

Orality in Playback Theatre: A Discourse Analysis

BY

NGEFOR SHELLA ZANJAM

This Thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Arts: Drama Department

Faculty of Humanities

University of Pretoria

SUPERVISOR: Prof Allan Munro

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof Marié-Heleen Coetzee

December 2021

DEDICATION

I dedicate this milestone to my late brothers FONKEH ISIDORE and NGU BLAISE who supported me in this journey but could not live to celebrate the achievement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first thanks go to God Almighty whose presence has given me strength and kept me sane on this journey.

I am so indebted to my supervisors Prof. Allan Munro and Prof. Marié-Heleen Coetzee for always believing in me and encouraging me whenever I felt like quitting. I have learned so much from them and grown intellectually by their sides.

I am grateful to my entire family who, despite not seeing me for so many years, have encouraged me to stay on the path. Their understanding and prayers have made it possible for me to reach this point.

I thank the Drama for Life Playback Theatre Company for opening their doors to me whenever I knocked and to all the participants of the performance for agreeing to the use of their performance for this study.

Not forgetting my church community (West Central African Community of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Pretoria), and the tribal communities I belong to in South Africa whose constant prayers, material, moral and financial support kept me afloat.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The Department of Drama places great emphasis upon integrity and ethical conduct in the preparation of all written work submitted for academic evaluation.

While academic staff teach you about referencing techniques and how to avoid plagiarism, you too have a responsibility in this regard. If you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required, you should speak to your lecturer before any written work is submitted.

You are guilty of plagiarism if you copy something from another author's work (e.g., a book, an article or a website) without acknowledging the source and pass it off as your own. In effect you are stealing something that belongs to someone else. This is not only the case when you copy work word-for-word (verbatim), but also when you submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (paraphrase) or use a line of argument without acknowledging it. You are not allowed to use work previously produced by another student. You are also not allowed to let anybody copy your work with the intention of passing it off as his/her work.

Students who commit plagiarism will not be given any credit for plagiarised work. The matter may also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious contravention of the University's rules and can lead to expulsion from the University.

The declaration which follows must accompany all written work submitted while you are a student of the Department of Drama.

No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and attached.

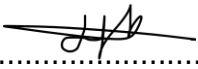
Full names of student: Ngefor Shella Zanjam

Student number: 14450152

Topic of Work: ORALITY IN PLAYBACK THEATRE: A Discourse
Analysis

Declaration

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this thesis is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.
3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE  DATE 2021/07/29

ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this thesis, has obtained, for the research described in the work, the applicable ethical clearance to conduct the research on 01-Oct-2015 with reference number GW20150920HS.

The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's code of ethics for researchers and the policy guidelines for responsible research.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the dynamics involved in the transitions between an oral and orally-based storytelling mode of narration, and the performance-based presentation of that story, as encountered in the storytelling processes in playback theatre.

Oral traditions have always existed in the world at large, and Africa is particularly steeped in oral traditions, of which storytelling is one. Modes of storytelling shape-changed through the ages. As a mode of applied theatre, playback theatre is centred on storytelling. The fundamental aim of playback theatre is to use theatre to bring a 'critical consciousness' to an experience that may have been inchoately personal. In the process of translating an orally narrated story to performance, the assumption, therefore, is that there would be some form of close correlation, refinement, reflection on and reflection with the act of enactment of the teller's story.

This is explored through the lens of orality and discourse analysis with particular focus on the theories of Walter J. Ong and James P. Gee. The study shows that characteristics of a purely oral culture and discourse tools are inherent in a contemporary oral form like playback theatre. The thesis argues that an understanding of the combined Oral formulae and discourse characteristics may curb potential miscommunication or mis-reflection between the teller and actors in playback theatre.

The study then describes the potential application of orality and D/discourse to theatre in community in general to establish how the two models of analysis might work. Following this, the study re-engages with playback to pinpoint the specific dynamics and working methods of playback theatre to determine the ways in which the teller's story or narrative found its reflection in the enactment presented by the playback theatre troupe or company. Following, the study analyses a story from a Drama for Life Playback Theatre performance by means of orality formulae, paying attention to both the teller's 'presentation' and the playback theatre enactment. Then, the same was done using the discourse analysis tools. In this way two sets of data emerged. On the one hand the 'information' contained in the teller's utterances could be determined using both analytical models so as to determine similarities and differences around that information, and then the same could be done with the enactment. The second, and particularly important set of data for this thesis could come about by comparing

and contrasting the data from the teller's set of utterances with the data from the enactment of performance moments. In this way the potential miscommunication, or mis-reflection could be determined.

Each utterance moment was analysed according to its most dominant Oral formulae and discourse marker or tool interpretation and then these occurrences were added together to show which strategies were more prominent and which least prominent. The study interprets these trends and tendencies between the dominant themes and meanings as they applied to the compare and contrast approach between the teller's utterances and the playback theatre enactment moments.

The findings suggest that this specific enactment by the playback theatre troupe company might not be as reflective of, or capture the crux of the teller's story, which on turn, might compromise the aim of critical consciousness that playback theatre aims to reach. The limitations of this study point out that these findings cannot be generalised. However, they do show trends around potential areas of miscommunication or mis-reading between the two parties. In summary, the findings pinpoint places, domains and strategies that may enhance an extraordinarily powerful and communal experience. Thus, potentially closing the gap between listening – 'translating' - interpreting and performance.

KEYWORDS: Orality, D/discourse analysis, Playback Theatre

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	viii
List of tables.....	xiii
List of figures.....	xiv
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background.....	1
1.1.1. A broad historical overview of playback theatre (PT).....	9
1.2. Research questions and aims.....	11
1.3. Research approach.....	13
1.3.1. Research process.....	15
1.4. Structure of the thesis.....	17
1.5 Chapter summary.....	20
Chapter 2: The spoken text (orality).....	21
2.1. Introduction.....	21
2.2. Understanding orality.....	23
2.3. The oral tradition.....	25
2.4. The orality/literacy dichotomy.....	26
2.5. The orality formulae.....	32
2.5.1. Additive rather than subordinative.....	33
2.5.2. Aggregative rather than analytic (adjectives).....	35
2.5.3. Redundant or copious.....	38
2.5.4. Conservative or traditionalist.....	40
2.5.5. Close to the human lifeworld.....	42
2.5.6. Agonistically toned.....	44
2.5.7. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced.....	47
2.5.8. Homeostatic.....	50
2.5.9. Situated rather than abstract.....	52
2.6. Oral dynamics.....	54
2.6.1. From literacy to secondary Orality.....	56
2.7. Chapter summary.....	58
Chapter 3: Discourse analysis.....	60
3.1. Introduction.....	60
3.2. The functions of language.....	62
3.3. Language as a performative.....	65
3.4. Gee's seven building tasks.....	67
3.4.1. Significance.....	68

3.4.2. Practices (activities)	70
3.4.3. Identities	74
3.4.4. Relationships	77
3.4.5. Politics (the distribution of social goods)	78
3.4.6. Connections	79
3.4.7. Sign systems and knowledge	81
3.5. Doing discourse and Discourse analysis	83
3.5.1. Situated meaning	84
3.5.2. Social Languages	86
3.5.3. Intertextuality	87
3.5.4. Figured Worlds	88
3.5.5. 'D' discourse	89
3.6. D/discourse analysis in theatre performances	91
3.6.1. The playback theatre ensemble D/discourse	92
3.6.2. The playback theatre D/discourse	94
3.7. Chapter summary	97
Chapter 4: Orality and discourse in theatre as a community experience	99
4.1. Introduction	99
4.2. Jakobson, Ong and Gee summarised	100
4.2.1. Jakobson's act of communication	100
4.2.2. Ong's Orality formulae	102
4.2.3. Gee's D/discourse building task	104
4.3. Theatre as a community experience	106
4.4. Theatre: an act of communication	110
4.4.1. Applied theatre (AT)	111
4.4.2. Applied theatre as Oral Discourse	113
4.5. Role and role-play	115
4.6. Ritual in theatre	123
4.6.1. Communitas	125
4.6.2. Play	128
4.7. Chapter summary	132
Chapter 5: Playback theatre as a mode of applied theatre	134
5.1. Introduction	134
5.2. Stories and storytelling	136
5.3. The received concept of playback theatre	138
5.4. The ritual in and of the playback process	144

5.4.1. First mini-ritual: the storytelling	146
5.4.2. Second mini-ritual: the enactment	148
5.5. Structure and practicality of a playback theatre performance	149
5.5.1. Playing back the stories: the structure and forms	152
5.6. Oral features in a playback theatre performance	153
5.7. A congruence of D/discourse in a community experience.....	156
5.8. Chapter summary	158
Chapter 6: Storytelling and enactment	160
6.1. Introduction	160
6.1.1. The discourse markers	162
6.1.2. The orality characteristics (Ong 1982)	163
6.2. The performance.....	164
6.2.1. The story.....	165
6.3. Analysis of the discourse markers in the story.....	183
6.3.1. Significance	184
6.3.2. Connections.....	184
6.3.3. Sign systems and knowledge	185
6.3.4. Relationships	186
6.3.5. Politics	186
6.3.6. Identities	186
6.3.7. Practices	189
6.4. Analysis of oral characteristics in the story	191
6.4.1. Situated rather than abstract.....	191
6.4.2. Redundant or copious.....	191
6.4.3. Additive rather than subordinate	192
6.4.4. Aggregative rather than analytic	192
6.4.5. Homeostatic.....	193
6.4.6. Close to the human lifeworld.....	194
6.4.7. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	194
6.4.8. Conservative or traditionalist.....	195
6.4.9. Agonistically toned.....	195
6.5. The enactment.....	196
6.6. Analysis of the discourse markers in the enactment	219
6.6.1. Practice.....	219
6.6.2. Significance	220
6.6.3. Identity	221

6.6.4. Relationship	222
6.6.5. Connection.....	222
6.6.6. Sign system and knowledge	223
6.6.7. Politics	223
6.7. Analysis of orality characteristics in the enactment.....	224
6.7.1. Situated rather than abstract.....	224
6.7.2. Homeostatic.....	224
6.7.3. Agonistically toned	225
6.7.4. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	225
6.7.5. Close to the human lifeworld.....	226
6.7.6. Conservative or traditionalist.....	226
6.7.7. Redundant or copious.....	227
6.7.8. Aggregative rather than analytic	227
6.8. Summary of chapter.....	228
Chapter 7: Discourse and orality consolidation: the findings	229
7.1. Introduction	229
7.2. Analysis of the teller's story with orality and discourse: what the data is saying	230
7.2.1. The possible meaning in the orality numbers.....	231
7.2.2. The possible meaning in the discourse numbers.....	233
7.2.3. Cardinal differences in the story's orality and discourse characteristics	234
7.3. Enactment's orality and discourse analysis: what the data is saying	234
7.3.1. The possible meaning in the orality numbers.....	235
7.3.2. The possible meaning in the discourse data.....	236
7.3.3. Cardinal differences in the enactment's orality and discourse characteristics.....	237
7.4. The correlation of the story and the enactment.....	238
7.4.1. Differences in the discourse and orality of the story and enactment.....	238
7.5. Digging deep: several meanings in a story	243
7.6. The medium of enactment: the reason for differences	246
7.7. Chapter summary	248
Chapter 8: Conclusions and implications	250
8.1. Overview of the research project	250
8.2. General Findings.....	253
8.2.1. The change in medium	253
8.2.2. The problems of enactment choices	254
8.2.3. Whose critical consciousness is it, anyway?.....	255

8.3. Shortfalls of the study.....	257
8.4. Possible further research	258
8.5. Conclusion	259
SOURCES CONSULTED	260
Appendix A.....	276
Appendix B.....	278

List of tables

Table 1: The Oral-Written Dichotomy (Horowitz and Samuels 1987:21).	28
Table 2: Analysis of storytelling.....	168
Table 3: Sum of discourse markers in the story.	181
Table 4: Sum of orality characteristics in the story.	181
Table 5: Analysis of story enactment.	200
Table 6: Sum of discourse markers in the enactment.	218
Table 7: Sum of orality characteristics in the enactment.	218

List of figures

Figure 1: Factors of Language in Communication (Jakobson 1960:352).	63
Figure 2: Factors of Language and their Functions (Tribus 2017:4).....	64
Figure 3: Playback Theatre Participants' D/discourse.	93
Figure 4: Playback Theatre Performers' D/discourse.	94
Figure 5: Playback Theatre Performance Discourse.....	95
Figure 6: The trajectory of events in Playback Theatre.	141
Figure 7: Essential Elements of Playback Theatre (Fox 1999:127).....	146
Figure 8: Playback Theatre Spatial Convention (Salas cited by Dennis 2004:294).	149

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

For ages storytelling has been the best form of remembering, since it is simultaneously preserving and remembering (Weinrich cited by Dauber 1999:67)

This study examines the problematics and dynamics involved in the transitions between an oral and orally-based storytelling mode of narration, and a theatrically based, performance-based presentation of that story, as encountered in the storytelling processes in playback theatre (henceforth PT). The fundamental aim of playback theatre (PT), according to Fox (2003:50), is to establish a performance vehicle that will bring "...critical consciousness to a circumstance that previously may have been inchoately personal". In this case, it is assumed that the "inchoately personal" matter or circumstance arises from the member of the audience who has volunteered to present a story to the other company members and the audience present – the teller of the story. The 'contract' of PT is then to creatively interpret the teller's story and develop some form of enactment (and possibly re-enactment) of the story so that a mode of 'critical consciousness' or an alternative perspective on the story may arise from the enactment. The assumption, therefore, is that there would be some form of close correlation, refinement, reflection on and reflection with the act of enactment of the teller's story. The purpose of this thesis therefore is to critically engage with this assumption, to determine, where possible, whether such a correlation or reflection presented in the enactment can be seen as a fair (in the sense of reasonably accurate) reflection of the 'inchoately personal circumstance' presented by the teller, and if there are discrepancies, how or why they have come about, and what might, speculatively, be done about them.

To do so, the study uses the characteristics, dynamics and communication formulae primarily identified by Walter J. Ong to be present in the discourse systems of a community that appears to be reliant (in language) on a predominantly oral form of discourse, in conjunction with discourse analysis tools from James Paul Gee (who operates in a discourse domain with both a verbal and a written discourse saturation). Ong (1982; 2002) 'constructs' an oral tradition as one based on the verbal, which implies a society almost completely systematised through the dynamics of verballity/orality and untouched by the physical presence of visual writing and the

written (as opposed to the pronounced) word. Such physical or visual writing brought different dynamics to the field of thinking, remembering and the passage of time. Hence Ong's theory presents characteristics and ways of acquiring and managing (and sharing) knowledge in such an oral culture. By extension, therefore, his theory can also present tools for the analysis of current verbal discourse. In a similar way, Gee's (2014 and elsewhere) theory/system of discourse analysis presents tools and methods of understanding and managing discourse which he argues needs to be seen as 'language in action'.

Both theories will be examined in detail in this study, with a focus on contextual language-in-use. These theories provide an analytical system for engaging in attempting to understand what occurs when, what appears to be a primarily oral system of communication (in storytelling), is moved towards another mode or medium of presenting that same story. An example of such a context is in the narration, listening to and interpretation of stories in PT.

PT, as presented in this study, is a mode of applied theatre (henceforth AT) that uses verbal/spoken stories from audience members as the basis for improvised performances. Although the idea of the interpretation of the story in performance is central, misinterpretation in the process of listening and translating a verbal story into improvised theatrical performance can occur. It is in this regard that the study aims to contribute – to close the gap between listening - translating- interpreting and performance¹.

To do so, the study firstly explores, in specific chapters, the theories of orality, discourse, theatre, storytelling and performance separately in order to frame and focus its understanding with regards to the aim of the study and PT in particular. It then uses this framework to explore characteristics of an oral story in a PT performance towards establishing a frame for subtle interpretation of stories. From the discussion of Ong's theory of orality and Gee's discourse theory, the study further explores and shows the similarity between the two theories with the aim of combining them into one within the parameters of oral communication. The study engages in a detailed analysis, using the developed model, to foreground and describe the differences and similarities between

¹ It is acknowledged that one performs storytelling and that performance is a broad domain. However, for clarity in this thesis, performance refers to that which occurs in a theatrical domain, for example, while storytelling occurs in a storytelling environment.

the presented oral story and the presented performed version of that story. Following this, the study attempts an explanation of the reasons for the differences and similarities. The research concludes with recommendations for further studies that will apply the aforementioned framework for a better² interpretation of all forms of oral storytelling, but predominantly stories in PT.

In his article *Tracing the songlines: searching for the roots of playback theatre*, Dauber (1999:67) quotes from Bruce Chatwin in stating that “to exist is to be perceived”, to be recognised, acknowledged, and celebrated. From time immemorial, stories have been used to fulfil these human desires. Stories and storytelling have functioned in different ways in communities. The importance of stories in constructing and maintaining social and cultural realities is well documented. Stories have been used as a form of entertainment, escapism, and diversion (Norrick 1997; Turner 1980; Bruner 1991); they serve as a conservation function; conserving collective and communal memory; and have remembering histories (Tuwe 2016; Dennis 2008). Stories have been used as a form of education, preserving cultures, instilling moral values, and inculcating social roles and behaviours (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017; Lawrence & Paige 2016; Robin 2015). Stories also capture experiences, ideas, and dreams (Holstein & Gubrium 2000). They provide coherence to, and continuity in life-worlds (Banks-Wallace 1998; Schiffrin 1996). People lead (and organise) their lives through stories.

Thus, stories and storytelling as communal events, follow a particular process and have a clear intention. This multidimensionality can be called the phenomenon of ‘storying’. Banks-Wallace (2002:411) interprets storying as the process of structuring ideas, memories, experiences, and the like, into stories. Storying is governed by culturally specific conventions that impact on representation, re-telling and remembering of story content. Storytelling is the interactive process of sharing ideas and experiences through oral and/or embodied expressions. Telling a story establishes a relationship and shared experience between storyteller and audience.

Stories and storytelling are rooted in oral traditions (Banks-Wallace 2002:210). Oral traditions can take many forms, including storytelling, poetry, songs, chants, dance, masks, and similar manifestations. South Africa has particularly vibrant oral traditions

² The notion of ‘better’ is loaded. As used here, (and as will become clear) it implies more complex, potentially more accurate, and more nuanced than the examples that are analysed seem to suggest. In this way the philosophies and claims of PT are interrogated, indirectly, too.

(Brown 1998:1) that have been important aspects “of South African society since the development of the first human communities on the sub-continent” (Brown 1998:3). Examples of these extend from the songs and stories of the San people of Southern Africa to the praise poems of the African chiefdoms (Brown 1998:3). A number of South African authors, playwrights and poets adapted oral forms to the literary works, amongst others Herbert Dhlomo, Mazisi Kunene, Benedict Vilakazi, Samuel Mqhayi, Ingoapele Madingoane and Mzwakhi Mbuli (Brown 1998:4-5)³. In contemporary times, stories are often expressed and consumed through writing and different forms of media. Theatre, drawing on oral and written traditions (depending on the context), is a mode of storying and storytelling that manifests in varied forms in/across time, space and cultures. One such mode is PT.

Coming into contact with playback theatre ten years ago opened my mind to the ways in which theatre can hold and disseminate life experiences. It is an oral and story-based mode of theatre that promulgates a sense of community amongst audiences as story-makers. It offers a platform not only to hear and experience fictional stories of known or unknown characters, but to share and experience ‘non-fictional’ life-stories in a communal environment that is then potentially fictionalised through performance. PT is a contemporary creation, or, more particularly for this thesis, a variation of, the oral tradition of storytelling.

As a non-scripted, seemingly spontaneous, improvisational form, PT aims to instigate and encourage people to share personal stories of their daily experiences with their fellow audience or community members and watch these being enacted (Fox 2003:2) by a group of performers. The particular dynamics of PT will be discussed in more detail in chapter five. The founder of PT, Jonathan Fox, drew on multiple theories including oral culture, Victor Turner’s notion of social drama (Fox 1999:124), the work of Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire and theatre activist Augusto Boal (Salas 1983:15), the improvisational theatre of the 1960’s and 1970’s (Rowe 2007:22), J.L. Moreno’s psychodrama and ritual (Fox 1999:10) to create PT in 1975. With his educational

³ The notion of an ‘oral tradition’ implies the idea of the presence of both the teller and the listener in the same moment and in each other’s presence. However, the mode of constructing such as story (which will be referred to as ‘Orality’ going forward) are the modes that may have been carried over to the literary tradition. Inevitably, of course, the presence of these construction modes is to be found in theatre where the written is constructed as a guide to performance, where “storyteller/actor/character” are in the presence of the audience in the moment.

background in ancient epics and pre-literary tales, Fox aimed at creating “dramatic forms for the enactment of any and all personal stories” (2003:3) and personal experiences. PT relies on stories/personal narratives from audience members and participatory interaction to create a performance. Without a story, there cannot be any theatre⁴ (Fox & Dauber 1999:7).

PT encourages individuals (that is, the storytellers and the audience) to re-evaluate their stories and positions in relation to a broader social environment. PT “fictionalises and abstracts the ‘real’ stories that the audience members tell, [with] the troupe giving it artistic shape” (Salas cited by Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540)). Thus, the stories are overtly and “necessarily altered and transformed in ‘playing it back’” (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540). Jackson adds that this is possible because PT represents:

... the ‘real’ world on stage in such a way that the audience can recognise the representation as ‘real’ (the world exists), but at the same time they are distanced from that ‘reality’ because they are watching it being created and interpreted. The story performed is, and at the same time is not, the same story that was told (cited by Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540).

This statement presents the core concern of this dissertation. To what extent and in what ways do the enactments of the stories approximate the intentions or realities of the actual stories? More particularly, to what extent do the stories, by virtue of their construction, present certain information/reality in certain ways? The enactment, seemingly draws on the information, and presents a reality that is more determined by performability than on reflection (in both the senses of the word ‘reflection’, namely of giving back and engaging critically with the information or story) Is there a way of engaging with or analysing these potential differences?

Nevertheless, these characteristics set out to assist audiences and storytellers to view their stories, feelings and experiences from a different point of view. The shared experience of listening (or story-taking), as well as the conventions, ritual and structure of PT performances allow or invite performances to become a familiar event – creating a sense of community.

⁴ This idea is comprehensively problematized in contemporary modes of theatre and performance (like live art). I shall however not engage with that Discourse here as it falls outside of the scope of this study.

In PT, events and experiences are related by the story-teller in the first person even though other characters may be part of the story that they tell. These characters are, inevitably presented from within the perspective of the story-teller, or teller, opening a potential 'gap' between the lived experiences narrated by the teller and manner in which the telling is shaped, on the one hand, and the way the PT company shapes the playing back of the teller's story within the PT context on the other. The teller uses oral language (and storytelling gestures, where appropriate) in the telling of the story, narrating, as it were, from reconstructing memory, while the actors of the PT company potentially draw from their understanding of the story as well as other factors (such as past performative strategic successes) in presenting a performance narrative of the story.

In this manner, two related but different Discourse moments come to the fore. On the one hand, the storyteller might be seen to draw on a strong oral tradition and storytelling Discourse (captured, provisionally, in the strategic formulae of orality), whereas the actors in the PT company use this as a basis but then construct an event that draws on a theatrical performance Discourse approach. This study interrogates the gap that might arise, leading to possible miscommunication as these two Discourses are at play.

The study uses Gee's (1999; 2011a; 2011b) D/discourse⁵ analytical tools and Ong's (2002) features/formulae of orality to understand and reframe these two intertwined contemporary forms of storytelling. The research critically analyses storytelling and orality in PT using D/discourse structures and the orality formulae as analytical tools. The analysis will be done with stories from PT performances as a contemporary form of storytelling and expression that respond to an oral tradition. The study proposes that Ong's features of orality and Gee's D/discourse tools contain universal structures or strategies of communication and can be used as critical analytical strategies to understand the oral narratives of PT and engage with the way the PT company does, and could 'listen' to the teller, despite the context⁶. Centrally, it is accepted that the

⁵ Provisionally, when the word 'Discourse' is used with an upper-case 'D' it refers to communication in context(s), whereas when used with a lower-case 'd' it refers to the specific language usage in the moment of communication. The two concepts are, of course, interlinked. The chapter on Gee explicates this difference.

⁶ Provisionally, the notion of 'context' operates in two ways: firstly, as a social context and secondly as a performance context, where 'performance' engages with the 'performance' of storytelling, and the 'performance' of theatrical discourse.

content of stories told, and the PT engagement with those stories, are both context-bound. However, it can be argued that the strategies used to shape the content of both the story and the PT retelling are operating at a deep structural level. Such deep structural strategies facilitate the analysis of surface structure, the contextualization of the retelling and content selection in the retelling.⁷

The research aims to demonstrate that using orality and discourse analysis as possible ways of accessing the deep structures in reading both parts of the PT event (namely the telling and the enactment) may assist PT to pinpoint and engage with the supposed essence or core intentions of a story more accurately. Fox points to the fact that an actor in improvisation must act spontaneously by not asking questions for clarification and not planning or analysing the situation or story, which basically is a type of “non-thinking” (2003:79) (These ‘instructions will need to be interrogated in another study).

Nevertheless, it can be argued that the call for spontaneity can be challenged by the presence of divergent deep structural patterns (of oral storytelling and theatrical performance demands), as these divergent demands call for different discourse acts. This, therefore, suggests that what the teller tells, and what is enacted might in fact be divergent, dissimilar, misread, miscontextualised, mis-emphasised, or even exploitative for performance gain - a situation that may be enhanced by divergent contexts. It is also accepted that part of this divergence will rest in the act of interpretation.

My MA research⁸ interrogated how interpretation happens specifically for the performer in a situation where the teller speaks another language. This was done with the understanding that there are multiple layers of communication and communication systems in PT (predominantly the verbal and non-verbal systems). Like Peltoniemi (1997), the study concluded, in alignment with Fox, that the PT performer listens and expresses mostly with his/her body for,

[t]o a significant extent, drama in playback theatre is not conveyed with words. In fact, the entire thrust of the

⁷ It is accepted that the notions of deep structure and surface structure are problematic, as explained and used by Noam Chomsky (Chomsky2013; Chomsky & Lightfoot 2009), who developed the ideas, but they are useful when seen in operation, here.

⁸ Obtained in 2011 with Drama for Life at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

performance is to take the verbal rendition of experience and translate it into not-so-verbal drama⁹ (Fox 2003:38).

Fox, therefore, makes the assertion that the performers' task is to translate what is, in essence, a seemingly purely verbal information stream (presented by the storyteller/teller and based on his or her experiences) by discovering the dramatic (or emotional or intention core of the telling) and then presenting this in a 'not-so-verbal' (meaning the performance is not only verbal but include non-verbal) discourse of performance. It is therefore of great importance to understand the dynamics of verbal renditions in PT as these are the primary cues and clues from the teller of the story.

As will be seen in more detail later, literature on PT has considered its form, structure and aesthetics (Fox 2003; Fox & Dauber 1999; Adderley 2004; Dennis 2004; Peltoniemi 1997; Mckenna 1999). PT itself has been used as a means for building communities through sharing of personal stories (Fox 2003; Adderley 2004; Park-Fuller 2003; Salas 1983, 1993; Fox & Dauber 1999; Dennis 2004; Fox 2007b). It has also been used to address specific issues from which literature has emerged. Centred in the educational context, PT performances have addressed dominant discourses amongst adolescences Jordaan & Coetzee (2017), bullying (Salas 2005; Fox & Leeder 2018; Reagan 2020). Some practitioners and researchers of PT have engaged with matters of governance, democracy and citizenship (Dennis 2007a, 2008; Barolsky 2021; Zankay 1999). Considering that by telling a story, PT encourages a re-evaluation of the self in relation to the broader social environment, much work has been carried out around health (Yotis, Theocharopoulos, Fragiadaki & Begioglou 2017; Moran & Alon 2011); healing and therapy (Salas 2009, 2020; Kowalsky, Keisari & Raz 2019; Hoesch 1999). Playback theatre has been named as stemming from oral traditions (Salas 2009; Brown & Zinkin 1994; Fox and Sperling 1999), but not explained in relation to orality formulae. Similarly, PT has been used as one of the methods of engaging with oral histories in post-mass violence contexts (High, Little & Duong 2015), but not in relation to orality formulae. It is this sparsity of research on playback theatre and orality that this research will address.

⁹ It is accepted that the differences between what is termed 'drama' and what is termed 'theatre/theater' have been highly problematized in the literature. An attempt will be made, later in this thesis, to define the two terms as they will be used. At this stage it is posited, simply, that 'drama' refers to an emotional and social trajectory that drives the selection of moments that are to be presented in physical, auditory and kinesthetic form, where this form is strategised in and for the theatre.

Rowe (2004) critiques the binary Fox creates between oral and written traditions, in explaining PT's' relation to oral traditions. This relation produces a conservative and nostalgic dynamic in his understanding of PT and does not capture the complexities of PT performances, although it does capture the communal aspects of storytelling in oral traditions - "communal telling" (Rowe 2004:178). Whilst Rowe refers to secondary Orality and briefly discusses the orality formulae in relation to Fox's ideas on oral traditions, he does not apply these to the analysis of a playback story, nor couple it with discourse analysis (Rowe 2004:116-118). At the time of Rowe's writing, he stated that there was no research that "systematically examine the discourse... of its practitioners" (Rowe 2004:3). Rowe (2004:21-23) also discusses the discourse of playback theatre, but the discussion centres on the lexicon used. At the time of writing, I did not find research on any of the data bases I had access to via the University of Pretoria that offered a detailed discourse analysis of a playback theatre story.

Given the above, the study locates itself in the field of orality, D/discourse analysis and AT (these terms will be defined and discussed in the chapters that follow). Stories from open¹⁰ performances that will help elucidate the questions arising in the study, will be taken from the context of the Hudson River Playback Theatre Company (henceforth HRPT and the DVD material is available in the public domain) and Drama for Life Playback Theatre Company (henceforth DFLPT and permission to use recorded material was obtained).

1.1.1. A broad historical overview of playback theatre (PT)

In 1975 PT was conceived in New York by Jonathan Fox and developed together with Jo Salas and the original PT company (Fox 2003; Feldhendler 2007; Fox 2007a). With his educational background in ancient epics and pre-literary tales, Fox aimed at creating "dramatic forms for the enactment of any and all personal stories" (2003:3). What came to be known as PT began as a form of community theatre in which "people could see their stories acted out and share with their neighbours' aspects of their daily lives and deeply felt concerns" (Fox 2003:2).

¹⁰The recordings for analysis are in public domain, but they were selected because they are not limited to a specific audience or based on a particular topic/issue and can be easily accessible by the general public. It was therefore deemed necessary to engage with what might be called 'non-partisan' PT events.

Before returning to the United States and conceiving this idea, Fox lived in pre-industrial Nepal where he was drawn to the oral tradition and the folk art of storytelling (Fox 2007a:5). His belief in and love for “a theatre for any and everybody” (Fox 1999:9), led him to founding a theatre company called “It’s All Grace” (1999:9) that performed improvisational developed pieces outdoors. After coming into contact with J.L. Moreno’s method of psychodrama in 1973, Fox says that a “*café* vision came to [him] of townspeople gathering to watch fellow citizens act out their stories [and] a year and a half later, [PT] was born” (1999:10). The first set of actors that made up the original playback company were from a psychodrama background and from 1975-1986 they experimented, rehearsed, and performed one Friday a week (Fox 2007a:6) for family, friends and the public.

In 1980, after a team of four from the original company visited New Zealand (Fox 1999; Fox 2007a) to teach and perform, PT’s ideology was welcomed and spread from then onward to other countries. According to Fox (2007a:6-7), by 2006 there was an estimated 100000 people using PT in over fifty countries. Africa was not left out, as the idea was taken up by the Bonfire Theatre Company founded in 2005 in Cape Town, South Africa, and in 2008 Kathy Barolsky, for the purpose of her Master’s degree, founded the Drama for Life Playback Theatre Company.

As it gradually spread its roots into the world and the African continent, there seemed to be a need and a call for more research (Fox 1999) and towards appropriately applying it within a multilingual and multicultural society. As such, inspirations for this study included a moment of miscommunication witnessed during a Playback Theatre performance between the narrative and enactment of a story and the call by Jonathan Fox who says

There is need for research: to develop new methods for the documentation and analysis of oral theatre; to study the level of context-text related communication as they become manifest in an improvisational performance; to examine the spontaneous creative process of the improvisational actor (the results might have usefulness far outside the field of theatrical studies). Most needed are historical and comparative studies of non-scripted theatre. These should include studies of the transition between preliterate and literate as well as the interstices between literate and post-literate genres.... (1999:58)

This need for research stems from the fact that as a method, PT is not only a mode of performance within the AT field but, as Feldhendler (2007:46) says, the approach is flexible, presenting a multitude of application possibilities and is a form of direct encounter between people. From the preceding quotation a number of issues are presented and pursued in this research project.

Firstly, the notion of the preliterate, the literate (and the post-literate) need to be problematized. This project will engage with this through an understanding of the domain of orality, as suggested by Ong and others.

Secondly, the notion of a 'non-scripted' performance (although embedded in much literature on improvisation) is argued to be a misnomer. This is because, although the content might appear to be non-scripted (although, given the nature of memory studies, this is, in itself problematic, but is not pursued in this thesis), the way this is structured both in the telling and in the performance is highly structured from a discourse point of view. This is suggesting of the interwoven nature of form and content, of the demands of the medium and the way this impacts on the 'message', and therefore, seemingly inevitably, the tension when the two media of presentation might be different. Given this, the next section formalises the research questions for this research project.

1.2. Research questions and aims

➤ Main research question

How can a combination of the orality formulae and tools of discourse analysis help in understanding and enhancing the storytelling and enactment processes in playback theatre?

➤ Main research aim

The purpose of this study is to use the discourse analysis tools provided by Gee in conjunction with the orality formulae developed by Ong as a way to interrogate the storytelling and enactment processes in PT. The research will make specific reference to the recognition, selection, interpretation, and reinterpretation in performance, of the stories told in PT performances. By extension, it may offer a strategy for more effective practical interpretations of stories in PT performances.

➤ Sub-question one

What characteristics of the oral/Orality tradition provided by Ong can be identified in the telling and enactment of the story?

➤ Sub-aim one

This study aims to analyse the characteristics of the oral tradition/Orality as theorised by Walter Ong and identify such characteristics in stories narrated during PT performances. This is (1) to confirm how orally-based storytelling in PT performances is operative, (2) to foreground and interrogate how the formulae may be used to unpack potential meanings revealed in the tellers' stories, and (3) to analyse the played back performance to interrogate what the company has utilised, what disregarded and what discarded in their performing of the story.

➤ Sub-question two

What are the dynamics of discourse analysis?

➤ Sub-aim two

The purpose of this sub-aim is to describe and explain Gee's strategy of discourse analysis, using his notion of the different specific tasks of discourse markers, as they are embedded in discourse (seen as a contextual and performative phenomenon), so as to analyse the teller's story, and then the PT version of the story, so as to see which discourse markers have been used, which disregarded and which discarded in the conversion of the story to the PT event.

➤ Sub-question three

What characteristics of O/orality hold D/discourse dynamics within them?

➤ Sub-aim three

The purpose of sub-aim three is to attempt to find a form of correlation between Ong's O/orality, and Gee's D/discourse strategies by putting side by side the characteristics of O/orality and the tools of Discourse/discourse to analyse and identify Orality/orality in Discourse/discourse. This is then used to engage with sub-question and sub-aim four.

➤ Sub-question four

How can Orality and strategies of Discourse analysis work together to develop a strategy or method for deeper listening of stories, and by extension, therefore, a more complex and aesthetically accurate playback moment?

➤ Sub-aim four

The purpose of sub-aim four is to develop and use the Orality and D/discourse strategies and methods to engage with a deeper and more accurate listening and understanding of stories to close the gap between listening - translating- interpreting and performance.

1.3. Research approach

This study seeks to analyse and situate storytelling as an oral phenomenon through a discourse analysis of stories in PT performances. It will therefore be located in a qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative researchers are concerned with the examination and analysis of the way meaning is constructed in the social world, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam 2009:13; Berg & Lune 2012:3). Such research indicates the notion of quality which refers to “the what, how, when, where, and why of a thing—its essence and ambience” (Berg & Lune 2012:3). In contrast to the quantitative researcher who is unconnected to the phenomenon being researched, Denzin and Lincoln argue that qualitative research is a

situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a field of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, and memos of the self. (2000:3)

This definition given by Denzin and Lincoln focuses on the process and context of data collection. In this context, data would be any material created, collected, and produced during research in the form of sound, images and text (Ryan & Bernard 2000). As some definitions of qualitative research concentrate on a particular aspect like the focus, purpose, process and context of data collection and epistemological stance, Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013) propose a more functional definition. For these

authors, “qualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values” (Guest *et al.* 2013:3).

This definition therefore allows for different kinds of data and analysis techniques to be included. It also allows for the diversity of theoretical and epistemological frameworks (Guest, Namey & Mitchell 2013). Data clusters in qualitative research are produced through methods such as participant observation, focus groups, in-depth interviews, and (specifically for this study) text and conversation analysis, which would therefore include discourse analysis and orality.

In the context of this study, a qualitative research method of discourse analysis is used to fulfil the objectives of the study. Discourse analysis is both a methodological and conceptual element which involves ways of thinking about discourse and of treating discourse as data (Wood & Kroger 2000). It gives a perspective on social life in which language and shared meanings are the factors that influence the social structures in which individuals are embedded and the physical context in which people live. It also engages with ways in which people create these social structures in and through their language(s).

The term ‘discourse’ is used in different ways in different academic areas (Gee 2011b; Wood & Kroger 2000). Despite these different approaches, the interest in discourse analysis in the context of this study is on how language is used (Gee 2011b), for language is seen as performative and functional. Therefore, the best source of data for a discourse analysis is naturally occurring language rather than artificial conversations in organised in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (Guest, Namey & Mitchell 2013).

Given that language is the focus of this research in the context of PT, Gee’s (2014) method of discourse analysis will be applied to interrogate the specific structure of discourse (language) and interaction between two or more speakers. This is done with the aim outlined above which is mainly to understand why there might be moments of miscommunication in a PT process. Gee’s method of discourse analysis will be used in this research because it focuses on language use above the level of the sentence (grammatical structure) to include the context (social) (Gee 2011b; Wood & Kroger 2000). I will specifically use Gee’s model of discourse analysis to engage with the

language of PT in open performances of two companies namely, the Drama for Life Playback Theatre and Hudson River Playback Theatre.

Wood and Kroger argue that discourse analysis emphasises what talk is doing and achieving, considering that utterances can be classified in three features “(a) their locutionary or referential meaning (what they are about), (b) their illocutionary force (what the speaker does with them), and (c) their perlocutionary force (their effects on the hearer)” (2000:5).

The discourse analysis of stories in these PT performances should identify elements of orality, how it is expressed in the PT Discourse and, together with the discourse tools, how it may enhance the experience of PT. The research analyses how the teller’s story and enactment might overlap or diverge in meaning and intention, considering that communication in this sense has deep structural characteristics that manifest in different ways but perform the same function.

1.3.1. Research process

The route the study took was firstly to interrogate the theories of Orality and D/discourse (seen, as will become evident, both as ‘language in action’ as discourse, and ‘language usage in context’, as Discourse) by doing a detailed analysis, through comparison, of the thoughts of several theorists in these fields. The study also examines theories on PT to clarify the understanding of the form and its manifestation in the context of this research. This made-up part of the first phase of identifying and establishing the theories and literature that would better aid in exploring the aims of the research. In short, this phase set two, intertwined, analytical frames in place, which could be used to interrogate the dual nature of PT, namely the storytelling and the enactment, so that differences and similarities between the two manifestations could be assessed.

The second phase of the research consisted of collecting the data. After duly presenting the objectives of the study and obtaining permission from the *drama for life programme* and DFLPT, one of the PT monthly open performances was recorded. Consent was obtained from participants before the recording and consent forms signed after the performance only by those who shared a story. The data was then transcribed and set to be used for the research analysis.

Edwards posits that “recordings are essential tools in discourse research but are not sufficient in themselves for the systematic examination of interaction” (2003:321). This is because a proper transcription and analysis of the story should involve the interactional context of the story, for stories perform social actions and audiences are involved directly or indirectly in the construction of the story (De Fina & Johnston 2015:155-156). Observing the interaction during the performance as a researcher was impossible as I was the one doing the recording. Also, as an interactive form, PT poses a challenge of being recorded with one camera as such focus was placed on getting the stories hence placing a deficit on the data and limitations in the analysis. Nevertheless, as part of attempting to delimit the range of data for analysis, the transcribed text concentrated on the verbal. However, a transcription was carried out of the actions performed by the actors, as this was seen as an inevitable attempt to translate the verbal presentation of the storyteller. Furthermore, such transcribed action needed to be embedded in the enactors’ understanding of the ‘performance discourse’ (or Theatre Discourse).

In the third phase, the researcher then used the developed analytical frames (namely Orality and D/discourse analysis) to analyse the transcribed data in pursuit of addressing the research questions. The manifestation of elements of orality and discourse were identified in a PT story and enactment, using a fully transcribed performance from the DFLPT and some excerpts from the HRPT companies. Edwards highlights the importance of the transcription in spoken discourse research for “distilling and freezing in time the complex events and aspects of interaction in categories of interest to the researcher” (1993:3).

The analysis was done for both the oral rendition of the story and the enacted story. Interrogation of both the story and the enactment helped to highlight what the performers identified, selected, and then subsequently used from the story, and what was missed (and where possible, speculation as to perhaps why these matters were missed, discarded, or not foregrounded). Highlighting these threw more light on what the performers look for when listening to a story and how this dual focus may create avenues for misinterpretation. This analysis was carried out with the hope of providing a frame for subtler (and perhaps more accurate) listening by PT practitioners. The final phase of the process consisted of presenting the findings in this report and the limitations and possibilities for further study.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

CHAPTER ONE: This chapter introduces the thesis, stating the research questions and aims. It offers the rationale for the study, namely the need to establish methods and ways of countering potential miscommunication between the storyteller's version and the enactment version of that story in the PT process. It suggests the three theoretical domains that are to impact on the study, namely PT itself, theories around Orality, and theories around Discourse/discourse analysis. It provides a summary of the research process, methodology and presents an outline of the way the thesis is organised.

CHAPTER TWO: This chapter presents one of the major theories used in the study which is Orality. It begins, following Ong (1982; 2002), by arguing that a primary oral tradition is one untouched by writing. Oral communication in a primary oral culture is directly linked to thought processes (Ong 1982; 1999) which are expressed in words through the voice (partially unlike the literate cultures where writing serves as a residue or a seeming dislocated or non-contextual information storage system) which implies that the articulation of the mind may be seen to be directly linked to oral culture because information can only be heard and stored in the memory for remembrance. It sets oral culture against the literate culture as a step to understanding the characteristics identifiable in a purely primary oral culture, acknowledging that this binary is artificial, as, with the advent of literacy, there is an inevitable crossover in both directions.

Thus, the chapter makes a brief comparison between primary orality as one untouched by writing and secondary Orality to show that PT is set within a secondary oral culture with elements of a primary oral culture. Nevertheless, Ong's formulae, to be found in a primary Oral tradition, are described in detail as they provide an efficient analytical tool for all forms of verbal storytelling modes. The formulae are unpacked with examples from some playback performances of the HRPT. Using examples of communication from the PT domain helps to remain within the confines of the study as these formulae will be used to analyse a full story from a playback performance in chapter six.

CHAPTER THREE: Chapter three presents discourse analysis as the second of the major theories in the study, and method to be used for data analysis. In this chapter,

Gee is presented as the main theorist whose idea of discourse as language-in-use (or, perhaps more appropriate to the theatre, 'language in action') is presented alongside other advocates of discourse for a better understanding of Gee's theory within the context of the study. Here, discourse with a lowercase "d" as language-in-use/language in action is set along Discourse with a capitalised "D" which refers to language with other things. These 'other things' include matters such as ideological positions, the nature of the medium being use, and the relevance of multiple languages, and the added dimensions of proxemics, gestures and actions, and prosody. This is done with the understanding that within the context of the study, language cannot be analysed by itself. In analysing language (in PT) therefore, the chapter presents the seven characteristics of discourse which Gee says are constructed as language-in-use. Some playback moments are used to broaden the understanding of these characteristics. This chapter also lays the groundwork for an understanding of the Discourse dynamics at play in AT, storytelling and role-play, which is tackled in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: This chapter presents relevant literature on community, role-play and ritual with a focus on AT, so as to locate PT within these Discourses. The chapter describes the potential application of Orality and D/discourse to theatre in community in general. The chapter presents AT as a communication Discourse with elements of orality and characteristics of discourse analysis inherent in the process and experience. Furthermore, the notion of community examined here allows AT to be located as a community-based experience where different roles are enacted, as the understanding of role-playing within social experiences and theatre is explored. It engages with these theories in relation to the understanding of Orality and d/Discourse in playback theatre. The purpose, therefore, of the chapter is to interrogate the notions of AT within a communal performance setting so as to open up areas of differing communal expectations.

CHAPTER FIVE: This chapter presents playback as theory and practice. Here, a description of the theoretical foundation of playback and all that is involved in the practical process is presented. As the main drive for the PT process, writings and views on story and storytelling examined here includes the orality formulae in reframing contemporary storytelling experience in a setting like PT. This chapter brings together the theories and literature seen in the previous chapters, situating them within

playback with respect to the aim of the study. The orality formulae in chapter two and discourse characteristics in chapter three are identified within the playback process. This sets the stage for the analysis of a full story in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: In this chapter, a full analysis of a transcribed story from a playback performance of the DFLPT is done. This will be done by applying the orality approach of analysis to both the teller's 'presentation' and the PT enactment presentation, and then to do the same with both presentations, using the discourse analysis tools. This is presented in a table where the story is broken down into words and phrases. These words and phrases are selected and explained as enacting one of the oral formulae (in one analytical approach) and discourse characteristics (in another). In this way, two sets of data will emerge. On the one hand the information contained in the teller's utterances will be determined using both analytical models so as to determine similarities and differences around that information, and then the same will be done with the enactment. The second, and particularly important set of data for this thesis, will come about by comparing and contrasting the data from the teller's set of utterances with the data from the enactment of performance moments. In this way the potential miscommunication, or mis-reflection could possibly be determined. Following this, chapter seven will engage with the set of data in determining how and why there could be potential miscommunication.

CHAPTER SEVEN: With the analysis and comparisons completed, this chapter then attempts to interpret the trends and tendencies between the dominant themes and meaning. It further attempts to explain the potential reasons for the disparities between the conflicted number of discourse and orality appearances. Doing so shows that within the playback Discourse, there are different discourses and Discourses at play that are contested and negotiated as the PT company pursues an enacted version of the original story but is still bound to present an ultimate community experience of playback as a theatrical event, as well. This can be seen as type of dual agenda. Nevertheless, the chapter also demonstrates that there are similarities that exist between the discourse markers and the orality formulae. The chapter argues that together, these can enhance storytelling and oral communication. With these interpretations, the next chapter presents the findings of the study and its implication for storytelling within playback theatre and oral communication with possible avenues for further research.

CHAPTER EIGHT: This chapter resumes the aims of the study and the trajectory it followed to arrive at the conclusions presented. The chapter draws conclusions following the interpretation done in chapter seven while highlighting areas of shortfall that may have hindered some conclusions to be arrived at. It goes further to suggest areas of possible further research that may enhance the domains and strategy of PT as an extraordinary powerful and communal experience.

1.5 Chapter summary

This chapter serves as a map highlighting the main ideas to be explored in the research in connection to the aims of the research. It defines and presents PT as an interactive orally-based form of theatre in which characteristics of a purely oral culture and discourse features can be found. It provisionally identifies Walter J Ong and James Paul Gee's theories of orality and discourse analysis respectively as the theoretical frames for pursuing the aim of this research. The chapter outlines the research questions, aims and objectives of the study and presents the approach taken and process in which the study develops. It also presents the breakdown of the study and what will be explored in each chapter. By doing this the chapter identifies key terms that will be explored in the study while establishing its purpose and limitations.

In line with this, the next chapter explores one of the major theories in the study, namely Orality. It presents Ong's (2002) view of a purely oral tradition as one untouched by writing. This is done in conjunction with the ideologies of other orality and communication scholars so as to align Ong's notion of orality and the nine formulaic elements and dynamics at play in orality, in answering sub-question one.

Chapter 2: The spoken text (orality)

2.1. Introduction

Writing, that is to say placing defined marks on a page, where such marks can generate communal meaning on a page, where such pages are transportable across space and time and are set and are storable, is a modern means of communication and storage of knowledge, developed from a Greek system described as the “alphabet” (Havelock 1986:134)¹¹. Prior to the era of the development of the literate mind characterized by writing, orality was the mode of communication and transmission of knowledge, which inevitably was defined to include the presence of both communicator and recipient in the same space at the same time and where the communication was only transportable through actions of memory. Thus, in an oral tradition, systems of memory storage become vital. Therefore, the ways in which acts of communication are strategized and structured specifically to accommodate the capacity of memory becomes central to orality.

Nevertheless, a person telling a story is involved in two-time frames. The telling moment occurs where teller and audience are in the same location and where the story, therefore unfolding through the time of the telling, requires of the listener to be able to remember what went before a specific event being narrated so as to make sense of that event and to locate it in the trajectory of the story. Thus, the teller has to strategize so that these events and the sense that is required evolves in the memory of the listener.

Secondly, the teller (specifically in PT and therefore for the aims of this study) is dealing with the time during which the events that he or she is narrating, took place. The teller is thus drawing on memory which, inevitably, also is strategizing and shaping the remembering of those events. This shows that the teller operates between his or her own remembered events and his or her understanding of how to shape these events according to the demands of the context in which the story is being told, and the demands of the listener to remember and to find meaning. This study concentrates on this last demand for the teller, namely the shaping or strategizing of the telling for the possible emergence of meaning in an oral context. The plan, therefore, in this

¹¹ It is acknowledged that this can be posited to be a western way of understanding the advent and development of writing. Nevertheless, it is argued that the strategies across histories and cultures may be similar.

chapter is to understand such strategizing (following Ong) so that the strategies can be used to analyse PT storytelling and, from this, to see how the enactment captures the purpose and meaning of the story(teller).

This chapter engages with Walter J Ong's theory of Orality¹² (1982; 2002 *et passim*) as a medium of communication based on the idea of oral communication as pre-literate. As will be argued, these systems have carried over into communication domains where writing is also present. Therefore, to fully understand the oral tradition as found in the concepts of Orality, it is necessary to juxtapose it to the writing/literate culture. Understanding the differences and intersections in these two culture organisation systems is important towards developing a frame for the analysis of spoken contributions in the PT encounters. The first section of this chapter presents a historical overview of the discovery and theorisation of the oral tradition in conjunction with the literate culture.

Secondly, the chapter will describe the O/oral formulae that Ong presents as characteristics that can be found in any and all (reasonably) pure oral forms of communication. These are hypothesised and argued by what Ong describes as traditional orality 'untouched' by writing, with the idea that there is another form of Orality with a touch of writing which he calls "secondary [O]rality" (2002:2). The chapter also seeks to show that, the major difference between primary orality and secondary Orality is in the medium of communication. It is important to note that Ong also argues that, because of the Orality nature of a society, the way the society or culture is organised and operates shapes, and is shaped by the Orality orientation. This thesis does not pursue these differences, but engages with the formulae that Ong posits that shape the discourse of communication in place in these (real or hypothesised) cultures.

This is also in preparation for the understanding of the O/orality interface with D/discourse analysis, to be done later in the study. Thirdly, the chapter will then identify and reveal the O/orality features within the PT form. This is however speculative as it will only be confirmed in a later stage with examples from a PT performance.

¹² The use of orality with a capital 'O' refers to the concept or theory involving not only spoken language but other things that influence oral communication like technology.

To achieve the aims of this chapter, which is mainly to present the characteristics, dynamics and structuring of oral communication (as seen through Ong's orality lens), the characteristics of the oral tradition of language usage and patterning will be explained using examples drawn from the famous 'I have a dream' speech (1968) of Martin Luther King, and the 'I am an African' speech (2005) of ex-South African President Thabo Mbeki. Examples will also be drawn from the PT performance of the Hudson River Playback Theatre Company (henceforth HRPT – the performance is available on DVD sold in the public domain). This will give a more practical understanding of the formulae and their characteristics and dynamics and later set them against the discourse analytic frames¹³ which will be used to analyse a PT performance in chapter six.

2.2. Understanding orality

The noun (and its concomitant system of analysis) "orality" or "oralism" (Havelock 1991:11) gained momentum in the twentieth century with the works of Milman Parry and Albert Lord. It was grounded in auditory expressions. Havelock conceptualizes orality as referring to a "society distinguished by [only] oral communication" (1991:11), untouched by writing (Ong 2002). He goes further to say that orality is an identity; it refers to a particular type of language used in oral communication and also identifies a given type of consciousness, thought process, or ideology which is supposed to be crafted by or expressed in orality (Havelock 1991:11). This understanding is juxtaposed to literacy, which is considered to be a state of mind and social condition of language and cognition expressible in writing (1991:11).

This seems to imply two discrete systems of knowledge creation and knowledge retention, coupled with two discrete worldviews and systems of operating in and engaging with the social world. Indeed, there may have been such a time, but it is now accepted that the interactions between the two approaches (orality and literacy) are fluid and interactive. Thus, there are elements of orality still very present in written work (poetry is an example of this), strongly suggesting that the written discourse approach 'flowed from' an attempt to capture the spoken word. Yet there are also

¹³ Provisionally it should be noted that Orality forms a discourse type of its own. However, as used here, the notion of a discourse is connected, for the purposes of the argument, to the system of discourse analysis which will be attended to in the next chapter. In that chapter, the application of that mode of discourse to Orality will be argued.

aspects of written work that are seemingly solely reliant on written discourse (legal codes are examples of this, perhaps). Furthermore, the context of the communicative act may also determine the style of presentation – complex theoretical arguments made verbally at conferences often seem to be written tracts, constructed to be read, but read aloud with little thought around the auditory context¹⁴. Nevertheless, for this chapter orality is primarily treated as a discrete language usage phenomenon that assists in penetrating the storytelling in PT.

The appreciation, analysis and theorization of the oral tradition untouched by writing has been possible only through the preservation of orally-based narratives in writing and studied side by side in a comparative approach. In his book *Orality and Literacy: the technologizing of the word*, which has been widely referred to and used in various disciplines, Ong (2002) explores and identifies characteristics of an oral tradition untouched by writing in concordance with writing and the print press. He bases his analysis on the effect of sound and the thought process of a purely oral mind as opposed to a literate mind.¹⁵

Oral communication in a primary oral culture is directly linked to thought processes (Ong 1982; 1999) which are expressed in words through the voice. In much of his rhetoric and writing, (Soukup 2004; 2005) Ong focuses on sound and the word. This is so because sound is the medium used in opening up what is in the innermost part of the human physiology, it also connects people and sound always signifies life (Soukup 2004:9). Sound presents a personality to the world different from writing, and the “Personality structure,” Ong writes, “varies in accordance with variations in communication media and consequent variations in the organization of the sensorium” (cited by Soukup 2005:5). Ong introduces the notion, therefore, of ‘the sensorium’.

What Ong implies here “by the sensorium [is] the entire sensory apparatus as an operation complex [or] the use of the human senses together to communicate” (cited by Soukup 2004:10). Soukup posits that the spoken word as a sense organ on its own has far reaching consequences. This is so because it is tied not only to thought

¹⁴ The interaction between the written drama text and the performed theatre version of the same text has been debated for years.

