and audio-recorded interviews and focus groups. Through a discussion of each in turn I consider how these methods can be understood and utilised within the identified methodological and epistemological framework. As part of this I discuss in detail my on-going positionality as a researcher within the ethnographic cases, recognising this as a core element of data generation. Finally section 5.5 details the precise research designs of both the pilot and main case studies, charting how and why the design was developed over the course of the research.

5.1 Starting Principles

In this brief opening section I discuss three core 'starting principles' which have informed my research. Less substantial than epistemology, these principles are grounded in recognising both the practicalities and complexities of empirical research. I begin with the proposition of treating research as a craft, avoiding circular debates of research paradigms via a focus on the demands of research questions and the substantive issues of research design. Next I address the notion of research reflexivity as a core requirement of empirical research, regardless of methodological framing before finally considering the idea of 'mess' in social science research. I recognise and welcome mess as an unavoidable and potentially fruitful element of social science inquiry.

5.1.1 Substantive Issues of Research

Punch argues that research questions both define the conceptual framework of education research and point to the types of data generation need. (Punch, 2009:57) He offers a "hierarchy of concepts" (Punch, 2009:59) model for the novice researcher to move through in identifying their research questions. The initial stages are identification of a broad research area; followed by a more specific research topic; and the identification of a general research question(s). From this, specific research questions and data collection questions can be developed, elaborating on the study's focus and operationalising these concepts by expressing them in a way directly answerable by empirical data. (Punch, 2009:62)

This notion that data collection questions point unequivocally to data collection methods, which only then suggest overall decisions of research design and epistemology, may appear reductive. Methods cannot be considered merely as 'neutral' techniques.

(Ackroyd, 2006:x) However, in this model research questions are not a static list, but an evolving and iterative model for research design as a whole. Through this, therefore, the researcher can clearly chart a coherent thread across various levels of extraction. (Punch, 2009:63-4) This research project closely applied Punch's model as a framework for research design, and as can be seen in appendix 1, the scope of the research was progressively refined throughout the life of the project. In section 5.2 I discuss further how the demands of my specific and data collection research questions led to the chosen methodology of critical ethnography.

Punch states this framework avoids 'methodolatry', i.e. the unthinking commitment to a single methodological outlook. Methodolatry has arguably plagued educational research via the 'paradigm wars' (Hartas, 2010; Niaz, 2008; Pring, 2000) which have sought to establish whether (post-) positivistic quantitative (Goldacre, 2013; Hargreaves, 1997) or more explorative qualitative approaches (Hammersley, 1997; James, 2013) are more suited to educational research. Theatre and drama in education research has also grappled with this, with the prevailing view that the commitment to experiential, arts-based pedagogy prompted highly qualitative approaches to research, typified in O'Toole's statement that "Our drama research needs to acknowledge that many of the 'facts' we discover and the conclusions we draw are not objective, nor exactly verifiable." (O'Toole, 2006:21) There has been push back against this with Fleming notably stating that such approaches can, in practice, amount to a hesitance around claims of 'truth' which stunts development of knowledge in the field. (Fleming et al., 2004)

However, while this is a valid critique, Fleming et al.'s proposed solution of engaging productively with quantitative methods is in danger of perpetuating, rather than resolving the paradigmatic divide which has so unhelpfully plagued education research as a whole. The research question-focused approach of Punch therefore offers a way forward which, while not ignoring questions of epistemology, places them in relation to the demands of any particular inquiry. Gorard expands on how a focus on "substantive, but generic issues of research" (Gorard & Taylor, 2004:174) avoids unproductive statements of methodological allegiance, and rather focuses on research as a craft. Gorard and Taylor suggest focusing on elements such as: research question design, sampling, validity and data analysis is in order to achieve this. Section 5.3 thus addresses how such substantive issues have been handled within this study.

5.1.2   Researcher Reflexivity

Despite the primacy, as argued above, of inquiry-led research design, within this study I also recognise the unavoidable influence of researcher positionality, and the attendant need for reflexivity during the research process. As Alvesson and Sköldburg comment, reflexivity is essential for all good empirical research, defined by an understanding that all references to empirical data are the result of interpretation; and require careful reflection on the positionality of the researcher, i.e. an "interpretation of the interpretation" (Alvesson & Sköldburg, 2009:9)

This notion of research reflexivity has been a common theme of theatre education research (Taylor, 2006), as it chimes with the field's grounding in practitioner-research (Bolton, 1998; Slade, 1954; Way, 1967). As Neelands observes, the tradition of reflective research, is frequently cited as stemming from Schön's concepts of the reflective practitioner. (Schön, 1983) Neelands builds on Schön's model to suggest the concept of reflexivity-in-practice, which he argues brings an ethical and critical model to reflexivity, in emphasising the importance of dialectic meaning makings within teaching and learning processes. (Neelands, 2006:19) The reflexive practitioner, or in this case researcher, achieves this by deliberate disruption of any tendency to a singular, authoritative narrative, leaving both pauses for reflection and space for alternative considerations.

My own professional and personal positionalities as a researcher, and theatre education practitioner, undoubtedly informed both the scope and interpretation of this study. I opened this thesis with an attempt to offer some insight into this positionality, though I would argue the dynamic and processional notion of reflexivity-in-practice as described by Neelands demands more. Dressman advocates that reflexivity prompts a commitment to not only recognising and describing, but to bracketing, i.e. mapping *how* that positionality shapes the remainder of the research endeavour (Dressman, 2008:153).

Embodying reflexivity-in-practice, therefore, requires the researcher be made visible throughout the research; requires that that visibility's positionality is considered; and finally requires the insights from that consideration are utilised to disrupt potentially unreconstructed subjectivities within the research. It is here that a reductive commitment to reflexivity can be found lacking. This is an issue embedded in drama education's origins, as Taylor observes: "Drama educators prided themselves on their practice, and those who wanted to theorise about such practice were seen as getting in the way of real work"

(Taylor, 2006:3) This suspicion of academic theorising has been embodied in the tendency, to focus on personality-driven explorations of drama education practice through the lens of a handful of 'master' practitioners. (Hornbrook, 1998) Such an approach resonates more with the notion of 'reflection-on-action', i.e. a more passive 'contemplation' (Neelands, 2006:19) and I seek a more complexified and contextualised positionality through the three reflexive moves of section 5.2, through the explicit consideration of research positionality as data generation in section 5.4.3, as well as in the initial positioning of the introduction to this thesis.

5.1.3   'Mess' in Research

Alvesson & Sköldburg recommend an appreciation of the dynamism of social science, a perspective which takes account of the 'crisis of representation'. (Taylor, 2006) This study has therefore been influenced by the epistemological notion of 'mess' in making sense of this dynamism. Law explicity mobilises the concept of 'mess' to explore the implications of this recognition of the uncertainties of social science research. (Law, 2004) Through this he critiques the notion of research methods altogether, suggesting that they "not only describe but also help to *produce* the reality they understand." (Law, 2004:4) and furthermore are explicitly designed to engage with only a reduced subset of 'knowledge' made visible by western scientific endeavour. What therefore sits outside this, though frequently intersecting with it, Law argues are a multitude of 'messier' ways of knowing which current social science methodologies do not illuminate. For Law the mess and uncertainty of social science research lies not only in the movement between empirical data and theory, and within the interpretive lens of the researcher, but in the observation that these processes actually help *produce* the phenomena they are exploring.

 This, on one level, represents a clear challenge to the argument in the above section 5.1.1, which presents a largely rational framework by which sequential formation of research questions guides the selection of data gathering methods. However, Law does not mount this critique in order to completely reject the certainties around current social research methodologies, but, in suitably reflexive style; to critique, destabilise and ultimately add to them by creating new "metaphors and images for what is impossible, or barely possible." (Law, 2004:6) He encourages researchers to pay less attention to good research 'hygiene' and instead to throw themselves into charting the choppy oceans of 'generative flux', the constantly moving processes by which meanings are constructed,

enacted and challenged within the human endeavour. But, if this sounds rather breathless and unrigorous, he ultimately advocates for "quiet methods, slow methods, modest methods." (Law, 2004:15) In this way, Law's arguments seem centred around the concept of *pace*, and a commitment to disrupting the implied steady, linear pacing of normative social science enquiry. Through this understanding, the processes of research design as described in section 5.1.1 are not incommensurable to this approach, but must be considered in light of the changes of methodological pace a recognition of mess invokes. Law discusses this understanding of mess in relation to his position as a sociomaterialist, which is relevant to this study in problematising and making sense of the active and physical elements of ensemble pedagogy and the implications they hold for engaging in geometries of power. As Nicholson observes, this chimes with an increasing focus on materiality in applied theatre research, as scholars become more focused on the material 'geopolitics' of knowledge. (Nicholson, 2016)

More broadly theatre education research often recognises the role of mess via the lens of theatrical and performative practices. Hughes et al. for example, draws on Schön's notion of mess in relation to reflexive practice (Schön, 1983) in their applied theatre projects. (Hughes et al., 2011) Through describing case studies of the three authors' recent applied theatre projects, they conclude research embedded in the dialogic, site-based, temporal practices of applied theatre "challenges notions of method and methodology as epistemologically secure, finite, discrete sets of procedures fit for the purpose of discovering certain, measurable findings." (Hughes et al., 2011:187)

Hepplewhite makes a similar claim, also citing Schön's notion of mess as central to reflective practice through focusing on their methodological approach of 'reflective dialogues', a "multistage process with conversations stimulated by reviewing video recording of an observed session with practitioners." (Hepplewhite, 2014:326) This cyclical, deliberately 'messy' design embodies both Alvesson & Sköldburg's notion of dynamism in that researchers and participant practitioners undertake a shared, dynamic approach to data analysis, and Law's appeal for changing the pace of research methods. For example the use of video recordings to prompt reflective interviews literally disrupts and reformats the pace of reflective practice, inviting participants to, in the words of Hughes et al. "hold the practice still for a moment so that we can look at its parts." (Hughes, Kidd, & McNamara, 2011:207)

In this way Hepplewhite and Hughes et al. demonstrates some ways in which 'mess' can be positioned as a central consideration with regards to methodology in theatre education research, and invoke the scepticism towards method Law articulates, without abandoning altogether the concept of research as systematic and rigorous. Thus, I would argue this grounds a methodological understanding of mess in highly practical, rather than philosophical terms. While Law's argument focuses on constantly fluctuating uncertainties in sociomaterialist epistemologies, grounding this in the practice-based work of applied theatre and theatre education research reminds us this approach ultimately allows us to both more flexibly navigate the lived realities of participants and to more honestly interpret and present those realities.

To summarise, I have presented what I have come to consider three starting principles of my work as a researcher. I position myself as a researcher who recognises messiness as both an essential and beneficial element of qualitative empirical research. I also position myself as a researcher guided primarily by substantive issues of research design. In this way, I align myself with Symond and Gorard's invitation to view research as a craft. (Symonds and Gorard, 2010); and finally I position myself as a reflexive researcher who seeks to consciously oscillate between these demands of 'mess' and 'craft', and who recognises and problematises her own inter-subjective interpretations. In the following section, I apply these three principles directly to this study, and explore how they led me to the research design of critical ethnograpy.

5.2 Alighting on Critical Ethnography, and its Epistemological Affordances: Three reflexive moments

Within this section I discuss how the focus of my research questions and the affordances of the field work context led to the choice of critical ethnography as my methodological framework. Based on an exploration and critique of the work of drama education critical ethnographer Kathleen Gallagher I will consider the epistemological and methodological implications of this approach. Through this I draw out three key intersecting epistemological areas: constructivism, critical theory, and discourse. Framing the exploration of these three areas through my three starting principles of qualitative research identified above, I set out how each of these epistemological elements invites a particular reflexive 'move' within my research design, treading the balance between

immersion in the 'messiness' of each of these elements, whilst also retaining a sense of the systematic and substantive design issues of empirical research.

As explored within chapters two and three, the central aim of this study is to address the 'domestication' of ensemble pedagogy by utilising play as a lens through which to rearticulate the pro-social focus of ensemble pedagogy and deepen understanding of its central process of teacher uncrowning. To this end, the 'data collection' research questions (Punch, 2009) of this study, which drove the generation and analysis of the empirical data were iteratively developed as follows:

a) How is 'ensemble' understood?

b) How is this enacted in practice?

c) Is playfulness evident and meaningful for participants in making sense of and enacting 'ensemble'?

d) What characterises this playfulness? Who takes part, what forms does it take, when does it occur?

e) Does there appear to be any contextual prerequisites for playfulness?

f) What, precisely, do participants achieve through their playfulness? Why is this relevant to the understanding and enacting of 'ensemble'? (Appendix 1)

These questions prompt a focus on the processes of participant meaning-making; on the importance of local, contextual detail; and on what the outcomes of these processes of meaning-making are within the local context. Furthermore, question f. with this focus on participants' 'achievements', foreshadows implications of social interaction and power relations. The focus on ensemble pedagogy as a pro-social endeavour, and on the notion of play as a discursive mode requires a methodology which can make visible issues of society and culture and facilitate the use of social theory within data analysis. Finally, the affordances of the SSF festival project as an empirical research site offered the opportunity for a sustained period of data generation, and the possibility of a pilot study in which to test and refine empirical processes, as the project runs annually over several months.

Therefore critical ethnography, broadly understood as the application of critical social theory to the methodologies of ethnography, (Carspecken, 1996; Gallagher, 2006; Madison, 2012; Noblit, 2004) became the central methodological framework of this study. The basic tenants of 'classic' ethnography, i.e. open-ended immersion in the field, and prioritising the understandings and experiences of participants' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) chimes with the focus of the data collection research questions and affordances of the SSF project. While the approach's focus on issues of inequality and power through the application of critical social theory provides the rationale for engaging with the pro-social perspectives highlighted through the literature review.

The work of Kathleen Gallagher and her research partners offers a model for the use of critical ethnography within theatre education research in which she forefronts the emancipatory intent of her research and teaching practice with young people. (Gallagher, 2006, 2007, 2018; Gallagher et al., 2010; Gallagher and Wessels, 2011) Below, I will focus on Gallagher's evolving use of critical ethnography to explore the central epistemological tenants of this approach and their implications for research design. I do this via consideration of three overlapping epistemological areas of critical ethnography: constructivism, critical theory, and discourse. These considerations can be considered as three 'moves' on my reflexive journey. Gallagher, via Britzman, (Britzman, 2002) discusses how reflexivity can be framed as a series of questions the researcher must ask themselves. (Gallagher 2006) Thus in these three reflexive moves I will explore the questions each has prompted towards my own research.

5.2.1 Ethnography and constructivism: Positioning the researcher and participants in a co-constructed space

Ethnography in itself is a broad and disparate school of methodology. Briefly, it has evolved from its roots in early twentieth century anthropology where it typically entailed long term immersion in another, usually non-western, culture, returning with a written narrative of the experience. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) Concurrently, this extended immersive approach to fieldwork was also utilised by the Chicago School of Sociology from the 1920s to 1950s in studying the cultures of urban America; and from the mid-twentieth century onwards, ethnography as a sociological approach proliferated in a variety of contexts. (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007:1-2) Ethnography has proven popular within education research, as it allows researchers to treat school, classroom and other

educational contexts as 'cultures' in their own right, and hence forefront the analysis of the processes of these cultures as they occur in practice. (Punch 2009:129) For comparable reasons, ethnography is similarly popular within theatre education research (O'Toole, 2010; Omasta and Snyder-Young, 2014)

Ethnography has been described as a naturalistic approach, in that it seeks to study cultural phenomena in its 'natural' settings. (Punch 2009:125) However, though the influence of symbolic interactionism, i.e. that humans construct their own meanings which inform their actions and interactions in a constantly fluctuating process; (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Woods, 1996) and through moves away from the colonially authoritative voices of its anthropological past, the majority of ethnographers recognise knowledge as essentially constructed. Gallagher's critical ethnography work is consistent with this, as when she states: "We are… aware of the ways in which our ethnographic narratives construct reality as much as reflect it." (Gallagher & Wessels 2011:254) and foregrounds the process of this construction in her studies. (Gallagher, 2007; Gallagher et al., 2010; Gallagher and Wessels, 2011)

The nature of this ethnographic constructivism, and its implications for research epistemology and practice, can be seen as operating on several levels. Firstly, as symbolic interaction emphasises, is the focus on participants' meaning-making processes. This, as Geertz has argued, necessitates the use of ethnographic 'thick description', i.e. the generation of rich and detailed field notes which attempt to embrace the complex, constructed nature of participants social world, seeing it as "a manuscript – foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries." (Geertz 1993:10) In parallel consideration to this therefore is the researcher's own subjective interpretations, or constructions, of the data. The reflexive question of this aspect of critical ethnographic epistemology is therefore how to make sense of and make visible my own role in the construction of the data, whilst foregrounding the participants' meaning makings? While classic approaches to ethnography can speak of *minimising biases* (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007:16) Gallagher argues the reflexivity demanded by the constructivist implications of ethnography more closely embraces the messiness of social research. Her studies dwell on moments of tension, communication breakdown, (Gallagher and Wessels, 2011) and disappointment. (Gallagher et al., 2010) Citing feminist theory, Gallagher has argued that emotions are at the core of ethnographic research, not

as 'bias' to be 'minimized', but as a core process of data generation and analysis. (Gallagher & Wessels 2011)

I have thus similarly come to view the ethnographic principles of constructivist symbolic interactionism as inviting a holistic, reflexive presence of my self as researcher within the data, and to similarly recognise the complex and holistic perspectives my participants bring. Guided by Van Maanen's definition of ethnography as "the peculiar practice of representing the social reality of others through the analysis of one's own world in the world of these others." (Van Maanen, 1988:ix) For Gallagher and others (Britzman, 2002; Denzin, 2003; Thomas, 1993) there is a link between this reflexive constructivism and the commitment to emancipatory perspectives. As Hacking explains it, identifying social realms as constructive implicitly invites critical consideration of social inequalities within this construction. (Hacking, 1999) Critical ethnography therefore, understands constructivism from an epistemological perspective, and the attendant requirement of researcher reflexivity and conscious positionality is not only a matter of research validity, but part of the approaches' ethical and emancipatory commitment to participants.

5.2.2   The role of Critical Social Theory in critical ethnography: Understanding the parameters of emancipatory change

Critical ethnography can be understood as a commitment to positioned constructivism, as described above, extended with the application of systemic models of social theory and some level of dedication to participant emancipation. Critical approaches to ethnography have developed from the 1970s onwards, seeking to combine ethnographic methodological approaches with critical social theories in order to produce "research accounts sensitive to the dialectical relationship between the social structural constraints on human actors and the relative autonomy of human agency" (Anderson 1989:249) In this, the methodology takes from critical social theory the notion that society consists of systematic inequalities of power, including economic, racial, gendered constructs of oppression. (Anderson, 1989; Jordan et al., 1995; Noblit, 2004) The approach was developed in part by feminist scholars seeking to apply structural accounts of power inequality in ways which both accounted for nuances of lived experience and suggested practices for redressing these inequalities. (Anderson, 1989) Within this is therefore a commitment to effecting emancipatory change for participants; a commitment which Gallagher places at the centre to her own expression of critical ethnography. (Gallagher,

2006, 2007, 2018; Gallagher et al., 2010; Gallagher and Wessels, 2011) In these projects Gallagher's understanding of this change is participatory, immediate and practice-focused, driven by "the explicit and immediate needs in the field." (Gallagher 2007:55)

This commitment to emancipatory change for participants chimes strongly with the pro-social principles which inform ensemble pedagogy. However, left unproblematised, simplistic understandings of this comment to change and empowerment for participants is at risk of reproducing the miraclising rhetorics around theatre and drama education practice which are part of domestication. The reflexive question for my understanding of the emancipatory role of critical theory in critical ethnography therefore became to what extent this should prompt direct and active change for participants. Recent research has foregrounded Foucauldian notions of power relations as facilitating nuanced, plural and dynamic readings of power, and thus oppression and empowerment, in education research (Gallagher, 2008; McGarry, 2016) and theatre and drama education practice contexts. (Aitken, 2009) This chimes with Carspecken's recognition that critical ethnographers' knowledge production is itself located within these structural inequalities. (Carspecken, 1996) Gallagher's methodological approaches offers some robust practices in this area; problematising simplistic notions of participatory methods in the use of student-led verbatim theatre interviews; (Gallagher and Wessels, 2011) a readiness to make visible not only her positionality, but the doubts, hesitancies and changes which characterise this positionality over time. (Gallagher 2007:123-5)

Gallagher further argues the epistemological framings of theatre and drama education pedagogy help make sense of the demands of critical ethnography, stating: "the non-linear and narrative modes of drama education can productively interrupt our traditional qualitative accounts of classrooms." (Gallagher 2006:65) echoing a variety of other approaches which have sought to problematize and embody the partial and inter-subjective knowledges possible in post-structuralist ethnography. (Denzin, 2003; Sallis, 2014) However, there is here the potential to slip into advocacy of drama education in conflating the pedagogy being researched with the epistemological principles of the methodology being used. For example in making claims about the inherent power of drama to enfranchise the oppressed 'other'. (Gallagher 2006:76) This appears to leave little space for the distancing and doubting which a critical approach demands. There is a need for friction as well as fit between methodology and subject if research is to be robust (Fleming et al., 2004; O'Toole, 2010; Omasta and Snyder-Young, 2014) As Finneran and

Freebody state our understanding of the relationship between drama and emancipation is "little more than an assumption – and a slippery and undefined one at that." (Finneran and Freebody, 2016:18)

Raynsford frames this issue of critical ethnography's claims to active emancipation through Habermas' four-stage model of praxis, highlighting it is the move from the second stage of 'interrogating' social and historical factors to the third stage of creating an agenda for change, which is problematic to achieve. (Raynsford, 2015) To this end I hesitate to make emancipatory claims on behalf of my critical ethnography practice beyond the Habermas' second stage of interrogation. I thus draw from cultural geographer Michael Gallagher in seeking not to achieve transcendence from power relations on behalf of participants, but rather opportunities to reconfigure the power relations around them; recognising via a Foucauldian perspective that power is not by necessity oppressive, but can also be "productive, an essential part of both social life and political struggle… full of possibilities, the instrument both of oppression and of liberation." (Gallagher 2008:147)

5.2.3   Discursive critical ethnography: Discourse as a methodological language of critical social hope

As discussed above, critical ethnography is typically understood as the utilisation of critical social theory within the methodology of ethnography. (Anderson, 1989) Through this, its methodological moves are understood as the application of social theory to the generation and analysis of data produced through qualitative ethnographic methods; typically recognised as participant observation, interviews, and document analysis. (Emerson et al., 1995; Gallagher, 2007; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) However, in reflexively questioning how to shed light on the particular strategies by which participants construct, enact and resist the social regimes which act upon them within educational contexts, the notion of discourse has been highly useful.

'Discourse' within social science, holds a variety of meanings, one which resonates strongly with this study is Foucault's notion of discourses as embodiments of social power. However Gee offers a useful guiding principle within this when he differentiates between 'big D' discourse i.e. a set of mutually agreed ways of using language, which can range across geographic space and extend through time; and 'little d' discourse, i.e. interaction between individuals. (Gee, 1996) Through Gee's distinction, it is possible to see how a

discursive focus is well suited to the aims of critical ethnography, in that it provides an interface between understandings of power as they function both within macro social institutions and micro social interactions. This potential suitability is one Gallagher highlights, though does not fully pursue, within her methodology writings: when she suggests critical ethnographers are focused on the production of social relationships, and hence language should be considered central (Gallagher, 2006) and more directly posits that:

> "critical ethnography might also be better served by greater attention being paid to discourse analysis so that the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic activity, in drama classrooms especially, might more systematically reveal how relations of power are sustained through the creation and reproduction of meaning" (Gallagher, 2007:75)

Within this study I take this forward, directly applying considerations of discourse analysis within a critical ethnographic framework.

The analysis of discourse has been understood in a variety of ways in social science research, (Kress, 2011) often in relation to socio-linguistic research traditions, leading to a range of approaches for combining this linguistic focus with ethnographic methods such as linguistic ethnography, (Creese, 2008; Maybin, 2003; Rampton et al., 2004) and critical ethnography of communication (Collins and Blot, 2003) to name just a few. Applied linguistic studies have used a conversation analysis approach to understand students' uses of playfulness within the classroom; (Bell et al., 2014; Bushnell, 2008; Cekaite and Aronsson, 2005; Forman, 2011; Waring, 2012) and the same close discursive approach has been fruitfully used in other drama education studies. (Freebody, 2010, 2013) However, though these approaches implicitly recognise the constructed nature of knowledge and social reality, they do not necessarily forefront issues of power and oppression in ways that are commensurate with a critical perspective. Thus, I would suggest the group of approaches defined under critical approaches to discourse analysis (as opposed to the more distinct Critical Discourse Analysis) (Rogers, 2011) as most relevant to this methodology.

Defining this approach as being focused on the interface of the social and the linguistic, Rogers emphasises that through critical approaches to discourse analysis we can see

power not only in a pejorative or singular sense, but move towards understanding its complexities, effects and outcomes through a study of how participants make use of, as well as resist, discourses of power. (Rogers, 2011) In terms of implications for methodology, this critical approach to discourse does not suggest a singular methodological framework, but invites hybridity and responsiveness to the needs of the inquiry (Rogers 2011:11) For the demands of this study, the discursive focus was articulated via a specific focus on how participants' interactions revealed and also acted upon geometries of power within their contexts.

For Rogers this critical discourse focus links closely with the notion of hope within education research, when she states the end goal of critical approaches to discourse analysis is "to hope, to dream, and to create alternative realities that are based in equity, love, peace, and solidarity. Thus, a critical project is necessarily based in what Giroux… calls the language of hope." (Rogers, 2011:5) Critical ethnography can thus be considered a methodology of social hope. As discussed in chapter two, ensemble pedagogy can be understood as a commitment to the enactment of social hope via active citizenship, while chapter three offers a theoretical lens to explore this via the notion of a subjunctivising playful classroom discourse. Hence, in addition to its connection to critical ethnography in general terms, a critical approach to discourse analysis is a strong fit for the foci of this study.

To summarise, through identifying critical ethnography as the methodological framing of this study, I have considered the epistemological implications of viewing knowledge as socially constructed; invoked critical social theory and its ability to reveal and complexify systemic oppressions and thus suggest routes to participant empowerment; and finally identified a focus on discourse, with all its attendant models of power as a framing for empirical data generation.

5.3   Substantive issues of research design

As per the discussion in section 5.1.1, where I emphasise my focus on 'substantive, but generic' (Gorard and Taylor, 2004) issues of research design, in the following three sections I lay out my methodological approach, within the tradition of critical ethnography, to some key areas of research design. First I consider research validity and ethics, two key issues in any research study, but particularly critical ethnographic work,

due to its constructivist and emancipatory perspectives. For the former I primarily draw on the work of feminist scholar Lather, focusing in particular on the notions of 'face' and 'catalytic' validity (Lather, 1991) as well as more general notions of qualitative validity such as triangulation and member checking. In terms of ethical considerations, I discuss how both formal ethical requirements have been met, and how more formative ethical decisions were navigated in practice. Finally, I consider data analysis, in particular the tensions between critical ethnography and standard ethnographic or qualitative coding practices, and how I addressed these tensions via the notion of hermeneutic analysis. (Packer, 2011)

5.3.1   Lather's validity for critical ethnographers

Within qualitative research, there are various approaches to ensuring validity. (see Creswell, 2007) These vary in perspective from a sense of 'aesthetic connoisseurship' to a more bureaucratic focus, yet frequently they speak from a place of defensiveness for the value of qualitative research. (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000) Lather's critical, feminist perspective has hence been a central source for guiding considerations of validity within this research, as she considers issues of qualitative validity on their own terms, rather than seeking to create a research agenda which is commensurate with quantitative notions of validity. (Lather, 1991) Furthermore her notions of face and catalytic validity in particular allow for an understanding of research validity which chimes with the emancipatory focus of critical ethnography. (Gallagher, 2006) Therefore I consider here the five aspects of validity Lather presents in *Getting Smart:* triangulation, construct validity, systematic reflexivity, face validity and catalytic validity. (1991)

Of these elements, the most central in terms of validity in critical ethnographic contexts are face and catalytic validity; it's emancipatory intent (Gallagher, 2006) requiring a model of validity which foregrounds participants' knowledge as a lived and contextualised experience. Face validity, Lather explains, is established in a sense of recognition for the participants of the research and is operationalised by feeding descriptions, emerging analysis and conclusions "back through at least a subsample of respondents." (Lather, 1991:67) In this way, face validity can be seen as synonymous with the broader qualitative notion of member checking, defined as the researcher soliciting the participants' views on "the credibility of the findings and interpretations." (Creswell, 2007; Silverman, 2010) Within this study, I carried out a series of member checking activities to ensure a level of

face validity, including post-ethnography feedback sessions with teaching participants, informal participant conversations around observation sessions, and the use of interviews and focus groups to offer up my own emerging analysis as a starting point for discussion. (Gallagher, 2011) Silverman critiques these processes, arguing they function more as a tool for extending the generation of data, rather than a process of validation. (Silverman, 2010) Yet, enacting face validity this way allowed me to generate and analyse data in ways more closely informed by the ongoing perspectives of participants.

Lather defines catalytic validity as "the degree to which the research process re-orients, focuses and energizes *participants* towards knowing reality in order to transform it." (emphasis mine, Lather, 1991) As discussed in section 5.2.2, the notion of empowering, (Gallagher, 2008) giving 'voice' to, (McGarry, 2016) or realising direct social change (Dennis, 2009) for participants, particularly within youth contexts is highly complex. 'Participatory' methods alone cannot be considered evidence of catalytic validity. (Gallagher, 2008; McGarry, 2016) Thus, within this research I thus came to consider catalytic validity via the enactment of the pragmatic notion of social hope, (Gallagher, 2015, 2016d; Nicholson, 2013; Rorty, 1999) and sought, not to directly impact or change my participants but, through my time with them create a space - most obviously within interviews and focus groups, but also by my presence in rehearsals - where they might reflect on their experiences.

This reflexive, constructivist, participant-empowerment ontology of validity appears somewhat at odds with Lather's definition of 'Construct validity' which she describes as the requirement to "Determin[e] that constructs are actually occurring rather than mere inventions of the researcher's perspective"; (Lather, 1991:67) the specification of '*actually occurring*' being the incongruous aspect. In light of the demands of face and catalytic validity discussed above I have understood construct validity as the consistent and precise use of theoretic constructs. I have thus sought to consider the core conceptual lenses of the research: the notion of ensemble pedagogy and definition of playful discourse; and application of key theoretical constructs within the data analysis, such as 'third space', and discursive identity work, in light of their face and catalytic validity. In essence, asking to what extent the participants recognise these theoretical models as chiming with their own experience, and to what extent these models make visible constructs of social power within the research context.

Alongside these more epistemological aspects of validity, Lather includes the concept of triangulation, which she defines as the use of "multiple data sources, methods and theoretical schemes." (Lather, 1991:66) Within constructivist perspectives, the notion of triangulation may be problematic, as there can be no assumption perspectives or data sources will converge rather than diverge. (Silverman, 2010) However, if triangulation is framed less as a mathematical process and more as a "celestial navigation" aiming not to establish truth, but minimise misunderstanding, (Stake, 1995:109) it is still a fruitful mark of validity. Within this study, I have sought data source triangulation through the use of multiple pilot case study sites and methodological triangulation via the use of observation, teacher interviews and student focus groups. In line with the 'celestial navigation' model, I make no claims to the definitive nature of these triangulations, but through perusing key themes and events across ethnography sites and data corpora via analysis have sought to produce a robust and coherent account.

'Systematic reflexivity' is the final element of Lather's model of qualitative validity. She defines this as the necessity to consider and give an account of how the researcher's positionality and use of a priori theory has informed the empirical work. Through sections 5.1 of this chapter dealing with my positionality as a researcher; section 5.2 and my reflexive questioning of critical ethnography; and the upcoming section 5.4.3 in which I consider the methodological impact of my particular positionality within this study I have sought to give a full discussion of my reflexive journey and how it systematically informed the research design.

5.3.2 Ethics: At the core of critical ethnography

Given the situated nature of ethics within ethnography, (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and in particular the empowerment-focused relationship with participants within critical ethnography (Gallagher and Wessels, 2011; Madison, 2012) ethical concerns form a central consideration of research design. In some ways it is arbitrary to discuss them separately, and I suggest the reflexive discussion of section 5.2 demonstrates ethical concern for both the immediate wellbeing and potential emancipation of participants is central. Here though I consider both the formal ethical requirements of this study as a doctoral thesis; and some more formative ethical issues which developed during the research process itself.

These 'procedural' and 'situated' ethical elements (Gillam and Guillemin, 2004) can be seen as occurring across this research project in three stages; pre-empirical research, at the point of establishing empirical research, and throughout the lifetime of the empirical work and beyond. Before beginning empirical work, the study was passed without amendment by the University of Warwick ethics committee. Due to the funding and departmental positionality of the research, this application for ethical approval was informed by the ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (British Educational Research Association [BERA], 2011, 2018) and the Economic and Social Research Council ([ESRC], 2015) I also sought and received a clear advanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for 2013.

The next key stage of ethical considerations was during the period of contacting SSF as the key gatekeeper and through them, the participant teachers. A 'school access' summary (see appendix 2 for pilot study and 3 for main research cycle) was sent to potential participant schools, setting out a summary of the intended research, including number of observation, interview and focus group sessions in addition to procedures around confidentiality and data security. Within this document, in line with the constructivist principles of critical ethnography, and BERA's caution on the bureaucratic burden of research (British Educational Research Association [BERA] 2011:7) I emphasised both my flexibility in terms of access requirements, and intention to serve as a reflective and supporting 'sounding board' for participating teachers. I also state my commitment to observing the safeguarding regulations of each case study school and intention to anonymise participants in all written work. This was achieved by the use of pseudonyms for schools and participants throughout the thesis.

It was upon beginning contact with participating schools that the ethics became more 'situated' within each site. Preliminary meetings with participating teachers allowed for conversations on the aims, scope and methods of the research, for the teachers to raise any questions or concerns and, where necessary, for participating teachers to carry out further internal gatekeeping with regards to securing permission from school leadership teams. The agreement of participating teachers to proceed beyond this point can therefore be considered informed consent. (British Educational Research Association [BERA], 2011) However ensuring the informed consent and engagement of the *student* participants was also a key issue.

BERA states, in line with the United Nation convention of the rights of the child that wherever possible young people should be facilitated to give their own informed consent, (British Educational Research Association [BERA] 2011:6) however, some schools required consent from students' parents to participate in the research, where this was the case I composed letters for this purpose. As with the access summaries, these emphasised confidentiality, anonymity, the right to withdraw, and the secure storage and use of data. However, in these cases, this formal granting of consent from parents was not seen as superseding the need for an on-going negotiation of consent with students within the sessions themselves. Within each case study I introduced myself and my project in an open and age-appropriate way and made myself available for any questions students had throughout the project. Further informed consent was sought by the use of an ethical opening statement to the first interview and focus group in each case study and thereafter more informally referred to and repeated as needed.

As discussed throughout this chapter, notions of engagement and empowerment cannot be considered straightforward, particularly within a critical ethnography carried out in the highly-codified institutional power discourses of school settings. (Gallagher, 2008) At several points "ethically important moments" (Gillam & Guillemin, 2004:265) were revealed within the research; events perhaps not strongly indicated as ethical 'dilemmas', but where the business of 'situated' ethics were enacted on a day to day basis. One such moment occurred within the main Grafton High ethnography. The teacher Grace increasingly elected to leave the room during afterschool rehearsals, asking that I as the remaining adult kept 'an eye on things'. I was left to question how active a role I should take in this. When on one occasion students sought permission to leave the after-school session early during this time; was I authorised to grant this? I attempted to avoid direct engagement, recommending the students await Grace's return, but not stopping them when they did decide to leave. This incident, though low stakes in many ways, demonstrates the situated, processional and co-constructed nature of ethical relations in critical ethnography research settings.