¹⁵ It should be noted that this thesis does not engage with the phonocentric and logocentric argument raised by Derrida, in the pursuit of refuting ‘origins’ of speech, but argues for a parallel and synergistic relationship, noting that the Orality and Literacy understandings are not hierarchical but different. Neither is inferior or superior to the other.

patterns as earlier mentioned, but also to cultural forms and human experience (2004:11). Therefore, the world of sound is considered to exist only in time (Ong 1999; Soukup 2004, 2005). “Sound exists only when it is going out of existence” (Ong 2002:69) for, once a word has been uttered, it perishes and cannot be retrieved (Ong 1999:65). Thus, if sound is connected to meaning, it implies that meaning itself, in the context of the moment, might ‘disappear’. Therefore, mechanisms and strategies are used to manage such a sense of disappearance. As will become clear in this chapter, Ong posits that oral cultures use formulaic linguistic constructs to retard the disappearance or structure the recall and maintain some form of shared meaning. This forms one of the characteristics of oral communication, as will be examined in this chapter.

Several studies (Goody 2010; Barber 2007; Bucholtz & Halls 2004; Erickson 2002) in anthropology and sociology have presented findings of traditions and cultures that have survived over the centuries without much influence from the chirographic (written) world. This has mainly been possible through storytelling and passing down teachings and knowledge from one generation to another by or via the spoken word. This chapter is focused on presenting the characteristics of the oral tradition focusing on the theory of Ong, with contributions from other scholars.

2.3. The oral tradition

The discovery and theoretical structuring of the oral tradition was done through the analysis of the composition of epic poems such as Homer’s *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* (Havelock 1987). It is said that the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* began as improvised storytelling, and the discovery/conceptualization of its oral compositional structure was made by Harvard classicist Milman Parry (Fox 1986; Ong 2002). The discovery of such oral compositions could only be made possible with the invention of writing, termed the alphabet by the Greeks. This invention had a transformational effect on language, though Havelock (1986) maintains that this transformation did not substitute one language/discourse mode (oral communication) for another (written communication). It is with the interrogation of long recitations by native oral speakers that the question of retention and narration in the oral culture came to be considered.

According to Ong, articulation, or sound as products of language are paramount to the oral tradition. This is because information can only be heard and stored in the memory

for remembrance, unlike the literate cultures where writing serves as a residue or a seeming dislocated or non-contextual information storage system. Ong (2002:6) explains that thought is related to sound, and, for oral cultures therefore, sound is all powerful. What one utters, or the sound that comes out of one's mouth does not only denote communication, but is in line with our thought. To therefore retain sound that evaporates immediately after it is uttered and reproduce it later in a well-organized manner, warrants some stylistic techniques or strategies to aid the retentive power of the memory. This seems necessary for the oral tradition given that it has no "...residue or deposit," as writing is to the literate mind a deposit to aid retention. Thus, to remember orally requires a system or set of strategic techniques that are reinforced by the context and life view of the society.

Milman Parry's discovery of the distinctive features of the Homeric poems shows that the "oral poets [did not work] from verbatim memorisation of their verse" (Ong 2002:22) but rather had vast deposits of epithets that helped to put together stories, with different metrical exigencies that was presented differently at every narration. Metrical exigencies are obviously a determining factor for the selection of words in a poet's composition, but surely not the only characteristics of orally-based thought and expression. Critically, it can be argued that the vocal patterning for composition (the orality dynamics) is directly tied to worldviews, or ways of structuring the world. Ong therefore provides characteristics (or formulaic dynamics) of orally-based thought and expressions (at times placing them against literary-based characteristics in his attempt to show difference) which are analysed in chapter three of his book *Orality and Literacy*. In his analysis, Ong acknowledges that, these (oral/literate characteristics) are not discrete but engage with each other.

2.4. The orality/literacy dichotomy

The characteristics of oral language and the difference in thought and expression of oral and written languages have only recently been theorised, according to Ong. The breakthrough came through Milman Parry's work on Homer (as noted earlier). Oral language has been viewed by many scholars as the primary means of communication between human beings from creation, with writing only becoming prominent in (comparatively) recent times. There exist a considerable body of research in the fields of linguistics, psychology, philosophy (Mckenzie & Street 2017) and education (Kern

& Schultz 2005; Biakolo 1999; Gough & Bock 2001; Friesen 2018) on the relationship between orality and literacy.

While orality is associated with sound and face-to-face conversation (Ong 1982, 2002), literacy is associated with written text, and therefore the potential of a decontextualized and recurring return to a particular set of words and the accepted absence of the writer. Brandt iterates that “[literacy] is written language... [and] to be illiterate is to be without important means to trade [communicate] with others” (2011:1)¹⁶. Nevertheless, it is assumed, simplistically, that in a literate world there is little or no direct interaction between the writer and the reader (Horowitz & Samuel 1987). Although there is little consensus on the prominent traits of these two modes of language, Ming-Ming Pu (2006) asserts that the main point of agreement is that they are different in ways of communicating, knowing, and reflecting on experiences.

Horowitz and Samuels open the argument when they state that:

Oral language is typically associated by linguists with conversation that is produced, processed, and then evaluated in the context of face-to-face exchange and grounded in interpersonal relationships that are often clearly established. Oral language is adapted to a specific audience and to socio-cultural settings and communities that are presumably *present*, functioning in a context of *here and now*. (1987:56).

Here, three key concepts are foregrounded for application to the PT situation. Firstly, both the teller and the listener need to be in the same space. Secondly, this space, in and of itself, is located in specific shared socio-cultural dynamics, which should include the processes of storytelling and enactment. The premise of this current study, however, suggests that in some cases, these dynamics are not as shared as they might seem. Nevertheless, and thirdly, the implication is that the teller adapts the telling to what he or she perceives to be the dynamics, implying that the adaptation in and of itself is based on moving past, remembered events into present, recounted events.

On the other hand, Horowitz and Samuels associate written language with books and schools, arguing that written language is formal, academic, and planned; it hinges on

¹⁶ The term “illiterate” has taken on a connotation of inferiority in a context of modernity/coloniality. It is unclear whether Brandt offers this view. However, for this thesis, ‘illiterate’ simply, denotatively, refers to the inability to read and write, and has nothing to do with the ability to operate in a (different) complex world.

the past and is reconstructed in such a way that in the future it can be processed by varied readerships (Horowitz & Samuels 1987:21). This is contentious, in that it assumes that spoken language is not learned but appears; automatically; that the processes of learning communication strategies are seemingly self-evident or informal in an oral culture, or in orality (any stand-up comedian or actor will attest to the hours of learned preparation that goes into the oral delivery appearing to be spontaneous) and, in simplistic terms, Homer, for example, was not academic. Nevertheless, the transferability of at least the markers of potential meaning, across time in written form is accepted.

Horowitz and Samuels further attempt to illustrate the oral/literate dichotomy in the table below. Accepting that dichotomies are in and of themselves never discrete; the table does open up both the potential differences but also, as shall be seen, the areas that offer reconsideration. (Indeed, each one of the binaries offers debate and interrogation.)

Table 1: The Oral-Written Dichotomy (Horowitz and Samuels 1987:21).

Oral language	Written Language
Talk	Text
Face-to-face conversation with reciprocity between speaker and listener	Face to text with limited reciprocity between author and reader
Narrative-like	Expository-like
Action-oriented	Idea-oriented
Event-oriented	Argument-oriented
Story-oriented	Explanatory
Here and now	Future and past
In given space and time	Not space- or time-bound
Informal	Formal
Primary discourse	Secondary discourse
Natural communication	Artificial communication
Interpersonal	Objective and distanced
Spontaneous	Planned
Sharing of context (situational)	No common context
Ellipsis	Explicitness in text consciousness
Structureless ¹⁷	Highly structured
Cohesion through paralinguistic cues	Cohesion through lexical cues
Single predication	Multiple predication

¹⁷ As will be argued, this characteristic by Horowitz and Samuels is not accurate – Orality is in fact highly structured.

Repetition	Succinctness
Simple linear structures	Complex hierarchical structures
Paratactic patterns	Hypotactic patterns
Right branching with limited subordination	Left branching with multiple levels of subordination
Fleeting	Permanent
Unconscious	Conscious and restructured

The table presents what can be seen as the ‘traditional’ views (or, more specifically, the views current at the time of the authors’ writing), of the difference between verbal language and written language. An engagement with Ong as a representative of the Orality school of thought, however, demonstrates that, although some of these binaries are seemingly accurate (such as the understanding of cohesion through paralinguistic cues versus cohesion through lexical cues), many rely on the assumption of dominance/superiority of the written and ignore the notion that writing has a ‘distanced’ reader/receiver in mind, that needs persuading in some form or another. This is when the writing process is undertaken to accomplish that task.

Furthermore, all talk is highly structured, as conversation analysis demonstrates (Hutchby & Wooffitt 2008; Hutchby 2017; Clayman & Loeb 2017) — conversations are structured according to who is listening and who is speaking, in what context, what the purpose of the conversation is, what perceptual filters might be at play, what noise (interference, both in terms of physical noise, and conceptual or ideological noise or confusion,) is present, what the power dynamics at play are in the conversation, and so forth. When fully analysed, as will be explicated later on in this chapter, the characteristics of written text can also be found in verbal text. This is made possible with what Ong came to call secondary Orality.

As mentioned in the Horowitz and Samuel’s definition above, the process of oral communication depends on ‘sound’ (Ong 1999) or ‘utterance’ (Akhutina 2003) produced in a social event, and at or in a specific context and time, between a speaker and listener. Once sound has been uttered, it cannot be retrieved; Ong states that

Sound exists only when it is going out of existence. It is not simply perishable but essentially evanescent, and it is sensed as evanescent. When I pronounce the word "permanence," by the time I get to the "-nence," the "perma-" is gone, and has to be gone. (1999:65)

This explains the need for repetition, for example, in oral communication. In the presence of a listener, Bakhtin (cited by Akhutina 2003) posits that the utterance allows the speaker to interact with other speakers by responding to the preceding speaker's context and anticipate the receiver's response, for

every specific utterance is a link in the chain of verbal communication in a definite sphere . . . the utterance occupies some *definite* position in this sphere of communication, on a particular issue, in a particular transaction, and so on. It is not possible to define one's own position without relating it to other positions. For this reason, each utterance is full of responses of different types to other utterances in the given sphere of communication (Bakhtin cited by Akhutina 2003:97).

This positioning of orality dynamics reflects the communication process in PT as will become evident in the study (indeed, because of the dual media of storytelling and enactment, it will be argued that the shifting positions may be the reason for possible misinterpretations or different interpretations). By contrast, because the written text is always present for reference, it promotes "... abstract concepts, analytic reasoning, new ways of categorizing, [and] a logical approach to language" (Scribner, Cole & Cole 1981:223) thus freeing the mind of its memory work (Ong 1982). This means that a literate person will think of a name only as a label while, an oral person will associate the name to a thing (and a large number of extra-linguistic features) depending on the context of communication. In such a process, the listener must (or needs to) have a shared context with the speaker; one of concrete and imagistic reality, hence the socio-cultural context of communities (Ong 1982, 1999; Scribner et al. 1981; Akhutina 2003).

The notion of community (as will be seen in chapter four) is varied and contested, but it is important to note that whatever idea of community one deals with, the modern society has been greatly influenced by writing. As such, Brandt (2011), and Scribner *et al* (1981) believe written language is the exclusive possession of the human animal that makes us distinct from other creatures of cultures. According to Scribner *et al*, written languages' "...origins are found in cultural history rather than biological evolution" (1981:3) but modern research on language (Pinker 2003) and culture show that they both influence each other.

It is along this line that Kramsch (1998:3) says "through all its verbal and non-verbal [manifestations], language embodies cultural reality". As one will see with Gee who

says language determines our activities and identity, and vice versa, Kramsch says “we express our experiences through language and also create experience through language” (1998:3). As part and parcel of our cultural experience, that is language, “[f]ully literate persons can only with great difficulty imagine what a primary oral culture is like, that is, a culture with no knowledge whatsoever of writing or even of the possibility of writing” (Ong 1999:60).

To understand such society without the influence of writing, one has to have gone back to studying the oral society. This has only been possible with the existence of written text for reference and the oral language one studies tends to be written down, therefore making the divide between oral and written language blur¹⁸. An evidence of the thin line divide has long existed with authors who put into text sayings from oral traditions (while not aware of the orality problem) like

Ecclesiastes 12:9-10 "Besides being wise, Qoheleth taught the people knowledge, and weighed, scrutinized and arranged many proverbs. Qoheleth sought to find pleasing sayings, and write down true sayings with precision." (cited by Ong 1982:17)

This particular quotation opens many of the concerns of this study. One notes, for example, the seeming connection between “pleasing sayings” and “true sayings” and one wonders whether the pleasing nature was because of the medium of performance, or because the sayings generated certainty, which might, in itself, be pleasing. Furthermore, one notes the wise person had two tasks, namely of teaching (and one presumes this was done orally), but also to write the sayings down ‘with precision’. As will become clear, it is the translation of the verbal to the written or from the one verbal medium to another, that the nature of such ‘precision’ is questioned. Finally, one notes that the importance of proverbs, or repeatable and accessible moments of wisdom that are the matters captured (in writing).

Ong states that “[w]riting [. . .] is a particularly pre-emptive and imperialist activity that tends to assimilate other things to itself even without the aid of etymologies” (1982:12). Goody (1987) thinks there is no clear-cut division between orality and literacy, while Townend and Walker (2006) assert that they are closely interdependent. Tannen

¹⁸ In the same way, and in this sense, language usage affects the understanding of language usage, and the understanding of language usage affects the language used. The synergy is unavoidable.

advocates that orality and literacy be treated as a continuum for they intermingle in everyday language use (cited by Brandt 2011).

Though one might find it hard to imagine life without text, Ong places a greater power on oral language in interaction than text. To therefore understand orality, Ong provides formulae or characteristics that make it seemingly distinct from written language. Such formulae should be seen in orality culture in terms of the immediacy of communication, the necessity to commit information to memory so as to recover at a later stage, the need to conform to the way other members of an orality community actually communicate, and the need, furthermore, to draw on and reinforce the worldview of that community. In this sense, the community is conservative in nature, both in terms of conserving information, but also in terms of conserving a worldview and all that goes with it. Thus, in the analysis through Orality, one is pursuing both the strategies of information sharing, storage and retrieval, and an attempt to understand the worldview of the community.

In summary, and using conversation as a point of departure and linking this to storytelling, one encounters (1) the notions of immediacy; (2) of information being retrieved and provided orally according to the context of the speaker, the listener and the conversation; (3) that the conversation is emergent, and therefore reliant on memory cues as well as contextuality (both from moment to moment in the conversation and taking into consideration the responses being received); (4) that the conversation or story, by its very nature contains an accepted structural patterning; and (5) that the conversation or story has a purpose or rhetorical reason for coming into existence. To manage all these dynamics requires practice¹⁹, and to analyse all these dynamics requires an analytical strategy. For this thesis, Ong's work on the formulaic provides such a useful strategy.

2.5. The orality formulae

Ong's orality formulae are presented in this section, so that the devices, dynamics, and potential purpose of each one in his formulation of Orality, can be documented; but also, to begin to speculate on how these reflect a worldview. These dynamics will

¹⁹ Seen in this way, it becomes evident that the notion of 'improvisation' is in fact far from 'spontaneous.' Conversations seem to demonstrate a sense of spontaneity, but this is a veneer that hides a highly complex, learned, interactive process.

be used extensively in the various analysis moments of both the storytelling (which is predominantly oral in nature) and the performance (which contains elements of the oral, but also other elements of performativity). The discussion of each formula foregrounds the orality approach, but is placed against a potential written or literacy dynamic to better understand the differences. (This is a strategy that Ong himself uses and is useful as a differentiation mechanism).

2.5.1. Additive rather than subordinative

In modern English, the word ‘additive’ as a noun refers to a substance added into other things like food to preserve or improve its quality. As an adjective, in mathematics it relates to, or produces a result in addition by introducing a flow of numbers. The first definition of adding to improve the quality of a substance relates to oral communication because words such as ‘and’, and ‘then’ can be used to produce a flow of narration and in sustaining that narrative, as explained by Ong. Thus, in the additive mode, events are placed in a sequence where the one leads to the next. Significantly, causation is implied, in that, by placing one event after a previous one, relevance is determined by assumption but not by explanation particularly.

Ong (1982, 1999) makes mention of the fact that oral thoughts and expressions are additive while written thoughts are subordinate. In explaining this point, Ong quotes from the Bible²⁰ where text stems from oral culture and preserves recognizable oral patterning. The use of words like “and”, “when”, “then”, “thus”, or “while” are very prominent in the “creation narrative of Genesis 1:1-5,” (Ong 1982:36) and provide a flow of narration. In essence, events are added sequentially, whereas in literacy there are moments for pauses, reflection, clarification, and meandering (the subordinative effect). The additive nature of oral discourse, thus, limits the notion of pauses for clarification, extension and adding to the meaning of particular, discrete, events. Speculatively, when engaging with the story presented by the teller in a PT performance, this pattern will help the narrator or teller’s story to flow straight on point

²⁰ It should be noted that this refers to the King James translations of the original texts and it is to this that Ong refers. This is in line with the notion that the King James Version was specifically generated to accommodate an illiterate (as defined above) congregation, where the priest would read the text aloud. The newer versions do not follow this patterning as they are translated to be read and thus fall into the literacy domain of analysis. A comparison of the creation narrative as presented in the King James version and the *Good News Bible*, for example, is insightful. Attempting a persuasive and convincing *oral performance* of the passage as it appears in the *Good News Bible* is very difficult.

and not in bits and pieces of clarification, explanation, causation or even emphasis.²¹ (However, it should be noted that these do occur in modern storytelling, as explained below).

PT is practised in an era much influenced by chirographic and typographic communication. As such, one tends to think more elaborately with detailed grammatical structures (including, inevitably, the use of subordinate tactics). However, the additive structure in this oral discourse can help bring out meaning independent of grammar (Ong 1982:37) as illustrated below.

JO: And this is Debbie and this Dean. And we are Hudson River Playback Theatre. And we are very glad to be here with you to be part of your day today..... (Hudson River playback theatre Company 2005).

In presenting the other members of the playback cast, Jo (the conductor) repeatedly uses 'and'. By using 'and', she is adding on new information or, in this case, introducing a new person. Indeed, as she introduces each member, the use of the word 'this' suggests that Jo is moving down the line of the cast members, pointing to each one individually in the row, and then moving on to the next one. Apart from adding information, this also allows for the information added to stand out (and be accentuated) in a unique way from the previous bit of information. (One notes, for example, that she does not stop and place each person in some form of context through description, clarification, or explanation. This would move the presentation into the domain of the subordinate).

It places emphasis on every addition both in terms of isolation, but also through non-verbal emphasis. As this is the case, no item excluded will have any effect or change the meaning in what is being said (or asked for a comparison). Therefore, the additive nature in oral communication helps to elaborate by adding information in a narrative which is, or can be independent of the whole, yet is seen in sequence. Furthermore, in this example, memory is aided because the information is provided verbally, and then accentuated both visually and gesturally at the same time. In the reading of the passage, only the name is mentioned, once, but, on rereading, one can begin to build

²¹ Speculatively it could be argued that the purpose of PT enactment is precisely to allow for these moments of clarification and explanation, but this is unclear from the literature on PT.

one's own picture of the people. This multiple reinforcement speaks to another of the formulae, engaged with below.

Lord argues (1987:56) that despite the additive nature of oral communication, it is not void of subordination. For example, when a series of actions in a narrative is "interrupted by a time clause" (Lord 1987:55), introducing a new scene, a subordinate clause is often used. This point is illustrated with Salih Ugljanin's version of *The Battle of Kosovo* (lines 30-39) ... "they knocked on the door. Lazar sent the priest. Night passed; dawn came. Lazar summoned the priest" (Lord 1987:55). Yet even here the sequential, additive nature is paramount.

2.5.2. Aggregative rather than analytic (adjectives)

Oral narrations use set expressions, phrases or clauses, clichés and, epithets more than literate cultures (Ong 2002:38). This aggregative nature is sometimes applied to criticize or praise people, for example, "the beautiful princess" and not "the princess". The epithets or expressions are welcomed and kept intact rather than analysed or questioned (Lord 1987:56). Thus, value constructs for people, places, moments in time, and so forth, are communally set and easily recalled. The princess is always beautiful, the villain always evil, and so forth. Thus, the general is made more specific by aggregation, and therefore is more easily remembered and located (both in the story and in memory). Havelock emphasizes that the

... complete "conceptuality" of discourse (if this be the appropriate word) depends not on single words treated as phenomena *per se*, but on their being placed in a given relationship to one another in statements which employ either a copula or an equivalent to connect them (1986:136).

Therefore, an analysis of the single words "is a high-risk procedure" as Ong (1982) thinks that adding 'subordinate' explanation, description or clarification will break up the thought pattern of the narrator. This may also lead to misinterpretation (or be lost in memory) or a misplacing of the speaker's intention. In the literate understanding, each individual moment is classified in context and through cross reference, allowing the moment to be analysed for its specific intent at that moment. Furthermore, it suggests that, in the literate world, given a context, princesses, for example, can sometimes be beautiful, sometimes dowdy, and sometimes unpleasant or evil. This is not the case in the orality mode, causing a seeming 'hardening' of typical description,

but also an ease of classification and thus a clarity of relationship to the thing being described.²² By providing a word cluster that incorporates, inevitably, a thing and an emotional, ideological and/or visual positioning of that thing, both the thing and the position are aggregated, and the aggregated concept is committed to memory.

The use of slogans and clichés like “the Glorious Revolution of October 26” or the “the Glorious Fourth of July”, is quite distinct in quality and function to the epithetic formulas of oral traditional or Homeric verses like “wise Nestor” or “clever Odysseus” (Ong 2002:38; Lord 1987:56). Both sets of phrases are clustered together for ease of remembrance. However, the former is used and accepted without any analysis as it deals with a moment in history, while the latter is not deprived of meaning, for the use of the word ‘wise’ will depend on the person’s action in a given context. In essence referring to Nestor as ‘wise’ and Odysseus as ‘clever’ is meaningful in context as it forms part of thought itself (Ong 1999:66). Therefore, the words ‘wise’ or ‘clever’ as used in the context are kept intact without any need for analysis. Ong (2002:39) notes that these words can however be replaced or used differently in a different context for they are neither abstract nor have fixed meaning attached to them.

To consider oral compositions to be abstract as does the literate mind, defeats the “syntactical test” according to Havelock because “oral discourse... [is] always busy, performing or behaving” (1986:137), thus it is involved in some form of action (including the events being narrated and the act of narrating itself). As mentioned earlier, words cannot be “identified categorically... [nor] defined or described analytically” (Havelock 1986:137), as with literate thoughts and expressions. Given that the meaning of words in oral thoughts and expressions can be given social, physical, and psychological identity or definition, they can be applied to various things depending on the context of usage. This forms part of thought itself, ready for oral occurrence (Ong 1999).

These applied epithets may not individually be meaningful to the whole context in which it is used but it adds value and helps in understanding the whole. An example from the speech of one of the greatest civil liberty minds in history, Martin Luther King

²² In this regard one can point to factions splintering from a dominant liberation movement where the oral is the primary mode of communication, for example, where the splinter group members go from “heroes of the revolution” to being given the epithet of ‘cockroaches’ almost overnight, so that particular people can be clearly defined in their relationships to the Orality narrator representing the dominant.

is now considered. (My use of 'greatest' implies a comparison of him to other civil liberty leaders. Another way of phrasing this from an Orality point of view would be 'the great Martin Luther King, martyr to the struggle'). These can also be found in his 'famous' speech (the speech is always 'famous') "I have a dream".

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. Five score years ago a great American in whose symbolic shadow we stand today signed the Emancipation Proclamation. (Martin Luther King 1963:1)

The use of 'greatest' and 'great' adds more value to and shows the importance of what is being said. By also using these words, he is being specific in linking this event with the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. One notes the use of the antiquated term "five score years" (that is, one hundred years, harking back to 1861 and connecting it to 1961) which locates the Biblical style of the language and is thus appropriate for Reverend King. Furthermore, it resonates with the style of the Gettysburg address by Abraham Lincoln "fourscore and seven years ago" (Schwartz 1996:399) which is then accentuated by the symbolic shadow of Abraham Lincoln (who led the emancipation/ freedom of the slaves in the United States). Thus, the context of the speech is accentuated in a number of ways. This performing aspect of the speech is lost without the words as demonstrated in a self-paraphrased version, below:

I am rather pleased to be here with you and share something that, in all likelihood, when we think back on it, could be a very important moment in our history. By our history I mean yours and mine. We are the ones that got our freedom from Abraham Lincoln. For those of you who don't know, he is the man that signed the Emancipation Proclamation about one hundred years ago, give or take some years. And that signing was great for us. But now we are at another moment in history, it seems to me....

From this literacy induced reworking, a number of points are worth considering. Firstly, one notes the number of subordinative moments (from the previous formula principle) that occur, as the speaker stops, refocuses, clarifies, provides added information, and so forth. King's speech, on the other hand, marches on sequentially or additively. Secondly, there are no clusters of words that evoke emotional, ideological, or even visual memory connections (that is to say, the aggregative is emasculated) and in their place is simply an attempt to provide dispassionate information (the clause "for those

of you who don't know" indicates this clearly). Finally, the heroic, Biblical and substantially performative nature of King's original speech has disappeared in the mundane. It can be argued that this performative aspect is enhanced by a type of medium aggregation – the location of the style of presentation within a Biblical style aggregates the Biblical to the context of the speech.

From a world view understanding of the aggregative, one can deduce that orality cultures are clear in their definitions of matters and events, suggesting that changes in such understandings of events are extremely difficult to make and when they are made, they are immediately cemented in clear and shared epithets. Subtleties of analysis muddy the notion of remembering or memorialising events and people.

2.5.3. Redundant or copious

Within a literary culture, the mind concentrates on moving ahead, because what it forgets can always be revisited in a text. However, to aid remembrance and to keep listeners on track, redundancy, or repetition of the already said (either directly or in a slight rephrased way) is crucial in oral cultures. In some instances, it helps the speaker to organize his next thought in the mind (Ong 2002). This can be important in playback to encourage fluency in story narration; given that people sometimes come into the space without knowing or rehearsing the stories they might share (see Roman Jakobson *Selected Writings* pages 39-41). The oral formulae of addition – the need to list by adding – influences and makes repetition possible. In this case, the repetition is not of phrases or ideas but of words like 'and'. However, the repetition of an idea or a phrase especially for the purpose of remembrance or emphasis, is the core concern in this section.

In short, no really new bits of information are added (the nature of redundancy suggests that something is no longer really necessary, or is a repetition), but the original bit is repeated in a slightly different form. An example illustrates this: "It was a blustery day. The wind howled. The wind shook the trees. The wind blew paper across the playground. The wind disrupted the play of the children. The wind was everywhere." In this example, the accumulation of images directly connected to one phenomenon, the wind, paints the picture of that moment. The repetitions are copious. Within the literacy world, the sentence might simply have read: "The wind was destructive in the school."

It is said that by the third or fourth repetition of something, the matter is remembered. Furthermore, such repetition allows for one thing being used to refer to a much larger context in time. When Martin Luther King (1963) in his speech repeatedly says, “I have a dream...”, he is speaking not of events that have come and gone or are happening in the present. By saying this, he is talking about what will happen in the future. By repeating this phrase, he is giving hope to those listening and, to some extent, prophesying; because each dream takes the same structure — it identifies something that is wrong, and then prophesies what the changed circumstances could look like. (In this example one also encounters the additive formula).

In the context of PT, and in oral communication as a whole, the presence of an interlocutor is indispensable. For the former, the conductor (Jo) uses the additive to pattern the thought of the teller, while repeating what the teller (Judy) says for clarity and emphasis.

JO: The frustration of the bureaucracy. Choose someone to play your friend. Sarah? And let's make up a name for her.

JUDY: Sally.

JO: Sally. And a word or two for Sally as a person. What's she like?

JUDY: A very strong person.

JO: A strong person. And a friend of yours, who's having a crisis with her own emotional health. And can you give us a couple of examples of the bureaucratic obstacles that you encountered?

JUDY: They were daily.

JO: Daily, right! Does this ring a bell?

Notice Jo, the conductor, repeating words and phrases from Judy who is the teller. In doing this, Jo is reassuring the teller that she is listening and hearing her. Her repetition is also a step into getting more information from the teller. We know this because of the question she asks after repeating what the teller says. (It is also important as this reinforcement through redundancy also engages the memory of the PT company who will be undertaking the enactment).

Lord however believes that this oral characteristic of repetition can be applied more in situations of “general communication than to oral traditional literature” (1987:57). For him, the issue of repetition in oral traditional literature does not

... arise from the need to remind the audience of what has been said, but from what I would call “ritual repetition”; and I would like to suggest that the fullness, the copiousness, comes from “ritual elaboration.” Only those elements are described fully which are of significance. (1987:58)

Elements like the sword of a hero when he arms himself for battle with a dragon are foregrounded. Lord insists on the antiquity of the ritual characteristic of repetition saying that Ong’s analysis is “more applicable to political speech-making than to oral literary composition” which he thinks, with time, the original ritual function of repetition will be lost or “kept as conventions of literary style which are retained as ‘oral residue’ in written literature (1987:59).

I agree partly with what Lord anticipated here because the literary style of repetition one studies in poems at school stems from orality. In his analysis of the redundant nature of orality, Lord does not totally dismiss its purpose of aiding memory but emphasizes that “[w]hat he is speaking of is recall of thought rather than of words, although the configuration of the words which express the thought aids in remembering it” (1987:59). Nevertheless, the repetitive characteristic serves as a mnemonic aid as well, thus combining the additive and redundancy.

In comparison to a speech like that of Martin Luther King, the example above, drawn from a PT performance, demonstrates a classic case of orality in conversation. In such a case, the repetition arises more from the listener than the speaker – in this case the conductor. Both cases of redundancy, either by the speaker or listener, are important for remembering. However, in the case of PT (as will be further demonstrated in the analysis of a full story), the conductor uses this repetitive style for clarity in the story especially for the sake of the actors. In the same line of reasoning, one can also say that by doing this, (repeating words and phrases of the teller’s story), the teller’s character hears the information a number of times to easily recall in the enactment. That moment of repetition, also allows a window of time for the actors to build the enactment plot in their minds as they listen.

2.5.4. Conservative or traditionalist

Writing is seen as an asset in preserving and conserving knowledge for future engagement, argument, or cross-reference. In the oral cultures, where writing does not exist, oral societies spend so much energy and time in repeating and performing

knowledge as a way of remembering and transmitting that knowledge, thus conserving it. The dynamic that thus appears is the cementing of the past as the yardstick for making judgments. Thus, in a literate society, if one is unsure of something, one consults books. But in the oral society, the point of reference is of matters that have been remembered and have been made memorable through repetition and tradition.

As it is often heard with most African traditional sayings, wisdom comes with age. By tradition here, one implies and refers not only to a people bound spatially, but to the language, songs, stories, performances and customs of a particular culture that are already in existence, have been validated through conservation and tradition, and that distinguish that group from others. The traditional forms of storytelling and singing still exist in the modern chirographic world which is why Ong sees it as conservative because, “tradition is not a thing of the past but a living and dynamic process which began in the past, flourishes in the present, and looks forward into the future as well” (cited by Lord 1987:63).

Even as tradition is something passed from generation to generation, it is not fixed and also impossible to pass it on just as it is because,

tradition consists not only of a body of thought, formulas, and themes, but, equally importantly, tradition also embraces an *art* of composition, which has shaped the formulas and themes used to express that body of thought. (Lord 1987:63)

Therefore, knowledge of the past can vanish if not repeated as Ong (1982:40) suggests. Part, therefore, of the oral society’s task is to generate regular occurrences that allow for the conserving of that tradition and knowledge; to prevent the case of a tradition being extinguished. (In this, the original reason for the establishment of PTPT is cemented as well). However, the process is not stagnant except, as Lord says, when “. . . it begins to lose contact with the present and becomes a preserver of its own past rather than a continuator” (Lord 1987:63). Therefore, although the oral world appears to be conservative and traditionalist, it allows for novelty in the art of telling stories and singing for the tradition is one of creating and inventing themes, rather than retelling memorized passages (Lord 1987:64). Thus, the oral form of PT which keeps the face-to-face contact of the oral tradition, but retells stories in an improvised performative form rather than orally, is one of many new compositions of the art.

Critically, therefore, when a teller tells their story it is based on their lived experiences which may be conceived of as a story or narrative. When this story is then told in the context of a PT moment, it is shaped by the demands of the PT context (which would include the fact that the PT company has not heard the story before, but the teller has). The teller's narrative conserves their experiences based on their context. The PT company, on the other hand, might not share the same tradition or context as the teller – it might be problematic to assume that it did (and herein lies one of the translation problems). This becomes potentially controversial when one assumes a homogeneity of tradition (which might include shared values, beliefs, and practices) – an assumption that one needs to be careful of.

2.5.5. Close to the human lifeworld

Primary oral culture conceptualized and verbalized all their knowledge close to the human lifeworld, for it was easier to preserve knowledge especially of skill when it was closer to the lived world than to an abstract, theoretical one. Thus, knowledge was constructed out of what was experienced directly, what was occurring in the lived environment, and from concrete actions and events. Thus, the concrete, the seen, heard, felt, experienced, and moved through world offers up a series of markers and reference points in the orientation, remembering and the narrating. Inevitably, therefore, the oral world conserves such physicalized and concretised moments. However, drawing on an example from the political sphere, Ong (1986) posits that writing and print has created a distance of knowing political leaders and their affiliates because these are preserved in an abstract, neutral list, void of any direct human action²³. Within the oral culture, leaders are continuously present, and genealogy could be easily recalled in context of their actions, that is “the names of persons and places occurred as involved in doings” (Ong 1986:42). Thus, names in the oral culture were easily remembered and accounted for through relations to others and actions performed. Indeed, these were embedded in the praise songs (Gunner 2017, 1979; Brown 1997) that accompanied special occasions, where the praise songs recounted attributes (or epithets – see the section on the aggregative, above), as well as

²³ Current political processes of democracy through elected leaders operating in a different part of the specific and experienced world, in parliaments, ‘centres of power’ and abstract constitutions suggest this ‘distance’ in contemporary terms.

significant deeds that had been performed that located the leader as the contributor to the well-being of the community.

Reference to nature and things around us when speaking can easily be identified in speeches. In describing who an African is, Thabo Mbeki²⁴ alludes to natural, every day, and shared visual experiences of the community and other features when he says, “I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land” (2005)²⁵. By using these words, he paints a picture of what an African represents, drawing on what all Africans experience and know. Another example can be taken from Martin Luther King’s speech “one hundred years later the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity” (1963). Here the author puts wealth and poverty in comparison through the image of a wide, endless sea and a small, secluded island as we know it. Thus, the lived experiences of poverty and (observed) prosperity are connected to the experiences of the ocean and the experiences of an island in that ocean.²⁶

What is said becomes clearer when put forward through an image that comes across as common knowledge or as common lived experiences. It suffices to say that, in this way, the oral tradition gets to acquire and remember knowledge – knowledge is, in fact, lived experience of the lifeworld, and is constructed and remembered because of the living in that lifeworld. In line with this idea and with reference to the Greek or ancient concept of pedagogy (that of the oral cultures), Ganyi (2014:66) affirms this of the African traditional cultures who instructed their young ones through the processes of life and the conscious exerciser of oral performances. Such is also true of trades that were acquired by apprenticeship through observation and practice with very limited verbal explanations (Ong 1982). In the absence of any “how-to-do-it manual” (1982:42), oral cultures learned through observing human actions.

²⁴ From a speech presented by Thabo Mbeki on 8 May 1996 at the adoption of The Republic of South Africa Constitutional Bill 1996 by South Africa’s Constitutional Assembly. Thabo Mbeki was at the time Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa. https://soweto.co.za/html/i_iamafican.htm

²⁵ In this example, one is also aware of the additive formula at play. This is also evident in the additive element of using opposites.

²⁶ It can also, of course, be argued that in this description he draws on the history of the slave trade and the crossing of the ocean to be enslaved/impoverished in the “island” that was America.

PT as an oral form focuses on lived experiences. It is easier to remember and recount vividly what one has experienced than the stories embedded in print. This is a critical concern because, when the story is told from the lived experience of the teller it is then 're-enacted' and one of the lifeworld experiences that the re-enactors draw on is their experience of previous playback moments. Furthermore, as will become clear, the accuracy of the playback may be problematic if the lifeworld of the teller differs markedly from the lifeworld of the re-enactors. If the two lifeworlds coincide, then this is not a problem, but if they are markedly different, that which the re-enactors select might not be what is embedded as a central concern in the lifeworld of the teller. In an oral community, the sense of homogeneity is almost expected, whereas, in a literacy community this might not be the case. (This point resonates with the previous one around the transferability of tradition).

2.5.6. Agonistically toned

The notion of the agonistic²⁷, or the elements of conflict and difference, plays out in orality in three domains. Firstly, in an oral world, the understanding of the world was set up between those who were on the side of the community (in whatever enterprise) and those against. Thus, the notions of inclusion or exclusion were definite and set and shaped the understanding of the world. One was either part of the community in all things, or one was outside the community (and therefore against the community) in all things. This manifested, often, in the epithets used to reinforce that belonging or exclusion – heroes could only be 'our' heroes, classified as 'valiant heroes', and therefore it was impossible to have a hero 'on the other side'. The person who displayed heroic characteristics was labelled 'an evil and powerful villain', for example. Thus, the chief could do no wrong, but the opposing community could do no right.

The second significant difference between orality and literacy is that the former is solely dependent on human interaction (Okpewho 1992; Finnegan 2012) in that the human interaction is both repeated and the occasion for the human interaction is repeated. Consequently, there are carriers or formulators of the language events that capture these interactions such that "... a performer who formulates [stories, poems

²⁷ It is useful to remember that, in traditional drama or theatre, conflict drove the story or narrative. Thus, in the narrative the protagonist was on one side of the conflict (usually representing the views with which the audience were to identify), and the antagonist was on the opposite side. The conflict was resolved when the protagonist won, as it were, cementing the views of the audience.

and songs] in words on a specific occasion, [and] in a sense depend[s] on repeated performances for their continued existence” (Finnegan 2012:4).

If the agonist holds, from the first formulation, how does a community change, without the performer becoming a victim of misrepresentation and therefore exclusion? The performers are however not bound to transmit exactly what they heard as earlier mentioned, thus making it possible, especially in the African oral culture, for conflict to arise between two performers of the same folktale. Although one does not own the tale, the performers strive to be the best such that “a storyteller from among the audience [can] come forward to fill up gaps in the previous story or to follow it up with another story. Thus, the storytelling session may be turned into a competitive game” (Chinyowa 2011:67). The idea of a battle or competition between the narrators exhibits the agonistically toned nature of orality; yet at the same time the agonistic is defused by becoming part of the storytelling mode. Criticism, therefore, is embedded in the subtle changes to the story, but the performance, therefore, takes on the agonistic mode and task.

Ong (1982:43) posits that “orality situates knowledge within a context of struggle”. Therefore, it is difficult to have internal conflict within the oral culture, for all conflict (internal/external) has to be verbalized as it is the only way of transferring knowledge. Internal conflict can only be recognized and acknowledged when voiced out. For example, there are times when someone has mixed emotions arising from the same context and situation.

KEELIN: I guess just sitting here, I've known some of these people for a really long time, and I'm sort of feeling there's things about them that I didn't know. And that's really a good thing. I like to be surprised.

JO: You mean things that you've been hearing today...

KEELIN: I didn't know that Holly was buying Maria's house. And I didn't know that Humah found us to be such a support to her and that makes me very happy and very sad at the same time.

Here, Keelin is informing the others of how she feels about them (her co-workers present in the performance) and the information she just acquired. Knowledge, such as the one shared in this playback context, is not viewed as an abstract entity typically fostered by writing (Ong 1982, Havelock 1986). Critically the implications are caught in the idea that 'you are either for us or against us'. In the instance shared above,

Keelin is agreeing and joining with the others to share a special moment of both happiness and sadness.

Thirdly, and following on from the performative nature of the agonistic, struggles of contestation occur within communities, as a way of decompressing tensions (on the one hand) and letting off steam on the other. Ong refers to “flyting (or fliting)” (1982:43) as this is found in the African retelling of proverbs and riddles (Okpewho 1992:43) or “young black males in the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere, engag[ing] in what is known variously as the ‘dozens’ or ‘joning’ or ‘sounding’ or by other names” (Ong 1982:43). In these competitions two opposing (or agonistic) forces are set up against each other in the community, and the task is for each to insult, denigrate, belittle, or undermine the other until one or the other loses the ‘playfulness’ of the agonistic encounter and moves, possibly, to a ‘real’ reaction to the insults.

This is not only aimed at transmitting knowledge to the audience but also at demonstrating wisdom and celebrating physical behaviour as a “description of physical violence often marks oral narratives” (Ong 2002:44). This however, Ong notes, “is not a real fight but an art form” (2002:44). It can be argued, therefore, that, in an oral community such playful agonistic practices are encouraged to bring conflict into the open and thereby deal with the events that led to the conflict²⁸. Knowledge of the conflict moments is revealed, the breaking point of the conflict is established and defused, and the community is made whole again. (In short, these types of agonistic performances are part of a ritual, as will be expanded upon in later chapters).

As writing and print gradually seemingly overpowered the oral tradition, this art form of verbal and physical description of conflict was seen to be virtually repulsive. It led to a refocused on internal rather than external crises. Yet with humanity becoming more individualised and less community orientated, it became even harder to express the internal conflicts, which may be seen to result in the need for a return to the oral tradition in art forms such as PT.

²⁸ Such agonistic ‘performances,’ therefore, relied on accessing a storehouse of insults and presenting them in appropriate aggregative flows of images, where the bulk of the imagery is drawn from both past experience (hence the ‘tradition’ of the insult) and from concrete images from the lifeworld. A typical example is the conflict between two people who are insulting the other’s mother, for example: “Your mother is so fat the scale screamed her weight”, to which the reply might be “your mother is so fat she comes around two corners of a building at once”, to which the reply might be “your mother is so fat . . .” and the insults continue.

The pair form²⁹ of PT uses conflicting situations for enactment in the pair form, which in most cases, are internal conflict situations rather than conflict between two individuals. As such, it is suggesting that the agonistic is the root of the internal strife because the situation seems unresolvable. Speculatively, it can be argued therefore, that the telling of a story verbally and the response of the actors in performance, allow for the actors to physicalise the teller's internal conflict while simultaneously educating the audience. To an extent, the teller and the actors can therefore be said to be engaged in an agonistic performance, potentially also using agonistic elements that are typical of traditional drama/theatre.

Critically, therefore, it becomes very crucial for the PT company to be able to accurately identify the particular conflict or agonistic matter. However, as has been suggested in the section on the lifeworld views (above), this is easier to do when the lifeworlds coincide; but if they are different, then what might be the agonistic moment for the teller, might not be the agonistic cue picked up and reacted to by the PT company. (Furthermore, what might be deemed agonistic by the PT company might not be seen to be so by the teller.)

2.5.7. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced

The word 'empathetic' in this orality formula derives from the word 'empathy', widely used in the psychological discipline. As mentioned by Elliot, Bohart, Watson and Greenberg (2011:380), empathy is a complex construct used for different purposes that consist of different experiences and acts. However, this study will not delve into the multiplicity of concepts and definitions associated with this phenomenon, but seeks to define the concept in relation to the core of this study. Therefore, in thinking of orality and PT as social phenomena in which empathy applies, I define it "as a complex imaginative process in which [a person as] an observer" (Coplan 2011:40), goes through "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing and responding" (Barker 2008:141) to an experience, or something from the other person's point of view (Colman 2009:248), "while maintaining clear self-other differentiation" (Coplan 2011:40) and structuring the world as s/he does (Dymond cited by Cuff, Brown, Taylor & Howat 2016:146).

²⁹ This is one of the techniques used in PT to re-enact the stories. The techniques will be explained further in the chapter on PT.

The central concern in this formulaic moment is the sense of the communal (Ong 2002:45) and the centrality of shared experience in the development of an understanding of the world. Such communality and experientiality leads inevitably to a sense of empathetic (or experientially shared) connections to others in the community. By contrast, in the literate world, it is argued that the acquisition and judgement of effective and truthful new knowledge requires a sense of objectivity (Ong 2002:45), as the potential new knowledge is weighed up against abstract principles, theories and, perhaps, universal truths. In this sense, orality fosters inclusivity (as has been argued, above), while literacy fosters abstract and objective testing. Inclusivity, it can be argued, fosters empathy, whereas testing fosters distancing.³⁰

With the oral culture, knowing or obtaining knowledge brings the knower and the known so close that there is (or appears to be) no room (or need, for that matter) for objectivity (Ong 2002). This explains why oral knowledge is close to the human lifeworld. It also implies the emotional connections that reinforce belonging and therefore by extension, exclusion. The idea of belonging and connecting to the context and content also greatly affects one's understanding and subsequent transmission of what one hears. In talking about the researchers of the African oral tradition, Okpewho asserts that the foreign sociologist – from Europe and America – unlike the native African scholars

... were unable to get down to a proper analysis of the merits of African oral literature chiefly because they lacked a sufficiently deep understanding of and feeling for the indigenous language in which that literature was performed. (1992:12)

To know, not only the language, but be part of the culture (or community) becomes very important, especially for performers of oral literature who need a unique artistic style in the composition and delivery of stories (Chinyowa 2011). When story tellers are able to develop their unique style (within the confines of community expectations but acknowledging the licensed 'playfulness' of the occasion) in composition and delivery, many scholars believe it becomes the possession of members of the community (Okpewho 1992, Goody 2010) and can be passed down through

³⁰ This situation is further problematised when one considers that, should it come to pass that an objective stance leads to contradictions in the community, the agonistic comes into play, and the holder of the contrary view is excised from the community, for example.

generations. It can therefore be argued that a strong empathetic bond is established (and reinforced) between performer, community, context, and content.

The familiarity of the cultural context embellishes the relationship between the performer and his audience. Through an ensemble of actions which might include the voice, gestures and intentions of the performer (Goody 2010:55), the performer is able to shape the story through the response of the participatory audience (Chinyowa 2011:65). Therefore, the oral tradition allows a bond between narrator, audience and character in a communal sense which can only be achieved through physical presence and engagement rather than “personal disengagement or distancing” (Ong 2002:45).

Critically, within orality, balancing arguments for and against (a hallmark of the literate) a position or person is replaced by feelings of solidarity and *communitas*³¹. This also begins to demonstrate the possible reluctance to challenge ideological truths as the lived experience is empathetically central to operating in the world. (This is reinforced by the agonistic). In the analysis of PT as an oral art form in chapter five, it will be evident that this art form, according to Fox (1986), provides a communal space – in a world more and more engulfed by personal space – for people to commune not through folktales and epic poems but with sharing personal stories. By so doing, they develop a “...critical consciousness to a circumstance that previously may have been inchoately personal” (Fox 1986:50), hence upholding the characteristics of the oral tradition of participations and empathy.

Participation in any oral communication is always voluntary unless it is a question that requires an answer from the other party. However, getting involved becomes easy when one connects with what is being said, hence the empathy. In PT the connection is called the ‘red thread’ (Fox 1999:117). An analysis of the stories shared by Mathew and Christine in the HRPC open up the problem:

MATHEW: All of a sudden, I’m speechless and people who know me, know that that’s not me! 11 years ago, when I started, I had no idea that I would still be here and still doing what it is I do. That I would fall in love with what I do, which is helping people. And growing as I have—I used to be a very much a quiet, shy person, which some people find hard to believe; and trying to bring the experience I’ve had to the people I teach. And this is one of the

³¹ *Communitas* is dealt with in the next chapter. In summary, *communitas* allows for the dismantling of boundary expectations, which, of course, in an oral culture, do not necessarily exist. Indeed, as will be suggested, *communitas* is central to ritual, where the coherence of community is reaffirmed.

rooms I teach in. Going from the back of the class to the head of the class is the amount of transition I've experienced in my life through working here is amazing.

.....

CHRISTINE: I've been at the agency 15 years, and a few years ago, I worked at a house which was a transitional home. And one of the people who'd come for an interview to live in the house, at first, we weren't sure how he'd do. We had our staff appreciation picnic the other day, and he actually got a 5-year plaque, for actually working for the agency in village care, as well as moving into his own apartment; so it was a really good thing to feel like I had a part in his development.

In the part of the conversation omitted through ellipsis, the conductor invites another story after Mathew's one, and Christine immediately says she has one. It is obvious that the urge for participation was influenced by the connection she felt listening and watching Mathew's story. Both stories, though from different angles, are about the fulfilment and growth experienced in the workplace. The empathetic nature of oral communication in PT has been mentioned above through Keelin who became more connected to her colleagues by hearing things about them for the first time (see the example in 2.5.6, above).

2.5.8. Homeostatic

Oral traditions are considered to be static (and therefore conservative and traditionalist in their stasis); passed down from one generation to another generation (Goody 2010; Okpewho 1992). This is the reason why early scholars of oral cultures could not recognize the unique qualities of, especially, African oral literature, as they thought that being passed from narrator to narrator and from generation to generation, "they must have lost certain qualities which appealed to their original owners, and whatever survived must have been weakened versions of the original text" (Okpewho 1992:6). It is not surprising that these scholars will think of oral tradition as such because not only were they coming from a literate culture, but they were also not part of these societies under study as discussed in the preceding formulae.

In his analysis of orality, Ong (2002, 1999), emphasizes memory and recall as the main points of departure for the other dynamics of orality (Soukup 2004). Memory relates specially to sound which takes place in time. Once a word is verbalized, it cannot be recalled or, like literate cultures, looked up. Given that oral cultures do not

have books or dictionaries to look up meaning of words, words are therefore known to have layers of meaning (Ong 2002). As knowledge in the oral culture is linked to life events, the memory therefore focuses on the here and now for any past event cannot be retrieved from any books like the literate culture.

The meaning of words in an oral culture are derived from the here and now or “the real-life situation in which the word is used [or what] Goody and Watt call ‘direct semantic ratification’” (Ong 2002:29). So, when Ong says, “you know what you can recall” (1999:65), he does not imply that the oral mind can remember and use words in their exact form (or with the exact same meaning), but that the mind can readily produce words (images, connections, events that are similar, and so forth – in essence an empathetic connection) to apply in given situations. This however does not mean that word meanings are changed completely in oral tradition but that “Memory of the old meaning of old terms thus has some durability, but not unlimited durability” (Ong 2002:46). By this he means that oral art forms are part of everyday social life such that ancient words are preserved and used in current situations. In this sense, there is always some variation in each new performance of an art form for “variations creep in partly because memory is imperfect” (Goody 2010:64) and “everything appears in its situation, since that is how memory works best” (Soukup 2004:15).

The ability to use new words especially for oral art form performers is not just about what they can recall but

... skilled oral narrators deliberately vary their traditional narratives because part of their skill is their ability to adjust to new audiences and new situations or simply to be coquettish. (Ong 2002:58)

Consequently, as an improvised oral art form, PT is always presented to different audiences, in different settings and for varied purposes which therefore necessitate variety in performance. (The problem, as will become evident, is that this variety might not solely be about the story being told, but on the variety of theatrical performance techniques available to the PT company, which, in turn, might skew the accuracy of the playback moment. In short, the homeostasis refers to action sequences that have been memorised and used, effectively, before, in performance, and are thus used again because they may seem to approximate the meaning sought). In a playback performance, the meaning of words could be derived, accentuated, developed, given

direction, or even changed by including gestures, vocal inflections, facial expression, and the entire human, existential setting in which the real spoken word always occurs (or, following PT theory, should always occur) as illustrated with the oral characteristic of close to real lifeworld. This, in this case, will depend on the themes of the performances. Speculatively, this can also point to the ‘truthfulness in enactment’ based on recognition factors, and therefore could also begin to explain a potential breakdown in communication in the PT, as in the example cited at the beginning of this study.

2.5.9. Situated rather than abstract

Persons in the oral culture tend to think more about the situation – here and now – rather than the abstract. The language of oral culture is always tied into physical action, unlike written language that can be preserved and transmitted with ease. In an oral culture language is tied to concrete specific details rather than generalized as an intangible concept. According to Ong, “all conceptual thinking is to a degree abstract” (2002:48) because a word like ‘tree’ can refer to anything and “[e]ach individual object that we style a tree is truly ‘concrete’, simply itself, not ‘abstract’ at all, but the term we apply to the individual object is in itself abstract” (Ong 2002:48). This (abstractness), to Havelock (1986:135) is a concept coined by the literate mind in an attempt to explain the Homeric idioms as abstract ideas. Havelock asserts that

... complete “conceptuality” of discourse (if this be the appropriate word) depends not on single words [as in the example given by Ong] treated as phenomena *per se*, but on their being placed in a given relationship to one another in statements which employ either a copula or an equivalent to connect them. (1986:136)

When placed in relationship to one another in a concrete real-life situation, words are personified, thus performing an action, unlike when the ‘is’ statement is used to indicate a fixed relationship between an object and a subject. In his book *African Oral Literature* (1992), Okpewho concurs with Havelock’s analysis by highlighting ‘imagery’ as one of the literary devices. Like Havelock, he says images may be expressed directly or as similes with the use of “like or as” (Okpewho 1992:98). The latter however is used more by a literary mind to understand the discourse (Havelock 1986) used by the oral mind, which therefore means anyone listening must be familiar with the context to better comprehend (Ong 2002; Lord 1986; Okpewho 1992). With the simile

construct, the listener is required to hold two distinct images (or two images from different lifeworlds) in mind at the same time, allowing for a movement and connection from the one to the other and back again. In a literary tradition this is fostered because the listener can refer back and forth between the two images until the meaning is in place. In the oral tradition, where the first image disappears once uttered and is committed to memory (if possible) that first image fades and the completion of the simile image becomes difficult, warped, or inconclusive (or becomes a concrete metaphor, accepted as such because the image is embedded in a lifeworld referentiality). Using the additive as a way of explaining this, in simile, the connecting word 'is' stops the flow of the additive formula, asking for a reflective moment, or seen through Ong's lens, an abstracting moment.

With the use of a metaphor, that is "a comparison achieved by direct reference" (Okpewho 1992:99), orality situates itself and remains "close to the living human lifeworld" (Ong 2002:49). Metaphor (as an explanation generated from a literary tradition) imposes one image on another so that, in the metaphor, the one image melts as it were, into the other image, becoming one (new) image, which, by this mechanism, becomes a new word or thought or idea. In simplistic terms, the literary mind can unpick the two concepts, whereas the orality mind assumes the accuracy of the new concrete image as being inevitable, as it were. Unlike literacy,

... an oral culture simply does not deal in such items as geometrical figures, abstract categorization, formally logical reasoning processes, definitions, or even comprehensive descriptions, or articulated self-analysis, all of which derive not simply from thought itself but from text-formed thought (Ong 2002:54).

As these aspects or explanations of the oral culture also derive from text-formed thought, it explains the reason why Ong considers all conceptual thinking to be somewhat abstract. I would want to believe that in saying this, Ong is not referring to writing, but to oral language influenced by writing which he calls "secondary [O]rality" (1999; 2002: 2). Thus, despite the claims that PT is an oral form of theatre, it can be argued that PT, though it claims a reflection of the oral tradition, is inevitably also influenced by writing. The usage of PT is not limited only to present events, but it can be said to be situated, as it is tied with physical action or everyday life events. This also centralises the body as a situated part of the process. Speculatively, it can also

be argued that the situatedness locates the transliteration from storytelling to enactment, as it situates the verbal in the performative. However, the question of situated thought expressions arises with PT participants who are heavily influenced by writing, thus leaving one to wonder if this could be a point of miscommunication.

Drawing on the argument made in this section, perhaps it can be concluded that the conceptualisation of PT is done through the metaphor, where the story appears to melt into the playback, whereas it should perhaps, in operation be seen through the eyes of the simile – ‘the story (supposedly) equals the enactment’. Argued in this way, whereas the teller may draw on orality (as will become evident in the analysis in Chapter six) the PT company is attempting to create a metaphor that requires some form of reflection on the part of the audience to unpick the parallels. However, in setting up the metaphor, the PT company draws on theatrical performance tropes first, and then on the orality elements in the story to be presented.³²

2.6. Oral dynamics

Recent studies of applied linguistics and sociology have been focusing on “the dynamics of primary oral verbalization” and oral verbalization of written text (Ong 2002:6). As evident and pioneered by Ong, primary oral language is one with no influence of writing, but it suffices to say that there is also oral language that is influenced by writing which Ong calls “secondary [O]rality” (1999; 2002:2); hence the reason for Tannen’s suggestion that they be treated as a continuum. For the purpose of this study, I will refer to oral language untamed by writing as ‘Orality with an uppercase ‘O’ and oral language influenced by writing as ‘orality’ with a lowercase ‘o’. In this section, I attempt to look at the characteristics that differentiate them so that it positions each in life as a whole, and the playback process in particular. The means and modes of communication are the differentiating characteristics of primary and secondary Orality (Ong 1982; Goody 1977) as the latter is sustained by technological tools such as telephones, radios, and television (to which can be added, theatre).

In his book, *Orality and Literacy: the technologizing of the word* (1982, 2002), Ong sets a base to better understand orally-based thoughts as opposed to chirographic

³² It should be noted that this is not a criticism of the efficacy of the process (such efficacy testing is beyond the scope of this thesis), but simply a way of attempting to understand and explain the potential dualities evident and providing mechanisms to unpack the possible miscommunications or misrepresentations of the story.

and typographic thoughts. He provides the contrast between orality and literacy by analysing what has been widely studied, printed, and reprinted as characteristics of an oral tradition not influenced by writing (Ong 2002; Soukup 2004; 2005). In extension, the subtitle “the technologizing of the word” presents us with the influence writing had on communication (which, in turn, has led to the way that the radio, telephone and TV as mediums of communication, which seemingly have orality as their bases, are in fact structured for literate minds).

Ong (1982) and Havelock (1986), in their study of the transformation from orality to writing then print, acknowledge the ‘word’ as being the main aspect of the different communication traditions. The ‘word’ in the oral tradition, being verbal, depends on sound while the literate culture with the invention of print, perceives the ‘word’ in print to be able to apprehend meaning. In simplistic terms, therefore, in orality the acoustic sound is the stimulus or trigger for meaning, whereas in the literate world, the visual image is the stimulus for meaning. Fundamentally, therefore, orality, like sound, is time based, whereas the literate is space based. So, because “oral cultures dwell in sound and in the power of sound” (Soukup 2004:15; Ong 1999), it becomes difficult for the literate mind to understand the power of say a name because

Chirographic and typographic folk tend to think of names as labels, written or printed tags imaginatively affixed to an object named. Oral folk have no sense of a name as a tag, for they have no idea of a name as something that can be seen (Ong 2002:33).³³

Understanding is greatly influenced by thought processes. Given that oral cultures depend on memory and recall (Ong 1982, 1999), an object and its name cannot be separated (Soukup 2004). On the other hand, the availability of a word in print makes memory to be regressive as it can always go back to look up the meaning of the word to complete the simile, for example (see footnote 24). Havelock (1986) notes that it is only after writing and printing was introduced that the oral culture could be preserved and subsequently studied in the Homeric poems. In short, the acoustic qualities of orality are ‘frozen’ in the visual and then, in the attempt to understand the orality nature

³³ In this explanation one sees the simile argument being made again, where, in the literate domain, the label is one thing, the person the label refers to is another and, in the space of comparison, the two are brought together in a ‘pause moment,’ whereas in the orality world the name *is* the person – a metaphor-making activity.

of the frozen moment, a literate mindset is brought, seemingly, to bear on the analysis to determine the acoustic essences.

To attempt to avoid such seeming contradictions, orality and literacy cannot be treated as separate entities but as a continuum, fostering a back-and-forth between orality strategies and literacy strategies³⁴. This position therefore can support the notion that “the culture of our own generation is seeing a revival of orality (through electronics and the PT form) as a viable mode of communication with a long historic ancestry” (Havelock 1979:188). In other words, to compare this new form of Orality to the oral tradition, one would need to examine the transformative process from orality to literacy and then back to Orality. As will become clear, such movements are shaped by the use of medium, the presence or absence of the listener, the intention of the communicative act, the context in which the act takes place, and related issues.

2.6.1. From literacy to secondary Orality

In his book *Orality and Literacy*, Ong not only discusses the oral tradition and its characteristics, but takes us through the transformational journey of the different media. He emphasises that the shift from orally-based thoughts to writing was slow, but was later enforced by the advent of print (2002:132). Through writing, early scholars revealed the oral culture, while print highlighted the “shift from sound to visual space” (2002:115). Ong’s (2002:112) analysis of the print culture does not only reveal the effect it had in preserving writing, but how it also affected the oral tradition by giving it new life.

The new orality which we now live with, and which Ong calls “secondary [O]rality” (2002:2), is also dependent on writing and print as technologies. Secondary orality is fostered by technologies such as books, television, radios, and tape recorders (and theatre). Its similarities and differences to primary orality have been linked to a range of social values (Durant 1984:337)³⁵.

³⁴ This can, perhaps, also be illustrated by the notion that squiggles on a page represent sounds, and one requires memory to connect a squiggle to a sound, and then to connect structured squiggles to learned words. Often these words are learned by sounding them, and then returning the sounds to the squiggles.

³⁵ A close analysis of the text used by television and radio news readers, for example, illustrates this problem. The text is written to be read, in other words, the sequencing of the words prepared for the reader’s mouth needs to be done in such a way to attract and make meaning for the listener’s ear, which in turn is affected by both the orality dimension of the acoustic qualities of listening (an orality

The sense of community and social interaction fostered by spoken words in the oral culture is restored with secondary Orality. For Ong, the spoken word serves as a tool to form human beings into “close-knit groups” because it stems from “the human interior and manifest human beings to one another as conscious interiors [and] as persons” (2002:72). This experience is however different in a primary and secondary oral culture with regards to the audience and the author orator.

An audience in a primary oral culture needs to be physically present. This is because when the spoken word has been sounded, it cannot be retrieved. For this reason, the group dynamics is always small as compared to secondary Orality which “generates a sense for groups immeasurably larger” (Ong 1999:69). The technology that allows for a large group to be reached at one moment in time also makes it possible for the audience to be physically absent and still hear the words while listening to news on the radio, for example. There is also the possibility for the audience of the secondary oral tradition to programme themselves or record to watch/listen at a more convenient time (Durant 1984:338). All these different possibilities as Ong puts it is because in our age of secondary Orality; we are group-minded self-consciously and programmatically (1999:69). This concern will become central in the consideration of PT, as it cannot really be assumed that, inevitably, the teller comes from the same social grouping as the PT company.

The author or orator/performer in the age of secondary Orality has writing, print and other technological aids in the act of speaking and memorizing. With these tools, speech is scripted, learned, rehearsed, and sometimes auto-cued at the time of performance (Durant 1984:338). This has therefore raised the need for spontaneity which in the secondary oral tradition has to be planned before executed – this offers the possible oxymoron of ‘rehearsed spontaneity’ that is to be found in effective realistic acting, for example, where the actor attempts to give the impression that the words are entering his or her mind (as he or she ‘is’ the character) on the spur of the moment, so to speak. In contrast to this, Ong (1999:69) considers primary oral culture to be more spontaneous because of the absence of writing (perhaps because there appears to be no original text). Durant (1984:338), apart from viewing secondary oral spontaneity as being planned, identifies two forms of spontaneity. The first refers to

domain), but also by the thought processes of thinking (as influenced by a literacy mode of making sense).

live programs that are spontaneously produced and transmitted unedited (or at least these programs set out to give the impression that this is the case). The second refers to those programs that are edited before transmission by isolating and selecting material for use and also editing the pause fillers. According to Ong,

... primary orality made itself felt in the additive, redundant, carefully balanced, highly agonistic style and the intense interplay between speaker and audience [whereas with secondary orality], the audience is absent, invisible [and] audible (1999:70)

However, with reference to Durant's second spontaneity example, and drawing on Ong's quotation, and then applying these to edited programmes, many of the orality dynamics are present, such as the balancing between agonistic views, the additive accumulation of these views moving toward a conclusion, and the visual and acoustic dynamics that are inserted to foster audience involvement (such as music, landscapes or soundscapes, the quality of the presenter's voice, the authenticity of those being interviewed, and so forth). Therefore, what is actually spontaneous is simply the moment-to-moment appearance of the programme.

The psychodynamics of the primary oral culture when echoed in the secondary oral culture, can be evident through the performer-audience interplay or what Goody terms "face-to-face" interaction (1992:16). All the characteristics of the primary Oral culture are also present in the secondary oral culture with the main difference being the medium (or, perhaps more precisely, the technology demands of the medium) as discussed above. This interplay is very much central in PT and will be better understood by examining the O/oral dynamics in this art form. The Oral dynamics (with upper case 'O') refers to the formulae expanded upon above, and the organisation of thoughts that accompany this, and the 'oral' (with lower case 'o') refers to the acoustic involvement in the communication moment.

2.7. Chapter summary

The chapter has traced seminal scholars who have interrogated communication focusing on the difference between written and oral communication and it is through such writings that the realisation and understanding of the oral form came to be. Despite this, Ong remains the main influencer in this field in terms of Orality because his work purported a purely oral tradition untouched by writing. As such, the analysis

presented traced how the chirographic culture was preceded by an oral culture and only through the discovery of writing that this was later understood. Orality emphasises the idea of the present, as words cannot be stored. Also, with orality the presence of the listener is paramount for any communication to take place.

The oral tradition that was made known by writing, was also greatly influenced by it giving birth to what is now known as secondary Orality. After looking at its characteristics in comparison to primary orality, secondary Orality (in which primary orality is fully present) will be presented with a capital 'O' because it involves spoken words plus other things like writing and technology. The idea of the O/oral relationship and difference is closely linked to the idea of D/discourse that will be uncovered after the presentation of the discourse theory in the next chapter.

In relation to the primary oral tradition's re-incarnation through PT, most characteristics of the oral culture have been inculcated into the PT ritual while others can be identified in the artistic and social frames of PT. This chapter has at the very least, provided a set of orality concepts or models that can be used in the analysis of what transpires in the PT engagements. The identification of the oral formulae namely, the additive rather than the subordinative; the aggregative rather than the analytic; redundancy or copiousness; the conservative or traditionalist; close to the human lifeworld; agonistically toned; empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced; homeostatic; and situated rather than abstract. These dynamics or formulae will be used as part of the analysis on PT, which will be done in chapter five as it presents the frame and process of PT.

The next chapter introduces and then builds the second analytical model to be used to interrogate the PT process, namely the use of discourse analysis. The chapter draws heavily on the work of J.P. Gee, as his work reinforces the notion of 'language in action,' which resonates strongly with the demands of drama and theatre. It also draws strongly on the notion that this 'language in action' must be seen in particular and specific contexts. One such context is the very nature of performance (to be discussed in the chapter after that) and therefore, by extension, in PT.

Chapter 3: Discourse analysis

3.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter developed an analytical model of oral language in comparison to language that is embedded in a literacy approach. Language as text and talk has consistently been a point of study in academia related areas; as a subject in itself and also as an object towards understanding other fields. The study of language has developed beyond just understanding the structure and syntax of a sentence to looking at what language does and produces beyond the sentence. The term 'Discourse Analysis', continues to be used in relation to the close study of language in context across all forms and modes (Tannen 1982:x) and is also used as evidence of aspects of society and social life (Taylor 2013:7).

Discourse analysis is an empirical research approach widely used in the social sciences, humanities, and other related disciplines. It interrogates utterances and text as "doing something" (Austin 1962, 2013) in the context in which it is uttered rather than a simple true or false statement. Discourse analysis therefore moves beyond grammar (Austin 1962:3) and acoustic manifestation and engages with people, in context, using language in the pursuit of various ends, and drawing on the expectations of the context, situation and goal to shape the particular language manifestation. The title of Austin's 1962 book usefully summarises this situation: *Doing things with words* (to which can be added 'in context').

The main objective in this chapter is to expand on James Paul Gee's (1991; 2004; 2011a; 2014) theories of D/discourse that present characteristics of a contextual Discourse which is language-in-use together with other things like tradition, social norms and ideological or culturally specific matters. As will become clear, 'discourse' (with a lowercase 'd') refers to the manipulation of the language from moment to moment, and Discourse (with an uppercase 'D') refers to the contextual influences on the manipulation. An utterance, therefore, is a discourse moment that occurs in a Discourse.

To begin, the discourse analysis system of working in the first part of this chapter the use and understanding of language is established and language is presented as performative. Such language, according to Austin, "looks like a statement and grammatically... will be classed as a statement ...; and yet is not true or false"

(2013:22). Such utterances are rather doing something more than merely saying something (Austin 2013).³⁶ An analysis of theorists who have written theoretical and practical concepts about performative language is required to unpack and locate the term within this study. This will then lead into Gee's concept of performative language, so that the study begins to unpack and then apply the dynamics, strategies, and positioning of his concept in relation to analysing the D/discourse of PT. Thus, discourse analysis will be used to analyse the teller's orally narrated story and the enactment of the story by the PT company to see where (if at all) what is being done with the discourses in both cases are similar or, where different, in what way are they different. Furthermore, an attempt will be made to see how discourse analysis could also be used to engage with the notion of Orality as a discursive mode.

Secondly, this chapter examines Gee's seven building tasks as tools of discourse analysis. The analysis of Gee's tools is done alongside other scholars' ideas of discourse analysis, so that the reason for using Gee's tools in this study is established. In doing this, practical examples will be drawn from everyday life and from the HRPT performance. This sets the stage for the analysis of a full DFLPT performance carried out in chapter six.

Thirdly, the chapter presents discourse analysis from two perspectives, established by Gee. These are discourse analysis with an uppercase 'D' and discourse with a lowercase 'd'. It aims to establish that language is not only saying something but also doing something. Therefore, discourse with an uppercase 'D', will involve language and other things like culture, context, and, where relevant, ideology. Furthermore, the notion of dramatic or theatrical performance, as a medium, also contains particular Discourse requirements, suggesting differences between ordinary language, and performance language. On the other hand, discourse with a lowercase 'd' concentrates only on the bits that contribute to a fuller understanding of a particular use of language. By doing this, the analysis of the PT performance will be more complexly understood under these categories. The central concern of this study is that

³⁶ A linguistic convention needs clarification here. It is obvious that an "utterance" – or shaped acoustic patterns in space, – can do nothing (except disturb the air). It requires some form of construction (on the part of the utterer) and some form of interpretation (on the part of the hearer) and then some form of reaction before one can assume that something has happened (or there has been 'action'). However, from a language analysis convention point of view, once this is realised, then utterances are dealt with in a type of personified way, seemingly to grant power to the sound.

the storyteller's story, and the playback of that story might differ markedly. Using discourse analysis as outlined here will assist in determining these possible differences and could lead to an enhanced mode of listening and interpreting on the part of the PT company. (Such an enhancement is suggested in the concluding chapter).

3.2. The functions of language

With the acceptance that language and its usage is an important and necessary medium for human communication (Tribus 2017:1), this section will not delve into the social, psychological and cognitive use of language. It briefly presents Roman Jakobson's model of the function of language. This model is used initially for three reasons: firstly, it can be seen as a precursor to Gee's work (although Gee does not directly acknowledge this, the similarities are clear); secondly, the model is efficient in that it opens with clarity the multiple functions of "doing things with words" (following Austin); and thirdly, it does not address the ideological Discourse matters that Gee introduces, and therefore is less entangled, initially, with that domain. Nevertheless, Jakobson is useful to establish its similarities to Gee's seven building tasks of language. Language is used to communicate, and communication involves an exchange of ideas and feelings involving more than one participant. Although a wide range of research and publication exists on language, Tribus (2017:1) posits that these are often in small pieces as each concentrates more on the contextual use of language rather than a broader spectrum of the function of the language.

Jakobson's (1960:352) model of the function of language distinguishes six elements which are interrelated. These functions enable the speaker and the listener to perform different tasks and, according to Tribus (2017:1), understanding all six functions gives language users a "broader understanding of the varied purposes language serves" (2017:2). Drawing from Karl Bühler, Jakobson (cited by Tribus 2017:3), established six factors that are necessary for communication to occur. In his model, the addresser sends a message (or bits of semantic information) to the addressee. For the message to operate and have meaning, it requires context. The message is conveyed through a code that may be partially or fully familiar to the addresser and addressee. And finally, Jakobson posits the necessity of a contact between the addresser and addressee that enables and allows them to connect and stay in communication. (This

may also be seen as the medium). Below is a schematic of all these factors involved in communication.

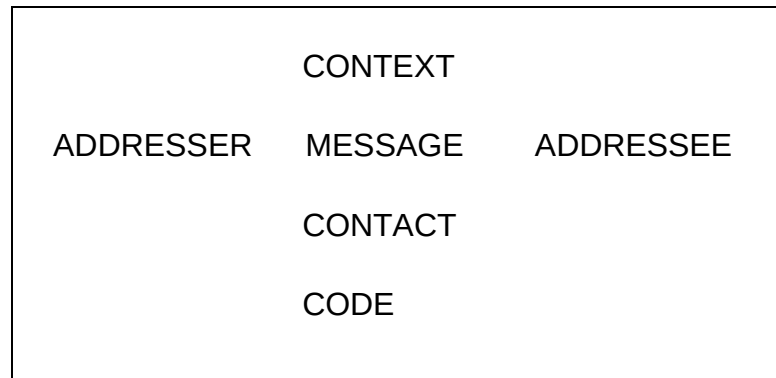


Figure 1: Factors of Language in Communication (Jakobson 1960:352).

These six factors that make up the communication chain each fulfil a specific function and all six factors are present and at work in any utterance to varying degrees of importance and emphasis. Jakobson (1960:352-355) explains that as the addresser sends the message, s/he tends to produce certain emotions, thus the emotive function. In contexts where the primary function is to draw attention to the addresser, the emotive function is emphasised. Lyrical poetry presents a fair example of this at play, where the analysis of the utterance might emphasise how the utterance reveals the emotional state of the poet. The context of communication, of and in the message is referential. This function provides information that allows the message to be decoded or interpreted, because it provides a field of reference. Such a field of reference might include the geographical, gender, age, specifics around this particular act of communication, power relations and the like.

The conative function is orientated towards the addressee which implies that the utterance is shaped in such a way as to directly accommodate or influence the addressee or listener. Utterances of persuasion, therefore, are shaped bearing the addressee's needs and wants in mind. The content or objective information of the message produces the poetic function as Jakobson draws on the Greek concept of 'poesis' or knowledge. The metalingual function applies to the way the medium used has affected and assisted in shaping the utterance. Thus, the demands of the haiku, for example, will shape the way utterance enters the world, as will the limits of some social media, for example, such as the 280-character limit to Twitter.

Finally, the phatic function acts to establish, prolong, or discontinue communication. and this exploits the contact factor. It also serves to check for the effective functioning of the channel and the continuous attention of the addressee. The notion of calls for feedback as part of the utterance can be seen as the phatic in operation, as does the notion of a question (where the utterance is constructed in such a way as to invite an answer). Below is a diagram of the factors and their relevant functions.

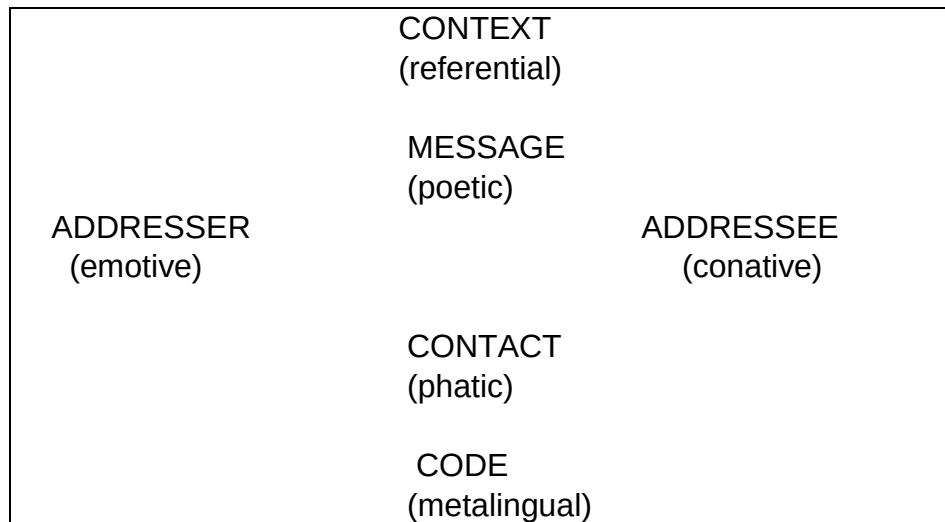


Figure 2: Factors of Language and their Functions (Tribus 2017:4).

This classification is done according to the strongest factor (Tribus 2017) but does not however mean that there is a hierarchical factor. The factors are not placed in terms of the most important because they are equally important as they inter-operate (Hérbert 2011). The dominant function in any utterance will depend on the larger context, as Jakobson posits that “the verbal structure of a message [utterance] depends primarily on the predominant function” (1960:352).³⁷ Thus, as Gee may say, verbal language performs a particular function or a particular ‘who doing what’. As will become clear, below, Gee has one more function than Jakobson has. Therefore, in the process of analysing Gee’s language building tasks (a concept that is similar to Jakobson’s interwoven factors and functions), one will also demonstrate what relation

³⁷ An utterance such as “pass me the jam, please?” invites the addressee to be conatively involved, locates the need (emotive) of the addresser (me), metalingually employs the code system of a question, (and uses English as the language) positions the poetics of jam and the action of passing (the message information), locates the utterance within the context of eating by referentially employing jam as a spread for breakfast, for example, and makes the contact through the use of ‘please’ which keeps the phatic engaged.

each has to Jakobson's functions. This will also enable one to understand the seventh function of language. To ease the analysis of the seven-building tasks, it is important to first understand what is means when it is said that a piece of speech or message is performing an action.

3.3. Language as a performative

In accordance with the concept that J.L. Austin (1962) promulgated (and resonating with the Jakobson argument presented above), Gee argues against the general notion of language, which is in the sense of "communicating information" (2011a:2) only. In this sense, language does not merely share or present data or bits of fact. For him, language does not exist only to 'say things' (or share content) but by saying things in language, we are doing things³⁸ and being things. It does not only "'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state some facts'" (Austin 1962:1). In using the term "performative utterance" Austin (2013:6) refers to situations where saying something is doing something. Similarly, Fairclough argues that language is a part of a society, and therefore, as a "social process, language is a socially conditioned [and conditioning] process" (1989:22). With language, information sent out in a particular context gives one (both utterer and listener) a certain identity, depending on the activity or practice we are doing. The connection between saying (information), doing (action) and being (identity) is the nature of language-in-use. Put another way, the performing of an utterance offers analytical opportunities for engaging with what is being said, why it is being said in this way, what the performance wants to see happen or done, and what the utterance might reveal about the utterer (and the listener, for whom the utterance is shaped).

When in use, language allows us to take on different social identities – a particular 'who,' like a doctor or lawyer. Thus the 'doctor-speak' or 'lawyer-speak' of the shape of the utterance both reveals the identity formation of the doctor or lawyer, but also shapes the way he or she speaks (or provides information, seeks to influence, makes the connections, and so forth). Secondly, it (language) also determines (and is determined by) the particular action or activity one might be engaged in. However,

³⁸ Gee has a strong tendency to use what appears to be a nebulous word – things – to point to something that is doing something or being something. Where possible, the thesis will attempt to be a little more specific than using 'things' as a way of foregrounding matters, but acknowledges that this is Gee's 'metalingual thing'.

these identity and activity markers can only be determined from what is being said (information). Thus, the doing (action), being (identity) and saying (information) are very much interconnected in terms of language (Gee 2011a:2). The connection is a two-way route, as 'who' and 'what' informs the type of language one uses, while, on the other hand, the language being used exposes the 'who' and 'what' of an individual.

Some theorists have argued that language is a social construct (Burr 1995, Duranti & Goodwin 1992, Sapir 1921, for example)³⁹. What one lives and experiences in life can be given structure and meaning through language, as language is a form of social interaction. Burr explores the relationship between language and the person. She elaborates that

The person you are, your experience, your identity, your 'personality' are all the effects of language. This means that we can only represent our experiences to ourselves and to others by using the concepts embedded in our language, so that our thoughts, our feelings and how we represent our behaviour are all 'pre-packaged' by language (Burr 1995:39).⁴⁰

It is therefore in a social context and through language that identities, actions, and information are constructed. Fairclough (1989:23) explains that many textbooks on language will have separate sections on the relationship between language and society as though they were two independent entities. However, he argues that language and society are not "related" but have an "internal and dialectical relationship". This is so because "[any] language activity which goes on in social context (as all language activity does) is not merely a reflection or expression of social processes and practices, it is a part of those processes and practices" (1989:23). Therefore, language and society would impact on each other, or, more particularly, are tightly, one might even say inseparably, interwoven.

³⁹ In what follows, it must be clear that all societies have language as a strategic tool to engage with society. As such language strategies, it can be argued, are part of the deep structure of all people. Thus, the discourse strategies that Jakobson and Gee explore are ever present. The particular way that the language operates in a particular society is self-evident. Nevertheless, the differentiation between social language or particular language in use, and language strategies that are generalised (or even universalised), needs to be clear. A parallel to illustrate this point might be useful: virtually all human bodies, by virtue of anatomical and functional similarities, offer the same range of possibilities. However, each society emphasises particular possibilities for their own uses, contexts and needs, and ignores other potential options that might be relevant to another society. Thus, the discursive strategies guide one towards what to look for in all utterances, but do not particularly determine what one might find there, when one looks.

⁴⁰ Critically, this, and Fairclough's extension thereof, resonates with Ong's notion of Orality and Literacy as well.

Considering the notion that language is a part of culture and society (made up of other elements), Gee (2011a) and Fairclough (1989) focus on discourse as language plus other things or what Gee terms “language-in-use”. To therefore make meaning of the information, action, and identity a person portrays through language, Gee explains that we “need to know who is saying it and what the person saying it is trying to do” (2011a:2). Therefore, a discourse analysis is necessary to fully understand such a relationship.

Though there are many versions of discourse analysis which may be descriptive or critical, (Van Dijk cited by Fairclough 2003:2), Gee puts it that

... all discourse analysis needs to be critical, not because discourse analysts are or need to be political, but because language itself is.... [This is so because] any use of language gains its meaning from the “game” or practice of which it is part and which it is enacting. (2011a:9 emphasis added)

This speaks much to the focus of this research, which will be doing a discourse analysis of PT practice, suggesting that a discourse analysis of the teller’s story and of the enactment may reveal not only the recognition or mis-recognition of core bits of ‘language in use’ but also the differing discourse strategies (or, to draw on Jakobson, the different metalingual processes) at play, as well as the mis-selection of any other factor and function to enact. (This is not to say that there are overt political dynamics at play in PT, but to suggest that there might be covert power positions being presented, knowingly or unknowingly). Gee adds that looking closely at the structure of language (in this case in both orality terms and in playback terms) can help one uncover different ways of saying things, doing things and being things in the world.

3.4. Gee’s seven building tasks

Through language, we build things in the world that accomplish actions and enact identities (Gee 2011a:16). Gee explains that when “we speak or write, we always (often simultaneously) construct seven things or seven areas of “reality”, which he terms the “seven building tasks” (2011a:17). Therefore, in the process of searching and bringing into play information which can be understood, or as outlined above, when we generate utterances, Gee (2011a:17-20) provides seven building tasks for the analysis of language-in-use/language-in-action/utterances. These building tasks, which are presented below, are critical in the development of an understanding of what

the various actions or acts of communication that manifest in PT might be. Gee explains that the seven building tasks are used to create a situation or context, but, furthermore, language is also used to generate these seven things, depending on context.

3.4.1. Significance

The degree of importance given to any event makes it significant. As Gee explains, there are some events in life that are significant by popular standard, but for others, we need language to explain its significance or clarify its importance and meaning to others. In PT, specific language moments used in the teller's narration can have a consequence on the interpretation of the story and the outcome of the enactment. Looking back at the discourse analysis question, I will ask what aspects in the language usage in the story and the playback brings significance to certain things and in what ways?

To determine the significance or importance of any discourse or utterance, the focus is always on the grammatical use of words and sentence clauses; Schiffrin calls these "discourse markers" which are "sequential dependent elements that bracket units of talk" (2001:57). Schiffrin considers linguistic expressions made up of members of word classes as discourse markers. Some examples he mentions in his writing are "conjunctions (*and, but, or*), interjections (*oh*), adverbs (*now, then*), and lexicalised phrases (*y'know, I mean*)" (2001:57). They connect utterances at single levels or across "different planes of discourse" (Schiffrin 2001:58) which means it may have more than one meaning in an utterance or text and make it significant in different context.

According to Gee (2011a), the use of these grammatical structures and discourse markers can either build or lessen the significance of an utterance. He, however, chooses to focus on one main grammatical device, which he says is central to building or lessening significance. What he dwells on is the main and subordinate clause. He explains that

What... we choose to put in a main clause is foregrounded information. What we choose to put in a subordinate clause is backgrounded information. Foregrounded information is taken to be what is being focused on here and now, and thus is

treated as the most significant information here and now. (Gee 2011a:92)

In a statement like ‘though I am always in a good mood, I feel down today’. The clause ‘I feel down today’ “is the main clause [and] also a declarative clause” (Gee 2011a:92). It is asserting the information. It is orienting the listener to what is important at that moment, which is the mood of the person. Gee (2011a:92) asserts that the foregrounded information is treated as the significant one because the focus is on the here and now. The subordinate clause ‘though I am always in a good mood’, is backgrounded information which, even if left out, the message will still be understood. An active listener might, therefore, ignore the background information and either agree with or disagree with the assertion⁴¹.

Another example (not of everyday conversation but from a PT narrative) engages with what of importance might be asserted in a story. This is from the same PT performance used in the previous chapter. This was a performance done by HRPT for a group of managers and administrative staff at Crystal Run Village, an organization in upstate New York that serves people with developmental disabilities and mental illness. The title of the show, chosen by Crystal Run staff, was “The Juggling Act: Supporting the people we serve, our staff, and ourselves” (HRPT 2005).

HOLLY: She is my supervisor. I’ve worked with her for—I’m sorry—for over 10 years. She’s leaving, and I just got her job, so it’s bittersweet. I got a new job, but I lost her. On top of it I’m buying a house—can I announce it? —her house! So, we’re in the middle of leaving, hiring, closing, and we’re doing all of this together, so it’s like we’re kind of looking forward to the date, but we’re actually hesitating about the date, so there’s a lot of feelings. Right. I’m sorry.

Looking at Holly’s story, she mentions her supervisor [Maria] leaving; she gets a promotion as a result of the supervisor leaving; and also acquiring the same supervisor’s house as her new house. All of this background information is directing the listener to what is the most significant detail in the story: the relationship between Holly and Maria and that feeling of loss and gain she is dealing with. The most important message here is the close, friendly relationship she had with the supervisor

⁴¹ There is an element of Orality here, in that the main clause might be seen as part of the additive formula, whereas the subordinate clause might be seen as the subordinative. In Orality, to make both aspects contiguous would be to construct the sentence as ‘Almost every day I am in a good mood, but today I am in a bad mood,’ for example.

which is in all likelihood the reason why the supervisor recommended her as her replacement and also the reason why she could buy her house, because surely Holly was the first person to be informed about the house sale.

There are two possible interpretations of what she says here. One is that Maria as a colleague and friend whom she has worked with for long is leaving the organisation and it's a painful loss for her. Secondly, she is also expressing happiness for what she has gained as a result of Maria leaving. There is an expression of feeling and state in this narrative and expressiveness is one kind of illocutionary act put forward by Searle (1976). By using 'we' and not 'I' in almost her whole narrative, Holly puts forward the importance of her relationship with Maria and through this, Jakobson's emotive function takes centre stage.

Given this analysis, selecting the core significance of a potential playback becomes important. Does one foreground the relationship? Does one foreground that change brings loss and happiness (the "bittersweet" comment refers to this)? Does one foreground or make significant the material, in the gain and loss of a job, the gain and loss of a house, the gain that comes with promotion? Speculatively, the drawing on the first question as the primary one, the enactment offers theatrical opportunities that can be demonstrated through bonding rituals. Making the second question the focus of significance may offer performance possibilities of growth and death, and of advancing and retreating. Attending to the third question might encourage actions of building and breaking down, of accumulating and discarding and the like. Finally, and perhaps significantly, in the utterance, given the professional services that the organisation offers, there is no mention of that service, or anything associated with it. The question that can be therefore posed is to what extent is the context that the PT company selected to create important or central to the enactment, and how would this influence the significance selected for enactment?

3.4.2. Practices (activities)

An activity is also considered a practice, like teaching, performing, or chairing a meeting. A practice has its language patterned only to that activity and makes it recognizable. Some activities tell us what language to use while a certain sort of

language informs us of the activity being carried out⁴². Furthermore, any utterance performs a task or activity such as begging, instructing, explaining, insulting, and so on. Either way, one cannot do without the other, for language and practice “boot strap” (Gee 2014:33) each other into existence as time passes. Thus, if the action that is to be undertaken is one of explaining, for example, and the person doing the explaining is a doctor, then the way the explanation is shaped is determined by the practice of ‘doctoring’ and the shaped utterance reveals that practice.

In their fight for freedom, not all black Americans adopted the peaceful protest method which is why Martin Luther’s King speech of 1963 was an activity of begging and persuading for peaceful demonstration. This can be identified in this extract from the speech:

In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again, and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. (1963:3)

King was a preacher in the American Methodist Episcopalian Church (the AME). Thus, if the task is to persuade, one would expect the preacher to draw on theological language which is what he does (the reference to the “drinking from the cup” is a clear Biblical reference as is the reference to “soul force”). Furthermore, as a Protestant he places himself within the same category of his ‘congregants’ (the phrase “we must...” occurs four times in this extract). Furthermore, in the tradition of preaching, he uses antithesis regularly, by suggesting that “we must not do *this* (which is something we want to do as mere mortals) but do *that* (which is what God expects us to do)”. Thus, his practice of preaching as an activity is captured in the utterance, and that activity reveals (and is shaped by) his position⁴³.

⁴² An earlier footnote suggested that the activity of thesis writing requires an objective, non-personal approach to the writing thereof. Note also that the activity of writing a footnote, in and of itself, locates the writing within the domain of academic writing.

⁴³ An Orality analysis of this part of his speech reveals all of the Ong formulae at work, too. There is strong use of the additive, the homeostatic and the concrete. The speech draws on the lifeworld of suffering of the listeners, and the lifeworld of the church as both he and they experience it, and the images used are Biblical, and therefore to a large extent epithetic.

As this discourse is doing the activity of persuading, it is also fulfilling a further function in the communication chain (as argued by Jakobson). It was mentioned earlier that the position of the function depended on how strongly it is fulfilled within the utterance. With the activity or practice task, it is evident that it can equally be found in all the functions. In the text above, what the speaking is doing is pleading. In reference to the struggle for freedom “in the process of gaining our rightful place”, his message is very poetic in “drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred” and brings out the emotive, concern “we must not...” to the receivers/addressees who fulfilled the phatic by probably responding “yes... go on...”. As for the conative, the phrase “I have a dream...” within the speech establishes contact and prolongs the communication process. The use of the preacher register reveals the metalingual (which is reinforced by the Biblical references). Therefore, each piece of communication or language is an activity that potentially performs one of every function of language.

The act of communicating is a practice by itself and PT as a form of theatre is a practice by itself. PT as a practice has its own language/metalinguality and the use of that language designates that one is in the activity of PT. However, the language used in the story narrations needs to get others to recognize the activities or practices in the story. The potential gap between the language/metalinguality of telling as an activity or practice and the language/metalinguality of enacting as an activity or practice becomes critical.

Practice, as Gee says, is a “socially recognised and institutionally or culturally supported endeavour that usually involves sequencing or combining actions in certain specified ways” (2014:32). These practices, which he also calls activities, are different from actions. According to Gee (2011b:97-98), an action describes a doing in the here-and-now like “John is playing baseball at the park.” On the other hand, activities as defined above, looks at the meaning that is acceptable and used socially, culturally, and institutionally. Therefore, when we say, “John plays baseball for the Yankees,” he holds a profession as a baseball player, which is an accepted norm of the society he leaves in, and the Yankees is an institution recognised for that purpose.

These actions and activities are performed through language as in saying that I am a lecturer, or I am teaching French to students. On the other hand, the actions, and activities we are involved in, like a teacher or baseball player informs our linguistic and grammatical choice of words and sentences – as Austin (1962) and Gee (2014) allude

to the fact that, when we say something, we are doing something, which can be either an activity or an action. So, being a football player can be considered an activity while kicking a ball is an action. The activity and action also depend on the context (referential) and most of the time these can be seen to stem from a question (that is looking for an answer, which the utterance then provides). Looking at the sentence above we suppose the question must have been: “What is John doing?” which, from the answers, means what he is doing at that moment or what he is doing in life as a profession⁴⁴. Looking at Holly’s story used earlier, I raise the following question: What activity and action is she accomplishing through her story?

Before delving into this data, we must keep in mind, as Gee (2011a) says, that some activities are rigid and routinised. For example, the question before Holly’s story was about how the day has been going for the participants. Setting the context is a standard and routine metalingual process for the leader of the PT company (the conductor). However, the conductor sets a further context for (what will become) Holly’s story by asking about saying farewell to Maria – the metalingual technique always drawn up in PT to set context is through posing a question:

JO: Perhaps one more person, something about today, whether it was saying goodbye to Maria, or something that came up while you were sitting in your office—yeah?

With her story, Holly clearly understands the metalingual (she answers the question that set the context) and shares a story expressing her emotions about Maria’s departure from work-place by saying “... it’s bittersweet” (p.69) This is however not the only activity she fulfils with the story. Firstly, she fulfils the activity of sharing a story as part of the PT practice. Just by sharing the story, she is performing an action. She has taken on the role of a storyteller and with the story that of an informant as she informs every one of her new purchase and promotion (for those who may not have known before then). If she had not taken this route, we will not be able to bring out the actions she is accomplishing, and the other discourse tools that her narrative brings out. Gee asserts, “these actions are often, as we will see, carrying out others of our

⁴⁴ It should be noted that in theatre work there is a slightly different understanding of this, although related. In theatre the action is what the character engages it to achieve a specific objective, whereas activity can be seen as way of adding character or dimension to the action, in such a way that it reveals something about the character, or is seen to be typical, perhaps, of that type of character. Thus, for example, a farmer might spend time whittling (an activity) while he argues (action) with his neighbour about the neighbour’s animals’ transgressions onto his farm.

seven building tasks” (2011b:99). And as I have shown with the Martin Luther King speech, these actions not only bring out the other building tasks, but fit within all Jakobson’s functions of communication.

PT, as it will be defined and described in chapter five, can be seen as a socially recognised (Gee 2011a) activity in itself; that of storytelling and performance. Although it is an activity that is rigid with the conductor inviting the audience to tell stories and guiding them through the action of telling with questions. The teller within this activity manages to perform actions that realise their own goal and agenda (Gee 2011b:103). We must note that the rules in the PT activity are found within its structure and not in the telling of the story, thus the teller is allowed freedom and innovation in his/her action of telling. Critically, however, as will be argued, the activity and actions of storytelling and the activity and actions of playback (or enactment) are different. Thus, to assume that the PT experience is one activity or action set, is problematic.

3.4.3. Identities⁴⁵

Physiologically, our identity is (arguably, and ideologically) defined from birth as either being male or female and further with a name that separates us from the other males or females. The societal norms – gendered, racial, national, social, cultural, and so forth – into which we are born (Reddy & Butler 2004:117), are what decides who and what we are. Through these identities, we also perform the different norms that shape us. Butler (2011:22) argues the fact that these identities are not made in a single moment in time, or once for a lifetime. From time to time, we take on different roles or identities which sometimes take a while to develop. This is made possible through our D/discourse, which reveals things about the speaker, and about the person being spoken to.

We build and create identities through the language we use while our role in a particular cultural and social setting also informs the language used. That is, what we say and do at a certain moment and place reveals who we are. When we give identities to others through writing or saying, it also deduces who we are (or brings out our

⁴⁵ I am fully aware that the discourses on identity formation are extremely complex and embedded in multiple power discourses as well. In the next chapter I attempt a refinement of the simple gloss that is provided here. Thus, my discussion is acknowledged to be superficial, simply to move the argument that Gee makes, forward.

identity). For example, a judge has a specific way of speaking and jargon/lexical field related to the action of judging, as does an auctioneer.

By using language that undermines the race of another person, it automatically identifies the speaker as racist (Gee 2014:34). In narrating a story in a playback performance and talking about others, saying what we think of them can bring out who we are (our identity). When we listen and read Martin Luther's King speech, we can deduce the person he is from the way he uses language. From the extract above (p.71), we can see that he is a peaceful person, he is a preacher as he uses words like 'soul', 'faith', 'redemptive'.

According to Gee we have an everyday or all-round identity. However, when we interact with this identity that we think we have, it may become blurred or generate new ones as we "use different sorts of language and act in different ways when [we] are communicating as everyday people in ... [our] lifeworlds" (2011b:107). When we meet in a particular context, we bring our identities from our different cultural and social backgrounds, but then we must create new identities through the language we speak. For example, we may have doctors, fathers and businesspeople meeting in the same space. Here they will not speak and act like doctors, fathers and businesspeople; although they speak with what Gee calls a "vernacular style of language" (2011b:107) which in itself differs by dialect and sociocultural group. It would become awkward if a judge used 'judicial jargon' while chatting to a mechanic in a bar. And the reverse would be equally awkward. Thus, as contexts change each one's identity language approach is adapted (partially, or completely according to factors such as power positions) to fit into the context. (This matter is taken up in some detail in the section on role-play and the presentation of self, in the next chapter)⁴⁶.

In a shared or communal context, communication will therefore be more fluent and fluid and identities enacted can quickly be recognised by people of the same sociocultural group although even the same vernacular spoken can vary in less and more formal versions (Gee 2011a). The first identities we find in any communication is the sender and the receiver. Let us take a context of a home; a man will use a different lexis/diction with his wife than with his children; depending on the subject and

⁴⁶ A good example of getting an understanding of context wrong and how it impacts on the language used, is where an elderly person, in talking to a youth, begins to use the 'dialect of youth'. Grandfathers who attempt to be 'hip' or 'woke' are simply embarrassing!

the identity he wants to portray. Suppose that the man would like to talk to his wife about the household finances and expenditures. The approach might be more of a discussion and negotiation and thus his lexis/diction would be that which identifies his wife as an equal partner. The style of language used with the children will, however, be different because he will want to portray his identity as the leader and master of the house; thus, he will only be telling and informing the children of the financial changes. Critically, for the argument being made here, the information (or Poesis, using Jakobson's term) in both cases is the same information, but the way it is presented is shaped by the identity of the addresser and his perceived identity of the listener (wife or child).

These identities that we want to enact in a conversational situation can easily be reformulated when the listeners' response is not always what we expect. This often occurs when 'maxims' are not followed or when the multilingual is not shared or misunderstood. 'Maxims', a term coined by Grice, are said to be "general statements of principles about how things should be done" (Jones 2012:67) in a conversation. When these maxims are not met, identities in conversation can be renegotiated with language. The idea of negotiating and renegotiating is a standard action in the activity of improvisation theatre. This is, however, difficult in conversations where the listener is not required to respond, as is the case of the teller after completing his story, or the actors while they are listening, in PT.

Returning to Holly's story (p. 69), what socially recognisable identity or identities is she directly or indirectly enacting? As mentioned earlier, this performance was centred around the work that the audience members do as care givers. From the conductor's introduction, and the title of the performance, "The Juggling Act: Supporting the people we serve, our staff, and ourselves" (HRPT 2015), one already sees that this was not limited in scope nor timeframe, but it was centred around the role of a care giver, a caring and supportive person.

In the first instance, Holly has shown that she is a good listener as she picks up on the conductor's invite to share not only about how the day has been, but also saying goodbye to a colleague. Some of the identities she portrays are not only of her but of Maria as well. Through the story, she shows that she and Maria can be good and loyal friends. She also identifies herself as an emotional person where she says, "I am

sorry". She enacts the identity of one who has taken on the role of carer, as witnessed by the regular use of the pronoun 'we'. One might also speculate that she enacts the role of a good conversationalist, as the story is well narrated. With her story, Holly enacts the identity of a wealthy person as she was able to buy Maria's house that was put for sale as a result of her moving. It will also be noted that as these identities are enacted, relationships to those in the story and around are brought to life.

3.4.4. Relationships

There is a fine line between identity, task and relationship which is sometimes difficult to separate; but Gee (2011a) advises that we deconstruct them separately. We use language to build social relationships. Relationships are built with individuals (parents, child), institutions (universities) and professions (doctor, teacher). Language can determine our relationship with those we talk about in a story in a playback performance without necessarily identifying the relationship. Some relationships are constructed and mentioned directly: for example, when someone says she is my sister. Language used can build relationships with people who are either present or absent. In his speech (p. 71), Martin Luther King builds a relationship both with his congregants (as suggested in the section above), but also with the other race group. The relationship that was evident at the time was that of oppressor and oppressed, however, through his speech, a new relationship of brotherhood emerges when he says that "... for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny" (1963:3).

The use of 'formal language' for example, establishes a relationship, as does the use of jargon or slang⁴⁷. Given that identity and relationship go hand in hand, we continue with Holly's story to demonstrate this point. We have already seen that Holly's story (p. 69) was not only about her but also about Maria as a colleague and friend. They share a social and professional relationship. The story reveals that they were not just colleagues, but Maria was Holly's supervisor. Despite this, their social relationship as friends was overwhelmingly stronger. Therefore, in communication, relationships are not only revealed, but the degree and importance of each relationship is revealed

⁴⁷ Many languages recognise this in their choice of personal pronouns. Such languages have a formal and an informal form of the English pronoun 'you', for example. In Old English this differentiation was seen in the use of 'thee' for formal occasions, and 'you' for informal ones. In French, the differentiation is made by the use of 'tu' for singular informal and 'vous' for plural formal.

through language. Looking at the story, it is what Jakobson (1960) will call the “referential” as it sets the context of the story, not about buying a house or getting a new job, but the relationship between Maria and Holly. (It should be noted, given an earlier analysis, this might be the approach taken by the enactment group, accentuating the relationship aspect, as opposed, for example, to the material, or contextual. It is around the decision made as to what building task to foreground by the playback enactment that this thesis revolves).

3.4.5. Politics (the distribution of social goods)

Politics in terms of language does not involve political parties, but the distribution of social goods in a society: who gets what in terms of money, status, power and acceptance in a society. Language is political as it puts the distribution of social goods at stake. An utterance that relates to “the distribution of social goods” (Gee 2011a:19) puts the speaker and the listener within a certain power position in relationship to one another. Therefore, power is at the centre of politics. The way we use language determines who or what has power and who or what gets accepted in a society or by a particular group in society. One can envision, for example, a teller presenting a story that sets out to reveal moments of oppression, where the oppressor is in the audience. The language used can either build or undermine the social good⁴⁸.

Social goods are either acceptable to a whole society or a part of the society or a cultural group. When I use social goods in the context of communication and D/discourse, I refer to who people are, what they do or say and these can be taken, or not, as normal, natural, acceptable, correct, good, or worthy - within a given context. According to Gee (2011b:120), the place and time in which these social goods are portrayed can be a source of conflict and insult.

Another category of social goods Gee identifies is ‘face needs’ which “are large and general categories of social goods” (2011b:120). As humans, we all portray a sense of worth or dignity and want to be honoured by others in society. Some people want

⁴⁸ Although Gee does not engage with this, it is perhaps important to note the double meaning of the word ‘good’. The way Gee seems to frame it, ‘good’ refers to possessions, or a strong material connotation at least. This could connect the ‘social good’ of visible or manifest power imbalances. However, it may also refer to ‘the good’ as a manifestation of goodness or moral character, for example. In this sense, King’s speech would fall into this domain. Furthermore, when the same information needs to be conveyed where the power imbalance is different, it leads to the shape of the utterance. Oliver Twist’s famous request: “Please, sir, can I have some more?” is vastly different from him saying “More!!” yet the request is the same.

their privacy respected and hate to be imposed upon, while others want to belong and to be involved. Gee (2011b:119-120) calls this “negative face needs” for the former and “positive face needs” for the latter. We can therefore honour or dishonour these ‘face needs’ and social goods when we distribute or withhold what we think counts as social or our viewpoints on how these social goods should be distributed.

It is not always obvious especially in a PT performance that people are giving their opinion on a social good. In the example in the above transcript (p. 69), we have seen so far where Holly talks about the bittersweet feeling of losing a friend and colleague but, on the bright side, getting a new job which was hers. In terms of the distribution of social goods which in this case is receiving a promotion at work, Holly is able to include this in her story without any fear because now she has the upper hand as a supervisor. Generally, we can imagine that some colleagues will feel she got the job because of her friendship with Maria.

On the other hand, when it comes to announcing about the house, there is a bit of a power shift. Normally a house should be put on the market and advertised, but Holly obviously got to know about the sale first because of her close relationship to Maria. The fact that she has to ask Maria for permission “...can I announce it?” (p. 69), before announcing shows the social good of buying a house was not fairly distributed and, in this case, Maria holds the most power. With this story, Holly indirectly praises and honours Maria as a friend, but we will see below when we discuss connections that a misunderstanding occurred, or the face need was not well received.

In communication, we regularly attempt to balance our viewpoints on social goods especially when we want to avoid hurting people who are directly or indirectly involved. This may also be seen as a type of politeness principle. It may either honour or dishonour the face need or social goods we are talking about. Sometimes balancing occurs when we are not very sure of the facts we are putting forward; thus, avoiding breaking connections or connecting things that do not match.

3.4.6. Connections

Language can either break things that are connected, or connect things that are apart, even when they may seem connected. We can use language to connect ideas, institutions, or people. Furthermore, parts of language usage are also used to confirm that communication is, or might be, taking place. Such language usage might be

sounds that indicate an affirmation of listening ('uh-uh', 'you go, girl!' and so forth). This is what Jakobson (1960) refers to as the Phatic in his communication chain. Connections are also marked by the use of sentences or grammatical interludes which Gee calls "cohesion" (2011b:128). They are words or phrases often used to connect clauses but "speakers and writers have to do more than connect clauses within sentences. They must also connect sentences across whole oral or written texts" (2011b:128). Even with oral communication, some contacts or connections are non-verbal like a glance and a nod of the head.

In a text, the devices of pronouns, determinants and quantifiers, substitution, ellipsis, lexical cohesion and conjunctions (Gee 2011b:128-129), signal or indicate to listeners and readers the link a sentence or utterance has with the previous sentence or utterance. In an ongoing conversation, not all of the cohesive devices will be easy to identify as in a written text⁴⁹. The absence of these devices in conversation, requires connection to be made visually. In a PT performance, language does not always serve to connect clauses and sentences but to connect people, groups, ideas and situations in the story. With Holly's story (p. 69) we can see an example (below) of how these connections are made by including the other part of the story where the receivers spoke to show if connections were made or not.

Sometimes in a PT performance, before the teller starts their story, the conductor would ask to know where and when the story is set. This question helps in setting a time frame and in so doing, a connection is made between the present in which the story is being told, and the past in which the story took place such that the time in between vanishes as the event is being relived in the telling. This question is, however, not always asked with the short stories as was the case with Holly's story.

We have seen that Holly makes a vivid connection between her and Maria as best of friends. This friendship is also connected to the institution which is their workplace where they are colleagues and, speculatively, where the friendship was born. Maria,

⁴⁹ An interesting example of this is to be found in the repetition of what has just been said by another. So, for example, when the conductor asks a person's name, the name is then provided, the conductor repeats the name. In this way, although no new information as such is presented, the connection is made and confirmed. In written form, students are often taught to paraphrase a question that has been posed before the student attempts to answer it. This phenomenon also appears in conversation.

while listening to the story, does not understand that these are connections being enacted as she thinks Holly's story is solely about her.

MARIA: Please don't make this about me! Stop! Everyone else has more problems.

JO: I'm sure by the time we finish there'll be lots of other stories. But this is important, someone who's been here for a long time. But this is her story.

HOLLY: This is about me, but you happen to be in it!

Maria's statement here shows that the contact was lost at some point because earlier (seen in the video recording of the performance) she had kept the contact by nodding and agreeing for Holly to share information that only they knew. A breakdown in communication and potential misinterpretation may occur when the contact is lost or not understood. Such situations of miscommunication and misinterpretation can generally be avoided when those involved in the communication moment share and understand the same sign system.

3.4.7. Sign systems and knowledge

The idea of sign systems and knowledge, though listed as one building task, is presented in a relational manner. Gee (2011a:20) posits the fact that there are varied and different sign systems apart from language and knowledge that is made and obtained within these systems. In relation to Jakobson's (1960) communication model, a sign can be equated to the metalingual, while knowledge is the referential and poetic.

In semiotics (the study of signs in communication and human experience), a sign is seen as "something which stands for something else" (Chandler 2017:2). Signs enable communication, but there are communicative systems that are not languages such as images, sounds, odours, objects, events, equations and graphs (just to name a few) which make up different sign systems (Gee 2011a:20; Chandler 2017:11). Different languages exist in the world and each of these languages has many different varieties, lexical fields, dialects, sociolects and idiolects (doctors', lawyers' and artists' languages are different in English or French). In communication, different signs are sent and received which Jakobson has referred to as the metalingual and become meaningful only when interpreted. Chandler (2017:11) points to the fact that the interpretation of signs takes two different senses or meaning. The first, which is a

concept, or a specific meaning in the mind is called the “sense or designation” and the second, which is related to something or someone in the outside world which is called the “reference or denotation” (Chandler 2017:11). It is therefore through the referential that the poetic is able to be decoded and knowledge or beliefs obtained.

In this sense, the building task of sign system and knowledge may be evaluated separately for, out of these systems, we make knowledge and belief that are either relevant or irrelevant in given situations. Therefore, in given contexts, language can be used to privilege or promote one sign system, knowledge, and belief over others (Gee 2011a:20). There are beliefs and claims that would be relevant in a playback performance. Understanding the subtext of an utterance would be vital. The knowledge and discourse of PT is made relevant and foregrounded over the languages of other art forms and everyday language at the time of the performance. Every language, dialect or sign system is important to the people who speak or use it because it brings out identities. There is, therefore, a connection between this discourse tool with the identity and politics tool. In any given situation or context, a person will speak in a way that portrays his/her identity which also promotes the language and sign system in question as the most important to others. Therefore, these sign systems and knowledge, considered the most distinctive social good to humankind, is always negotiated and contested in context. As such, “we use language to [either] build them up or tear them down” (Gee 2011b:136).

This is so because the different sign systems represent the different viewpoints, belief and knowledge people hold in and of the world (Gee 2011a:24). For example, scientists believe that the language of mathematics and statistics is superior for gaining knowledge and understanding the physical and social world. On the other hand, qualitative researchers do not believe this; thus, the upholding of artistic languages like story-telling in PT. Through language, some beliefs and sign systems are made better or worse than others. In the multi-lingual South African context, the native dialects and sign systems are held in high esteem to English, which is considered a universal language. Therefore, language used in a particular context can build or break a particular sign system and knowledge over the other.

3.5. Doing discourse and Discourse analysis

When one talks, one is using language to build things, employing what Gee has called the seven–building task concept. One is in context enacting a particular ‘who’–which is the identity aimed to portray – and a particular ‘what’ – the activities we are building. I have discussed these ‘who’s’ and ‘what’s’ above with some examples from the HRPT. In the world, discourse (here meaning language-in-use) builds or enacts these seven things discussed above while on the other hand, the seven tasks accomplish something in discourse. To recognise and acknowledge these activities requires tools of inquiry.