Events such as this suggest to me ethical considerations cannot be divorced from research design and intellectual approach as a whole. Beyond divisions of procedural and situated ethics, ethical considerations are embedded in every area of research, from initial literature reviews to data analysis and presentation. (Gillam and Guillemin, 2004) As I state at the opening of this section, critical enquiry places ethical care and emancipation

of participants as a central and constant concern of the research design. Within this design process, ethical and epistemological considerations of what it means in practice to carry out a high quality, valid and ethical piece of critical ethnography converged for me around questions of data analysis.

5.3.3   Implications for data analysis in critical ethnography

When taking the constructivist and social justice principles of critical ethnography forward into data analysis, recognising the unavoidable positionality of the researcher and the central role of critical social theory a key point of tension arises around the common ethnographic analysis approach of grounded theory-based coding. In this section I consider the limitations of this approach for critical ethnography and argue for the use of hermeneutic analysis (Packer, 2011) processes, which recognise the constructed, contextualised and processional nature of knowing within critical ethnographic endeavour.

It is often recognised (Carspecken, 1996; Madison, 2012; Packer, 2011; Tracy, 2010) that writings on qualitative enquiry can be evasive on the specific processes of qualitative data analysis. There is a broad consensus within many texts of a process built around the coding and thematic analysis of data which draws to a greater or lesser extent on the principles of grounded theory; i.e. the constant comparison of data and developing theory. (Corbin and Strauss, 2008) Creswell gives a typical description of the substantive steps of analysis within this process:

> "Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing
> the data… for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a
> process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the
> data as figures, tables, or a discussion" (2007: 148)

Yet the assumptions inherent within this model can be problematic. Traditionally the grounded theory approach to analysis has been criticised for 'trite' conclusions, poor sampling and little engagement in extant literature. (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007) The lack of initial engagement with literature is clearly at odds with the central use of social theory in critical ethnography. In addition to this, some have argued that the very process of qualitative coding is overtly positivistic. (Packer, 2011) Certainly uncritical applications of

the coding process leave little room for recognising the active role of participants in data generation and meaning making, which is again central to critical ethnography.

However, grounded theorists themselves increasingly recognise post-modern and post-structuralist perspectives. (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005) Qualitative methodologist Parker taps into the underlying sensibilities of many of these approaches when he suggests an analytic process based on Gadamer's notion of hermeneutics, in order to take more account of the dynamic, intersubjective meaning-making processes inherent in critical data analysis. He describes the core principles of this as recognising: we are never free of preconceptions; our understanding is always 'in application' to our current context; therefore there is no single correct interpretation, but a dynamic and provisional knowledge always open to (re)interpretation; encounters with new these new understandings in context can alter our preconceptions. (Packer, 2011: 97)

Within this approach the process of analysis begins in and is inseparable from data generation; knowledge is recognised as contextual and provisional, and co-constructed in the positionality of both researcher and participants. (Emerson et al., 1995; Madison, 2012; O'Toole, 1997; Silverman, 2010) In the data analysis of this study therefore, I undertook a variety of methods to enact the principles of hermeneutic analysis. During the ethnographic field work itself, as discussed in more detail below in section 5.4.1 on observation and field note methods I employed contact summary sheets, (Miles et al., 2014) and from processing and transcribing the data onwards made regular analytic memos. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) These techniques were employed to retain more sense of the ethnographic data as a holistic experience, minimising the 'decontextualization' which can take place in 'traditional' qualitative coding processes. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:156)

During analysis itself, these 'in-between writing' texts (Coles and Thomson, 2016) focused and informed engagement with theoretical literature, which in turn drove the analytic processes. Within critical ethnography, Madison speaks of the direct use of 'theory as analysis' (Madison, 2012) while Gallagher describes how theoretical sensibilities permeate throughout the data generation and analysis within her work as a critical ethnographer. (Gallagher, 2007) Within this study analytic memos from the pilot study frequently referenced educational space as a social construct, (Foucault, 1984; Lefebvre, 1991; Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011; Schapiro, 2009; Thomson et al., 2012) and notions of

identity as socially constructed. (Boylan and Woolsey, 2015; Davies and Harré, 1990; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Kempe, 2012; Norton and Toohey, 2011; Wales, 2009)

The use of diagramming (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005; Craft et al., 2012) as a hermeneutic analytic process was the central way 'sensitizing concepts' (Rampton et al., 2004) and themes were developed through the data. These themes and concepts provided a framework for an iterative process of writing as analysis, (Charmaz, 2006; Emerson et al., 1995; Thomson et al., 2015) through which cycles of data triangulation and connections with theoretical literature produced the final analysis as a written text. This analytic process can be understood as hermeneutic in that it foregrounds the use of critical social theory; and that it retains a sense of the data as a holistic lived and contextualised experience through the rejection of reductive coding and use of iterative writing processes.

5.4   Data Generation Methods

Taking account of an epistemological framing which highlights the social construction of knowledge; acknowledges critical and post-structural accounts of oppression and empowerment; and which recognises the central role of discourse in social construction and enactment of power in the wielding of qualitative data generation methods is no small task. The scale is further complexified by the commitment to Lather's five-point matrix of validity within critical research, ever-present ethical concerns and the knotty currents of hermeneutic data analysis. No wonder, as Gallagher observes: "Critical social research has not produced a tight methodological school of thought" (Gallagher, 2007:58)

Nevertheless, in seeking to undertake, and then make visible the enactment of the epistemological commitments of critical ethnography as a particular element of research craft, such an account is necessary. As Madison states, while at times in critical ethnography the method *is* the theory in a very complete sense, there is still a space to articulate a distinct set of procedural methods. (Madison, 2012) In the following articulation, Coles and Thomson's notion of 'in-between writing' (Coles and Thomson, 2016) has been central in charting the journey from participant observation, via fieldnotes, to finalised analytic writing. Likewise Madison's framing of the critical ethnographic interview process supports my discussion of the use of interviews and focus groups within this study. While finally Pink's discussions of ethnography as first and foremost: "a participatory practice… framed within ideas of learning as embodied,

emplaced, sensorial and empathetic." (Pink 2009:63) led my consideration of my own process of researcher positioning, and indeed informed the decision to include this as a method of data generation.

It is worth noting, as I discuss further in section 5.5 on the specifics of the pilot and main ethnography research design, that many of the nuances of these methods as considered below were in development if present at all in the pilot study cases. However, for reasons of clarity here I do not distinguish between specificities of the pilot and main study, but rather chart the development of methods across the project as a whole.

5.4.1   Observation: Videos and Field Notes

Critical ethnography, as a holistic, reflexive research methodology, reaches beyond 'observation' as a discrete method of data generation. Nevertheless, part of enacting this reflexivity is the systematic presentation of activities undertaken. In this section I first discuss the generation of data via observation through the use of field notes, presenting the various 'in-between' writing practices (Coles and Thomson, 2016) which chart a continuous, hermeneutic journey from data generation to analysis. However, as a counterpoint to this focus, I also discuss how considerations of the ethnographer's lived experience as the centre of knowing balanced with understandings of ethnography as focusing on participants' meaning making, informed my observational practice. Finally, I discuss the use of video recordings as a companion data corpus to fieldnotes in making sense of ethnographic observation.

Many guides to ethnography stress the centrality of fieldnotes, (Emerson et al., 1995; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Miles et al., 2014; Wolcott, 2009) both in their initial creation and subsequent 'working up'. Thus, for my sessions attending SSF training, school rehearsals and performances in local theatres an approach was developed which consisted of extensive, unstructured in-situ note-taking; and a process of 'working up' and extending these notes immediately or soon after the session. This 'working up' included the creation of a 'contact summary sheet' (Miles et al., 2014) consisting of a brief overview of the sessions events, and responses to five questions which supported a deeper and more focused period of post-session written exploration (see Appendix 4 for examples) These notes then formed the basis of a series of 'in-between writing' processes, (Coles and Thomson, 2016) in line with the hermeneutical approach to analysis outlined in section 5.3.3. These consisted of regular analytic memos i.e. "not fully developed working

papers, but occasional written notes whereby progress is assessed, emergent ideas are identified, research strategy is sketched out, and so on" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007:150); the extension of session overviews with details from the in-situ notes and video recordings in cases of ambiguity during typing up this hand written corpus (See Appendix 5 for example typed summary); and finally the iterative cycles of organising the observation data, triangulating with interview/focus group data and connecting with literature which took place during the analysis chapter drafts. In this way, I found much truth in Emerson et al.'s statement that "The writer learns through writing about her experiences." (1995:63)

However, this is not to suggest fieldnotes, however richly worked over and up, represent the whole of an observational data corpus within ethnography, they remain a tool of the process. Hammersley and Atkinson refer to the existence of 'head notes' to expand and re-contextualise written data texts, (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) while a more nuanced expression of this comes from Pink's discussions of ethnographer positionality. In this, she states the knowledge production of ethnography comes from the centrality of the ethnographer's experience. (Pink, 2009) As Coles and Thomson qualify, this is not an act of narcissism or a simplistic sense of 'authenticity' but rather a recognition of the researcher's subjectivity in the very generation of - as well as in the analysis and presentation – an ethnographic text. (Coles and Thomson, 2016) Parallel to this recognition of the lived experience of the ethnographer as central in the generation of observational data, is the oft-cited requirement to focus on participants meaning making. (Emerson et al., 1995; Silverman, 2010) Within my research, I sought to balance these competing requirements through recording small details, and in recognising the necessarily gradual process of comprehending participant perspectives, (Silverman, 2010:243) and to keep participants' voices, i.e. direct quotes distinct in the written data. (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007:146)

Recognising the partial, contextualised and processional nature of knowledge generation through ethnographic observation practices, the use of video recordings can feel like a reassuringly tangible and neutral counterpoint. Paterson et al. note the rationale for using video as a reference and aide memoire in this way: "Video recording can add to the depth and breadth of in-person observations by providing data that the researcher is not able to access in participant observation. It can supplement field notes at times in which details of a situation may be too complex for the observer to perceive." (Paterson, Bottorff, &

Hewat, 2003:8) Dunn highlights the particular affordances of this in theatre and drama education research settings, capturing the often ephemeral nature of the work. (Dunn, 2010c) Yet, as Dunn also notes, video recordings are ultimately as selective and constructed as any body of data. As Paterson et al. describe it: "Because we tend to ascribe lack of bias to the authoritative record that is provided by this technology, video recorded data are often presumed to be more credible and precise than what is observed by the human researcher." (Paterson et al., 2003:5)

Thus while during the data analysis process video recordings were used to aid recall around key identified sections, particularly in clarifying details of discursive interaction, I recognise this as an extension of the reflexive and co-constructive processes which constitute critical ethnographic analysis, rather than simple verification. Paterson el al. suggest in this 'blending' of written and visual observational analysis there is the potential to miss contradictory findings present in the particularities of each data source. (Paterson et al., 2003) Yet, for Pink the use of visual media is embedded in the unavoidable emplacement of the ethnographer in their field. (Pink, 2009) Thus, within the framings of critical ethnography, I suggest this 'blending' of observational data generation and analysis across field notes, video recordings and attendant 'in-between' writings represents a holistic ethnographic observational practice.

5.4.2   Interviews and Focus Groups

A key aim of the use of interviews and focus groups in critical, ethnographic methodologies is to take a reflexive and phenomenological perspective, (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Madison, 2012) which rejects the notion of the interview providing 'insider' perspectives. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:170) Madison succinctly expresses this perspective when they state:

> "The ethnographic interview opens realms of meaning that permeate beyond rote information or finding the "truth of the matter." The interviewee is not an object, but a subject with agency, history, and his or her own idiosyncratic command of a story. Interviewer and interviewee are in partnership and dialogue as they construct memory, meaning, and experience together." (Madison, 2012:23)

In this section I therefore discuss how I enacted this understanding of qualitative interviews and focus groups. Logistically speaking, the decision was taken to undertake interviews with participating teachers and focus groups with students primarily to increase opportunities and avenues for participant voice within the ethnographies. Focus groups, i.e. group interviews, were chosen for student participants in order to access multiple student perspectives, with the recognition this could not be seen as representative, and that the presence of multiple interviewees complexifies the process in several ways. (Sullivan, 2011)

In terms of the content, form and scope of the interviews, I undertook an increasingly phenomenological approach, via discussing events occurring during observation (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:107) and by seeing the interviews as an observable event in themselves, viewing "accounts – including those derived from interviewing – [as] social actions." (Delamont et al. 2003:98) Building on this perspective, I drew on a technique used by Gallagher, in which my emerging analysis are deliberately offered up as a starting point for discussion via interview and focus group sessions (Gallagher, 2011)

In translating this positionality into the selection of questions and framing of sessions, I was guided by Madison's suggestion that the ethnographic interview has three overlapping forms:

> "(1) oral history, which is a recounting of a social historical moment
> reflected in the life or lives of individuals who remember them and/or
> experienced them; (2) personal narrative, which is an individual
> perspective and expression of an event, experience, or point of view; and
> (3) topical interview, the point of view given to a particular subject, such
> as a program, an issue, or a process." (Madison, 2012:24)

Within this framing, it could be considered reductive to talk of 'semi structured interviews' (Punch, 2009) though this term is technically accurate. For each interview and focus group between 4-12 questions or areas for discussion were identified in advance of sessions, but I sought to utilise these flexibly and allow "genuine curiosity, sincere interest and the courage to be vulnerable" (Madison, 2012:31) to guide the interview process.

The opening focus groups and interviews of the pilot thus drew on Madison's 'oral history' form, inviting participants to give an account of their professional and educational

journey, and how it led to the decision to undertake the SSF project. Within the pilot project, the first round of interviews were the same across the four cases, while subsequent focus groups and interviews varied in order to take account of the developing specifics of each case. Subsequent sessions can thus be variously placed under Madison's framing of personal narrative or topical interview. Within these broad framings Madison maps a framework of a variety of planned question types, which I sought to utilise in the enactment of a reflexive, phenomenological approach to interview commensurate with critical ethnography. These ranged across inviting open-ended reflection on experiences. e.g. "What was your favourite moment?" (Statten Park Focus Group 2) To a phenomenological inviting of reflection on a particular moment or event in sessions, e.g. "In rehearsals, you've been emphasising being 'actors, not students' – what was your thinking behind this distinction and do you think it's having an effect?" (Grafton High 2014 Interview 2) And in particular referencing participant concepts from previous interviews, e.g. "[You] mentioned last time rehearsals were the highlight of your week. Have there been any changes in the way you interact with the class?" (Statten Park Interview 3)

Throughout the pilot and main cycle, questions focused on the formation and experience of 'the ensemble'. Either through notions of collaboration, e.g. "Do you think you've got better at working together?" (Grafton High 2014, Focus Group 2) or increasingly eliciting thoughts on 'third space' ideas, e.g. "Do SSF rehearsals feel different from other teaching?" (Statten Park Interview 2) Madison describe these as "Opinion or value questions [which] address a conviction, judgment, belief, or particular persuasion towards a phenomenon." (Madison 2012:25) Alongside this core theoretical and empirical focus, within the main research cycle questions increasingly reflected developing analytical perspectives, e.g. role of identity: "Can you be yourself in drama (more than other lessons)?" (Grafton High 2014, Focus Group 2) and empowerment and autonomy: "Do the school rules always apply in the drama classroom" (Grafton High 2014, Focus Group 2)

I thus sought to recognise my inherent positionality as a researcher in the dynamic co-construction of interview and focus group data by borrowing a transcription technique from playwright Caryl Churchill: "when one character starts speaking before the other has finished, the point of interruption is marked / (with a forward slash)" (Ivanchenko 2007:74) Mindful of the discursive focus of the methodology as outlined in section 5.2.3 I also drew on Mann's argument for making visible the active role of the interviewer via

transcription conventions (Mann, 2011) and thus in transcription I sought to record this active role, as in the extract below:

> "Arthur: Um. (short pause) Uh, in the scene, if you have to be like kind of rude to someone, and uh, in school you're not really allowed to do that but you can do that in drama (Jennifer: Ok) just to, to… (Jennifer: Yeah) Yeah, I can't really explain it.
>
> Jennifer: Yeah, no that makes sense. So if you're playing a part or doing a scene you can do things that you wouldn't do/ in…
>
> Eleanor: Yeah, so like say things and like do things like, actions that you wouldn't be allowed to do. (Jennifer: mm) In school, and, um, it's little things like seating plan and having to wear your blazers and stuff like that as well." (Grafton High 2014, Focus Group 2.1 17/07/2014)

To summarise, in line with the epistemological framing of critical ethnography, semi structured interviews and focus groups were undertaken with the understanding that they represented a co-constructed, phenomenological encounter with participants.

5.4.3   Researcher positionality: "Now it's data!'

In this final section I discuss not a particular data generation method in the usual sense but consider how the proposition of the critical ethnographic researcher as generating knowledge from their own positioned experience, in co-construction with participants played out in practice. Due to the limited scope of the pilot cases, it was in the 2014 research cycle this perspective most clearly informed the data generation. In early observation sessions, it became clear that the participating teacher, Grace, felt 'observed' in a disciplinary sense. She revealed this several weeks later, reflecting she could now 'be herself' as a teacher when I was present; and later again reflecting that my role was not 'like OFSTED', but 'an anthropologist.' (Field Note extract 26/06/2014) This was also echoed in the interview process. During the first interview, Grace at times appeared to be consciously 'evidencing' points with referral to institutional audit structures such as grade boundaries. In the second, and particularly by the final interview there was evidence Grace began to treat the interviews as a place for reflecting on her teaching practice, as in the comments below:

"Jennifer: And were there any bits that you really struggled with, or bits that you were really happy with?

Grace: I think my organisation, in the process, I didn't have a tight enough rehearsal schedule and if I was starting it again, I wouldn't start it before the summer holidays. I think that if they had a shorter, run in, they'd have a better sense of urgency.

…

So yeah, I think that it's [a] process that sitting here now and reflecting on it, it's a process that actually does lend itself very well to forming the group, yeah." (Interview 3 27/11/2014)

In terms of the student participants, a similar process occurred within the focus groups – which at first were short, with staccato answers. By the second round they were increasingly taking ownership of the focus group as a space to raise and discuss issues pertinent to them, for example GCSE grade requirements for further study.

In addition to this, while I became an increasingly familiar presence in the rehearsal room, there was regular discourse from the participants positioning me as an 'outside eye' on proceedings, often as a neutral adjudicator in instances of perceived 'unfairness' within the sessions. The presence of the video camera became a key part of this positioning. Students regularly 'checked in' and 'out' of the sessions with a pose or wave to the camera. Addressing comments directly to camera became a mark of stating something formally, for prosperity. For example, after failing to hold a still image during an exercise, and distracting some of the other students, one student places himself directly in shot and states: "I'll say this in front of the camera (faces camera, waves) I'm sorry." (Transcribed from video extract 25/06/2014)

Another, similar reference developed to events or statements as being 'on record', and thus being available for my 'judgement'. This was expressed in the joking phrase 'Now it's data', as used in the exchange below in Grace's third interview.

"Jennifer: Brilliant. Any other final thoughts or comments?

> Grace: Um (pause) It's actually been really interesting having you involved
> in the process… I'm not sure how much the students understand what
> you're doing, but they accepted you as part of their group… Which was
> really… nice… Hahaha, now it's on your tape!
>
> Jennifer: Now it's data! (laughter)" (Interview 3 27/11/2014)

In this way, there came to be a shared, though relatively tacit, understanding of the video and dictaphone recordings and the fieldnotes as co-constructed ephemera of the ethnography as research endeavour; and myself as ethnographer as embedded in the lived experience of the rehearsals, but distinct from them. The participants exercised their autonomy in co-constructing the data through signals and statements to camera, and through using interviews and conversations to attend to their own concerns and reflections. This process echoes McGarry's reflection that: "The positionality and identity of a researcher is constructed by other participants in the research process rather than simply being decided and enforced by the researcher" (McGarry, 2016:44)

5.5 Research design and implementation

In this final subsection of the methodology chapter I set out, for reasons of clarity, the procedural research design in action within both the pilot case studies and main ethnography.

5.5.1 Pilot Study

The decision to undertake a pilot study was made primarily in recognition of the rigorous demands of ethnographic approaches on the skill of the researcher. In addition to operating as an explorative mobilisation of key concepts identified at that point via the review of literatures around theatre and drama education and playfulness, this pilot cycle was intended to function to develop critical ethnographic skills and perspectives. The research design sought to give an adequate encounter with the participating schools' experience of the SSF festival, whilst not producing a data corpus which would be unwieldy to process and analyse, mindful that that a second, more substantial research cycle was planned the following year.

The participating schools were purposively sampled (Punch, 2009) in collaboration with key SSF staff. As the gatekeeper to participating schools, the SSF staff had a wealth of

experience in terms of schools' relationship to the project, and by implication an appreciation of potential participant schools' receptiveness to engagement with the research process. Relying on SSF to facilitate contact with potential participating schools could be seen as problematic, for as Hammersley and Atkinson note, gatekeepers hold a significant amount of power in the research process and have a vested interest in presenting their organisation in a favourable light. (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007) However, as discussed above in section 5.3.1 on validity, critical ethnographic research does not seek to generate representative or generalizable data, but rather to explore the socially situated specifics of each case.

Thus, schools were purposefully sampled primarily by perceived receptiveness of the SSF contact teacher to participating in the study, in addition to practical considerations such as geographic accessibility. In addition there was a secondary consideration for a sample very broadly reflecting the variety of schools who participate in SSF. Five schools across London and the midlands were initially approached. Of these, all bar one went forward with the study, giving a pilot sample of four. These consisted of:

- St. Mary's, an all girls' Catholic secondary school in outer London

- Grafton High, a mixed inclusion secondary school in inner London

- Statten Park, a mixed primary school in inner London

- Brookline, a mixed 2-19 age Special Educational Needs (SEN) school in Oxfordshire

The schools were contacted by SSF via email with an invitation to join the project, including an 'access document' which detailed the design of the study as follows: To observe a maximum of six rehearsals, evenly spaced throughout the festival project; to observe the teacher training, student workshop and performance days; to conduct a short, unstructured interview with the participating teacher, and two short focus groups with 3-5 students at the opening and close of the festival project. The intended flexibility and informality of the research process was emphasised, and details of ethical processes were given. (Appendix 2 and 3)

These four pilot case studies were carried out over a total of 17 weeks during 2013, beginning with an initial period of 7 weeks from June to July and a further 10 weeks from September to November. (Appendix 6) Several factors across the four case study schools,

such as teacher absence, timetabling issues, Ofsted inspections and the key occurrence of two of the case study schools withdrawing from the SSF performance meant that this design varied considerably from original intentions across the four cases, as detailed in the table below:

School	Initial SSF training	In-school Observations	Teacher Interviews	Student Focus Groups	Cast Workshop	Final Performance
St. Mary's	No	6	1	1	Yes	Yes
Grafton High	Yes	4	2	2	Yes	No (school didn't attend)
Statten Park	Yes	5	3	3 (1 at start, 2 at end)	Yes	Yes
Brookline	No	4	1	1	No (school didn't attend)	No (school didn't attend)

Table 5.1 Pilot Study Case Study School Contact Summary

This is not to suggest the variation is a weakness in the data, or that any one case can be considered more or less 'complete'. However it is relevant to consider the variation for reasons of analytic transparency. Statten Park has the broadest and fullest data gathered overall, with almost every intended point of data collection occurring. Furthermore student availability meant there was an opportunity to carry out an additional closing focus group. This on the one hand indicates data from this case can be robustly triangulated across different data sources. However, it also indicates both the welcoming stance of the school with regards to the research process, and their commitment to SSF as a project.

Brookline meanwhile could be seen to represent the slightest set of data, though as the school began their rehearsals in the new school year of September 2013 and chose to withdraw from SSF in October, the data gathered is broadly in line with the time they participated in the project. The data from St. Mary's is weighted in favour of observation rather than interviews and focus groups. This was largely due to limited student and teacher availability around rehearsals, as they took place after school. There is thus a reduced opportunity to triangulate the observational analysis with interview and focus group data. Finally Grafton High, while having almost the full intended range of interview and focus group data, has a reduced number of observation sessions (unlike Brookline, their withdrawal was days before the final performance, so their overall rehearsal period was not reduced in length). This reflects broader issues within the case which ultimately contributed to this school's decision to withdraw from the project, as discussed in the following chapter.

5.5.2   Main Study

The key change in design from the pilot study was the number of school sites. In order to operationalise the pilot study sensitising concepts and develop them more deeply, a single sustained ethnography was planned. Near the close of the pilot study in November 2013, discussions with teaching participants took place to ascertain the possibility of returning the following year. Developing the research project with a pilot study school would allow me to carry forward insights and relationships developed at the school during the initial study. While several schools registered their interest, it was the opportunity to follow Grafton High's 2014 SSF Festival journey, again with that year's GCSE Drama group but a different teacher - returning Department Head Grace - which proved the most compelling, in light of the 2013 group's decision to withdraw from the festival.

This single ethnography was therefore designed to be more substantial in nature than the previous case studies. As detailed in the 2014 school access document, this would comprise attending and observing *every* rehearsal and session relating to the festival, conducting three teacher interviews and two student focus groups with two-three students evenly spaced across the project. (Appendix 3) Again, flexibility was emphasised, and again the actual research process differed slightly in delivery from design, as logistical issues dictated some rehearsals were missed, while the rapport built with the small GCSE drama cohort of 9 students prompted the undertaking of three focus groups, each

comprising two sessions with 4-5 students at a time, so the whole cohort took part in each focus group. The ethnography took place over a total of 19 weeks, with 7 weeks June-July 2014 and 12 weeks September-November 2014 and a total of 48 contact sessions, varying in length from one hour to full days. (Appendix 6)

As detailed in section 5.4.1 on observation, this in-depth single ethnography required more systematic field note processes. In addition to unstructured in-situ notes, these notes were annotated and expanded directly after each session, and a 'contact summary sheet' was completed with an overview of the session's events and a series of questions designed to extend and focus the fieldnotes. (Silverman, 2010) Furthermore, all in-school sessions were filmed in order to facilitate a focus on the discursive processes of the rehearsal room. Staff and student SSF training days, a class theatre trip and the festival performance day were not filmed due to the enhanced ethical processes of pursuing informed consent for filming from external participants in these contexts.

5.5.3   Affordances

The research design holds several affordances as a quality critical ethnography, and a strong attempt to address the research questions, exploring the role of discursive playfulness in the formation of ensemble pedagogy Shakespeare projects. Firstly, the research is robust in its iterative, reflexive design, which allowed both logistical, theoretical and empirical discoveries from the pilot phase to inform the main research stage. In this way I maximised on my ability to respond to both developments in the field research context and my growing skills and positionality as a critical ethnographer. Secondly the extended single ethnography of the main research stage allowed for a positioned and processional understanding of ensemble-building in educational contexts, and for the development of the tacit member knowledge which facilitated the recognition of many tropes of the participants' playful discourse, i.e. reoccurring word play, in-jokes and so on.

Finally, the hermeneutic, iterative thematic analysis process, while less regimented than the grounded theory-based coding often used in qualitative analysis, was nevertheless a strength in that it was appropriate for the inclusion of social theory which *critical* ethnography requires. Furthermore, it makes visible the both my positionality as ethnographer in *relation to* the research and the primacy of the lived experience of the ethnographer as *integral* to the research. (Pink, 2009) In contrast to this fruitful messiness,

the treatment of research as a craft through the production of the field research data audit and the appendixed examples of sample data, coding and analysis extracts offers a systematic record of research process.

5.5.4   Limitations

No piece of research could or should claim perfection in its design and implementation, and there are several limitations to this study. It is typical in qualitative thesis projects to highlight the lack of generalisability and replicability, and potential for the inclusion of researcher bias. I do not do that here however for, as discussed in section 5.3.1 on validity, I do not seek to defend qualitative research by comparing it to values embedded in the particularities of quantitative research endeavour. (Gaskell and Bauer, 2000; Lather, 1991) However, that is not to claim the knotty processes of researcher reflexivity and ethnographic lived experience are beyond reproach. I hope through the clarity of presentation within this chapter and appendixed documents I make visible the systematic reflexive processes (Lather, 1991) and intellectual and professional positionalities which have informed the research. Nevertheless, I am aware that however consciously, deliberately and critically, this methodological design is axial upon my positional, inter-subjective interpretation. A second, related potential limitation is that the empirical research has a highly theoretically-informed point of entry via the ontology of ensemble pedagogy and discursive playfulness. A more open ethnography of the SSF festival process would have undoubtedly analysed the data through different, more abductive theoretical prisms and these could have been argued to hold more construct and face validity with regards to the question of ensemble-based approaches of teaching Shakespeare, and hence hold more catalytic validity, i.e. more potential to effect emancipatory change in this area. (Lather, 1991) Yet, I would argue this research avoids relativism, a common accusation levied at theoretically-informed, personalised qualitative research (Hargreaves, 1997) via the processes of systematic reflexivity accounted for and carried out through this chapter.

A third limitation is while there is an increasing appreciation of nuance and variety of critical and youth oriented qualitative methodologies, particularly within theatre and drama education research, (Gallagher, 2008; Gallagher et al., 2016; Gallagher and Wessels, 2011; McGarry, 2016; Pink, 2009) the above research design took limited advantage of these. Were I to have the opportunity to redesign this project, I would seek

to include more of these participatory, and sensory-focused approaches. For example, the use of student-led peer interviews to compliment or replace researcher-led student focus groups, (Gallagher and Wessels, 2011) or the use of active games and exercises, (McGarry, 2016) or objects and visual stimuli (Pink, 2009) in participant focus groups and interviews to open up a potentially richer and more discursive conversation. While my positionality and reflexivity as an ethnographer was increasingly informed by these critical perspectives on student and participant voice in qualitative research, these specific methodological techniques which seek to disrupt traditional models of qualitative inquiry may have proved a source of fruitful messiness. (Hughes et al., 2011; Law, 2004)

Finally, while the literature review of play in theatre education identities discourse as a key element of utilising play as an explorative lens for ensemble pedagogy, (Araki-Metcalfe, 2008; Bushnell, 2008; Cook, 2000; Winston and Strand, 2013) and this chapter likewise identifies the discursive focus in critical ethnography, (Gallagher, 2006, 2007; Rogers, 2011) nevertheless, for reasons of time the was a lack of opportunity to utilise any micro discourse analysis methods, such as conversation analysis (Freebody, 2010, 2013; Have, 2007) in the research design. A key area to further develop this research could therefore be in collaboration with the fields of critical discourse analysis and applied linguistics.

5.6   In Summary

In this chapter I have sought to chart my journey as a researcher through the development of the design and implementation of this study. Beginning with three core principles, informed by current debates in theatre and drama education research, of research as a craft; the importance of reflexivity and the role of 'mess' I then moved on to identify critical ethnography as the methodology most suited to the needs of the research questions. After a reflexive exploration of the constructivist, critical and discursive epistemological demands of this methodology, I moved on to consider how this epistemological framing influenced the 'substantive issues of research' validity, ethics and data analysis, concluding that a contextualised and hermeneutic perspective informed these elements of research design. I then addressed the separate research generation methods of my study, including giving sue consideration to the role of researcher positionality before finally offering a brief summary of how this design was enacted within the pilot case studies and main ethnography.

6   Pilot Data Analysis: Identity, third space and Shakespeare through play

In this chapter I firstly offer a brief context of the pilot case study design, and insight into the world of the four case study schools covered in this research cycle in section 6.1. Referring back to the reflexive principles of critical ethnography described in the previous methodology chapter, in section 6.2 I recognise the unavoidable partiality and 'messiness' of this pilot research cycle, and thus justify the decision to centre the analysis around three core sensitising concepts, developed via a combination of theoretical concepts explored in chapters two and three, and from in-vivo concepts in the data. The main body of the chapter is arranged around these key sensitising concepts of identity, third space and Shakespeare in third space.

 In section 6.3 I explore the how the issue of teacher and student identity was oriented towards via playful discourse and activities within the case studies. Here I draw on post structural literature on identity to argue playful discourse allowed for participants to gain greater flexibility and reflexivity, and hence empowerment, through their identity work. In section 6.4 I combine this notion of playful identity work with the notion of third space as discussed in the *Signature Pedagogies* report, demonstrating where and how these playful processes allowed a sense of trust and ownership to flourish within the case studies, and where a lack of playfulness correlated with a collapse of the ensemble space. Finally in section 6.5 I consider how this notion of flexibility through play applied to the navigation of Shakespeare as a cultural and textual object within the case studies. The chapter concludes by summarising the key points of this analysis; and demonstrating the focused questions it raised going forward into the main research cycle analysis.

6.1   Context: Case study schools

Brookline

> *"We are a community special school for children and young adults aged between 2 and 19. We describe ourselves as a values-based school and encourage all visitors to our website or school to read our values as they underpin all aspects of learning and life at Brookline. We have approximately 70 pupils on roll and have a strong focus on individualised,*

inclusive learning. As such our pupils are grouped with their age peers in
classes where learning is skilfully differentiated to ensure every pupil
succeeds and is celebrated in a fully inclusive class and school community."
(from Brookline's website)

Lisa, the lead teacher on the SSF project at Brookline, is a secondary class teacher running the project for the ninth year at the school. Having initially met reservations from the school's head teacher about the suitability of the project for their students in 2005, she described during interviews how she advocated for the project amongst the parents and community; and liaised with SSF over accessibility issues in order to successfully complete the project. In the subsequent years, the SSF project became an annual event, and is as Lisa reports it currently recognised and valued as one of the school's key inclusion activities within the community

 This year, the project is offered to Key Stage 4 (age 14-16) and sixth form (16-19) students, with 16 students from across these ages electing to take part. The play is *Macbeth*. The cast have a variety of disabilities and additional educational and behavioural needs. Diagnoses of students were not sought as part of the research, but from observation and focus group sessions this clearly included autism of varying levels, some to the extent of having little spoken language; visual and hearing impairments; and mobility issues, though no students used a wheelchair fulltime. The rehearsals took place at regular times each week, and students left their classrooms to rehearse in the school hall, which also functioned as a gym and lunchroom. In addition to Lisa several teaching assistants and support staff attended the rehearsals; some were ongoing support staff for individual students, while others were more general assistants.

Statten Park

"Statten Park is a two-form entry primary school with a distinctive
character. Staff & pupils are ambitious & confident – performance at KS2
shows our pupils outperform their national peers & make more progress
too. The school serves & is surrounded by the Burdock Estate, itself
refurbished in 2001 and our premises have recently been refurbished and
extended too. It's this position at the heart of our community that gives
Statten Park School the platform to succeed." (from Statten Park's
website)

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Rachel, a year 5 class teacher, was the lead teacher on this project. It was her first year at the school, her first year of full time teaching, and her first year undertaking the SSF project. However, Rachel has for several years run an inclusive youth theatre within the borough and had previously been a key staff member at SSF itself. The class of 30 students were all of West Asian Muslim heritage, and many lived in the estate which, as the school website describes, immediately surrounds the school. In interviews, Rachel spoke of both wanting to draw on and consolidate the sense of community between the school and surrounding families, and also of "giving… different horizons" (Interview 1 22/07/2013) for the community through the Shakespeare performance, which was to take place outside of the borough.

The rehearsals of *Julius Caesar* began in the summer term of 2013, when the then year 4 class visited Rachel and their new classroom for 'settling in' days. The bulk of rehearsals then occurred at regular times weekly during the autumn 2013 term, initially in the large classroom, and increasingly utilising the school hall and stage closer to the performance date. Rachel was typically supported by two classroom teaching assistants.

Grafton High School

> *"At Grafton High School, we are passionate about learning. The school has a long and successful history of providing an excellent education for young people. At Grafton High School, we have high expectations of all pupils and seek to nurture and stimulate their ambitions. We encourage them to become high achieving, independent learners who will go on to university or career of their choice. Our commitment to every pupil is to provide teaching of the highest standard to support them in reaching their full potential.*
>
> *Inclusion and equality are very important to us. Ofsted describe how the school is 'driven by a passionate belief that all pupils, irrespective of their circumstances, are entitled to the best possible education.' We pride ourselves on developing respectful, caring individuals who play an active role in their community. Our pupils develop confidence through participation in the huge range of social, sporting and cultural opportunities on offer."* (Grafton High School website)

Grafton High has been taking part in SSF for five years, typically running it with their GCSE drama cohort. This year would be teacher Travis' first year leading the project at this school, though he had led on it for two years at his previous school, a performance-arts specialist secondary school in Essex. Travis spoke enthusiastically of these past projects in interview, which he ran with a year 9 (age 13-14 years) 'more able and talented' drama cohort. Before starting the project at Grafton High he highlighted the context and his expectations were markedly different, describing the 16-strong GCSE drama class as "Very, very weak academically and in terms of performance." (Interview 1 16/07/2013) He also emphasised that due to timetabling and curriculum changes in the school the GCSE cohort would comprise year 9, 10 and 11 students completing the course in a single year, (the more typical model for GCSE/Key Stage 4 is for two year courses over years 10 and 11) adding to the pressure of the project, which he planned would function as a 'mock exam' for two different modules of the GCSE assessment.