This section discusses the tools of inquiry necessary to analyse what the seven-building tasks are accomplishing in discourse. This is done with the notion that each tool raises a question that is applicable to all seven tasks. The purpose, therefore, is to set the tools necessary for a full discourse analysis of a PT event that will be done in chapter six on a performance from the DFLPT. Furthermore, this section, as the title indicates, will also interrogate the concept of Discourse (as proposed by Gee) – here meaning ‘discourse plus other things’ – as a tool of inquiry. While looking at the Discourse as a tool of inquiry, this section will also juxtapose it to discourse as it forms the centre of this study. This is done so that one can begin contemplating how and where Ong’s oral characteristics intertwine with Gee’s language building tasks.

When talking about lower case “d” discourse, Gee is referring to “language-in-use” (2011a:205) or stretches of written or spoken language (like conversations or stories), which, for the linguist, will include the building tasks. On the other hand, “D” Discourse is language plus “other stuff”, as Gee calls it (2011a:34). This indicates that “activities and identities are rarely ever enacted through language alone” (Gee 1999:7). So, “thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, believing, and using symbols, tools, and objects [together with language] in the right place and at the right time” (Gee 1999:13), gives specific and detail recognition (identity). Discourse analysis brings out the nuances, ideologies and belief systems associated with these identities. This is so because, “you are who you are partly through what you are doing and what you are doing is partly recognized for what it is by who is doing it” (Gee 1999:14). The question that arises here is what will help to recognize the other “stuff” in a story which will then help to better understand what the teller is trying to convey through the story. To

answer this question requires the tools of inquiry that help to build and uncover the ‘who’s’ and ‘what’s’ in language.

3.5.1. Situated meaning

In talking about discourse in this chapter, it has been established, with reference to a number of discourse analysts like Gee (2014) and Austin (1962), that, in saying something, one is doing something or performing a particular who and what. However, the same ‘who’s’ and ‘what’s’ have different meanings in different contexts because a word or an utterance has several meanings attached to it. Mostly, people have general meanings in their minds, especially those stipulated in dictionaries. Despite this, most meanings of words are given in context, which is why Gee (2011a:63) talks of “utterance-token meaning and utterance-type meaning”. Every word has a range of possible known general meanings which are its utterance-type meaning but when the same word is used in actual context, the word takes on specific meaning which is the utterance-token meaning. For example, a heart is generally known to be an anatomical organ that pumps blood to living organisms. However, if used in a sentence like ‘she has a big heart’, this will not literally mean the size, but refer to the character trait of kindness and generosity of the person being talked about.

Situated meaning is when a word or sentence structure takes on a specific meaning in context that is related, or close to its range of meaning potentials. An example can be drawn from the meaning of the word ‘light’ to illustrate the different types of meanings. In the Oxford Advance Learner’s Dictionary (Hornby 2010:861), it is alluded to that the noun ‘light’ has several different meanings and is used in many phrases in which its use could change from noun to verb, adjective, and adverb (used in the idiom ‘to travel light’). The definitions below are presented depending on its use in a phrase.

1 (noun): the natural agent that stimulates sight and makes things visible 2 (verb): provide with light or lighting; illuminate 3 (adjective): having a considerable amount of light; not dark, of little weight; not heavy. (Stevenson 2010:1021-1022)

One might argue that these are at best ‘objective’ meanings, or at least partly generic and accessible to those that simply know the semantics, but, as Gee says, words do not only have general meanings, “they have different and specific meanings in different contexts in which they are used and in different specialist domains that recruit them” (2011b:152). Thus, these meanings will generally be applied and understood as they

should be, depending on the context of use. Consider the word to 'boot' something: if one has a soccer background, it means to kick it. In an employment background, to boot means to fire. But if you are from a computer background, to 'boot' something is to get it started up the different connotations associated with the word for different context is what Gee has called the utterance-type meaning. Therefore, meanings are 'adjusted' according to context and the reference field availability of those involved in the communication moment.

On the other hand, when words or structures are given specific meaning in context, it is called utterance-token meaning. Consider a situation where a teacher in class says 'the light shines in the darkness'; an automatic response deduced from the statement could be a physics teacher treating the topic of electricity of which the utterance-type meaning of light explained above will apply. When this same phrase taken from John 1:5 "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out" (Good News Bible 1994:118) is mentioned in a church or when discussing Christianity and, we believe those that have access to the belief system would know that light here refers to spiritual uplifting and illumination or to a person who is in Christ, and those who do not, would need to attempt to find a way of entering that Discourse context. Failing this, the two clauses do not make sense, for a physicist.

What is important to note here is that in an actual context, a listener does not have the luxury of, seeming consciously, looking up the meaning of words in their head as they might in a dictionary. Therefore, people know the possible meaning of a word from routine as they either have heard it or used it before. In this sense, that particular meaning is embedded in context for the user. However, meanings of words are likely to change depending on the context of usage. The possibility of a correlation between Gee's idea of meaning in context may exist with Ong's orality formulae of aggregative where epithets and set expressions used take their meaning in context and 'narrow down and point towards' particular meanings. It becomes evident therefore that the discourse analysis tool can also be used to understand Ong's orality formulae. A correlation of both theories will be done later. Words do not only have different meanings in context, but the same word can mean different things with different social languages.

3.5.2. Social Languages

So far, the word 'language' has been used as a general term when talking about especially oral communication as outlined and interrogated in the previous chapter. The use of the word 'language' here is more specific to the several different languages spoken throughout the world such as English, French, Spanish and German just to name a few. It is accepted that people do not just speak one seemingly 'pure' language as these are divided into subcategories called vernaculars or dialects. These sub-languages also have different varieties used in different contexts. Therefore, social language is defined as "styles or varieties of a language (or a mixture of languages) that enact and are associated with a particular social identity" (Gee 2011b:156). By using these varieties of languages, we construe and engage in the building tasks we have seen above, precisely performing different identities in different contexts.

Within the focus of this research, social languages are examined as used in a playback context and how such examinations assist one to recognise the different identities or enact different identities. It should be noted that members of the same social grouping or context may not always speak the same social language. (Indeed, hearing a specific social language often leads to expected or imagined conclusions about the utterer. This matter is taken up in more detail in the discussions on community, with specific reference to the work of Benedict Anderson (1996) and his work on 'imagined communities'. For example, doctors have different varieties of the medical language which can be used depending on the context and content of communication. Also, members of the same community may speak two or more languages like French and English.

In such bilingual or multilingual communities, the nature of an utterance may involve elements from more than one language. Sociolinguistics have named this 'codeswitching' which involves an individual using different "language varieties in the same speech event" or utterance (Woolard 2006:73-74; Hall & Nilep 2015). Codeswitching however does not concern only bilingual or multilingual communities. It "is relevant to all speech communities that have linguistic repertoires comprising more than one way of speaking" (Woolard 2006:74) such as distinct languages, or between dialects, registers or styles of a single language. Mixing languages in a speech event does not imply those involved in the communication process formulate utterances in a vacuum (Hodges 2015:42) for discourse produced in one context is

somehow connected to another context. The process of using text from a different context is referred to as intertextuality.

3.5.3. Intertextuality

With the oral formulae in the previous chapter, it was mentioned that oral communication is redundant or copious. That is, many of the words or sentences that are used in an oral communication have already been said by somebody. This is what Gee (2011a:29) calls intertextuality. In the action of speaking or writing, one often quotes, mentions, paraphrases, or “alludes to [a] text (that is what someone else has said or written)” (Gee 2011b:165). Text in this context is understood as a record of a communicative act which is either written or verbal (Brown & Yule 1983:11). Given that discourse emphasises language in interaction, verbal text is more viable in and for oral communication.

With intertextuality, a person can quote a text either directly or indirectly. Such text will, however, have to be recognised by the listener for him/her to be able to unpack the identity being enacted or construed. The fact that some text spoken in a particular social language incorporates other social languages, means different identities are incorporated, mixed, or enacted alongside one another which is common and normal for many linguistic and multilingual communities as is known (as pointed out, above) as codeswitching. What does this entail? In the case of codeswitching, analysing and understanding discourse in context is made easy with intertextuality. That is, the speaker uses text that is familiar or has been used and heard before to facilitate meaning, transfer and confine that meaning.

Intertextuality also plays out when two fields of reference are juxtaposed and access to both fields or worlds become necessary. In a sentence such as: ‘She sat with her head in her hands and her eyes on the floor (sic),’ one is confronted with the first part of the sentence that requires access to the literal world, and the latter part, to a figurative world. The anomaly can only be understood if one has access to both linguistic conventions (of the literal and the figurative). In the same way metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche can only be grasped by having access to both the conventions and to what is being referred to. This movement between the language (and texts that subsequently arise) of storytelling and the language of theatrical

performance also implies a sense of intertextuality, and it is the transitions (back and forth) in this intertextual space that provides the driving force of this thesis.

3.5.4. Figured Worlds

Language as already mentioned is used to privilege, or not certain aspects of the world in which we live and interact. Also mentioned was the social language tool saying it contains varieties used in different contexts for different purposes. These contextual social languages are often used in socially and culturally accepted stories, anecdotes, folk theories, Discourse models and what Gee calls “figured worlds” (2011:63).

Gee defines a figured world as “a picture of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal” (2011b:170). But what is taken as typical or normal varies with context. In the world, each cultural and social group or community (and one refers here to chapter four for different types of communities), thinks and does things in ways that are typical or normal to the said community. It is usually a simplified (or typified) way of understanding and accepting things around what Gee has called figured worlds. The point is elucidated further with this example from Gee:

Some parents confronted by a demanding two-year-old who angrily refuses to go to bed, take the child’s behaviour as a sign of growth towards autonomy because they accept a typical story like this: Children are born dependent on their parents and then grow towards individual autonomy or independence. On their way to autonomy, they act out, demanding independence when they may not yet be ready for it, but this is still a sign of development and growth. Other parents confronted by the same behaviour, take the behaviour as a sign of the child’s wilfulness because they accept a typical story like this: Children are born selfish and need to be taught to think of others and collaborate with the family rather than demand their own way. (2011b:169)

Most of such stories are stored in our minds (which is why the mind plays a central role in the D/discourse of orality for the purpose of recall) and passed down through communication as was mentioned in the chapter on orality. Apart from the mental influence, some stories have been stored in written text. It does not matter what is believed or not, Gee states that these figured worlds are neither right nor wrong, but they are prone to change or are contested in time. Thus “figured worlds” can be seen as prototypes that are drawn on; or ‘short-hand versions’ used to facilitate cross-referencing; or stereotypes that are accessed as points of departure for confirmation

of understanding; or are even used as hyperboles or euphemisms in language and context.

3.5.5. 'D' discourse

The earlier part of this chapter focused mainly on discourse which is language-in-use. As already mentioned, this differs with Discourse in that the former is concerned primarily with the sentence structure and grammatical use of language, while the latter involves language with other things like the body, places and objects. This section will outline different types of Discourses that may be at play in a communication interaction and Discourse as a tool of inquiry.

When two people are involved in a conversation, they use language and sometimes different vernaculars of the language as seen in the social language tool. For example, an American and a Brit will speak two different vernaculars of the English language which can also be further broken down to the regions from which they come. In the context of this interaction, they are enacting and recognising different socially accepted identities. This is so because “different social groups construct, construe, use, negotiate, contest and transform [these identities] in the world and in history” (Gee 2014:25).

Discourse involves identities constructed and construed in groups like a street gang, institutions, the military, a profession, teachers, lawyers, doctors, cultures, and ethnic groups. Being a particular person in “any of these groups means speaking and acting in ways that are socially accepted or recognised as an identity of the said group.” Gee explains that using the term Discourse to describe such groups is for the simple fact that they existed before we arrived and will still be here after we leave.

As will become evident in the next chapter, as the matter of community (and more specifically, ‘imagined communities’) is unpacked, a person from a particular community, upon engaging with another who offers particular language tasks in the communication moment, will make assumptions about that person’s community. Such assumptions will include belief systems, value systems, power hierarchies, gender role expectations, and the like. Thus, it is assumed that these assumptions are embedded in the communication (whether they are simply present, or are directly embedded, or not) and that the communication has been shaped by these ‘true

assumptions.’ A Discourse analysis attempts to identify and interrogate these assumptions.

This, however, does not imply that the Discourses are constant and unchangeable. Rather it is through the discourse (language-in-use) of the Discourses that institutions and identities are construed, formed, or modified. Whatever Discourses we carry, the key is recognition because;

If you put language, action, interaction, values, beliefs, symbols, objects, tools and places together in a such a way that others recognise you as a particular type of who (identity) engaged in a particular type of what (activity), here and now, then you have pulled off a Discourse. (Gee 2014:52)

Yet there is always a possibility for the Discourse at play not to be recognised when it is not similar enough to other Discourses – this could logically be a reason for misinterpretation in a PT performance. In such situations, it could go two ways in that “if [the Discourse] is different enough from what has gone before [in history], but still recognisable, it can simultaneously change and transform Discourses [but] if it is not recognizable, then you are not in the Discourse” (Gee 2011a:35).

For example, PT as a Discourse is recognisable from the historical Discourse of oral storytelling with a blend of theatrical enactment. Given that the performance of a Discourse here and now with all its “words, deeds, values, beliefs, symbols, tools, objects, times and places” (Gee 2011a:36) is never the same from the previous Discourse and has no clear-cut boundaries, the participants are always involved in what Gee calls “recognition work” (2011a:36) as a means of making visible the ‘who’s’ and ‘what’s’.

As carriers of these Discourses through history, Gee (2011b:156-158) notes that there are two sets we are exposed to in our lives. They are a primary and a secondary Discourse. He describes a primary Discourse as one that’s the language and ways of doing things that is thought and acquired from birth through our parents and others around one. The primary Discourse is our lifeworld Discourse because it sets us apart due to its cultural roots and distinctions. Therefore, “our lifeworld Discourse is the way that we use language, feel, and think, act, and interact, and so forth, in order to be an everyday [non-specialised] person” (Gee 2011b:179).

On the other hand, secondary Discourses are acquired in a wider social sphere of institutions like churches, schools, and workplaces beyond the primary Discourse setup. However, as the secondary Discourse is experienced, it is informed by the primary, thus creating new Discourses (Gee 2011b:202; Whisnant 2012:7-8), though they might occasionally conflict. Thus, new Discourses are formed (or appear to emerge) every day, but these must be recognizable within the larger sphere for identities and activities to be visible.

As a tool of inquiry, the question to be answered is how a person uses

language, as well as ways of acting, interacting, believing, valuing, dressing, and using various objects, tools, and technologies in certain sorts of environments to enact a specific socially recognizable identity and engage in one or more socially recognizable activities (Gee 2011b:181).

Put another way, how does one perform (or reveal) one's Discourse? So, how do the D/discourse of PT and the D/discourses enacted in the performance, reveal the identities and activities of the participants? Discourses are multiple (Whisnant 2012:7) and live through history with humans as carriers. Most importantly, Discourse must be recognizable for the identity and activities to be visible. For example, it is conceivable to imagine a PT company, where the members are steeped and experienced in a liberal, Eurocentric Discourse being confronted by a story that emanates from a participant that presents strong Black Consciousness Discourse demands. In this case the Discourse of the PT moment (shared by both sets) is confronted by clashing Discourse positions.

3.6. D/discourse analysis in theatre performances

In the chapter that follows, it will be shown that some forms of theatre involve spectators watching a group (actors) perform a story on stage while other forms of theatre involve participants/spectators in the creation and consumption of the story. (This simplified definition is offered here to provide a workable frame for what follows, below. It will be expanded upon, interrogated, and critiqued in the next chapter). One of the differences that exist between a drama process and theatre process like PT is the fact that not all spectators and participants of the theatre process are actively involved in the creation as just a few spectators can share stories in any given performance. Having looked at D/discourse tools of inquiry and Gee's seven building

tasks of language, it can be said that, when actors and audiences are involved in the activity of a theatre performance – in the case of this research PT – they are using language to enact different identities.

Having said so, this section will however not delve into details of how the building tasks are construed, built and enacted in a theatre process. That will be done in a later chapter with a performance from the DFLPT. This section suggests how Discourse (language plus other things) and discourse (stretches of language in interaction) are at play in a theatre performance like PT.

3.6.1. The playback theatre ensemble D/discourse

The PT performance in itself is a Discourse. This Discourse is a combination of the historical accepted and recognised Discourse of oral storytelling combined with elements of Western theatre. In the process of interacting in the PT performance, other Discourses are made recognisable through the stories shared and the enactment. This means that in PT the teller reveals many bits of information about himself and other people. (This is also true of the PT company, as will become evident below).

The context and content of a story reveals a teller's Discourses which sometimes may not be directly in line with the Discourse of the PT performance. The same content will also be shaped by the building tasks, establishing the relationship of the teller to the context and people 'in' the story being told, the events/activities that are significant for the story, and the reason for telling the story, the power positions at play, and so on. It also shapes the information about the perceptions of the teller towards storytelling as a Discourse moment itself (for example, a teller's relationship to love, trust, honour, responsibility and the like, may be different from the PT group's understanding).

While interpreting the teller's D/discourse through theatrical improvisation, it is believed that the actors project a part of their own D/discourse in the enactment. (This belief has raised many questions and critics about the authenticity of spontaneous improvisation in theatre. Further, about that which shapes the D/discourse of the actors as a group, and as individuals. This however is out of the scope of this study and therefore will not be examined in this research.) With the notion of every participant in a PT performance having their own D/discourses, there is an intertwining of D/discourse from which could arise a potential miscommunication. The diagram below shows the relationship and examples of D/discourses within a PT space.

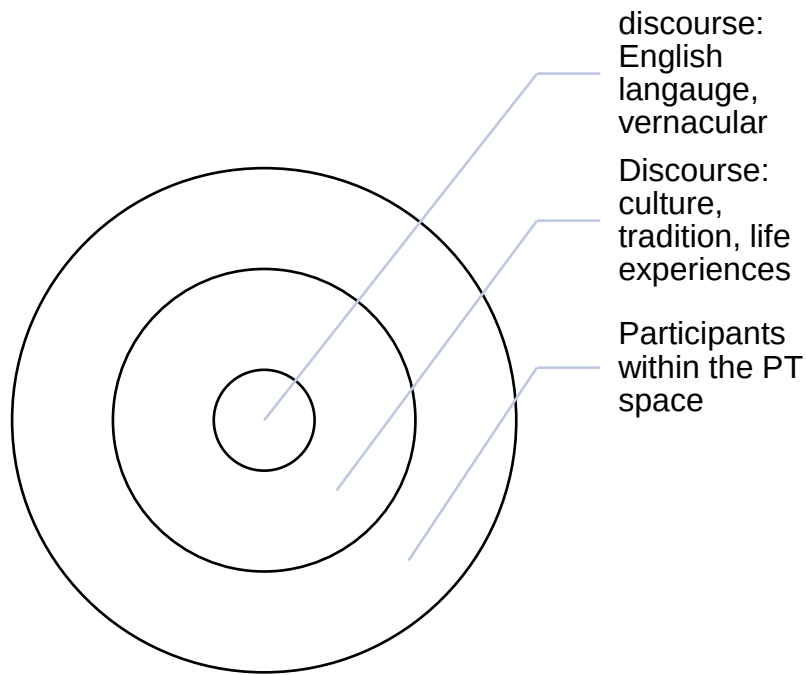


Figure 3: Playback Theatre Participants' D/discourse.

As the figure shows and as earlier alluded to, humans are the bearers of the Discourses we meet and the ones we create. Within the PT space, we bring all these Discourses with us, and express or enact them using discourse (language-in-use). Although the Discourse of the teller aids him/her in telling their story, the type of language used and the manner in which the language is used to narrate the story, creates a Discourse of the story itself. Within the space of PT, Discourses are merged, negotiated to create the PT Discourse through which a new Discourse might or not emerge to be reintroduced within the everyday Discourse.

Like the teller/spectators, the PT troupe may or not be of the same community, yet they also bring with them D/discourses within the PT space as earlier mentioned. However, they possess the D/discourse of PT which the teller/spectator might or not have a clue of (or, in some cases, access to, until 'learned' in the space). Apart from also being participants in the PT experience, the actors and conductor of PT have an advantage over the audience because they possess and are familiar with the Discourse of storytelling and performance (though some audience members might also be). As such they have the ability and advantage to easily manipulate and successfully merge the D/discourses in the PT space. In the diagram below, I illustrate the PT troupe's D/discourse.

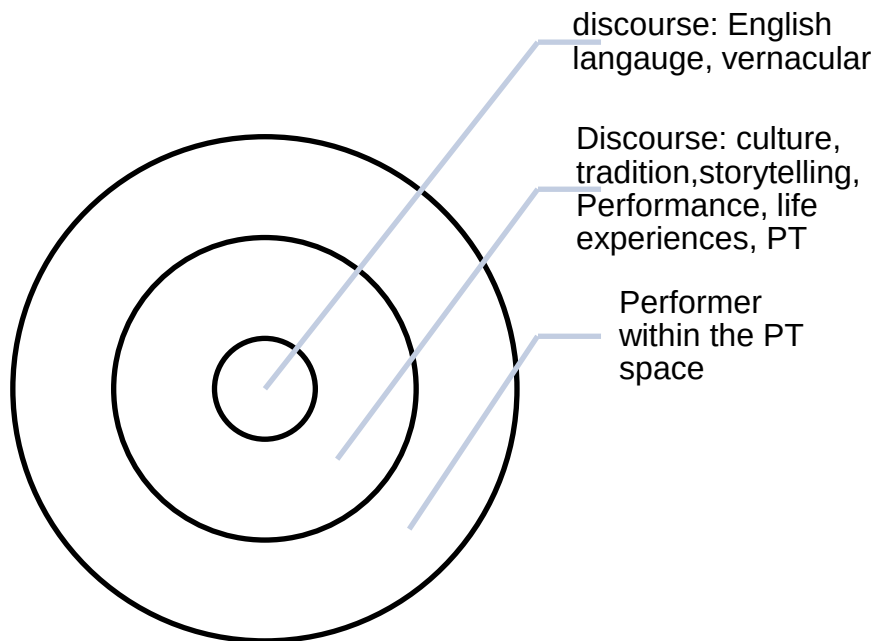


Figure 4: Playback Theatre Performers' D/discourse.

3.6.2. The playback theatre D/discourse

As seen with the teller/spectator, the playing of the story can be analysed as the Discourse of PT and as a performance Discourse of a particular playback experience and a particular story. It is my contention, in this regard, that where miscommunication occurs, the reasons for this might be that what is being targeted in the playback moment has been misunderstood or miss-recognised as being important in the story that was told, and the way the storyteller has structured the story. In essence, the playback moment might fixate on the wrong⁵⁰ building task, for example, or bring the wrong Discourse to bear. With regards to discourse, the language used might be standard, but the actors and participants carry with them different stretches or vernaculars of this language. This is especially true of a context like South Africa where English used in performances, might not be the preferred language of some participants, conductors, or actors; given the multicultural and multiracial status of the country. In such situations, the Discourse of the performance and that of the story risk not being fully recognised by the parties involved. This is compounded, perhaps, by

⁵⁰ By 'wrong' here am making reference to instances when the performers do not pick up the emphasis or crux of the story as suggested by the analysis of the discourse and Discourse clues provided in the story and, therefore, by the storyteller.

the fact that the storyteller predominantly makes use of an oral or verbal mode of discourse, whereas the PT has access to the visual, the acoustic (oral and verbal) and kinaesthetic language or discourse options of theatrical performance (or theatrical Discourse).

When writing about playback in chapter five, it will be demonstrated that PT is made up of three elements which are: the art, the social and the ritual. The zone of ‘good’ PT occurs when these three elements are (seemingly) successfully incorporated together. These are moments when stories are well narrated and (again, seemingly) successfully interpreted through the enactment. For this to happen, the PT troupe and the spectators must understand, negotiate, merge, and accept their D/discourses. Below is a diagram to illustrate how the teller’s D/discourse and the troupe’s D/discourse (could) merge to create the PT D/discourse.

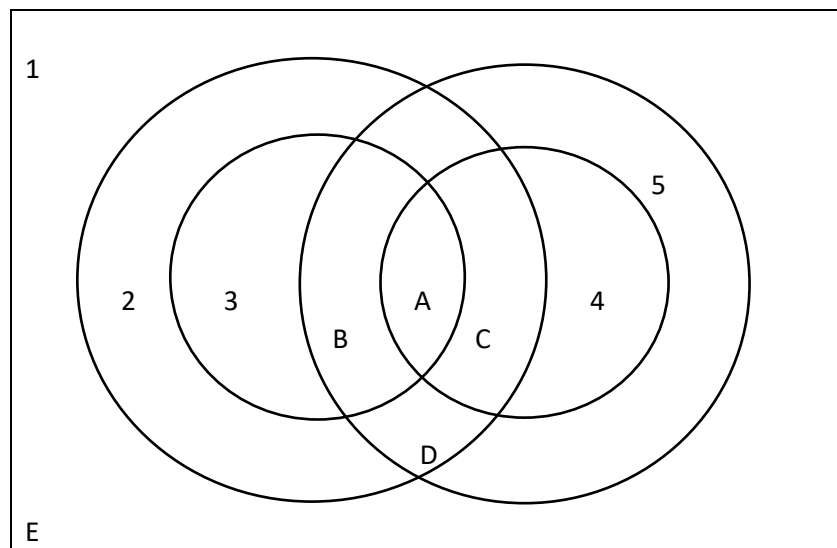


Figure 5: Playback Theatre Performance Discourse.

- 1, is the PT space where the performance experience happens. As will be seen in chapter five, this can take place anywhere for it is not fixed.
- 2 and 5 represents the PT troupe, teller/spectators’ Discourse respectively (language plus other things).
- 3 and 4 stands for the PT troupe, teller/spectators’ discourse respectively (language - in - use).

What is most crucial about this diagram are the intersections that happen within this PT space. With A, there is a potential conflict of D/discourse especially in cases where the actors and the teller, speak and perfectly understand two different languages such as Zulu and English, for example. This point indicates that there has to be negotiation on which discourse to use at any given performance. For most parts, the PT troupe is always in control of such decisions as the teller/spectator is never asked which language they will feel more comfortable to share their story in. To an extent, this element can either make or mar the experience of the PT Discourse for it is the tool used in the expression of Discourses. Both the teller/spectator and the actors use their own Discourses as a steppingstone in understanding the others'; hence the point D where it meets and is negotiated (or mediated).

The discussion of D/discourse has been for both the teller and the actor which they bring into the PT space. E is the overall PT Discourse. For it to be experienced, the teller must use the actor's discourse to convey his/her Discourse. This is indicated at the point B. On the other hand, the actor with the influence of his/her Discourse, must convey the tellers' Discourse (through the enactment) with a discourse the teller relates to. This occurs at the point indicated by C. As all these experiences and expressions happen orally together with the theatrical and performance discourse, we also take into consideration that the oral formulae will ease the understanding and expression of these Discourses.

The situation is made more acute in that the orality formulae, as described above from Ong, suggests that the story, the events of the story and the way the story is being told, is also structured to draw on the demands of orality and memory. Thus, the story content and structure can be analysed using these sets of markers. Furthermore, the playback component can also be analysed; potentially, using the same discourse markers. Again, where miscommunication or misinterpretation might occur, is when the orality and discourse markers are missed or misinterpreted in the transition between telling and playing back. Indeed, there is a correlation between the Ong orality formulae and the Gee building tasks. This weave of Discourse and discourse analysis, Orality markers, the storytelling, and the playback, is what forms the basis of this research.

Discourse, as already mentioned, is made up of discourse (language-in-use) and other things like culture, tradition, and way of life. By saying something, using language, we are enacting identities (Discourse) performatively. In the same light, by enacting an identity, we use language (discourse) that fits the Discourse we are portraying. Each element in a discourse analysis, is a function that must be fulfilled for a complete communication to take place. Seeing that communication in PT involves multiple senders and receivers, our analysis of a story in chapter six will determine what discourse tasks are involved and who is enacting them.

3.7. Chapter summary

It can either be called language or discourse, but it should be in communication. This chapter has established the functions of language from Jakobson's perspective. It showed that all the functions of language are present in any piece of communication. However, their level of presence and importance in each instance depends on the context of communication. That is to say, the (who) person doing (what) something, places emphasis on different functions of language to achieve different outcomes.

These functions of language have been shown to be closely related to Gee's building tasks of language. With the analysis of the building tasks by Gee, this chapter has shown that any piece of language uttered in any given context, does two main things. It recognizes and/or builds an identity and an action. Secondly, a person's identity and action enacted in a particular context determines and/or influences the language being used.

Like the functions of language, in every bit of communication, more than one building task can be identified or used. The tools of inquiry provided in this chapter aim at helping to understand, identify and utilize these building tasks. It concludes that all the tools of inquiry must be used to pose a question about each building task for every piece of communication. A proper analysis will require five questions (with the five tools of inquiry) that seek to show how a building task is built or not in a piece of discourse.

As one of the tools of inquiry, Discourse has been considered as a point on its own in this chapter. It has been shown that Discourse is made up of language (discourse) and other things. Therefore, an analysis of discourse in the context of this research without Discourse will be partial. With this in mind, a provisional analysis of the

Discourse of theatre has shown that both audience and actors come into the performance space bearing separate and different D/discourses. As such, for better understanding and interpretation of the theatre Discourse, there must be a form of negotiation and acceptance of some of each other's Discourses. An analysis of a performance in PT will show if this is able to be achieved and how it can be achieved.

Before analysing the performance, the next chapter explores theories of theatre as applied, role and role-play as communication processes with reference to the communicative model of Jakobson, Gee's discourse task and Ong's orality formulae.

Chapter 4: Orality and discourse in theatre as a community experience

4.1. Introduction

The analysis of Orality and discourse analysis in the previous chapters established that in a predominantly oral tradition, the presence of the speaker and the receiver as illustrated in Roman Jakobson's (1960) model of communication, is an indispensable factor for the communication process. Ong (2002), as the main theorist on Orality accessed for the study, posits that a primary oral culture, untouched by writing, is influenced or is identified through the nine formulae which have been set out in chapter two. In the same light, Gee's (1999, 2011a) theory of discourse, sees language as performative. That is, by saying something, one is doing something. As such, he provides seven characteristics that are enacted through the use of language and that also influence the use of language.

Gee goes further to differentiate between discourse with a lower case 'd' as language-in-use and Discourse with a capital 'D' as "language plus other stuff" (2011a:34). With the above mentioned and keeping in mind the aim of this research which is to do a discourse analysis of the oral work in PT, this chapter aims to demonstrate how the orality formulae and discourse building tasks play out in AT so as to identify a potential gap between theatre as Discourse and the Discourses of the participants involved in the making of the theatre. This chapter, therefore, commences with a summary of the orality dynamics, communication model and discourse building tasks to set the scene for the understanding of theatre as Discourse, and how these might play out when AT participants' Discourses engage in the communication processes of the theatre Discourse.

With oral communication, it can be argued that a role is enacted and recognised in the presence of another, which, in turn brings to mind the idea of a 'community of two' (at least). Several works by PT practitioners and researchers have portrayed the art form as a community experience (Fox 2007b:91; Fox 2003:2; Dennis 2004:23; Salas 1983:15). This chapter will therefore need to consider the discourse of community so as to frame a working understanding of PT as community experience within this study. Similarly, the idea of several roles being performed within any given context warrants a basic understanding of the term 'performance' (or, at least, the 'act of performing').

The chapter will, therefore, examine the shift from the idea of performance to performativity. This is to attempt to demonstrate that PT as a contemporary oral art form of storytelling is not a performance-based art form but is, arguably, a performative experience considering that oral discourse is performative.

The purpose of this chapter is therefore to examine relevant theories of theatre as applied so that, firstly, the dynamics at play can be described and then used in an engagement with playback theatre, and secondly to establish such differences and similarities that are at play in the different but related fields. It will briefly look at how theatre has been used in social interventions using role and role-play. The way this will unfold will be to firstly unpack the different ideologies and applications of various fields of AT. By doing this, the chapter aims to locate and frame PT within the context of AT. This is done for the purposes of creating context and not to engage with debates around the relationship, commonalities or differences between AT, theatre, and performance.

This chapter will examine the concept and theory of role-play, describing and documenting its utility and practice by referring to selected theorists in appropriate fields. It aims to show that the fundamental roles within theatre as an oral form can be understood through the D/discourse dichotomy, for Gee says in speaking, one is performing different identities or roles. Centrally, therefore, theatre (which is the focus of this study and this chapter) is not only a Discourse, but an act of communication.

This chapter begins by summarising Jakobson's model of communication, Ong's orality dynamics and Gee's discourse task within the frame of theatre Discourse. Whereas the previous chapters presented these concepts as part of general world views, these summaries begin to apply this work directly to theatre.

4.2. Jakobson, Ong and Gee summarised

4.2.1. Jakobson's act of communication

Roman Jakobson's (1960) writing concentrates on the action of communication. He uses the standard communication model of sender, message/medium and receiver, but extends it by isolating the factor (that is the 'thing' to be scrutinized) and the Function (that is, what that "thing" is supposed to do). This basic communication model in theatre locates the actors and the audience as the sender and receiver respectively. However, there may be more than this at play, namely two receivers who are the other

character (actor) and the audience. However, in a non-traditional theatre context such as in AT, where the actors and audience are both involved in the process of creation, it can be said that the roles, dynamics and tasks of sender and receiver are complexly interchangeable amongst all of those involved in the theatre production process.⁵¹ (What follows draws on the arguments made in chapters two and three, and on the overview of PT as supplied in chapter one). The understanding of this act of communication in theatre is based on PT (which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter). On the sender side, Jakobson calls the factor “the addresser” (1960:352). The function is to reveal something about that addresser – a process which Jakobson calls the “emotive function” (1960:353). Speculatively, the teller in PT reveals something of themselves through the story while the actors in their acting reveal things about themselves as individuals and the group as a whole. On the receiver’s side Jacobson calls the factor “the addressee” (opening up the possibility to scrutinize who might be envisaged as the receiver of the act of communication) and the function as “the conative” (1960:352-353). Here the actors might be called to interpret the essence of the story while the audience might be called to reflect on their own life experiences while listening.

In-between the addresser and the addressee is the message/medium that engages with, assists in shaping and attempts to clarify or relate to the way things proceed from the sender to the receiver. Jakobson (1960:352-356) identifies four dynamics that are at play in the medium/message. Firstly, he identifies the context (in which the act of communication takes place, and which will influence the act) and the function for this he calls the referential. This means that for the act to be successful, both the addresser and the addressee need to have something in common to refer to. In other words, communication may be reliant on a shared perceptual or reference framework. (As will become clear, it is here that one of the potential areas of miscommunication in PT will arise).

The second factor he calls contact, in which there are checks and balances put into the act to make sure that this is *in fact* an act of communication. The function of

⁵¹ It is accepted that this description is simplistic, but it does open out the agencies involved and points towards the complexities of what will follow. By way of example, it is conceivable to extend this model to actor-to-character communication (and back), to actor-to-actor communication, to performance audience member to the member’s own lived experience (as they engage with what is happening in front of them, and relate it to real world situations), and so on.

contact, which he calls the phatic is to keep the channel of communication open, and to check as to whether there are no misunderstandings, or that there is still participation in the action of communication at a particular point.

The third factor he calls code, and the function of the code is a metalingual function, which means that the communicative strategies of the medium are in place and working. Thus, the use of a particular language, or the register being used, acts as the code. In theatre, for example, mime would have a code, and the metalingual aspects of that would be gesture, amongst other things. The final factor he calls the message, and the function of this aspect is to contain the information (or data, for example). Jakobson (1960:355) indicates that the function of the message is a poetic one.

How all these factors and functions play out and are manifested, employed and experienced in theatre (and then specifically in PT), will be seen as these are elaborated later in the thesis. Furthermore, in the process, the discussion will demonstrate a clear link or similarities between Jakobson's model of communication and Ong's orality dynamics in relation to theatre's act of communication. (This will be further explored through Gee's work on discourse/Discourse).

4.2.2. Ong's Orality formulae

Ong's theory of Orality in the previous chapter is presented as a world view which could be adapted to any context and field. This summary moves away from the generalized or world view idea of Orality as a Discourse to potentially structure oral communication in theatre discourse and Discourse to make it work orally. As a move toward the theatrical, the following begins to connect the orality dynamics with the construction of a narrative, which in turn is seen as the basis of the theatrical.

The additive formulae have been viewed as one that enables the flow of thought process for the addresser and eases remembrance for the addressee. In presenting a narration (or story) in theatre, one puts one episode next to the next episode and so, through a series of linked episodes, the trajectory of the narrative is presented. It will be evident in the analysis of PT that the teller and the actors in the role of addressers, are influenced by the additive formulae in advancing the plot differently. This is so because the main medium of communication being verbal for the teller and theatrical for the actors, is different. Occasionally, even with the use of the additive, there is a pause for elaboration; however, this pause and elaboration is influenced by other

formulae such as the redundant. The redundant formula is important as the narrative moments require reinforcement occasionally. (Here is the first of the matters that might look like the subordinate, but is in fact, making sure that the information of a particular episode is cemented or reinforced for memory purposes. It is also a way of aggregating the tension). With the aggregative formulae, the narrative is structured so that the tension aggregates or builds. This is the classic idea of moving toward a climax of some form or the other. It is also the memory task of making sure everything is in place and is controlled, and this is the task of the epithet, so that characters are clear, for example. This is clearly communicated in theatre through a pre-rehearsed performance. However, with AT like PT where the audience and actors interchange roles and are both involved in the process, it is speculatively perceived and interpreted differently.

Building or creating something new is difficult so the conservation of traditional formulae relies on using what has gone before in the community and in the narrative. Thus, the narrative draws on accepted and established values, norms, and the like. This is one of the areas where the study sees as a place of possible miscommunication where the traditions of the teller, and the traditions of the PT company might differ. To draw on Jakobson (1960), referentiality might differ. It will become evident that the teller's choices of discourse in narrating stem from their own personal and community Discourses while the actors are influenced by conserved theatrical Discourse, theirs, and the teller's Discourse. In cases where a narrative might be about heroes, the gods, or other matters, what they do and what happens to them must connect in some way to the lifeworld of the listeners. Thus, the listener should be drawn into the narrative because of a shared lifeworld (both with the teller, and with the narrative events unfolding). It can be argued that this also resonates with the notion of a shared ideological position. Furthermore, it also connects to the dynamics of shared metalingual expectations and abilities to encode and decode. The situated formulae can be considered as an extension of the conservative and homeostasis. Speculatively, in PT, this might be where the theme or even the "red thread" is presented. In PT, this experience and connection in the tellers' stories shared is referred to as the "red thread" (Fox 1999:117). Thus, the theme of the story is situated in a shared lifeworld with recognizable characters. Put another way, there is a shared contextuality present.

Ong (1982:43) situates knowledge in the oral tradition within a context of struggle hence the agonistic formulae. The struggle between good and evil, right and wrong is able to advance communication in an oral tradition as well as in the advancement of a plot in theatre. A narrative is only worth telling if two things are in place: Firstly, that which may be deemed as positive, and that which may be deemed as negative are placed against each other (such positive or negative attributes might be embedded in characters, but might also attitudes, or values or whatever) and the point of the narrative is to make that which is positive succeed. Secondly, for the performative efficacy of the narrative it is deemed important that tension between the two sets of role-players in the narrative and/or the enactment escalates and becomes more intense (until a resolution on the side of the positive is attained).

Presumably, it is in the course of such conflict that the addressee can relate and empathize. Ong therefore sees orally-based communication as empathetic. Although a narrative might be about heroes, the gods, or other matters, what they do and what happens to them must connect in some way to the lifeworld of the listeners. Thus, the listener should be drawn into the narrative because of a shared lifeworld (both with the teller, and with the narrative events unfolding). It can be argued that this also resonates with the notion of a shared ideological position. Furthermore, it also connects to the dynamics of shared metalingual expectations and abilities to encode and decode. In this formula moment, the narrative has to identify and present who (or what) one must identify with (and therefore, following the agonistic, who one should be against), but the narrative also has to make a connection between the narrative and the real-world experiences of the listeners. (From Gee, this will connect, amongst other things, with sign systems and knowledge and with identify).

4.2.3. Gee's D/discourse building task

Any act of communication contains Jakobson's simple model of application in which there must be an addresser and an addressee. To this, Gee (2011a:2) adds that in an act of communication, one is always saying something and doing something. Even though both Jakobson and Gee are focused on the act of communication, analysis reveal the fact that Gee focuses generally on the addresser and addressee. That is how in the act of communication, both use language to build things. Beyond the world view of doing and saying things with language, how does the theatre Discourse

influence what the addresser and addressee say and do in the theatre context. Also, how does what they say and do build the theatre Discourse?

The first discourse task significance foregrounds what is important in the act of communication. Seemingly when the narrative becomes redundant with repeated episodes, the narrator is reinforcing and making the said episode important. Such situations could potentially reveal something about the addresser. The discourse task of practice is what helps in achieving the others. This point shows how the act of communication is practised and what the practices are that are being spoken about, engaged in or talked about. So would a story or theatrical performance engage in not one but several activities. Through these practices, other discourse tasks are engaged with, such as identity, which is about revealing something about the addresser and addressee from what they do, say and from what is not done or said. Practices in an act of communication also helps to reveal relationships. What relationship exists between the addresser and the addressee? And therefore, how does this affect the act of communication?

The discourse task of politics has to do with the power positions between the addresser and the addressee, and how those power positions influence the way the act of communication is shaped. (This speaks of the goods and those goods can refer to goods and services and who has control over them, or it can be referring to a value system that talks about the 'common goods'). Gee also talks about connections. This has to do with whether the act of communication is getting through. In this context, the addresser or addressee will be checking to see whether the act is potentially successful (clarity, audibility, understandability, and the like). Here, the phatic is present.

The last discourse task is related to the metalingual. Sign systems and knowledge deals with codes used in the act of communication. These codes, when they are conservative or traditional will arguably enable all the other discourse tasks to be easily enacted and recognised within the theatre Discourse. These contextualised summaries of the theories and models discussed in the earlier chapters of this thesis will now be used in the analysis of theatre as an act of communication. This is done with the notion that any and all acts of communication are communal. The next section

shows how theatre can be considered a community experience and by extension an act of communication.

4.3. Theatre as a community experience

The term community is a widely used and difficult to define word in popular and academic discourses. There is neither complete agreement as to what the nature of the phenomenon that the term refers to is (Cohen 2013:13). Given that the study is grounded in the field of theatre, it will locate the meaning of community there. This is done so that PT's D/discourse of community story sharing will be understood in this context. Broadly speaking, community "can range from a geographical, temporal and spatial entity to a conceptual and cultural unit that is maintained by and constituted through [amongst others] narrative" (Anderson cited by Gerrit & Coetzee 2012:135) encounters and communal practices based on seemingly shared values and beliefs. A community can also be seen as a symbolic construct "around which stories of collective identity and collective repositories of meaning are created" (cited by Gerrit & Coetzee 2012:135).

As already mentioned, a community is often associated with a spatially bound area inhabited by small groups of people or people with collective identities and ideologies. In essence it refers to the things that people have in common and which bind them together (Day 2006). This widely used notion of community has changed considerably both in popular and academic discourses according to Delanty (2010:109). In his attempt at dissecting the varied applications of the word 'community', Delanty arrives at the point that community has been greatly affected by current contemporary social and political transformations. This means that new communities emerge from the experiences of the already existing ones.

The idea of new communities emerging from existing ones brings into play the oral formula of conservation or tradition. Added to this, the sign system and knowledge of the old community is adapted and given meaning within the context of the new community. Therefore, as a communal experience projects tradition of theatre and the oral tradition. In an article, Claycomb refers to such theatre as "staged oral history" (2003:96) because it is based on private experiences and testimonies, but emphasises more on the notion of community or communal (represented by choruses on stage or different ideological discourses in an act of communication) than the individual protagonist (2003:98) that characterises traditional plays. Thus, if a PT is considered

a community, it is affected by, and has emerged from such transformations or communities. PT offers a communal experience through an individual's oral history or story that is shared, listened to, witnessed and brought in relation to the stories of others.

In line with this, other understandings of community exist. What is offered here can only be partial and is by no means exhaustive. The first, as mentioned earlier, is a spatially bound approach. Here, people live in a shared space or, in another word, a neighbourhood. This is often reflected by disadvantaged urban localities as portrayed by community studies requiring government support and response (Delanty 2010; James, Nadarajah, Haive & Stead 2016). The role of a member of such communities is often that of the neighbour such that one finds more of a social interaction than communication. Theatre and PT in particular can also be seen as spatially bound, in that it is experienced in a specified space. In such spaces, participants become neighbours who find common and related interest in their individual experiences through the social interaction of the PT process. By virtue of shared space, a connection is created between the addresser and addressee in the act of communication. Therefore, the practices of Orality will be shared, and the engagement through discourse would appear at best seamless, or, free of potential misinterpretation. In similar fashion, the shared Discourse would cement shared values, for example, and acceptance of power differentials.

In the second approach, community is seen as “the search for belonging and the emphasis is on the cultural construction of identity” (Delanty 2010: xii) or “people bound by a particular identity defined by nation, language group, ethnicity, race, clan, religion, or sexual orientation” (James *et al.* 2016:12). Here one begins to see the emphasis of the self-versus-the-other as one's identity is uncovered or revealed through one's interaction with others. According to Goffman, identity is a sum of all the roles we play in life (Goffman 1959:9). Therefore, the roles we play are socially constructed directly or indirectly. In this sense, therefore, Discourse is socially constructed (and then shared).

Several studies (Salas 1993; Fox & Dauber 1999; Rowe 2007) allude to (or claim) the fact that the sharing and experiencing of other stories in PT brings about change and development in the person and the community. This can be achieved through empathy derived during an act of communication. This process of change, according to Zankay,

is not always obvious to the concerned because “our awareness is more connected to our identity [therefore] the changes in us are usually more obvious for the people around us” (1999:4).

The third approach to community dwells on political consciousness and collective action (Nisbet 2014; Bauman 2013). Here people come together in groupings of mutual self-interest such as a profession or association, with emphasis on a collective ‘we’ opposing political or social injustice (for example). In other words, Discourse is created in this understanding of community as a ‘counter’ to an alternative (often oppressive) Discourse. PT can also be located within this approach as it aims to bring people together as a community in a collective experience of sharing their daily experiences that are set in political and social interactions of their respective communities. Thus, the shared Discourse is used to develop strategies to engage with an alternative Discourse (and can also be seen as a place to rehearse discourse strategies to counter the oppressive Discourse). In the fourth approach, communities are constituted in virtual or online relationships (Komito 2011; Sessions 2010). Here technology plays a key role in reshaping social relations that cut across and embed the other three categories. (Although this is beyond the ambit of this project, this can be seen in the use of social media).

AT has community as central to its aims and operations. In the context of AT, community may be viewed as a symbolic construct and is approached from the propagation of Benedict Anderson as “an imagined political [and social] community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (1996:6) and also symbolic as “it is that entity to which one belongs, greater than kinship...in which people acquire their most fundamental and most substantial experience of social life outside the confines of the home...[where] they learn the meaning of kinship through being able to perceive its boundaries” (Cohen 2013:15).

Anderson adds that “communities are [best] distinguished ... by the style in which they are imagined” (1991:6) meaning the boundaries perceived by its members in which such members, identify and enact different roles in relation to the other perceivable roles (Goffman 1959:3). Such boundaries are symbolic with part of their meaning subjective as “individuality and commonality are thus reconcilable” (Cohen 2013:21) and negotiable. It is thus, because the boundaries of community do not only “imply

different meaning for different people. It also suggests that boundaries perceived by some may be utterly imperceptible to others” (Cohen 2013:13). This is critical especially in oral face-to-face interaction as being able to speak the same discourse does not necessarily mean one would understand the others’ Discourse. This is due to the potential inability to recognise the others’ sign system, for example, or sliding differences in processes of referentiality. However, if the theatrical sign system becomes evident to the entire theatre community, there are chances of a more effective act of communication. Alternatively, as will be argued, if the theatrical sign system taken on and exploited by the PT performing community and the communal sign system of the audience or non-performing participants do not resonate, then such effectiveness is diminished

In the PT space, a connection is formed through sharing stories though members of the PT community may never get to know each other. Following Anderson (1991:6-7), a sense of connection to the community is as important as physically being in this community. The community members, as national subjects, are tied together in terms of space, time and also concept. Those ties are sustained by narration of ideas and stories that provide a common ground for community members. This includes narratives of the origins of the community, a shared history, etc. On a micro-level, this can be applied to PT. PT community members are tied to each other temporarily, and they maintain those ties through the narratives that are shared and heard.

PT, as a narrative construct, is framed within the idea of community as imagined with symbolic boundaries in which people hold and perform different roles (or, as argued in discourse terms, different identities). Because all of these approaches attempt to explain a sense of community as it might now manifest in spatiality (or shared presence), cultural sharing, collective action against the other and in technological links, they are still empowered by the Discourses constructed in the imagination⁵². There are therefore different experiences and notions of community within a theatre community. Thus, these different notions or types of theatre communities are set within a broader understanding that a theatre community is only imagined (Anderson 2006:5)

⁵² Simplistically stated, a Discourse of the imagination can be conceived of as an ideology. This dissertation attempts to avoid this term as it has strong political connotations.

and sometimes experienced at the threshold of a ritual process (Turner 1969:184 - 185)⁵³.

In considering therefore all these different styles and ideas of community, PT can be said to be a community of “an ongoing performing group” (Fox 1986:162), with the idea of validating each person’s Discourse through *communitas* in the ritual (the notion of ritual and *communitas* is expanded upon further in this chapter) of storytelling. In PT, the performing community (actors) is experienced differently from the ensemble (with the audience) and the audience as a community. It also gets to be a spatial community as the performance takes place in a set space. This form of community that PT takes, however, disintegrates after the performance. The end product in PT, like other applied forms as an imagined community, is performance. Performance is either verbal or non-verbal, but most times involves both. Verbal performance, which derives from speech act theory was named by J. L Austin “performative utterances” (1962:6). Therefore, theatre can be considered an act of communication as it involves actors and audiences who act as addresser and addressee in a communication process.

4.4. Theatre: an act of communication

Theatre is a practice that involves addressers and addressee. The assumption, in a more traditional form of theatre, is that there are always two addressees: the audience and the actors (the other characters in the play). However, theatre communication is more complex than it seems as briefly explained in footnote one of this chapter. The people involved in this act of communication form a community, but as part of the community in which the participants live (Turner 1988:27-28), theatre acts as a reflection of the practices and identities enacted in such communities. It aims to use the knowledge and sign systems of the said communities and foregrounds them through different methods. Different theories, genres, styles and methodologies of theatrical practices are used to engage these sign systems and knowledge. In general, the methods used will either be labelled as theatre or drama.

Meanings related to the terms ‘drama’ and ‘theatre’ differ depending on context and application, compounded by contemporary thinking on performance but, Morgan and

⁵³ Turner (1969:98), as a social anthropologist, looks at community as an experience within the drama of social and cultural rituals thus terming it ‘*communitas*’.

Saxton (1989:1) state that “drama and theatre are not mutually exclusive”. For them, “drama is about meaning, it is the art form of theatre which encompasses and contains that meaning” (Morgan & Saxton 1989:1). On its part, theatre is about expression (in whichever form or method), so “it is the dramatic exploration of [that] meaning which fuels that expression” (Morgan & Saxton 1989:1). An interrogation of the complexities related to these meanings and applications fall outside of the scope of this thesis. The study does not get into the ambiguity of the term ‘theatre’ as it is set on one mode of AT that will be explicated below.

4.4.1. Applied theatre (AT)

Considering the word ‘applied’ to mean putting to practical use, AT can therefore simply be defined as putting theatre into practical use. The term AT gained momentum in the 1990s and is used as a universal term to refer to theatre-related activities that are performed and/or expressed beyond traditional mainstream theatre (Taylor 2003; Prentki & Preston 2009; Nicholson 2005; Thompson 2003). AT involves drama and theatre-based practices, methods and strategies with interactive and/or participatory theatre to form a hybrid (Nicholson 2005:2) form of theatre that gives social critique and offers a mode of social reflection. It identifies, analyses and engages with individual or collective concerns, and explores possibilities or avenues for action and change, often communal. Taylor notes, “applied theatre operates from a central transformative principle” (2003:1). By this he means that AT helps to safely bring those concerned through a difficult transitory period (which can be political or social, for example) into a new place and time (Thompson 2003:200-202) and it is responsive to local settings and priorities. Adding to this, Prentki and Preston state that AT consists of “... theatrical practises and creative processes that take participants and audiences beyond the scope of conventional, mainstream theatre into the realm of a theatre that is responsive to ordinary people and their stories, local settings and priorities” (2009:9). The practical context in which AT takes place, shaped (and still shapes) its definition(s) and the theoretical terrain(s) in which it is located.

Nicholson (2011:241) points out that there is a vagueness associated with the use of (and deviations from) the term AT. The term was not coined by any one individual: “to describe a very precise set of practices or concepts”, but rather the term “emerged haphazardly and spread like a rhizome to fill a gap in the lexicon” of drama and theatre

(Nicholson 2011:241). According to Nicholson (2014:5), distinctions between AT and applied drama are “moot” and the terms are often used “quite flexibly” and “interchangeably”. Locating the ways in which the term AT is used is more a case of articulating the malleability of the term in relation to priorities as stated above, than searching for its ‘authentic’ roots or ‘essential’ nature in relation to other modes of drama, theatre, or performance (Nicholson 2011:241).

AT often happens (but not always) in non-theatre venues or informal spaces (Prentki & Preston 2009; Nicholson 2005, Thompson 2003). AT can be done about, by, for and/or with people or communities (Prentki & Preston 2009:10). It incorporates the model of communication involving an addresser and addressee with focus on issues that connect them while accentuating their individual identities. The commonality in focus lies in the process of learning and/or change in attitude or understanding that occurs while participating in the process, rather than having an exclusive focus on artistry or entertainment (Prentki & Preston 2009:1). Yet, the culminating end product of the creative instructional or transformative process can be a show for an audience.

AT is perhaps best “defined by its aims of personal and social transformation, [and its interdisciplinarity rather] than by the various [possible] forms it may take” (Conrad 2004a:13). This means that the culminating end product of any creative instructional process could be a show for an audience but need not be (as in the case where the group can be seen as its own audience). The varied forms of AT all engage in improvisation (which is key to AT), role-play, drama games, the creation of a symbolic world and storytelling.

Using this form of communication, significant studies have been carried out on particular issues to raise awareness: amongst others in encouraging better attitudes to health education (Dalrymple 2006; Sibanda & Kajee 2019), to teach a particular concept: literacy and numeracy (Sibanda & Kajee 2019; Braund & Ahmed 2019); to interrogate human actions: woman and child trafficking (Etherton & Munier 2007; Chinyowa 2010; Ebewo 2017); to prevent life-threatening behaviour: youth suicide (Conrad 2004; Sibanda & Kajee 2019); to change states of oppression: male domination, political disenfranchisement, bullying (Prendergast & Saxton 2013); to heal fractured identities: relationships, body image, and sexual abuse (Dennis 2008; Bundy 2006; Gallagher & Rodricks 2017). Prendergast and Saxton (2020:8) remark

on the variety of professionals “from educators to doctors” that have found AT useful for furthering work on social issues in communities.

What is clear from this list, and stated here in a simplistic form simply to allow for the movement to the next section, AT implies a process where particular types of communities that might be experiencing particular types of social (and related) problems in that community (perhaps described as addressees) are facilitated in the engagement with the problems by a coterie of experienced AT practitioners (perhaps described as addressers) where the facilitation occurs through a particular process (perhaps described as the medium) that is theatrical or dramatic in nature (perhaps also described as ‘language-in-use’). Seen this way, however, one is confronted by the possibilities, firstly that there is a hierarchy (addressees lack something, and addressers have the means to assist in dealing with that lack); and secondly, that the complexity of the events in the medium offer moments of contention and miscommunication. Thus, it can be suggested that referentiality might be misaligned, contact is ‘patronising’, the role-play versus reality might be misconstrued (a metalingual and code problem) and so forth. This thesis suggests turning to Orality and d/Discourse analysis can open out these problems for attention.

4.4.2. Applied theatre as Oral Discourse

The above discussion has been attempting to establish a brief background to the term AT. Clearly this is what AT sets out to attempt to accomplish. The descriptions, however, are not particularly useful in attempting to understand what techniques, processes and strategies are at play in AT, or the dynamics that may be claimed to be at work, but offer potential moments of debate and duality. Thus, as a method generally used in addressing a wide range of social issues, AT inevitably has to address oral discourse and written discourse that may be at play in the act of communication. When talking simply about the oral and discourse (lower case), the focus is on the language or medium of communication. However, this might exclude the social and cultural aspects (included in Discourse and Orality with capital letters) and therefore appears to imply an intensely complex communicative act. Therefore, there is more to AT than just the language of interaction used. Thus, this section attempts to locate the characteristics of Orality and Discourse so that AT may be expanded upon as an Oral Discourse.

In the process of establishing oral communication as pre-literate, Walter J. Ong in chapter three of his book *Orality and literacy* (2002) presents some psychodynamics of orality that characterises a purely oral tradition, one untouched by writing (see chapter two for a detailed analysis). Although several studies have shown that it is the advent of writing that enabled the discovery of a purely oral tradition, Ong (2002:132) says it also influenced the oral culture by bringing in a new form of Orality which he has called “secondary [O]rality” (1979:3). As a discourse therefore, Orality is viewed beyond the sentence structure for it is language (oral communication) within a social and cultural context hence, Gee’s (2014:52) notion of Discourse. The major difference raised by Ong between secondary and primary orality is the use of technology in the former as a medium.

Oral Discourse therefore is a verbal or spoken art involving the perceptions, beliefs, traditions and symbols of people. It involves “connections across sentences and the signalling of meaning by multiple semiotic modalities” (Erickson 2015:422). Given that AT is partly defined and viewed through its transformational purpose in society, it is therefore a medium by which Discourses can be negotiated and experienced orally. Orality is the medium used in PT (an AT form) to make sense of the different human experiences and identities through stories (Banks-Wallace 2002:411).

As a Discourse, when the purpose of an AT act of communication is foregrounded, it is assumed that the orality dynamics come into play in the communication process between the addresser and addressee. Through these dynamics, the discourse tasks of the participants’ identities, beliefs and power struggles, their relationship and how they are connected, may or may not be recognised. The practices brought into and portrayed in such acts of communication and how this same act of communication practised enables or breaks the realisation of the discourse task and orality formulae. The understanding and application of the oral formulae and discourse characteristics in a theatre Discourse centres around the identity and role of the addresser and addressee in the communication process. It also depends on the successful application of the referential, poetic, phatic and metalingual communication functions. Given that the successful application of the discourse task and communication functions in AT lies on the addresser and addressee, a brief understanding of role and role-play would throw more light into how AT, more specifically PT, functions as an

oral discourse. Role and role-play are examined from a socio-cultural and theatrical perspective in focus with the study.

4.5. Role and role-play

The concept of role is popular and used in many disciplines, from theatre to the social sciences (Biddle 1986:67). It has been widely researched not only as a phenomenon on its own, but also as a medium in understanding and articulating various social constructs. To be able to understand the concept of role as applicable to this study, it is essential to situate the understanding of self. Landy talks of the self as “one’s uniqueness, distinguishing a person from all other people” (1994:01). For Goffman (1959:3), the self-arises through and in social experiences. Therefore, individuals develop and experience themselves by socially interacting with other individuals in given situations. Being yourself can be considered as not being in role therefore representing your ‘essential’ identity. However, this highlights the dilemma in being yourself and acting as yourself, for the ‘true’ self as Shamir & Eilam say is a “‘subjective phenomenon’” (cited by Ladkin & Taylor 2010:8) and is, in itself, a construct.

Utterances construct and shape identities, or in this sense roles, for Gee (2011a:2) says that when we speak, we are enacting two realities. In an act of communication, a proper application of the orality dynamics situates the message in context such that a connection made will highlight the identities being enacted. The use of discourse in enacting a role, constructs new identities in context at the same time improving the already existing identities in relation to other identities.

In such situations, Goffman (1959:22) sees individuals as conducting performances or assuming a role either as an addresser or addressee in which the individual portrays (or presents) different parts or aspects of themselves to others and in different conditions. There are however parts of ourselves or roles which we keep for ourselves and for this, Goffman (1959:69) refers to as the “back region” or “backstage” – that is, the roles we play in the private of our homes or spaces where no one is watching us⁵⁴.

⁵⁴ An argument can be made that, in the privacy of our homes we do not, in fact, unconsciously play roles, but simply carry out a series of actions suitable for the task at hand. When, however, that ‘task at hand’ engages with acts of communication (such as when one rehearses what one will say to the boss at the following day’s meeting, for example), then role, presentation demand expectations, and therefore, discourses, are at play. Furthermore, when one begins, consciously, to evaluate how effectively one is carrying out the task at hand then such an evaluation might be framed as an internal conversation, and this assumes an element of role.

An individual at any given time and space is always consciously or unconsciously playing a role or rehearsing for a different role.

People play different roles in society which are recognised as an actual and tangible role like being a mother, father, teacher, or politician. This falls under the functional role theory which Biddle says “focused on the characteristic behaviours of persons who occupy social positions within a stable social system” (1986:70) like the family (The nature of such a stability is problematic, given, for example, the ‘imagined community’ argument made in section 4.2).

Landy puts it that, “a role, is also a basic unit of personality containing specific qualities that provide uniqueness and coherence to that unit” (1994:102). This concept of role is socially constructed and interpreted thus, reflecting the “norms, attitudes, contextual demands, negotiation, and the evolving definition of the situation as understood by the actors” (Biddle 1986:71). Goffman used the term “frame” to refer to the “viewpoint that individuals have about their circumstances” (cited by Howell & Heath 2013:54). The frame enables them to make sense of an event or a specific situation with regards to the impact this will have on them as individuals (Howell & Heath 2013). In this sense, therefore, it can be argued that there are parallels between Goffman’s concept of the frame, and how discourse strategies are used to ‘frame’ a communicative act.

Within the AT act of communication, the actors and audience cooperate to send and receive a given definition or understanding of the narrative. Significance is placed on a practice using additive, aggregation and redundancy. The use of familiar codes from conserved or traditional sign systems is likely to create a connection that accentuates and situates the relationship between the actions and identities in the act of communication.

Another concept that developed is the cognitive role theory focusing on role expectations and behaviour which centrally interrogates how “a person perceives the expectations of others and [behaves accordingly] with the effects of those expectations...” (Biddle 1986:74). In this sense, roles determine actions in community and actions are determined by the roles’ demands, in a mutually supportive way⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ This concept has an influence on storytelling in PT. This is because in telling, the storyteller, influenced by and likely using oral formulae, ultimately selects only sections of his/her experience that

This theory appeared in Jean Piaget's and Jacob Moreno's writing of 1926 as role-taking and role-playing. However, role-playing is the end result of the process of role-taking and role-making (Turner 2006:86; Landy 1994:110).

Unlike Goffman (1959) whose theory of role-playing is socially and culturally constructed, Moreno (taking a psychodramatic standpoint) sees it to be more inclusive, which "carries the concept of role through all dimensions of life; [beginning] at birth and continues throughout the lifetime of the individual and the *socius*" (Moreno 2008:65). Thus, for Moreno, role-playing is three-dimensional: "Social roles, expressing the social dimensions; psychosomatic roles, expressing the physiological dimension; and psychodramatic roles, expressing the psychological dimension of the self" (2008:65). The different roles can be acted out individually or together, which in most circumstances points out to what we often refer to as multiple roles adopted and what Gee (2011a) calls identities. Therefore, what one is and what one does is different but interlinked and inseparable.

In this sense it is considered that the teller as the addresser in the PT (see the PT structure examined detail in the next chapter) act of communication, plays out several roles in the narrative using orality. These different identities of the teller and others involved in the practice of the narrative are situated in context of the narrative and not that of the act of communication. Similarly, these different identities are constructed and acted out within the influence of a preserved or conservative sign system and knowledge. A recognition of the sign systems makes connection and the enactment of different roles in any act of communication easy.

According to Landy (1994:105) these multiplicities of roles are experienced as individuals take on roles from their social environments while generating new roles through a constructed version of their identity. This means that in any social situation, we already have roles assigned to us but, in the process of our interaction with others, we generate new roles; thus "a role cannot exist without one or more relevant other-roles towards which it is oriented" (Turner 2006:87). The previous chapter has shown that discourse permits one to do things that reveal who one is and what one wants to achieve in a particular moment, while Discourse shapes and determines what one

project to what the teller perceives or considers are the expectations of the audience in the given context.

might call social identities. Therefore, discourse (in this case oral language) is used to shape and experience Discourse.

Despite the fact that role-playing, and role-taking are investigated and applied differently, Turner (2006:86) sees both as processes because there is more to it than only a determinant of social and cultural norms. It is therefore a process of “devising and discovering consistent patterns of action” (2006:86) which can only be possible through interaction between the self and the other. In analysing the data of this study, it became evident that the role or identity of the teller is also determined by the relationship with the other roles or identities in the story. Both concepts of role explained here seem relevant in the PT Discourse as there are many Discourses at play in this experience.

The audience member who takes up the role of a teller must perceive the expectations of the PT troupe which may be quite different from those of the audience and project these into his narrative. On the other hand, in taking on the different roles in their enactment of the teller’s story, the performers might also construct their expectations of particularly the teller, and therefore, in the enactment, may themselves consciously or unconsciously project their own different Discourses into these roles.

Through the process of grouping behaviour into units, role-taking is then exhibited through “enacting [role-playing] a prescribed role to devising a performance [like theatre] on the basis of an imputed other role” (Turner 2006:86). When we take on roles, it is part of our everyday interactions, which is quite different from just playing a role once in a specific context, as one might in a theatrical event. When examined together as a word and concept, role and role-play give us a different understanding as compared to the individual analysis.

Wilshire puts it that, “one is already another to others who has been formed by others, so he cannot be that centre which is in itself and for itself as he feels himself to be...” (1982:97). The concept of role-play has been extensively researched and used in the drama and theatre disciplines especially, and is very useful in the fields of education, therapy, and social works. Role-play in drama and theatre taps into human experience to create learning opportunities while also aiding in the development of one’s personality; thus, the intertwining mentioned in Wilshire’s quotation.

Role-playing is considered to be the dramatic impersonation of a persona (Landy 1994:110). It refers to a process where a participant takes on, takes up and tries out the actions, attitudes, values and behaviour of a role to gain insight into how another (or oneself in a different role) thinks, reacts and feels. Role refers to the action of taking on a role – an act of ‘enrolment’ – and play defines the fact that the action of “taking on a role” should contain a measure of “play” (Ladousse 1987:5). Playing means that the act of role-playing takes place in an environment where participants feel safe to create their own reality within the structure of the role-play (Ladousse 1987:5). By doing so, they are also “experimenting with their knowledge [and perceptions] of the ‘real’ world” (Ladousse 1987:5). It is therefore critical that all involved in the role-play moment understand (and share) the coding of what is real and what is role (an example of code-switching), participate and abide by the rules in the non-real (or metalingual practice) of play, accept that contact is simulated, and have referential access to the ‘real role’ context.

For Moreno, “role-playing is a function of both role perception and role enactment” (2008:66). By this, Moreno implies the drawing on a cognitive engagement, that is to say we think of a particular identity (though this may not always be the case) we want to enact in a particular context. This is scrutinised cognitively before it is physicalised or verbalised. It is assumed that the actors in PT go through this process as they listen to the narrative of the teller. Landy (1994:110) conforms to this idea by saying that identification, projection and transference as aspects of role taking are based on extrinsic or society-shaped structures and intrinsic structures. The identities and the practice of portraying them is homeostatic as it is influenced by the sign system and knowledge of the context of the narrative. This therefore implies a role is socially based as it is mostly learned through experimentation (and, in many cases, imitation). In the process of learning and unlearning different roles, what works is reinforced as it is a dynamic in society. That is, we adjust each role in the moment according to what we perceive from the other.

This process puts into perspective context and time because (learned and successful) roles of the past and aspiring or projected ones of the future can be enacted (or, as has been argued, playfully experimented with) in the present. Therefore, role as a socially determined (Landy 1994:100) concept may not always be based on reality. What is perceived mentally and enacted is not restricted to the present (Collier

2005:55) as engaging with both past and future enables a change in understanding (Bolton 1993:39) as participants reflect on the effect of the past on the present and the consequences of the present to the future (Collier 2005:55). As this chapter mentions further on, this experience in role Turner (1979:465) posits is achieved in liminality.

Role-playing is an embodiment of different identities, and this embodiment is not separate from our thought processes (Kemp 2012:63). Like oral language, physical language is also embedded in our thought processes for “the mind is inherently embodied” (Kemp 2012: xvi). Actors in main-stream theatre or drama performance and even improvisation, go through a mental process of validating the behaviour of a given role in a specific circumstance in relation to other roles. Landy sums this process up by saying that “... the world is represented in mental images, incorporated through role taking, [then] re-presented in physical actions through role-playing” (1994:110). To Landy’s process of role-playing that end in physical action we may add with certainty that speaking is enacting identities - thus, role-playing; for if one speaks like a doctor using medical lexis/diction, that person is enacting the identity of a doctor.

On a cognitive level, role-play “invites modification, adjustment, reshaping and realignment of concepts already held” (Bolton1985:156). Detaching from an experience allows the participants of sessions of role-play to look at their experiences from a new perspective. It is this new perspective on prior knowledge or experiences that may lead to new insights, or a change in understanding. Through the process of role-play, individuals can gain new insights or awareness by taking on a role and responding to a situation in an unplanned and unpremeditated way (O’Neill 1995:80) as if it were real. This fosters a dynamic process of “self-creativity” that facilitates reflexivity, specifically on the relationship between the “self and other” (Nicholson 2005:72). This process of reflexivity between the self and the other clarifies existing relationships while creating new ones between the identities in the act of communication⁵⁶.

On an affective level, when a connection exists or is created, affective responses can be “evoked in us by another, who can be real or ... imagined” (Blair 2015: [sp.]). Role-

⁵⁶ It can, of course, be argued that taking on a role is an act of taking on a role so as to take on a role, that is about taking on a role. However, this regressive argument does not help much. It simply offers the same anomaly as the request to ‘act naturally’ which simply provides a circularity of argument.

play is a means of activating the imagination. By placing themselves in imaginary contexts and acting as an imagined other, those in role may experience sensations similar to those of the other. However, they experience their own feelings from inside the situation of the role they play. Engaging in role-play thus has the capacity to evoke an empathetic response as one considers, and feels for, the situation that another finds him/herself in. A feeling that may ignite the experience of *communitas* as expanded upon in section 4.2.

Within the theatre space, both actors and spectators are actively playing a role. Elam (cited by O'Neill 1985:158) points out that "it is the spectators who initiate the theatrical" communication and O'Neill says "without the engagement of the audience there is no relationship, no communication, and no theatre". This is a fact for the AT forms' (including PT) processes depend on an active audience (to tell a story). Furthermore, the shaping of the aspects of the role is determined by the role-player's perceptions of the discourses (or Discourses) at play.

With the applied forms, all participants are involved either as participants or as audience (Bolton 1993:40) but in the process of the act of communication, roles may be changed either from receiver to sender as will be evident with playback theatre. Bolton states that participants either take part through simulated role-play, or in the experience and reflection of the product. The role taken up by the audience or the actor is represented using signs to be looked at and read (O'Neill 1985:161). These identities are embodied and represented through language and gesture as they are part of the same system but operate in different ways (Kemp 2012:64). In all applied forms of theatre, the Discourse expectations of the applied form assists in shaping the contributions, and, within the emerging form, the discourses of the interactions are also shaped and presented according to the demands (or perceived demands) of the particular moment.

As a social encounter, theatre presents us with an imaginary world (O'Neill 1985:161) through which we scrutinize the different roles we play and encounter in real life communities. Thus, the Discourse of theatre includes the acceptance of an imaginary world but asks for that imaginative to play out in the discourses of role-play. PT (as a particular kind of Discourse moment) as a theatre form involves role-playing, and in PT, it has been argued by many practitioners and researchers that the roles performed

by the actors and audience are held in the secured safe space of the theatre experience (please also see chapter five). By entering a world of make-believe, the players willingly suspend their disbelief as they enter a symbolic world and operate in it 'as if' it was real. The knowledge that this world is theoretically a symbolic construct, offers a safe space that enables participants to explore thoughts, feelings and reactions not always possible in the world of day-to-day living. Consequently, the Discourse acceptance of 'make-believe' allows for experimentation in the communication moments that emerge in that safe space.

With PT, there is both an aspect of the real and the fictional. As roles are presented and represented, Bolton (1993:41) alludes to the fact that participants are both "submissive and detached" because they are simultaneously experiencing and watching themselves. The idea of submission in theatre (especially AT) is taunting because participants are actively involved in the whole process and as O'Neill (1985:161) states, "even if the product – the meaning which is negotiated and the world which is created – is less than excellent, [the process] enables participants to transcend the narrow confine of their personal identity and allows them to participate in other forms of existence". Participants in this act of communication (theatre) come to the space with/in different roles – as parents, teachers, and students. Within this communal context, one is assigned different roles, such as leaders or participants and as one interacts or plays with others, more roles are generated.

Moving forward, this study will refer to a role as an identity and role-playing as enacting or performing identity. In any given communal context like PT, different personalities are enacted and recognized through a confluence of thoughts and actions and through conscious and unconscious processes. The different identities that make up the PT act of communication, their relationship and how these identities connect to the Discourse will be examined in the next chapter. Given that any such gathering like PT is considered as a community of people gathered in a given context to share and experience each other's stories (that is to say, it appears that they share a common Discourse) it will become apparent that, in the commonality they may communicate using different (and at times, conflicting) discourses. With the apparent conflicting differences in D/discourse, a chaotic process may be expected. However, it is assumed that the presence of a ritual allows for a smooth experience. The next

section, therefore, considers what ritual in theatre looks like and how it engages with the enactment of the D/discourses.

4.6. Ritual in theatre

Theories of ritual abound in several discourses - either as a common social and/or cultural phenomenon; or merely applied as theory to construct other discourses (Turner 1969; Bell 1992; Schechner 1993). Human beings have been involved in ritual activities of some sort since the knowledge of the earliest tribal communities yet, like orality that could be studied only after writing made it possible, ritual activities began to be captured and theorized only from the late nineteenth century (Bell 1997:1). A community is identified through a lot of things as discussed above but ritual is very important in any community's social identity (Cohen 2013:30). These rituals vary in communities and have been at the centre of religious rites.

The writing on the relationship between myth and religious rites used ritual to focus on the sacredness of religious rites (Bell 1992, Rappaport 1999). This study does not examine ritual as a religious rite but within social interactions. Sociologists and anthropologists like Goody (1961) and Goffman (1967) examined ritual within social activities not related to religion. Still within this same field, ritual has been used in the attempt to explain certain types of human activity of the performance both in real life and on stage (Geertz 1980; Turner 1969; Schechner & Appel 1990). In psychology, pathological stereotyped behaviours, constantly changing behaviours and role-playing (Landy 1994; Moreno 2008) were conceived within the construct of ritual or influenced by the ritual of life.

In talking of ritual therefore, I think of "actions exhibiting a striking or incongruous rigidity, that is, some conspicuous regularity not accounted for by the professed aims of the actions" (Nadel cited by Goody 1961:158). It is "performed in a sequestered place according to set sequence" (Rappaport 1999:24). The elements in this definition of ritual can be identified in theatre and PT especially, although, according to Rappaport (1999:26), there is no mention of the term 'symbol' since ritual is often viewed to be symbolic like the "transformation of real behaviour into symbolic behaviour" (Schechner 1974:458), for the purpose of performance. In the definition, there is also no specificity of what the ritual is about or for. However, because there is no universal definition for the term ritual, the reason for any ritual can only be brought

out within the context of its practice, as is to be found in theatre performances. No matter the content and context, all rituals presumably include formalities, patterning, repetition and rhythm.

The formalities, patterning, repetition and rhythm of ritual (Alcorta & Sosis 2005:330) can also be identified in an act of communication. In terms of participants in this act, Baumann (1992:99) argues against the idea of ritual being only for insiders or members of the same community. He shows that ritual implicates others or outside participation whether they may be present or not. As in an act of communication, “ritual can serve to negotiate the differing relationships of its participants with these ‘Others’ [addressee] and in the process reformulate cultural values and self-knowledge” (Baumann 1992:99). In a theatre performance for example, the addressee may not directly be involved in the ritual process but as witness may still emotionally invest in the process.

Important to the idea of ritual in performance and social dramas is the liminal space and *communitas*. The liminal space (or threshold space) is where the margin between the sacred and the secular exist. Turner (1982:24) writes about it as a time during a performance when participants move more into a “sacred space and time from a profane or secular [everyday] space and time”. This space or margin does not exist separate from ordinary life but is set in-between (Dennis 2004:43). In expanding on the concept of liminality, we will see later how Turner draws on Van Gennep’s conception of ritual as a process-based structure that shows that all rites of passage or transitions are marked by three phases that comprise of a separation (pre-liminal) phase, a transition (liminal) phase and a re-entry (post-liminal) phase (1969:166). The process translates into AT as participants are separated from their day-to-day communities (pre-liminal phase in which their life stories are created) into a space where they share their personal experience, listen and watch others’ experiences (liminal phase where *communitas* is experienced), then return back into the “social fabric” (Fox 2003:214, post-liminal phase) with (not always) new, creative paths and processes (Feldhendler 2007:48) to merge into their existence.

This schema proposes that ritual as part of society and culture is a day-to-day activity and not something set aside (Carlson 1996:20). It is, however, not surprising that there is always an overlap between ritual and performance as both are Discourses that have

developed adjacent to each other (Dennis 2004:42). This is so because theories of ritual appear in writings about performance and theatre (Schechner & Appel 1990) and have been used to illustrate the theory of performance (Schechner 1985, 1993; Turner 1982, 1962).

According to Sennett “ritual constitutes the social form in which human beings seek to deal with denial as active agents rather than as passive victims” (cited by Dennis 2004:45). Put another way, a ritual offers an opportunity for people to move outside the rough and tumble of daily life, so as to engage meaningfully and in a safe space with the Discourses that may have led to some form of conflict, to mend old and create new relationships. Also, participation in ritual allows for the participants to understand and widen their knowledge of the values and cultural changes they perpetuate or are assimilated to each day (Baumann 1992:113). In the ritual context, participants move from secular to sacred. This crossing over is what anthropologist Victor Turner (1982: 24) describes as the “liminal,” as explained earlier. At such a point, participants in a ritual are removed from daily activities into a space where they go to the threshold of the everyday and then move beyond into the ritualised space. This space, or liminal threshold, is the point at which these Discourses of the communities from which they belong are suspended and *communitas* is experienced.

4.6.1. Communitas

Communitas, a notion of community, as propounded by Victor Turner (1969), differs from the other notions explained above in that it is more of an experience and perception. Turner’s notion of *communitas* is set against the backdrop of the absence of social structures. As made overt in Discourse, social structures are all about basic and critical relationships; the politics of everyday interaction which comes down to membership (belonging to a certain clan, club, or cult), class stratification and power struggle. There is a central idea of status and position with the idea of social structures. Therefore, Turner posits that the absence of social structure breeds *communitas* which is “being with one another or a multitude of persons” (1969:127).

In every mode of interaction, people hold positions, which can be referred to as their roles or identities (as is the case with PT) and status (even if it is not being above or below to the next person, being equal or in the same position to the next person is still a form of status) thus, Turner’s (1969:96) idea of *communitas*, lives beyond the

structural value of a social and political communities with status and power struggle. Fundamentally, in *communitas* (also known as an anti-structural moment), freedom from Discourse obligations is fostered, implying that restrictions on discourse (culture, identity, gender, age, and the like) are removed, in the pursuit of the free flow of life, so to speak. *Communitas* occurs in a liminal space.

Liminality, according to Turner, means “a state or process which is betwixt-and-between the normal, day-to-day cultural and social states and processes...” (1979:465) that “is full of potency and potentiality ... experiment and play ... [but not limited] to ritual and the performative arts” (Turner 1979:466). Our focus within the context of this research is liminality experienced within a ritualised frame and the performing arts like PT where a liminal time and framed space is set separately from the everyday world (Turner 1979:467). Considering that the set space and time for ritualised ceremonies and performative arts are a rite of passage which consist of three stages being; “(1) separation (from ordinary social life); (2) margin or hen (meaning threshold), when the subjects of ritual fall into a limbo between their past and present modes of daily existence; and (3) re-aggregation, when they are ritually returned to secular or mundane life - either at a higher status level or in an altered state of consciousness or social being” (Turner 1979:466-467).

In this process, individuals and society comments on and critiques itself using Discourse, or what Turner calls “metalanguage” (1979:467). The second stage of liminality – the point between two Discourses - is where *communitas* is experienced. It can be said especially in the context of theatre that the participants experience *communitas* at the liminal point between the Discourse of their social community and the Discourse of theatre in which the ritual takes place. Participants in a theatre community come with their own individual Discourses, which is shared and experience within the theatre Discourse. Therefore, it could be said that the liminal point between the addressers’ Discourse (coupled with the addressees’ Discourse) and the theatrical Discourse is where *communitas* is experienced.

If *communitas* (as opposed to the structural) entails equal experience in the liminal (on a threshold), liminality as Turner posits will mean that “the high could not be high unless the low existed and he who is high must experience what it is like to be low” (1969:97). It can be seen as both sides of a coin in which one can only be if the other

is, which is an idea that is shared with oral communication and discourse analysis. In that ritual process, different roles exist and are enacted in relation to each other. Therefore, I am because you are. Though this co-existence of I and the other is central in his study of *communitas*, Turner still indicates within his research that there are different types of *communitas* moments, namely: existential or spontaneous, normative and ideological. This study will not go into detail analysis of the different experiences of *communitas*, but of interest to this study is spontaneous *communitas* which according to Turner “can never be adequately expressed in a structural form, but it may arise unpredictably at any time between human beings who are institutionally reckoned or defined as members of any, or all kinds of social groupings, or of none” (1969:137).

Experiencing a spontaneous *communitas* needs no plan or preparation; it happens inexpertly and sometimes one is not able to explain the feeling or sensation obtained in that liminal space. It speaks to the unique experience of PT (see section 5.3), which is able to bring a diverse audience (race, language, culture and tradition) together in a particular space and time yet could leave them unsatisfied with the structured form of PT, or an inadequate enactment of their story, in which case *communitas* may not be experienced. The idea here is that having different Discourses that speak to each other within the experience of PT, *communitas* is experienced when there is a shift or change in a person’s Discourse, and participants must also be willing to accept and receive the change. This is because such experience of *communitas* is likely to

revitalise and renew our social practices and institutions than experiences of structure and institution. The sources of renewed life and vitality are not likely to be found in structure equivalent to the institutional experience, but rather in the anti-structural experience of *communitas* or the quest for it (Veling, cited by Dennis 2004:69).

The revitalisation of the being enables an understanding of the power relations and practices from the different communities they belong to. Turner asserts this point when he points out that we are “...released from structure into *communitas* only to return to structure revitalised by [the] experience of *communitas*” (1969:129). Despite the dialectics, the notion of community lies in the search for belonging. This search for belonging Turner explains (as he draws on Martin Buber) that “*communitas* involves the whole person in relation to the other” as it is

... quintessentially a mode of relationship between total and concrete persons, between "*I*" and "*Thou*." This relationship is always a "happening," something that arises in instant mutuality, when each person fully experiences the being of the other. (1969:136)

These relationships can be experienced only by recognizing the identities enacted. In a constant search to belong and to be accepted, one turns to imagine and create groupings that are in sync with one's ideas. It is within this framework that Benedict Anderson (2006) says all communities are imagined. It could be an imagined ethnic, political, social, ideological and/or linguistic community. Anderson uses "imagined" because the "members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (2006:6). These communities come into existence through a common shared interest and is fostered by mediums such as language.

The idea therefore is of a shared perceptual frame where, because people share the same discourse (language), there is an automatic imagining of a shared Discourse. This however does not automatically mean an experience of *communitas* for there has to be a realization and acceptance of a different Discourse. The consideration therefore with PT is that it is imagined for the PT crew who uses the PT discourse (language, ritual) to impose a common Discourse to all participants (experiences framed under a certain theme). In the process of then experiencing PT, the participants uncover theirs and other Discourses through stories for which *communitas* can be experienced when this change in Discourse is accepted. This idea that drives this suspension of personal Discourses for the experience of *communitas* is play and the dynamics of play.

4.6.2. Play

Several theories on play exist. Play has commonly and widely been associated with children. For Cohen, (2018:16) play is not something that only children do, because some adult activities, like rituals and social dramas, can be considered as forms of play. Some types of play activities are considered more meaningful than others when it is not pretentious but thought through (reality play) and aimed towards specific outcomes (Salen, Tekinbas & Zimmerman 2004:34). There have been numerous definitions of and research into play in the fields of psychology, sociology, theatre, etc. However, developmental psychologist Jean Piaget states, "the many theories of play

expounded in the past are clear proof that the phenomenon is difficult to understand" (Piaget 2013:147; Cohen 2018) and to define. According to Pellegrini and Smith (1998:51), no one definition is necessary or sufficient, but typically multi-dimensional.

Some of these theories of play explore the relationship between play and exploration in children which was pioneered by Jean Piaget (Cohen 2018:15) while psychoanalysis which influenced the field of psychodrama, explored cognitive and emotional development through and in play (Blatner & Blatner 1991; Blatner 2003). The constructivist approach, classified as modern theory of play (mainly in the educational sector), looked beyond the 'how' of play, but what could be achieved through play (Roussou 2004; Blatner & Blatner 1988; Katzeff 2003; Cohen 2018).

Play is considered to be "a range of voluntary, intrinsically motivated activities normally associated with recreational pleasure and enjoyment" (Garvey 1990:4). Play activity is motivated in different ways. Play can be intrinsically motivated (Roussou 2004:7) (free play or explorative mostly done individually and by children) which is also referred to as pretend play (Göncü & Perone 2005) thus connected to the mind and thought. Also, play can be motivated and influenced by external forces (motivated play for a specified outcome) through which other dimensions other than the familiar everyday life are expressed (Blatner & Blatner 1988). Play also brings about learning outcomes (Roussou 2004:4) as new knowledge is obtained through the exploration of ideas and concepts from prior knowledge and experience. The sort of play which is expressed in theatre is that which is motivated by the will for entertainment or transformation as is the case with the AT forms. Play can take several forms such as improvisation, performance, mimicry, games and sports, but creates no wealth or goods. Dramatic play or creative play (Landy 1994; Jennings 2017; Stacey & Mason 2019), which falls within the scope of this study, is different from competitive forms like sports and games (Caillois 1961; Huizinga 1999; Verheijen, Stoltz, van den Berg & Cillessen 2019).

Creative forms of play resonate with the oral formulae purported by Ong for its characteristics gives an indication of the absence of writing. These characteristics of play summed up by Huizinga and reiterated by Landy (1994:67), say (the characteristics are expanded in the next 4 paragraphs) that "[play] is a spontaneous, improvisational activity rather than a calculated, scripted one". Literally, in mainstream theatre, a play is scripted spoken words on a stage by actors. This is not necessarily

the case in AT as it is a spontaneous - the ability to enter into a playful or virtual world and improvise - playful reconstruction of ideas or events. Therefore, the act of communication in scripted play and spontaneous play is inevitably experienced differently with different outcomes. Spontaneity is a skill that can be attributed to a purely oral mind. Through play, the self and its surroundings are explored beyond the norm and the self (identity, connections and relationships) is sometimes recreated in and through the process.

Landy adds that play, “is a symbolic, imaginative activity expressed through movement, speech, [embodied engagement] and/or thought” (1994:67). Play is informed by everyday life Discourses and through imaginative impersonation, it gives an opportunity for people to learn and unlearn behaviour (identities) made in real life situations and to test out choices without real-life consequences. According to Landy, “many forms of play have a projective nature in which the player’s thoughts, wishes or needs are projected outward onto the world” (1994:67). In such a situation, Goffman (1959:49) explains that the performer is taken in by his/her own act as they must convince themselves and the audience that the role, they have taken up is the real reality. If we consider that in play, a player puts on a mask in the form of a role, then according to Park, “...this mask is our truer self⁵⁷, the self we will like to be.... [therefore role] becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality” (cited by Goffman 1959:11). Role may reveal more than it conceals.

Play exists in a representational context and a symbolic world. In enacting issues within the play world, the player comes to know something of the larger world outside. In an act of communication like theatre, as participants take up different roles, relationships and power relations are clarified which allows for connections and empathy towards the Discourse or other identities to be made. The player not only understands the issues on a bigger scale, but also comes to understand more of his/her own and others’ personalities. In this way, Park says “everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously playing a role...[for] it is in these roles that we know each other [and]; it is in these [same] roles that we know ourselves” (cited by Goffman 1959:11). Although we consciously play roles as an intrinsic part of human

⁵⁷ The dynamics and problematic of the true and core self are argued and documented in several items of literature. However, this study will not indulge in these debates as it will deviate from the core focus of the research.

activity, dramatic role-play uses the element of the imagination and pretence as rehearsal or exploration of actual roles in the community or social context. With the use of language (sometimes in a playful context) we are portraying a particular identity of ourselves and others around us. A player or an actor (in theatre and sometimes in social dramas) often takes on and plays out the role of another character. Levels of dramatic play differ, from social play where the person involved takes part in activities that do not often “require him(her) to be someone other than himself (herself)” (Morgan & Saxton 1989:31), to activities or roles representing a certain attitude or point of view in the drama, that is not necessarily the player’s own.

Play is not directed towards an external goal like completing a task or making money; rather, it is directed towards for example, mastery or competence. By playing out the other and our own experiences, O’Toole says we “broaden [our] repertoire of behaviours [which] helps [us] gain insight into [our] present behaviour and possibly to modify it” (1992:72). Play is an essential psychic reality of all human beings that might be genetically based. Imagining oneself as another and playing that out is seen as a natural part of human existence. Play represents a confluence of thoughts and actions, of conscious and unconscious processes. Play enables the enactment of different identities and Discourses.

Goffman (1959:2) asserts that when an individual is in the presence of others, he usually conveys information by means of the expression he gives (conscious actions and reactions) and expressions he gives off (unconscious, unintentional, contextual and non-verbal). Play is a creative activity that bridges two levels of reality and identity. This means that play creates the possibility for visible identities and identities not readily accessible in life, to be experimented with. Play sometimes moves beyond life experiences into the realm of fantasy. In the theatrical act of communication, the addresser explores reality through play while the addressee sometimes receives this as a fantasy or entertainment. In AT the addressee is involved in the play which may be real or fantasy, but which allows them to take different identities. Through this play, new knowledge is acquired, so one could say the telling and enactment of the stories in PT open up possibilities for the participants to view life and their experiences in a different way.

Although these characteristics generally explain play situations, one should understand that the play of children and adults might be differently motivated. This section has established the varied forms of play from games to entertainment in the theatre. In the process of accomplishing any of the forms of play especially in theatre, the participant is removed from their everyday self into roles they represent. The playful world of theatre and drama can be imaginative or from lived situations (like in PT) in which participants (as in the actors and audience who interchange roles as addresser and addressee in the process of communication) are expected to take up roles and play roles that relate to the self or to the other. The practise of roles we play in theatrical and social context (Gee 2014) explores different identities and their relationship to other identities using orality. Moving forward, the term role whose meaning and understanding within the frame of theatre has been explored here, will be referred to as identity.

4.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has focused on providing varied perspectives of literature relevant to the research and the approach to the research. The chapter explored the idea of role and role-playing towards understanding the different roles present and enacted within the PT experience. It pointed to the fact that individuals always portray several roles within a specified context as part of social behaviour and extended the discussion to role-playing in fictional or symbolic worlds. Such roles are enacted within a community like that of theatre which is imagined with symbolic boundaries. It showed that roles and role-playing is necessary for the experience of *communitas* within any ritual process of a community. As such the chapter showed that to experience *communitas* within such communities, there is a need to reconcile individuality and negotiate the perceived meaning of the symbolic boundaries.

The theories and understanding around community are considered to locate AT and subsequently PT as a community experience. It showed several notions of community is experienced at different levels of the PT process. The participants in this community (AT) are members of other communities that carry different Discourses. As such, community being a group of people has been viewed to include, the physical space, *communitas* and an ephemeral experience of community. The chapter concludes that

within a liminal process, there is an experience of *communitas* through the sharing and experiences of one another's stories.

The relationship between role, role-playing and community has also been considered. This has been done not specifically within the context of theatre but to consider the experience of orality and D/discourse as operative in social contexts. The chapter pointed to the fact that AT is a community event that involves D/discourse characteristics with storytelling as a performance narrative.

From framing the research to expounding on the various literature that underpins the study, PT has been constantly mentioned and referred to. Therefore, the purpose of the next chapter is to attempt a defining and understanding how playback as an AT method works. Following that, a detailed analysis of PT events will be undertaken, to attempt to demonstrate how the claims of PT and the experiences in the field may present moments of miscommunication.

Chapter 5: Playback theatre as a mode of applied theatre

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed AT and key constructs related to the operations and efficacy of AT, with specific reference to how Discourses and discourse might manifest. The chapter also looked at the dialectics of community and how these are understood and practised within the AT field, again engaging in the D/discourse location in community. As mentioned before, PT is one of many forms of AT that are used in a wide variety of contexts. It is a contemporary creation or variation of oral traditions of storytelling. Storytelling has been, and still is, a part of many cultures, specifically also indigenous African communities (Chinyowa 2000, 2011; Finnegan 2012; Furniss & Gunner 2008).

Historically, many cultures and communities were entertained and schooled through storytelling ceremonies (Banks-Wallace 2002:411). These ceremonies also served as forums to heal sickness, solve social problems or pass down knowledge and wisdom (Mlama 1995). Such influences have also been felt in South Africa with examples from “the songs and stories of the San and Khoi to the praise poems (Zulu/Xhosa: ‘izibongo’; Sotho: ‘lithoko’)” (Brown 1998:3). Stories in the oral tradition were often indirect, with the meaning not always explicit. They often centred on gods and heroes (Fox 2003:2). PT puts individual experiences at the core of its storytelling process. The creation of this mode of an oral tradition of storytelling was influenced by theories of orality and other theories, as suggested in chapter one.

PT claims to be non-scripted AT, and does, indeed, not work from a traditional concept of a written script that needs to be read or memorized in and for performance. As non-scripted (within their definition)⁵⁸, it relies on stories from audience members for a performance to take place. PT is a method of AT/theatre that is group–orientated and participatory, mainly aiming at encouraging “individuals to re-evaluate their [perspectives and] positions within a broader social environment” (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017: 539; Feldhendler 2008:1). As non-scripted, it relies on stories from audience

⁵⁸ This thesis has attempted to demonstrate, both from the perspective of Orality and D/discourse, that the narrow definition of scripted to imply written down on a page for example, is problematic. Any language usage is constructed according to rules, is context bound, and at times individually particular. As such the process of learning how to do this (effectively) in communication requires learning how to ‘script’ the communication process.

members for a performance to take place. PT centres on the enactment (through improvised dialogue, music and movement) of personal stories told by audience members by a PT troupe (Salas 2009:459). Audience members tell personal stories (tellers), the teller selects actors from the troupe to play the different roles dictated by the story, and the teller and audience witness the story seemingly being recreated and given dramatic coherence and artistic shape.

As such, both the oral narration of the story and the playing back of the story appear to be improvisational in nature. The actors re-tell the audience member's story verbally and non-verbally immediately after it is narrated, without discussing or rehearsing the dramatical re-telling. A PT troupe is generally made up of five or more people: the conductor, the musicians and the actors who act out the stories. The conductor is the bridge between the performers and audience, inviting audience members to tell their stories (Salas 1983:18), and guiding the process (Dennis 2007:356). There is a clear delineation of the performance space and clearly established roles that separates the audience from the playback troupe. Amongst the troupe in the performance space there is a "recognisable spatial configuration for the conductor, musician and actors and the teller as they come to the stage to tell their story" (Hutt & Hosking 2004:7), as well as a recognisable pattern of events during the performance. This establishes a sense of ritual in the performance. There is the ritual of, and the ritual in, PT (this is further explained in section 5.2 of this chapter).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a description of what PT is according to available literature, and then to locate PT within the notions of D/discourse and Orality. This needs to be done so that the analytical chapter (which follows this chapter) can identify possible discrepancies and contradictions between what PT sets out to do, and what might actually happen. Therefore, this chapter will explain what PT is seen to be, what it does and what is involved in its process. One aspect that Fox (1999:119) holds firmly to, is PT's roots in, and connection to, oral traditions which revolve around telling stories.

5.2. Stories and storytelling

AT, of which PT is an example, is an act of communication involving addressers and addressees. The sending and receiving of coded messages in this act of communication is a little different from everyday acts of communication. Here, messages generally take the form of stories. As mentioned earlier, the telling of stories by audience members is a principal element of PT.

Telling a story involves conveying events in words or through an enactment (Lapadat, Black, Clark, Gremm, Karanja, Mieke & Quinlan 2010; Vannini 2009) as is done in theatre, arguably holds the potential for societal and personal reforms (Andrew, Hull & Donahue 2009, Connelly & Clandinin 1990). Stories play an important role in constructing the individual and society (Thomas & Schwarzbaum 2016:3; Vannini 2009:1). This is so because we think and remember in stories; expressing and describing ourselves in the world around us is done through narratives (McAdams & McLean 2013:234). In this process of construction, Lapadat *et al* (2010:78) put it that the “listener/reader/viewer is implicated as witness, audience, collaborator and co-constructor” as is apparent in the process of PT. Stories have often been used as a way of entertainment, education, culture preservation and instilling moral values (Bage 2012; Stephens & McCallem 2013; Archibald 2008). Stories provide coherence and continuity in life experiences.

According to Woodruffe-Burton and Elliott (2005:462), people make sense of their lives through the stories they can or cannot tell and understand themselves through the stories they create in order to situate themselves in time and place and in relation to others. Personal narratives through which we identify the ‘self’ are not given products of a social system nor fixed entities which the individual can simply adopt but is something the person actively creates (2005:462) or co-creates. Narayan and George (2003:450) and Laitinen (2002:3) suggest that the construction of personal stories is shaped through culturally, socially recognised and sometimes transculturally negotiated narratives and linguistic conventions. In other words, the structured value system of a society or culture serves as backdrop against which stories are shaped. Hence the conservative and homeostatic function of orality and the sign system and knowledge characteristics of discourse appear evident in such constructions. Makus and Nurius (cited by Woodruffe-Burton & Elliot 2005:462) add that

... an individual is free to create any variety of possible selves, yet the pool of possible selves derives from the categories made salient by the individual's particular socio-cultural and historical context and from the models, images, and symbols provided by the media and by the individual's immediate social experiences.

The self here, refers to the different identities or roles that one takes on in different social contexts. As argued in the previous chapter, these identities or roles exist in relation to, or through interaction with, other roles and identities. People lead their lives through stories. As an aspect that talks "about experiences, events, personal or collective memories..." (Vannini 2009:935). Vannini (2009) proposes that stories are often shared with the self or with others to make sense of personal and shared experiences and to experience dialogue (in the communicative and not theatrical sense of the word, although there are shared characteristics). Stories are constructed from fragmented pieces of experiences (Narayan & George 2003:450) generated by the various discourses of life and the society we live in. Tyson (2006:285) posits that "discourse is a social language created by particular cultural conditions at a particular time and place". He adds that discourse represents "thoughts, ideas and images" that express "a particular way of understanding human experience" (2006:1). Further, that discourse is also concerned with how language operates as "a vehicle of ideology"⁵⁹ (Tyson 2006:285). A majority of contemporary stories are expressed and consumed through writing and different forms of media. Other contemporary mediums, like theatre, have made storytelling more a part of social life as these reflect upon the actions and events of everyday life (Czarniawska 2004:42).

Contemporary storytelling can be seen as both an oral and written art form (that influence each other in modernity), but holds its origins from oral cultures as it has a history from ancient rituals to the present day. What therefore are those features or strategies of oral tradition that may help one to understand and reframe contemporary storytelling? Ong (2002) puts it (as I have expanded upon in chapter two) that oral tradition is one untouched by writing. This is so because there is a vast amount of literature (Ong 2002; Bigelow & Watson 2013; Raji-Oyelade & Oyeleye 2020; Gintsburg 2020) comparing written and spoken language of literate persons.

⁵⁹ This aspect falls outside of the scope of the thesis. I do, however, refer to it in my concluding chapter as an avenue for further research.

PT as a contemporary tool for storytelling, not only focuses on the interactive aspect but emphasises orality as a fundamental narrative medium within its ritual context. Fox (1986:50) argues that telling one's experience is always an experience of critical consciousness. It is important to emphasise that the experience Fox (1986:50) mentions not only resonates with the oral narratives, but also when experiencing it replayed in the dramatic forms of PT. In this sense, the potentially "inchoately personal" (Fox 1986:50) story from the teller is made 'critically conscious' for the teller and the community present through the enactment.

Before proceeding, I return briefly to Lapadat *et al* (2010:78) who note that the "listener/reader/viewer is implicated as witness, audience, collaborator and co-creator". These four roles are interwoven into one complex listener system. The definition of a witness captures the intention to report what the witness saw and heard. Inevitably, though, such a retelling will be determined by the witness's perspective, memory selection, value system and ability to convert what was witnessed into a narrative. As such, what was presented and what is contained in the report is, potentially, different. As an audience witness/performer therefore, what is determined to be important to the witnessing is again determined by witness perspective and the like. Given these anomalies, it now becomes problematic to consider the witness a collaborator (a person who works together with another) because the storyteller and the witness bring potential differences to the event. Finally, and given the argument presented here, the question needs to be asked: what exactly is being co-constructed? Nevertheless, Lapadat *et al* 's(2010:78) view of matters resonates with PT, and therefore the next section engages with the perceived notion of PT, as it is to be found in existing literature and practice, and which will be critiqued in this thesis.

5.3. The received concept of playback theatre

In PT, people can share stories about aspects of their daily lives with others (audience members) and watch these be enacted on the spot by performers. Unlike ancient tales where heroes and gods are praised, this form of non-scripted theatre speaks about the life of ordinary people and aims to illuminate connections between the stories of various people (Fox 2007b:92). These connections may bring the participants closer together as a community when they experience *communitas* (it should be noted that they are already a community of theatre participants), while helping to shape the ever-

changing world in which they live. The teller's story is altered and transformed in different phases of 'playing it [them] back' through an overt act of interpretation that audience and performers are aware of (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540). It is the nature of the overt act of interpretation that forms the central concern of this research project. Those who listen to and view the telling and enactment are positioned as witnesses, audiences, collaborators and co-constructors of meaning (Fox 2007b:98). The telling and (re)enactment processes that PT facilitate further set out, seemingly, to make visible the underlying social, political, and personal dimensions of human interactions in a given context. These processes also build synergy between individuals and their communities (those in which they belong as part of their everyday life) through a "dynamic mediation" (Feldhendler, 2008:1) of the tensions within stories.

Fox's point of view is that PT does not exist to offer solutions to problems but aims to bring "...critical consciousness to a circumstance that previously may have been inchoately personal" (Fox 2003:50). For Fox, it is all about telling and recognising experiences through dramatic enactment. He argues that "[the] sensory interaction with the environment, iconic thinking ... and the marriage of feeling and thought..." (1999:120) makes it possible for an audience/audience member to 'indirectly' derive solutions by engaging in a performance (although it may not be the main aim of PT).

The critical dimension of narrating stories is surfaced through what Fox calls the "red thread" (1999:117). When the conductor invites audience members to share, s/he does not invite for one type of story. Yet as each teller recounts a personal experience, these stories become connected at a social level. As such, Dauber posits that:

Playback theatre is both an **individual** as well as a **collective** experience, which, on the one hand, can only be understood from a **subjective perspective**— i.e., through (individual and collective) self-reflection, and on the other hand can be described from an **objective perspective** as an objective experience of a theatre performance in a particular social context. (1999:159 emphasis in Dauber)

The notions of 'subjectivity' and 'objectivity' are problematic, and it is difficult to determine what Dauber is referring to here. Objective in this sense, may refer to positions of engagement or witnessing that looks at the teller's story with different eyes, and offers critical distance. Acknowledging that PT has an aesthetic Discourse

in which various discourses have opportunities to play out might be a more effective way of describing both the particular telling and the general aesthetic demands.

In any context, the stories not only speak to the immediate “community in a general way, [but they] usually relate very specifically to the circumstances of the group” (Fox 1999:118). In this case, the story that arises from the teller’s experience is based on “subjective sincerity, congruence and authenticity,” it is claimed (Dauber 1999:161). Dauber argues that, by recognising the personal meaning of a story and discovering what seems to be/what the troupe understands as its overt/covert themes, that is its “overt (conscious) and covert (unconscious) themes” (Dauber 1999:161)), and adding to the portrayal thereof on stage, broadens the meaning of the story for the teller and the whole group. This experience can only be possible if stories are shared because, as mentioned before, PT depends on the verbal input of an audience (Salas 2006:5) for an enactment to follow. Without a story from the audience, there cannot be any PT performance, thus the audience is a partner or collaborator in the creation of the PT event at least, and process at best.

The PT performance opens up possibilities for gaining another perspective on, or understandings of, issues in the stories. Seeing a story/your story being interpreted and enacted on stage allows for distance from the story or experience, it is claimed. Jackson (2007:141) proposes that the ‘real’ world is being represented on stage in a manner that allows the audience to identify the presentation on stage as ‘real’, but simultaneously, tellers and audience members are removed from that ‘reality’ as they are observing how the ‘real’ is being created by the troupe. This allows for critical distance and a shift in perspective. Thus, “the story performed is not the story told”, but “paradoxically, it is the same story” - surfacing the idea of “sameness in difference” (Park-Fuller, 2005:9). Ostensibly, it is this “distance that allows the storyteller to view his/her story from another point of view, [or] even multiple points of view” (another) (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540), allowing for critical re-evaluation of stories and experiences (Park-Fuller, 2005:7). Park-Fuller (2005:10) terms this processes the “aesthetic paradox”. The term refers to an identification-detachment effect that is claimed comes about by watching one’s story and/or oneself being enacted and interpreted on stage (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540). The presentation of stories on stage, which is in effect a re-telling of the story, disengages the story from a lived experience, disassembling the “pre-reflective underpinnings” of the teller’s stories, and

explicitly reconstructing the story in performance and through a “discursive repositioning” (Park-Fuller, 2005:10).

By returning to the theories on Discourse and discourse, there are concerns around this claim, and an attempt must be made to determine the potential areas of duality and contradiction. To recap: the PT event has its own Discourse (and the teller and group, arguably, their own Discourses, as well). Each particular telling and enactment draw on strategies of Discourse from moment to moment. The teller’s Discourse emphasises and strategies might not be the ones selected by the group to enact. Furthermore, drawing on the dynamics of orality, from chapter two, whereas the way that the teller tells the story can be seen to follow the traditional understandings of orality (a spoken discourse), in the enactment the PT troupe has to find methods of translating the oral cues into another medium (performance). It is in the selection of which cues to choose to enact, and how to embody those orality cues that the potential contradictions and mismatches might occur.

To attempt to determine key moments for these mismatches or mis-selections the trajectory of the events in PT are presented and discussed here.

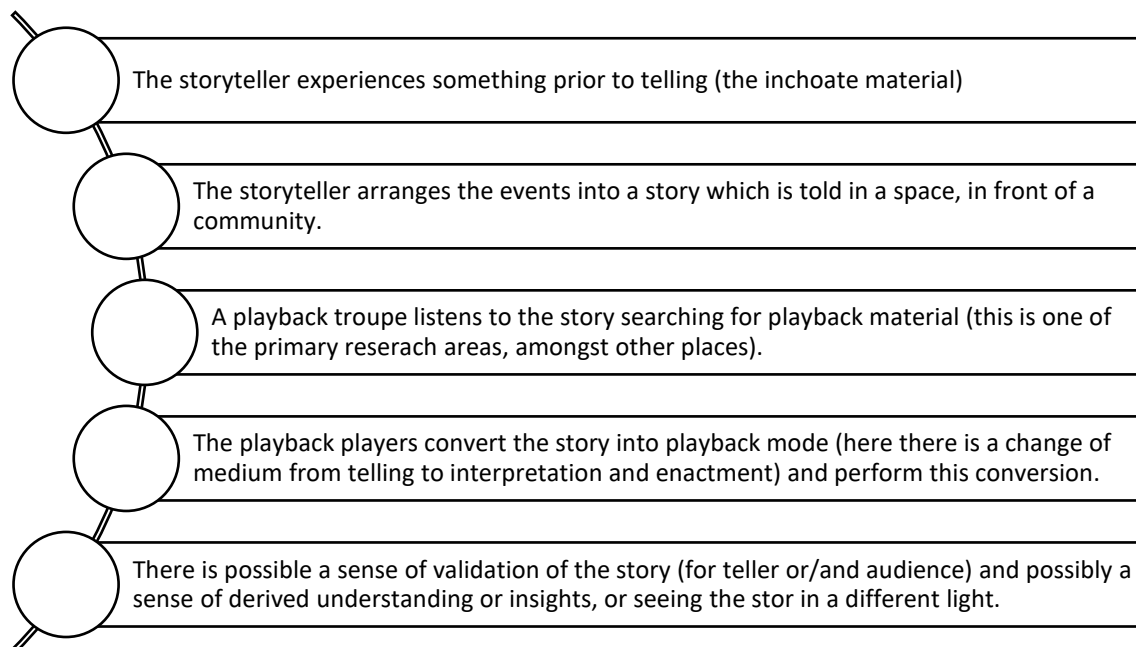


Figure 6: The trajectory of events in Playback Theatre.

Each phase involves some form of selection and translation or transliteration - in short, a change in D/discourse (in some way or another). The idea of the moon- shaped figure indicates a repeat of these events that forms that full circle of the PT ritual. Critically, to speak only of the same content being translated according to the medium/form of presentation is either too simplistic, or fraught with problems. This opens out the dynamics of orality at play in the PT performance, and the various interwoven D/discourses that collide, engage, communicate and confuse in this ritualised process. Explicating this will become the task of this chapter. I differentiate between the *ritual of* and the *ritual in* playback theatre.

As a ritualised performance, Dennis (2004:42) posits that PT “straddle[s] the performance/ritual threshold”. There are two forms of ritual inherent in the PT form: the *ritual of* PT that encapsulates the *rituals in* (there are two mini-rituals here) PT. The *ritual of* playback (the experience of the whole process from entering into the space to leaving the performance space and entails adherence to rules of conduct (Fox 1999:126). In this, the actors must focus on their presence on stage while the conductor must learn to keep the *ritual of* the playback performance moving no matter the kind of teller or story encountered. The *ritual of* PT consists of a repeated cyclical process in the performance that includes an invitation to the audience to tell a story, a teller telling a story, the conductor posing questions as the story unfolds, a narrative transition to the enactment (let’s watch), the enactment, and a closing with an acknowledgment of the teller and his/her story (Salas 2009:446). It may therefore be argued that the ritual of PT carries the hallmarks of a Discourse of performance.