This change was undertaken by the school due to the number of students requiring extra literacy support to reach a C grade at GCSE English. As Travis, also part of the school leadership team, noted, this was reflected in the high reported levels of adult illiteracy in the borough. Like Rachel at Statten Park, which is situated in the same borough as Grafton High, Travis emphasises the 'culture gap' for his students, stating "They never experience any museums, any form of cultural experience." (Interview 1 16/07/2013)

The rehearsals of *Macbeth* began in September with the new school year, during thrice-weekly GCSE drama lessons, which took place in a mobile classroom in the far corner of the school's concrete playground.

St. Mary's Catholic School for Girls

> *"St Mary's is a very successful school with a reputation for academic*
> *excellence. We are a true comprehensive and provide a quality education*
> *for our students irrespective of their ability as they all have the potential to*
> *succeed beyond their expectations. Most importantly our students*
> *develop, whilst in our care to be confident young women who understand*
> *and appreciate the valuable contribution they can make to society. The*
> *learning experience is our main priority and our teachers work together to*
> *ensure that the students are inspired, motivated, challenged and engaged*

by their teaching. We enrich the students' education through an

impressive range of extra-curricular activities, visits and journeys.

As a Catholic School our Christian faith, our shared beliefs and values

underpin all that we do. Our students have a clear understanding of our

expectations and we strive each day to maintain a learning climate in

which each student feels valued, safe and secure."

St. Mary's had been a regular participant in SSF prior to teacher Lana's arrival two years ago, when she took over running the project. Initially it had been part of their BTEC Performing Arts course but following the discontinuation of the course within the school, it was decided last year to offer it as an extra-curricular option, open to students across the school via audition and with rehearsals taking place twice weekly after school. A cast of 14 was selected from 50 auditionees to perform *Much Ado About Nothing*.

6.2   Sensitising Concepts

The analysis below is organised around three central sensitising concepts, and eight second-order concepts or themes. The use of sensitising concepts within data analysis is an ethnographic approach (Rampton et al., 2004) in which concepts derived from relevant theory shape the process and presentation of the analysis. (Patton, 2002) However, as Patton goes on to state, these concepts are not necessarily applied wholesale from the literature, but provide the researcher with an initial sense of direction. (Patton 2002:256) The decision was taken to lead with this deductive approach to analysis with the pilot case study data, rather than a more inductive approach due to both the aims and the processes of data collection.

 As a pilot study, the framing of these case studies was broad and tentative, as reflected in the wording of the research questions in use at this point of the study. (See Appendix 1 for a table of the research questions as developed through the life of the project) The intention was to explore the most expedient approach of empirically utilising theories of playfulness in a theatre education context:

1. How might a theory of play look in relation to theatre education?

2. To what extent is this theory borne out in participants' experiences and articulations of the value of theatre education?

3. What are the implications for impact assessment of theatre education programmes?

Through this, I discovered focusing on *how* participants utilised playfulness and *what was achieved* amongst the participants as a result of this playfulness allowed both for a fuller presentation of the nuances of each case study and spoke back more directly to the issues around ensemble pedagogy raised within the literature review. In particular, the question of what was achieved through playfulness led to a focus on literature around sociological understandings of identity and space, alongside the body of theatre education literature cited in chapters two and three. Thus the three core sensitising concepts cover: identities through play, the creation of playful 'third spaces', and playing Shakespeare in 'third spaces'.

Geertz calls for a focus on thick description in ethnographic research. (Geertz, 1993) A reflexive analysis of this pilot data must recognise both its tentative, explorative aims and relatively high number of cases, completed simultaneously over an ethnographically speaking short time frame, limits the thickness of the data. Concepts cannot always be triangulated across data sources or cases; time to gain familiarity with the institutional cultures of each school and build rapport with participants was limited; and the implications and effects of initially compelling events could not always be followed up. However, as discussed in sections 5.5 of the methodology chapter, recognising the limitations of this pilot data led to several changes within the research design of the main case study cycle. Furthermore, the sensitising concepts developed through the following analysis were then able to be operationalised within this main cycle. Thus, in presenting this analysis I acknowledge the unavoidable, and sometimes even fruitful 'messiness' of qualitative empirical research. (Hepplewhite, 2014; Hughes et al., 2011; Law, 2004) (Geertz, 1993)

6.3   Identities through play

When initially focusing on both the variety and purposes of participants' playfulness within the pilot case studies, a common theme began to emerge around the issue of identity. Firstly, playful acts and exchanges seemed to be frequently tied to expressions of individual and group identity. Secondly teacher participants in particular appeared to utilise playfulness as a means to perform and switch between multiple identities. Thirdly,

students in particular engaged in their own dark play to both explore new identities and, on occasion, resist those being imposed on them within the classroom space.

In analysing this identify-focused playfulness, I draw on literature which takes a poststructuralist perspective of identity as essentially multiple; constructed; and processional. (Versluys, 2007) As language learning scholars Norton and Toohey highlight, these poststructuralist understandings see identity as both "context-dependent, and context-producing, in particular historical and cultural circumstances" (Norton and Toohey 2011:219) In particular, I draw on Davies & Harré's notion of 'positionality' as an expression of identity which sees identity construction as constantly occurring through interaction (Davies and Harré, 1990) and Boylan and Woolsey's (2015) poststructuralist study of trainee teacher identity, where they argue a focus on teacher identity through this theoretical lens is highly relevant for research considering issues of social justice within education. (Boylan and Woolsey, 2015) Considering the data through this literature, I argue the participants' playful identity work allowed them greater social and pedagogical flexibility.

6.3.1   Wider identities made visible through play

The pedagogic technique of drawing on personal identities during teaching was an approach modelled during SSF training sessions, for example during Statten Park's cast workshop, Barry, an SSF facilitator, refers to his nationality to explain his misunderstanding of a student comment: "I'm American, pardon me." As Galton has observed (Galton, 2010) this willingness to draw on personal experiences and identities within the classroom is a common feature of many art education practitioners' practice. Similarly, Thomson et al. recognise the importance of 'identity-making' in arts education practices, commenting this contributes to learners' sense of 'becoming somebody' through their educational experiences. (Thomson et al. 2012:12)

The approach modelled in SSF training appeared to resonate with two of the case study teachers in particular, Rachel and Lana, who felt SSF offered opportunities to connect their teaching practice with their wider identities and interests. Their joyful tone describing this during interviews hints at the sense of freedom and playfulness intertwined with this personal identification with the project:

"I love rehearsals, it's the best part of my week… I think it's, in one sense I think it's quite personal because being artistic, so, you know, my degree's in English I totally love Shakespeare and I totally love theatre as well and I have worked in various theatre settings… so it is a project which is very geared up to be in my interests" (Rachel, Interview 2, 4/10/13)

"I was much more enthusiastic about it and wanted to run it really. So it ended up with me taking responsibility for it, and so now it's like *my baby*." (Lana, Interview 1, 17/10/13)

While Grafton High teacher Travis' perspective was more ambiguous, though he also described himself as 'loving Shakespeare' during interview, he took a more distant position with regards to the project, commenting of his first SSF experience: "Being an NQT you're always given [these] kind of projects to run and manage, being a bit of a dogsbody" (Interview 1, 16/07/13

In terms of how a sense of identity was oriented towards during rehearsals, a key theme identified early on in the research was teacher Lana's switching of professional role via the discourse she used in rehearsals. Lana often began sessions in a noticeably 'teacherly' tone, characterised by clear, firm, short statements and questions. During the rehearsals themselves a different tone was observed, inviting students into a shared focus on the text, rather than giving direct instruction. Statements were often more ambiguous, included more questions, and Lana appeared more readily to visibly struggle for a word, throwing out possibilities; whereas in 'teacher' mode, she would rather briefly pause to recollect a needed word in order to form a more authoritative and complete statement.

This pattern continued throughout rehearsals, though the students did not always mirror the informal, collaborative tone and when contributing, would often frame suggestions as hesitant questions in a mode I termed 'teacher-pleasing' in my fieldnotes; i.e. they appeared keen to offer the 'right' answer. At other times students seemed to show a passivity and waited to be given a direction. Lana would often gently rebuff these pleasing or passive actions, with statements such as "If it works for you, we'll do it" and "I don't want you to just copy me". By the performance day, whilst this discursive pattern was, to an extent still occurring: for example a student asked following the dress rehearsal "Was is good when…?" there was also evidence that the cast had become more active and

autonomous in their role as actors; with shared problem solving on props issues, and mutual support amongst cast members during rehearsals.

This approach of Lana's chimes with the notion of 'disciplinary discourse' and 'collegial pedagogy'. (Thomson et al., 2012) In taking on a role as 'director' in which her discourse is more open, collaborative and focused on the demands and affordances of the theatre-making process, Lana is inviting the students to likewise engage as actors, implicitly modelling the explorative and collaborative elements she frames this role as requiring. The students, however, are at first hesitant to take up this role, even when it clearly affords them more choice and autonomy within the rehearsal process, and instead seek to re-establish the more familiar teacher/student exchanges, based on the existence of correct answers and teacher dominance. In terms of the key ensemble move of 'uncrowning' (Enciso et al., 2011; Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011; Neelands, 2009a, 2009b) this highlights the need for students' readiness, as well as teachers' willingness, to undertake this more egalitarian, but more socially 'risky' pedagogic discourse within the classroom.

At Brookline, the teaching staff use more explicit modes to invite students to bring their wider identities to the classroom, and thence establish a collegial pedagogy. This is primarily achieved both through the use of games, and through teasing, playful discourse. For example during the first rehearsal, students are invited to play the game 'stand up if…' allowing participants to voice statements on aspects of their own identity and preferences. The responses focus on the students' activities over the holidays, and a lively dialogue between teaching staff and students ensues, collating around meetings and shared experiences during the summer break. There is a clear sense through these exchanges, punctuated with jokes and laughter, that these individuals are part of a community outside the classroom as well as within. Norton and Toohey (2011) highlight the idea that learners can gain greater autonomy within the classroom through drawing on broader identities, and through these games Lisa and her colleagues appear to demonstrate an appreciation of this. While the approach of the Brookline teaching staff is explicitly play-based, as I will explore in the following section, the use of more personalised and more varied identity positionalities by teachers' during rehearsals often appeared to be achieved through a conscious performance or 'playing' of identity.

6.3.2   Identity as performative

Within sociology, theorists have long used performative models to describe behaviour. (Davies and Harré, 1990; Goffman, 1990) Kempe, however, has argued the notion of professional identity as performative is relevant to teachers of drama in particular, citing Schonmann's triadic approach to teacher identity which differentiates between person, role and character. (Schonmann, 2006) For example, in a performance context there is the actor as an individual 'self', the professional 'role' of actor which they are fulfilling, and the 'character' they are playing. Kempe suggests teachers' reflective awareness of these intersecting identities requires a sense of 'aesthetic distance', as they negotiate between their own personal 'self', the professional role of teacher, and the professional character they choose to undertake that role within. (Kempe, 2012) This developing of 'aesthetic distance' in professional identity work can be considered an element of the 'self-distancing' (Castoriadis, 1997; Neelands, 2016; Sennett, 1986) required for active citizenship.

In terms of more fully utilising the implications of poststructuralist theories of identity, Boylan and Woolsey's appropriation of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of smooth and striated space, (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) extended to conceptualise identity (Boylan and Woolsey, 2015) is also applicable here. Below I discuss how within the cases teaching participants not only moved between distinct, 'striated' identities, but were also able to create 'smooth' identity spaces for themselves in which they could be in a more dynamic position of becoming or juxtaposing conflicting roles. For, as Boylan and Woolsey state "Smooth identity space allows for movement that is more unpredictable and where there is a greater possibility of combination and recombination of different positions." (Boylan and Woolsey 2015:66) They combine this with Davies and Harré's notion of positioning, which in contrast to Schonmann's more static identity triad identifies 'position', 'act' and 'storyline' to highlight how identities can not only be myriad, but processional and determined by the narratives we build around them. (Davies and Harré, 1990) Taken in combination, these models of teacher identity as both multiple and in continuous development help map how within the case studies teaching participants would 'perform' both their role and character as teacher/director, often utilising playful discourse to frame this performance, and to create 'smooth' identity space which facilitated movement between these roles.

In interview, Rachel expressed her understanding of play in terms of exploring new roles: "I think sort of a sense of play is… ideas about trying things out, experimenting with different things, embodying different roles" (interview 1, 22/07/13) This perspective could be seen in practice during rehearsals, where Rachel would often use games and playful discourse to model and develop performance skills for her students. For example, repeated use of a mimed character 'Siegfried the Rat", building group investment in the imaginary rodent to use as a prompt for shared focus exercises, i.e. students jumping in sequence to allow 'Siegfried' to pass under their feet.

This represented a clear choice, as with Lana in her after school rehearsals, to embody a particular identity character as teacher/director. In this case a highly playful character, similar to the approach Thomson et al. describe as the use of heightened 'storytelling' language as a pedagogic performance inviting active engagement, beyond the traditional information-focused teacher talk. (Thomson et al. 2012:20) This approach clearly resonated with her 9 year old students, who responded to 'Siegfried the Rat' with delight. However, Rachel was also able to utilise her playful and performative approach to identity to move between different 'characters' during the rehearsal process, switching in particular to a more authoritative discourse for issues of behaviour management. Notably the students responded readily to the variety of pedagogic characters Rachel presented throughout the process, with no sign they found either her more playful or firmer personas as disingenuous or alienating.

This highlights the importance of the ability as an ensemble teacher to create 'smooth' identity space in order to move between these 'characters' as needed, and the potential role of playful discourse in achieving this. However, the fragility of these different identity performances can be seen in the case of Grafton High. Travis' approach is superficially similar to Rachel's, moving between a conversational and often darkly playful discourse and a more authoritative teacher role, in this case almost exaggeratedly performed in its strictness, for example in frank statements such as "Shut up Eihab, I'm the director" to curb a student's disruptions. Yet, as I will further explore in the remainder of this analysis, the Grafton High students ultimately found this approach alienating.

Norton and Toohey suggest that pedagogical practices which focus on the poststructural conceptualisation of identity as multiple, dynamic and performed have: "the potential to be transformative in offering… learners more powerful positions than those they may

occupy either inside or outside the classroom." (Norton and Toohey 2011:47) Though it is not clear from the examples above that a teachers' pedagogic skill at performing and moving between identity roles necessarily offers *students* enhanced identity possibilities, it is clear in the Statten Park case it can at least provide an enjoyable and engaging learning space. In the following section I focus on the ways students did appear to claim these new and often more powerful identity possibilities for themselves, frequently through 'dark' playing.

6.3.3 'Dark' play

As discussed in chapter three, there is some evidence that the 'dark' playing defined by Schechner (Schechner, 1993) can have a pedagogic role. (O'Toole, 2001; Winston, 2005) Lisa, the lead teacher at Brookline school, describes an incident of student-teacher dark play whilst prop-making for the performance, which helped avert a behavioural meltdown from a student:

> "We were painting the cauldron together so we both had black paint on
> paint brushes, and he was getting fed up with doing it… starting to build
> into a hyper state, and he put his paint brush to my face. Ok so what I
> could have done then was, tell him off, you know, say 'Stop it, you have to
> carry on painting' and that sort of thing… [but] I took hold of his hand and
> moved it out of the way and I say 'That's a good idea' and painted a beard
> on his chin with my black paintbrush and it just stopped him dead, and I
> said 'Quick, go and look, you've got a beard!' And he went and looked in
> the mirror, and he was going (mimes looking at chin) because he had, you
> know, just a few strokes of black paint… and he was laughing and
> laughing. So, because I was playful about it we overcame would could
> have become a difficult time for him and the less of those times he has,
> the nicer for him and the more he can learn to use that side of his
> character, not to be out of control." (Lisa Interview 1, 24/09/13)

In this incident, it is key that Lisa choses to respond to her student's frustrated and angry gesture of moving to paintbrush to her face by repositioning the action as a mutually playful one. As Lisa describes it, this offers an alternative narrative for the student, which he chooses to take up and extend by admiring his new 'beard' in the mirror. Lisa mentions this as opening up space for the student to access a 'different side of his character',

notably one which has more 'control', chiming with Norton and Toohey's comments on the autonomous power available for students in accessing new identities. Within the Brookline focus group, students similarly commented on the opportunities to explore new behaviours and identities through the process of rehearsal itself:

"Jennifer: Anyone else… like anything else about the project?

Charlie: You can get to die. Not like/…

Mario: Watch this guys, I'm going to fake-die.

Jennifer: So you, you get to act that you're?/…

Mario: Yeah, you're not really dead.

Sarah: We have to act."

And

"Ruby: Um, you pretend if you're like kissing, but you're not really.
(Laughter from all) You're not really.

Mario: Blugh!

Ruby: Like on the cheek…. It's not really real, just pretending." (Brookline Focus Group, 24/09/13)

The opportunity to explore these extreme or potentially transgressive activities, but within a safe performative frame - 'fake-dying' and 'just pretending' kissing - is clearly valuable to the students. Lisa takes the perspective in interview that drama offers a unique opportunity for these SEN students to develop social play skills in ways that are age-appropriate: "They don't want to play with baby stuff. So being involved in a serious, dramatic production offers all those opportunities for play: role play 'I'll be this and you'll be that', 'I'll pretend I'm angry' you know… they're able to do it in drama, in a relaxed and easy way, and they *learn* from this, so, about why people behave in different ways" (Interview 1, 24/09/13)

Within the Grafton High case however the students' dark playing, if it can be defined as such, was more extreme and precarious. From the second observation session onwards, I

note the almost constant low-level disruption from a group of male students. This was characterised alternatively by silence and lack of engagement; and by mocking, rejecting or subverting the rehearsal tasks. Observing this, I was acutely aware of my own frustration as a practitioner at the disruptive results of these students' behaviour, reflecting in my field notes that I would struggle to keep my cool in Travis' position. Travis confides the next time we meet that he has never had a class with behaviour issues as bad as this and came very close to walking out that day. His frustration and disappointment are clear.

This raises the question of when behaviour can no longer be defined as play, no matter how dark. An interesting perspective is offered by Talmy (2008) whose research suggests students' continued resistance to institutional norms, could be considered not merely 'poor behaviour' but an act of rejecting the learner identity foisted upon them; if it does not chime with their own sense of identity, or meets their learning needs. Similarly Sharkey (2004) suggests students' silence can be seen not as a deficit, but as an act of political resistance. Taking this perspective, it could be possible to cast the Grafton High students' continued disruption as a deep and provocative form of dark play as active citizenship, at the extreme end of the 'sabotaging' Winston describes in his *Changes* study. (2005) However, in terms of dark play as an element of ensemble pedagogy, it appears clear this extreme has a limited role in establishing a sense of ensemble. This is perhaps due to the fact it relies on the individualised aspect of dark play which Schechner emphasises: "dark play may be entirely private, known to the player alone… [its] inversions are not declared or resolved; its end is not integration but disruption." (Schechner 1993:36) The disruptive nature of this dark play on the development of the Grafton High group as an ensemble is reflected in the focus group comments of some of the less disruptive students:

> "Sasheer: But then, he [Travis] does get a bit carried away and he says 'one more chance, one more chance' I think he should actually park some people… so they can get the shock, and then they won't be bad any more…
>
> Nadra: It's effecting our grades personally." (Focus Group 2, 27/11/13)

Similarly, while in the example given by Lisa from Brookline of the face-painting incident teacher-initiated dark play builds on and redirects her student's potentially disruptive

offer, where Travis draws on dark or teasing play within the rehearsals this appears to further alienate the students. As in the following exchange, during a day-long half term rehearsal:

Larry asks Travis for a countdown on a movement section

Travis replies, with faux-exasperation "What do you want me to do?"

Larry, sulkily: "Alright sir" (Field Note Extract, 31/10/13)

From this, it could be argued that dark play, *if* invited or sanctioned by the teacher *and* mutually constructed with other ensemble members, *can* be a valid part of ensemble pedagogy, in particular that it allows students to resist institutional and behavioural norms and present alternative identities. However, as O'Toole observes, the pedagogic value of this form of play exists on a 'knife-edge', and is certainly capable of hindering, as well as enhancing, the ensemble experience. (O'Toole, 2001)

To conclude on the sensitising concept of exploring identity via play, by the close of these four case studies I had perceived a relationship between the use and presence of playfulness in the SSF rehearsal rooms; and the range and flexibility of both teacher and student identities. This was often achieved either through playful, even darkly playful, discourse; or through the use of games and playfully explorative theatre exercises. As the studies cited (Boylan and Smith, 2012; Davies and Harré, 1990; Norton and Toohey, 2011; Sharkey, 2004; Talmy, 2008) suggest, the opportunity to engage in this identity work has clear social justice implications, in terms of increased individual confidence and empowerment, and the development of a dynamic group identity, resonating with the mutual communal and autonomous opportunities available through play in the identity rhetoric. (Sutton-Smith, 1997)

6.4   The creation of playful third spaces

In analysing how these playful identity discourses interacted with the 'default pedagogies' (Thomson et al., 2012) of the school contexts, the theoretical framework of space, (Auge, 1996; Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2005) and in particular the notion of third space, (Bhabha, 2004; Etheridge Woodson, 2015; Klein et al., 2013; Soja, 1999) became highly relevant. In discussing how 'default pedagogies' act within school contexts, Thomson et al. draw on the notion on Auge's notion of 'non place' to describe:

> "a locale in which people are institutionally stripped of their humanity…
> as schools operate in more instrumental and audit-driven ways, they
> move further away from… person-centred education… The notion of non-
> place is then a way of describing a de-humanising trend. It is one in which
> the sociality of a place… is eroded through processes which makes people
> in them less important than the data about them." (Thomson et al.
> 2012:11)

In section 6.4.1 I describe how default pedagogies within each school context contributed to the sense of the class/rehearsal room as a 'non place'. This socially constructive perspective on space chimes with various threads of ensemble pedagogy literature. For example within *Open Space Learning* a great emphasis is placed on the 'trans-space' nature of the learning they describe, by which they mean spaces which are socially constructed as somehow 'other': transgressive or liminal. (Monk et al. 2011:127) While in his discussion of the inherent risk of ensemble pedagogy Neelands highlights the necessary risk of 'taking appropriate space'. (Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) This spatial theorising of ensemble pedagogy echoes a more general spatial turn within social, education and thus theatre and drama education research, (Charlton et al., 2011, 2014; Dolan, 2006; Holdsworth, 2007; Hunka, 2015; Hunter, 2008; Mackey and Whybrow, 2007; Rajendran, 2014, 2016; Rodricks, 2015; Sloan, 2018) within which the notion of 'third space' is particularly relevant. (Gutierrez et al., 1999; Hulme et al., 2009; Riordan and Klein, 2016; Thomson et al., 2012)

As Thomson et al. argue, third space is a useful concept within arts education research, as it describes the hybrid (Bhabha, 2004; Soja, 1999) and processional quality of spaces constructed via the pedagogic approaches common to arts education. (Thomson et al., 2012) This also chimes with the spatial models within second paradigm play theories as described in chapter two, most notably Bakhtin's notion of the carnival as a space of subversion and popular licentiousness (Bakhtin, 1984; Tam, 2010) and Turner's concept of socially transformative liminal spaces. (Turner, 1982) While research by Raynsford suggests creative spaces in education encompass "Freedom, Autonomy, Dislocation, Surprise, Politics." (Raynsford, 2015:285) highlighting the social justice possibilities of creative educational third spaces.

Furthermore third space can be seen as commensurate with Foucauldian readings of power discourses, as discussed in section 2.2.2 on the social risk of ensemble in chapter two. Indeed, Foucault's notion of heterotopias, which he defines as "something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which … all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (Foucault, 1984:46). He describes how these spaces can juxtapose "in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible." (Foucault, 1984:48) This suggests a model of ensemble third spaces which highlights their capacity to facilitate alternative discourses of power relations, albeit hybridised and temporary.

In 6.4.2 therefore I use the concept of third space as a framework to analyse how the ensemble pedagogy processes of the SSF project create a new, but contingent space of participant trust and ownership within the case study contexts. As a term borrowed primarily from the field of cultural geography, there is a critical and social justice perspective inherent to the concept, in which it can be understood as a 'utopian project' where "those who engage in a third space must work continually to open and build the new space in the face of the forces of conservativism and the weight of institutional structures and history." (Klein et al. 2013:28) Thus I consider here the implications of viewing ensemble pedagogy as a producer of third space within school contexts. While in section 6.4.3 I chart the collapse (Monk, Chillington Rutter, et al., 2011) of Grafton High's ensemble third space and explore how the lack of playfulness, in particular playful identity discourse, contributed to this.

6.4.1   Default pedagogies

Thomson et al. describe default pedagogies as defined by lessons designed with opening and closing plenaries sandwiching a central section characterised by direct teacher instruction followed by individual student practice. There is a consistent charting of progress via the use of attainment level metrics and lesson objectives. (Thomson et al. 2012:10-11) these pedagogic approaches reproduce the dehumanising quality of non places via their reliance on narrow auditing and assessment metrics. (Holligan, 2010; Thomson et al., 2012) Across all of the four case study schools it was possible to chart how the audit-focused default pedagogies of each school context impinged upon the SSF rehearsal process.

At Statten Park, where teacher Rachel as the sole classroom teacher had responsibility for delivering the broad primary curriculum alongside running the project, a clearly relevant aspect of default pedagogy for her was the issue of timetabling. As she confided in me after one rehearsal: "I need to do something to my timetable… [I] thought I had squeezed everything out of my timetable that I could…" (Field Note Extract, 13/09/2013) Thus, while Rachel had the flexibility of having 'access' to her cast throughout the school week, the opportunities of this had to be managed alongside the pressures of delivering a broad statutory curriculum. At the time of the case study, Statten Park had recently received an OFSTED 'inadequate' rating, and as Rachel explained in our initial meetings the new leadership team had an ambitious strategy to secure an 'outstanding' rating in the near future. An ambition which Rachel shared, but which clearly added to the sense of pressure around timetabling the curriculum.

In contrast Lisa, at SEN School Brookline, discussed her sense of flexibility and freedom in relation to her mainstream school counterparts, wondering how they manage the rehearsal process: "Because I've got a much more flexible timetable. You know I'm not working with all the different departments… and mine aren't doing a whole exam thing… So, it is easier for me." (Interview 1, 24/09/2013) When considered in light of the consciously playful, holistic approach Lisa and her teaching colleagues took in rehearsal, this hints at how the normative demands of many mainstream schools can limit the establishment of ensemble pedagogy third spaces.

The presence of default pedagogies within the SSF experience was most visible within the Grafton High case. As described in the case overview in section 6.1, the participating class was a mixed-year group GCSE Drama cohort, undertaking the exam course in a single year, reduced from the standard two-year course. In order to accommodate the SSF project within this tight timeframe, teacher Travis described his intention to "hang it completely on the exam criteria." (Interview 1, 16/07/2013) Within rehearsals, this framing of the project via the GCSE exam criteria could be seen through Travis' repeated use of the GCSE 'explorative strategies' language in rehearsals, and a strong default pedagogy framing of the lessons through strategies such as opening rehearsals with written comprehension tests on *Macbeth* and prominently displaying learning objectives. Reflecting on this approach during interview, Travis states:

"Although it would be a lovely enrichment opportunity, we're in the job of getting kids exams. Which doesn't necessarily, you know, sit overly well all the time with my ethos and core values when it comes to teaching. On the other hand, that's the way the curriculum is now… That's the national agenda. But also, if they don't get these exam results, they can't progress to level three, if they don't get those exam results they can't progress to university. So, bottom line is we're, if we do not get them these results we've failed in our job, in our core duty." (Interview 1, 16/07/2013)

In these comments, Travis goes some way to distancing his teaching ethos from this exam-led focus, to an extent he acknowledges this default as a politically expedient necessity: 'that's the national agenda'. Yet, he takes an uncritically linear view that the 'core duty' of a secondary school teacher is to facilitate the progression to university. While there is not space here to unpick the full implications of this statement, I would argue it demonstrates a lack of criticality in terms of Travis' position towards the aims and processes of default pedagogies.

Tellingly, even when not drawing directly on the GCSE exam criteria, Travis directing style takes the linear approach of tightly blocking each moment. The students directly cite Travis' fast-paced and highly-controlled approach to rehearsals as a frustrating factor for them:

"Craig: Travis rushes so much, like/…

Jennifer: Do you guys feel that time pressure, of having to do your GCSE in one year?

Craig: Yeah, he wants us to get 'A's like. Well, some people will get an A but, he forces us. When, like he pushes us too much. Sometimes.

Jennifer: Well, why do you think he does that?

Craig: To get us a grade, the grades." (Focus Group 1, 01/10/2013)

Travis' decisions in terms of navigating the high stakes and time-sensitive pressures of the impending GCSE exam chimes with Kempe's observation that while:

"many aspects of the teacher's role and its attendant responsibilities are externally prescribed and thus inevitably become an imposed element of the teacher's identity. It must nonetheless be recognised that exactly how such expectations and demands are met by an individual teacher is contingent on how that teacher interprets the requirements and translates them into their praxis." (Kempe 2012:533)

Relating this back to the playful identity work described in 6.3, I would argue the ability to navigate default pedagogies is contingent on teachers' ability to reflexively distinguish – in Schonmann's terminology – the demands of their professional 'role' from a sense of 'self' and their particular approach to the 'character' of a teacher engaged in SSF. (Schonmann, 2006) As I will explore in section 6.4.3, when a teacher is unable to do this for themselves, it has a direct impact on their ability to facilitate a similar self-reflexivity for their students.

6.4.2 The possibilities of ensemble third spaces: mutual trust and ownership

Within the case studies, it was possible to see ways in which the schools navigated the default pedagogies of their contexts in order to successfully realise ensemble third spaces within the SSF project. I break this down firstly into how a sense of trust and collaboration was fostered within the cases, particularly at Statten Park, and to a large extent St. Mary's and Brookline. I then focus on how these more realised third spaces were characterised by a growing ability and preference of participants to play together with and through the Shakespeare texts.

At Statten Park, Rachel reflected in our final interview that she felt the ensemble playing (Boyd, cited in Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain 2004) exercises and principles encouraged by SSF were instrumental to the positive change she observed within the classroom relationships:

"It's a sort of very levelling project, if you are all on the stage, all of the time, all at the same time and the success depends on all of you. If you do it as a big ensemble piece then that embodies that side of things as well, and that's really… the key and that I hope is going to develop through" (Interview 3, 15/11/2013)

For Rachel therefore, the framework of ensemble performance techniques had a direct effect on the classroom as a community.

It was possible to see these changes throughout rehearsals, for example by the fifth observation session students were taking increased peer responsibility for performance by shushing each other; resolving line confusion in character; and giving prompts in character, for example when the student playing Mark Anthony forgets the line 'shall I descend?' the group prompt him in role as the chorus, calling 'yes, descend!' This sense of shared responsibility extends to Rachel as director, and during the body of rehearsals, students increasingly communicate with her on performance issues in frank, confident tones which are markedly different from the typical hierarchical speech of the primary classroom. For example, when Rachel marks out the stage dimensions in tape in the school hall, a student calmly reminds her of a missed mark; or when Rachel gives a post-rehearsal directing note to one student, another offers a further suggestion directly to him. Compared to the lingering 'teacher pleasing' discourse of the St. Mary's students, the focus here is firmly on a sense shared responsibility for the performance, rather than a desire to garner the teacher's praise. On the performance day it is possible to see the students taking this sense of ownership and confidence into the theatre space when, during the dress run, one student calls up from the stage to the technical desk 'Shall we start?' with all the composure of a professional actor.

Again, Rachel reflects the ensemble performance focus of the project is at the heart of this sense of co-ownership "It's a project that you can really *own* and because everybody has, literally, a part to play." (Interview 3, 15/11/2013) This sentiment is echoed in the students' focus group comments: "it doesn't matter if you have a small part or a big part... it's people who have little parts are the main people as well, so everyone is part of the play." (Rohima, Focus Group 1, 13/09/2013) Though both Rachel and her students credit the creative aesthetic of the SSF project with these egalitarian outcomes, in Rachel's interview comments it is clear her own enjoyment of Shakespeare, and willingness to share this experience of joy with her students, is also a key factor when she describes an experience during the project:

> "I had a small group that I took out during another lesson the other day.
> And to kind of sit round a table with a group of nine year olds and dissect
> Shakespeare, because that's actually what we're doing, [to] do that with a

group of nine year olds, like I would... with a group of adult actors to be honest is really quite special." (interview 3, 15/11/2013)

Norton and Toohey describe this process as the creation of an 'imagined community' within the education context, a concept commensurate with understandings of third space which encapsulates "a desired community that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future" (Norton and Toohey 2011:415) When considered with student Rohima's comments that "You can be an ensemble in the class during other lessons as well. And to outside when you go market, and when you see people, like that." (Focus Group 1, 13/09/2013) demonstrates the power this combination of communal creative endeavour and teacher 'uncrowning' can have in terms of reaching ensemble pedagogy's aim of inspiring active citizenship in the wider world. As Boylan and Woolsey express it, a commitment from teachers to emotionality and to "enacting different social relationships within the classroom and beyond" facilitates social justice concerns. (Boylan and Woolsey 2015:64)

Alongside trust and co-ownership, 'family' was a reoccurring motif in the data. Statten Park student Madhavi describes in the final focus group how the characters of *Julius Caesar* were 'strangers' to them at the beginning of rehearsals, and 'a family' by the end. This statement is particularly telling in light of the close-knit West Asian extended families many of the students' hailed from. As relayed by Rachel, generally these families were expansive and caring, but often reticent to both outsiders and outside engagement. For a student to express their relationship to the play text in these terms therefore suggests their experience of SSF went beyond that of a school project and blended into their personal narratives of family and community.

For Lisa at Brookline, her identity as a teacher was intertwined with her experiences of family; in her opening interview she charted her journey into education as beginning with her role as a big sister, organising children's parties; via school parish drama activities; and thence to teacher training. In this way, it's possible to see Lisa's sense of teaching 'character' (Schonmann, 2006) as represented in the tacit, emotionally close and mutually supportive models of family and community groups. This sense of communal responsibility, in particular the idea of supporting and including novice members, is reflected in the Brookline students' focus group comments:

> "Jennifer: So this is your first year [taking part in SSF]. So how are you feeling about it, how are you finding it so far?
>
> Charlie: A bit nervous.
>
> Jennifer: A bit nervous?
>
> Mario: Don't worry, we'll help you out Charlie.
>
> Sarah: Yeah Charlie, we'll help you.
>
> Jennifer: Oh lovely, so it sounds like you guys are a really good team. Do you work well together when you rehearse?
>
> Mario: Yeah, we do. We help Charlie out, yes we do.
>
> Sarah: We always help you Jason don't we.
>
> Jason: Yep, you always help me." (Focus Group 1, 24/09/2013)

At St. Mary's, while the idea of family is not explicitly mentioned, there are similar instances of support to novice cast members from those returning to the project, for example one student encourages another with: "Come on, I couldn't dance but I did that thing last year" during work on the opening movement sequence. Furthermore, during their focus group, students repeatedly commented on the value they found in the project being a mixed-age endeavour within their school:

> "Tracy: Its fun and you get to spend time with different people that you normally don't and in different years and such."
>
> And
>
> "Maria: It is kind of different because in lessons you're working with, like classmates of your age group then in Shakespeare you… interact with different years." (Focus group 15/10/2013)

From these comments, and those of the Brookline students, it is possible to reflect on the increased ensemble affordances of the more 'familial' multi-age, cyclical processes of the SSF project as organised at Brookline and St. Mary's, compared to the more formally

delineated year and subject groups of the mainstream school context. In the following chapter I build on this notion of family as a metaphor for tacit and mutual care as a model of alternative power discourses within ensemble third space and consider the particular affordances and limitations for active citizenship within the context of the main ethnographic study. As a pilot study sensitising concept however, it offers a preliminary demonstration of some of the ways in which SSF participants in the case study schools enacted discourses of power in ways departing from their schools' hierarchical default pedagogies, engendering a sense of mutual care, trust and ownership.