The repeated phrase ‘*let’s watch*’, the repeated invitation to tell in PT and the questioning that the conductor uses, build the complexity of the story/stories by layering images, themes and story-threads and encourages shifts between multiple perspectives that foster reflection and insight into a life-event or experience – creating the *ritual in* PT. Fox suggests that creating ritual requires different skills and Discourses such as “the invocation of a transpersonal dimension ... building ecstatic emotional energy, the sparse, rhythmical, [though] highly specialized use of language...” (1999:126). The ritual Discourse and performance Discourse meet at a threshold to make up the PT Discourse. At times, both are present in the same performance, and at other times one or neither (Dennis 2004:42). However, the ritual of PT is always present as, according to Fox (2003, 1999), the absence of the PT ritual

excludes any performance or process as PT. Given this explanation, it is clear that PT as Discourse, also attempts to follow discourse strategies. The problem, however, might lie in the notion that the discourse strategies of telling and the discourse strategies of 'playback' differ (as will be demonstrated in the next chapter).

The nature of the process experienced depends on the audience and theme of the performance. Turner asserts that ritualised or symbolic performance of important events in a society is reflective for the spectators – as seeing ourselves in a mirror (selectively, one must add) by “arousing consciousness of ourselves as we see ourselves” (cited by Dennis 2004:38). Thus, the claimed transformational aim of the ritual in PT is declared. An individual, after such a ritualised performance, moves to a new status and is reincorporated into society and “expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards” (Turner 1969:94-95) that were not clear before. In these performances, individuals are participants, observers or both participants and observers.

An intertwine of two separate discourses (because the language is different at each level of involvement) within the PT Discourse becomes apparent. Furthermore, the level of participation especially for the audience in PT is different from other theatre techniques (applied or otherwise). PT does not generally encourage an audience member to step on stage to take part as an actor. The urge of physical participation (to 'act,' as described earlier), is managed by the inherent power of the ritual, which at the same time allows for a seemingly active and interactive experience of the audience (1999:131). (One is reminded of the “witness, audience, collaborator and co-constructor” argument, following Lapadat *et al* (2010:78), raised earlier). PT work requires an understanding of the demands of ritual, as the whole process of PT is framed in a ritualistic form. Thus, the PT framing ritual (so to speak) provides the rules for the ritual within the frame. Following this, the particular ritual (following the teller's story) needs to follow these rules. The frame and rules claim to foster growth in the teller and audience. The problem might lie in in the discourse of telling, the discourse of enactment, the Discourse of PT, the PT strategic Discourse of enactment, as understood by the troupe, and the Discourse that gave rise to the teller's story. Nevertheless, all of this is ritualised, it is argued.

5.4. The ritual in and of the playback process

It has been established that ritual in theatre contains formalities: its patterning is repetitive and rhythmic. These seemingly acceptable characteristics of ritual become clear in their purpose only within the context of the ritual performance. As such, PT proposes several ritual performances within the Discourse. The ritual in and of PT makes part of the Discourse of PT. This main ritual is made up of two mini rituals which are that of the storytelling mini ritual and the enactment mini ritual. In the PT ritual process, each participant performs a role in relation to others. These roles are different at different stages of the ritual but like circular ritual with a leading shaman, the role of the conductor in the PT ritual is considered that of a shaman.

As the master of ceremonies, the conductor in PT is likened to the shaman (albeit a point for debate) in a ritual ceremony who guides the ritual process (Fox 1999:127; Adderley 2003:8); but unlike the traditional shaman, the conductor does not enter into a trance state or practise divination and healing. He/she directs and leads the events through a process with set rules that are determined by the PT structure. Fox explains that though PT is a spontaneous (which has been critiqued by scholars) process, the ritual of PT has its rules of which some are:

The teller must come to the chair; the teller must stay in the chair during the enactment; the teller must tell a personal story. The actors stand when picked for a role; the actors do not talk during the interview. The conductor does not interrupt the enactment; the conductor checks in with the teller after the enactment; the conductor dismisses the teller from the chair. (Fox 1999:128)

This set of rules therefore shapes and forms part of the PT Discourse ritual and the constructed spontaneous content of the event such that the Discourse of telling a story is framed and directed by the conductor through questions that structure the teller's story and the actors' performance. The stories therefore have a "particular ritualistic journey to travel" (Adderley 2003:8) within the set rules of the form, both in the telling, and in the enactment.

The success of every ritual process relies on all participants playing their roles (in the case of PT, the teller; the audience; the performers and the conductor). Roles played in a ritual process are assigned for that purpose and sometimes fixed, like being a priest, a teller, or a conductor. With performance rituals, these roles reflect the real

ones played in life. In PT, the teller presents himself as a real character through a story (which may contain other characters) and the troupe interprets and represents these characters through music, words and bodily expressions. It is the ritualistic nature of the liminal performance space that provides the permission to move from reality to telling and enactment, and back again, as time passes in the space. This might be seen as the *communitas* dimensions of the activity of PT.

Despite the ritualistic framework of PT, Jo Salas (1999:18) explains that PT, as the name denotes, is theatre, and theatre is art. PT as a form of art shares the central dynamics of all arts which is not only to represent (or ‘re-present’) things the way they are but produce a community’s shared understanding (Heidegger 2008) through selection, reshaping, foregrounding, juxtaposing, consolidating and giving a particular direction to matters that have been stimulated by real events. These actions may be seen as the discourse strategies of artmaking, where artmaking is seen as a particular kind of Discourse. Therefore, PT, through its dramatic, theatrical, and artistic forms “[...] convey[s] human experience [...]; [and] embod[ies] narrative and [a] meaning in the realm of space and time” (Salas 1999:18).

For this to happen, Salas argues that art alone is not enough as PT is also a discursive “interactive social process” (1999:18) through which people find (or construct) meaning and coherence in the chaos of everyday life. The social experience, as Fox (1999:126) explains it, is greeting the audience (after which the audience enters the liminal space), introducing the performance, invoking stories, interviewing the teller and so forth – in short, establishing the ritual. Fox explains further that as a result of its flexibility, some companies tend to lean more towards one of these three components of PT – ritual, art or social interaction – and, as Salas (1999:30) argues, “good enough” PT is one that successfully incorporates these elements such that they cannot be distinguished. Fox further illustrates this point of ‘good PT’ in Figure 7 below. (Critically, the diagram opens out the types of discourses at play and the Discourses that oversee those discourses. This is the central concern in this research project).

A successful implementation of all three elements in PT creates a space where deep stories concerned with the major themes of human life journeys such as birth, initiations, marriages and death – “the very stuff of ritual” (Adderley 2004) -- can be

told. This requires a critical engagement of listening skills, and an aspect of social interaction from the performers and participants.

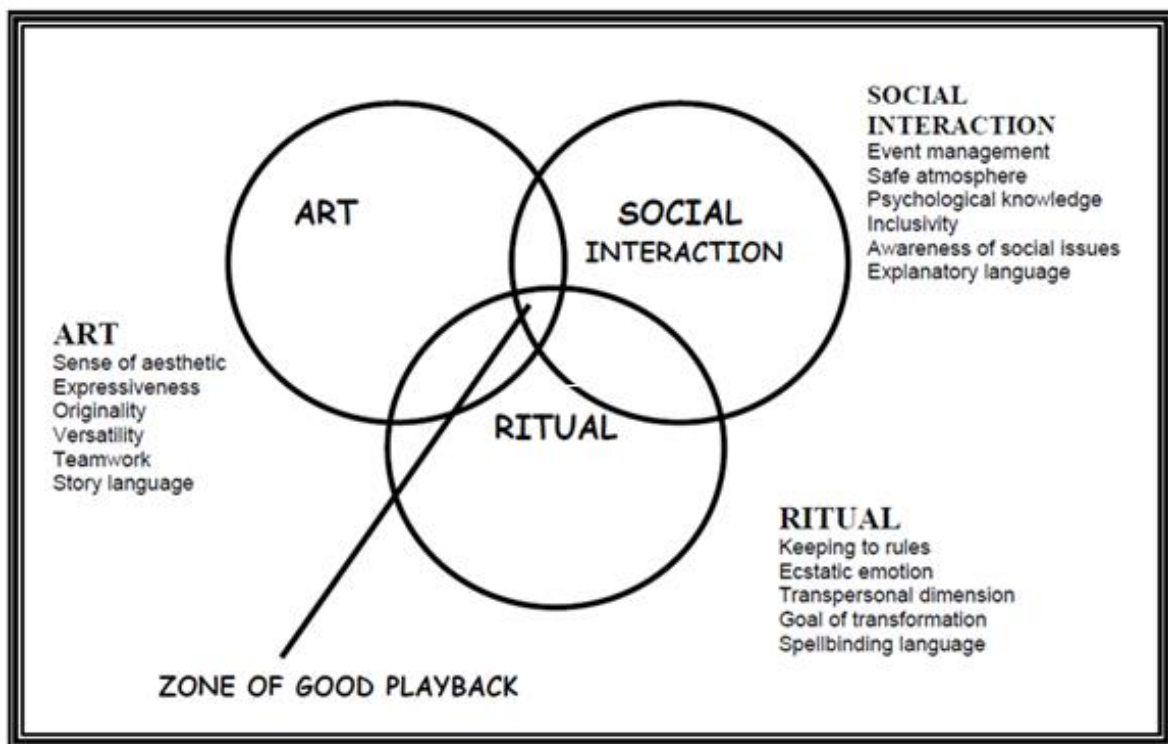


Figure 7: Essential Elements of Playback Theatre (Fox 1999:127).

In this space, ritual is contained within the art, social interaction and vice versa. The participants in the pre-liminal phase experience social ritual of meeting and greeting as they enter and settle into the PT ritual space. The transition to the liminal phase is done by the conductor who introduces the art form while setting the rules of the ritual. In the liminal phase of the PT ritual, participants take on roles of addresser (the actors are story tellers here) and addressee (audience) but return to their normal identities at the post liminal phase as they return to the social life at the end of the ritual experience. These roles are interchanged throughout the ritual process as, within this bigger frame of the PT ritual, sits two mini-rituals.

5.4.1. First mini-ritual: the storytelling

The art of storytelling in itself contains a ritual structure which is translated into the PT experience. In the frame of the storytelling ritual, there is an addresser (the teller) and addressees (the audience; the conductor and the performers). In the pre-liminal

phase, participants take their seats and quieten down as they prepare to listen. When the teller begins with the words 'once upon a time...' (in the case of PT the time and place where the story happened is set), the story is initiated and the participants are transported into a liminal space of make believe, or, in the case of PT, a space of (the telling of) real events of which none of the other participants have been part of, apart from the story teller (although, for meaning to occur, some form of recognition, at least of aspects of the events told, needs to be present).

To sustain the attention and involvement of the addressees, the teller must structure and tell the story in a particular way. This is possible only by drawing from discourse elements of using vivid images (metalingual), highlighting (significance) and repeating material, keeping the contact (though repetition, for example) and checking on referential or political cross-referencing confirmation, drawing on what the teller thinks are common (homeostatic) experiences, and the like. In a storytelling ritual, all of this is achieved verbally, thus relying on the guidance of the orality formulae for success. If this were not to follow, addressees forget, do not connect, do not understand, miss the important points (or misinterpret them), are not emotionally involved, do not work out who the good and who the bad are, and how the story relates to them (that is, relates to the good and the bad, and how this relates to the audience members, and the troupe).

In this process, there are two Discourses involved: firstly, the storytelling Discourse with a beginning, middle, climax and an end; and secondly, the Discourse in which, and from which the story comes involving the teller and the listener. The teller's Discourse influences how he tells the story while the listeners' Discourse influences the impact of the story on them. Speculatively, all involved in the listening (conductor, performers and audience) are listening for different things and thus it can be said that the performers are listening for performative cues, for example.

In summary, the storytelling mini-ritual in PT draws on the Discourses of storytelling, relates those to the Discourse of the teller (and the Discourse of the community, if this is a different one), uses the formulae of orality to verbally construct the story, and then uses the discourse building blocks to build the story. All this happens verbally. At the end of the storytelling ritual, both the teller and listeners resume their normal roles in the community where discussions about the story can take place; but in the case of

PT, the end of this mini-ritual transitions into the next mini-ritual of the enactment of the story. Note should be taken that in the storytelling mini-ritual, the actors take the role of listener (audience) and must now get into different roles for the next mini-ritual.

5.4.2. Second mini-ritual: the enactment

Like the storytelling, the enactment mini-ritual entails the three phases of pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal within the overall ritual of PT. In the pre-liminal, the actors are still sitting as audience listening to the story. When the conductor gives the cue to watch and to transition from the storytelling ritual to the performance ritual, the actors in PT do not often get into action directly as they must stand up from their chairs and sometimes stand silently for some seconds on the side (as experienced with the DFLPT) before delving into action. All these constitute the post-liminal phase of the story ritual and the pre-liminal phase of the enactment ritual.

As the actors change roles from audience to characters, objects and movements from the story, the performance world and the liminal phase of the enactment mini-ritual is entered into. A series of events that are spoken events, movement events, sound events, relationship building events, and so on, are played out. One event leads to the next. Some of the events appear instantly recognizable as similar to real life, and some have a magical, aesthetic, ritualized feel to them. These events are supposedly triggered from verbal events that have been shared in the other (teller's) mini-ritual. But they are also triggered because the actors are not the roles in the teller's story, but the roles in the performance story and therefore they will shape this mini-ritual, bringing the demands of roles (and, perhaps, theatrical Discourse enrolling) in this mini-ritual process to bear. Thus, like the story mini-ritual, the performance draws on the Discourse of the story (by extension the Discourse of the teller), the Discourse of performance and the Discourse of the actors for the enactment.

The post liminal phase of the enactment mini-ritual starts as when the performance comes to an end; then the actors stand looking and facing the teller (as a sign of thanking them for the story) and the audience clapping. Then they return to their roles as actors/audience sitting on chairs in the PT ritual as the teller is questioned.

Describing the process in this way suggests that the mini-ritual of the enactment differs from the mini-ritual of the storytelling, thus making the Discourse of the actors/PT

company different from the Discourse of the teller/audience. Hence, the discourse building tasks and orality formulae used to make the verbal story compelling might not be effective for the performance enactment. This is compounded, perhaps, because the orality formulae and the enactment formulae might not coincide and so a form of translation or adaptation, or selection to move from the one set of formulae to the other may take place.

5.5. Structure and practicality of a playback theatre performance

As alluded to earlier, PT is made up of three defining elements that consist of the form (ritual aesthetic), the content (personal story) and the context (Salas 1993). Conventionally, PT consists of four actors (this number could be more or less, depending on the company), a musician or two and a conductor who invites stories from the audience that are to be enacted (played back) by the actors and the musician to the audience. The spatial convention of PT is consistent and adhered to in all PT performances and may not be changed (Fox 1999). However, I believe companies may adapt this spatial convention according to the performance space available.



Figure 8: Playback Theatre Spatial Convention (Salas cited by Dennis 2004:294).

The two chairs on the left-hand side of the stage in Figure 8, are for the conductor and the teller – the teller sits between the conductor and the actors who sit up stage central (only during the long form). The actors are usually seated on boxes which are also meant to be seen and used as props. Added to the props is a set of different colourful cloths on a wooden structure, upstage left. The cloths are used generally in the long form to differentiate characters in a story, demonstrate different ideas and feelings in a story, identify a setting and are also used as props in a story. The musician sits to the right, with an arrangement of different musical instruments on the floor (Salas 1983:18).

The arrangement of the space and where the audience is seated forms part of the PT ritual that Adderley refers to as “sacred space” (2004:9). This arrangement allocates the space of everyone involved in the performance (Adderley 2004:9). Salas (2009:446) explains that an audience member is invited to the teller’s chair and tells a story. The story is played back by the actors and musician. Once the first story has been enacted, the teller returns to the audience and the whole process is repeated with another teller and a different (though often related) story. Thus, the storytelling mini-ritual and the enactment mini-ritual are repeated several times within the one PT ritual space.

The process is facilitated by the conductor, whom Fox says “is the captain of the team on stage” (2003:128). The conductor welcomes everyone to the performance and introduces the audience to the ritual of PT (Salas 1983) then draws out the story by inviting audience members to come out to the performance space and tell. (This can be seen as the phatic/contact, the aggregative [orality] and the relational [discourse] strategy from the various analytical models described earlier). The emphases are both to direct the teller on what is important to mention and also to direct the performers and the audience to what is important to hear in the story. (The question that needs to be asked is: On what basis does the conductor decide what is to be repeated? The decision might be searching for clarity, but it might be set as a cue or clue for the direction that conductor might be deciding to take the enactment, and therefore is priming the troupe.) However, the performers do not dwell only on the conductor’s emphasis but also on what they themselves extract from the whole story. The conductor acts as a bridge between the actors and the audience. (As will be seen in

the next chapter, it is during this phase that discourse cues are often reworked - potentially problematically).

The teller tells a story about (or from) his or her own life to the audience from his or her own point of view (Salas 1983; Dennis 2007) by drawing on the Discourse of the story and using the Discourse of storytelling which has a beginning, middle, climax and an end. The teller chooses an actor to play him/her during the performance and sometimes may also be asked to cast the other roles in the story (this only occurs with the long form). The choosing is done in the pre-liminal stage of the storytelling mini-ritual when the audience and actors are settling down as listeners. Conceptually, allowing the actor to portray the teller's role creates distance that gives the teller a chance to see themselves outside of the situation that gave rise to the story, as Salas (1983:21) claims. When chosen, the teller's actor must stand during the narration process. If not chosen, the other performers listen to the other roles in the story that they are to bring out in the enactment. Once the story has been enacted and the conductor checks in with the teller, the teller leaves the stage and returns to the audience while another person is invited to tell a new story (Salas 2009:446). Every story is important and carries equal weight and therefore is given its due recognition (Dennis 2007:362).

With music, the musician assists in shaping a scene and attempts to complement the emotional dimensions of a story as the musician interprets both the story and the enactment occurring at that moment. Music creates mood and atmosphere that heightens the dramatic action and through music the scenes are linked together (Salas 1993). As part of the ritual, the musician starts playing from the conductor's cue of 'let's watch', allowing the actors to prepare and begin the performance when the music stops. Though not often, the musician will play all through the enactment. The music or sound played is improvised from the mood of the story. The musician creates the transition from the narration to the enactment of the story⁶⁰.

From the above elements, it would appear to be clear that the audience, actors, musician, and conductor are co-creators in this performance-based process. They, however, take on different roles at different stages of the PT ritual as has already been

⁶⁰ Of all the aspects, the role of music is potentially the most obviously learned and therefore connected to multiple discourses of music-making, music theory, and contextualization.

discussed at some length in this chapter. Through negotiation and participation, meaning is claimed to be created among participants from the stories shared and heard; although, critically, what those meanings might be will depend on the discourses and Discourses involved. Fox emphasizes that “[t]he extent to which we can develop a [technique] which works and feels organic will depend on our understanding of the exigencies of the oral style and our skills at adapting them to a post literary age” (2003:54). (To this the research might add a clearer understanding of how discourses operate.) Before discussing the oral and discourse features in PT, a brief description of the different forms used to enact stories in PT, that make up part of the PT ritual, is required.

5.5.1. Playing back the stories: the structure and forms

As part of the PT ritual and being a mini-ritual, the enactment of stories in PT is done using structures that are classified as either ‘long form’ or ‘short form’. In many cases at the beginning of a PT performance, the audience is unaware as to what will happen in the space. No one knows what will happen during the course of the ritual process – both actors and audience (Hoesch 1999:51; Fox 1999:123). While the audience may be ignorant of the entire process, the actors who know the ritual process are only ignorant of the type of stories that will be shared and heard. To socially integrate them, the audience is not only given a verbal explanation of what PT is all about but shown by actors who tell and enact their own stories. This is done at the beginning of the PT ritual and forms part of the pre-liminal phase of the ritual. Using one of many short forms, mirroring, actors take turns introducing themselves with light and comical stories of themselves using mirrored movements.

Turning to the audience, the actors then introduce the performance with another short form called fluid sculptures. “These are dancing tableaux that aim to represent a feeling an audience member has about a particular experience, such as the weather, a moment from the day, a general mood or about the theme of the performance if one has been designated” (Fox 2007a:7). This may be considered the liminal phase of the ritual whereafter this introduction the audience members slowly become involved in the ritual and are assigned roles of tellers. At this stage, the discourse is short and can only be a word that describes an emotion or sometimes conflicting emotions. The pairs

(2007a:9) is a short form that is used to portray conflicting emotions in a story, like excited and nervous; eager and hesitant.

These short forms – the fluid sculptures and the pairs with the long form stories (will be explained below) – are the conventional forms that were developed by the first playback company (Fox 2007a:7). With its flexible nature and the founder's (Jonathan Fox) call for more research into developing PT, other short forms like the chorus and the three-part story were created and forms part of the commonly used forms (Fox 2007a:10-11). The chorus is used to play back a story in its entirety or as a mood sculpture in the background of a story that has been cast and is being acted out, while the three-part story is generally used as a warm-up to long stories. Unlike the short forms where the storyteller stays in the audience, in the long form stories, an audience is invited to sit in the teller's chair on stage and share a story either past or current of his/her life (Fox 2007a:9). The whole thrust of this exchange or communication from narration to performance is done verbally with the orality formulae and discourse building task shaping and moulding the experience.

The sections before this discussed the two mini-rituals in the PT ritual. It may seem that there is only one storytelling and enactment mini-ritual. However, from the explanation of the structure and forms used in the PT ritual, there are several moments of the telling mini-ritual and the enactment mini-ritual. These are short and swift at the beginning of the PT ritual and are only experienced as longer towards the end of the process. The D/discourse of the short forms at the beginning serves to set the mood for the longer telling where the oral formulae and discourse characteristics may and/or should be used in the telling and performance.

5.6. Oral features in a playback theatre performance

As an interactive form of theatre, PT aims to create a dialogue between participants. As mentioned earlier, it is seen as a non-scripted form that depends on stories from audiences for the performance to unfold. It has been established that Jonathan Fox, one of the founders of this verbal art form, aimed at recreating an oral traditional form of communication through storytelling; thus, he was greatly influenced by the oral tradition. As has been established in the sections above, the PT ritual is made up of two mini-rituals. Presumably, the dialogue that PT aims to create between participants can happen independently and differently with each mini-ritual as they draw on

different Discourses without an overlap. This section aims at identifying the orality features (outlined in chapter two) which may be seen to have been incorporated within the PT form and those that are being used or enacted unknowingly.

As argued in chapter two, the communication process of the Oral tradition is directly linked to a particular type of thought process which is bound to be redundant or repetitive for ease of remembrance. Like the Oral tradition, PT stories are based on human experiences and are not scripted in the traditional sense of the concept. At the beginning of the liminal stage when the telling uses the storytelling Discourse (Once upon a time...), the listeners are transported into the Discourse of the teller or a whimsical place. In the process of narration, the teller is bound to repeat some phrases several times as a way of bringing back the story to mind and putting it in a narrative flow. It is, of course, possible for the teller to keep on repeating the same thing and adding much detail to the story. Analytically, it can be seen that the use of the orality formulae helps to prevent the repetition of the same event during the telling severally and also in the capturing; keeping and sustaining the attention and interest of the listeners.

The additive nature of the Oral tradition is reflected in PT through the questioning and prompting of the teller by the conductor. In the process of narration, the conductor repeatedly uses words like 'then', 'and' and 'okay'. This is to enable the flow of narration and also as an assurance to the teller that he or she is being heard. The use of these words by the conductor also helps the teller to construct the story by giving just main points and making it brief.

It is necessary for stories to be brief and straight to the point in a PT performance so that a majority of the participants can be given a chance to share their stories. During this process, there are no questions for clarity on a word or phrase used, but rather for the advancement of the story and as a way of emphasising certain points. Therefore, whatever the teller says must be accepted as said, and thus the aggregative nature of the Oral tradition in which epithets ease the understanding of the story manifest. Thus, commonly known or understood expressions are often used and accepted as assisting in creating and reinforcing the context of the events being related. In this regard, the actors and the audience rely on their own Discourses in understanding and interpreting new words.

These expressions are conserved through regular repetition by the teller to ‘make the point’. Whereas with PT, each performance is assumed to be different from the last. In the retelling, the troupe may often use these conserved moments (when, in the past, they have been seen to work effectively in the dramatic format) in various shapes and ways. This is so because, although the audience and theme of performance always changes and different stories are told each time, the Discourse options in enactment may become selective, given a realisation, through experience, of what works in performance.

Basing the performance on lived experiences situates the form in oral cultures as conversations and stories that are close to the human lifeworld⁶¹. The reliance on lived experiences does not stem from the need to remember as in the Oral culture, but in an attempt to breach isolation (Sajani, Linds, Wong & Ndejuru 2014:94) by providing a space where “any story could be told and artistically represented towards generating insight and perspective on the human condition” (Sajani *et al.* 2014:94). The shared experience is witnessed in the here and now, based on present social and political conditions. Therefore, every PT performance argues that it is situated in time and place such that stories heard could never be abstract or fictitious. Nevertheless, as shall be demonstrated in the next chapter, because of the change in orality discourse strategies from the teller to the enactment (that is to say, from oral strategies to enactment strategies), the types of insights required by the teller (which is the reason for the story to be told) and the types of insights offered from and via the enactment, might not correlate (although both, of course, comment on the ‘human condition.’) Centrally, the human lifeworld of the teller, and the human lifeworld of the troupe might not coincide and therefore choices in the enactment might not correlate with the teller’s story. This slippage might be reinforced by the change in medium, with its correlating change of discourse strategies.

Stories are generally generated to reveal conflict within and around us. It can be suggested, therefore, that the teller tells a story where the conflict he or she experienced has not been fully resolved. If such a story is personalised, then the

⁶¹ As has been argued, the assumption that the lifeworlds of the teller, audience and the PT troupe cannot be taken to be synonymous. It will only occur in a completely homogenous grouping with a shared perceptual framework, and therefore differences of age, gender, race, education and so on are all aspects that counter such homogeneity. The same goes for homeostatic moments. The only way out of this conundrum is to assume universal values, which is also a highly contentious position.

conflict manifests between the teller and the world. The goal in PT is that, through the process of sharing, listening, and observing the representations, there is a sense of relief, clarity and/or catharsis. The agonistic tone of the teller's story is negotiated, in performance, away from transferring knowledge (as in an Oral culture), but towards gaining insight and perspective on a shared human condition. This however does not mean that PT performances homogenise human experiences or focus only on general humanitarian values and societal ills as critiqued by a number of scholars (Sajnani *et al.* 2014:95). In the process of negotiating the teller's story, words are given meaning in the context of the story and the performance by the listeners. The contemporary era is greatly influenced by writing such that most words tellers use in their stories have established meanings in dictionaries. Words and phrases can therefore be used and reused in different contexts and spaces despite their established meanings.

5.7. A congruence of D/discourse in a community experience

In the course of this study, I have established that discourse as language is a tool of communication (Gumperz 1982; Gee 2014) and, using discourse, stories are told which may lead to conversations in PT. Such conversations enacted in PT differ from everyday ordinary face-to-face conversations. It takes place through the teller's story and the interpretation and enactment of the story in scenes on stage (Fox 1999:119). It offers a balance between the use of verbal language and of non-verbal languages (Park-Fuller 2003:292) – thus language-in-use, following the argument made in chapter three. There is a discourse strategy for everyday conversation, and an adapted discourse strategy for the reflecting of that conversation in the theatre. Both types of conversation access the non-verbal as well as the verbal, but in different ways. When there is a transfer, so to speak, of the conversation caught in a teller's story, to a 'reflected' version of that conversation in PT there is potentially the problem of slippage between the intentions of either.

Gee's (2011a) exposition on language-in-use (as presented in chapter three of this project) advocates the building of seven realities of life, for, when one says something, one is simultaneously enacting an identity and an action. He also posits that every action and identity inform on the type of language to be used in any given context. Despite this, language (be it oral or written language) is not universal as there exist different dialects of any given language. With PT, there is an assumption (though not

always) that the audience share and use the same discourse especially when there is no prior knowledge about the group (especially in open performances produced by the PT company).

Doing PT (Salas 2006:1) in a context where the group (actors and audiences) shares the same Discourse differs, potentially, in many ways from when the group has different Discourses. (Of course, it is difficult to make the assumption of such similarities, especially as the ritual strategies do not make allowances for finding out the differences). Ultimately, one's D/discourse is connected to one's culture and identity. As such, we, as individuals, acquire and use different strands of the same discourse (influenced by our primary and secondary Discourses). Therefore, in PT, language and the way that each person uses it (for his or her discourse goals) sets each individual potentially separate from the other.

Because of this, and despite the claims that the ritual of the process allows for strangers to experience a communal bond (Fox & Dauber 1999, Fox 2007b, Salas 1983) wherein,

... telling personal stories becomes a way to explore issues of identity within the self, the community, and the culture. We identify with different aspects of each other's experiences. An enacted personal narrative is a house of mirrors. The process of sharing life stories reflects in multiple directions: narrator to self, narrator to listener, narrator to society, listener to society, and personal story to historical story (Fox 2007b:99).

One begins to realise that the multitude of discourses and Discourses present are bound to challenge the pursuit of any definitive interpretation.

Therefore, there is a strong indication of different Discourses existing and at play in the PT ritual. These Discourses comprise those of the teller's, the audience's, and the actor's Discourses as well as PT as a phenomenon, itself. These are enacted at different levels, using different discourses within the process.

The teller, for example, hesitant and unsure of the process, is guided by the conductor to share his/her Discourse (life experiences) using verbal discourse (oral language). The actors, supported by the music, lighting (Salas 1983) and a few colourful cloths transform this real-life Discourse into a theatrical Discourse, using physical, verbal and non-verbal language (theatre discourse). On the other hand, the audience uses non-

verbal discourse to reflect on their own Discourses by listening to the teller's Discourse and watching the actor's Discourse (enactment of the teller's Discourse).

A conglomerate of these Discourses is a community experience with each member of the community in different roles/identities as listeners, narrator and actors. Although not all Discourses get to be shared and witnessed, the ultimate belief in PT is that "the collection of experiences narrated and played back will in some way represent the collective [and individual] story of the room" (Fox 2007b:101). The argument raised in this section is that this might not completely be the case.

5.8. Chapter summary

Since 1975, PT has used forms of improvisation to enact life experiences of people who narrate them in the presence of others and the playback troupe. Founded by Jonathan Fox, together with Jo Salas, this form falls within the AT frame as it can be practised in diverse cultural and social contexts within any location ranging from theatres, school, and community halls and also within the private living space of individuals with the aims of personal and social transformation.

As a 'non-scripted' form of theatre, Fox aimed at recreating the oral traditional ritual of storytelling through which individuals are celebrated, uplifted and could experience in commune/communitas. The marriage of the art (improvisational forms) and the social (individual and communal experience) is held together by rules considered as the ritual of PT. Within this experience of the pre-liminal (meeting), liminal (sharing and experiencing) and the post-liminal (return to normal) lie two mini-rituals of storytelling and enactment, each framed and held together by the O/orality formulae and D/discourse markers. Although the set rules of PT help in framing and holding the experiences of the individual and PT community, the analysis in this chapter has shown that the experience of the PT ritual is based on the oral narration of stories for any theatre to happen. The discourse characteristics and orality formulae present in the verbal narration ritual are inevitably adapted in the enactment ritual for the purpose of the performance Discourse.

Within the PT D/discourse, there are different D/discourses that are at play. With reference to the Drama for Life Playback Theatre Company, the next chapter will analyse a story from one of their open performances. Through detailed analysis the chapter demonstrates that the theatrical dramatization in PT is in fact not a direct

representation of the story narrated. The chapter will use the D/discourse characteristics and orality formulae to show how the different D/discourses play out in both the telling and enactment of the same story.

Chapter 6: Storytelling and enactment

6.1. Introduction

An in-depth analysis of Ong's oral formulae posits these as the underlying factors in an orally-based communication while Gee's discourse characteristics informs on the 'whos' and 'whats' within the same communication context. These characteristics and formulae established to be fundamental in an effective, oral communication, require both an addresser and addressee to play their roles of sender and receiver in the communication chain. This ritual of sending and receiving in communication has been shown to be more complex in a storytelling context like that of PT. As established in the previous chapter, the PT ritual houses two mini-rituals which are the storytelling mini-ritual and the enactment mini-ritual. Within the whole and sectioned mini-ritual, the enactment and use of the oral formulae and discourse characteristics differs; depending on the Discourse of the ritual such as the Discourse of storytelling and the Discourse of performance.

In PT, the enactment ritual is only possible as a result of the story ritual in which tellers narrate lived experiences. These tellers' stories are constructed from fragmented pieces of experiences (Narayan & George 2003:450) generated by the various Discourses of life and the societies we live in. PT's claim is that the enactment mini-ritual assists in "disengaging the story from a lived experience, dismantling 'pre-reflective underpinnings' of the teller's stories, and overt re-assemblage through performance and a discursive repositioning" (Park-Fuller 2005:10). The question, therefore, is whether the enactment accurately reflects the teller's story, or whether it disengages from the teller's story – or whether it does both.

This chapter aims to break down a story and its performance enactment within the DFLPTC which is considered as a context of communication or conversation. As such, it will identify the discourse characteristics and orality formulae within the utterances of both media. It does this by doing a close analysis of the relevant teller's story using the orality markers/formulae, and then the discourse dynamics. This analysis is placed in a table form to indicate how many times a particular characteristic or marker occurs. In this way the most regular occurrences of the markers or formulae can be determined numerically. The same process will then be carried out on the enactment. Following this, a comparison between the most regular markers and dynamics in the teller's

story, and the most regular markers or dynamics in the enactment will be compared. Speculatively this would demonstrate where the teller's story, and the enactment converged and where it diverged.

Noticeably, all the oral characteristics and discourse formulae can be found in any utterance, while the utterance can also build these discourse formulae. Given that the enactment claims to be a re-telling of the verbal story, having the same number of oral formulae and discourse characteristics could be a possibility. However, one should keep in mind that what one sees is a potential aesthetic and theoretical paradox as "the story performed is, and at the same time is not, the same story that was told" (Jordaan & Coetzee 2017:540), surfacing the idea of "sameness in difference" (Park-Fuller 2005:9).

In the analysis, only the characteristics deemed prominent and important in an utterance will be marked down, recorded and engaged with. Choosing will also be informed by the preceding utterance and the following utterance to the particular one engaged with from moment to moment, as an attempt to present a coherent flow in the analysis of the text.

The interpretation and analysis of the research data remains subjective as it is not based only on facts, but also on the experience of the researcher in the theatre technique. As a former student of Drama for Life, I undertook a certified formal training of the PT method which then formed the basis of my MA degree research. Although I have not done PT practically after my training, my participation as an audience member and teller in the DFLPT performances influences some of the conclusions that will be drawn in the course of this analysis and findings.

The transcription and analysis of the research data was not carried out only from the view point of an observer, because prior knowledge and training in the playback technique in some ways places the researcher as an observant participant. Also, the fact that the researcher was fully present in the performance when the data was recorded, influences some of the conclusions made in the course of the analysis and findings, thus making the interpretation subjective.

Firstly, the analysis of the teller's story will be done. This will be achieved by breaking down the story into units of utterances and text. Each unit may be seen in the form of a word, a phrase or a sentence. The reason for dissecting the story this way is to

identify both the prominent discourse marker(s) and orality characteristic(s) present that holds the highest 'value' in the teller's story text at that moment. Both the discourse markers and the orality characteristics will be done in the form of a table. The reason for doing so, is to determine the number of appearances of each marker type so that the analysis that will follow may determine what the numbers may imply for an understanding of the meaning and purpose that the teller in particular might have presented in the telling. These will then be contrasted with what occurred in the playback ritual that follows.

Secondly, the same identification and counting of the orality and discourse markers will be done for the enactment of the above-mentioned story by the actors. Every effort was undertaken to ensure that this was done independently without any reference from, or to the teller. As such, the analysis will dwell only on the actors, their utterances and speech acts.

Lastly, after both the story and enactment has been analysed and interpreted separately, it will be combined as a comparative analysis in the next chapter. By doing so, the possible discrepancies between the story and the enactment will be brought to light, so as to attempt to determine the differing strategies followed that led to the particular playback interpretation of the story. This chapter will also contemplate some of the decisions of the playback actors, speculating as to whether they might have been influenced by their performance repertoire in the interpretation of the story. This analysis will further highlight the fact that the discourse characteristics and orality formulae present and used in the storytelling and enactment are different. Understanding this will be a step towards proposing potential differing schematic strategies for interpreting oral communication and storytelling in theatre and PT in particular.

This chapter commences with a recapitulation of the discourse markers/building task and orality markers/characteristics, before proceeding to the analysis.

6.1.1. The discourse markers

A discourse in any given context either builds or lessens something. Within a single discourse can be found several of the discourse markers, however, one will always stand out from the rest. To bring out this discourse markers requires answering the following question for each of the markers in the same discourse:

How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and conversations being used to build relevance or significance (practices, identities, relationship, politics, connections and sign systems and knowledge) for things and people in context?

6.1.2. The orality characteristics (Ong 1982)

Additive rather than subordinate: The use of words like ‘and’, ‘when’, ‘then’, ‘thus’, or ‘while’ provides a flow of narration. In essence, events are added sequentially.

Aggregative rather than analytic (adjectives): Oral narrations use more set expressions, phrases or clauses, and ‘clichés’, epithets than literate cultures. This aggregative nature is sometimes applied to criticize or praise people, for example, ‘the beautiful princess’ and not ‘the princess’.

Redundant or copious: It is said that by the third or fourth repetition of something, the matter is remembered. Furthermore, such repetition allows for one thing being used to refer to a much larger context in time.

Conservative or traditionalist: Oral societies spend a great deal of energy and time in repeating and performing knowledge and the way of life. This is done as a way of remembering and transmitting that knowledge, thus conserving it.

Close to the human lifeworld: It is easier to remember things that are close to everyday life than abstract and distanced from lived experiences. Things, places and personalities are preferred, rather than abstractions, theories and philosophies.

Agonistically toned: Ong says that “orality situates knowledge within a context of struggle” (1982:43). There are both internal and external struggles. With orality these struggles need to be uttered to be known and recognised.

Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced: With the oral culture, knowing or obtaining knowledge brings the speaker and the listener close such that there is no room for objectivity. This explains why oral knowledge is always close to human lifeworld.

Homeostatic: Given that knowledge in the oral culture is linked to life events, the memory therefore focuses on the here and now, for any past event cannot be retrieved like in books for the literate culture. The meanings of words were therefore linked to

the event in the present; that is, word meanings are circumstantial. Once an event is passed, the meaning is lost or modified to suit another event.

Situated rather than abstract: An utterance in oral culture is always tied to physical action. There is always meaning in every word that is uttered.

6.2. The performance

The Drama for Life Playback Theatre Company (DFLPTC) is one of the few PT companies in Africa. This is so because PT, as an AT method, has barely spread across the continent. This company was founded in 2008 by Kathy Barolsky as part of her Master's degree research (2009). It has since existed under the auspices of DFL and has done several performances in schools, and in corporate and local communities on different social topics. Currently, one of their main activities includes holding open performances at the end of each month at the University of the Witwatersrand. The data for this study was recorded in one of these performances⁶².

Like all other monthly performances, this was an open performance to the public. The performance lasted an hour. There were no particular theme or topic chosen for this performance, but given that it was towards the end of the year and the last performance for the year, the DFLPT members decided to direct the performance towards evaluating the year and looking forward to the new year. The conductor for this performance is Brenda⁶³.

Brenda: So, we find ourselves now at, towards the end of (the year)⁶⁴. And this is a time of endings and beginnings. Actually, as the year ends, we feel a lot about endings and starting new things and also all the things that happened in the space in between. So, if you could just take a moment and think about (the year)

Although the performance was not themed, it is evident that in her role, the conductor is formulating one by guiding the audience to think in a particular direction which is about endings and new beginnings. Fox (1999) asserts that the conductor represents the shaman of the PT ritual and is therefore responsible for holding and guiding the audience, as seen here with Brenda. This however does not imply that all stories shared will be only about evaluating the year ending or about beginnings and endings.

⁶² It should be noted that full ethical clearance, both from the University of Pretoria, and the Drama for Life organization was obtained. The Information leaflet is appended.

⁶³ Pseudonyms have been used in respect of confidentiality.

⁶⁴ For purposes of confidentiality, the exact year of the performance will not be mentioned.

With or without a theme, these “stories are constructed from fragmented pieces of experiences generated by the various discourses of life and the society we live in” (Narayan & George 2003:450).

Despite the different fragments from different sources, under a closer investigation, it can be seen that there are some connections in all the stories shared which Fox calls the “red thread” (Fox & Dauber 1999) and acknowledges that PT has an ‘aesthetic Discourse’. With this red thread, the experience of *communitas* (Turner 1969), where we experience and recognise our common humanity, is evident in PT.

The red thread in this case is derived from that element of a shared theme as introduced by the conductor or could simply be something quite different to the theme or the title of the performance. Fox (1999) adds that a shared context might also trigger the red thread or a connected dialogue of stories. This element of the shared context as is with the characteristics of orality, allows for a smooth exchange and understanding in oral communication. (A detailed analysis of how the red thread is experienced will be the topic of another research project).

6.2.1. The story⁶⁵

The story used here is that of Adam⁶⁶ (not the teller’s name). It is a story about the ups and downs (beginnings and endings) his family has gone through in order to find a comfortable place (town) where they can all live together in happiness. The main idea in his story seems to be the search for happiness which, according to him, does not lie in where you live or what you have but in the people with whom you share life, and, in this context, family. The conductor’s text is included in the transcript to create that conversational situation. However, attention is paid more to Adam’s story in the analysis. (As is standard practice in the theatrical conventions, the physical actions that accompany the spoken word are indicated in italics. They are presented here to attempt to provide a fuller picture of the unfolding events, but, inevitably, also to contribute to clarity).

⁶⁵ In compliance with ethics regulations, pseudonyms have been used for both teller and actors.

⁶⁶ I note that Adam is a black African male. Adding this bit of information might contribute to a far more complex analysis, in time. This will not be attempted in detail, as the central thrust of the thesis is elsewhere. I note this simply here to indicate that I am aware of this potential complexity. However, I am also going to mention the races of the actors in this performance (who are all female) at a later stage, as this becomes pertinent to the analysis.

Brenda: What are the other long stories sitting here with us today? *(She gestures to a person and they applaud while he makes his way to the chair on the stage. The actors sit on the crates.)* May we have your name... *inaudible*.

Adam: Uhm, uh, my name is Adam.

Brenda: Adam, who would you like to play your story? Sharon or Tallia?

Adam: Sharon. *(She stands up. They all giggle).*

Brenda: Okay, Adam. How would you like to start your story?

Adam: Uhm, so, uh, it's along the lines of, uhm, leaving thinking you go find something out there, uh, coming back to realise that it was actually there in the beginning. Uhm, so two years ago my wife and I, we left Johannesburg, uhm, with our three children. Just, uhm, I suppose we were frustrated, uhm with Johannesburg *(inaudible mumble)*, and we wanted something else for our children and for us, I guess. Although I obtained work in Johannesburg. So, we originally moved to Limpopo, where I'm from, thinking that we'd sort of get our roots there and have our children grow up there, uhm, only to realise it was way too hot and we could not stay *(Laughs)*. Because living was just too uncomfortable. And then, so we decided to go to the South Coast, to KZN, where my wife is from, much more prettier, uhm... there's the sea and she has family there. And, uhm, in between all the time I was always coming back to Jo'burg, go back. And, uhm, the whole moving around the space was extremely stressful. And... all the time we were questioning ourselves, you know, what are we doing? We're spending so much money moving up and down. Uhm, we should have stayed in Jo'burg. What are we doing? Are we tearing our family apart? Our marriage it, uh, it's taking a lot of strain. What's going on? What's going on? And uhm, we were always asking ourselves was it the right decision to leave? Was it the right decision? Because when we did leave, we were positive; we were so sure about it. We prayed about it; we got a strong confirmation that leaving was the absolutely most perfect decision. So, we felt very confident in leaving. Uhm, it was just you know, the most obvious thing. So now, we're coming back. *(Laughs)*. And... there's a lot of relief, because being apart, my wife and I, being apart for so long, we realised that we actually... we missed each other. We want to be together. And that's the... you know, we decided we could live anywhere in the world, as long as we're together. And uhm, and that's what's come out of this. In many ways it's been a magnificent, magnificent journey, very stressful, very tough,

very taxing, but to have gained that knowledge that, you know, wherever we are in the world we just wanna be together, it doesn't matter where, just to (*stutter*)... to come to know that has been very precious. Uhm, so yeah. The title I guess would be around the world in two years. *Laughs*.

Brenda: Around the world in two years. And how do you refer to your wife?

Adam: My... angel.

Brenda: Around the world in two years. Adam's story. Let's watch.

(It should be noted that, in the fragmentation for analysis, some of the fragments/units could be made even smaller. For example, line 93 indicates a repetition of the word "magnificent", and this repetition could be analysed and explained. It was decided however, that the analysis presented here provided sufficient evidence so that the conclusions that were reached could be effectively justified. Furthermore, it was decided to use the presentation of the chronological units of the narrative to develop the analysis. Therefore, although a particular unit has a discourse marker and an orality marker, no direct connection between the two should be drawn. Although it can be argued that this might be possible, it is not the purpose particularly of this research project.

Table 2: Analysis of storytelling.

UTTERANCE	BUILDING TASK	ANALYSIS	ORAL CHARACTERISTICS	ANALYSIS
1. What are the other long stories sitting here with us today?	Practice	A request to share, tell a story in the form of a question	Conservative or traditionalist	The request to share a story is a means of preserving knowledge.
2. Uhm, uh, my name is Adam	Identity	First, hesitation with uhm, then confidence and in control	Redundant or copious	The repeated uhm sustains the flow of thought
3. Adam	Connection	⁶⁷ Repeats to acknowledge and make connection	Redundant or copious	Repetition helps with remembrance
4. Who would you like to play your story?	Practice	The teller is requested to do something – choose an actor to play him in the enactment	Situated rather than abstract	The words she says is performing an action.
5. Sharon or Talia?	Politics	The conductor does not relinquish total power to the teller as she indicates exactly where to choose	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	By mentioning names of the actors, gets them involved in the narrative rather than just passive listeners
6. Sharon	Connection	By choosing and repeating the actor's name. He makes a connection with her	Redundant or copious	Repetition of the name

⁶⁷ Repeating in orality serves as aid for remembrance

7. Okay Adam,	Connection	Acknowledges Adam's choice	Redundant or copious	Repeats the teller's name.
8. How would you like to start?	Practice	Request to start the narrative	Situated rather than abstract	A story always has a beginning and an ending. It is situated in time and place
9. Your story	Identity	A storyteller	Close to the human lifeworld	The teller is requested to narrate events he has lived and experience and not imagined
10. Uhm, so, uh	Identity	Not confident and hesitant to take the identity of story teller given him	Additive rather than subordinate	It seems he wants to add on to something said before
11. It's along the same line of leaving	Significance	Sets the theme of the narrative	Conservative or traditionalist	The teller recalls what the conductor and other tellers had said earlier
12. Uhm	Identity	Uncertainty	Additive rather than subordinate	Helps to add on more information or another idea
13. Thinking you will	Politics	Still has not owned the story by saying 'you'	Homeostatic	The word 'thinking' here may not be the act of the mind but a feeling or an expectation
14. Find something out there	Practice	An action of searching	Situated rather than abstract	Searching for things is part of a human action
15. Uh	Identity	Hesitation, uncertainty	Redundant or copious	He has used this before

16. Coming back to realise that it was actually there in the beginning	Sign system and knowledge	To realise is to gain knowledge		Close to the human lifeworld	Actions of realisation are part of human interaction
17. Uhm,	Identity	Hesitation, uncertainty		Redundant or copious	Same as before
18. So	Connection	Getting the audience attention		Additive rather than subordinate	A word that helps to include other information in the course of the narrative
19. Two years ago,	Significance	Time frame of story is important		Conservative or traditionalist	The actions happened in the past but can still be recalled through memory
20. My wife and I	Identity	A married man		Close to the human lifeworld	Characters that are recognisable
21. We	Significance	Emphasises a bond		Close to the human lifeworld	This includes other people in the narrative thus making it believable
22. Left Johannesburg	Practice	An activity carried out		Situated rather than abstract	The place mentioned is known or can be found
23. Just, uhm I suppose	Identity	Hesitation and uncertainty		Redundant or copious	The repetition of the expression 'uhm'
24. we were frustrated with Johannesburg	Politics	Generalises the frustration with 'we'		Agonistically toned	This statement reflects an emotional struggle

25. And ⁶⁸ , we wanted something else	Significance	The reason for leaving	Additive rather than subordinate	New information is added which is not explaining the previous
26. For our children	Identity	A father	Situated rather than abstract	The characters are recognisable
27. And for us I guess	Politics	Not openly accepting a need	Additive rather than subordinate	Another information
28. Although	Significance	Introduces another important thing	Additive rather than subordinate	It signals the addition of more information
29. I obtained work in Johannesburg	Identity	A working man	Conservative or traditionalist	The action happened in the past
30. So	Connection	Making contact and keeping the listeners active ⁶⁹	Redundant or copious	It is repeatedly forming part of the narrative
31. We originally moved to Limpopo	Practice	An activity of moving	Conservative or traditionalist	Recalling past events
32. Where, I'm from	Connection	The link he has to Limpopo	Close to the human lifeworld	Referring to Limpopo known by many
33. Thinking	Practice	A mental activity	Situated rather than abstract	An action that humans can relate to

⁶⁸ Here one encounters the additive that is peculiar to orality and also serves as a stalling point for remembrance.

⁶⁹ In Jakobson's communication schema, he calls this the 'phatic' or 'contact'

34. That we'd sort of get	Identity	'sort of' shows uncertainty and doubt	Agonistically toned	There is an internal conflict expressed in not achieving a need
35. Our roots there	Sign system and knowledge	'roots' brings an idea of culture	Homeostatic	The word 'roots' will mean different things in different context. Here it is referring to a traditional bond, heritage
36. And have our children grow up there	Connection	The connection between a person and a place	Situated rather than abstract	Still referring to Limpopo
37. Uhm	Identity	Hesitation	Redundant or copious	Re-occurs in the narrative
38. To realise	Sign system and knowledge	An awareness, gain new knowledge	Situated rather than abstract	This is an action one can relate to or situate in everyday human interaction
39. It was too hot and we could not stay	Significance	The weather condition is made important as a reason for a new beginning	Aggregative rather than analytic	Adjectives are used here to describe Limpopo and gives a reason for not staying
40. Because living was just too uncomfortable	Politics	He mentions a social good, living conditions	Aggregative rather than analytic	Another reason for not staying described using an adjective
41. And, then,	Identity	Hesitation, uncertainty	Additive rather than subordinate	These words give the impression that he wants to add more reasons
42. So	Connection	Keeping contact with the audience	Redundant or copious	Repeatedly used

43. We decided to go to the south coast, to KZN	Practice	A decision is taken and moving made		Close to the human lifeworld	A place that is known and recognisable
44. Where my wife is from	Connection	His wife is connected to KZN as her birth place and origins		Conservative or traditionalist	Information of the origins of his wife forms part of his Discourse
45. Much more prettier	Significance	Importance is placed on the beauty of the area		Aggregative rather than analytical	It describes KZN
46. Uhm	Identity	Hesitation		Redundant or copious	Repeated use
47. There's the sea	Significance	The feature that stands out		Close to the human lifeworld	A place recognised in human interaction
48. And she has family there	Connection	The wife and her family		Additive rather than subordinate	Added information about KZN
49. And uhm	Identity	Hesitation		Redundant or copious	Repeated use
50. In between all the time I was always coming back to Jo'burg, go back	Practice	Moving back and forth		Conservative or traditionalist	An action that happened in the past
51. And uhm	Identity	Hesitation		Additive rather than subordinate	It adds in another idea or action to the narrative

52. The whole moving around the space was extremely stressful	Significance	How the moving back and forth felt is important	Aggregative rather than analytic	An emotion expressed with details
53. And...all the time we were questioning ourselves,	Identity	Lack of confidence and self-doubt about the decision to move.	Situated rather than abstract	Self-questioning and doubt is a human thing
54. You know	Sign system and knowledge	The listener knows or understands what is said	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	Insinuating that the listener knows something makes them part of the narrative and active listeners
55. What are we doing?	Identity	Self-doubt	Agonistically toned	There is a sense of conflict with making choices
56. We're spending so much money	Significance	The value of money	Homeostatic	Money here could be hard physical cash or something else
57. Moving up and down	Practice	Moving	Situated rather than abstract	Movements are situated
58. Uhm, we should have stayed in Jo'burg	Identity	Still doubting the decision to move and is regretful	Agonistically toned	Conflict with making a choice

59. What are we doing?	Identity	Self-doubt	Redundant or copious	Repeating the same question as above
60. Are we tearing	Practice	To destroy	Aggregative rather than analytic	Describing the effect of the choices
61. Our family apart	Relationship	Family	Close to the human lifeworld	Family is part of human interaction
62. Our marriage it's, uh, it's taking a lot of strain	Relationship	Family and marital links	Situated rather than abstract	Marital issues are things people can relate to
63. What's going on? What's going on?	Identity	Self-questioning, lack of confidence, self-doubt	Agonistically toned	An expression of emotional conflict
64. And uhm,	Identity	Hesitant	Redundant or copious	Repetition
65. We were always asking ourselves	Practice	The activity of questioning	Situated rather than abstract	It is part of everyday activity to question the self and reflect
66. Was it the right decision to leave, was it the right decision?	Significance	Questioning the decision	Agonistically toned	There is a conflict here of decision and choice
67. Because, when we did leave,	Practice	Leaving, moving	Situated rather than abstract	The action of leaving is recognisable

68. We were positive, we were so sure about it	Identity	Confident		Situated rather than abstract	Human interaction activities
69. We prayed about it	Sign system and knowledge	Privileging a way of life		Conservative or traditionalist	An activity that is part of society, engraved in memory and passed down from generation to generation
70. We got a strong confirmation	Connection	Confirmation		Homeostatic	A confirmation can either be positive or negative
71. That leaving was the absolutely most perfect decision	Practice	An action of deciding and leaving		Situated rather than abstract	Still talking about the activity of leaving
72. So	Connection	With the listener		Homeostatic	This word can be used to add more information but, in this instance, it introduces a solution for a previous action
73. We felt very confident in leaving	Identity	Confident and sure		Situated rather than abstract	A feeling that can be related to
74. Uhm,	Identity	Hesitant		Redundant or copious	Repetition

75. It was just, you know	Sign system and knowledge	Assuming the listener is aware of what he wants to say	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	The phrase makes the audience active and part of the narrative
76. The most obvious thing	Identity	Confident and sure	Situated rather than abstract	Emotions and actions that are relatable
77. So now, we are coming back	Practice	Coming back shows an activity of moving from one location to another	Situated rather than abstract	Movement, back and forth
78. And.... There's a lot of relief	Identity	The word relief shows a calm person	Situated rather than abstract	A sense of being
79. Because being apart	Relationship	Showing separation	Homeostatic	It explains the statement made before this
80. My wife and I	Identity	The structure of the phrase reflects that of an educated intellectual	Situated rather than abstract	Recognised identities in society
81. Being apart for so long	Relationship	Separation, disconnection	Homeostatic	This statement can mean different things in different context
82. We realised that	Sign system and knowledge	Gaining knowledge of a fact	Situated rather than abstract	Part of human interaction
83. We actually... we missed each other	Relationship	Missing each other shows the love and closeness between the two	Homeostatic	Meaning can vary in context

84. we want to be together	Relationship	Love, closeness, togetherness	Situated rather than abstract	A human need in terms of relationship
85. And that's the...	Identity	Hesitation, uncertainty	Additive rather than subordinate	Seemed like wanting to add more reasons to those already mentioned
86. You know	Sign system and knowledge	Insinuates the listener possess the knowledge or knows what he is talking about	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	Includes the audience in the narrative
87. We decided	Practice	It's an activity of making a choice	Situated rather than abstract	Decision making, a human action
88. We could live anywhere in the world	Practice	To harbour a place	Close to the human lifeworld	The human world
89. As long as	Sign system and knowledge	Setting conditions	Homeostatic	Can be giving a reason or a condition
90. We're together	Relationship	Closeness, love	Situated rather than abstract	Human interaction
91. And uhm, and	Identity	Hesitant	Redundant	Repetition
92. That's what's come out of this	Sign system and knowledge	Giving information about the outcome on a subject	Situated rather than abstract	Results of the whole experience
93. In many ways it's been a	Identity	This shows a happy and fulfilled person	Aggregative rather than analytic	Describing the whole experience

magnificent, magnificent journey					
94. Very stressful, very tough, very taxing	Significance	Saying what stood out in general		Aggregative rather than analytic	Still using epithets to talk about the whole experience
95. But to have gained that knowledge that	Sign system and knowledge	Knowing, get an insight into something		Conservative or traditionalist	The experience and outcomes have become part of history
96. You know	Sign system and knowledge	The listener is assumed to have knowledge of the subject		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	Engaging the audience
97. Wherever we are in the world	Significance	Drawing attention to location		Close to the human lifeworld	The planet, destinations
98. We just wanna be together	Relationship	Closeness, love for one another		Homeostatic	Being together brings out different meanings in different context
99. It doesn't matter where, just to...	Significance	Importance here is place on being together		Close to the human lifeworld	Emphasis on the planet again
100. To come to know that has been very precious	Sign system and knowledge	Gaining new knowledge, enlightened		Conservative or traditionalist	Knowledge that has been conserved in memory

101. Uhm, so yeah	Identity	Hesitant		Redundant or copious	Repetition
102. The title I guess would be around the world in two years	Sign system and knowledge	Giving an information		Homeostatic	The narrative does not show him circling the planet in two years
103. Around the world in two years	Connection	The conductor connects with the teller and audience		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	The conductor repeats to show that she is actively listening
104. And how do you refer to your wife?	Practice	Asked to give more information		Situated rather than abstract	A known identity
105. My Angel	Identity	Naming the wife		Aggregative rather than analytic	An epithet or adjective in talking of the wife
106. Around the world in two years.	Significance	Repeats the title to lay emphasis		Redundant or copious	Repetition
107. Adam's story	Significance	Shows ownership		Situated rather than abstract	The narrative is owned by a person, thus making it real and believable
108. Let's watch	Practice	The request to do an action		Situated rather than abstract	An action done within human interaction

Table 3: Sum of discourse markers in the story.