6.4.3   When third spaces collapse

This section focuses primarily on the decision of Grafton High to withdraw from the festival, and to a lesser extent the withdrawal of Brookline school, reading these decisions as a collapse of the third space potential in these cases. This notion of collapse draws on the language Monk et al. use describing the process by which, if a teaching space does not allow for a culture of mutual confidence, and if the teacher is not willing or able to concede some measure of control to students, the 'openness' of the space will close in on itself, and revert to default pedagogies. (Monk et al. 2011:125) In exploring the factors around this collapse in the Grafton High case, I identify two key issues. Firstly, what I have termed 'identity inflexibility', referring to the teacher's inability or unwillingness to engage in the flexibly, dynamic identity work of the kind referred to in section 6.3 (Boylan and Woolsey, 2015; Davies and Harré, 1990; Kempe, 2012; Schonmann, 2006; Wales, 2009) either on their own behalf or for their students. Secondly, I chart a similar tendency to view the teaching space, including the normative regulations or discourses governing the space, as finite and inflexible.

 I preface this with Travis' own description of the decision to withdraw from the project:

> "We made it, two days before the festival we did a dress rehearsal, with an audience and with other members of staff. And, they couldn't recall it [the script] and therefore we made the decision predominantly due to the fact we didn't want them to become embarrassed, and actually it would be more damaging by them performing than not performing. It wasn't so much it wasn't aesthetically pleasing, it was more about the fact actually it would be more damaging to them." (Interview 2, 27/11/2013)

Much of the data in this section is drawn from this interview with Travis. In terms of reflexively contextualising this data it must be recognised that within this interview Travis is understandably concerned with creating a justificatory narrative around this decision to pull out of the project, both for me as an outside observer, but likely also for himself, for as Davies and Harré state, it is through the creation of coherent narratives we construct our sense of identity. (Davies and Harré, 1990) I recognise therefore that to an extent the sense of inflexibility derived from this data may be attributed to this justificatory tone. However, by triangulating these statements with data from student focus groups and observations wherever possible, I argue they do represent substantive issues within the rehearsal process itself.

The central factor in Travis' static and finite classroom identity, I would argue, can be found in his definition of his successful role in terms of the neoliberal metrics of the mainstream UK school system. He emphasises his own teaching qualifications as an 'advanced skills teacher' and states "Every observation I've had I've always been outstanding." (Interview 2, 27/11/2013) Klein has argued teachers are not always be able to position themselves with agency if they are overly 'caught up' in previously successful professional discourses, (Klein, 1998) which would appear to be the case here. In particular, as his professional identity is so heavily invested in these discourses, there is a disincentive to undertake the risky changes (Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) required for ensemble pedagogy practices. As with the 'teacher pleasing' of St. Mary's students, there is more comfort and value in their existing clear, if reductive, metrics of success than in exploring a murky alternative.

Alongside this inflexibility with his own professional identity, Travis took a narrow perspective on the identities of his students. Firstly through his positioning of them as 'urban', through which, as the students reflected on during their focus group, caused them both discomfort and confusion:

> "Craig: He said talk cockney and that yeah, but he's not really… he ain't told us to actually do it because sometimes… Like he's saying talk cockney but…
>
> James: [indistinguishable] stereotypes actually, because he was like 'you'll know it well because of the area that you're from'

Craig: Yeah

Jennifer: Do you feel there's perhaps a bit of an assumption there? That, because of the area that you guys live you have a knowledge of a certain way of doing it?

Craig: And sometimes he takes the mick, like before we was listening to music and he was like 'turn that *hood* music off' or something.

Jack: And then he wants us, and then he wants us to do it for him and that." (Focus Group 1, 01/10/2013)

In this way, see although Travis states his aim in his opening interview to make *Macbeth* relevant for the class, referring to recent 'gritty' TV adaptions starring working class actors Ray Winston and James McAvoy, the students feel this reading of their identity and community is reductive and 'stereotyping'. And moreover that it is confusing, as the invitations to 'talk cockney' and draw on their own cultural tropes are juxtaposed with a normative school discourse which rejects those perspectives, i.e.: 'turn that hood music off'. Comparing this to the playful availability of wider identities for students cultivated in the other case study contexts – such as the disciplinary pedagogy invitation to work as actors at St. Mary's, or the celebration of each cast member as a valuable individual through games at Brookline - it is clear that the Grafton High students quoted here do not feel they have been given permission to bring these identities into their rehearsal room, or even recognise the identities as applied to them. As Norton and Toohey have shown (2011) when learners are unable to make a meaningful connection between their own language practices and those of the school or classroom they become demotivated. From Sasheer's comments in the final focus group, there are hints that a greater opportunity to play, and sense of 'freedom' may have yielded different outcomes for the group:

"We need to be more free because, like we should be allowed to laugh about a little bit... Because, we have to like put in all our feelings so much that we can't really express things, we have to think about… would he [Travis] like it if we say that or if I give a suggestion would it be alright. Like we can't be free" (Focus Group 2, 27/11/2013)

Thus, while Travis seeks to engage the students via invoking opportunities to embody what he perceives to be their 'authentic' identities, there is a lack of reflexive, playful discursive engagement with navigating the power discourses invoked in this aim. This ensures the ultimate failure of establishing any contingent third space in which these alternative identity embodiments might be possible.

In addition to the inflexible, imposed identity of 'urban', there are also several ways Travis positions his students as 'deficient'. As explored in the *Signature Pedagogies* report, a key element in the creation of third space pedagogies, and in constructive approaches to education more broadly, is an assumption of universal capacity in students, and a valuing of the knowledge and perspectives they bring. (Donalson, 1993; Neelands, 2009a; Thomson et al., 2012) Within his first interview, Travis draws out several binaries between SSF cohorts at his previous school, who he categorised as: 'MAAT' (More Able And Talented), 'a strong group', and the 'top 10%' in English 'cross-referenced' with the top 10% in drama. While his current cohort are described as: 'very, very weak' academically and in terms of performance, the majority having some level of additional needs; being 'pathway three students' i.e. "they have three years and six hours a week to obtain a C at GCSE [English], due to the fact they came in well below national average on literacy at key stage two" (Interview 2, 27/11/2013), and that only 52% are targeted to gain GCSE Drama grades at a C or above. What is telling about these binaries is, as with Travis' own narrative of his school identity, they largely draw on the metric-driven discourses of normative schooling: labelling students as either advanced or lacking and expressing their achievement in the numerical or finite grades of high-stakes testing. (i.e. 'the top 10%' 'well below national average') This is very much the de-humanising language of the non-place. (Auge, 1996)

Within the second interview, Travis suggests the blocking, lines and comprehension of the plot were not retained by the students because of the 'mild learning difficulties' of the majority of the cast. Whilst not directly disputing the veracity of this, it is telling to compare Travis' perspective with that of Lisa at Brookline school, whose students all have severe SEN diagnoses. She reflects on her directing process, in particular the autonomy she feels to edit the script to her students' needs:

> "And because we have to approach it in a different way to they do in
> mainstream, you can't *expect* them to learn pages and pages.

So we pick out the bits they like saying and give them that… and then they own their own part, in a different way and it makes them confident and relaxed about it. So I think that's something that, you know, other schools could learn from us you know, be more adventurous. Adapt it to your people so their comfortable with what they're doing." (Interview 1, 27/09/2013)

As with Lisa's reflections on the relative freedom from curriculum, exam and timetable demands she enjoys as a teacher outside the mainstream context, here it appears the reduced presence of 'default pedagogy' discourses around the labelling and measuring of students allows Lisa to take a more emphatic, reflexive approach to directing, significantly one in which she feels comfortable adapting the text to her students, rather than dwelling on their educational profile as a barrier to understanding the text. However, Lisa's subsequent sudden absence from the Brookline case demonstrated this may owe more to her own identity positioning that the affordances of the SEN school institutional discourses. In my discussions with deputy head Julie around her decision to withdraw the students from the project, she stated it wasn't 'fair' to ask students to all remember and perform the whole play on a single night, and her planned switch to a film project would allow for smaller groups to work on shorter sections. As she further elaborates: "it's really been Lisa's thing."

Through this, can see how much the identities teachers perceive as being available for themselves and their students, and their ability to be confident and flexible in that view, can affect the processes and 'success' of ensemble pedagogy projects. Connecting this to Lisa's stated and explicit focus on play and playful identity work with her students demonstrates how playfulness can potentially facilitate this social risk-taking necessary for ensemble pedagogy via the establishment of mutually trusting and nurturing third spaces which disrupt and hybridise institutional discourses of student capacity.

Within Travis' second interview particularly a sense of both the school and SSF contexts as demanding and inflexible loom large. Similarly, when Julie takes over as lead teacher of SSF at Brookline, her comments take a markedly different perspective to Lisa's sense of the project as a playful, familial, ongoing process and starkly cites cost, curriculum demands and lack of measurable progress as reasons to pull out. Travis, meanwhile, frames the SSF rehearsal timescale as prohibitively tight when married with the demands

of the GCSE drama curriculum; using a strictly quantified metric of the rehearsal process to express this:

> "The ratio we use in GCSE, is the, you know, it's almost to say it's one hour to block per minute and one hour to rehearse it to a band one standard. So, per minute is two hours. This was a thirty minute play, so theoretically it should have sixty hours; which we didn't have." (Interview 2, 27/11/2013)

In his reflections on the change in classroom dynamics following the premature end of the project it is possible to gain a sense of the third space 'collapse' by the fact both teachers and students alike reference becoming 'more comfortable' in the space. Travis describes how both classroom relationships with his GCSE group, and their progress, is much improved once the SSF project is cancelled. For example, he expresses surprise that students engaged and achieved well in their recent unit one practical exam. I would suggest this improvement may be due to the fact the framing of Travis's classroom discourse was then back in line with the 'default pedagogy' requirements of a formal exam, and so students responded more positively as they were no longer being given the 'mixed messages', Craig, Gary and James' described in their focus group comments. Travis says of the change in classroom atmosphere and progress:

> "My relationship with them is far more positive, because actually they've upped their game and therefore I don't need to be challenging, I don't need to be having negative interactions, we're focusing on the learning and on drama as a subject" (Interview 2, 27/11/2013)

The comment on 'focusing on the learning' and 'drama as a subject' would support this interpretation. Students' reflections similarly suggest that the collapse of the third space potential of the SSF project, while a blow in terms of failing to bring the performance to fruition, actually removed much of the confusion and conflict within the classroom:

> "Jennifer: Do you think the process of doing the rehearsals and getting up to the performance, do you think it was different from other drama lessons?
>
> Nadra: Yeah. Yeah it was.

Jennifer: In what way?

Daveed: In other drama lessons we do – it's easy.

Jennifer: So what made this different or more difficult?

Daveed: It's just we don't feel ready or confident or, because we think, like because this is a *mock*, that's why we don't take it seriously, you know." (Focus Group 2, 27/11/2013)

In these comments there is a two-fold perspective on the framing of the SSF project within the GCSE course: firstly seeing SSF as a difficult or high stakes challenge they are not 'ready' for, whilst also seeing the performance as a 'mock' within the more dominant GCSE framework, and hence unimportant. I would argue that it is partly because these conflicting framings were starkly left to stand, rather than more deftly and playfully navigated by Travis, that the resistance to and disengagement with the project was so marked.

To conclude on the sensitising concept of playful third spaces, in the above passage I have argued that playfully reflexive identity practices facilitated the establishment of ensemble spaces for the SSF rehearsal process. For Statten Park this allowed: Rachel to successfully navigate the demands of curriculum timetabling and high-stake OFSTED expectations; the empowerment of students to take ownership of the rehearsal process; and for a greater sense of community to be fostered within the class, with hints of students' more active engagement in their communities beyond. At St. Mary's this eventually gave a sense of 'professional' confidence for students. At Brookline the creation of a safe though jocular space through play allowed students facing severe social and educational barriers to engage collaboratively in the rehearsal process. Yet the sudden departure of Lisa demonstrated how fragile the maintenance of these spaces can be. Grafton High is an even starker example of this, where Travis' commitment to the narrow institutional discourses of default pedagogies ensured neither he nor his students felt empowered in their engagement with the project, with the result of a shared sense of relief when the hampered attempt at creating a third space collapsed back into the more familiar metrics of the GCSE exam.

This model of ensemble as third space highlights the social riskiness of ensemble pedagogy approaches via positioning the work within wider geometries of power. The hybridising quality of third space demonstrates how, via playful discourse, it is possible to collaboratively and dynamically construct a pro-social alternative to the default pedagogy 'non-space' common within school contexts. While a common strand within theatre and drama education space literature is the notion of utopian, transformative or 'escapist' spaces (Dolan, 2006; Hunka, 2015) the notion of third space suggests a more discursive, contingent quality. The concept of play as a subjunctivising mode of discourse can thus be seen as having the potential to 'third' the institutional school space.

6.5 Playing Shakespeare in third spaces: possibilities and limitations

The factor of 'Shakespeare' both through the presence of the play text in the rehearsal process, and then implications of his works as a cultural object more generally, was a highly relevant and also ambiguous one throughout the process of these four case studies. In exploring this final sensitising concept, I first consider the ways in which Shakespeare was understood as an aspirational object of high culture, and the value this added to the SSF project for participants, as well has the issues it revealed around potentially colonial discourses of students of colour and EAL students as being in 'need' of Shakespeare. Secondly and contrastingly, I explore how the Shakespeare texts were understood as accessible texts to be explored and 'played'. Ultimately I argue it is a focus on the 'playability' of Shakespeare (Royal Shakespeare Company, 2008; Thomson, 2002; Winston, 2015) which allows the teachers to draw on the cache of Shakespeare as an object of high culture on behalf of their students; but in such a way that foregrounds potentials for prompting ensemble pedagogy aims of active citizenship, rather than passive 'civilising'.

6.5.1 Shakespeare as high status challenge

Within the *Signature Pedagogies* report, Thomson et al. identify a willingness to confront challenges of scale and ambition as one of the core pedagogic practices of third spaces. (Thomson et al., 2012) The performance of a Shakespeare play, albeit a 30 minute edit, in a professional theatre, is clearly an element of the SSF festival process which offers challenges of scale and ambition. Within the case studies, it was possible to observe a variety of ways that the Shakespeare texts, the cultural trope of Shakespeare more

generally, and the notion of 'professional' performance was referred as a high status and challenging aspect of the project.

 At St. Mary's, and also Statten Park, students reported during focus groups that they valued this opportunity to study and perform Shakespeare, seeing it as giving them 'a head start' for the times they expected to encounter his work as part of the school curriculum and in higher education:

> "It's an advantage because sometimes, in English, sometimes we do like
> Shakespeare plays and we study it and because we've got like a head start
> with the play we can understand it... so it's helpful."
>
> (Maria, St. Mary's Focus Group 1, 15/10/2013)
>
> And
>
> "I think it's great because it's like our first time, so imagine we go to
> University and we want to study like, drama and stuff we can remember
> what we done in primary so we get a little better at drama and acting
> stuff." (Rohima, Statten Park Focus Group 1, 13/09/2013)

However, by contrast, the Grafton High students interviewed did not make this link, or do not value it, with one student commenting "It's alright, but I don't really like it, because it's old-fashioned, it's not my style." (Gary, Focus Group 1, 01/10/2013) While others describe the language in particular as 'difficult' and 'confusing'. Perhaps due to his students' perspective, Travis discusses the Shakespearean language as a barrier to be overcome, and states he rather values the storylines and the 'cultural heritage' of Shakespeare:

> "Yes, he's part of your cultural heritage and it's really important you've
> read Shakespeare... but actually I think if we're not careful we're just
> going to turn kids off it. It's about thinking actually this is a story, this is a
> bloody good story, forget about the language these are good characters,
> this is a good plot, these are real universal themes and ideas. The fact that
> you haven't got a Scooby-doo what the words mean, actually isn't overly
> important for me." (Interview 1, 16/07/2013)

While in this comment Travis balances an intrinsic value of the plays as 'good stories' in themselves with the cultural capital of Shakespeare, he later focuses overwhelmingly on this latter element. Interestingly, this is precisely the opposite to the rehearsal approach Berry advocates: of exploring the words and ignoring the cultural capital. (Berry, 2008) This hints at the potential limitations for play in this cultural value-centric approach. Within the case study this perspective, alongside Travis' positioning of his students as deficient in cultural capital is potentially problematic, as when he states he sees the value of SSF as:

> "Them on stage, overcoming the fear of something that potentially is very alien to them, especially you know, in socially deprived areas… So you've not only got your, low aspirations, your low literacy but one of the big deficiencies you've got in inner-city areas is a cultural gap a significant culture gap… they, they never go to the theatre, ever. They never experience any museums, any form of cultural experiences and I think something like this, well, just goes a step towards bridging that culture gap." (Interview 1, 16/07/2013)

Rachel at Statten Park, which is in the same inner London Borough as Grafton High, takes a similar perspective:

> "We are kind of dealing with (short pause) quite a big learning curve for both the children and their parents in terms of what a theatre is, how theatre works. And even sort of in a geographic sense we're going to be performing this not in the borough, we're going to be performing in [central London]. We've got big challenges, you know, helping the children to see beyond their immediate surroundings." (Interview 1, 22/07/2013)

While opening up new and broader cultural experiences of performing arts for young people from all walks of life is a central and unarguable tenant of theatre education, I want to highlight the colonial implications implicit particularly in Travis' phrase 'They never experience… *any form of cultural experiences*". This, along with the rhetorics of his students as educationally deficient, as explored in the previous section, also positions them as culturally deficient, and reproduces essentialised narratives around race. (Blackledge, 2009; Yosso, 2005) These discourses, Blackledge argued, naturalise the

conception of a monocultural and monolingual British community and marginalise "the cultural practices of Asian minorities… From the perspective of this normative homogeneous imagined community, the Asian cultural practices were positioned 'as aberrant, Other, and damaging to the educational prospects of minority children.'" (Blackledge, 2009:423) This same implication is occurring here, with a zero sum comparison of Shakespeare and professional theatres as 'culture' and inner city, largely West Asian Muslim life as 'not culture'. Though Rachel does not make such a stark comparison in her comments above, further discussion of the value of Shakespeare for English as an Additional Language (EAL) students takes a similar view of monocultural British experience as normative with her focus on the necessity of 'standard English':

> "All of my children are from an EAL background and in general the levels
> of standard English are relatively poor. And I have a real interest in
> preparing my children for the rest of their lives really and I think to have
> the kind of linguistic register where you can apply for a job, you can go for
> job interviews, you can meet and talk with anybody you encounter, and
> that you understand that there is a whole register of standard English
> which is really, really important for you to attain." (Interview 1,
> 22/07/2013)

Again here is the tendency, as Norton and Toohey describe it, to 'essentialise' categories of students, in this case as 'EAL background', denying the possibility of their identities as more complex or dynamic. (Norton and Toohey 2011:417-8) This runs contrary to the constructivist and pluralistic principles of ensemble pedagogy in which the knowledge the students brings to the classroom is implicitly valued. (Donalson, 1993) A study by Wales has identified the issue of what she terms 'missionary zeal' as a common one within drama teachers' professional identity construction, and she touches on the unsettling implications of this positionality in terms of discourses of power when she states: "This is not to suggest that these [teachers] cause harm, intentionally or otherwise, but there is something a little disquieting in the metaphor. Do their students want to be saved? What are they saving them from? What 'faith' or 'word' are they teaching, and how?" (Wales 2009:269) These are pertinent questions here, for when the students' cultural positionality is essentialised, so is that of Shakespeare – as in Travis' statement that the meaning of the play texts' language is unimportant as long as his students have a 'cultural

experience' – thus limiting the possibilities of creatively and critically responding to the text through rehearsal.

 However, Ramanathan has observed that the use of complex English literature texts, in a language learning context, requires creative and high-level analysis from students and thus can both enhance their educational progress and widen their access to more 'powerful identities.' (Ramanathan, 2005) This narrative would seem to chime with the Statten Park and St. Mary's students' appreciative comments at the opening of this section. Thus there exists here a complex relationship between the use and discursive positioning of Shakespeare as a cultural object; the aims of ensemble practices and the discursive identity work of participants. In terms of identifying more nuanced positions within this issue, Lisa at Brookline takes a subtly different perspective on the value of Shakespeare for her students when she states:

> "I also believe that if you're doing drama with children who struggle to understand or to speak, you know, they have those impairments, you should only use the very best material with them, don't give them rubbish because, you know, why, why should they have that? They need to be given the best stuff, that's most engaging" (Interview 1, 24/09/2013)

 In this statement there is the small, but distinct difference compared to Travis and Rachel's comments above, in which the students are seen as *deserving* the best, rather than being in *need* of it. Thus Shakespeare as a cultural object, and the experience of SSF more broadly is understood not as aspirational, or civilizing in the Arnoldian sense of culture as 'the best that has been thought and said' (Arnold, 2006) but as the 'most engaging'; a premise which holds much more potential for the realisation of the active citizenship aims of ensemble pedagogy. In the following subjection, I respond to the issues raised here by considering how approaching the Shakespeare texts through play within rehearsals allowed case study teachers to step away from the essentialising of Shakespeare as an object of high culture, and by implication created space for their students to engage with the texts on their own terms, whilst still drawing a sense of cultural capital from that engagement.

6.5.2   Playing Shakespeare

In the 2013 incarnation of their initial teacher workshop day, SSF suggest 'playing' as a key part of the rehearsal process, offering a model of creative work based on the David Glass Ensemble process and encouraging teachers to value the 'playing' and 'organising' stages in particular:

- "Preparing – This is everything you do as a director before meeting your cast. The Preparation stage of your Teacher Director Workshop.

- Playing – This is the playful part of the process, introducing the plot and the characters to your cast through games, trying out ideas.

- Organising – This is where you mould that play into a structure, this is where your students will be empowered to take ownership of the play (we usually find this happens after the Cast Workshop)

- Presenting – This is where you share work in front of an audience. This will happen at your Cast Workshop but can also happen in school.

- Reflecting – What can be learnt from the performance, what feedback can you give to the cast?

  This process can be applied to the whole of the Festival or to individual rehearsals. Don't rush to get to the Presenting stage. This can cause anxiety or problems, and it may be because not enough work has been done at the playing and organising stage." (Shakespeare Schools Festival 2013:2)

Within the *Signature* Pedagogies report, this type of creative playing is referred to as: "Tinkering, experimenting, generating and trying out ideas with humour, disruptive intent, questioning and gentle mocking." (Thomson et al. 2012:15) The focus on questioning, disrupting and mocking within this definition highlights its power as an anathema to the trope of Shakespeare as an essentialised object of high culture. When asked about her understanding of play in relation to the SSF project, Lana at St. Mary's replied:

"I guess thinking about how we use the idea of playing with words, the
idea of playing around with ideas is something that is very relevant to
[the] rehearsal situation. And certainly at the beginning of the rehearsals,
kind of playing with the characters. Playing out different scenarios,
different ideas." (Interview 1, 17/10/2013)

Here Lana highlights the open-ended and multiple creative possibilities she feels are
created for the rehearsal process through explorative play. She later comments that she
feels this 'openness' is not only expedient for the SSF rehearsal process, but a quality
inherent to Shakespeare's play texts, i.e. negative capability, (Bate, 1997) comparing the
process to the annual school musical production:

"There's not many different ways to interpret Sandy in Grease... Whereas
with Shakespeare you've got that openness already there and that's part
of the joy of it. So I really appreciate that contrast and that openness and
ability to play with the ideas." (Interview 1, 17/10/2013)

Likewise Rachel, alongside the cultural capital and 'standard English' perspective quoted
above, also states she feels it is 'entirely possible' to approach the 'formality' of
Shakespeare: "In a way which is about personal expression and about experimentation
and about communication in a much wider way." (Interview 1, 22/07/2013) In subsequent
interviews, she develops this perspective, and speaks less of her aim to introduce the
students to 'standard English'. Rather, she states the SSF project is Shakespeare "as it's
supposed to be', a 'shared exploration" (Interview 2, 04/10/2013); and when reflecting
back on the finish project, says of her students: "they love workshops, they love doing
things on their feet, they love, the kind of ownership that you get from that, I think? I that
it's a project that you can really *own*." (Interview 3, 15/11/2013) Through these comments
it is possible to see a narrative forming in regards to Rachel's appreciation of the value of
active, playful approaches she utilises in rehearsals; charting a link between 'shared
exploration' and 'ownership' for her students. 'Ownership' can be seen as a more
equitable concept than the 'attainment' of standard English which she emphasises in her
opening interview.

In a similar way that Lisa at Brookline was enabled by her schools' institutional context to
diverge from the curriculum- and exam-led demands of mainstream default pedagogies,
she likewise spoke of how the needs of her students necessitated a more flexible

approach to the Shakespeare play text. As cited in section 6.4.3, Lisa's technique of creating a short, selective edit based on the students' capacity and 'favourite bites' allowed her students, in her words, to "own their own part, in a different way, and it makes them confident and relaxed about it. (Interview 1, 24/09/2013)

Again, Lisa links this readiness to explore, even deconstruct and repurpose the text with imbuing a sense of student ownership. It was possible to see this approach in action during observation sessions, where Lisa encourages students to find opportunities to play with language, both from the text and more generally, as in her comment to student Jared on deciding: "which witch we'll have." Jared echoes this ambiguous repetition back to her with relish. In such exchanges there is the rich and open-ended 'playing the word' which Berry, and other Shakespeare advocates have argued for. (Berry, 2008; Cheng and Winston, 2011; Gibson, 1998; Winston, 2013) Similarly, Lisa gently prompts both students and staff back into this readiness for editing and adaption when they begin to treat the current script as a finite object, as when reassuring one student "Let's see, and if it gets too difficult we can just change it." And reminding a teaching assistant who is closely following the current script edit during rehearsal: "It depends on the actors you have and what they'll do."

Lana at St. Mary's also opens up opportunities for her students to take explorative and critical perspectives on the play text, for example when addressing the problematic *Much Ado About Nothing* line in which Claudio vows to take back his spurned bride Hero*:* "I'll hold my mind were she an Ethiope." Lana doesn't cut the line, but rather invites the largely African and Caribbean heritage cast to engage in debate on its meaning and appropriateness. Together, they decide to mark the line with an exaggerated disapproving reaction from the other characters on stage during the scene. This willingness to open up the meanings and intentions of the play text for debate appears to support the students' critical engagement with the text, with one commenting, part shocked and part delighted, to Lana at the end of a rehearsal: "This one, if you actually take away all the language, it's about alcohol, abuse, sex and marriage!" This can be read as Neelands' 'playing the world' in which students contextualise and actively explore the values of the text via their own perspectives and experiences.

In Clemente and Higgins (2008) research they found English language teachers used a variety of language play practices to satirize and 'de-throne' issues of English cultural

capital. This notion of 'de-throning' chimes strongly with the ensemble pedagogy concept us 'uncrowning' and demonstrates, as in the examples from the cases above, how teaching practices which explicitly encourage playing with and through Shakespeare can help navigate some of the problematic 'civilizing' quality of positioning the texts as 'high culture'. Less of this playful 'de-throning' is seen at Grafton High however, where Travis often emphasises a need to 'take it seriously' during rehearsals; reminding Craig and Gary "you have to take this seriously" when the pair drop cues and collapse into laughter while exploring different ways to speak in unison as the *Macbeth* witches. Similarly, Travis comments to me during the cast workshop session that the second attending school are more 'professional' and are clearly 'taking it seriously' compared to his students. As Pigkou-Repousi observes in her study of ensemble pedagogy, when students are positioned so as to see an education goal as "unachievable – owing to its distance from an individual's or a group's culture – both students and their general social environment 'tend to discourage ambitions seen as excessive'" (Pigkou-Repousi 2012:258)

 As charted in this section and in section 6.4.4 above on the collapse of third spaces, the goals Travis establishes for his students within the SSF project *are* unobtainable, in that he creates a discourse of unpassable binaries between: Shakespeare as cultural heritage and the students lack of culture; the need to 'take it seriously' and his students perceived 'unprofessional' silliness; and the academic complexity of Shakespeare and his students' low ability. This leaves no space to play between these binaries. Gallagher and Wessels speak of 'unruly' pedagogic theatre spaces which can both retain and question traditional theatre and cultural conventions. (Gallagher and Wessels, 2013) I would argue within the framework of the SSF project, there exists the potential for the creation of a liminal space which can encompass both the kudos of Shakespeare as high culture in such a way that empowers the participants, whilst also retaining the sense of Shakespeare as accessible and engaging. What I suggest through this analysis is that it is the willingness and ability to play with and between these perspectives which contributes to the success of the SSF project, from an ensemble pedagogy perspective.

6.6   Conclusion: Teacher uncrowning at the axis of third space creation

 The core takeaway of this pilot analysis is that it is possible to see how playfulness in the theatre education classroom can offer a flexibility of interaction which allows for the creation of ensemble pedagogy third spaces in normative school contexts. In the case

studies analysed this was characterised by a willingness on the part of participants to play both through the performance text and their own identities.

 Through the sensitising concepts of playful identity work, theories of third space and the notion of Shakespeare as a cultural and textual object to be 'played' I have argued that playfulness, realised through drama games and exercises, joking and even dark social discourse can be understood as a key factor facilitating the flexibility and risk-taking needed to realise the equitable, collaborative practices of ensemble pedagogy.

 Within this, I have identified the positionality of the classroom teacher as axial in this process. This chimes with the central tenant of ensemble pedagogy in which the teacher is required to uncrown and distribute their power as teacher. Yet, within these case studies, it is demonstrated this is not a finite or passive process, but rather represents a challenging and ongoing positionality for teachers in balancing the default pedagogy demands of their professional teaching 'role' with their own understandings of their 'self' and teaching 'character'. As Wales argues, this begs for further education practice research which places teachers, and their autonomous praxis as translated through their identity or 'subjectivities' at its centre. (Wales, 2009)

 Thus, while these pilot cases are undeniably 'messy' in terms of the varying richness and continuity of data, the organisation of the analysis around these sensitising concepts offers several useful questions and focuses going forward into the analysis of the main research cycle case study: how is the axial role of teacher identity realised in this case? Does it afford the students' the flexibility and empowerment noted in the most successful case studies here? How is a sense of play, in particular dark play, made use of within the case study? Do these factors facilitate the creation of a third space, and in what ways does this resist and navigate the school's institutional norms? Is the cultural and textual object of Shakespeare itself understood through a playful attitude? Can this be said to afford students an empowered ownership of the text? In the following analysis chapter, I will demonstrate how these more focused questions, arising from the pilot analysis, guided my reading of the single, more substantive 2014 Grafton High case study.

The final question begged by these sensitising concepts, with only hints of an answer arising from the pilot data, is whether this reading of ensemble pedagogy practices as essentially playful can demonstrate the realisation of the approaches' core social justice aim: "Can an ensemble ... act in some sense as a ... better version of the real world on an

achievable scale which celebrates the virtues of collaboration?" (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain 2004), i.e. can it empower students as 'active citizens' in their worlds beyond the classroom pedagogy. Through the framework of the *Signature Pedagogy* concept of default pedagogies it has been possible to see how third ensemble spaces represent a resistance to these defaults within the pilot cases, but the data lacks the detail to offer an answer as to whether and how this empowers individual participants to resist these default discourses, and other institutional and societal discourses, where they are overtly oppressive to themselves or others. The following analysis will therefore operationalise the sensitising concepts detailed here in an attempt to respond to this and other related questions.

7   Grafton High 2014

In the following chapter, I present my analysis of the critical ethnography carried out at Grafton High in 2014. The sensitising concepts of playful identity work, ensemble pedagogy as the creation of third space, and the playing of Shakespeare in third space developed in the pilot studies informed this analysis. I develop them here to argue the notion of the creation of third spaces via ensemble pedagogy highlights the opening up of chaos, complexity and contestation in such spaces. This contestation can be understood as the beating heart of participatory democracy, in that the conventions of social relations are made visible and open to active re-negotiation. (Massey, 2005) Such chaotic power geometries of ensemble third spaces, I conclude, are both opened up and fruitfully navigated via mobilising practices of both care and play in the enactment of social hope as a grounded and generative practice of social justice. (Gallagher, 2015; Green, 2008)

Following section 7.1, which offers a contextual introduction to the 2014 Grafton High SSF ensemble, in section 7.2 I respond to questions posed by the conclusions of the pilot study around the axial role of teacher identity and the emancipation and flexibility this affords students by: exploring the relationality between playful identity work and the construction of ensemble as a third space in this ethnographic case. Initially via an analysis of participants' use and structure of identity-informed playful discourse; then by exploring the participants' framing of ensemble as 'family' (Gallagher, 2016a) as an organising metaphor to explore the mutually playful and care-ful processes within this; and finally by more deeply exploring the particular 'family values' of the Grafton High ensemble, and how the enactment of these can be read as immediate and contextualised acts of active citizenship. Via this analysis, I argue 'family' can be read as the central 'we story' of the group; defined as "long-lived stands of cultural experience symbolically coded in language that carry information and aspiration" (Green 2008:94) we-stories can be understood in this context as powerful elements of discourse, capable of inviting shared social hope and the enactment of participatory democracy. Through this I speak to the pilot study's conclusion question on how third space can be created and if it can be said to resist and navigate institutional norms.

Within section 7.3 I consider the positionality of Shakespeare within this playful and care-ful production of socially hopeful third space, responding to the pilot study concluding question of if and how the texts are understood through a playful attitude. Building on key

themes of the juxtaposition of Shakespeare as 'high status' and 'universally accessible' noted in the pilot studies, I firstly explore a range of ways the participants 'played' the text, (Mackey, 2004) particularly in the early stages of rehearsal. Through this I conclude this active playing of the text can indeed, as the pilot study conclusion asks, be said to afford students a sense of ownership of the text. Focusing on the ability of these experiences to disrupt students' expectations of the text, I argue they demonstrate the central role of the Shakespeare as a literary and cultural object in mutually constituting discourses of identity and space. (Charlton et al., 2011; Massey, 2005) However, I then go on to focus on two key ways this playful approach to the text became limited: the teacher's hierarchical and striated (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) positioning of the role of director; and the attempts to circumnavigate direct engagement with Shakespeare's language, highlighting how this served to reproduce essentialising discourses of Shakespeare as 'civilising' particularly in this inner-city, multicultural classroom. (Blackledge, 2009; Dyches, 2017; Norton and Toohey, 2011) I close this section by arguing Shakespeare can be considered as another rich and ambiguous 'we story', which when actively played with and through can shape and facilitate our deployment of playful and care-ful discourse for the enactment of social hope in the ensemble pedagogy classroom.

In 7.4 therefore, I draw these disparate strands together to argue conceiving of ensemble pedagogy as a third space allows us to conceptualise the rich social opportunities and social risks the approach offers. I draw on Green's call for 'public philosophers' to lead the collaborative telling and re-telling of 'we-stories' as an act of social hope, (Green, 2008) to frame the axial role of teachers in facilitating the creation of ensemble third spaces. I argue conceiving of Shakespeare as one such 'we-story' highlights the need to facilitate active playing with, rather than passive reproduction of all aspects of his works within this framework. Through the metaphor of family as the caring enactment of ensemble active citizenship, I respond to the final question of the pilot study conclusion, of whether this playfully constructed third space can facilitate students' enactment of active citizenship by arguing for a re-centring of the social justice value of ensemble pedagogy as located in the work itself, rather than being understood as the rehearsal of active citizenship beyond the classroom. This addresses the central problem of 'domestication' (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004) of ensemble pedagogy, as it reframes the approach as experiential and generative. Finally I argue that conceiving of this work via the mutually constructive notions of space and identity, and by foregrounding the central role of play within this, I

offer a new understanding of the core ensemble pedagogy practice of teacher uncrowning not as seeking a partial or ongoing transfer of power from teacher to students, but in the reflexive creation of 'smooth' identity spaces which free up new opportunities for all participants in navigating the complex power geometries of their lives.

7.1   Grafton High Case Overview

Grafton High, as discussed in the previous chapter, is an inclusive secondary school, located in an inner London Borough. 2014 was the sixth year the GCSE drama class had taken part in the SSF festival, and the second year of undertaking this within the intensive one-year GCSE course. During interviews the drama department teachers speak of a time when they had two GCSE cohorts each year, and twinned SSF with other external performance projects. This year there are only 9 students in the class, a reduction of around a third from the previous year. The majority of the students are in year 10, aged 14-15, though one student Tabitha is a year 9 student and they are later joined by two sixth form students to supplement the casting. Five of the students; Amar, Tapani, Nami, Saguna and Shalini, are of West Asian origin and are practicing Muslims. Alfie and Eleanor are white British, while Tabitha is of Eastern European descent and Jocelyn is mixed race white British and Afro-Caribbean.

The teacher Grace is head of the school's drama department and returning from a year's maternity leave. She is mixed race, of white and Afro-Caribbean extraction. Arriving at drama teaching via a background in psycho-social studies and a love of literature, Grace is by turns effusive and no-nonsense with her students. Having been at the school since her training placement a decade ago, she is a well-known figure; former students seek her out, and even her childminder is a Grafton High alumnus. She speaks of the project as a 'mini goal'; building confidence in the GCSE exam, whilst also reflecting: "but actually this is bigger than their exam." (Grace, Interview 1, 09/09/14) This sense of the weight of the project partly stems from an expectation from senior school leadership of a successful performance, after the previous years' Grafton High entry pulling out of the festival with just days to go. The play they are producing is *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare's early piece of Roman violence and revenge.

The observation sessions took place during timetabled drama lessons, in after school rehearsals and at SSF-hosted events several times a week over a total of 19 weeks: 7

weeks June-July 2014 and 12 weeks September-November 2014. This amounted to a total of 48 contact sessions from the first teacher training day to final performance. As I reflect in chapter 5, ethnography cannot and should not be easily divorced from its holistic and contextualised lived experience for both researchers and participants, though the requirements of analysis may isolate and recontextualise these events in new sequences to gain new insight. Considering this, a brief summary of the events of the project is offered as useful signposting to the reader, with no assurances of its neutrality.

The group began work on the project in the summer term by producing a short 'trailer' of the play which served as an internal advertisement of the SSF performance in the school and as vehicle for workshopping the play. Alongside this, the group attended a performance of *Titus Andronicus* at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, and in class watched Julie Taymor's 1999 film version, (Taymor, 1999) and are impressed and inspired by both. Amar, a student with a variety of educational and behavioural challenges, is cast as the lead. The rehearsals get underway with energy and gusto, and the cast seem to gel well, even when two sixth form students are recruited to fill gaps in the casting, attending rehearsals on an ad-hoc basis as their timetables allow. However, problems arrive in rehearsals when the students, and Amar particularly, increasingly struggle to remember lines and blocking; and for the group's social dynamics when Amar begins a romantic relationship with another cast member, Tabitha. The pair experience racially-motivated bullying from elsewhere in the school and subsequently break up, again rocking the group dynamics close to the final performance. The group rally through these challenges to bring a performance both they and Grace are proud of to the festival, though all would admit it was far from perfect from a theatrical perspective.

7.2   Playful discourse and the creation of an ensemble third space

In this section I explore the relationality between playful identity work and the construction of ensemble as a third space. I do this by first charting the ways identity-informed playful discourse was a key factor of participants' interaction in 7.2.1. Within this I highlight the ways in which rehearsal 'brackets' of this playful discourse acted as a liminal ritual, allowing participants to position themselves in relation to each other, and also to navigate regulatory institutional discourses of the school. From there I move on to describe how a playful development of a shared language, grounded in the embodied collaborative processes of theatrical work, characterised the body of the sessions, and

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finally draw on references to family in the data to mobilise this as a metaphor of ensemble third space building.

Section 7.2.2 therefore more deeply explores how the 'family values' of the 2014 Grafton High ensemble were enacted in practice. Via the primacy of reflexive and relational 'family' identities, I argue the resultant sense of familial respect and caring can be considered a democratic act of active citizenship. I problematise this by highlighting the stark gender lines in which this caring was carried out within the ethnography, before concluding with an extended analysis of a key event at the close of rehearsals which demonstrates the complex ways play and care were mobilised by participants in the creation of an ensemble third space.

7.2.1 Identity work as playful dialogic empathy: a space to be

Within the focus group sessions, students often referred to the opportunity to 'be yourself' they experienced in the drama classroom. (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/14) As the pilot cases demonstrated, this opportunity to 'be yourself' within the SSF rehearsals can be enhanced through teacher/directors undertaking a playfully reflexive approach to identity within the class/rehearsal rooms. (Boylan and Woolsey, 2015; Davies and Harré, 1990; Norton and Toohey, 2011) Within the 2014 Grafton High ethnography it became clear Grace's pedagogy involved a robust and jocular embodiment of this reflexive identity work. A key example of this can be seen in the extract below, via the ways Grace both validates and complexifies students' identities as practicing Muslims, through a mix of teasing, solidarity and scaffolding discussion; prompting an exchange of dialogic empathy. (Sennett, 2012)

The five West Asian students were observing the fast of Ramadan during the summer term, at the beginning of the rehearsal process. This was often a topic of conversation during the beginning and end of sessions amongst the fasting students, and Grace often referred to this; validating and recognising this aspect of their identity. One exchange in particular demonstrates how Grace scaffolds these interactions in order to create space for empathetic discourse; i.e. interactions which explore and value difference. (Sennett, 2012) Packing up after one session, the Muslim students are commiserating with each other on the hardship of fasting. Amar joins in provocatively by asking Grace if there is anything to eat in the drama department office. She responds with shock and Amar comments "I ain't fasting, I ain't religious", which prompts the following exchange:

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Shalini: Being religious isn't fasting, it's…

Amar: Shut up Shalini!

Grace: Don't say shut up!

Amar: She acts like a proper *Muslim.*

Shalini: What's a proper Muslim?

Amar: It ain't you.

*Grace: (gasping in mock shock, causing other students to turn and focus on interaction)
You know Shalini, it's a good debate, and it's a good question to ask him.*

Nami: What?

Grace: What's a proper Muslim?

(the group now stop packing up and stand around Grace, offering overlapping responses)

Arthur: There's no such thing as a proper Muslim really.

Nami: There ain't no proper Muslims…

….

Shalini: But then there's some things you have to do…

(Transcription of video extract 03/07/2014)

From there other students, both practicing Muslims and otherwise, continue the discussion, moving on from Grace's first provocation, to Amar reasserting his religious credentials by sharing where he prays, other students responding in recognition "My uncle goes there"; and from there back to the challenges of fasting. Elinor, of white British origin, asks the West Asian girls "Is it hard?" They respond readily, continuing the discussion as they leave the classroom.

When asked about the exchange after the session, Grace reflected she felt this was a common result of engaging in drama, the students felt they could share and 'be' more of

themselves within the lessons, echoing the students' focus group comments. This certainly seems reflected in the exchange above, with both the Muslim students comfortable debating issues of practicing their faith, and non-Muslim students similarly engaging in debate and inquiring into religious practices. However, it is also significant in this instance Grace extends and legitimises the discussion by repeating the key provocation of what constitutes a 'proper' Muslim to the group at large. In this way, she empowers the students to embody and explore their own broader identities in the classroom space.

Though in this key example Grace explicitly facilitates the framing and extension of the interaction between Amar and Shalini into a wider class debate, there were innumerable more fleeting instances of playful discourse centred around identity, ranging from teasing discussions of students' romantic lives to Grace's mock despair over childcare arrangements. (the students are fascinated by her baby son and offer to babysit) These short instances of off-task talk may seem inconsequential, but within them a variety of non-hierarchical and shared identities are expressed: Grace as a busy working mother; the students as helpful and enterprising potential carers; and students as burgeoning adults with complex personal relationships. Rajendran describes this playful dialogic empathy in youth work as opening up the 'creative mix' of identities. (Rajendran, 2016) Whether through more explicitly scaffolded interactions of dialogic empathy, as described above, or more tacit and fleeting conversations, it is through a jocular robustness within their discourse the participants discover ways to enact for themselves and recognise in others multiple, reflexive identities.

It has been argued that the creation of such 'smooth' identity spaces can facilitate the empowerment of students to new and extended identity positionalities. (Boylan and Woolsey, 2015) A final strand of data around identity appears to bear this out. At the opening of one session, just over half way through the rehearsal period, Grace spoke to the group in an open confessional tone, stating: "Over the weekend I've been thinking about you as a group… I come to this space as a director, but never check if you come in as actors or students" (Field Note extract 22/09/2014) When she asked how the students felt they entered, Saguna responded candidly "I'm going to be honest with you, students". Grace's discursive construction of the distinction between 'actor' and 'student'' and 'teacher' and 'director' can be read as an example of collegial pedagogy (Thomson et al., 2012) inviting the students to align themselves with the professional identity of 'actor'. While this became a shared point of reference for the remainder of the rehearsals: "Have

you arrived as actors today?" It is significant that Grace, while highlighting this distinction, does not define it. Though, as I discuss in section 7.3.2.1, there are elements of Grace's positionality as director which, in their more formal and 'striated' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) enactment limit the opportunities for students' autonomy in the mirrored identity of actors. Nevertheless, the realisation of these co-dependent professional identities occurs progressively, discursively, over the lifetime of the project.

As I will further explore in the three subsections below, this identity work, playful in its reflexivity and multiplicity, was key to the formation of the class/rehearsal room as an ensemble third space. These interactions, often 'bracketed' in the opening and closing of sessions, gradually contributed to the development of a shared language for participants and ultimately, I suggest, to a shared sense of 'family'.

7.2.1.1   'Brackets' as a site of playful identity work: defining the third space

This notion of 'brackets' came to be a central concept during analysis. Noticing that instances of playful discourse overwhelmingly occurred in the opening and closing moments of rehearsals, I began to note this phenomenon as 'bracketing' within the field notes. These playful brackets, informal and tacit, contained a multitude of separate interactions; ranging from relatively structured impromptu games to unstructured jokes and teasing banter. This phenomenon can be understood as social ritual, analogous to Turner's notion of liminality (Turner, 1982) functioning to open up possibilities of 'plural reflexivity', (Turner, 1987) particularly, as I discuss below, with relation to the institutional demands of the school space. In this way, the participants playful discourse can be seen as a 'boundary phenomenon', (Babington, 2013) establishing an alternative third space.

The extended extract below is offered as one of the clearest examples of a playful opening bracket of a session via an impromptu game. As the students enter the space Grace, without preamble, introduces the game. Apparently invented by Grace, it is refined in action by the students. As youth theatre leader Etheridge Woodson observes, this playing together helps "scaffold opportunities for group flow – peak experience." (Etheridge Woodson 2015:119) The students' active participation in not only playing, but *shaping* the game establishes a working pattern of active and egalitarian participation.

Grace: It's to make you all feel part of a wonderful, wonderful ensemble, remember that word, ensemble. (She gestures to Amar) Can you be very still centre stage.

(Amar begrudgingly moves into position, grinning uneasily)

Grace: And it's basically called 'checking Amar'. So all you do is you just run in, and you check Amar. (She runs into the space and 'tags' Amar on the shoulder, laughing uproariously at his response)

Amar: (Laughing) Ah, what?

Grace: And then you can run and, and you can try to get a tickle spot. (She pokes him in the back as she runs past)

Amar: Miss! (The students laugh)

Grace: So you can come in from any angle, and the person who gets the most checks, yeah, is the winner.

Grace then goes on to establish how far Amar is allowed to move from his position, Jocelyn offers the metaphor of a spotlight; building on Grace's theatrical language of 'centre stage' and referencing the lighting of their current trailer performance:

Jocelyn: (Striding into the space, speaking to Amar) You know your spotlight, yeah, you know your spotlight?

Grace: Yes!... So here (she indicates space on the floor, approximately 6 foot square), here, to here

(The first round begins, the students all run, giggling, into the space, and Amar ducks and dives to avoid them, moving far wide of his 'spotlight')

Grace: Amar, you're out! You moved out of the spot!

Amar: Miss!

Grace: Right, so start again!

Amar: (Breathless, laughing) There's a whole lot of people, there's so many people! One more chance?

Grace: Ok, Ok.

Amar: One at a time, one at a time at least.

Grace: Ah, ok! I'll clap and that number of people can go at a time, so it's a listening exercise as well, so you need to listen. Are you ready?

Amar: (Instructing group) So if one of you come, yeah…

(Grace claps twice)

Jocelyn: Two

Saguna: Two people

(Arthur and Eleanor run into the space, swerving to reach Amar as he avoids them)

Amar: Nah, you can't do that, you have to go straight!

Grace: Yes, you have to go straight… I'm making the rules up as I go along, I love this game already.

(Transcribed from video extract, 24/06/14)

She then extends the format of the game, so students are positioned on opposing sides of the room and need to make eye contact with a student opposite in order to establish who will move into the space and potentially decide how they will close in on Amar. This is a rich example of the equitable discourse which can be established through playful group flow. The game is developed and extended in several ways by the students, and Grace readily accepts and builds upon these offers, for example taking on Jocelyn's concept of the 'spotlight'; and accepting Amar's modifications of reducing the number of students in the space. The students also negotiate readily with each other, without requiring every change be pre-approved by Grace, as with Amar's order to 'go straight'. Grace accepts this, and her following statement of the rules being made up as she went along is an example of her discursive strategy of making decisions making processes visible and open. 'Check Amar' became a regular fixture in session openings from this point in.

The use of jokes and teasing banter was another key element of these playful brackets. Again, there was an equitable element to this teasing; the students and Grace all gave as good as they got, as in one instance during the close of a rehearsal in which Eleanor

prompts Grace to look up a children's TV show on the class computer, as one of the characters looks like Grace. Shalini, arriving at the computer in response to Grace's shriek of recognition, comments "You don't look like that *now.*" Referencing that the actor is younger and slimmer than Grace. Grace rebukes this with an indignant but laughing "Oi!" Etheridge Woodson refers to this as 'flipping' of hierarchical structures, noting that self-directed humour can be read as demonstrating accessibility in leaders. (Etheridge Woodson 2015:121) Likewise, this exchange bears out the suggestion from the pilot studies that 'dark' play, when sanctioned and utilised by the teacher, can have a role in ensemble building.

A final key characteristic of these playful brackets, is that they coincided with normative school auditing activities and conventions carried out in the opening and closing of lessons. These were often centralised and digital, for example teachers were required to complete the online register within the first 15 minutes of the lesson, and the need for the class to remain in classroom until the end of lesson bell was sounded, lest they be picked up on the school's CCTV positioned throughout the corridors. Other examples included the completion of report cards for students on report, and the requirement for a homework task to be entered in the students' learning journals each lesson. Thus, the playfulness of these periods created an ensemble space actively and explicitly located within the broader power discourses of the school, echoing the permeable and flexible quality of third space. (Thomson et al., 2012) In particular, the playfulness with and through identity meant the very notion of identity took on a performative element, thus these session brackets can be understood as 'smooth' identity spaces (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) where institutional roles of teacher and student could be navigated alongside more holistic identity work. (Schonmann, 2006) Through this, Grace and the students could meet the normative school requirements without being subjugated or 'essentialised' (Blackledge, 2009; Norton and Toohey, 2011) by them. At times Grace explicitly facilitated more 'uncrowned' and egalitarian approaches to these requirements, as when opening out the decisions on Amar's report to be decided by the group at large. Democratising the process, Grace invited students to vote on each element of the report as she filled in the card. This chimes with Neelands' description of the social imaginary as an element of ensemble, where theatre spaces are "as an essential institution of democratic civic life; providing a public forum for the consideration and debate of laws, rules and conventions" (Neelands 2009a:185) Though, notably this uncrowning does not

remove broader institutional discourses of power, but allows Grace and her students to more equitably navigate them.

7.2.1.2   The role of play in establishing a shared language

Grace and the students discursively navigated the construction of the ensemble across the rehearsal process. Developing a shared set of meanings was a key part of this process and was often accomplished through playfulness. Grace introduced and modelled the playful use of language in ways specific to the group from early sessions, from the heightened use and repetition of key words – 'action' 'continue' – to the use of a variety of exaggerated 'voices' and tones as a framework for practical work. The repeated use of warm up games became part of shared lexicon, which eventually could be invoked non-verbally. For example, at the close of a one session in the third week of rehearsals, Grace announces they need to "shake off the stresses of the lesson." Without further instruction, she gestures for the students to create a circle, and begins the actions for the 'hokey-cokey'. Several students give a laugh of recognition: "No Miss! She's making us do the hokey-cokey!" Before continuing in silence. At the close of the first round they draw to the centre of the circle, and the silence is broken in an impromptu and simultaneous call of "Oh, the hokey-cokey!" (Field Notes extract 23/06/14) In these examples, the playfully shared language establishes an increasingly tacit framework for creative collaboration. Yet, in another key example, elements of shared language functioned less operationally, and more as a sheer expression of community, though one open to problematisation and subversion.

The participants developed a catch-phrase: a sung refrain from *The Lego Movie* (Lord and Miller, 2014): 'Everything is awesome, everything is cool when you're part of a team'. First sung by Grace during feedback early in the autumn term, the students quickly pick it up, with Eleanor using it the following week to signal a lighting cue is ready. From then on it increasingly functioned either as positive feedback and or confirmation of readiness during rehearsals. In a call and response fashion one participant could sing 'everything is awesome' and a chorus of 'everything is cool when you're part of a team' would be immediately forthcoming. Like the codified rehearsal room language above, this shared piece of language has a community-building aspect, though in this case one which is explicitly discursive via its call and response co-construction. Furthermore, its sentiments were on occasion subverted. For example, after an unproductive rehearsal close to

performance Grace comments tersely 'Everything is *not* awesome' and the group stand quiet and shame-faced; as their catchphrase has essentialised their playful collaboration in all its joyous dynamism, this subversion holds for them nuances of the depth and specifics of Grace's disappointment.

In the above examples, Grace's teaching practice is clearly infused with playful elements, through her use of heightened language for key instructions, games, and the incubation of on-going catchphrases. However, these are given meaning and pedagogic significance in their acceptance and active engagement from the students; as in the 'everything is awesome' example, playful incidences take on further significance when the students independently use them for their own discursive ends. Even where individual instances of this language use seek to express not unity, but lack of engagement and disappointment, as in 'Everything is *not* awesome'; it is precisely the reflexive nature of this language play which allows the group to navigate the challenges of working together as an ensemble. Thus, playful discourse did not only facilitate establishing a relational boundary between the ensemble space and the wider school institution, but it was key in the continuing co-construction of that space.

 Another strand of the relation between play and the development of a shared language connects to the participants identity positioning as actors and director, as discussed above in section 7.2.1. In focus groups, students reflected on the experience of being actors via the notion of 'acting together', specifying it was the experience of creating a theatrical trailer for their final performance which brought them together:

> "Tapani: Yeah, I think it at the start like, obviously, no one knew each
> other that well, and like when it came to us performing on stage. Like it
> was kind of like weird, but gradually everyone got closer together,
> knowing each other and we was able to perform, I mean act together and
> then our trailer, and yeah, it got better now than it was at the start.
>
> Eleanor: Yeah….
>
> Tabitha: Because in drama you have to kind of like, act together. Like in
> other lessons… you don't really work with like, other people, but in drama
> you have to." (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/14)

As I will discuss in more detail in section 7.3, Grace encouraged the students to take a non-naturalistic, non-verbal approach to the trailer performance. It is therefore possible to read this physicalised 'acting together' as the embodiment of the reflexive, discursive identity work described in the verbal interactions above. Via the play of theatrical performance, as Tapani, and Tabitha discuss above, the students discover how to 'act together', both in the performative and collaborative sense; i.e. to become the active citizens of Neelands' ensemble model. This can be understood as a process of embodied cognition, in which meaning is co-constructed through active performance. (Irish, 2016; McConachie, 2015)

7.2.1.3   Ensemble third space as 'family'

In the final focus groups and interview, both students and teacher referenced the concept of family in reflecting on their experience of the project:

> "Like, we'd talk [in the class WhatsApp group] about Miss's performance, which is on the 4th. (Tapani: Yeah) And then we're doing things for two of the members of our, Arthur and Elinor, we're doing two things for their birthday, as well. It's like a family, (laughs) it really is." (Saguna, Focus Group 3.1 27/11/2014)

> "Jennifer: and do you think you work with Grace any differently now, after having done the rehearsal process together?
>
> Jocelyn: Yeah, I was thinking like, we're treated like family. (Jennifer: Ah.)" (Focus Group 3.2, 27/11/2014)

> "That's been a godsend really, I think the process of doing it as a mixed year group, um, group of young people has brought them together, they're a little community… they're a little family." (Grace, interview 3, 27/11/2014)

Family was also a sensitising concept within the pilot data, with Statten Park student Madhavi describing the characters of *Julius Caesar* as being 'like family'; Brookline teacher Lisa's narrative of her route into teaching defined by familial and community engagement; and the Brookline students enactment of care and induction of novice members in their focus group data. In the statements above, Saguna discusses 'family' in reference to

shared attendance at mutually important events beyond school: Grace's community theatre performance and birthday celebrations. Grace highlights the mix of student ages as allowing them to form a familial bond, contrasted with the usual year-group structures of institutional schooling. For Jocelyn though, a sense of family is primarily about how you are treated. Understandings of family are thus indicated in relationships to each other, and to the space; and to the wider institutional and local contexts. This notion of family is regularly referenced by actors and directors working in ensemble contexts, (Irish 2016:143-4) therefore drawing on Gallagher's work in this area (Gallagher, 2016a) it is possible to read the concept of 'family' as central to exploring how the playfully discursive identity work described above shapes the enactment of ensemble within the SSF project.

As part of the conversations during the session 'brackets', the students' and Grace's actual family members are referenced regularly. Grace shows an interest in her students' family lives, for example inquiring after Jocelyn's mother, who is expecting a baby, and offering to pass on baby clothes. Likewise Grace speaks of her restless nights with her infant son, and logistical challenges of childcare. The students half-jokingly offer to babysit, and Grace's childcare arrangements are part of the shared planning of trips to the local theatre for SSF training and performance days. Her mothering and caring are highly visible elements of the classroom: Grace blends her new personal identity as a mother with her positionality as an educator, like the teacher in Gallagher's case study she "uses the personal, biographical details of her life to understand herself as a teacher and her students, her 'family.'" (Gallagher 2016:6)

These notions of familial care and community appear embedded in Grace's positionality as a teacher in the wider school. Past students of Grace's drop by the school theatre space during after school rehearsals, where Grace asks about their lives, careers and families. Grace's son, I learn, is looked after by a past student of hers, who qualified as a childminder after herself becoming a mother as a teenager. In this way, Grace's role as a teacher is constructed with and through her mothering; and this enactment of teaching as domestic caring can be read as a feminist resistance to the institutional models of school care and control. (Gallagher, 2016a; Yosso, 2005) Thomson et al. describe how these personality-led approaches to pedagogy can be read as an 'indwelling', i.e. a tacit and lived expression of epistemological and ontological assumptions. (Thomson et al. 2012:9)

In this case, the notion of family cutting across classroom, home and community life is particularly powerful when considering discourses of care and power in this urban, multicultural classroom. Social and education research has pointed out urban student populations, and students of colour, frequently bring 'familial capital' – extended models of community, family and caring – to the classroom. (Nelson, 2011; Sennett, 2012; Yosso, 2005) While homogeneous or generalising readings of urban, racialised students should of course be avoided, the locale of Grafton High on the doorstep of its high-density housing catchment area, offers a geographic proximity which facilitates the blending of school institutional, public community and private family lives. Grace forefronts this blending via enquiring after students' family members and opening her classroom to past students.

This is in strong contrast, I would argue, to discourses noted in the Grafton High and Statten Park pilot studies of teachers positioning their largely West Asian, urban student populations as deficit in culture. In this case, the cultures of students' community and family lives are made relevant and valuable within the classroom. With the capital of this 'community cultural wealth' (Yosso, 2005) being sited within the community as a whole, rather than individuals, this has implications for the importance of valuing the community-based identities urban students of colour can in many cases bring to the classroom, not only from ethical principle, but because they may hold skills for collaborative active citizenship which standard western and school institution models of democracy do not.

As with the teacher in Gallagher's case study, who enacted her authority " through her call to family bonds, through her consistent rule-setting and governance, and through her sense of humour." (Gallagher 2016:24) Grace's mothering/teaching achieves both strength and ambiguity via playfulness. As she puts it, commenting to me after one early session: "I'm a bit of a joker, but you don't mess with me." In this emphatic statement is the sense of familial authority as holding an inherent, tacit logic. As Gallagher cautions, this may ultimately "have the effect of stifling challenge to authority, as the hierarchy of family is left unquestioned." (Gallagher 2016:18) Yet, statements from student focus groups suggest they feel they have an active stake in establishing the line between 'joking' and 'messing':[1]

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[1] Please note, the students do not refer to Grace by her christian name, but as Miss, or Miss. [surname]. To provide consistency for the reader I have used her pseudonym here and in all other relevant extracts.

"Saguna: Before I was like really unsure about Grace because like she's one of those people you don't know what to say, because she might either kill you or laugh. (all students laugh) Like, as well, I'm not going to say I know her so well, to know what I'm going to say, because I know she might kill me at one point. (laughs) But, like, like, we like, because she's not just a teacher, like, she's…

Arthur: A friend.

Saguna: Yeah/…

Tapani: Yeah, a good friend, yeah.

Saguna: She gets with, like, not in a bad way, like she would help with our personal things and, (Jennifer: Mm) she would obviously help us in drama as well, so I really like Grace as a teacher.

Tapani: She's like another one of us (Nami: Yeah) she's like young, she's not young but, if you know what I'm saying, but she's like, she acts like a person yeah." (Focus Group 3.1 27/11/2014)

In this extract, the use of the term 'friend' and statement that Grace is 'one of us' reflects this sense of equity. Yet Saguna's laughing "I know she might kill me at one point" demonstrates the power of humour in enacting this tacit, emotive, mothering authority. Sutton-Smith observes some of the earliest interactions of our family lives can be read both via the second paradigm play rhetorics of power and of identity. While stating "the social hierarchies of the sibling, peer, or family play group soon bring important hierarchical power considerations to the acts of power that are displayed." (Sutton-Smith 1997:78) he also highlights research on the processes of community membership via family play. In this way, it is possible to see the intimate, tacit and sometimes ambiguous play of the family as a model for playful discourse relations within ensemble pedagogy; as deeply connected to both community building and social hierarchy relations.

The metaphor of the ensemble as family is key therefore, as it offers a model for the idiosyncrasy and processionality of ensemble pedagogy relations; relations which are not necessarily non-hierarchical, but open to flux as members grow and the demands of the context change. Likewise, the resonances between the notion of teacher 'uncrowning' and

teaching as 'mothering' is compelling in the potential to re-route discourses of classroom power through intimate, emotive and tacit modes. Sennett provides a working concept for this in describing how the workshop has been constructed as a cite combining civic justice and co-operation with the enactment of family values via cross-generational skill sharing and ritual commitment of apprenticeship/loco parentis. (Sennett 2012:56-7)

7.2.2   Grafton High Family values

In the above section, I chart how playful and reflexive identity work functioned to bracket the SSF rehearsal space off from the normative school discourses. Within this liminal space, participants were able to develop a shared language based on that ongoing identity work and the embodied discourse of 'acting together' theatrically. I have surmised, via reoccurring themes in the data, how this can be read through the metaphor of 'family' and considered some of the implications of framing ensemble pedagogy within this metaphor. However the 'uncrowned' and informal power discourses of the family also holds compelling and tacit knowledges and power discourses of its own within the classroom. In this section therefore I take a deeper look at the 'family values' of the 2014 Grafton High ensemble; asking if the classroom as family can offer alternative value systems to that of the Western neo-liberal classroom, as Gallagher suggests (Gallagher, 2016a), what value system is being offered here? And do these family values in fact work to empower active citizenship for the student participants? With the aim that an exploration of the qualities specific to this ensemble can be extrapolated to broader understandings of the approach.

This exploration focuses around two key events within the ethnography. Firstly the inclusion of cast members outside the GCSE drama classroom. Grace took the decision early on to fulfil the casting requirements of the play by recruiting two A Level Drama students, Carli and Fred, from the school's sixth form. Despite logistical issues in terms of marrying key stage 4 and sixth form timetables, Carli and Fred attended rehearsals regularly in the final three weeks of rehearsals. In the sections below I explore how these two students were welcomed by the GCSE group, and how they in turn found their place within this ensemble family. Secondly the occurrence of a romantic relationship between Tabitha and Amar, which through its beginning, development of complications and eventual breakdown, provided a central marker for the ways the students navigated their broader identities and experiences within the ensemble space.

Cutting across these two central events, I explore the 'family values' of the Grafton High ensemble firstly by considering the relationality of the classroom interactions, i.e. the processes by which participants' identity work within the space shaped and reproduced the discourses of shared action and care facilitated by Grace's 'teaching as mothering' described above. I then identify how this relational caring can be read as embodiment of active citizenship and as a commitment to social justice. However, I go on to focus on the 'care' of one student: Amar, the low-achieving but personable clown of the group and consider the gendered and racialised aspects of this care and the implications this held, particularly for the experience of the female students.

Through this focus on the contextualised and lived expression of the Grafton High ensemble's 'family values', I argue these often emotive, personalised and tacit exchanges demonstrate how the discursive enactment of ensemble pedagogy as family can be seen as a 'we story'; a grounded and hopeful expression of our shared history, present and future necessary for the enactment of social justice and participatory democracy, (Green, 2008) a model which chimes with extant research into the use of storytelling in social and familial contexts as a mode to resist oppression and create space for aspiration in diverse student populations. (Yosso 2005:77)

7.2.2.1   *Positionality of relationships*

Within the notion of family as a metaphor of classroom community, is the implication of the positionality of individual members within these familial relationships. (Gallagher, 2016a) At the risk of reliance on stereotype: our families know us intimately; our particular strengths, weaknesses, histories and hopes. We have defined roles within our families; mother, brother, uncle; and more personalised roles such as problem-solver, joker, DIY expert and so on. These positionalities are embodied and experiential, they rely on who we are *to* each other and what we do *for* each other. Within the study, it was possible to see participants developing their co-constructed, reflexive identity work to fashion particular family or ensemble roles for themselves. This metaphor of familial relationships is a useful model for exploring the mutually constitutive nature of space and identity (Charlton et al., 2011; Lefebvre, 1991) within the context of ensemble pedagogy.

Eleanor, for example, consistently showed an interest in lighting and other technical elements of the performance, frequently being the first to suggest adding lighting or music elements to a scene, and in the sessions leading up to performance takes responsibility for

the timings of a percussive activity with chairs. The rest of the group in turn welcome this as a particular area of expertise from Eleanor, and even when, as on one occasion she became frustrated and snappy in her prompt to run and re-run the chair banging sequence until correct, they continued to do so readily, accepting her judgment of timings unquestioningly. In this way, there was an increasing mutual support and a sense of tacit understanding developed amongst the group, characterised by both a willingness to work together and, seemingly to value the variety of skills and interest amongst their members.

An arguably more complex ensemble role was Jocelyn's undertaking of leadership and caring responsibilities within the group. From early sessions it is Jocelyn who prompts the group to move from discussion to practical exploration, often drawing on the vocabulary Grace herself uses (Field Note extract 12/06/2014). Within this is a sense of care which again echoes Grace's teaching as mothering. For example when Eleanor is a late addition to the GCSE class, several weeks into the summer term and start of the project and is in her first lesson hot seated in role as Lavinia. Visibly nervous, with shaking hands, her answers signal her discomfort: "I don't really know the play." "Can I say that?" At the end of the exercise, Jocelyn calls Eleanor to sit next to her; and smiling, gives the whispered reassurance "It gets easier" (Field Note extract 18/06/2014) And when the sixth form students Fred and Carli join an after school rehearsal, Jocelyn's confident and jovial direction of the pair in a scene they share serves to demonstrate her growing confidence in this role, and is an opportunity to analyse the ensemble 'family values' she demonstratively performs as part of her induction.

In this extended extract, Grace has just left the room and Jocelyn continues to explore the scene alone with Carli and Fred: "Let's go through this." Jocelyn begins, striding across the centre of the rehearsal space. They run through the short scene three times. First pausing frequently; Fred and Carli clarify meanings with Jocelyn, she explains clearly and confidently, and also models suggestions for blocking. Hesitant, but jovial, they move quickly in and out of role in this first run through. The second run through shows an immediate development in tacit understandings, and the scene flows more smoothly, though giggles remain around Fred's line 'villain, I have done thy mother.'; the trio delighting together in such a seemingly modern insult in an otherwise dense historical text. At the end of this second run through, Jocelyn builds on her role as a leader, or gatekeeper, to both the performance and the ensemble space. Standing downstage centre, she speaks loudly to Carli and Fred:

Jocelyn: Right, you ready? Right, let's go. Do you want to do it, like, up the front, so you walk?... (gestures round downstage)

Fred; Well, we have so much space

Jocelyn: Well, I'm... see this is what I mean, it would be easier to do it in the studio, because that's where we are all the time.

Fred: Well, we can make this totally flexible....

Carli: Where's the front?

Jocelyn: Well, the front's about here (stands downstage, models following blocking) That's what I mean, so you can walk down the front, show the audience the child, and then go to Aaron.

Fred: Because we could drag this out for ages, if we actually think about it.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Fred: Because we could have some music here, like...

Jocelyn: Right, I'm just going to go for it. (reads from script) 'Why do the emperor's trumpets flourish thus?'

(Transcribed from video extract 15/10/14)

Fred, who has earlier spoken of lighting and sound ideas, is clearly keen to bring his own stamp to both the blocking and production design, but he easily acquiesces to Jocelyn's suggestion, accepting her knowledge of the cast's usual rehearsal space. His comment 'we could drag this out for ages' is an approving one, referencing making a 'moment' of Carli's entrance, he nods and smiles in response to Jocelyn. Jocelyn in turn responds positively to this, but rather than discuss Fred's suggestion further, instead moves forward into another run through of the scene. This can be read as a pedagogical act, rather than a rejection of Fred's suggestion. In the immediate move into the scene Jocelyn models the group's focus on running scenes in their entirety and seeking to resolve issues 'live' within scene runs, rather than in lengthy pre-discussion.

Reflecting on the process of the two sixth form students joining the cast, the GCSE students reflect in their final focus group:

> "Saguna: Yeah, at first we were like 'Oh, they're better than us.' But then we realised it's not that, you know, we're all together. But I think, like… we knew that they weren't in our group but were like… we allowed them, not allowed them, but we worked with them.
>
> Tapani: We managed with them.
>
> Saguna: But we know that we're still a group. (Tapani: Yeah) So it's us."
> (Focus Group 3.1 27/11/14)

Saguna and Tapani's comments echo the dynamic of the above exchange between Jocelyn, Fred and Carli, describing a situation whereby the sixth formers were initiated, but not assimilated into the group. In particular, Saguna's use of 'allowed', though she hesitates to use it, readily describes the warm but robust gatekeeping strategies employed by Jocelyn in that first rehearsal. It is significant that though at first intimidated by the sixth formers superiority, understood via the 'default' school discourse of student seniority, the autonomy and solidarity they experienced within the ensemble: "you know, we're all together" facilitated a more equitable interaction between the students. Massey highlights the pivotal role of such relational identity positionalities in the construction of space. "If entities/identities are relational then it is in the relations of their construction that the politics needs to be engaged." (Massey 2005:355) she states, emphasising this relational and processional being together can always be read in political/critical terms. It is the political, or rather democratic, implications of the Grafton High family values which I therefore turn to in the following section.