DISCOURSE MARKERS	STORY
Identity	33
Practice	19
Significance	16
Connections	13
Relationship	8
Politics	5
Sign system and knowledge	14

Table 4: Sum of orality characteristics in the story.

ORALITY CHARACTERISTICS	STORY
Additive rather than subordinate	10
Aggregative rather than analytic	8
Redundant or copious	18
Conservative or traditionalist	10
Close to the human lifeworld	10
Homeostatic	11
Situated rather than abstract	28
Agonistically toned	7
Empathetic and participatory	6

Looking at the table above, the following questions arise: why are some discourse tools more frequent and how do these numbers help to understand the narrative in terms of discourse? This section will explain the relationship each discourse and orality tool have with the other and how the numbers help to understand the reason for Adam sharing this story.

Although it's a story about ending and starting life in new locations, Adam's use of language strongly suggests that he intended to portray more, or is trying to understand himself through the story. This is one of the aims of PT which indirectly tries to clarify the inchoate experiences of life. The circular movement, from Johannesburg to other

cities and back to Johannesburg coupled with the back-and-forth movement for work, seem to indicate an indecisive and ungrounded individual. The pauses and constant hesitation in his narrative is a reflection of the indecision in the story. Therefore, Adam's story is more about identity as evident with the number and for this, he needed language and activities to help enact the identities hence the elevated number of the practice tool too.

Alongside this enactment of identity, is relationship, as explained below. In the course of portraying relationships, identities are enacted. There is a clear indication in the story that identity, family relationship and work are significant to Adam hence its numerous appearances. With the Discourse of storytelling, which in some way is conversation, the connections tool always comes into play for sustaining the flow of narration as is seen in Adam's narrative.

Story narration is done orally and oral communication consists, or upholds some characteristics as stipulated by Ong (2002). These characteristics of oral communication are not enacted in and through language equally. Therefore, for every piece of communication some characteristics will be enacted more than the others, depending on the aim of the message and the context. In Adam's case, the situated, rather than abstract characteristic, is higher than the rest. This is not surprising in the situation of PT because telling the story does not require much physical language, but verbal. Therefore, every utterance in the oral culture is considered an action hence it is situated within the context of the narration and story rather than discarded as unhelpful or abstract.

Though every word or phrase in the oral rendition is situated, this has not been prepared ahead of the performance by the teller. The teller does a lot of repetition and keeps the narration short and straight to the point by adding rather than analysing with details. By doing this, using the additive method, the teller is able to think of what to say next in the course of narrating; hence it helps in sustaining his thought process, flow in plot and more specially could potentially aid the actors to remember details of the story. To further understand this story, each discourse tool and oral characteristic will be examined below in detail.

6.3. Analysis of the discourse markers in the story

The table above represents the detailed step-by-step break down of Adam's story. It shows how each word, phrase or sentence creates or is influenced by a discourse and orality marker. As earlier mentioned, Gee (2011) explains that a proper discourse analysis must go through these steps. However, it does not necessarily mean all these tools would be used or can be found in the discourse being analysed. As such, one marker or tool is chosen amongst the others as the dominant or most important within a spoken word or phrase. As a narrative, discourse analysis of a story would not focus much on the linguistic and grammatical structures.

Van Dijk (1982:179) speaks of using 'episodes' in an action discourse like stories. An episode as he says, is a part of a whole, having a beginning and an end with both the part and the whole involving mostly sequences of events or actions. These episodes he explains should somehow be unified and at the same time have some relative independence (Van Dijk 1982:179). This means that a story as a whole is first of all an episode within a world event or action. Within this story are episodes unified to the whole and can stand individually as an action or an event. It is important to note that analysing the story using the episodic theory does not totally exclude the grammatical and linguistic markers as these can be found within and are used to mark the beginning and end of an episode.

It is with this idea in mind that the above story has been written not straight up as a narrative but broken down in lines, words, and phrases. Lines represent the information structure of a text (Gee 2014:157). Text or speech according to Gee (2014:148) is produced in small spurts. Each spurt is a clause length as the events or episodes are firstly selected and organised in the brain's eye before being vocalised. What is unique about the episodes and spurts is that they are marked by pauses and linguistic markers. Putting them in lines enables ease of identification and reference. A building task may be found within a single line or more, therefore, the analysis entails moving back and forth between the structure of the story and "the situated meaning it is attempting to build about the world, identities, and relationships [within this] context" (Gee 2011a:128).

6.3.1. Significance

The use of grammatical pointers or discourse markers makes some parts of a story or some events more important than others. When the audience members come for a PT performance, they come unprepared. That is to say they have no story prepared as they sometimes do not know what topic or theme the performance will be based on. This was the case with the performance on which this study is based. The performance was aimed at reviewing the year that was ending. As the conductor introduces the performance, in this case asking the audience to evaluate the year and think about ending that year and starting a new one, it now directs the audiences' mind to thinking and selecting what is more important for them to share around this topic.

The main topic or area of discussion in a performance opens a window to other topics which still maintain a connection to the main idea; hence the idea of a red thread in PT (Dauber & Fox 1999). Adam's story about beginnings and endings is centred around moving and having to start life in a new city. To him, ending your life in one place and having to start over again in another, is not what is important. The significance of his story is explicit as he says it himself from line 94 to 99 (p.179). Therefore, for Adam, there will always be a balance between the end of one thing and the beginning of another, as long as one has support like family. What he puts forward through this story as important is family always staying together, no matter the circumstances.

6.3.2. Connections

Discourses, social languages, figured worlds and conversation make it possible to connect things and people in context. In discussing PT in the previous chapter, it was mentioned that one of its core purposes is bringing together people from different social and economic backgrounds into a space where they become a community with a shared interest for a given timeframe. Within this community there is the experience of *communitas* as stories shared by each one is connected in some way to the next story. As already mentioned, this is called the red thread in PT. Understanding the connections, or the red thread between Adam's story and other stories within the same performance, explores and expands on the experience of *communitas* (This will not be explored here as it falls outside the scope of the study). Several studies have explored this idea of the 'red thread' in PT (Dennis 2004; Fox & Dauber 1999; Fox

1986) existing in the sharing of and listening to of stories. It is, however, my contention that a 'red thread' may also exist within a single story⁷⁰. By using repetitive words and phrases, the teller is able to connect episodes of his life into a story. Each narrated event or episode of the story presumably is connected to the next in one way or another thus creating the 'red thread'.

With discourse within the sphere of orality involving a speaker and a listener, connections stand out as a way of making and keeping contact between the parties involved in the communication process. So, by using the connectives mentioned above, the teller sustains the listeners' attention. On the other hand, by repeating what the teller says, the conductor is maintaining contact and acknowledging his or her attentiveness to the teller. It is such connections that have been made evident in the breakdown of the story.

6.3.3. Sign systems and knowledge

How is Adam privileging or de-privileging specific sign systems and beliefs, that is to say the languages, styles of language, claims and specific ways of knowledge and beliefs? This story has made it evident that the discourse characteristic of sign system can be separately identified from knowledge. The only sign system that Adam makes visible in the story is praying and the belief in God's or a god's powers. The experience of the story brought about understanding or knowledge of the fact that family should stay together no matter the circumstances.

Adam's story enacts how and why family and God⁷¹ should or not be privileged in relation to life's struggles of beginnings and endings. Everyone in society and in this setting of the PT performance has the knowledge that there exists a divine power. By saying "We prayed about it, [and] we got a strong confirmation that leaving was the absolutely most perfect decision", Adam is privileging divine intervention concerning life decisions. What is not certain in the story is the type of divine intervention sought. Is it traditional or Christian? By constantly using the words 'we, us, our', in his story, Adam is also privileging and reinforcing the belief that family should stay together no

⁷⁰ This is an assumption I intend to explore further in an article.

⁷¹ It is important to note here, that this is the only 'unusual' sign system change and it occurs only once. This realization becomes significant when the analysis turns to the playback analysis.

matter the circumstances. The use of such language in his narrative creates a connection between sign systems and knowledge to relationships and politics.

As mentioned above, sign systems and knowledge exist separately because an object that represents something (sign system) is completely different from knowing about the thing (knowledge). With Adam's story, knowledge is enacted more than sign systems. He makes visible common and general knowledge like praying. However, some information is not made visible as he expects the audience to be in the know when he says, 'you know'. The relationship of signs to language is a debate and study in itself which will not form part of this study.

6.3.4. Relationships

How language is used may directly or indirectly portray the relationship one has with those listening and with those mentioned in the narrative or discourse. When Adam starts his narrative, he says "my wife and I" to distinguish the different identities in the story with him being a husband and a father and establishing his wife in the story. From this point onwards he uses the first-person plural in the use of the pronouns 'we, us and our' to refer to his wife and himself, which portrays the close and bonded relationship they share. There is also a close relation and bond between him and his native land or place of birth as bonds can also be formed between people, objects and places.

This bond is evident in the description of the place they moved to. He could have stopped after he said "So we originally moved to Limpopo" but he went further to say "where I am from, thinking that we will sort of get our roots there..." The use of the word 'roots' in this context can be viewed as a starting over or a new beginning. On the other hand, given that he is talking about his native land, this could mean going back to the traditions, culture and way of life in which he was born so that his children could also be inculcated with their roots. (Within the South African context, such an interpretation, given the socio-cultural dynamic at play, can be seen to be reasonably obvious in this interpretation.)

6.3.5. Identities

By using language, a person identifies with being someone or something in a given context. As an identity may influence the type of language used in a given context, so, too, the activity being carried out and the language being used, reveals the identity of

a person. Gee further classifies identity in two categories which are “activity-based identities and relational identities” (2017:83). Activity-based identities centre around activities we do or what may be called a job. It is not easy to classify someone under this category if they do not clearly define what they do in life like being a builder, a gamer, or a doctor. When someone just generally talks about work, like Adam does in his narrative, it becomes difficult to determine his activity-based identity. The story makes known the fact that Adam is a hard-working man who travels from one town to work in another, but it is not clear what he is (Being) and what he does (Doing). Another one of the activities that he narrates is one of seeking something; perhaps a place of belonging, as well as a place of stable work. However, it is obviously clear that he is the teller in this account of PT, and therefore he can be said to adapt his storytelling mode to this activity.

On the other hand, the relational identity is much easier to determine and classify. By relational identity, Gee talks of relations that are always in contrast to different people (2017:87). A relational identity is often assigned or imposed on people and unlike activity-based identity that the self is free to identify with, relational identity is often classified in opposition or in contrast to other identities. Therefore, Adam’s use of language identifies him in relation to others - like being a husband because of the wife and he is a father because of the children he mentions.

In enacting an identity or identities through language, a person also brings out the identity of those around and those mentioned in the text. Given that the narrative of a PT is not entirely in the form of a conversation, determining the identity of the receiver is not quite possible. However, their identities as conductor, actor, musician, teller and audience are generic to the PT form. The persons mentioned in the narrative already give us identities of the wife and the children. In this type of oral narrative that is not planned beforehand, the teller does not go into details to describe the particularities of the identities involved unless asked by the conductor. Nevertheless, the need to identify as a teller in this particular set of circumstances can be found in his repetition of ‘you know’, which is a marker seeking to establish clarity for himself as teller, within the group.

It is therefore in such instances that the oral characteristic of aggregation becomes part of the discussion as epithets are used. Some epithets are clear within the

discourse, for instance Adam refers to his wife as “my angel”. Other epithets can be formulated by analysing the discourse. In looking at the entire discourse, Adam can be seen as a loving husband as is the wife (lines 79 to 84 p.177-178). Adam can also be seen as a hard-working man (line 50 p.173). Through his narrative, he is portraying his family (especially his wife) as patient for putting up with the inconveniences of moving and staying alone with the children. This adds to his identity as a grateful person in a loving relationship.

So far, we have seen that the identity discourse is directly and indirectly mentioned in the story, but there can be other cues like non-verbal cues from which the teller’s identity could be deduced. It has been mentioned that communication, especially oral communication, involves both the use of verbal and nonverbal messages. As such, in narrating the story, the teller’s gestures, posture and facial expressions can say much about what type of person s/he is. Other non-verbal cues can also come from what the teller is not actually saying in the story. Although he does not say it, one could pick up from the story that Adam is trying to portray himself as a dutiful husband and father.

6.3.6. Politics

The mention of politics brings to mind power play and power struggle. In a conversation, or a discourse situation, language used can directly or indirectly indicate who holds the upper power. This could be in terms of taking decisions for the benefit of all in a given context, family, community, or country. Having the power can be consciously or unconsciously played by the individual concerned using language as is the case with Adam and his family.

The continuous use of the first-person plural pronoun in his narrative shows an equal share and distribution of power in the matters of the family. Adam indirectly portrays the importance of including the woman in family decision-making. Adam does not divulge the real person at the helm of the decisions; but in analysing his story, it can clearly be seen that it is his wife because the moving was inconvenient for Adam who had to go back and forth between cities for work. Therefore, through the use of language, Adam is trying to portray a balance of power in his family. After the analysis, there is clearly a contradiction to this balance of power as his wife has more power (in his eyes). This is evident in the fact that she has to confirm all the decisions about moving and seems to be the one who has the final word. These actions make it

obvious that she is in charge of the situation and the family. Power play in communication also helps to reveal the identities of the parties involved. Within this bond of a husband and wife who stand as one, there are individual identities that Adam is enacting in and with the story.

In the mini-ritual of storytelling, as the addresser, Adam holds the power. Through his story, he transports the addressees into his universe who must accept what they hear without questioning its veracity. This situation is also enhanced by the PT ritual that does not allow an exchange between addresser and addressee (actors and audience). The teller (in this case, Adam) holds, or seems to be given, the power to take the addressees into any world which can be real or unreal. Thus, the existence of politics or power relations in the PT ritual (where the teller holds the power of the story) undermines or puts to question PT's claim of sharing real life experiences.

6.3.7. Practices

The analysis of the identity tool has shown that a practice, or an activity can also be referred to as an activity-based identity because both deal with things like teaching, gardening, telling a story, attending to patients in the hospital. In chapter four, it is mentioned that some activities inform what language to use in a given context, while some utterances enact a certain practice such as caring, instructing, praising, insulting, acknowledging or being indifferent. Gee purports that "language has meaning only in and through practices" (1999:8). Therefore, the questions arise as to how Adam's practice of storyteller defines the type of language he uses and how his language in the narrative makes some activities he is enacting or trying to enact, recognisable.

First, as a storyteller, there is a coherence in his narration with regards to the structure of a story which has a beginning, a middle and a conclusion. When he begins, he introduces the theme of the story in line 11(p.169): "it's along the same lines of uhm leaving". In other words, he could have said: 'this is a story about...'. The story is then developed and, in the end, he says "Uhm, so yeah" which indicates that he has finished his narration and gives a title to the story without being asked. There is a clear indication that Adam is an experienced storyteller through the episodic structure of the narrative with a potential escalating conflict line indicated through the internal conflict of indecision and the resolution of the conflict through divine intervention.

Secondly, Adam's language proves that he is indirectly enacting another activity, that of honouring and praising his family especially his wife (and children, indirectly) for their patience, understanding and unconditional love through the ordeal of moving from one town to another and staying alone for long periods without their father and husband. There is a clear feeling that, in the two years of moving, and Adam leaving his family for long periods of time to work in another town (although the period of work is not defined in the story, the distance between the towns shows that one cannot frequently travel to and from the coast), a broken marriage could have resulted if his wife was not true to him and patient. This is so because in line 35 (p.172) he says "our marriage it's, uh, it's taking a lot of strain. What's going on? What's going on?" Saying that the marriage was taking a lot of strain means there must have been fighting and wondering whether is worth it.

To have been patient, understanding and considerate, Adam uses this story as a way of honouring his wife and portraying their marital relationship. This is so because, throughout the story, he uses 'us' and 'we' instead of 'I' or 'she'. At the beginning of the narration, Adam says "it's along the same lines of, uhm, leaving, thinking you will find something out there, uh, coming back to realise that it was actually there in the beginning". The use of the pronoun 'you' is a kind of rhetoric and may also be addressing anyone listening who has experienced the same. The 'you' at the beginning does not in any way relate to his wife, whom he mentions later, because she is not part of the present conversation.

Assuming the 'we and us' are taken out of the story and replaced with 'I', this can evidently change the meaning in, and of the story. What Adam is not saying, or even trying to say, is that he is the one who actually left his family trying to get something better out there for himself, or, as the breadwinner, for the entire family. This may be true for the simple fact that he does not mention anything in relation to his wife working. Quite often in conversation, people do not mean what they say and they do not say what they mean (Jones 2012:21). Therefore, considering that Adam is not saying what he means, it can be deduced that he is performing the activity of regret for almost tearing his family apart.

6.4. Analysis of oral characteristics in the story

6.4.1. Situated rather than abstract

Orality ties language to physical action so that when an utterance is not accompanied by any action, that specific utterance is placed within the context of the communication and the utterance is not abstract, but is situated within the context of the communication. Every word and phrase in this narrative that holds no other oral characteristic is situated within the context of the story. In line 33 (p.171) where the word 'thinking' is placed as being situated, one may think of this as abstract, but it is performing a mental action. On the other hand, Adam is not thinking about what to say in that moment, but the thinking is situated within the context of the story. The thought was of what lies ahead for him and his family as they will be starting over in a new location. Given that a story is made up of episodes, the situatedness indicates the sequential nature of the episodes. Thus, each narrated event is concretised by what comes before that event, leading to a building of situations. In Adam's story, the situation seems to demonstrate more and more desperation.

6.4.2. Redundant or copious

Repetition in orality is concerned with aiding remembrance and for emphasising points that are important in the communication process. In PT, this redundant nature of orality plays different roles at different levels. First, within the PT ritual, the redundancy is linked to the discourse tool of connection. When Brenda repeats Adam's name, she makes a connection with him while also helping the actors and audience to remember the teller's name. The ritualised repetition of the PT form inviting audience members to tell, empowers them to be involved in the process and not only stay in the foregrounded state of listening and watching the other's story. This enables a reflective connection to the stories and the process.

At the level of the speaker or the teller, repetition creates emphasis and places importance on certain points. When Adam repeats the question "what are we doing" in line 59 (p.175), it makes the rhetorical question an important piece in the narrative, which, in this case is trying to understand if the decision to move was the right one or not. As seen in the previous chapter, repetition in orality helps the speaker to organise their thoughts and render them fluently.

This is especially important in PT because the teller does not prepare to tell beforehand. Adam's use and repetition of the expression "uhhm" may seem, as seen with the identity tool of the discourse markers, that he is hesitant in revealing information or not sure of his story. However, as an unprepared oral rendition, the pauses give him time to think and organise his thoughts before verbalising them. This repetition keeps the teller constantly connected to the audience and enables the teller to avoid analysis, but just adds information that is important to the story. In other words, the teller is doing two things simultaneously: he is rehearsing the story in his mind while narrating; hence the repeated pauses.

6.4.3. Additive rather than subordinate

Closely related and following the redundant nature of oral language is additive. When there are pauses and repetition of words and phrases, the teller tends to add information rather than analyse and give details on what he has already said. In line 24 (p.170) when Adam says they left Johannesburg because they were frustrated, he does not continue with explaining what they were frustrated about but adds other reasons for leaving from lines 25-28 (p.171).

Direct or indirect additions sometimes give a reason for the previous utterance made. From line 67 (p.175), saying they were positive, they prayed and got a strong confirmation, gives the reason why Adam and his family decided to move. Sometimes, information is added without the repetition of words like 'and' or 'then'. This is evident in line 68-70 (p.176) when Adam lists the above-mentioned reasons for deciding to move. In the course of adding words and phrases to the narrative, the teller sometimes embellishes the narrative with adjectives.

6.4.4. Aggregative rather than analytic

The additive and aggregative nature of oral narrative serves the same purpose. These help to avoid lengthy explanations and details in the course of a narrative. Adam describes the mixed feelings of their journey in a few words as he says it was very tough and very stressful but at the same time a magnificent experience. However, in some way, this serves as a summary of everything he has been talking about in the story. Unlike "my angel," which serves its purpose of describing the wife without a detailed analysis of the type of person she is, the description of the journey at the end helps to summarise all the details about the journey given earlier. These words used

to describe situations, things and people get their meaning within the context of the communication which is more reason why it does not need to be analysed. It also allows the listeners to draw on their own imagination to complete the picture of the travels, the trials and tribulations the family went through, as this is taken as given through shared experiences.

6.4.5. Homeostatic

With orality, words are used and reused in many different contexts, but with varying meaning. This means that words in the oral tradition do not have static meanings because they evolve and change within the context of its use. In his story, Adam uses words that on one hand have static meanings but can be understood differently within the context of his story. For example, the word 'roots' when heard, instantly we think of a tree. In some circumstances it can mean the bottom or base of something. In social and cultural studies, our roots are often referred to our ancestral home and way of life which is arguably what Adam means when he says they went to Limpopo for the children to get their roots.

In another instance, when Adam uses the word 'thinking' in line 13 (p.169), he is not referring to the mental activity that we all do. The thinking here is applied as an expectation which in this case is what they were expecting to find or achieve from moving but had to come back to their starting point. The question that remains is: What were they expecting to get from these journeys? It should be kept in mind that this is a married couple who decides to move specifically to both their ancestral homes.

From lines 79-83 (p.177) there is the use of the word 'apart'. When something is apart from another, it means it is separate. In the case of marriage, it will imply divorce or separation when problems arise. Therefore, Adam and his wife could have been apart for this reason and travelling back to their roots to seek solutions for their marital problems. To solve such issues or other conflicts, both parties involved are needed which explains why Adam constantly travelled back and forth from Johannesburg where he is working. Therefore, the meaning of certain words and phrases in a narrative can help to elucidate and understand the hidden text of the story. Much of this interpretation relies on the shared experiences of the listeners as they work homeostatically with the information provided.

6.4.6. Close to the human lifeworld

In the oral tradition, stories that were imagined of events and heroes were brought close to the human lifeworld because these were mostly used for moral and educational purposes. Doing this makes the story real and believable. Based on this, PT invites people to tell stories about themselves that they have experienced in real life. We can connect and believe such stories when we hear things that are familiar to us and our social context. Adam uses names of places well known, like Johannesburg, Limpopo and KZN. This makes his narrative real and credible. As such the listener can easily relate and participate in the narrative. (It can be argued, here, given the South African history of migrant labour, that this resonated with the listeners, as Adam is a Black African Male, as mentioned earlier. As such, for many, Adam's experiences are close to the listeners' life- worlds.)

6.4.7. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced

Oral communication is most effective with an active listener to keep the communication channel open and flowing. If the listener cannot relate to the story, it will be difficult to connect with the speaker and participate in the communication. With Adam's story, the places, family, and the traveling are relatable; thus, enabling an active and participative audience. The conductor empathises with the teller and participates in the story narrative by repeating what the teller says and asking questions for emphasis and clarification.

In story narration, the communication tends to be one sided as most of the time only the teller or narrator speak. Therefore, it warrants the teller to keep contact with the listener through interjections. Adam does so several times when he says, 'you know'. This in some way allows the audience to respond (explicitly or implicitly) by saying 'yes, I understand what you mean' (which could manifest simply as a nod of the head, for example) at the same time being empathetic and participatory. (This function correlates with Jakobson's notion of the phatic). These interjections maintain contact with the addressee, and the responses of the addressee allows for communication to continue and flow uninterrupted. Apart from using rhetoric phrases like 'you know' while narrating, there are several such instances as in lines 30,42 and 72 (p.171, 172 and 176) where Adam uses the word 'so'. Through this, the audience is reminded that

they are part of the communication or the story. The reflective experience of *communitas* is believed to occur when empathy is stimulated and maintained.

6.4.8. Conservative or traditionalist

When a story is told within the human context, it not only connects the teller and the listener, but it is kept and easily transmitted from one generation to another. Adam honoured the tradition of telling stories orally and his experience will be preserved and shared widely by those who listened. In doing this, the audience will be continuing the tradition of storytelling. Line 100 (p.179) sums up a knowledge that has been conserved through his story that a family's joy and happiness is complete when they are together no matter the circumstances.

It might also be implied that Adam draws on the traditions of his background as he pursues his and his wife's roots. This suggests that Adam felt alienated in his work but thought that pursuing his traditional roots would solve this. It is also, perhaps, important to suggest that Adam implies, traditionally, that happiness occurs in loving and supporting relationships.

6.4.9. Agonistically toned

In the oral tradition, this refers to verbalised conflict. It can both be physical and or internal conflict. As stories of heroes and heroines were used in the oral tradition for entertainment and education, conflict could arise between two narrators about the authenticity and originality of a story. Inner conflict with the self, like in decision-taking and also conflict between people, has to be verbalised with the oral tradition before it can be recognised. Through his story, Adam indirectly verbalises his inner struggles of indecision as an individual.

However, it can also be implied, given the fact that Adam is a Black African male in the South African context, that the implied conflict between working and finding work is present here, too. Furthermore, the implied conflict around working in a place where one's 'roots' are not celebrated, is a common situation in South Africa, and so the listeners, at least, might also make this agonistic interpretation.

6.5. The enactment

The enactment of the story is done by three actors and a musician who are all female. I talk of enactment because, although the teller is narrating, the teller is in fact enacting the story orally and in narrative form. As part of the playback tradition, the teller, before narrating his or her story, chooses an actor to play him or her. In this case, Adam chose Sharon. For the other personas in the story, Thembi plays Adam's wife while Talia represents the children. In a situation where the story told does not have many characters, actors in a playback performance can choose to be anything or any place in the enactment of the story, as it is with improvisation. Lucy is the musician.

Earlier in the introduction, it was mentioned that the teller's speech act is mostly verbal while the actors engage both verbally and non-verbally. This is so because with theatre discourse, there is more than one clearly present act of speech (Searle 1969) associated with the actors' utterances or discourse. Such visible 'speech act accompaniment' can be in support of the verbal utterance (a head nodding, while the mouth says "yes" for example), or it can stand for an utterance, such as a gesture that invites (normally a speech utterance) someone to enter a room, for example. The analysis of the enactment will, therefore, be incomplete without the acts (physical actions) that present the entirety of the actor's speech acts. Beyond the speech act theory of a speaker's utterance involving more than one speech act, the theatrical speech act involves not only the verbal and non-verbal, but every object is loaded with the possibility of becoming an act within the theatrical speech act. As such, a cloth used in the enactment represents more than just the object in itself.

It should also be noted that, although orality has, in the previous analysis, been connected to the verbal, it is analytically useful to use the same orality characteristics to engage with the non-verbal presentation, as most of these characteristics can be found in the performance. Therefore, the analysis that follows will attempt to categorise many of the non-verbal events in terms of the orality dynamics or characteristics.

As with the telling, the convention is used to present the non-verbal speech acts in italics. The following, therefore, attempts to capture in words the Playback part of the event.

(The actors get up from the crates and form a circle, looking in while holding hands. Upstage right, Lucy plays the maracas as they prepare. Sharon walks to centre stage

with a black cloth, lays it down on the floor and kneels on it, placing her hands against one another in a praying position. She looks behind her then gets up and pick up the black cloth. Lucy plays the karimba.)

Sharon: Let's go. *(Thembi joins her centre stage, and they walk on the same spot with their arms folded around one another.)* You ready. Come now, let's go. *(Talia joins them on her knees and Thembi holds her arm. They walk on the same spot together.)*

Thembi: Leaving Jo'burg behind. *(She looks back.)*

Sharon: Look forward my angel.

Talia: Where?

Sharon: Forward. *(They stop walking. Sharon lays down her black cloth again.)*

Talia: I'm thirsty.

Sharon: Get used to it. *(The audience laughs).* Welcome to Limpopo. *(She kneels next to the cloth as she lays it out looking up with amazement.)* Come now. *(The musician plays the guiro softly in the background.)*

Thembi: Yo! This place is hot. *(She wipes her forehead and both her and Talia sit down on the cloth while Sharon pats them on the back. Thembi lies down keeping herself up on one elbow and exhales loudly.)*

Talia: Where are you going, Dad?

Sharon: I have to go.

Thembi: I'll see you soon. *(She extends her arm out and she and Sharon briefly hold hands.)*

Sharon: I'll see you soon. *(She walks big circles around Talia and Thembi.)*

(Thembi and Talia lie down and breathe deeply. Thembi fans herself with her hand.)

Sharon: My angel! *(Thembi sits up and Sharon jogs in circles around centre stage where Thembi and Talia are seated. She finally stops on a crate.)*

Thembi: Adam!

Sharon: *(She steps down from the crate and kneels behind Thembi placing her hands on her shoulders.)* Are we happy here?

Thembi: I don't know. *(Sharon leans forward).* Maybe KZN?

Sharon: You'll be happier there?

Thembi: Let's go.

(They all stand up. Sharon picks up the black cloth; Talia is on her knees.)

Sharon: That way. Let's go. *(She points to downstage right. They fold their arms together and walk on one spot. The musician plays the drum. They stop and Sharon lays down the black cloth in front of them).* Oh wait! *(She gets up and runs to the side to get a green cloth. She lays that down on top of the black one.)*

Thembi: It's beautiful!

(Thembi and Talia step forward to get onto the cloth, but Sharon stops them behind her with her arms extended out and hands flat.)

Sharon: Wait, wait! Wait. Wait. *(The musician stops drumming.)* Are we sure?

Thembi: Yes.

Sharon: Are you sure, yes? *(She looks at Thembi and Talia holds Sharon's pants.)*

Thembi: *(She points her foot forward reluctantly wanting to step onto the cloth.)* Yyyess.

Sharon: Wait. *(She holds her arms out, stopping them again.)* Think about it. Let's just think about it everybody. Are we sure? Is it the right thing to do? I mean we just came and it cost us a fortune too. *(She releases all the tension in her body and throws her arms down.)* Yeah, okay it's fine. *(Talia crawls underneath Sharon's legs onto the cloth.)*

Tembi: *(Places a hand on Sharon's arm.)* But Jo'burg. Think about Jo'burg. We'll get through.

Sharon: Okay. *(The musician blows a horn loudly.)*

Sharon: I've gotta go, my angel. *(She jogs in circles again.)*

(Talia climbs underneath the green cloth and Thembi steps onto it vibrating her hand on her chest. Talia folds the green cloth around Thembi. Thembi places her arm around Talia and they hold each other. Thembi anxiously breathes and mumbles something. Sharon climbs on top of the crate. She jumps off the crate and starts jogging again. Talia starts whining as if she's crying. Sharon jumps on the crate again. Thembi looks around her anxiously calling for Adam. Sharon runs around again. Sharon runs to them and holds Thembi from the back.)

Sharon: I'm here. I'm here. Not good?

Thembi: We're not good.

Sharon: *(Sharon takes Thembi's hand and pulls her away slightly to the left side. They hold hands.)* Are we good? *(The musician plays the rain stick and the maracas. Sharon wraps her body underneath Thembi's arm and they awkwardly weave their bodies together trying to fit it together. Talia plays with the green cloth).* Uh, no. No,

not good. *(Thembi and Sharon mumble something to one another holding hands and looking at Talia.)*

Thembi: We need to be together.

Sharon: We need to be together. *(Talia crawls to Sharon and Thembi. Sharon kneels down and collect the green and black cloths. The musician blows the horn loudly.)*

Thembi: Where?

Sharon: Back to the beginning. *(Sharon stands up, holds Thembi's hand. Thembi holds Talia's hand.)* Let's go. *(Sharon leans forward as if she's ready to start walking. They all freeze in this position to signify the end of the story. They return to their neutral positions, look at Adam and smile. Adam laughs loudly and the audience applaud.)*

Brenda: Which part stood out for you?

Adam: I loved the moments about the beginning and the moments about the end, uhm the kneeling down and praying, just, you know. Uhm, searching, looking forward, direction. And then near the end anxiety*(laughs)*. But just hoping, uhm, yeah... *(He mumbles something.)* Cool!

Table 5: Analysis of story enactment.

UTTERANCE/ACTION	BUILDING TASK	ANALYSIS	ORAL CHARACTERISTICS	ANALYSIS
1. <i>The actors get up from the crates</i>	Practice	Getting up	Situated rather than abstract	They get ready to start the enactment
2. <i>and form a circle looking in while holding hands</i>	Connection	Actors connecting with themselves	Conservative or traditionalist	This is a tradition of the DFLPT done before any enactment of a long story
3. <i>upstage right, Lucy plays the maracas as they prepare</i>	Sign system and knowledge	Music. The up and down raining sound of the grains gives the feeling of a count down into and action.	Conservative or traditionalist	The instruments played form part of the PT tradition that accompanies and enhances actions
4. <i>Sharon walks to centre stage</i>	Practice	Walking	Situated rather than abstract	To introduce the first action in the enactment
5. <i>With a black cloth</i>	Sign system and knowledge	A black cloth represents anything	Homeostatic	The cloth could stand for anything with her actions
6. <i>lays it down on the floor</i>	Practice	An activity is carried out	Situated rather than abstract	The action of laying down the cloth
7. <i>And kneels on it</i>	Practice	The action of kneeling	Situated rather than abstract	An action that is relatable
8. <i>Placing her hand in against one another in a praying position</i>	Sign system and knowledge	The symbol of praying as a way of life and common knowledge to many	Close to human lifeworld	This is an activity that is part of everyday life for most people
9. <i>She looks behind her</i>	Practice	Looking	Situated rather than abstract	Up to this moment she was alone on stage, thus

				the look might be a clue for the others to join in
10. Let's go	Practice	Calling the family to leave	Situated rather than abstract	Calling the other actors
11. Gets up	Practice	An action is done	Situated rather than abstract	Gets up from her kneeling position
12. And picks up the black cloth	Practice	Holding luggage for travel	Situated rather than abstract	An action
13. Lucy plays the karimba	Sign system and knowledge	Music. The sound is soft in the background as an accompaniment on the journey	Conservative or traditionalist	Instruments and music are part of the PT tradition
14. Thembi joins her centre stage and	Identity	Arms folded around one another: the wife	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	The other actor picks the cue joins in the action
15. They walk on the same spot	Practice	The action shows they are travelling	Homeostatic	This could just be walking but with the story it stands for travelling
16. With their arms folded around one another	Relationship	A close bond	Homeostatic	This action can represent love between a husband and wife
17. You ready?	Politics	She has already said let's go but still asking the wife is she is ready	Agonistically toned	There is a conflict of resolution here as he asks the wife to come along before asking if she was ready
18. Come now	Practice	Calling Talia to join them	Situated rather than abstract	Part of human interaction
19. Let's go	Practice	Leaving	Redundant or copious	Its repeated though to a different person

20. This is it	Significance	The decision to leave Johannesburg		Homeostatic	Raises a question of what she is talking about exactly
21. Let's go	Practice	Leaving		Redundant or copious	Repetition
22. <i>Talia joins them on her knees and</i>	Identity	On her knees ... the wife holds her arm: the child		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	As the child, the other actor joins in on the action
23. <i>Thembi holds her arm</i>	Relationship	Family love and bond		Situated rather than abstract	Sa mum holding the hand of a child is a normal action
24. <i>they walk on the same spot together</i>	Practice	The activity of leaving, travelling		Homeostatic	Still, this can be just a walking or showing travelling
25. Leaving Jo'burg behind	Significance	Emphasis on the leaving		Close to the human lifeworld	The place mentioned is known
26. <i>She looks back</i>	Significance	It shows a sense of nostalgia		Agonistically toned	This is a sense of regret for leaving
27. Look forward my angel	Relationship	My angel, a nickname means love		Aggregative rather than analytic	He uses the term to describe his wife
28. Where?	Identity	Uncertain		Situated rather than abstract	A question whose answer can be the name of a place
29. Forward	Significance	Keeping the focus ahead		Redundant or copious	Repetition
30. <i>They stop walking</i>	Significance	Indicates arrival		Homeostatic	This indicates arrival
31. <i>Sharon lays down her black cloth again</i>	Sign system and knowledge	Laying it down in a new location		Homeostatic	This can be the luggage or a different setting

32. I'm thirsty	Identity	Being a child		Homeostatic	The thirst could be for water or in this case showing that the new setting is very hot
33. Get used to it	Identity	Not compassionate		Situated rather than abstract	It is a normal thing for people to adapt to new environments
34. <i>The audience laughs</i>	Connection	To the action		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	the laughter shows the audience are engaged and part of the narrative
35. Welcome to Limpopo	Significance	Giving their location		Close to the human lifeworld	Mention of places that are known to the audience
36. <i>She kneels next to the cloth as</i>	Practice	The action of kneeling		Situated rather than abstract	A physical action
37. <i>She lays it out</i>	Practice	Laying out the cloth		Situated rather than abstract	Physical action
38. <i>Looking up with amazement</i>	Significance	The look shows how happy she is of where they are and of moving		Homeostatic	She is happy to finally arrive her destination or admiring the scenery
39. Come now	Practice	Calling the others to settle down		Redundant or copious	She has used this phrase earlier
40. <i>The musician plays the guiro softly in the background.</i>	Sign system and knowledge	Music. The string sound sounds like a heartbeat than enhances the anxiety from the heat.		Conservative or traditionalist	Music is part of PT tradition and oral narrative
41. Yo! This place is hot.	Significance	The weather conditions		Aggregative rather than analytic	The word hot says how the place is without analysing

42. <i>She wipes her forehead</i>	Practice	Sweating from the heat		Homeostatic	She could literally be sweating but here she wants to show the heat of the place
43. <i>And both she and Talia sit down on the cloth while</i>	Practice	The action of sitting		Situated rather than abstract	Settling in the new place
44. <i>Thembi lies down while supporting herself on one elbow and</i>	Practice	Lying down		Situated rather than abstract	Settling in the new place
45. <i>Exhales loudly</i>	Significance	The action may mean tiredness showing the stressfulness of the journey		Homeostatic	A sign of relief, worry or exhaustion
46. <i>Sharon pats them on the back</i>	Relationship	A sign of love and affection		Situated rather than abstract	An action that shows comfort
47. <i>Where are you going, dad?</i>	Relationship	Child/father		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	The child shows concern for the father
48. <i>I have to go</i>	Practice	Going		Situated rather than abstract	A response to the child's question
49. <i>I will see you soon</i>	Connection	With Adam		Situated rather than abstract	An understandable thing to say when leaving people

50. <i>She extends her arm out</i>	Relationship	Holding hands shows a bond		Homeostatic	The hand can perform several actions in this instance
51. <i>And she and Sharon briefly hold hands</i>	Relationship	Love and affection		Homeostatic	The same was done earlier when travelling but this is saying goodbye
52. <i>I'll see you soon.</i>	Connection	Adam with the wife		Redundant or copious	Repetition
53. <i>She walks big circles around Talia and Thembi</i>	Practice	Walking, moving		Homeostatic	The walk as earlier stands for travelling
54. <i>Thembi and Talia lie down and</i>	Practice	Lying down		Situated rather than abstract	Just a normal action
55. <i>breathe deeply</i>	Practice	An action		Homeostatic	A sign of relief or worry
56. <i>Thembi fans herself with her hand</i>	Significance	Showing how hot the place is		Homeostatic	Uneasiness reflecting the heat of the area
57. <i>My angel</i>	Practice	Calling		Aggregative rather than analytic	An adjective used to refer to his wife
58. <i>Thembi sits up</i>	Practice	Sitting up as a response		Situated rather than abstract	The sitting up is in response to the call
59. <i>And Sharon jogs in circles around centre stage where</i>	Significance	It is not the action that is important but the journey it signifies		Homeostatic	From walking to jogging, the travelling proves to be more frequent
60. <i>Thembi and Talia are seated</i>	Practice	Sitting		Situated rather than abstract	An action

61. <i>She finally stops on a crate</i>	Practice	Stopping means arrival at destination		Homeostatic	Showing arrival
62. Adam!	Identity	Calls the husband by name		Close to the human lifeworld	Naming the character in the narrative
63. <i>She steps down from the crate</i>	Practice	An action		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	Response to the call
64. <i>And kneels behind Thembi</i>	Practice	Kneeling		Situated rather than abstract	An action
65. <i>Placing her hands on her shoulder</i>	Practice	An action		Situated rather than abstract	A normal thing to do after arriving from the journey
66. Are we happy here?	Identity	Self-questioning, self-doubt		Agonistically toned	This question shows there is a conflict within
67. I don't know	Identity	Uncertainty		Agonistically toned	Conflict of indecision
68. <i>Sharon leans forward</i>	Practice	An action		Situated rather than abstract	To be closer to the wife
69. Maybe KZN?	Politics	The wife chooses where to go		Close to the human lifeworld	A new location mentioned
70. you'll be happier there?	Identity	Self-doubt, indecisive and uncertainty hence 'you'		Agonistically toned	Conflict of interest
71. Let's go.	Practice	Moving		Redundant or copious	Used earlier in the narrative
72. They all stand up	Practice	Standing up		Situated rather than abstract	Preparing to leave
73. Sharon picks up the black cloth	Significance	This action shows they are packed and moving		Homeostatic	This is like picking up luggage

74. Talia is on her knees	Identity	She stays in this position as the child		Redundant or copious	The same action was done earlier
75. That way. Let's go.	Practice	Moving		Redundant or copious	Repetition
76. She points to downstage right	Practice	Showing the way		Homeostatic	Facing a different direction to show they are moving to a different place
77. They fold their arms together	Relationship	Togetherness and family bond		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
78. And walk on one spot	Significance	Shows them on the journey		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
79. <i>The musician plays the drum</i>	Sign system and knowledge	Music. The sound is loud but not fast and gives a merrier feeling.		Conservative or traditionalist	Part of the PT tradition
80. <i>They stop and</i>	Significance	Stopping indicate arrival		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
81. <i>Sharon lays down the black cloth in front of them</i>	Practice	Laying the cloth		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
82. <i>She gets up and</i>	Practice	An action		Situated rather than abstract	An action
83. <i>Runs to the side to get a green cloth</i>	Significance	The change of colours with the cloths		Homeostatic	A different colour of cloth stands for something else
84. <i>She lays that down on top of the black one</i>	Significance	A new location		Homeostatic	Covering the black cloth shows a change of scenery. The bright colour shows joy from the

					insecurities that the black would represent
85. It's beautiful!	Significance	The nature, the beauty of the new location		Aggregative rather than analytical	It tells of the how the new place is without details
86. <i>Thembi and Talia step forward to get onto the cloth, but</i>	Practice	Stepping forward, stopping		Situated rather than abstract	To settle in
87. <i>Sharon stops them behind her with her arms extended out and hands flat</i>	Identity	Uncertainty, doubt		Agonistically toned	Still conflicted about the decision
88. Wait, wait! Wait. Wait	Identity	Hesitant, uncertain		Agonistically toned	Contemplating
89. The musician stops drumming	Significant	The action at this moment probably felt very important		Situated rather than abstract	This accompanies the action on stage
90. Are we sure	Identity	Self-doubt, uncertainty		Agonistically toned	A reflection of inner conflict, uncertainty
91. Yes	Identity	Certain, sure		Situated rather than abstract	Responding to the question
92. Are you sure, yes?	Identity	Uncertain, hesitant		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	Showing that he is listening and values her input in the final decision
93. <i>She looks at Thembi</i>	Politics	Probably searching for approval		Agonistically toned	Still not approving

94. <i>And Talia holds Sharon's pants</i>	Practice	An action		Situated rather than abstract	A child holding the parent's pants
95. <i>She points her foot forward reluctantly wanting to step onto the cloth.</i>	Practice	An action is done		Agonistically toned	Still confident about the decision or the step they have taken
96. Yyyess	Identity	Assertive and confident		Redundant or copious	Repeats her affirmation
97. Wait.	Identity	Uncertain, hesitant		Agonistically toned	Still battling to decide
98. <i>She holds her arms out stopping them again</i>	Identity	Hesitation		Agonistically toned	Still conflicted about the decision of moving
99. Think about it lets just think about it everybody.	Practice	Asking them to think or reflect		Situated rather than abstract	Asking everyone to think
100. Are we sure? Is it the right thing to do?	Identity	Self-doubt, questioning, undecisive		Agonistically toned	Still uncertain about the decision
101. I mean we just came and it cost us a fortune to.	Significance	Monetary value		Homeostatic	Fortune may not be measured only in terms of money
102. <i>She releases all the tension in her</i>	Politics	Yielding, accepting		Situated rather than abstract	A normal way of trying to relax

<i>body and throws her arms down.</i>					
103. Yeah, okay its fine	Identity	Reluctant acceptance		Situated rather than abstract	Accepting the decision
104. <i>Talia crawls underneath Sharon's legs onto the cloth</i>	Practice	The action of crawling		Situated rather than abstract	Finally settling in after all the hesitation
105. <i>places a hand on Sharon's arm</i>	Relationship	Closeness		Situated rather than abstract	Settled in
106. But Jo'burg, think about Joburg. We'll get through	Significance	Highlighting the reason for the move and change		Close to the human lifeworld	The mention of a place that is known
107. Okay	Identity	Yielding		Situated rather than abstract	Responding to the other actor
108. <i>The musician blows a horn loudly</i>	Sign system and knowledge	The sound is loud and strong. It could serve as an alert		Conservative or traditionalist	The PT tradition
109. I've gotta go my angel	Relationship	My angel shows love		Redundant or copious	Repetition of the epithet
110. <i>She jogs in circles again</i>	Significance	Going, the journey		Redundant or copious	Same action done before
111. <i>Talia climbs underneath the green cloth</i>	Practice	An action is done		Situated rather than abstract	Just an action

112. <i>And Thembi steps onto it</i>	Practice	An action is done		Situated rather than abstract	Just an action
113. <i>Vibrating her hand on her chest</i>	Significance	An uneasiness		Homeostatic	A representation of her inner restlessness
114. <i>The musician plays the guiro</i>	Sign system and knowledge	The vibrating sound accompanies Thembi's uneasiness		Conservative or traditionalist	The PT tradition
115. <i>Talia folds the green cloth around Thembi</i>	Identity	Caring		Homeostatic	Not just covering but comforting her
116. <i>Thembi places her arm around Talia and</i>	Relationship	Bonding		Situated rather than abstract	Reacting to her covering her
117. <i>They hold each other</i>	Practice	An action of holding		Situated rather than abstract	An action
118. <i>Thembi anxiously breathes and mumbles something</i>	Identity	Anxious		Homeostatic	Anxious, restless and missing the husband
119. <i>Sharon climbs on top of the crate.</i>	Practice	Moving		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
120. <i>The musician blows the horn</i>	Sign system and knowledge	It sounds loud like an alert		Conservative or traditionalist	The PT tradition

121. <i>She jumps off the crate</i>	Practice	Jumping		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
122. <i>And starts jogging again</i>	Significance	The journey, moving		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
123. <i>Talia starts whining as if she's crying</i>	Practice	Crying		Empathetic and participatory	Joins into her mother's restlessness
124. <i>Sharon jumps on the crate again</i>	Significance	The crate		Redundant or copious	Repeated action
125. <i>Thembi looks around her</i>	Significance	Anxiously calling for Adam		Homeostatic	Either trying to find something or calling the husband
126. <i>Anxiously calling for Adam</i>	Practice	Calling		Situated rather than abstract	Action
127. <i>Sharon runs around again.</i>	Significance	Moving, journeying		Redundant or copious	Repeated action of travelling
128. <i>Sharon runs to them</i>	Practice	Runs		Situated rather than abstract	Returns home
129. <i>And holds Thembi from the back</i>	Practice	Holding		Situated rather than abstract	Embracing her after returning
130. <i>I'm here. I'm here. Not good?</i>	Identity	Showing concern		Situated rather than abstract	Asking if anything is wrong

131. We are not good	Significance	The state of being		Homeostatic	Either physically not well or uncomfortable at the present location or lonely
132. Sharon takes Thembi's hand	Practice	Doing an action		Situated rather than abstract	Physical action
133. And pulls her away slightly to the left side.	Practice	Pulling away		Situated rather than abstract	Physical action
134. They hold hands	Relationship	Togetherness, bond		Situated rather than abstract	Physical action
135. Are we good?	Politics	Seeking reassurance		Homeostatic	The question can be interpreted in different ways
136. The musician plays the rain stick and the maracas	Sign system and knowledge	The sound is calming and soothing		Conservative or traditionalist	The PT tradition
137. Sharon wraps her body underneath Thembi's arm	Relationship	Bond, togetherness		Situated rather than abstract	To draw close to her
138. And they awkwardly weave their bodies together trying to fit it together	Significance	The struggling shows the questioning, the uncertainty and the movements		Homeostatic	It looks like a struggle

139. <i>Talia plays with the green cloth</i>	Practice	Playing		Situated rather than abstract	Just being a child
140. Uh, no. no, not good.	Identity	Hesitant, uncertain		Redundant or copious	Repeated statement
141. <i>Thembi and Sharon mumble something to one another</i>	Relationship	Love, togetherness		Homeostatic	Reaching a decision in character or stopping the action as actors
142. <i>Holding hands</i>	Practice	An action		Redundant or copious	This action has been repeated severally
143. <i>And looking at Talia</i>	Practice	Looking		Participative rather than objectively distanced	By looking at her, they include her in their action
144. We need to be together	Significance	What is important		Homeostatic	Together as a family or in the same place
145. We need to be together	Significance	Re-affirms what is important		Redundant or copious	Repetition
146. <i>Talia crawls to Sharon and Thembi.</i>	Practice	Crawls, kneels, collects		Situated rather than abstract	To join them
147. <i>Sharon kneels down</i>	Practice	Kneeling		Redundant or copious	She does this each time she wants to pick up the cloths
148. <i>And collects the green and the black cloths</i>	Practice	Taking something		Homeostatic	Representing their luggage

149. <i>The musician blows the horn loudly.</i>	Sign system and knowledge	The sound is loud, awakening like giving an alert		Conservative or traditionalist	The PT tradition
150. <i>Where?</i>	Practice	Asking a question		Situated rather than abstract	Engaging the others through questions
151. <i>Back to the beginning</i>	Significance	The beginning		Homeostatic	Beginning of the narrative, the journey
152. <i>Sharon stands up,</i>	Practice	A series of actions		Situated rather than abstract	From her kneeling position
153. <i>Holds Thembi's hand</i>	Relationship	Togetherness		Redundant or copious	A repeated action throughout the narrative
154. <i>Thembi holds Talia's hand</i>	Relationship	Bond		Redundant or copious	A repeated action
155. <i>Let's go</i>	Practice	Calls for an action to be carried out		Redundant or copious	Repetition
156. <i>Sharon leans forward as if she's ready to start walking</i>	Practice	An action		Homeostatic	This action represents movement, travelling
157. <i>They all freeze in this position to signify the end of the story</i>	Significance	The end of the playback journey		Conservative or traditionalist	A tradition of PT
158. <i>They return to their neutral positions,</i>	Identity	From character to actor		Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	That transition of character to actor

159. <i>look at Adam and smile.</i>	Connection	Acknowledging and thanking the teller	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	As a thank you for letting them be part of his story
160. <i>Adam laughs loudly</i>	Practice	The laugh and applause	Homeostatic	Is he laughing at something specific or is happy with the whole enactment
161. <i>And the audience applaud</i>	Practice	An action	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	This shows they have been attentive and part of the enactment
162. Which part stood out for you?	Practice	A question	Situated rather than abstract	Engaging the teller for feedback
163. I loved the moments about the beginning and the moments about the end	Significance	What stood out	Close to the human lifeworld	Beginnings and endings are part of daily interaction
164. Uhm, uhm, uhm, yeah	Identity	Uncertain	Redundant or copious	The teller repeatedly used this expression
165. You know	Connection	With the listener	Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced	Assuming the conductor and audience know his story
166. ... the kneeling down and praying, just, ..., searching,	Significance	The important parts in the story.	Homeostatic	Each of these actions will bring out different meaning in different settings

looking forward, direction.					
167. And near the end, anxiety, <i>laughs.</i>	Identity	Reflects on his anxious and uncertainty		Additive rather than subordinate	More of what stood out in the enactment
168. But just hoping	Identity	At the same time hopes for the best		Close to the human lifeworld	Hope is a human feeling
169. He mumbles something, cool	Practice			Situated rather than abstract	Reacting

Table 6: Sum of discourse markers in the enactment.

DISCOURSE MARKERS	PLAYBACK
Identity	29
Practice	67
Significance	32
Connection	06
Relationship	16
Politics	05
Sign system and knowledge	14

Table 7: Sum of orality characteristics in the enactment.

ORALITY CHARACTERISTICS	PLAYBACK
Additive rather than subordinate	01
Aggregative rather than analytic	04
Redundant or copious	28
Conservative or traditionalist	11
Close to the human lifeworld	08
Homeostatic	37
Situated rather than abstract	54
Agonistically toned	15
Empathetic and participatory	11

As with the story, this section will briefly look at what these numbers above say about the enactment. It should be noted that this is treated as an entity and not in comparison to the oral narration. As a team, the playback actors retell the story using verbal and non-verbal language. What discourse tools and orality formulae have been highlighted and enhanced through verbal and non-verbal language (in other words, all forms of action) in the enactment?

As part of the theatrical language, the non-verbal language is able to highlight important situations, objects, and places in a performance without verbalising it. From every utterance and bodily movement is found an action which in improvisation can represent anything in the story. As such, practice or activities is the highest

characteristic enacted in the playback. Through the enactment of these activities, some are made more important than others. Significance can be shown verbally and non-verbally. As will become clear, though, these activities might be driven by elements of the story, but they might also be driven by the demands of the theatrical event. Speculatively, this may be seen as the tension between the Playback as discourse demands, and the theatre as Discourse demands.