7.2.2.2   Care, belonging and democracy

The promise of ensemble spaces as spaces of equitable and active citizenship (Neelands, 2009a, 2009b) can be glimpsed in the induction of the incoming sixth form cast members, however there were other instances throughout the study where the sense of familial belonging could be seen as prompting a duty of civic care for its members; (Gallagher, 2016a) as the developing events of Tabitha and Amar's romantic relationship demonstrate.

Amar and Tabitha seek Grace out following an afterschool rehearsal to ask her advice on the issue of revealing the relationship to Amar's culturally conservative West Asian parents, she listens carefully and takes their concerns seriously without being heavy handed, and notably invites the insight of an ex-student of West Asian Muslim heritage who is also present, recognising the particular cultural context of Amar's concerns, and also situating the issue within the broader school and local community. Likewise, when it comes to light Tabitha is experiencing racially-motivated bullying due to the relationship, Grace flags this up with the other students during lesson time, explicitly requesting their support on Tabitha's behalf stating: "because of the way we're working together… [and because Tabitha is] the youngest member of our group, look after [her]".

Gallagher observes that a "plea to care for your siblings can also be read as a plea for democracy in the classroom and the fundamental understanding that we exist as a collective and must find a way to do so democratically." (Gallagher 2016:24) Thus, in Grace's emphatic call for the ensemble's care of Tabitha is an enactment of social justice; contextualised and personalised. Grace does not approach this issue of bullying from an institutional position of school policy, or from generalised narratives on racial equality and justice, but via an invocation of ensemble processes; "because of the way we're working together" and from a perspective of intimate and immediate care for a vulnerable member of their group. The students' responses are immediate and warm, with Saguna, Tapani and Jocelyn overlapping in their calls of: "We've got your back!" "Drama gang!" (Field Note extract 09/10/14)

It was perhaps because of this shared investment and support for the romance that the breakdown of the relationship, in the final weeks of rehearsal, seemed to affect not only the couple themselves, but the ensemble as a whole. Established patterns of interaction and care are broken, rehearsals become for a time tense and terse. Within this, Jocelyn positions herself as an intermediary between the couple. For example, following a successful dress rehearsal observed by the GCSE music class, Jocelyn intervenes in a spontaneous group hug, embracing first Tabitha, then Amar to avoid the pair experiencing that awkward contact. This continues on the performance day itself, in the dressing room Tabitha, Jocelyn and Amar sit together, easily sprawled across chairs and benches, taking selfies, joking and modelling karate moves on each other. This is a friendliness that would not have seemed possible in the tense atmosphere of the beginning of the week. Grace and I share a quick exchange, commenting on Jocelyn's seemingly conscious decision to

establish a friendly, joking atmosphere between the couple, ensuring they are able to maintain a friendship and work constructively together in the final rehearsal and performance process.

This relationship between care and contextualised democratic action can also be understood as an intertwining of care and social hope. (Gallagher, 2015) As Green, building on neo-pragmatist Rorty's notion of social hope argues; biological and emotional pulls to act in caring and communal ways draw us out to become "individuals within collaborative social processes that seek to enhance our... common safely, and our... mutual flourishing." (Green 2008:102) This offers a refocusing of ensemble pedagogy away from the potentially more structural civic models of the Athenian *polis,* (McGrath, 2001; Neelands, 2009a) which as Neelands has highlighted is an historical example highly patriarchal in its structure (Neelands 2009a:186) to more care-led models. As Feminist scholar Porter argues, the responsiveness and relationality of a 'care perspective' on civic imaginings holds opportunities unavailable in more formal, public and universalised 'justice perspectives'. (Porter, 1996) This framing of care via feminist theory is not to suggest care as 'women's work'; but to rather disrupt rational domestic/civic binaries of social justice with the hope of complexifying and humanising the quest for it in ensemble pedagogy. Thus, in the participants' care-led negotiation of the social dilemmas thrown up though the course of the project, the subtle possibilities of social hope are opened up through this reading of ensemble pedagogy.

7.2.2.3   The mothering of wayward boys: gendered division of care work

Within these positionings of democracy as care, and the familial, mothering quality of care, the work of caring became overtly settled along gender lines in the Grafton High ethnography. As Gallagher emphasises, within drama pedagogy are powerful opportunities for young women to challenge patriarchal systems of oppression. (Gallagher, 2017) Yet, as I highlight at the close of section 7.2.1.3, family as a model of pedagogy holds within itself the risk of uncritically reproducing compellingly tacit and emotive hierarchical discourses, recalling Foucault's power discourse model (Foucault, 1975) and recognising such discourses *cannot* be removed, only reconstructed. In this section therefore I unpick the implications of the ensemble's matriarchal caring - modelled and led by teacher Grace - as it centred on one, male student Amar.

As Grace described it, Amar faced a variety of behavioural and educational challenges. Due to his persistent behaviour issues he was regularly on report, meaning he must have his behaviour formally assessed by the teacher each lesson, and was at a real risk of being excluded from the school. He had also recently been assessed as having low reading comprehension, with the recommendation he have additional support in lessons in the form of a reader/scribe. Grace makes it clear to me she is keen to avoid this and sees the performance of *Titus* as a project which can engage Amar and encourage him to overcome his reading and writing issues. She reiterates in interview that she has seen him, and other students, engage during SSF sessions in a way they do not elsewhere in the school:

> "There's a number of students in my group that don't behave particularly well in other areas of the school. I know that in terms of Amar as well, one of his teachers said the way he held himself while he was playing Titus, we've never seen him hold himself like that before which such dignity. That was encouraging to hear, really encouraging." (Grace, Interview 2 15/10/14)

Though Grace's positioning of Amar through his educational and behavioural challenges could be read in line with Travis' understanding of his students as 'deficient' in the previous year's case study, with SSF positioned as a 'civilizing' factor; a key difference is Grace's understanding of the autonomy and choice she sees the project as offering students like Amar, as in her reference to 'dignity' above. Her choices in rehearsals emphasise this focus, as during one script-reading session when she comments "I'm letting Amar choose any part he likes as it shows he's listening". This culminated in casting Amar in the title role of *Titus*, cementing his central position within the ensemble.

If Grace drew on her identity positioning as a mother in this care and facilitation of Amar, she also mobilised the power of the strong maternal woman as a gender-based identity positionality for her female students, recruiting them in a mutual care and 'policing' of Amar in class. At times, this was a more implied positioning of the female students, as in the extract below, where Grace, slightly teasingly, is admonishing Amar for lack of engagement, refusing to accept the demands of Ramadan fasting as an excuse she reminds him his female counterparts will be coping with this alongside issues of menstrual cycles:

Grace: I'm just saying it how it is. So, if they can cope, you can cope doubly well. Because you're a man. But then you have man-flu.

Amar: Man what?

Jocelyn: Man flu!

Grace: Men don't deal with things the way women do, we're the stronger of the species…

(Transcription from video extract 25/06/2014)

While at other times this was more direct and active; for example Grace regularly asked the female students to watch if Amar used his phone during rehearsals. As the sessions continued, the female students would often continue this 'policing' role unprompted around school rules on use of mobile phones and wearing jackets indoors. This echoes observations that female students are often rewarded for demonstrativeness in their learning, while boys are rewarded for their passivity, (Gallagher and Rodricks, 2017) with the added aspect here that it is normative models of behavioural compliance that the girls are being required to demonstrate to Amar, arguably *in order to* pacify him. This highlights the need for an open-eyed critical perspective on the value of the ensemble as family, and of active citizenship as civic caring. As Wales observes, in the sense of missionary zeal common to drama teachers, there is a need to question what 'faiths' or 'word' we are preaching. (Wales, 2009) The use of family as a metaphor to explore the power geometries of this ensemble demonstrates both the potential of ensemble pedagogy to loosen institutional discourses of identity and space, but the tacit discourses which this invites inevitably carry their own 'disciplinary' (Foucault, 1975) aspect, as seen here in the gendered labour of caring.

And yet, within the focus groups is evidence of the students' critical sense-making of the positionality of Amar within their ensemble family. There are several different perspectives within this. Here Tapani and Eleanor reference the communal, open-ended nature of knowledge and achievement in drama:

> "Tapani: I think everyone feels the same, like, with other teachers they're
> all so focusing on some people that's doing so well and 'Oh look, you
> should be doing (Eleanor: Yeah) work towards that.' Whereas here, it's
> just, everyone's just the same.

Eleanor: And in drama if someone has like a really good suggestion, Grace will be like 'Oh, well done' but then, if there's someone who's not talking as much, she'll start questioning them so then they put their ideas across, so you end up equal.

Jennifer: Mm. And again, do you think that's just Grace as a teacher, do you think if she was teaching... maths she'd do it in the same way, or do you think there's something about the way you work in drama that makes that more?...

Eleanor: Yeah, I think it, it partly is drama, because if you was in maths and someone got the answer right, you'd teach someone else to get the answer right as well, but in drama it's like, in maths you can't be equal because there's always going to be someone who's better than you, but in drama you can, I don't know how to explain it, but you can be as good as someone else." (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/14)

Eleanor's last comment here is significant, as it hints that within the more hierarchical 'default pedagogy' discourses of other school subjects, Grace's singular focus on Amar may have been less well received. However within the drama classroom, the sense that "you can be as good as someone else" negates any issue of direct competition. While Saguna, in response to the same inquiry, emphasises the demands of the text in performance (and notably takes an opportunity to police Amar):

"Amar: Actually, actually, like I feel that I have more priority. [in rehearsals] Ha, no seriously, you've seen the lessons like, Grace always is nice to me, for some reason

Saguna: It's because she wants you to learn your goddamn lines!... I think we're all equal, but like the thing about Amar is because he's got the biggest role in the play, because it's named after him, Titus, so/ I...

Amar: Why am I the [unintelligible] one?

Saguna: So, he's quite struggling with the lines, so I think Grace is starting/... (Amar coughs) You are. Grace is starting to put a bit more focus on Amar to be really, like perfect.

> Amar: Plus, like, the teachers think that I can't get a C. So Grace is just like, overtaking that.
>
> Saguna: Yeah, I think she's trying to prove to them that he can get a C."
> (Focus Group 2.2 29/09/14)

Interestingly, Amar, while initially stating Grace is always 'nice' to him 'for some reason' he then reveals his understanding of this in light of Grace's mission for him to achieve a grade C in the GCSE exam. Both his and Saguna's subsequent comment reflect an understanding of the institutional value of that C, both for Amar and Grace. Here conflicting explanations of Amar's position within the ensemble are candidly debated within the focus group.

However, the initial issue Saguna highlights of Amar learning his lines became increasingly salient through the rehearsal process. In one of the third focus group sessions, again without Amar present, it became clear by the end of the project this experience left the students feeling increasingly more ambivalent and at times frustrated with Amar's central role in both the performance and ensemble, as his lack of line learning had a detrimental effect on the performance:

> "Arthur: Amar was annoying (students laugh)
>
> Jennifer: How so?
>
> Arthur: Nah, because everyone, we'd get all our lines done and he'd,
> when in the performance he kept repeating certain lines… It's just like…
> he, he didn't really take much time to learn his lines.
>
> Saguna: Yeah, he wasn't, he didn't put as much as effort as we did."
>
> Tapani: As we all did." (Focus Group 3.1 27/11/14)

Despite the increasing sense of frustration with regards to the public performance as a communal endeavour, which can be seen in Tapani's emphasis that Amar's effort was specifically less than theirs, the students' reading of Amar's positionality within the group, and achievement of bringing the role of Titus to the stage, albeit with a limited grasp of the lines is still led by a focus on care:

"Saguna: I think it's quite good for Amar. Because Amar got a really big role, and in, like, Amar in other lessons, he's always underestimated... (Tapani: Yeah, Yeah) And I think like this whole shows Amar... (Tapani: He can do stuff) so I feel like Amar's found something that he's actually (Tapani: good at) good at.

Tapani: He doesn't want to throw his life away." (Focus Group 3.1 27/11/14)

From problematising this aspect of the ensemble relationality, I emphasise there are no easy conclusions to draw in a narrative of the relationship between familial caring and active citizenship. While notions of civic caring may offer a powerful model for the active citizenship of ensemble pedagogy, the tacit power geometries invoked in its contextual enactment should always be open to reflexive analysis for, as this section of analysis demonstrates, there will inevitably be reproduction of certain existing, and potentially limiting, power discourses.

7.2.2.4 Amar goes too far

In this final section exploring the 'family values' of the 2014 Grafton High ensemble I offer an extended extract of an event in the penultimate week of rehearsal. This is significant firstly because Amar's continuing playful navigation and testing of boundaries is unanimously deemed to have gone too far – in Grace's terminology crossed the barrier from 'joking' to 'messing' – and secondly, while the students' behaviour following the exchange very much demonstrates the gendered caring/policing described above, it also highlights the central role of playful discursive strategies in their search to navigate and find resolution to Amar's transgression.

Two days before the final performance, the rehearsal has ended on a tense note when the students complain about Grace calling an early rehearsal before school the next day. Grace snaps in response:

Grace: Right I have a son, a one-year old baby, and I am up and out and in this building by 6:30am every day, so don't give me none of that rubbish!

(Amar has just mutters something unintelligible to camera, Grace freezes in front of him)

Grace: (Snapping) No, I need a class, that actually bothers to learn their lines, is what I need Amar. (He crosses his arms and firmly plants his legs astride, facing her) And that is the most disrespectful thing I have heard from your mouth. And it has made me not want to teach this class. Ever. Again. And has made me want to walk out that door. Because that was disgraceful.

Amar: I said it because you're stressed out.

Grace: Oh? I'm, why am I stressed out Amar? You know what, everyone, Amar has just told me I need a boyfriend ASAP.

(There is a gasp of shock from somewhere in the room)

Nami: Amar!

Amar: No, because/…

Grace: I need a boyfriend ASAP.

Eleanor: Amar, that's still rude, you shouldn't say that.

Tapani: You can't say that to people.

(Grace walks to her computer at the side of the room. Amar stands in the open stage space, with Tapani, Eleanor, Saguna and Nami sitting and standing in a rough semi-circle around him. He shuffles his feet and rubs his brow ruefully.)

Amar: Miss, I don't think…

He trails off, the girls begin to put the chairs away. He joins them, not helping but apparently attempting to justify his comment.

Eleanor: I'm not listening Amar, go and do something useful

(Transcribed from video extract 05/11/2014)

This exchange is highly charged, apart from the volume of Grace's initial reaction the participants speak in clipped, terse tones. While the girls put the chairs away, Amar remains near them. Out of reach of the cameras microphone, and my own ears observing from across the room, the four girls speak quietly but insistently to Amar, apparently

pushing him for an apology. I hear Eleanor muttering to him "You don't think before you speak." He peels away and quietly begins to speak to Grace, echoing Eleanor's phrase to her "I don't think before I speak." This apology is apparently accepted, though little further conversation passes between Grace and Amar. Meanwhile the four girls practice a scene, pinning down a complex entrance (the lesson is unusually extended due to mock exam period, thus the students are killing time). When they manage it correctly, they celebrate with a spontaneous chorus of the *High School Musical* (Ortega, 2006) song 'We're all in this together', with accompanying dance routine. This moves on to a general discussion of learning dances and the girls express a desire to learn the dance from *Dirty Dancing*, (Ardolino, 1987) singing snatches of the song '(I've had) the time of my life'*.* Amar exits, with permission from Grace, and she immediately begins humming the song along with the girls. Eleanor asked: "Oh Miss, can we learn the dance?" Grace obliges by playing a dance tutorial of the song onto the room's projector via YouTube, and both the girls and Grace dance and sing along, sharing discussions of their favourite films. (Field Notes 05/11/2014)

Grace's initial response, to echo Gallagher's analysis of the teacher as mother: "speaks most strongly to her sense of personal affront, an affront to the tacit bond of respect family members should have for one another." (Gallagher 2016:16) She does not speak directly to Amar, but to the group at large, and the shared sense of the affront to familial respect is echoed in the students shocked reaction. Tapani and particularly Eleanor then take the lead in their established gender-defined roles of policing Amar's behaviour. Yet, out of this tension comes an extended period of singing and dancing. What is significant about this, I would suggest is firstly that it comes spontaneously and jointly from the rehearsing girls, and secondly that they seek to build on this initial spontaneous episode and invite Grace's agreement and collaboration to do so. In this way Grace becomes included in their playfulness, an act which seeks to erase Amar's disrespectful words. Also of significance is the use of social media via YouTube to curate their space with the use of music and video. This playful and discursive exchange of online content – i.e. the playing of the *Lego Movie* (Lord and Miller, 2014) 'theme song' and google search for Grace's TV presenter doppelganger– is a common activity in the rehearsal 'brackets'. As the girls and Grace exchange views on their favourite films, they take turns to find and play songs from them on YouTube. In this way their play is communicative and seeks to develop shared

cultural references. It is a moment which echoes feminist scholar Segal's argument for the power of shared joy as the enactment of equitable and active citizenship. (Segal, 2017)

7.2.3 Conclusion: Play and care as mutually constituting ensemble third spaces

Within this section of the analysis, I have mobilised the sensitising concepts of playful identity work and third space models to describe how identity and space are mutually constituting (Charlton et al., 2011; Massey, 2005) within the processes of ensemble pedagogy. I utilise the notion of family as an organising metaphor for these processes which highlights both the power and ambiguity of care as an enactment of active citizenship and thus social hope; (Gallagher, 2015; Green, 2008) which indicates the complex and reflexive processes implicated in ensemble pedagogy teacher uncrowning. As Massey highlights, recognising the 'fullness of contingency' open in space-identity negotiations offers both massive opportunity and risk. (Massey 2005:300-1) An ensemble pedagogy which manages this via a balance of care and play can therefore be understood as a space to safely engage in this. Furthermore, as in the 'Amar goes too far' incident, play can function *as* care. The highly charged interactions of this event several days before the group's final performance, can be seen as the end of a journey which began with Grace's jocular facilitation of the student's debates on Muslim identity some months earlier. The capacity this ensemble has developed for dialogic empathy, even in emotive and highly charged exchanges, and use they make of play to navigate these points of difference and conflict can be seen in this final event.

7.3 Playing Shakespeare: Playing as reading the script

Within the pilot analysis I explored how participants exploited the 'playability' of Shakespeare to both accessibly engage with the texts and draw on the cache of Shakespeare as an aspirational object of high culture in ways that were essentialising rather than empowering. Likewise in this study I observed a number of ways a playful approach to the Shakespeare performance text facilitated the exploration of complexity and even paradox in the participants' relationship to Shakespeare. In many ways, as I describe in section 7.3.1, Grace took decisions in directing the exploration and rehearsal of the text which extended the reflexive and playful identity discourse which characterised her 'off-task' interactions with the students. Via the notion of 'playing the text' (Mackey, 2004) and treatment of the text as a 'made' object (Clapp et al., 2016) I map a variety of

text-playing approaches observed throughout the project; categorised by their ability to actively engage students in interpreting and performing the text, and by their ability to disrupt and diverge students' experiences of the text and of the rehearsal process. I argue these demonstrate the central role of the text in informing mutually constituting discourses of identity and space within ensemble pedagogy contexts. (Charlton et al., 2011; Massey, 2005)

However, alongside this, and increasingly as the participants moved towards the performance date, limitations to this playful text work became visible. In interview, Grace refers to this element of the rehearsals as "the bit where I'm playing with the clay that's already been warmed up and they've [the students] warmed it up themselves." (Interview 2 15/10/14) In section 7.3.2 therefore I explore the movement between the 'clay warming up' processes described in 7.3.1 and Grace's self-professed playing with that clay. In the pilot study I highlighted that an inflexibility in identity work, and in enactment of spatial discourses of the dual context of school as an institution and SSF as a project caused any burgeoning ensemble third space to collapse within the 2013 Grafton High case study. Yet in this study I conclude a sense of inflexibility was rather more narrowly focused on Grace's enactment of the role of *director*, and the understandings of a theatrical rehearsal process implicated therein.

Furthermore, her focus non-naturalist theatrical aesthetic, explicitly as a way to circumnavigate engagement in the complexities of Shakespearean language, appeared to stunt the rich text playing processes I describe in 7.3.1. I explore the implications this choice of distancing the students from engagement with the language holds in terms of the pro-social aims of ensemble pedagogy. As with several cases in the pilot study I highlight where this serves to reproduce essentialising discourses of Shakespeare as 'civilising', particularly for urban students and students of colour. (Blackledge, 2009; Dyches, 2017; Norton and Toohey, 2011) I conclude this section by considering how a deeper playing of Shakespeare's language may have influenced the group's guiding 'we story' as an expression of social hope. (Green, 2008)

7.3.1   Playing as reading the text

Mackey offers the term 'play' as an alternative verb to 'read' in educational contexts, suggesting it more accurately reflects the active, collaborative and intertextual decoding processes which are undertaken by young people engaging with texts. (Mackey, 2004)

Specifically, she highlights how the use of 'play' as a verb in this context highlights the ecological approach to the text. This echoes Charlton et al.'s thesis of classroom reading and writing processes as producing both identities and spaces. (Charlton et al., 2011) In the following sections therefore, I explore how the playful approaches to the text in rehearsal served to continue and complexify the production of identity and thus space, as described in section 7.2. I also highlight how these approaches can be seen to function by providing fruitful *disruptions* in engaging with the text, i.e. by exploring intertextuality and opening up divergent problem-solving techniques and hence can be understood as third space-building practices. More specifically, I highlight how Grace's directing choices of delaying and 'unfixing' the casting and exaggerated in-role modelling of performances; and the students' fascination with the grotesque and violent aspects of *Titus Andronicus* served to further opportunities to play with and through the text.

All of these text-playing techniques can be understood via the notion of play as a medial concept, as something the occurs in the movement between; (Mackey 2004:242) i.e. that serves to create space for exploration. As I will explore discuss below, this echoes with Clapp et al.'s notion of the 'maker mindset' in education, whereby foregrounding the 'made' aspect of both physical and cultural objects within education offers opportunities for learners to explore their parts, processes and complexities. (Clapp et al., 2016) Again, a playful 'tinkering' approach of breaking down Shakespeare texts into constituent parts similarly offers students a sense of author/ity (Povey et al., 1999) in ways which chime with the progressive ensemble pedagogy concepts of students' inherent capacity and of knowledge as co-constructed, unfinished and experiential. (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1998; Greene, 1987)

7.3.1.1   Identity and interpreting Titus Andronicus

Mackey argues for the value of 'play' as a verb ideally suited to the 'cross-media text processing' activities of the classroom, as it expresses the ecological nature of the classroom space. (Mackey 2004:236) Implicated in notions of classroom as ecology is the importance of the active relationships between its members. Thus, it is possible to view spatially located and constituted text playing as offering participants opportunities for identity work not available via default pedagogy text practices. (Charlton et al., 2011) During the summer term Grace and the students folded the reflexive identity work of the rehearsal 'brackets' directly into the processes of interpreting *Titus Andronicus*. For

example, during the initial group read through of the script, Grace joked the infant child of Aaron and Tamora could be played in their production by her own son. Drawing on the discourses of family and motherhood which shaped the participants' playful identity work this became an ongoing joke throughout the rehearsal process to refer to the infant as 'the baby Carl' after Grace's son. This reflected a theme in the participants' interpretive process of the implications of motherhood, childbirth and children within the text. When, during an early session viewing the film *Titus* (Taymor, 1999) Titus's 26 children are mentioned, Grace comments over the action:

Grace: I defy a woman to have 26 pregnancies

Eleanor: Oh Miss, imagine!

Grace: I don't want to imagine!

(Transcription from video extract 01/07/2014)

This exchange, though brief and informal, signals a route into the text which begins with the experiences and identities of the participants. Similarly while watching the sequence on film in which Aaron and Tamora's illegitimate infant is revealed with the characters horrified by his blackness, Jocelyn declares, again speaking informally over the film, the baby should be whiter as he was mixed race. Grace counters this with a reflection on her own dark skin tone, despite having white parents and a brief discussion follows amongst the group about differences in skin tone across black, mixed race and Asian racial origins. In this way, the issue of race within the play is approached as 'live' and relevant to the participants. Dyches would describe this as a process of 'restorying', which: "grants students from marginalized groups with an entry point into canonical conversations and a means by which to share and project their own experiential knowledge and lived experiences." (Dyches 2017:317)

Finally, the practising Muslim students also bring their experiences to bare on the rehearsal process. During the first script read through, the group quickly begin to respond to the stage directions Grace reads out, giving applause, trumpet sounds etc as needed. When she reads that all on stage pray, Saguna immediately raises her hands, palms up, in the opening position of Muslim prayer. Grace spots this and responds "Yes! I like that!" prompting others to copy the movement. Though Grace's extrapolation that the

movement is "more ambiguous than the Christian hands together" seems to circumnavigate the particular religious significance it has for the group, it nevertheless allows the Muslim students to perform the text through their own cultural traditions.

In addition to particular elements of individual participants' identities forming points of entry into the text, there is also a broader sense, expressed in focus groups, that within the practical and creative nature of drama work was a mandate to bring or reveal more of yourself, via the creative and discursive freedom of being in role.

> "Arthur: Yeah, I'd agree with that everyone has their own special way of doing something and, it kind of shows other people that 'Oh, that looks good I can try that myself' and then everyone's sharing their ideas so (Eleanor: yeah) it's making everything better.
>
> …
>
> Tapani: Yeah, I think you can be more in, yourself in drama than in other lessons because, like, I dunno, you're more, open to do more stuff and its practical stuff…
>
> Jennifer: So… Anyone else agree, think you can be yourself more in drama?
>
> Arthur: Yeah, yeah. I so you can use… Me, I kind of see myself as a kind of weird person, and in drama I can kind of use that weirdness to kind of create a character a bit and make the character a bit more effective. (Jennifer: Ok) And give it more personality.
>
> …
>
> Jennifer: Anyone else agree?
>
> Tapani: I agree Arthur is a weird person (laughter)
>
> Eleanor: yeah, I think it's good in drama because whereas if you was in English, you have to do something, you don't get a choice about what you do. Whereas in drama you can put your own twist on things and add your personality into your character and your ideas and all stuff like that. And

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you never have to like, try and impress anyone, because there's never any
wrong or right answer or idea." (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/2014)

In the discussion above the students' comments describe a dynamic process; whereby the
freedom from 'wrong or right' in the creative in-role work of theatre allows a fuller
expression of each ensemble member's identity, which in turn, as the observational data
suggests, then becomes available as contextual perspectives for interpretation of the text.
There is also the suggestion that within the freedom of in-role work, you can more fully
express a wider range of personally authentic identities. Mackey describes this process as
readers' identity work setting up "the warp of interpretation so that the final texture can
be woven using the specifics of the story as weft." (Mackey 2004:240) This image invokes
the materiality of relations between the participants and the text and is a useful metaphor
for the acts of space-making which occur through this reflexive weaving. Also relevant
here is Bruner's notion of play as 'subjunctifying reality' and thus keeping the textual
discourse open or performable by the reader. (Bruner 1986:26) It is clear here that for the
students this opportunity is deepened via the explicit performativity of in-role theatrical
work.

 Charlton et al. describe creative meeting spaces as points "of departure in meaning-
making and identity-making. The creative space and creative potential depends on
openness to difference and various 'experienced horizons' that participants in interaction
have." (Charlton et al. 2011:67) Thus, this rich relationship between playful identity work
and encounters with a theatrical text within the third space of ensemble pedagogy,
demonstrates the cyclical discursive processes which can develop when the in-role
framing of theatre as an artistic endeavour is folded into the work of 'smooth' identity
spaces. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) In Arthur's comments on how each person can have
'their own special way', his comfortable self-identification as a 'weird person', in Tapani's
joking acceptance of that, and in Eleanor's elaboration that there is no 'wrong or right
answer' is the indication of the egalitarian sense of community this can foster.
Furthermore, they ways in which students diverse racial and religious identities were axial
in explorations of the text holds social justice significance via Dyches' notion of 'restorying'
as an emancipatory encounter with canonical texts.

Here I explore a variety of ways engagement with the text was subject to fruitfully playful disruptions throughout the rehearsal process, arguing these supported a sense of 'author/ity' over the text for the students. I use this term over potential synonyms such as 'ownership', 'empowerment' or 'confidence' as its definition holds specificities of co-constructed and processional knowledge making. Povey et al. define a pedagogy of author/ity as:

> "Teachers and learners sharing this way of knowing work implicitly (and, perhaps, explicitly) with an understanding that they are members of a knowledge-making community… As such, meaning is understood as negotiated. External sources are consulted and respected but they are also evaluated critically by the knowledge makers… with whom author/ity rests. Such a way of knowing opens up the possibility of understanding knowledge as constructed and meaning as contingent and contextual and personal in the sense that it reflects the positionings of the knower. The teacher and the learner meet as epistemological equals. They work together to comprehend the world and to forge more adequate representations of it, which may include de-naturing the present and re-visioning and re-envisaging the future." (Povey et al. 1999:234)

Within a notion of student author/ity therefore, is a sense of knowledge as contingent and contextual, and also as located within a variety of external sources available for critical evaluation by the participants and understanding which echoes the principles of ensemble pedagogy.

An approach governed by foregrounding students' author/ity via open-ended critique of the text dominated the first term's work on the SSF project. Within the initial group read through of the text, for example, there are frequent pauses, elaborations – particularly the improvised inclusion of sound effects – and discussion. The extract below is typical of this. The group have just read up to the point where Titus's two sons have been falsely executed by the state, and his only daughter is returned to him violated and mutilated. Grace has just invited the group to summarise Titus's mental state at this point in the play, though the group have, typically, steered the discussion in the direction of their own interests:

Shalini: I liked Lucius, it's all Titus' fault

Grace: It's all Titus' fault?

Nami: It's not all Titus' fault.

Tapani: It sort of is.

Grace; Why it sort of is?

Tapani: Because, at the start, he kills his/…

Jocelyn (from across the room): He kills her son.

Grace: But what has happened to his sons?

Tapani: They died in war

Grace: By whose hand?

Tapani, Nami, Shalini, Saguna simultaneously: Tamora!

Grace: The Goths, Tamora's queen of the goths.

Saguna: So it's all Tamora's fault!

Grace: Is it?

Tapani: It's like half half, because they both want to get each other/…

Nami (overlapping): But if Titus…

Grace: yes, it's this whole cycle of revenge. If, if, what if…

Nami: Tamora's more evil than him

Saguna: Yeah, Tamora's more evil than him.

Grace: But is she?

Tapani: I think they're the same

Grace: He killed one of her sons, as she begged for mercy?

The pace of this discussion is quick and lively, the students frequently talk across each other and Grace. The question about where the fault of the events of the play lie is not one Grace has posed, but it is one Tapani, Saguna and Nami in particular are keen to explore. As in her facilitation of her students' 'proper Muslim' debate, Grace holds back from imposing an interpretation, though she scaffolds and extends this discussion, here by introducing the theme of revenge. Otherwise her turns are characterised by either short, open questions, or, in her final statement, more provocatively posing an opposing viewpoint. In this way, the students are prompted to both actively apply their knowledge of events in the play to justify their interpretations, and to discuss collaboratively. Grace's comments are addressed to the group at large, and she does not limit disagreement or overlapping cross talk between the students.

Similar inquiry-led disruption occurs whilst watching the film *Titus* (Taymor, 1999) in class. Grace shared with me that she had not seen the film before but preferred to have the first experience of it together with the students. The film was shown over several sessions, and Grace would regularly pause the action for moments of discussion. Sometimes these were led by her asking questions aimed at establishing the students' comprehension, but other times prompted were by a spontaneous reaction to an event on screen or responding to a student's question or statement. By validating the students' spontaneous comments in addition to her own, Grace helped construct a sense of author/ity for the students.

This making space for collaborative student agency continues to be peppered throughout the rehearsal process. An exchange I often noticed was a student asking for clarification on an acting decision, or offering a suggestion to Grace, and her referring back to the group at large. For example, during work on one scene, Amar asks if he should act drunk, her response is "Don't ask me, ask your group." Again, this echoes Grace's moves to uncrown her institutional authority during the session brackets, as in the student vote on Amar's report card. Though later on in the rehearsal process, as I will explore more deeply in section 7.3.2 below, Grace did lead decisions on the performance with more traditionally hierarchical directing techniques, at times she would continue to signal these instructions as provisional, with comments such as "I might change this, but for now…"

Along with the viewing of *Titus* in class, and the RSC video trailer of their 2013 production, another strand of intertextuality was introduced via a trip to the 2014 Shakespeare's

Globe production. Exploring several different ways into the text appeared to give the students as a sense of author/ity in interpreting their text for the stage. For example, a key realisation for the group upon seeing the Globe production was that the SSF script edit had a different ending to the full text; namely that Lavinia lives, rather than being killed by her father in the final scene. Witnessing the killing of Lavinia at the Globe was therefore a shock to the students and prompted lively discussion on the journey back to school comparing the implications of the two endings and considering which to use in their own production. The dual recognition of the SSF script edit as a made object, (Clapp et al., 2016) and moreover of performances of the text in general as specific interpretations rather than reproductions, opened up a mandate for the students to actively play the script. As Winston describes it, within this process "play is a 'craft' that gets the player involved in 'dialogue with materials' that enables a 'testing out' of the 'truth' of the ideas and practices." (Winston 2010:77) as Tapani and Amar's comments in this early focus group indicate:

> "Jennifer: So when you go and see the performance at The Globe... are you thinking to go and see it and say 'ok, right, that's what we do' (Tapani and Amar: No) and kind of reproduce it?
>
> Tapani: Like, just see how they do it, and see what we can do to make it better and do it in our own way
>
> …
>
> Amar: It's not about [inaudible] it's, you have to make it different.
>
> Tapani: Make it your own" (Focus Group 1.1 10/06/14)

7.3.1.3 Unfixed Casting

Along with approaches which served to disrupt the students' encounters with the text, another playful aspect of the rehearsals was the disruption to the casting as singular and set. By initially delaying the final casting, and in undertaking exercises which disregarded cast roles at several points during the rehearsals, Grace maintained opportunities to disrupt existing perspectives on the text, and to develop the sense of interpreting or playing the text as a communal endeavour. This can be seen in the extract below where, moreover, the students fold reflexive identity work into their discussions of casting. Like

the Bardwell students from the pilot case studies, (see page 125 of chapter six) they relish the opportunities to undertake actions and experiences beyond their daily lives.

Grace: I want to see how you will construct scene 10,

…

Saguna: Aaron, I want to be Aaron.

…

Saguna: I want to kill someone!

Amar: Yeah, I want to kill someone

Shalini: Who wants to be Lucius?

Saguna: Yeah, I'll be Lucius, I want to kill Saturnius.

Jocelyn: I just want to be killed.

Arthur: I'll be Saturnius.

Shalini: Titus, who wants to be Titus?

Nami: Amar, what are you doing?

Amar: I want to be Aaron.

Shalini: Aaron's not in this scene.

Saguna: So who's left?

Shalini: Titus, Tamora.

Amar: Titus, I'll be Titus.

The discussion of casting continues and moves to initial blocking. This is the final scene, where the core characters gather round for a feast which ends in a flurry of deaths.

Arthur: Wait, who's Tamora?

Tapani: Jocelyn.

Jocelyn: Me.

Arthur: Then you should stand here. (He gestures next to Amar as Titus, who is at the head of the table. Jocelyn moves)

Saguna: You've already made the pie, you're serving it. Hurry up, we're hungry!

(Amar walks between the two lines of students, miming a pie dish)

Arthur: You're walking through the table! (to laughter from group)

Tapani: You're such a bad chief!

…

Saguna: And now it's time to kill Tamora.

Tapani: Yay

(Transcribed from video extract 01/07/2014)

In this extended extract, it is possible to see a sense of playfulness building from the group's first discussion of casting. The casting applies only to this short exercise, so is not final or binding, and thus the students express preferences based on their positionality that day: 'I want to kill someone', 'I just want to be killed'. In this way playfulness achieves three key outcomes, firstly opening up decision making on key performance moments to the ensemble at large. Secondly allowing them to explore a violent and tragic moment of text with creativity and relish, by revelling in the absurdity of the multiple sudden deaths of the scene. Finally it allows the group to 'police' established rules of the text in performance through humour and teasing, as with Amar and the 'table'.

Even after the final casting was established, there were key moments throughout the rehearsal process which served to unfix the casting and recover some of this light-hearted, open-ended scene exploration. A key example of this occurred in the final weeks of rehearsal. Departing from her by now standard approach of actioning a scene via linear blocking, Grace divides the group into two and sets both to creating their own improvised 'role plays' of the scene. In my field notes I record how during:

"the second half of the lesson, Grace calls the groups together (using the countdown motif from other lessons) There is a marked 'carnivalesque' or story whoosh feeling to the first group's sharing; focusing on the repeated acts of violence (hand chopping off) in the scene. The audience laugh appreciatively, but under Grace's guidance, also give constructive feedback and thoughts on what could be used in performance.

The second group's sharing prompts more giggles – arguably moving from carnivalesque to farce? Though again Grace-led feedback drew out elements the group were interested in involving in the final performance… Does this [carnivalesque] role play in some way allow to keep performance options 'open' when exploring the scene, because it's obviously not how it will be finally done?" (Field Note Extract 14/10/2014)

This playful scene exploration, despite taking place close to the final performance, echoes many elements of the initial exploration extract above. Firstly, the casting is not final, by inviting two smaller groups to work on the scene simultaneously Grace removes the direct link to singular student ownership or responsibility over their characters. In the two group format, as I speculate in the field notes, there also seems to be a further space for playfulness with the text, as the focus on the final performance is disrupted and therefore a greater variety of creative possibilities can be explored. (Aitken, 2009; Rajendran, 2016; Winston and Strand, 2013) As with Bakhtin's carnival, with the normative demands of rehearsal removed by the dual workshopping, the group are released from a sense of obligation and pursue humorous or absurd performance options. Yet, unlike the reading of the carnival as being a singular release of transgressive impulses (Eco, 1984) Grace as a facilitator is able to draw out potentially fruitful elements and highlight them for the group's consideration, demonstrating the creative value of this approach.

7.3.1.4   Grace's In-Role Modelling

Grace's approach to directing, as I discuss in section 7.3.2 below, was in many ways characterised by a markedly singular and linear tactics, defined by tight blocking scene by scene. Nevertheless, along with the techniques described above, another approach which served to playfully and fruitfully destabilise the students' experience of the text was Grace's active modelling collaborative rehearsal processes by taking a role in the scene. This was typically prompted by necessity when a cast member was absent. However, it

appeared to have the added outcome of prompting students to take more collaborative and creative risks within the rehearsal. A key example of this was an occasion around half way through the rehearsal process where Grace had tasked the group with running a scene, and to keep a sense of momentum by giving lines in their 'own words' if they couldn't remember them exactly. The students were initially reluctant to do this, and struggled to give lines as close to the text as possible, furtively nudging a copy of the script to each other with their feet, until Grace modelled for Nami:

Nami (in role as Saturnius): Nor they, not you, nor…

Grace (modelling for Nami): "You didn't need to do that, I'm actually going to marry her because she's much fitter!"

Nami (in role as Saturnius): "You didn't need to do that, I'm actually going to marry her because she's much fitter!"

(laughter from group)

Amar (in role as Titus): These words are daggers to my wounded heart

Grace (modelling for Amar): How can you say that to me? And you're going to marry her, she's a Goth!

Nami (in role as Saturnius, responding to Grace's prompt): I'm going to marry Tamora, the Goth…

Grace: She's lush!

Nami (in role as Saturnius): She's, like, super hot, lush, come here darling (gestures for Tapani in role as Tamora to approach her)

(Transcribed from video extract 16/09/2014)

This approach clearly freed up the students to work more spontaneously with the story, and react to each other on stage, as Nami's improvised decision to call over Tapani as her new bride shows. Tam's observations of the carnivalesque quality of inviting profane 'languages' into the classroom are relevant here. (Tam, 2010) On another occasion, when standing in for Tabitha as Chiron, in a scene where a fight breaks out between him and his

brother Demetrius/Jocelyn Grace's use of 'ninja' fight moves, with added sound effects, though clearly over the top, prompted Jocelyn to engage more physically with the fight sequence. In this way, by literally uncrowning herself of the role of director and instead entering the performance space on an equal footing as a fellow actor, Grace revitalises the sense of active, shared problem-solved which characterised the exploratory sessions of the summer term.

7.3.1.5   The Grotesque and Violent

Finally, a key touchstone for playful engagement during rehearsals were the violent and grotesque elements of the play, which abound in *Titus Andronicus*, including several murders, a rape and mutilation, and the infamous baking of children into a pie and feeding it back to their mother. In many instances, the students showed delight and fascination in these grotesque and horrific elements of the play. In the early summer term session Grace initially invites and thus gives permission for the students to attend to these; in the second session a task invites exploration of what students find the 'grossest' moments of the play. Navigating the portrayal of moments of violence appeared to prompt both increased enjoyment and increased collaboration within rehearsals. As other drama education research (Cheng and Winston, 2011; Dunn, 2006; Tam, 2010) has observed, students are often drawn to the dark, powerful and 'taboo' elements of performance texts; in this case particularly the opportunity kill or be killed within the play. In discussions of casting this preference is often gleefully declared, for the female students in particular. For example, Jocelyn and Shalini both excitedly convey to Grace they want to play 'evil' and 'powerful' characters in the play. This dark and transgressive playing of the text thus offers opportunities of personal liberation for the students, particularly in resisting normative gendered discourses. (Cheng and Winston, 2011)

 The sense of playfulness around the violent sequences of the play also appeared to be a strategy for safely navigating the creation of these scenes, both in the emotional and physical sense, resonating with Bruner's emphasis on play as uncoupling behaviour from its usual consequences. (Bruner, 1983) For example Eleanor frequently giggled whilst being attacked and later killed as Lavinia, and likewise giggles abounded when Jocelyn and the sixth form students first explored the nurse scene, with its sudden death and sexual content. In this way, the students' laughter appeared to function as a technique for

signalling discomfort, or at least an awareness of the extreme content, without disengaging completely.

 However, if the students felt both fascination and discomfort through these sequences, they also appeared committed to getting them 'right', in the sense of making them shocking and affective for the audience. Accessing the absurdity of the violence through play and laughter during rehearsals if anything facilitated, rather than inhibited the ensemble's commitment in this area. The deaths of characters were often choreographed with a collaborative approach to physicality which was not utilised for other elements of rehearsal. Students touched each other readily but respectfully, vocalising what they intended to do. This care-focused playing with violence can thus be read as a form of kinaesthetic empathy. (Raynsford 2015:282) With laugher, particularly from students playing victims of violence, giving permission; signalling to their fellow ensemble members they recognised the violence was not 'real' or threatening. This sense of exploration, physicality and mutual respect can be seen in the exchange below:

Grace: We're going to let her… (to Amar) It might be nice actually if we let her sit, and then actually she becomes the first person you kill, before Tamora.

Amar: Yeah, but… I want to make her death surprising.

Grace: Ok, so surprise them. So actually, it can happen last. Oh, but you die/…

Amar: So, I hug her yeah, pretend I love her so much and/…

Eleanor: That's the thing, so you just sit me down on the chair, and, hug me yeah (demonstrates with hands) and then you strangle me.

Grace: Yeah, yeah maybe you strangle her.

Amar: I strange her yeah, but I/…

Grace: (excited) Right, play with this in a minute.

(Transcribed from video extract 28/09/2014)

Because the time and nature of Lavinia's death is not specified in their SSF-edited scripts, the students and Grace *play* with the possibilities of enacting her death. This extract also

serves to demonstrate how a sense of caring prevailed the occupation with violence. Here, Eleanor takes the lead in physically enacting the death of Lavinia, in such a way as to give permission to Amar as the attacker Titus, demonstrating a mutual sense of care towards each other as performers.

Another aspect of the students' delight in the gory nature of the story appeared to be the fact the cast did not expect this from a Shakespeare text, in focus groups they discussed how this challenged and destabilised their existing understanding of what a play by Shakespeare would be:

"Eleanor: I thought it… was going to be quite boring but this one's quite different so it's more interesting than the others (Shalini: yeah) like/…

Jocelyn: Like it's more gory.

…

Jocelyn: Yeah (Eleanor: Yeah) 'cause like *Romeo and Juliet* it's all about love and, we don't really care about that right now.

(Laughter from students and Jennifer)

Shalini: It's gory at the end (referring to *Romeo and Juliet*) when they kill each other.

Jennifer: That's true.

Jocelyn: But then like, with this one, with *Titus*, it's like, it's gory from the beginning, right until the end. It's just…

Jennifer: Do you think that will make it quite fun to do?

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Eleanor: Yeah, I think it will make it more interesting for the people watching as well. Because they probably won't be expecting anything like that." (Focus Group 1.2 23/06/2014)

In the extract above, the students position the violence of *Titus Andronicus* as both surprising and enjoyable. Eleanor in particular relishes the prospect of surprising their audience by subverting what they might expect from a school Shakespeare performance. And yet, just as the in-rehearsal attendance to moments of violence oscillated between a sense of subversive delight and mutual care, likewise this sense of care surrounding the violent aspects of the play extended to their audience, particularly where it might contain primary school children. This was an issue flagged up by Grace early on and reiterated when they attended the SSF cast workshop with a primary school group. During an early focus group, Amar commented: "Like Grace said yeah, it's not appropriate for, those reviews say… it was like bare violent. So from that we should learn that we have to make it appropriate for (Nami: For our audience) all age groups." (Focus Group 1.1 10/06/2014) As discussed in section 7.2.2, this intersection of play and care appeared as part of the 'family values' of this ensemble, with here even dark and violent play prompting attendance to a civic caring of each other and their audience. (Gallagher, 2015)

From this, and other ways the students attend to the grotesque and violent elements through play, there is a suggestion of a complex relationships with these elements of the text. Dunn and Tam's transgressive delight being one aspect, but also a sense of mutual care for each other and the audience.

7.3.1.6 Titus is tricked: playing the text in action

A rich example of many of these ways of playing with and through the text is to be found in a rehearsal exploring a scene in which Tamora and her two sons disguise themselves as Revenge, Rape and Murder, and attempt to convince the seemingly unhinged Titus they are come to do his bidding, as this field note extract demonstrates:

> Grace asks what their favourite scene is. From this provocation, via a
> discussion of costumes, they decide to work on the disguise sequence,
> with Grace initially inviting Tabitha, Jocelyn and Tapani to develop an
> opening freeze frame. They struggle for ideas, but Amar offers a
> suggestion and, under Grace's encouragement for him to get up and try it
> out, they begin to block the scene proper. Again, the group offer ideas –
> Eleanor suggests they should use 'that commedia person', an offer
> extended with appropriate terminology by Grace. Nami offers notes to
> Amar and Jocelyn suggests an idea.

Grace brings them plain white, full face masks, which immediately bring a
fission of excitement and approval from the group. However, they
struggle to continue a 'role play' of the scene and quickly return to script
as a group and begin to pour over it.

Grace encourages them move the blocking forward and suggests the
addition of turning house lights off and using torches. This, along with the
existing music cue quickly allows an atmospheric scene to develop.
Everyone seems to be enjoying it: those watching for the spectacle, the
three girls for embodying a scary 'other' character through their masks
and Amar for the experience of being scared by them.

They run a few times, with Grace leading blocking and the remaining
students as audience offering suggestion. Quickly the music provides cues
and shape of scene. It feels like Grace provides them with all the
'elements' of the scene, which they then experiment with and she then
shapes around the music." (Field Note Extract 25/09/2014)

Though this sequence is in many ways still highly structured and led by Grace, the
students are invited to *play with* the text via the physical and thematic elements of
theatre which she curates for them. Firstly, Grace opens the rehearsal with an identity-led
way into working when she asks which is the students' favourite scene. There is evidence
of the students' author/ity in their use of intertextuality, i.e. in Eleanor's mention of
commedia dell'arte. Furthermore, the focus on technical and material aspects of the
performance - masks, music, lighting – echoes the non-naturalistic interpretation of the
summer term trailer task and can be read as facilitating author/ity through a focus on
actively utilising these material aspects in the construction of the performance.

Though the students are playing within their cast roles, there are elements of cast
'unfixing' through the shared group identification of the scene, and in the off-stage
students acting as co-directors which, whist not unknown during the rehearsal process,
was not typical. In terms of Grace's active modelling, again, this does not happen fully, but
the inviting of an identity-led way into the rehearsal for the students, and scaffolding of
shared focus on the technical/'made' ways in to the scene can be read as a deliberate
'uncrowning' of self as director. In particular, in Grace's suggestion to turn off the lights
and use torches, she is giving permission for playfully heightened enactments of the text,

in much the same way as her exaggerated in-role modelling. Finally, the shared and delighted focus on the scene as scary, high-tension and led by trickery evidences the group's preoccupation with the grotesque and violent elements of the text. The ways in which Grace scaffolds this interest and draws on it to block the scene consolidates the conclusion from the pilot studies that dark play can form a valuable element of ensemble pedagogy, when sanctioned or led by the teacher. Significantly there is an element of subverting ensemble or 'family' identities in the scene, where the three girls in role as Tamora and her sons terrorise and trick Amar as Titus, in a subversion of the typical gendered enactment of caring/policing Amar, as described in section 7.2.2.3. In short, to borrow from Holdsworth discussing Joan Littlewood's 1960s fun palaces:

> "this was more than just an elaborate game of dressing up. Through these theatrical processes of staging and enactment, the young were able to play with other versions of themselves and invert narratives of poverty, class, exclusion and powerlessness by temporarily occupying their own narratives of success that relied on their ability to imagine, create and play." (Holdsworth 2007:302)

What this lively and communally-realised rehearsal session demonstrates is the variety of ways the ensemble pedagogy teacher/director can work text playing activities often associated with early rehearsals throughout the process. Etheridge Woodson describes this approach to cultivating ensemble creativity in terms of "enabling alternating patterns of convergent and divergent thinking/processes" and highlights "Creative processes occur in both linear and recursive ways" (Etheridge Woodson 2015;141) Mackey meanwhile uses the term 'plasticity of attention' (Mackey, 2004:245) in describing the effects of 'playing' a text. These notions of playfulness as engendering plasticity and recursivity, while enabling author/ity in engaging with any text, are particularly relevant in terms of Shakespeare as they echo the 'negative capability' of his texts. (Bate, 1997)

Thus this rehearsal session can be paradoxically be read on the one hand as facilitating an exploration of the rich plurality in *Titus Andronicus*, whilst on the other simultaneously representing what Mackey terms a 'zap' moment in which the complexity of the text coalesces into 'getting it' for the reader/player. (Mackey 2004:247) This playful development of textual author/ity thus contributes to the ensemble's active citizenship;

the casts' open-ended and recursive playing contributes to the construction of the ensemble rehearsal room as third space. This results not only in enhanced opportunities for the theatrical performance, but for the reflexive identity work of the participants.

7.3.2 Limitations in Playfulness

In this section I explore two key factors of the rehearsal that appeared to limit the sense of playing with and through Shakespeare, as described above. Firstly I discuss Grace's shift in the main body of rehearsals from her smooth identity positioning as teacher, to a focus on a more 'striated' positioning of 'director'; defined by a narrow, linear approach to blocking and running scenes. Via considerations of the implications and possibilities of the adaptation of the theatrical discipline of directing in educational spaces (Hall and Thomson, 2017; Irish, 2016; Rajendran, 2016; Thomson et al., 2012) I recognise the discourses of institutional expectations which acted on Grace in this interpretation of the role of director, but also draw attention to how this limited the students' author/ity within the rehearsal process.

 Secondly, I focus on the recurring theme of Grace seeking to avoid or 'translate' the language of the text for her students across the rehearsal process. I consider how this aim reflects the reproduction of Shakespeare as a distant object of elite high culture. Via an exploration of the ways text and language work can be considered a central element of the construction of educational third spaces (Charlton et al., 2014) I conclude by arguing, building on notions of playing the text as 'restorying' (Dyches, 2017) and story-weaving (Mackey, 2004) Shakespeare can be considered as a cultural 'we story', (Green, 2008) a cultural artefact with the potential to facilitate the active generation of social hope; though it's potential was not fully exploited in this ethnography.

7.3.2.1   *Uncrowning the teacher, recrowning the director?*

 In September, following the summer break, the group move from open-ended exploration of the text and creation of the 'trailer' performance to rehearsal of the text with the finalised cast. Several changes in the room immediately became apparent, and in fact were surprising to me as an observer following on the experience of the summer term. Thus in this section I explore in some detail this change in classroom discourse and attempt to make sense of it within the theoretical model of the ensemble pedagogy classroom as third space.

In the opening rehearsal of the autumn term Grace positions herself at the centrally within the school theatre space, in front of the students, who are sat scattered across bank of raised seating. This seems to signal a change in the power dynamic of the room. Where previously the students had become comfortable taking possession of the implied 'stage' of floor space within the three banks of tiered seating, they now hang back at the edges, awaiting Grace's instructions to enter. Likewise Grace's language is different here, as she begins to block the opening scene. In contrast to the codified, exaggerated instructions of early sessions, she is brief, authoritative and practical in her requests to 'take it from…', 'go again', 'you need…' Where earlier dialogic openness is continued 'It *might be* we'll give you a line' this is briefly alluded to, with no attempt to open up the decision to the group, despite the use of 'we'.

 A convention of running a scene through, then stopping for notes from Grace is quickly established. The response from the students to this change in approach is palpable. In addition to their physical hesitance to inhabit the space, they express their uncertainty to Grace, as in Jocelyn's tentative questioning of a line of text 'Do I say it to her?' Grace is dismissive in her response "Just say it Jocelyn, just say it." Further to this, there are times when Grace appears to explicitly dismiss the students' interpretations, even when there was nothing in the script to negate their perspective. As during this discussion of a scene in which Titus' daughter Lavinia enters with her new husband Bassianus. In the script the couple openly discuss their marriage, though Titus does not comment on it, and the group questions how much he knows, as the couple were last seen running away together:

Saguna: Yeah, they just know we ran away together.

Shalini: Yeah, but in the scene Lavinia…

Grace: (Shouts) At the moment! Listen to us Shalini, listen – Titus, the father, the character on stage, doesn't know because they ran away. Do you understand? We as actors can read the lines at the bottom (refers to text's footnotes)*, so we get the background information, the characters don't know.*

(Transcribed from video extract 2/10/14)

 Though, as I discuss in 7.3.1 above Grace continued to utilise warm up games and invited discussion and exploration at various specific points throughout the rehearsal process, the

effect this increase in teacher-led practice had on the students was marked. Whereas the open-ended discourse strategies employed in the summer term created a space for the students to engage enthusiastically and with author/ity, their reaction to the close blocking and linear running of scenes was one of increasing passivity. During one rehearsal, a month before the performance day they ran the long opening scene of the SSF edit in its entirety three times. By the third run through I recorded in my field notes the ensemble are increasingly performing without listening to each other or making eye contact, they focus on remembering their own lines and blocking. In contrast to the shared joy of the multiple text playing strategies of the rehearsal described in 7.3.1.6 above, there is no space made for plasticity or recursivity. Rather the text is treated as a static and finite object to be reproduced, individually and in completion, alongside pre-agreed movements.

Grace's discusses these directing choices during interview as the project moves towards its completion:

> "So we're getting a little bit tighter on blocking. So, next week it's going to
> be… more blocking of each scene so that the actions, physical gestures, so
> any sort of mime movement that we might add is locked in because then
> the last week, it's just going to be running the play." (Interview 2
> 15/10/14)

In this statement the terms 'blocking', 'locked in' and 'running' all point towards a singular, fixed, and linear approach to directing, and the creative approach more broadly. In further interview comments, Grace elaborates on this by drawing a clear distinction between her understanding of the role of 'teacher' compared to 'director':

> "I like being a director in the space, but the school doesn't like me being a
> director in the space. (Laughter) And that's a really interesting question,
> because I've been observed and I've been told in my feedback that I got
> yesterday that it was far too teacher directed and my argument is 'It's
> supposed to be' (laughter) and not without input… it's like a bit of clay, it's
> got form already, but you're kind of, manipulating it, if you will, and I just
> got annoyed that that's just not seen. That, actually, if those students
> hadn't come with anything themselves, I wouldn't be able to direct. And
> in a lesson and an observation they're only seeing the bit where I'm

playing with the clay that's already been warmed up and they've warmed

it up themselves." (Interview 2 15/10/14)

An interesting distinction arises here between the roles of teacher and director, with Grace suggesting directing as more didactic. This is a perspective shared by her colleague Travis in the previous year's pilot project:

"Directing is very different to teaching. The two aren't comparable. Any

teacher who leads from the front, even a drama teacher who leads from

the front, is not a good or outstanding teacher." (Travis, Interview 2

27/11/2013)

Extrapolating across Grace and Travis' comments, there is a shared understanding of directing as 'leading from the front' primarily via the use of blocking. This highlights paradoxes at the heart of theatre education work, as there is undeniably the potential for a clear hierarchical element to the role of theatrical director. High School Theatre director Gonzalez has gone so far as to argue that "Directors must recognize that a play rehearsal process structured with a director and a cast of actors is an arena in which ideal democracy probably can never occur." (Gonzalez 1999:18) While Thomson et al. recognise the use of professional norms and disciplinary expectations as core practices can be associated with third space-creating signature pedagogies (Thomson et al. 2012:46) Though notably, as Hall and Thomson have further argued in considering these approaches within the creation of third spaces; they sit alongside other repertoires of practice which arguably work to complexify the hierarchical discourses of many professional arts disciplines, for example practices in which "Artists made sure the classroom was a highly social and sociable place." (Hall & Thomson 2017:115)

Furthermore, as the *Signature Pedagogies* report emphasises, such individual practices are contingent on their overarching commitment to the enactment of what they term signature pedagogy purposes; learning not only to know, but learning to be, to do and to live together. (Hall and Thomson, 2017; Thomson et al., 2012) In other words, the application of disciplinary practices in educational contexts was successful when combined with approaches which drew on the practitioners' wider sense of identities (Galton, 2010) and enacted with the intention of broad educational aims. This understanding of the process of theatrical directing as hierarchically directive, therefore, and to what extent

this is intrinsic to the disciplinary discourses of theatre, or a matter of pedagogical or role performance choice, is a knotty issue worth problematising via this analysis.

Via Grace's discussion in interview and observed practices in the rehearsals, it is possible to see how her movement into the role (Schonmann, 2006) of director in the autumn term is different in construction to her enactment of the role of teacher in the summer term. Whereas Grace's teaching identity has been honed to 'smoothness', as the enactment of this role, informed by all the richness of the reflexive identity positioning described in section 7.3.1. demonstrates; the notion of director appears 'striated' for Grace i.e. distinct and separate from her other identity positionalities as she constructs and enacts them. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) Some hints of the wider discourses at play around these differing roles are revealed during interviews. Grace speaks dismissively of the positionality of her inner-city London school in national and policy discourse, shrugging off the constant potential threat of no notice OFSED inspections as "under the bravado of, terrorism, ebola, whatever (Laughter) whatever nonsense." (Interview 2 15/10/2014) demonstrating her playful separation of policy and institutionally mandated disciplinary discourses as they threaten to encroach on her professional practice via OFSED inspections.

Yet, her language in post-session discussions describing the expectations of the SSF performance lacks this levity. Her manager, the newly installed Head of Performing arts, is referred to as expecting a 'slick' performance, and as having threatened her with cancellation of the show if it not deemed up to scratch. As Rajendran observes, there is often a 'weight of representation' on school-based theatre to reflect well on the schools' ethos (Rajendran 2016:453) In interview Grace again references the stress and pressure of the final performance, and her anticipation of comparison to other schools' 'professional' and 'crisp' work. (Interview 2, 15/10/2014) This, I argue, demonstrates a sense of aesthetic distance (Kempe, 2012) in performing the role of teacher which is not present to the same extent in the performance of the role of director. Hence, as in Travis' inflexible identity positioning within the pilot Grafton High case, the third space and with it the opportunities for student author/ity constrict. The switch to the striated role of director for Grace can be seen as prompting a shift of pedagogic code which undermined the active citizenship potential of both the ongoing reflexive identity play and summer term's playing of the text.

In her reflections on the rehearsal process during the final interview, Grace discussed her identification of the limitations of her approach in this instance, commenting in the future she would seek to include more games and explorative rehearsal practices throughout the process:

> "The stuff that we'd done before the summer holidays, really got them involved and interested in plotlines and the themes, the undercurrent of the play and they seemed to have forgotten that, and rather than me, re-do and… re-check that. I just took for granted that that was, that had been embedded and it wasn't." (Interview 3 27/11/14)

The key issue identified by Grace here is an assumption that the students would carry both the discoveries and explorative outlook of the summer term into the main body of rehearsals. This highlights the ongoing pedagogic demands of an ensemble approach, challenging any easy assumptions that a set period of exploration or 'warming up' can embed a sense of an actively creative ensemble across a whole project. Furthermore the ongoing and relational nature of teacher uncrowning is implicit in this. As demonstrated in the analysis above, folding the use of discipline-specific professional roles such as theatre director into this is a complex process. As discussed in section 7.3.1, playing the performance text in a variety of ways; unfixing of cast, teacher/director in-role modelling, disruptive intertextuality were all successful in rewarming the clay, in Grace's terminology. Gonzalez echoes the cyclical use of 'clay warming' with 'clay shaping' practices, and their relation to navigating power discourses, when she explains of her own directing practice: "what I seek are moments of sustained encounters with oppressive forms of power relations in the rehearsal environment, moments that are tempered by the acknowledgment of my own implicature in those forms of power relations, and moments that illuminate alternative relationships between myself as director and my student actors." (Gonzalez 1999:20)

And yet, if the striated division between teacher and director did limit the students' author/ity in creative work, it is possible to see where the playful identity discourse of the first term, and the ongoing rehearsal brackets, did also appear to facilitate more illuminative moments, as Gonzalez terms them, within this. This was noticeable in the students' focus group reflections, in which the students position their reading of Grace's hierarchical performance of director in context of her wider identity work, and notably

overarching pedagogical purposes (Thomson et al., 2012) such as bringing them 'closer together' and to 'make' them 'do better':

> "Arthur: Like she [Grace] does kind of insult people but not in a (students giggle) really mean way, she's always joking about things and by her joking it kind of makes us, sort of like brings us closer together." (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/14)

> "Tapani: I think she's like really fun. And different, like it's good that she does shout at us, but it's in a way we don't get angry or walk out or get parked or anything

> …

> Eleanor: and when she does shout it's never in a horrible way, it's only to make us do better" (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/2014)

Thus, while Grace's performance of the role of director is problematised via this analysis, this is not to suggest role of director, even hierarchical performances of it, as being inherently unhelpful to ensemble pedagogy, on contrary, it rather demonstrates complexity of understanding teacher uncrowning in performance project contexts. Grace touches on some of this mutually negotiated positionality when she comments during one interview: "yeah, I've directed, but it's facilitated, because if they didn't want to do it, they wouldn't do it." (Interview 2 15/10/2016)

7.3.2.2 Shakespearean language as an obstacle

Within the pilot case studies, the positionality of Shakespeare as a cultural and textual object during the SSF rehearsal process was identified as a key sensitising concept. The analysis explored how Shakespeare could be positioned as either a 'civilising' or empowering object of high culture, and potentially simultaneously as an accessible object to be played with and through. A perspective briefly expressed by Travis in the 2013 Grafton High case was of Shakespearean language as superfluous to the value of the texts, which he located in both their cultural cache and quality of story. This was a perspective both echoed and expanded upon in Grace's approach to the language of the play text. This perspective, and the rehearsal room approaches which stemmed from it, became a key factor in limiting opportunities to play with Shakespeare in the main body of rehearsals. In

this section I will explore the problematic implications of this perspective in terms of 'essentialising' the cast and audience's relationship with Shakespeare and discuss how this perspective combined with Grace's hierarchical and striated understanding of her director role to inhibit students' sense of author/ity with the text.

From the outset, Grace stated to me her aim was to produce a performance the audience could "understand even if they were deaf" (Field Note 09/06/14). This aim was repeated and expanded upon during our first interview together:

> "So I just want to not overcomplicate the performance, keep it quite visual, so that the story, if the whole audience was deaf, could still be understood. And I think that's what's key, particularly for the students that we teach, and their parents and the people that they might want to bring along as well. To keep it something that actually, visually, it doesn't matter if they miss a line, or if the audience mishear a line or don't catch a line because it tells the story itself. So I'll probably have their trailer with very minimal dialogue, a little bit like the Othello trailer for Frantic Assembly
>
> …
>
> Yes, I want the language of The Bard, whatever, to come across, because I do think that's important... But not to get weighed down by it if they only learn half of their lines and they deliver them so that they can be understood and heard." (Interview 1 09/06/14)

This notion of Shakespearean language as problematic was further implied when Grace suggested a few sessions later that within the focus groups the students were likely to state they saw Shakespeare are "that guy from English with the weird words they don't understand" (Field Note 12/06/14) Comments from the students in focus groups are consistent with this:

> "Amar: The language is so boring, it's so hard.
>
> Saguna: The language is tongue-twisting." (Focus Group 2.2 29/09/14)

"Eleanor: I feel confident that it's Shakespeare because, personally I don't understand like Shakespeare's language, so if we was on stage and we was to muck up, people might not notice, because not a lot of people will understand Shakespeare anyway. So it's just like, ah, if you did say the wrong word, no one would probably take any notice of it, because Shakespeare it's just like, oh, loads of words anyway (laughs) that I don't understand.

…

Tapani: yeah, I guess in some ways, but then you'll have to understand what you're saying because if you're saying it in one way, when it's not. Like you're saying it angrily when it's supposed to be saying it like when you're upset, then that would look really weird, so I guess you'd have to research the lines and know what it means." (Focus Group 2.1 17/07/14)

These statements read in combination represent a largely negative but deeply ambiguous positionality with regards to Shakespeare's language. On the one hand comments such as Grace's 'I do want language of The Bard, whatever, to come across, because I do think that's important' and Tapani's suggestion the lines must be researched and understood to be delivered with meaning suggest a valuing of Shakespeare's language, albeit qualified by Grace's dismissive 'whatever'. While on the other is a focus on the narrative, and the visual elements of the performance as holding meaning, and an expectation confirmed by Saguna and Amar's comments that the language is 'weird' 'boring' 'hard' and 'tongue-twisting'. Yet I would argue these apparent opposing viewpoints are connected by the underlying dual assumption of the high cultural *status*, but narrative *irrelevance* of the language. This is most clearly expressed in Eleanor's statement that making mistakes with the language does not worry her because the text is "just like, oh, loads of words anyway" which she does not expect the audience to understand. Eleanor thus echoes Grace's sentiments that the language is extraneous to the performance, expressing a key implication here; the text's comprehension by the cast *or* audience is understood as optional, there is meaning and significance enough in that a Shakespeare play *is performed* by the students and witnessed by their family and community. Drawing on understandings of the mutual constitution of identity, space and texts in education (Charlton et al., 2011, 2014) this holds implications for both the students' sense author/ity

in engaging with the text, and the positionality of Shakespeare within the social justice aspect of ensemble pedagogy.

Within the rehearsal process there were two key examples of this ambiguous but distancing approach to Shakespeare's language in practice. The first was the creation of the wordless 'trailer' performance in the first term of the project. As I have described in section 7.2.1.2 this can on the one hand be understood as an embodied cognition process of 'clay warming' via the building of a shared aesthetic language. The opportunities to forge their own routes into the story, unfettered by naturalistic performance conventions (Gallagher and Jacobson, 2018) energised their collaborative performance work. Yet, as I will discuss further below, Grace's directorial decision to prioritise this language-free aesthetic in the body of rehearsals stunted opportunities to grow this embodied collaboration into the complexities of the language.

The second key distancing strategy with regards to the Shakespearean language was the use of 'role-play' as a GCSE Drama 'explorative strategy', defined as: "This is the act of pretending to be somebody else, of taking on a role. The role may be from a script or a character you have created." (BBC Bitesize, 2018) Typically, Grace utilised this as a verb, inviting students to 'role play' a scene of text in order to give them the opportunity to roughly improvise the scene in their own words, gaining a sense of familiarity with it, whilst also exploring creative possibilities. Yet, whenever she suggested this, the students were hesitant to undertake the task. In the session below Grace has asked them to role play two scenes from the SSF text edit. For several minutes the group have stood hesitantly over their scripts, negotiating earnestly on how to complete the task. There is a sense of confusion and reluctance. Grace stands up to reiterate the task:

Grace: You are not using the script, you are creating your own version of the scene.

…

Grace: You are creating your own version of the scene. You are showing no understanding of what role play is. You don't need to use, if you understand what's happening in the scene, then you don't need scripts.

…

Amar: Do we have to talk like this (indicates script)

Grace: No!

(Transcribed from video extract 08/07/14)

 I would argue a core reason for the students' hesitance is that, as hinted it in their frantic consultations of the script and Amar's qualifying question of whether they need to speak 'like it', the words of the text are not separate from the narrative, they accomplish specific things within it. The variety of embodied directorial approaches to the text – Stafford-Clark's actioning and Alfreds' units of action being just two examples (Alfreds, 2007; Stafford-Clark, 1989) - demonstrates the complex and active interpretation of required of a text at the level of language to bring it to performance. Furthermore Shakespeare's performance text, written with the original intention being used in short rehearsal periods via the use of cue sheets (Banks, 2014) are arguably more than most plays, literally a construct of parts, processes and complexities (Clapp et al., 2016) in which the words are put there to *do things*, for the performers and audience. As in this extract from the SSF *Titus Andronicus* text:

> "MARCUS: Who is this? my niece, that flies away so fast!... Why dost not
> speak to me? Alas, a crimson river of warm blood, Doth rise and fall
> between thy rosed lips." (Shakespeare 2014:15)

Here Marcus' opening words cue his scene partner Lavinia to attempt to run away as he begins to speak; while the description of her bleeding mouth provides context for an audience who originally may not have expected, or been able to see, visual effects. This belies the apparent simplicity and freedom of 'role-play'; the opportunity to 'translate' the text into their own words does not remove the requirement to engage with the complexity of the language, but by positioning it as a straightforward, moreover liberating, comprehension exercise, the high demands and diverse opportunities in 'translating' the text are disregarded.

 "When we use words, we are always situating ourselves." Argue Charlton et al., (Charlton et al. 2011:67) highlighting the mutual constitution of literacies, identity and space. Thus, attempts to circumnavigate the language of the Shakespeare text, the opportunity for the students to actively use the language in this process of mutual constitution of the ensemble third space is limited and their ability to engage with author/ity in the text as the opportunity to play the language (Mackey, 2004) is removed. While both the trailer

and the invitation to role play scenes are framed in by a sense of creative freedom or playing, it is 'playing the world', as I defined in chapter four, with no equivalent 'playing the word', thus limiting opportunities for engagement with Shakespeare and heightening the risk of reproducing elite cultural tropes and alienating the diverse student ensemble.

 Examples of 'playing the word' can be found in the Statten Park and Bardwell pilot case studies. In an opening workshop with her year 5 students, Statten Park teacher Rachel encourages the group during a language exercise to "Murmur the words in your mouth, like it's a really delicious sweet." (16/07/13) This session was the first introduction to the language of the play, and Rachel focused on this experiential, explorative approach; no attempt is made at defining particular words or checking comprehension of the text. Likewise, in her edit of *Macbeth*, Bardwell teacher Lisa strips the language down to the minimum in order to serve the needs of her diverse cast, yet the original text is retained, for example the use of repetition in chants of 'fair is foul and foul is fair' interspersed with 'murder most foul!' (Shakespeare, 2013) offer the students opportunities to play with the form, as well as the meaning, of the language. (Cook, 2000) Thus, I would argue, Grace's directorial approach of seeking to avoid the complexities of the play's language had the unintended outcome of perpetuating the notion of the text as a distant object of high culture.

This assumption that the language, whilst important, was primarily an obstacle to navigated and translated into comprehension, informed the rehearsal process. The procedure of blocking encouraged the treatment of the play text as a framework onto which meaning was to be imposed through tone of voice, facial expression and physicality. Thus the main body of rehearsals focused on a process of translation – from Shakespeare's language into either physical expression or the students' own words. Due to this prevailing perspective, the meaning(s) of the text beyond essential narrative were largely left unproblematised throughout the rehearsal process. What pervaded instead was a focus on learning lines and reciting them with projection and clarity. This is, of course a key element of any performance, but I argue it contributed to an ontological sense of the text as a culturally valuable commodity, to be possessed in the 'banking' model of learning; (Freire, 1972) rather than a text in the discursive sense, to be played with and through. This approach stands in stark contrast to research which demonstrates it is precisely the richness and complexity of the language which offers opportunities for students and teachers to play in ways which both deepened educational outcomes and

open up new personal and social possibilities (Cheng and Winston, 2011; Irish, 2016; Winston, 2013)

Returning to Grace's guiding intention to create a performance which could be understood 'if they were deaf.' (Field Note 09/06/14) This can be read as an earnest commitment to engage in a multicultural inner-city East London community with low levels of education and even literacy, as Travis reported within the Grafton High pilot study. However the use of words is telling in the sense of positioning her students and audience as being potentially 'deaf' to the language of Shakespeare and thus belies an assumption on which groups of people have cultural access to Shakespeare, that a process of *translation*, rather than exploration is necessary for the comprehension for those who do not. Again, this has the potential to take a colonialist 'essentialising' perspective on the cultural identities of both cast and audience. (Dyches, 2017; Ramanathan, 2005; Yosso, 2005) The other limiting element in terms of the pro-social potential of ensemble pedagogy is reflected in Eleanor's comments regarding the superfluous nature of the language in the performance, and the increasing 'banking' model approach to line learning as an individual achievement during rehearsals: the sense of theatre as a space for mutual *communication* is lost. And, as Boyd states, the "gift of collaboration" (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain 2004:18) is potentially the most precious theatre can offer us.

I have argued here that the words of a performance text can be understood as active, material elements of an ensemble third space and are mutually constitutive in the ongoing constructions of identity and space. Attempting to avoid or translate these words thus amounts to a universalistic 'trivialising' of space by denying students the opportunity to engage with the cultural, geographic, historical and political specificities of a text. (Charlton et al. 2011:63) As I highlighted in analysing the initial identify-led text exploration in section 7.3.1.1 such opportunities can be understood as 'restorying', (Dyches 2017:317) and offering students the possibility of weaving their own *Titus Andronicus*, with the fabric texture reflecting the specifics of the text and the students' own author/itive interpretations. (Mackey 2004:240) Had this restorying and story-weaving been extended to the level of Shakespeare's language, how might this have deepened and complexified the student's engagement with the text, and thus the text's positionality in their construction of their ensemble as a third space? Green's notion of 'we-stories' as guiding frameworks of social hope are relevant here. (Green, 2008) I have

discussed the notion of 'family' as a guiding we story for this group, and how it framed discursive practices of play and care in the enactment of active citizenship. Though a different narrative object, the Shakespeare text, both in its own plot and in the complex and – as I argued in chapter four – contested cultural positionality it brings with it, can also be seen as a potential we story. Not because of any claims to a singularly universal perspective on human nature, but because of the unique hermeneutical position of Shakespeare's stories within western cultural thought (Gregory and Gleyzon, 2013) As Irish has it "As texts for performance, Shakespeare's plays can be explored in the classroom, not as touchstones of universal values, but as 'metaphors to think by', an inheritance of convenient and evolving cultural constructions to share and develop meaning" (Irish 2016:34) Ultimately then, what is missed by a reduced engagement in the specifics of Shakespeare's language is an opportunity for the students to weave Shakespeare's we story into their own.

7.4   Conclusion: Ensemble third space as a site for negotiating institutional discourses of power

In chapter 2 I considered the importance of spatial and discursive theoretical models for the exploration of ensemble pedagogy, and within the pilot case study analysis posited this can be best understood as the construction of third space. In this concluding section I therefore offer the theoretical model of ensemble pedagogy as the playful creation of third space which I have developed through this critical ethnographic analysis. The core building blocks of this is the power of play to subjunctivise (Turner, 1987) and hybridise (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986) spoken discourse; and the understanding of discourse as constitutive of power relations. This offers way for individuals to engage in plural, flexible, processional and relational identity work; (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) and via dialogic empathy to navigate this differing identities. (Sennett, 2012)

 The spatially constructive potential of this was visible in the data via the development of a shared playful language, and the use of this playful discourse in bracketing the opening and closing of sessions as distinct from the rest of the school day. In the way the participants consciously and equitably navigated, though could not disregard, the 'default pedagogy' requirements of their institution. This demonstrates the potential of ensemble pedagogy to create third spaces within institutional structures. (Etheridge Woodson, 2015; Rajendran, 2016; Sloan, 2018; Thomson et al., 2012) These ensemble third spaces are not

simply utopic or therapeutic retreats from the power geometries acting on and through the participants, as has been argued elsewhere (Hunka, 2015) but hybridised and contingent spaces which overlay the normative space and fracture its assumptions, opening up, however temporarily and contingently, new possibilities of within the existing power geometries.

Despite the social justice potential of these ensemble third spaces however, just as they destabilise, rather than remove the existing power geometries, likewise the alternative discourses opened up are inevitably subject to existing social discourses of power. Within the data I utilised the in-vivo concept of 'family' as a way to explore these tacit relational discourses. Through this I concluded the participant's care-led enactment of active citizenship, for example within the group acting to support Tabitha and Amar in their experience of racial bullying, offer a responsive and relational model of social hope. (Gallagher, 2015, 2016a; Green, 2008; Porter, 1996) Though recognising this care-led model of active citizenship is not by definition unproblematic, as seen in the gendered nature of its enactment within the ethnography; the key event of Amar's transgression of this mutually constructed space of dialogic empathy and caring social hope; and the students redressing of this via song and dance demonstrates the potential power of shared joy as a restorative act of active citizenship. (Segal, 2017)

In making sense of the role of Shakespeare as a theatrical text and critically-charged cultural object (Coles, 2013; Dyches, 2017; Irish, 2016; Olive, 2011; Taylor, 1991) within this model, I focused firstly on the ways 'playing' the text (Mackey, 2004) afforded the students an increasing sense of author/ity (Povey et al., 1999) and opportunity to re-story (Dyches, 2017) by weaving their own identities into the text work. (Mackey, 2004) And secondly on the potential, only partially realised within the ethnography, of Shakespeare to act as a rich and ambiguous (Bate, 1997; Irish, 2016) 'we story' (Green, 2008) in the ensemble pedagogy aim of engendering social hope for its participants. Both of these elements foreground the mutually constructive role of text in the production of both identities and space (Charlton et al., 2014) and highlight the emancipatory potential of playfully subjunctivising and hybridising those discursive interactions with the text, particularly one with as much complex cultural weight as Shakespeare.

As I will explore more fully in the following discussion chapter, this model responds to the core aims of this study: it reasserts the centrally critical social aim of ensemble pedagogy

to offer an alternative to neoliberalism (Equity and Directors Guild of Great Britain, 2004; Neelands, 2009a) by presenting an ontology of the approach grounded in understandings of space as constructed via geometries of power. (Foucault, 1975; Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2005) And it deepens understanding of the central practice of teacher uncrowning by positioning that uncrowning as existing within and contingent upon those geometries of power, solidifying claims of the risk undertaken in teacher uncrowning, (Neelands and O'Hanlon, 2011) and demonstrating the power of playful discourse to successfully navigate and hybridise these geometries and create socially hopeful third spaces for participants to undertake active citizenship. Crucially, this counters domestication (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004) of ensemble pedagogy as a theatre and drama education practice as the model of hybridised third space resists expression in terms of default pedagogy 'outcomes'. (Holligan, 2010; Thomson et al., 2012) By speaking of the potential of play to create these relational, caring, socially hopeful third spaces I argue, we are closer as theatre and drama education practitioners to speaking 'our own language'. (Saxon, cited in O'Toole 2009)

8   Discussion

In this study, I identified and sought to address the issue of domestication (Kitchen, 2015; Neelands, 2004) of ensemble pedagogy theatre and drama education approaches within mainstream western school contexts. (Enciso et al., 2011; Pigkou-Repousi, 2012; Thomson et al., 2010) In this, between translation into narrow audit-focused metrics (Delamont, 2014; Holligan, 2010; Thomson et al., 2012) and mythic, universalising rhetorics of 'miracles' (Finneran, 2008; Neelands, 2004) what is lost is the potential of ensemble pedagogy as a rich bridging metaphor for pro-social practice across the field of theatre and drama education. (Neelands, 2009a) Recognising the increased focus on critical perspectives (Hughes and Nicholson, 2016a) and social justice (Finneran and Freebody, 2016; Freebody and Finneran, 2018; Nicholson, 2003; Shelton and McDermott, 2010) in recent theatre and drama education scholarship; in addition to the search for expressions of the cultural value of arts education; (Belfiore, 2018; Neelands et al., 2015; Thomson et al., 2015) and the increasing urgency of global humanitarian issues of economy, environment and democracy (Hughes and Nicholson, 2016b; Neelands, 2010a; O'Connor and Anderson, 2015) the aim of the research has therefore been to address this domestication of ensemble pedagogy via a re-articulation of its critical epistemology, and to more deeply explore its central classroom practice of teacher uncrowning.

 I hypothesised that second 'paradigm' theories of play as a dynamic and subjunctivising mode of discourse capable of fostering both togetherness and dissent offers a fruitful theoretical lens for achieving these dual aims. I developed a set of specific and empirical research questions (Punch, 2009) which asked what a focus on play could reveal about the processes of ensemble theatre education projects, and moreover what participants achieved via their playfulness within the UK ensemble theatre education festival project of Shakespeare Schools Foundation. Via an initial set of pilot case studies and a more substantive critical ethnography of schools undertaking the project I concluded that playful discourse was a key way in which teacher and student participants were able to develop reflexive, plural and processional identity positionalities (Davies and Harré, 1990; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) for themselves within the project; and that an active and collaborative playing (Mackey, 2004) of the Shakespeare texts offered opportunities to actively interpret and 're-story' (Dyches, 2017) the texts with author/ity. (Povey et al., 1999)

I recognise on the one hand that the framing of this enquiry into ensemble pedagogy via playfulness, while indicated via the field of theatre and drama education's long preoccupation with play (Bolton, 1998; Caldwell Cook, 1917; Dunn, 2010a; Finlay-Johnson, 1912; Slade, 1954; Somers, 2013) represents a particular and arguably narrow route into addressing the issue of ensemble pedagogy domestication. While on the other had ethnographic enquiry holds limited potential to generalise findings; as I discuss in chapter five there is a strong reliance on the inter-subjective interpretation of the researcher, albeit from a reflexive, critical positionality. Nevertheless, from these key findings I have developed a theoretical model which I argue addresses the aims of this study to recentralise ensemble pedagogy's critical epistemology and deepen understanding of teacher uncrowning; and thus has potential to address domestication in a variety of contexts. This theoretical model uses the concept of third space (Etheridge Woodson, 2015; Schapiro, 2009; Thomson et al., 2012) to express this. Via a central Foucauldian understanding of power as plural and discursive, (Foucault, 1975) and a constructivist understanding of the world as unfinished an thus open to change (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1998; Lefebvre, 1991; Massey, 2005) this model allows the description of ensemble pedagogy projects as hybrid, mobile, permeable and time flexible spaces; (Bhabha, 2004; Thomson et al., 2012) a fertile ground for active citizenship.

 By positioning the work of active citizenship as intrinsically and generatively occurring in these hybrid third spaces, this model understands these ensemble third spaces as sites of social hope. (Gallagher, 2015; Green, 2008; Rorty, 1999) This notion of the pragmatically generative quality of social hope, Gallagher argues, has power within theatre and drama education scholarship to express "how participation in artistic practices and local-global social relations might provoke forms of engaged citizenship worth considering in times of increasing youth social unrest." (Gallagher and Rodricks 2017:126) As touched on in the conclusion of the previous chapter, this positions the active citizenship of ensemble pedagogy not as an ideal in microcosm, or as an instrumental rehearsal with the aim of facilitating 'real' citizenship out in the world but the immediate, generative application of the social imagination to thirding the spatial power discourses of our own teaching contexts. This model therefore recentralises ensemble pedagogy as a critical social endeavour, and specifically forefronts its aim to seek alternatives to neoliberalism by making visible and facilitating the active negotiation of normative, individualising and universalising institutional ecologies of power neoliberal thought seeks to naturalise.

Furthermore, this model deepens understanding of the core ensemble pedagogy practice of teacher uncrowning by positioning the process not as a simple transfer of power, but as a contingent and ongoing renegotiation of complex power geometries.

In addition to highlighting the complex social risks ensemble pedagogy requires of practitioners, as I discussed in the conclusion to the previous chapter, this understanding of ensemble pedagogy uncrowning as positioned in wider geometries of power has several implications for ensemble pedagogy teacher training and practice. In demonstrating the value of playfully reflexive identity work, this study suggests a focus on ensemble practitioner training which focuses on developing the types of reflexive, empathically dialogic identity work described within these case studies. (Kempe, 2012; Wales, 2009) Etheridge Woodson argues for this when she calls on youth theatre leaders to develop a critical and reflexive understanding of power discourses and their own positionality within them, this critical understanding can be seen as essential for the creation of 'participatory publics' in our work; i.e. the enactment of active citizenship. (Etheridge Woodson 2015:109)

This focus on teaching practice as a conscious and reflexive creation of third space has been argued to offer empowerment and hope for teachers seeking social justice outcomes for their students. (Nolan and Stitzlein, 2011; Rodricks, 2015; Stitzlein and Rector-Aranda, 2016) Though supporting the complex and deeply personal work of becoming conscious of social power discourses and our own identity positionalities with is an idiosyncratic and time consuming journey, (Pittard, 2015; Snyder-Young, 2013) and requires attendant recognition of the need for systemic structural changes. (Hytten, 2011) The growing area of research exploring the possibilities and challenges of whole school/institutional change for the facilitation of pro-social arts education could offer ways forward in this direction. (Dawson et al., 2012; Etherton and Prentki, 2007; Freebody et al., 2018; Hewison et al., 2010; Thomson et al., 2010; Winston and Parvoti, 2016)

What a model of ensemble pedagogy as the construction of actively civic third space via *playfulness* can specifically contribute to this therefore is firstly offering an ontology of this critical reflexive discourse work which speaks through an established and recognisable creative and educational rhetoric. (Neelands, 2016; Schechner, 2012; Somers, 2013; Turner, 1982) And secondly offers a framing which avoids dwelling in solemn and often

highly abstract concepts of critical social theory by foregrounding the fun and collective joy (Segal, 2017) accessible through the approaches of ensemble pedagogy.

 As analysis in the previous chapter highlighting the interconnectivity of discourses of play and care utilised by participants in enacting civic third spaces shows, this focus on playfulness can be viewed in parallel to the recent work of Gallagher and colleagues, arguing for a valuing of care in the grounding and generating of social hope in the lives of young people via theatre education. (Gallagher, 2015, 2016a; Gallagher and Rodricks, 2017) In her discussion of the creation of 'spaces of potentiality' in applied theatre contexts, Sloan draws on affect theory to argue the dynamic, emotive 'aliveness' of the body in motion invoked in applied theatre practices opens up new personal and social possibilities. (Sloan, 2018) I suggest therefore this study introduces a parallel focus on play, complimenting Gallagher's concentration on care to offer a dual narrative of the potential of affective discourses of 'aliveness' in thirding existing power discourses and open up spaces of active citizenship and social hope. Winston's contrast of the aesthetic qualities of 'charming', play-like beauty vs the powerful sublime, (Winston, 2010; Winston and Strand, 2013) and O'Toole's contrast of moments of awe with moments of guffaw (O'Toole, 2001) hint at the potential for care and play being understood as dual strands of theatre and drama education pedagogy as affective 'aliveness'. Though, as the exploration of the 2014 Grafton High 'family values' demonstrates, these third spaces of mutual care and play still inevitably carry disciplinary power discourses, in potentially emotive and tacit ways, as in the gendered division of care amongst the students. Thus it is necessary to be conscious of what remains or replaces uncrowning of normative institutional power discourses in these models.

With regards to the focus on Shakespeare education, this study has demonstrated how playful discourse and the attendant creation of an ensemble third space for encountering Shakespeare removes binaries of conservative cultural dominance and simplified universal accessibility. (Coles, 2013; Dyches, 2017; Olive, 2011) The variety of 'text playing' practices detailed in section 7.3.1 offer the beginnings of an exploration into what a specifically play-focused model of active Shakespeare education could offer. There is potential for further research and practice development in this area, particularly in drawing on the concepts of playing the word and world of Shakespeare, as discussed in chapter four. (Berry, 2008; Monk, Heron, et al., 2011) Furthermore, the social justice potential of playing Shakespeare (Mackey, 2004) in ways that weave in participants positionalities and

offer opportunities for author/itive restorying (Dyches, 2017) can be seen as holding rich potential for developing the notion of Shakespeare as a socially hopeful we story, (Green, 2008) in order to generatively prompt active citizenship in ways more nuanced and critical than simplistic claims to Shakespeare's universality or humanity. Yet, within the ethnography and pilot case studies discussed in this thesis, there were a range of ways this author/itive re/we storying was limited. In the 2014 Grafton High case in particular narrow and hierarchical understandings of the role of theatrical director, and a 'missionary' zeal to bring the cultural value of Shakespeare to students whilst circumnavigating engagement in the specifics of playing the *word* of the text were limiting factors. Therefore it is necessary not to overstate the democratising potential of active and ensemble Shakespeare work, but to critically consider it in light of Shakespeare's rich but ambiguous cultural positionality.

This study also holds implications for further theatre and drama education research exploring the critical social models of discourse, identity and space. Building on existing explorations (for recent examples see: Freebody 2013; Rajendran 2016; Weber 2017; Sloan 2018) developing knowledge in this direction would respond to calls for "A mature pedagogical field" (Cahill, 2018:173) which can not only connect with, but drive forward developments in related disciples and broader theory. (O'Toole, 2010; Omasta and Snyder-Young, 2014) As theatre and drama education literature increasingly recognises the pertinence of global, growing issues of social justice, economy and environment (Finneran and Freebody, 2016; Hughes and Nicholson, 2016b; Neelands, 2010a; O'Connor and Anderson, 2015) this demands a reconsideration of our remit: are we a field primarily concerned with subject specific advocacy? I would rather argue there is an imperative to join colleagues working in similar critical, creative and progressive educational areas in the broadest sense to build substantive responses to these challenges which have the potential to concretely effect change in global educational policy and practice. To this end, I have sought to collaborate with performative language teaching scholar and applied linguist Silja Weber (2017) on a future research project, focusing on the use of critical approaches to discourse analysis (Rogers, 2011) in theatre and drama education research contexts.

It is possible to see the implications of this study as contributing to scholarship on ensemble pedagogy on several levels. Firstly as an active, democratic and theatre-based approach to teaching Shakespeare. Secondly as a theatre and drama education 'bridging

metaphor' expressing a relationship between theatre and drama education approaches and notion of social justice and active citizenship. Thirdly as a potentially broader educational and cultural model for work with children and youth which embodies social justice aims. Ultimately, what this study contributes to the field is a model of ensemble approaches to Shakespeare education which foregrounds the potential of facilitating third spaces - substantive, albeit temporarily and contingent spaces - for the embodiment of socially hopeful active citizenship via the simple but powerful premise of playing together. In this way, going back to Saxon's reflections that "in our desire to get through the door, we can be distracted. In our anxiety to be heard, we can learn others' language and sometimes forget the power of our own" (cited in O'Toole, 2009:viii) I argue speaking of these processes through the language of playfulness is a radical move to speak more freely and fluently in our own powerful language. Ultimately then, talking about our work via play lends it both a flexibility and a strength, which, if more fully developed and harnessed, holds the potential to empower its operation in oppressive neoliberal discourses of education, arts and culture without the need to either quantify or mythologise our work in relation to the value structures of those oppressive discourses.

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Appendix 1 Research Questions Table

Date	Research Area	Research Topic	General Research Q	Specific Research Q	Data Collection Qs
May 2013	Play theory and theatre education	Impact assessment in theatre education	Can play theory give a useful construct to assessing the impact of theatre education programmes?	What other constructs of value in theatre education impact assessment? What are their limitations? Why and how could play help?	
	Theatre education	Play theory and theatre education	Can play theory offer a useful language for exploring the value of theatre education programmes with school-age children?	How might a theory of play look in relation to theatre education? a) How could play as a mode of learning be understood in school-age children? b) In what ways does this understanding compliment, extend or contradict other	**1st Cycle (Theory Forming)** How do participants articulate the value of SSF?

				theories of the value of learning through theatre education?	In what ways do these articulations of value map onto play theory and other theories of the value of projects like SSF?
				To what extent is this theory borne out in theatre education participants' (perceptions/experiences)/articulations of the value of theatre education?	Is it therefore mouu about playful learning in projects like SSF?
				a) What are the limitations of this understanding in exploring the value of theatre education programmes?	If so, where/how is this playfulness present?
				What are the implications for impact assessment/assessing the value of theatre education programmes?	**2nd Cycle (Theory Testing)**
				b) Can this understanding go beyond the experiences of individual cases and provide a robust metric for impact assessment?	Can you scale this up and still make it relevant?

| July 2013 | Theatre Education | Theories of play and theatre education | "What is the place of play and playfulness in theorising the value of school-based theatre education programmes?"

[Literature review questions:

Why has the study of play in education been largely limited to EY? Is this justified? | c) What are the implications for culture, arts and education policy, for theatre education organisations and for education partners (i.e. schools, students' etc)

1. How might a theory of play look in relation to school-based theatre education?

a) How could play as a mode of learning be understood in school-age children?

b) In what ways does this understanding compliment, extend or contradict other theories of the value of theatre education?

2. To what extent is this theory borne out in practice? | **Systematic Literature Review**

What methods for studying play in school-age theatre education are suggested by the literature?

Field Research Cycle 1

How do participants conceptualise 'play' and do they |

				a) Do participants experience and report their experience of theatre education programmes as playful?	feel it is present in their TiE project?

			What does the broader field of play research have to offer to this context?
			
			In what ways has TiE literature engaged with theories of play?]
				b) To what extent is it possible to robustly record or measure play and playfulness in theatre education practice?
				
				c) What are the limitations of theorising school-based theatre education programmes in this way?
				
				3. What are the implications…
				
				   a) For theatre education organisations' practice and impact assessment?
				
				   b) For culture, arts and education policy?
				
				   c) For theatre education participants – schools, students, communities?
					Field Research Cycle 2
					
					To what extent is it possible to robustly record or measure play and playfulness in theatre education practice?

Aug 13	Theatre education	Play and Shakespeare	Playing with Shakespeare: A play-based exploration of how participants in Shakespeare Schools Festival take ownership of the text	1. Why theorise participants' engagement in terms of play? a. How do theories of play, Shakespeare and theatre education speak to each other? 2. What categories, types or modes of play can be ascribed to the SSF process? 3. To what extent can these playful (actions/behaviours/interactions/ discourses?!!) be said to facilitate participants' ownership of the Shakespeare text?	**Literature Review** a) How might a theory of play look in relation to school-based theatre education? b) How could play as a mode of learning be understood in school-age children? c) In what ways does this understanding compliment, extend or contradict other theories of the value of theatre education? d) To what extent is it possible to robustly record or measure play and

| | | | | | playfulness in theatre education practice?

Field Research Cycle 1

a) Do participants report their experience as playful and if so how do they conceptualise 'play'?

b) Drawing on existing play metrics what categories of play can be observed in the SSF context? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nov 2013 | | | **Playing with Shakespeare: The role of theories of play and playfulness in exploring theatre-based** | 1. How can the role of play in theatre education projects such as Shakespeare School Festival (SSF) be conceptualised? | **a) Is playfulness evident/meaningful in SSF process?** |

			approaches to teaching Shakespeare	2. To what extent can this conceptualisation be utilised empirically [through linguistic ethnography?] 3. What understandings of participants' experience of the SSF rehearsal and performance process does this play-based empirical analysis allow?	b) What different types/modes of play be identified? c) What contextual factors are invoked?/what does a focus on play allow us to see/say
May 2014			Playing with Shakespeare: The role of theories of play and playfulness in exploring ensemble approaches to teaching Shakespeare	1. How can the role of play in ensemble theatre education projects such as Shakespeare School Festival (SSF) be conceptualised? 2. To what extent can this conceptualisation be utilised empirically 3. What can this focus on the role of play reveal about the processes of ensemble theatre education projects	a) Is playfulness evident and meaningful for participants in SSF process? b) What characterises this playfulness? Who, what, when? c) Does there appear to be any contextual prerequisites for playfulness?

					d) What do participants achieve through their playfulness? How and why?
October 2014	Theatre Education	Ensemble Pedagogy	**Playing with Shakespeare: The building of ensembles, a linguistic ethnographic case study**	1. How can 'ensemble' as a theatre education pedagogy be defined? 2. How can the role of playfulness in ensemble projects such as Shakespeare School Festival (SSF) be conceptualised? 3. To what extent can this conceptualisation be utilised empirically? 4. What can this focus on playfulness reveal about the processes of ensemble theatre education projects?	**a) How is 'ensemble' understood?** **b) How is this enacted in practice?** **c) Is playfulness evident and meaningful for participants in making sense of and enacting 'ensemble'?** **d) What characterises this playfulness? Who (teacher, student), what (verbal, physical, formal, informal), when (beginnings, endings,)?**

					e) Does there appear to be any contextual prerequisites for playfulness? f) What, precisely, do participants achieve through their playfulness? Why is this relevant to the understanding and enacting of 'ensemble'?
?					

Appendix 2 School Access Summary 2013 (Pilot)

Research Summary

 I am carrying out a PhD researching the value participants find in theatre education projects such as Shakespeare School Festival. After completing my MA in Drama and Theatre Education in 2009 and undertaking three years of working as a drama practitioner with companies such as Shakespeare's Globe, I am particularly interested in the social and playful elements of theatre education.

 My initial aim is to follow 5 case study schools through the 2013 festival process, and explore what values the participating teachers, students, local theatres and families of students place on taking part in the project.

Access

 My overall aim in this research is to have an unobtrusive and informal relationship with case study schools. To this end there will be no written component to taking part in the research, it will consist of observations and short, unstructured interviews. My hope is that taking part in this case study will be a useful 'sounding board' for participating teachers to reflect as they go through the process of taking part in SSF.

 The breakdown of what access I would need is as follows. This can be seen as a starting point, as I am more than happy to be flexible in line with the needs of individual schools:

1) Short (30 mins approx) initial meeting with teacher to introduce self and project.

2) If appropriate, similar introductory meetings with other lead staff as needed.

3) Short, unstructured interview with case study teachers following directors' workshop day, which I will observe/take part in

4) Two short focus group sessions (30 mins approx) with 3-5 cast members at beginning and end of rehearsal process.

5) Observe a maximum of 6 rehearsals, including SSF cast workshop. To be followed by very short, unstructured interviews with teacher reflecting on rehearsal process.

6) PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY – short, unstructured interviews with case study teachers following the SSF primary school conference day, which I will attend.

7) Attend performance day and observe dress rehearsal process.

8) Gather feedback from parents of cast members on performance night, either by short focus group or another appropriate method agreed in advance.

9) Short (30 mins approx) debriefing interview with teacher, reflecting on project.

Ethics and confidentiality

1) I will hold an enhanced CRB check issued via the University of Warwick this year.

2) I will make myself aware of and abide by the safeguarding and data protection policies of both SSF and the case study schools at all times.

3) All schools and school participants will be anonymised in all reports, articles etc.

4) Interviews will be recorded either through tape recording or, in the case of spontaneous conversations, by thorough notes after the event.

5) Observations will initially be recorded through field notes. As the project progresses, if there is reason the research could be further served by taping, photographing or videoing sessions, separate and full permission will be sought for this from case study schools.

6) Similarly any observation schedules or frameworks that are used as the research progresses will be shared with case study schools.

7) All interview and observation data used will be member-checked with participants to ensure they are satisfied they are represented fairly and accurately through the data.

Appendix 3 School Access Summary 2014

Research Summary

I am carrying out a PhD looking the role of play and playfulness in theatre-based approaches to teaching Shakespeare such as the SSF project.

This will be my second cycle of field research, after completing a pilot study with 4 case study schools in 2013. The research design for 2014 is a 2-school case study using the approach of linguistic ethnography, which involves gathering qualitative data from observations, interviews and focus groups, as well as videoing rehearsal sessions.

Access

My overall aim in this research is to have an unobtrusive and informal relationship with case study schools. To this end there will be no written component to taking part in the research, it will consist of observations and short, unstructured interviews and focus groups. My hope is that taking part in this case study will provide a useful 'sounding board' for participating teachers to reflect as they go through the process of taking part in SSF.

The breakdown of what access I would need is as follows. This can be seen as a starting point, as I am more than happy to be flexible in line with the needs of individual schools:

1) Three short (30 mins approx) interviews with lead teacher at the beginning, middle and end of SSF project.

2) Two focus group sessions (30 mins approx) with 3-5 cast members at beginning and end of rehearsal process.

3) Attend and observe as much of the rehearsal process as possible, including SSF cast workshop.

4) To video record all attended in-school rehearsals.

5) Attend performance day and observe dress rehearsal process.

Ethics and confidentiality

1) I hold an enhanced CRB check issued via the University of Warwick last year.

2) I will make myself aware of and abide by the safeguarding and data protection policies of both SSF and the case study schools at all times.

3) All schools and school participants will be fully anonymised in all reports, articles etc.

4) Interviews will be recorded either through tape recording or, in the case of spontaneous conversations, by thorough notes after the event.

5) Observations will be recorded through field notes and, in the case of in-school rehearsals, video recording.

6) Any observation schedules or frameworks that are used as the research progresses will be shared with case study schools.

7) All participants will have the opportunity to member-check all interview and observation data to ensure they are satisfied they are represented fairly and accurately through the data.

8) Anonymised interim reports will shared with SSF as part of the access agreement. However, this study remains my own independent academic research, primarily for inclusion in my PhD thesis. Any other public use of data related to the case study, i.e. in conference papers, journal articles etc, will be made available to case study schools, as will the final thesis.

9) All audio and visual data will be securely stored on a password protected PC; used only for analysis and not publicly shared through the PhD thesis or any other presentation or publication; and will destroyed at the completion of the project.

10) All field notes will be processed into word documents which will be securely stored on a password protected PC, as will transcriptions of any relevant audio and visual data. Any inclusion of this data in the PhD thesis or any other presentation or report will be fully anonymised.

11) You and your students have the right to withdraw from the study at any point.

Appendix 4 Contact Summary Sheet

Appendix 5 Typed Contact Summary Sheet

Session: #24	Date: Tues 9/9/14 Time: 8:55-9:55	Venue: Studio

Overview

Feeling tricky to pin down what went on in this session – as previous for bit of off-task 'banter' between Grace and group.

Warm ups and discussions of physicality but then, to be honest, the actual blocking and reading of the scene felt quite formal and teacher-led. Grace stopping characters and focusing on small elements, whilst others standing static and waiting.

In fact, the whole session felt quite teacher-led – bar them setting out the opening blocking – which for my money they remembered [from before the summer break] really well.

There were some moments of playfulness <u>with</u> the text (number of children, applause card) And again the 'identity play' of check Amar.

After the session Grace and I discussed the scene – as a practitioner, I feel it's currently quite stilted and commented that the prisoners need to need to do more and make a choice about how they're acting.

Grace also shared that Amar was assessed yesterday and due to low reading comprehension it's been suggested he have a reader and scribe

Grace states that in some way this makes sense, but suggests in others his engagement with the script seems to negate this. I wonder – thinking about his 'learned helplessness' in written lessons and the fact he hasn't actually learnt (possibly because he doesn't understand?) the first line fully and despite the state of his script, I don't think he's done any serious reading of it over the holidays.

So for me the low reading comprehension makes sense (though I would give him extra tutoring, rather than a scribe/reader – smacks of getting him through his GCSEs at any cost)

Though, having said that, his sight reading is very good – though I wonder what his level of <u>comprehension</u> is within that?

Contact Summary

1) What people, events or situations were involved?

Whole group and Grace in studio space. Circle warm up, practical and read through section of scene 1

2) What were the main themes/issues the contact [involved for me]

Teacher leading? Finding moments of playfulness within the content of the lesson, rather than only off-task/banter

3) What research questions did the contact bare most on?

c) Banter at open and close – repetition of check Amar, at least two instance of playfulness <u>within</u> rehearsal/exploration of play

d) 'Banter' brackets – teacher-led? Less so at close?

f) notion that Amar's playful transgression might be helping him achieve navigation of his low comprehension?

More playfulness within rehearsal – explorative, lowering stakes?

4) What new speculations were suggested?

Amar's reading level?

Grace's quite tight leading of rehearsals.

5) Where should I place most energy/attention next contact?

How often does Amar directly read from text?

How often does each student chuck in a suggestion

Post-Session

Appendix 6 Field Research Audit Trail

	2013						2014												2015			TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL MAY 2015-JANUARY 2016	2016												2017							TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL SEPTEMBER 2017-SEPTEMBER 2018
	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A		F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	
Pilot Data collection	1		▓	▓	▓	▓																																						
Pilot data processing							2	▓	▓	▓																																		
Pilot data											3	▓	▓	▓												4															5		
Pilot analysis																																											▓	
Data collection													6	▓		▓	▓	▓																										
Data processing																			7	▓	▓	▓	▓																					

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	Data coding																				8																	
	Analysis writing																																						

1. **Pilot Data Collection June-July 2013 and September-November 2013**

	Statten Park	Grafton High	Brookline	St. Mary's
Observations In-situ unstructured notes	1 session July 2013 6 sessions September-October 2013	1 session July 2013 3 sessions October-November 2013	4 sessions September-October 2013	2 sessions June-July 2013 7 sessions October-November 2013
Interviews In-situ notes and transcription	1. 22/07/13 2. 4/10/13 3. 15/11/13	1. 16/07/13 2. 27/11/13	1. 24/09/13	1. 17/10/13
Focus Groups	1. 13/09/13	1. 1/10/13	1. 24/09/13	1. 15/10/13

Transcription	2. 15/11/13 (2 groups)	2. 27/11/13		

2. Pilot Data Processing December 2014 -March 2014

Transcribed interviews and focus groups and typed up fieldnotes, keeping regular analytic memos throughout process

3. Pilot Data Coding April-July 2014

4 partial attempts at thematic coding fieldnotes, drawing from insights of analytic memos, and relevant elements of literature review.

Wrote interim analysis document, which along with upgrade feedback informed developments in research design for main case study.

4. Pilot Data Coding – Second Pass March 2016

Utilised Charmaz's diagramming approach to map thematic coding of data.

Refined these codes to identify 7 key sensitizing concepts, in part through reflection on what elements has been useful moving forward into main study.

5. Pilot Data Analysis (chapter drafting) July 2017

Seven sensitizing concepts used as chapter framework.

Process of populating each concept with data extracts. Through iterative cycles of triangulating data and connection emerging trends with theoretical literature, refined structure to 3 core sensitising concepts and 12 second order concepts or themes.

6. Main study data collection: Grafton High June-July and September-November 2014

Observations Video recorded In-situ unstructured field notes Post session: in situ notes expanded, contact summary sheet completed	23 sessions June-July 2014 25 sessions September-November 2014
Interviews Transcription	1. 9/06/14 2. 15/10/14 3. 27/11/14
Focus Groups Transcription	1.1 10/06/14 1.2 23/06/14 2.1 17/07/14 2.2 29/09/14 3.1 and .2 27/11/14

7. **Main study data processing December 2014-April 2015**

Transcribed interviews and focus groups and typed up fieldnote summaries, keeping regular analytic memos throughout process.

8. **Main study data coding May-June 2016**

Utilised research question reflections from field note contact summary sheets to pull out and list each research-question specific comment from throughout data corpus.

Utilised Charmaz's diagramming mapping approach to map a thematic coding of these research question-focused comments.

Open coding of interview and focus group data. Mapping of key codes/themes identified.

Used the thematic codes drawn out from these two episodes of diagramming/mapping to draft an initial chapter structure within research question framework.

Through process of populating this chapter structure with elements of the data (observation data drawn initially from contact summaries, and referring back to in-situ fieldnotes and video recordings where needed), developed and refined the structure. Iterative cycles of triangulation across data sources and connecting emerging trends with theoretical literature finalised written analysis.