In a PT performance, the playback actor enacts multiple identities as the actor moves between their identities and those of the characters in the story. Firstly, roles are changed from actor and addressee to performer and addresser when there is a move from the storytelling mini-ritual to the enactment mini-ritual. During the enactment, the performer then takes on multiple roles informed by the Discourse of the story, the Discourse of performance, the Discourse of playback and the Discourse of the performer. Here the actor is expected to enact the different identities of the teller and characters in the story. These identities and other information in the story are made important through verbal and non-verbal language. Looking at the high number of the situated rather than abstract oral dimensions, explain why every verbal and non-verbal language in a PT performance adds meaning to the understanding of the (or a) story in real time, as the Playback occurs.

Meaning in oral communication is obtained within the context of the communication and changes as circumstances and context changes. This is true especially with an improvised performance like PT; hence the elevated homeostatic characteristic in this performance. The number of appearances of the discourse tools and orality characteristics says something about the enactment of the story, playback theatre as an improvisational form and also about the actors. These will be examined in detail in the next section.

6.6. Analysis of the discourse markers in the enactment

6.6.1. Practice

This is also referred to as an activity. In theatre, it is more about the action that is taking place as seen in this story. Every movement and action the actors do is considered a practice. On the other hand, a verbal utterance can also be an activity even if it is not enhanced by a movement or an action. For example, in line 57 (p. 205),

Sharon calls Thembi “my angel”. The act of calling out to someone emanates from the verb – to call.

The physical activity in this story is dominated by movement either walking on the spot or running around the performance space. In itself, they are just actions being carried out by the actors, but beyond that, they represent something more like travelling from one location to another in a car or plane which can only be physically represented on stage with difficulty. The actions are exaggerated and expressive, which is a norm with improvisation as each movement has the potential to say something and some have more importance than others in the story.

6.6.2. Significance

As an improvisational form, every action and movement are important in PT. Some are used to enhance the story and make the narrative more theatrical. For example, the running around and walking on the spot is important in this story with regards to the travelling and moving from one geographical location to another. Another important aspect in the theatricality of the story is when the musician blows the horn. The loud sound feels like a reminder for the actors to move into the next action because once this is heard, Sharon starts moving.

These actions are enhanced by the use of props. However, in improvisation and PT in particular, there is less to no use of props except for the crates which the actors sit on and the pieces of colourful cloths. These cloths can be used in any way throughout the enactment. In this story, Sharon uses the cloths to represent the different locations which they travelled to. The black colour used for Johannesburg and Limpopo shows where they felt uncomfortable and needed to move. On the other hand, with its beautiful scenery and climate, the green cloth is used for the KZN. When picked up and held, the cloth becomes luggage for the travel.

A journey of self-discovery, family bonding and seeking comfort is well summarised towards the end of the enactment by Sharon and Thembi in the body entanglement. As every utterance and movement in the performance is considered an action, some actions become more important in the understanding of the story while also revealing the identities of the persons in the story.

6.6.3. Identity

The story has not been pre-written nor have the actors rehearsed the roles to be performed. As they sit on the crates to listen to the story, they maintain their social identities as Sharon, Thembi and Talia and a teller pick one to play them by calling their names. When they first step onto the performance space, apart from the teller's actor, we do not know which identities in the story they play until it is revealed by an action or an utterance. Before then, their identities shift from the social to the theatrical as actors. When Thembi joins Sharon on stage, her identity or character is not immediately revealed until Talia joins them on her knees, and we can see that the different levels (Talia kneeling and Thembi standing holding her hand) shows she is the child, while Thembi is the wife and mother. Throughout a performance, the PT actors are constantly moving back and forth between identities. They have to maintain their social identities as themselves while at the same time being actors on a theatrical stage and performing the identities of the teller.

Sharon in her role enacts different identities like being indecisive and uncertain as he keeps asking his family if they are sure about the decision to move. 'He' becomes a caring husband who runs back to comfort the wife when she becomes uncomfortable and hysterical. As a husband, Adam also shows submissiveness by adhering to the decision of the wife to move. He, however, did not show much care with the child because most of his actions are with Thembi and when the child says, "I'm thirsty", his response of "Get used to it" shows no care or concern.

On the one hand, this shows the identity while in terms of improvisation, there is a miscommunication. Talia's request of water is significant to the heat in Limpopo and was a cue for Sharon to pick up on which she did not; hence the miscommunication⁷². As Sharon seems to hold less power in the story, the opposite is true of Thembi who is certain and sure in her decisions. She is also demanding and an attention seeker as she calls for her husband and looks uncomfortable during his travels.

⁷² Indeed, the line "Get used to it" can be seen a throwaway clever line from popular jargon and may raise a laugh, but is not intrinsic to the story and Adam's family's journey. This is a good example of a theatrical moment that is not in line with the teller moment.

6.6.4. Relationship

As different identities come into contact with one another, relationships are revealed. Some are construed while others are broken. In this narrative, there exists a family bond of father, mother, and child. This relationship however is on different levels. It is very clear from looking at identities that the husband is very close to the wife, far closer than to the children. The holding of hands, the naming 'my angel' and the concern for her wellbeing shows that he loves her. The one-sided show of concern raises questions of the nature and status quo of their relationship. In terms of identity, the man could be more passionate than the woman, or he is trying to revive a broken relationship between him and the wife. As a child, Talia could have stood between Sharon and Thembi, her parents, but by choosing to stay connected to Thembi throughout the narrative, shows a strong bond between mother and child and a weak, or non-existent, bond between father and child.

Language can either break or build reality. In the case of PT, the utterances and the actions of the actors are not always exactly what the teller said but taken from a universal Discourse. In this enactment, the actors indirectly affirmed a seemingly universal belief in family relationships as it is generally assumed that children have a stronger bond and relationship with their mothers and their fathers⁷³.

6.6.5. Connection

For the purpose of this study, I dwell mostly on connections made in advancing and sustaining communication rather than ideas, statements and phrases linked, or connected for meaning and understanding. Improvisation in any form works best with what is referred to as 'call and respond' (McCord 2009; Sale 1992). This means that when an actor says something, the other actor must respond in the same context to keep the flow going and avoiding miscommunication. The response that reveals Sharon's identity and relationship towards the child also enacts a break in theatrical connection. Though there is a break in continuity, that same discourse creates a

⁷³ It should be noted that the teller appears to take this as a given 'truth' and may even be the 'point' of the story. An analysis of the enactment seems to take the same position. However, although this is not part of this research project, different communities have different views on such matters. One can only speculate, therefore, whether the enactment was deliberately constructed to meet the teller's story, whether the enactment company actually accepted this position, or whether they might hold divergent views.

connection with the audience who laugh at the comment Sharon makes (with reference to the “Get used to it” line).

Connections form part of the playback ritual like the actors holding hands in a circle before coming on stage for the performance. At the end of the story, before the actor’s transition from characters back to their own identities, a connection is made with the teller to acknowledge and thank him or her for sharing. These form part of the ritual or the sign system of PT.

6.6.6. Sign system and knowledge

At this level of the story, the sign system and knowledge tool are enacted using items like the cloth to represent places. This is understood to represent a location because they say so with words. Music makes part of the story and the theatrical essence because music is part of life and a language of its own. It enhances the story with different moods and the musician is also part of the performance hence she plays a different instrument when there is a change of scene and stops when there is something important being said. Music is an integral part of oral storytelling and the PT tradition.

6.6.7. Politics

The actions of the actors in the enactment bring out some politics or power relations that exist within Adam’s family but not mentioned in the story. Common knowledge about power in a family puts the father at the helm. Although the analysis of the identities and the relationship enacted in this story, shows that Adam’s wife seems to have the final word thus giving her greater power, the actions of Sharon in lines 87 and 98 (p.209) holding back the family from settling in the new destination, suggests otherwise. Sharon’s action here shows that Adam as the head of the family does not want to relinquish total power to his wife.

In line 22 (p.202) when Sharon and Thembi were portraying travels by walking on the spot, Talia coming and kneeling portrays a universal power relation in families⁷⁴. Talia’s physical behaviour seems to reveal her identity as a child, but the kneeling

⁷⁴ However, please see the previous footnote on these matters.

might be seen as children not having the same rights as adults⁷⁵. Another power relation shown through this action of kneeling is when Sharon kneels in a praying posture. This appears to become an indication of a superior power above humans (assuming that it is [a] God).

6.7. Analysis of orality characteristics in the enactment

6.7.1. Situated rather than abstract

This performed story is about a family— mother, father and children – on a constant move, journeying from one location to another in search of comfort, peace and joy. As such, all actions and utterances in the enactment must be situated within the context of the story because every verbal action and physical expression within an oral communication plays a vital role in the understanding of the whole conversation or story.

Lines 37 and 38 (p.203) shows where Sharon kneels while laying out the black cloth. Looking at the action plainly, it has no bearing within the main idea of the story on travelling. As orality situates all utterance and action in context, this activity goes beyond just laying out a black cloth and gains new meaning in context. This therefore means that Sharon has arrived in a new location and is settling down. The crucial thing about the situated characteristic of the oral language is, it reveals, builds, or breaks down a discourse for language in use. In line 77 (p.207), Sharon and Thembi fold arms together and by so doing construe and reveal the relationship between the husband and wife. Also, in line 88 (p.208), Sharon's utterance reveals the husband's identity as does Thembi's in line 91(p.208) and Talia's in line 22 (p.202).

6.7.2. Homeostatic

In orality, word meanings are constructed within the context of how the word is used. Given that the language of theatre (especially improvisational theatre like PT) is both verbal and non-verbal, meaning takes on both for the understanding of the story. When looking at the main idea of the story in comparison to some of the actions done by the actors, there seem to be an apparent disconnection in communication. These actions

⁷⁵ There is an awkward, alternative, interpretation, and that is that it is assumed that the teller comes from a particular culture where children kneel before their parents. Nowhere in the particular PT experience under discussion is this made clear. However, it could be argued that this cultural portrayal thus becomes stereotypical and perhaps even condescending.

get their meaning within the context of the story. Context in the case of PT exist in a duality, that of the story narrated and the PT form. This is so because some actions and activities are part of the playback ritual in which the story is being performed with its own context, such as when, the actors are holding hands in a circle just before the enactment starts and the acknowledging look to the teller at the end of the enactment.

Music as part of the playback ritual plays the role of enhancing the performance of the story because it is not part of the story. Another thing that reads several meanings within the context of PT are the cloths. With this story, it becomes an indication of a location where the family settles in; when picked up and held during the moving, the cloth becomes luggage. The green colour placed on the black one is an indication of life, beauty, hope and happiness in a new environment. The jogging/ walking that Sharon does takes on a new meaning within the context of the story as travelling even without a sound of vehicles or the actor saying, 'I am on a journey'.

6.7.3. Agonistically toned

Generally, in theatre, physical conflict and conflict of interest can easily be presented on stage. There is also internal conflict that happens when an individual struggles to take concrete decisions and make choices. With orality, such conflict must be verbalised for it to be recognised. In this story, what is presented and enacted is an internal conflict of indecision. This is presented both verbally and non-verbally. In lines 87 and 95 (p.208-209), the internal struggle is seen through the reluctance to allow her family to settle in the new location. Sharon also shows the struggle verbally in lines 99 and 100 (p.209) as she asks the others if they are sure about the decision to move. This is a struggle of letting go and starting all over again. Sharon is conflicted in her decision of moving; hence the questions to Thembi in lines 66, 67 and 70 (p.206). Thembi becomes the reassuring answer she seeks.

6.7.4. Empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced

With PT performance, empathy and participation is centred mostly around the actors who must do so in order for the story to be coherent and move forward. It is difficult to see this aspect coming from the audience as the performance is not done with the audience but for them. The teller at this point also becomes an audience member. If there is no empathy and participation, it means there is a breakdown in communication.

In Line 33 (p.203), there is a breakdown in communication as Sharon does not build the empathy. In saying “I am thirsty”, Talia was simply bringing out the significance in Limpopo which is the heat. If Sharon had understood this, her answer would not have been “Get used to it”. This instance therefore demonstrates how the absence of empathy can break the flow of communication in orality. This can subsequently be a dilemma in improvisational theatre.

At the level of playback, empathy forms part of the ritual especially at the end of the performance. The actors must acknowledge and thank the teller for his story and at this, the audience always joins in with applause. This is a way of saying to the teller that they have heard the story and connected with it. The question now is at the level of the interpretation which determines if the point of empathy and participation was construed or utilised, or not.

6.7.5. Close to the human lifeworld

As mentioned, orality is empathetic and participatory. To empathise and participate in oral communication, the listener must understand and recognise what is said. This is easily achievable when the utterance is close to the human lifeworld. Being close to the human lifeworld also means the speaker and the hearer must share the same or similar cultural and social context. For example, the feelings of ending something and starting all over is a common human reality to which everyone can relate. Also, in storytelling, using names of people and places that are familiar and common, puts the performance in real life and makes it possible for participants to connect.

6.7.6. Conservative or traditionalist

In the first instance, the PT method is preserving and promoting the traditional way of communication which is oral, amidst the rapid technological advancement. Music as an integrated aspect of performance in PT also forms part of the oral tradition. The freezing at the end is also a tradition that allows the actors to transition from the identities enacted in the story, back to their own identities. This performance does not really enact any tradition or knowledge worth conserving apart from those of the theatre form already mentioned.

6.7.7. Redundant or copious

A performance that involves more than one character is very different from one that involves just one. This is so because with the one narrator, there is no call and response, therefore the narrator sometimes becomes redundant to maintain the flow of ideas and emphasis. With performance involving more than one character or actor, there is flow as one actor responds to the other's utterance or action; thus, avoiding redundancy.

Repetition, however, does occur in improvisation for the purpose of emphasising an important point like in lines 144 and 145 (p.214). Furthermore, an action can be repeated like Sharon running around and jumping on and off the crates. This is emphasising the point of going and coming between towns. The less repetition that occurs in a performance narrative like this one, the less additive is used.

Addition and repetition can be avoided because the burden of the narration is equally tasked on all the actors - allowing for expanded utterances and actions. On the other hand, the actors aid each other in the performance by covering up the gaps left and giving each other clues as to the next action or utterance. Hence the reason for the one appearance of an addition. In performance, repeated utterances allow for actors who may have forgotten their cues to remember. It is not uncommon for actions to be repeated, especially in improvised performances, thus making this a mark of performance redundancy.

6.7.8. Aggregative rather than analytic

In general, actors do not analyse and give details during a performance unless it is part of the script in the case of a scripted performance. When an improvised performance uses descriptive words such as adjectives, it gives a poetic feel to the performance. Very few have been used in this performance amongst which are 'my angel' as Sharon calls Thembi. In lines 85, Thembi uses the phrase "it's beautiful" to describe the scenery and atmosphere of KZN as opposed to Limpopo that she found 'hot'. Aggregation could occur in an original improvised performance. It is not the case here as the actors are performing a story narrated, thus have to avoid introducing more words and action lest it reads a different meaning into the story.

6.8. Summary of chapter

This chapter carries the data for this study. It aimed at transcribing a performance from the DFLPT through which the discourse markers and orality characteristics were to be identified and analysed. The transcription was done in two parts, first the oral narrative enacted by the teller, then the enactment of the teller's story by the PT actors. Each of these performances were detailed separately into words and phrases which enabled both the discourse marker and orality formulae dominant to be identified.

At the end of each section of the transcription, a table of the discourse markers and the orality formulae summed up the number of times each appeared in the performance as a whole. This already starts giving an indication and reason why some are higher than others and how this enables the understanding of the enactment and enactment.

With the enactment, the sum of the identity markers and the situated characteristics indicates that the teller through his story is trying to showcase himself, that is his identity and those of the other characters in the story. On the other hand, the enactment has a higher appearance of the practice marker and situated characteristics. This is an indication that the actors approached the story more from a theatrical point rather than just telling a story. This becomes some of the differences and similarities that may potentially exist between the narrated and enacted story. It may also highlight the potential for miscommunication and misinterpretation in PT.

The next chapter will consist of using these numerical data of orality and discourse in the story and enactment to construct potential findings. The findings for the story and the enactment will be done individually after which a comparative study of both will reveal any differences. The chapter will then speculate why these differences in the orality and discourse of the story and enactment might occur and what could be done about it. By doing this, I will offer responses to the questions and aims of this study.

Chapter 7: Discourse and orality consolidation: the findings

7.1. Introduction

WJ. Ong's and JP. Gees' work falls within the scope of language, communication, and social linguistics. The main books used for this research; *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (2002) with *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method* (1999; 2011a) from both authors respectively, have a disparity of about 17 years in their first publications. Despite this time disparity and their different approaches in theorising language and communication, this study has found great similarities especially in the context of oral communication. On the one hand, Ong explores the oral-literate contrast from ancient to present cultures and provides some characteristics of a purely oral culture untouched by writing.

On the other hand, Gee explores the concept of discourse as language-in-use with no particularity to oral or written language. As he purports that when in use, language is building or lessening two main areas of reality being a particular "who" (identity) and a particular "what" (actions). As such, he provides seven realities of life that are enacted through language and that influences the type of language used in context. He also refers to the use of language in combination with other social practices (traditions, values, ways of thinking) within defined groupings as Discourse.

These two theories of language have been described in detail in chapters two and three accordingly in relation to the focus of this study, namely, to build to models of analysis that were applied to the PT process. Despite their seemingly different approaches and focus in their work, the concepts both work for a better understanding of any communication practice. The analysis in chapter six has shown that both oral formulae and discourse characteristics are always present in an oral communication process, but work at different levels and provide differing analytical outcomes in places, but in others remarkably similar ones. This means that in any piece of communication, both the discourse markers and the oral formulae are at play with and/or against each other. In the previous chapter, an analysis of the oral formulae and discourse characteristics found in a story from a PT performance and the enactment of the story was established.

The detailed analysis of the story and enactment, as presented in the data tables show clear differences and a few similarities. It is as a result of these differences that, speculatively, miscommunication between the teller presentation and the enactment presentation could occur. This chapter firstly, aims to interrogate the orality and discourse analytical outcomes of the story and the enactment separately. This will be done by looking at the numbers of occurrence of each characteristic and what this might mean to the story, on the one hand, and the enactment, on the other. With this done, the potential implications of the orality and discourse analysis of the story and enactment will be presented separately.

The separate findings of the story and the enactment will then be compared. This chapter will establish these differences by comparing and contrasting the orality and discourse data. The chapter will only concentrate on the differences, as it is here where potential miscommunication can be determined and the potential reasons for such miscommunication be speculated upon. By doing this, it is preparing the groundwork for understanding why these differences might occur. In proposing what might be done with these differences, or how such differences might be changed, begins to address the main aim of the study which was to establish a frame for better communication and understanding of oral storytelling forms of theatre with the focus on PT.

7.2. Analysis of the teller's story with orality and discourse: what the data is saying

Influenced by the oral tradition, Fox (1986) established a form of theatre that is basically improvised from a teller's story to a performance story. All material available on PT has emphasised the point that it is an improvisational form (Fox 1986, Fox & Dauber 1999, Dennis 2014) that depends on the stories told by an audience member or teller for the theatrical performance to happen. The facts and literature about the improvisation in PT is centred on the theatrical performance and less has been written or mentioned about the teller and the story being improvised.

In PT, the teller narrates an unscripted⁷⁶ story on stage in front of an audience. As noted in chapters five and six, the teller's act of narrating can be considered

⁷⁶ It is not the purpose of this thesis to engage with the debate as to whether all communication is 'scripted' or learned in society or not. What is, however, accepted, is that (effective) strategies to communicate are learned and applied, which is why one can analyse these strategies in an act of

improvising because in most cases with PT performances, the teller is not informed on the theme of the performance beforehand. The story narration is also considered improvised as no teller prepares a story before the event, but has to put together episodes of their life into a story in the moment. The outcome of the narration is unpredictable but emergent, as the teller must organise from memory past events in which case the orality formulae and discourse characteristics are unconsciously or consciously used to shape the narrative. The occurrence of these characteristics in the narration as seen in the previous chapter are disparate. What might this mean for the teller and the teller's story?

7.2.1. The possible meaning in the orality numbers

The table in chapter six shows the number of times each oral formula occurs, and it was argued that the allocation of a formula for any discourse was influenced by the one that came before and after it. I will, however, not be looking at all the formulae but the highest occurrences and what this might be saying about the teller and the possible purpose of the teller's story. It should be noted that the focus is on the teller and not the story because one of the objectives of PT, as mentioned, is to validate the person through the story they share (Salas 1999).

In the analysis of the teller's story, the situated formula has the highest number of 28. From the knowledge of the situated formula in chapter two, one will assume that the actions in the teller's story is situated in real time and place which is recognisable to the receiver. In delving further, and looking at the aim of the PT process, the situated might go beyond situating the actions in the teller's story but rather situating the teller as the main and most important character or symbol in the story. In essence, the actions are used as vehicles to place focus on the person who is carrying out the actions. Therefore, through his story, Adam might have been trying to bring the listeners into recognising him and his reality and not the action occurring in the story. This is done by a constant repetition of what has already been said, especially the use of the word 'I', 'we' and the pauses.

communication. What is important, however, is that in many cases a teller's strategy appears, on the surface, to be more 'natural' or 'usual', while it is accepted that theatrical performance strategies are more overt. The seemingly paradoxical concept of 'acting naturally' captures this problem.

The second highest formula used or enacted in the teller story is redundancy. With several repetitions of the pronouns mentioned above and some phrases like “you know”, one might say that Adam is trying to place the focus of the audience on him as the character in the story and not so much on the actions or storyline. Closely related to the redundant nature of the narration is the additive where the actions of the teller are given one after another without detailed analysis of the process and consequences. The absence of these analyses could point to the fact that the teller wants to be recognised more rather than the story receiving the main focus.

In most PT performances, there are always novice audience members. Even when the audience members are not novice to the PT form, it does not change the structure of the ritual especially with regards to the warm-up as the audience always needs to be warmed up to the idea of telling personal experiences in public spaces. When a teller starts narrating a story, the conductor is seen frequently interjecting into the teller’s story to direct them through questions and remarks. This was however not the case with Adam. Also, the absence of detailed analysis in his story, suggest that he is not new to storytelling and also the PT form.

The homeostatic, conservative and close to human lifeworld formulae help the audience perceive and acknowledge the story as real. This is only possible when focus is placed on the person that is the teller and not the story. Therefore, not being able to see and recognise the teller for who he is, or is trying to portray, might bring an audience to think the story itself is made up for the sake of the performance. Apart from the fact that the story narrated is about the teller, the mention of recognisable places like “Joburg” and of relatable actions like praying, justifies the ‘real’ nature of the experience. When a story is as ‘true’ as Adam’s, the audience participates through empathy towards the teller.

Seeing that empathetic was the lowest in all the orality formulae of the narrated story, one begins to question the measurability of empathy as the addresser (in this case the teller) and the addressee (as the audience) do not have any direct exchanges during the communication process. It is assumed that when the audience can perceive and experience familiar context, as in the case of Adam where he mentions names of familiar places, it potentially breeds that experience of *communitas* which arises from a place of empathy towards the teller and his experience.

In summary, the analysis of the story used in this study strongly suggests that the teller is drawing attention to himself and what he went through, perhaps with the purpose of eliciting empathy. To do this, he describes actions, events and places that are familiar to the audience and checks periodically that they have connected to these actions, events and places.

7.2.2. The possible meaning in the discourse numbers

By narrating his story using oral language, Adam (as the teller) has simultaneously construed seven areas of reality which can be understood using the seven-building tasks of discourse. These realities, however, differ in importance as evident in the number of occurrences of each building task. The discourse task of identity which stands the highest amongst others shows that through this story, Adam is asserting his identity and individuality. By listening to his story, the audience is expected to identify with who and what he is. He is not expected to be seen just as a character in the story being narrated. To recognise and identify the characteristics of an individual, one needs to see them in action and daily life interaction, hence the practice registering second highest in the telling. Adam uses the activities and the actions in the story not (only) as a way of advancing the plot of the story, but as a means of revealing his qualities as an individual. Therefore, the actions and activities given highest importance in the story are used as a means of revealing the identity of the teller. As such, the teller, through the story, is expecting the addressee not to only be a passive consumer of the story, but to identify and acknowledge his identity. (In this sense, one can argue that the teller is pursuing an empathetic reaction from the audience).

In making obvious connections and using recognisable sign systems, the teller is enabling the addressee members (including the enactors) to make connections with their own sign system which, in turn, may help them understand the identity of the teller. Through this, importance is placed on the identity of the teller and not on the actual events of the story. The fact that the relationship and politics building task have the lowest occurrences, strongly suggests that the discourse is a means of revealing and acknowledging the identity of the teller rather than the power relations that might exist.

7.2.3. Cardinal differences in the story's orality and discourse characteristics

Orality as a form of discourse (language-in-use) sits within Discourse. This is so because the combinations of language (in this context oral language), actions, interactions, objects, tools, technologies, beliefs and values that come together to capture the socially and historically significant identities are inherent in the formulae put forward by Ong that define primary orality as one (potentially) untouched by writing. However, these elements are very much present in secondary Orality, for technology and writing that influence secondary Orality are part of the Discourse.

Therefore, the discourse characteristics and orality formulae put together, expatiates what a person is saying, which is using the right words at the appropriate time and place, 'doing' things that make that which is enacted recognisable and accepted as actions in the right time and place, and 'being' the right identity that would use the right words and actions that are recognisable and acceptable to the addressee/audience. There is a very close similarity between the discourse building task and the orality formulae; as can be encountered, for example, in the identity and situated formulae; the practice and redundant formula; significance, sign system, homeostatic and additive, and so forth. y

The separate analyses have shown that the teller, through telling the story in the way that it is told, is wanting to make his identity recognisable and acknowledged by the addressee. The teller therefore portrays and enacts his identity through practices or activities that can be situated in the real world with recognisable sign systems. By using the oral method of redundancy and addition to make the discourses that reveal the identity significant, the teller is making it possible for his identity to be situated in these actions. From these analyses, Adam's story holds an underlying need for the addressees to recognise and acknowledge him.

7.3. Enactment's orality and discourse analysis: what the data is saying

As a theatre form, playback aims for a performance on stage in front of an audience. As already mentioned, there is no overt script, nor in-the-moment rehearsals, as the story for the performance is dependent upon the audience sharing a story. Although it

ends in a performance which could be considered as entertainment⁷⁷, the literature on PT seems to seek to validate the individual sharing the story and the community of that given performance. Birthed from the idea of oral storytelling, this study has shown that a theatrical performance also contains elements of orality and discourse building task. Given this, what meaning could then be deduced from the occurrences of the orality formulae and discourse building tasks in the enactment?

7.3.1. The possible meaning in the orality numbers

The understanding of the orality formulae in the enactment goes beyond verbal rendition as the language of a performance mostly contains movement, actions and gestures. The physical interaction in orality is the same prerequisite Sawyer advocates with improvisation discourse as being a “collaborative emergence” (2004:13), meaning

... theatre improvisations [as oral communication] are *emergent* because the outcome cannot be predicted in advance, and they are *collaborative* because no single participant can control what emerges; the outcome is collectively determined by all participants. (Sawyer 2004:13 emphasis added)

as an improvisational Discourse, the PT enactment of the story is a collaborative venture between the actors who take up different roles seemingly generated from their interpretation of, and reaction to the teller’s story, apart from the teller’s role which is cast by the teller. As mentioned, the actor’s enactment changes the medium (and therefore, potentially, Discourse strategies) to theatre performance, and, like oral communication, what transpires is improvised from memory with the aid of the teller’s narrative. Critically, it can be argued, however, that there are two sets of memories at play: on the one hand the events presented by the teller’s narrative, and on the other hand, the memories of theatrical training, experience, what has worked before in similar situations and what can be deemed to be theatrically effective strategies, to name but a few of the performance memories of the actors.

Thus, in the process of the enactment, the actors seemingly attempt to draw on and situate every gesture, movement or action which is supposed to be made to fit within the context of the teller’s story. However, the number of the homeostatic formulae indicates that the actors are using theatrical gestures and movements from their

⁷⁷ Acknowledging that this is a complex and loaded concept, it is simply used here to suggest that the events are used in a way that moves beyond simply reworking of information, and might move towards domains that are emotional and, perhaps, spiritual.

repertoire of theatre, as seen in chapter two, the homeostatic formula makes a direct and close link between oral communication and memory. It states that, words in the oral culture can be used repeatedly, but with different meaning as the words derive their meaning from the context it is used in. As such, it can be said that the actors in the enactment at least try to situate their theatrical gestures and movements in the teller's story.

To enable the teller and the audience to recognise (supposedly with ease) some of their actions in the story enactment, the actors tend to repeat some movements and gestures; hence the redundant formulae follow after the situated and the homeostatic. Agonistically, a performance without conflict and tension may not engage the audience and may not draw empathy towards the character(s). Therefore, the number of the agonistic moments in the enactment indicates the need for the actors to keep the audience captivated in the enactment which is followed by empathy towards the happenings/events in the story. By doing this, the enactment seeks to fulfil the PT objective of a communal experience, bringing a sense of belonging and of sameness in life experiences.

7.3.2. The possible meaning in the discourse data

A discourse could be verbal or physical. Generally, theatrical discourses can be argued to be more physical (that is to say, bodies seen moving through space and time, with some form of intent) than verbal. The number of the discourse tasks of practice indicates the theatricality of the story. This means that the actors are more concerned with what is doable physically than what is said. Actions are exaggerated and amplified, which is a norm with improvisation as the smallest action opens up interpretation. For example, to illustrate Adam's actions of journeying back and forth from work, Sharon ran around the stage in large circles repeatedly. As the audience, we are able to situate this action to travelling because we have heard the narrated story. This could as well be interpreted as someone running away from something or running about in confusion. Despite the use of a varied repertoire of actions and movements by the actors, some have more importance than others in the story.

The actions and movements, on which emphasis is placed, are used by the actors to reveal the (enacted) identities of the characters and their relationships to each other. Put another way, however, these enacted identities are created through the memory

structures of the actors, keeping in mind that characters in the enactment are not cast - except for the teller's character, every action and movement that an actor makes significantly reveals identities and relationships within the enacted story. Such actions and movements, also bring to light sign systems. The sign system engaged with through the enactment is theatrical, like the use of props which, in PT, are minimal (cloths and chairs) with music. In a way the actors are saying that, though the story is improvised on the spot, dynamics of theatre discourse can still be found in the enactment; thus, making the enactment less of a story narration and more of a theatrical enactment. This argument foregrounds the fact that actors select theatrical actions that are more effective in performance than those that actually speak to the teller's narrative.

7.3.3. Cardinal differences in the enactment's orality and discourse characteristics

There are more similarities than differences in the discourse and orality as applied to as enacted event, as these analytical dynamics complement and reinforce each other when analysing language in use. When paired together, the numbers of some oral formulae and discourse characteristics complement each other in understanding the enactment. Firstly, (and most obviously) the enactment is almost entirely made up of actions and movements. These actions and movements which have been argued to potentially stem from a repertoire of theatre discourse, are situated within (or, given the arguments suggested above, inspired by) the story of the teller, therefore the positive correlation between practice and situatedness. To achieve this, some static theatrical actions must be amplified and given more importance than others.

Giving importance to some, and not all, actions require repetition of the said actions, thus, the number of the redundant formulae. This repetition helps the actions to be situated in the story. In a way, this becomes crucial because, as has become evident in the study, the actors tap not only from the theatrical Discourse for the enactment, but are also influenced by their own, the teller's and the community's Discourses (or, more accurately, what the actors assume or perceived to be these Discourses). It is only through the redundant significant actions that identities and relationships are revealed in the enactment. These actions that enact identities and relationships are supplemented by situations of conflict or the agonistic, but it is important to note that

from the data, the agonistic does not necessarily mean power relations or politics. (In fact, a detailed reading of the teller's narrative could reveal that the agonistic concerns are, arguably, predominantly internal ones to the teller himself, and his relationship with his wife). Together with the agonistic, the sign system in the enactment creates moments of empathy and connection. The conservative formulae of the enactment, speaks more to the theatrical form of PT in keeping with arguably the oldest traditions of theatre being oral storytelling and improvisation.

7.4. The correlation of the story and the enactment

This study has established that the Discourse of PT is comprised of a storytelling mini-ritual and an enactment mini-ritual. The analysis has shown that by using discourse building tasks and orality formulae, each of these mini-rituals or communication moments can be understood independently. However, the entire thrust of the PT Discourse is dependent on the storytelling mini-ritual. This means that without a story, there cannot be any enactment and by extension no PT.

The PT form is based on telling personal experiences and then validating them through enactment – not for the enactors to offer solutions to problems. However, it aims to bring “...critical consciousness to a circumstance that previously may have been inchoately personal” (Fox 2003:50). With this in mind, the assumption is for the enactment to be a ‘mirror reflection’ of the story told by the teller. The analysis of Adam's story and the supposed mirror reflective enactment using the same tools has shown the two acts of communication not to be the same. This section compares both the story and enactment through the numbers of the discourse tasks and orality formulae. It then goes further to speculate on why the differences might have occurred and proposes what could be done about such differences or how to avoid having them.

7.4.1. Differences in the discourse and orality of the story and enactment

PT is experienced at individual as well as collective levels. In his writing, Dauber states four different dimensions from which PT can be understood which are the “content dimension; artistic dimension; ritualistic dimension; and social dimension” (1999:160). The content dimension is formulated from an individually subjective perspective, mostly examined by asking how PT works from the viewpoint of the storyteller. In PT, the strategic position of the approach assumes that the teller is on a subjective self-reflection of his/her life experience through the story narrated. In other words, this is

assumed to be the rationale for the teller to even open his mouth and tell, so to speak for “the teller, in choosing to tell [a] story, traverse[s] a boundary of normal acceptance and even safety...” (Fox 1999:123).

The claimed aim for the playback actors is to discover the telling’s conscious and unconscious theme and unspoken identities, and authentically portray it on stage to attempt to illuminate (by presenting differing perspectives or using different strategies of saying the same thing) and broadening the meaning of the story for the teller. Such a broadening might be undertaken by giving multiple possibilities of interpretation, by seeming to use metaphorical performance language, and/or by converting the aural (of the telling) into the visual and kinetic, thus providing more dimension.

The idea of an authentic performance of the story means it is a mirror representation of the narrated story. One can, however, identify major differences in the teller’s story and the enactment of it. The enactment of the story recorded highest numbers of the orality characteristics than the narrated story.

One other major difference between the narrated story and the enactment of the story, has been recorded with the situated rather than abstract oral characteristics. In the story narration, it was discussed that the teller seeks to situate himself through the story while the enactment of the story seeks to situate and fit different Discourses especially theatre Discourses in the context of the story.

These theatre Discourses, being situated in the context of the story, are generally made up of actions and movements. As such, one observes the correlation in the frequency of the situated oral characteristics and discourse marker-practice. In contrast to this high frequency of the situated and practice in the enactment of the story, are the low frequency in the narrated story.

Strategically, practices or actions are not only physical but also verbal, especially in oral communication. Given that the teller’s story is narrated verbally (that is, orally), every utterance of the teller is considered a practice. On the other side, the PT actors must translate these verbal practices into physical ones for the sake of the theatrical aspect of the form; hence the reason why there are more appearances of the practice characteristics in the story enactment than the story narration. For example, in line 39 (p.172), Adam mentions that they could not stay in Limpopo because it was too hot.

In the enactment, Thembi, who plays Adams' wife, remarks in line 41 (p.203) 'it's hot' and in the next line wipes her face.

For one utterance or practice used by the teller, the actor uses two. The phrase 'it's hot' could be argued to be sufficient to connect the teller's point to the point being made by the enactment, but it was not deemed to be sufficient for the enactment and so the visual and physical gesture is added, presumably for some theatricality. Thembi had to wipe her face as a reflection of the heat which by itself would have still sent the message of heat. As some of these actions are repeated, it adds to the number of practice strategy moments in the enactment. (Speculatively, one wonders whether the gesture alone, or a regular repetition of the gesture, without the verbal explanation might not have been sufficient, given the change in medium).

There is more redundancy in the enactment than the teller story. The redundant characteristics have been noted to be closely related to the significance marker. Data shows that the enactment of the story has the highest frequency with these two. Unlike the prominent differences with the practice and situated characteristics, there are some similarities in how redundancy and significance have been enacted in the narrated story and the story enactment.

The idea of movement, leaving one location to another was equally redundant in the teller's story as well as in the story enactment. Significantly, for Adam as teller, what was significant in the practice was not the moving itself, but the stress (line 52 p.174) associated to the actions, the self-doubt and questioning about the moving (line 66 p.175) and the money wasted (line 55 p.174) in carrying out these movements. Adam still emphasises the idea of stress and monetary value associated with the movement in line 94 (p.179).

The enactment equally portrayed the practice of coming and going. However, the focus here was put on the theatricality or performance problem of portraying (or enacting in a performance space) leaving one location and arriving in another. The enactors attempt to do this through the use of the cloth by picking it up to show that they are leaving one location and laying it down to show arrival in another location. Also, the change of the colour of the cloth from black to green when they arrived Limpopo, emphasises the idea of a different scene. Although the enactment did not

totally reflect what was significant about the movement for the teller, they managed to mention the monetary implications in line 101 (p.209).

Speculatively, it can be suggested that using a simple cloth to stand in for the stresses and strains that the teller went through in the new location, points to the concerns of presenting movement and location by the enactment, as opposed to what actually happened during the move and in the new location. Thus, the discourse of the theatrical possibly imposed itself on the discourse of experience and emotion that the teller presented.

The analysis and comparison of the discourse markers and orality characteristics for both the narrated story and the enacted story have indicated quite huge differences not only in the data recorded, but also the meaning derived from the characteristics for either the narrated story and the enacted story. In the same way that these differences exist, some characteristics are close, or have the same data recorded for the narrated story and the enacted story.

The discourse marker of identity is one, amongst others, that did not record a huge difference in terms of the frequencies between the narrated story and the enacted story. For identity, the narrated story recorded 33, while the enacted story had 29. Does this data indicate that the enacted story captured the essence of the narrated story in terms of portraying the identity of the teller? Given the fact that the teller's character is cast before telling begins, speculatively the actor cast to play the teller is not only listening to the story, but also concentrating on the different identities of the teller so that s/he is able to mirror closely what was heard and seen in the enactment of the story. For example, the tellers' indecisive and uncertain nature was captured by Sharon from lines 87 to 92 (p.208) when she stops the family from settling down in the new location; asking if they were sure about the decision to move. One would have however expected the identity numbers to be slightly higher in the enactment of the story rather than the other way around because, as a team, the actors are not only portraying the identities of the teller, but those of the other characters in the story as narrated by the teller.

Similarly, the orality formulae of conservative and close to human lifeworld, do not have very noticeable differences in both the teller's story and the story enactment as the discourse characteristic of identity. The narrated story recorded 10 for both

conservative and close to human lifeworld, while the enacted story recorded 11 and 8 respectively. While both the narration of the story and the PT enactment are keeping to the tradition of educating through storytelling, Adam's story indirectly enlighten the notion of happiness that is found in family love and togetherness - which the enactment of the story replicated exactly. The mention of actual name of places known to the audience in both the narrated story and the enactment of the story, made it believable and close to life experiences. It is with such instances that connections are made which allow for the experience of *communitas* in the PT ritual.

With the discourse task of politics and sign systems, the teller's story and the story enactment have equal frequencies. Although politics in both the teller's story and the story enactment might mean power relations, the use of a story telling sign system in the teller's story focuses on the Discourse of the teller.

In his story, Adam mentions the move to Limpopo as a way of finding his roots. Every other area in the narrated story where sign system and knowledge are enacted, the focus is on knowledge, as Adam mentions several times about gaining new insight into the importance of staying together as a family no matter where it may be. On the other hand, the sign system in the story enactment focuses more on the Discourse of theatre, and Adam's reasons for the journey appear to be lost. Speculatively one might ask how the enactors might set out to embody the search for insight (the pursuit of staying together is, indeed, embodied in the enactment). Insight and knowledge are extremely difficult concepts to embody, one could argue. Here, the use of music and instruments to accompany the enacted story could be seen as being part of a theatrical medium to address this problem although music is not part of the narrated story.

A close observation from the analysis of the data shows that the story enactment recorded highest numbers with most of the characteristic/formulae than the narrated story. However, the teller's story, employs more additive, aggregative and the connection characteristics/formulae. Given the fact that the teller's interaction with the audience as part of the same act of communication is not directly reciprocal (the audience does not respond directly to the teller or gesture to confirm understanding), there is bound to be the use of addition for the advancement of the plot more than the enactment where the interaction between the actors advances the plot. Moreover, addition in a verbal telling operates from a point of view of the sequencing of events,

whereas in the theatrical sense it usually operates from an approach that foregrounds a cause and effect dynamic⁷⁸.

Such disparities in the enactment and story as outlined in this section, is proof of a possible miscommunication or misinterpretation. What is important however is not just comparing the data, but considering the proportionality in the strategies employed in the narrating of the story and the enactment of the story. Both the teller and the actors employ a different medium which may be referred to as the 'medium of enactment' which will be explored below to ensure that several media can be used in both the telling and the enactment. However, the story may have several meanings depending on which medium emphasis has been laid.

7.5. Digging deep: several meanings in a story

In any story or communication process, the addresser directs and shapes utterances depending on who is listening, on the context of the communication and on the aims of the addresser. All elements that make up the discourse or utterance are interrelated, but work in the communication process at varied degrees. As already mentioned in the study, the degree and emphasis of each element in the discourse depends on the intention of the addresser while also revealing a certain task being performed.

The analysis of Adam's story and the enactment of the story reveals a certain task being performed in both cases as seen above. For Adam, the story is used to accentuate his identity and be recognised as a certain person in the ups and downs at particular moments of his life. However, the performance does not directly dwell on the identities of the teller, but what is enacted more are the actions of going and coming (travelling). In the PT space, the audience sits with so much tension on what to tell as a story but are not left with their own free will of deciding as the theme of the performance becomes a guide to the shape the story will take. Also, the constant invitation by the conductor, with the constant reminder of a personal experience, in some way cautions the mind of the teller to himself.

One of the aims of PT (presented earlier but vitally important to the debate and therefore it is repeated here) is to bring "...critical consciousness to a circumstance

⁷⁸ An argument can be made that the additive in Orality also relies on a cause-and-effect sequencing dynamics, but, speculatively, for the logic of the sequencing, cause-and-effect is far more prevalent (and perhaps a necessary convention) in theatrical performance.

that previously may have been inchoately personal” (Fox 2003:50). The enactment must therefore go beyond the personal dimension of the story and look (potentially) at the political, social, and cultural dimensions of human interactions enacted by the narrated story. Unless the intention is overtly to conscientise both the teller and the audience, such an enactment analysis needs to be contained by the systems of analysis suggested here. To do otherwise would be to overtly and deliberately select the values and practices in place in the company so that these values and practices could form the basis of what might be “critical consciousness.” It is in the slippage between ‘playing the mirror’ to reflect the teller’s story, the consciousness from which it arose and ‘critiquing’ that consciousness, that potential miscommunication might arise. Although some elements of orality and discourse in Adam’s story may have been enacted less than the others, it undoubtedly reveals political, social and cultural dimensions of human interaction.

In both the teller’s story and the enactment of the story, the discourse characteristics of politics carry the same weight. However, these are not enacted in the same way. In the narrated story, Adam portrays a power relation that exists within his family by playing on the use of pronouns as he uses “we” and “us” when he talks about the decisions, expectations and frustrations in the movements. Here one could deduce that Adam was not focusing on himself as an individual, but trying to enact the dynamic in relationships and how life happenings and decisions affect these relations. By doing this, Adam suggests that the teller in PT holds the power to direct the story in any way that suits their intention, despite being conditioned by the theme of the performance and the idea to tell a personal story. In this sense, the contained family unit is set up for Adam.

However, in the enactment of the story, the performers focused on the individual rather than the relationship. For example, in Line 17 (p.201) Sharon asks Thembi “You ready?” when they are about to leave Joburg. Here, what has been revealed is a power dynamic because after saying “Let’s go”, the husband turns to ask the wife “You ready?” which suggests a checking in as an afterthought. Implying, perhaps, that his decision comes first despite any circumstances. Should the “you” be replaced with “we”, the relationship would have played out in a far stronger correlation to when the teller narrated in the story.

As it is with politics and relationship, the same can be said of the discourse element of sign system and knowledge. Both the narrated story and the enactment have equal frequencies in the analytical table, but with different focuses. The analyses of this element in chapter three, emphasised that for the sake of this study we will treat sign system as one element and knowledge as another because even as they are related, in simple terms a sign can be felt and seen while knowledge on the other hand can only be an idea which is neither seen nor felt.

In this sense, Adam uses his story to convey the idea of acquiring new information or understanding when faced with life challenges. Throughout the narrative, Adam mentions realising and gaining knowledge on family bonds and relationships; despite where one finds oneself, and in line 92 (p.178) he says that is what has come out of the whole experience of moving from one location to another. In the enactment of the story, the actors only used words in lines 144 and 145 (p.214) when Sharon repeatedly says: “We need to be together” rather than physically embodying the idea of ‘togetherness’ in a way that would have had far more dimension and depth than words. This nuance reinforces the fact that PT performances look at the performative aspects of the story for the performance. Although using the teller’s words during the performance is a great idea in ensuring an exact representation of the narrated story, theatre is more about actions and movements; hence to be able to enact words and ideas that are not readily actions enlightens the difference between the storytelling mini-ritual and the enactment mini-ritual.

With the sign system element, Adam through his story presents or narrates his belief in a supernatural existence by saying they prayed about their decisions. Speculatively, it can be argued that speaking about praying (and perhaps the act of prayer itself) is more powerful in the absence of action or enactment (as it relies solely on the focus on sound, with no distractions). In this sense, enacting the praying moment seems to lose its ‘sanctity’ in the cliché of kneeling, with the hands together. This tension between the ‘power’ of sound only, and the dimensionality of the enactment where it is appropriate, can lead to a simplification of complex acts of communication, and would challenge, therefore, the ‘critical consciousness’ noted above.

Adam also raises his cultural relationship by talking about his roots. Although this thesis will not engage in depth on this matter, it points out that, if the company is a

multicultural company, then moving across cultures in a physical and enacted 'reflection' of the cultural dynamics of the teller, and presented by the teller, opens many delicate and controversial aspects of co-modification, appropriation, and stereotyping. In this sense, the enactment of the story clearly shows the aspect of prayer but does not accentuate the cultural element of the story. The use of cloths and music might be considered as a cultural sign system; however, its absence in the narrated story shows that these have been used as a PT sign system to enhance the theatricality of the enactment in the particular way that the company thought appropriate.

7.6. The medium of enactment: the reason for differences

PT presents an environment where humanity is validated through the telling and performing of personal experiences (Salas 1999). Stories, as mentioned in chapter five, provide coherence and continuity in life experiences. This can be expressed, or conveyed either with words (verbal or written) or through an enactment (Lapadat *et al.* 2010, Vannini 2009). Theatre, as in the performance of stories, combines both methods of conveyance. This gives an impression of a dualistic medium in conveying stories. That is to say some stories will be conveyed with words and others through actions.

In experiencing stories within a theatrical frame, the medium becomes one unique experience. In his rhetoric of the oral tradition, Ong (1982) emphasises the link between the mind and the voice. In the same line of argument, Kemp (2012:16) speaks against the perception of dualism that sees the mind separate from the body; for the mind (thought) is inherently embodied, while action is also embodied because it is mostly unconscious (Kemp 2012: xvi). If all human senses are used together to communicate (Soukup 2004, Kemp 2012), there cannot exist a dualism in the Discourse of PT. The teller would not only be using the voice medium while the actors embody the story. The story narrated both verbally and physically should not have much difference.

The difference in the narrated story and the enacted story however exists because from all indications (67 in the story enactment, versus 19 in the teller's story for the practice characteristics), the enactment focuses more on the theatricality, or the potential performability of aspects of the teller's story. While listening to the teller, the

actors pick elements from the story that are more physically achievable and think of ways to physically portray what is not immediately obvious. This is where the homeostatic, using theatrical and personal sign systems that exist in the company's, the individual's and the PT genre's repertoire to represent what is not obvious from the story used.

Thus, apart from actions being the most important for the enactment, one other medium is Discourse. In an improvisational context like PT, the actors use different Discourses to try and authentically portray the story: the (perceived or interpreted) teller's Discourse; the story's Discourse; the PT Discourse, theatre Discourse, the audience's Discourse, and the actor's Discourse. Being able to successfully combine these Discourses to achieve an authentic representation of the story, can sometimes be confusing. The reason for tapping into all these Discourses which might cause misinterpretation is because with the enactment, the actors target (what they assume to be) the global community (the playback community), rather than the individual who shared the story. In doing this, the enactment will be fulfilling the potential idea of a communal validation and neglecting that individual validation.

To assert and validate this individuality, the enactment needs to portray the conscious and unconscious identities of the teller in the story. The analysis shows that Adam's conscious theme was asserting his identity and those of others in the story he narrated. These identities are enacted through what he does and says in the story. These activities, through which the identities are enacted, then become the significant point of the story for the teller. The teller's discourse within the PT Discourse (the introduction of a theme at the beginning of the performance) is based on content from an individually subjective perspective which is narrated using verbal and nonverbal language; hence the mind/voice and mind/body causality.

In both the story narration and the story enactment, there is a duality of medium. For the narration it is a mind/voice medium, while for the enactment it is both mind/voice and mind/body. When the actors then seem to use one medium more than the other, the mind/body more than mind/voice there could be miscommunication. How then could this be avoided?

In the first instance, it can be said that a performance cannot entirely happen without the homeostatic theatre sign system. Therefore, the actors need to focus more on the

story and teller's Discourses. To achieve this, an understanding of the discourse characteristics and orality formulae should be made part of the training and rehearsal requirements. This entails asking the question, how does what the teller says enact the building tasks and formulae? In this way, the enactment will be based solely (or, in more likelihood, a more nuanced company engagement) on the teller's and the story's Discourse through the theatre Discourse.

Secondly, performances contain verbal (sound/dialogue/music), nonverbal (facial expressions), body movements (hand/feet movements) and the entire scenery (stage/props/music). Performatively, improvisation tends to be more mind/body inclined. Dauber says that the actors, work "through a connecting pattern between the story [what they hear verbally], the portrayal [individual images and actions that can portray the story], and the social context of the performance [collective, archetypal images and pictures suiting the story]" (1999:167 emphasis added). Critically, the notion of the collective or the archival assumes a sense of generality; yet performing an action that is visually perceived, for example, is very specific in its nature. Nevertheless, given that the story is oral, it is but natural that PT actors verbally include more actions through words and phrases from the teller's story in the story enactment. If this is done using exactly what the teller says, then the misinterpretation might be avoided. The bigger problem lies with the ensemble that interacts more through actions than words.

7.7. Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter has been to analyse the data in chapter six, using the theories in the study as a frame (or frames) of analysis/es to construct potential findings. In the first place, the chapter evaluated what the data from the analyses of the teller's story and the enactment of that story, using orality and discourse potentially, could mean. The orality findings and discourse findings for the teller's story and the enactment were then compared separately after which these were brought together to unravel the differences; to understand why there might be differences and to speculate on how these might be avoided.

In comparing the orality and the discourse for both the teller's story and the enactment separately, it was understood that the elements somehow aided each other in the utterances as they are not enacted individually or in isolation, but all the orality

formulae and discourse characteristics exist in any utterance at the same time. As such, the orality formulae and discourse characteristics could complement each other in the discourse. For example, the use of the situated in the story enabled an understanding of the identity. Despite this, the orality formulae and discourse characteristics are enacted differently in the narrated story and the enactment of the story.

Given the differences, it is deduced that the medium of enactment on the part of the actors might create differences and potential miscommunication between what the teller 'might' have intended (but what seemed to become evident from the analysis) and what the enactment 'might' have intended to reflect to the audience (as this, too, became evident from the analysis). The next chapter will offer, a possible way out of this conundrum, should it be sought.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and implications

8.1. Overview of the research project

As argued throughout this thesis, the fundamental aim for Playback Theatre (PT), according to Fox (2003:50), is to establish a performance vehicle that will bring “...critical consciousness to a circumstance that previously may have been inchoately personal”. In this case, it is assumed that the “inchoately personal” matter or circumstance, arises from the member of the audience who has volunteered to present a story to the other company members and the audience present – the teller of the story. The ‘contract’ of PT is then to creatively interpret the teller’s story and develop some form of enactment (and possibly re-enactment) of the story so that a mode of “critical consciousness” or an alternative perspective on the story may arise from the enactment. The assumption, therefore, is that there would be some form of close correlation, refinement, reflection on and reflection with the act of enactment of the teller’s story. The purpose of this thesis therefore was to critically engage with this assumption, to determine, where possible, whether such a correlation or reflection presented in the enactment can be seen as a fair (in the sense of reasonably accurate) reflection of the ‘inchoately personal circumstance’ presented by the teller, and if there are ‘discrepancies’, how or why have they come about, and what might, speculatively, be done about them.

To engage with analysis, the thesis set up two models of communication analysis. The first of these arose from the work of Walter Ong on Orality (1982; 2002 *et passim*) (presented in chapter two), as the primary mode of communication from the teller of the story would be an oral approach, and one of the modes of communication for the enactment would also be oral.

Although Ong saw that Oral communication in a primary oral culture is directly linked to thought processes (Ong 1982; 1999) which are expressed in words through the voice (partially unlike the literate cultures where writing serves as a residue or a seeming dislocated or non-contextual information storage system) which implies that the articulation of the mind may be seen to be directly linked to oral culture because information can only be heard and stored in the memory for remembrance.

Therefore, using conversation as a point of departure and linking this to storytelling, one encountered:

1. The notions of immediacy;
2. of information being retrieved and provided orally according to the context of the speaker, the listener and the conversation;
3. that the conversation is emergent, and therefore reliant on memory cues as well as contextuality (both from moment to moment in the conversation and taking into consideration the responses being received);
4. that the conversation or story, by its very nature contains an accepted structural patterning; and
5. that the conversation or story has a purpose or rhetorical reason for coming into existence.

In short, the telling of a story is not inchoate, but carefully structured according to specific oral dynamics and formula, and, although it might not be specifically rehearsed, the structure and dynamics of effective storytelling are not 'inchoate.'

To manage all these dynamics requires practice, and to analyse all these dynamics requires an analytical strategy for which Ong provides nine orality formulae:

1. Oral language is additive rather than subordinative;
2. Aggregative rather than analytic;
3. Redundant or copious;
4. Conservative or traditionalist;
5. Close to human lifeworld;
6. Agonistically toned;
7. Empathetic and participatory rather than
8. Objectively distanced;

Homeostatic and situated rather than abstract.

The second mode of analysis drew on the work of Gee (2011a) on discourse and Discourse analysis, as this, too, would apply to both the teller's and the enactment presentations. Gee separates out discourse to refer to specific, moment to moment utterances, whereas Discourse refers to contextual matters that surround or are implied by the utterance (such as the PT event, for example). Discourse analysis interrogates utterances and text as "doing something" (Austin 1962, 2013) in the context in which it is uttered rather than a simple true or false statement. Gee explains

that when “we speak or write, we always often simultaneously construct seven areas of “reality” which he terms the “seven building tasks” (2011a:17), meaning that language builds things in the world that accomplish actions and enact identities.

Therefore, in the process of searching and bringing into play information which can be understood when one generates utterances, Gee (2011a:17-20) provides seven building tasks for the analysis of language-in-use/language-in-action/utterances:

- 1) significance;
- 2) practices;
- 3) identities;
- 4) relationships;
- 5) politics;
- 6) connections; and
- 7) sign systems and knowledge, as described in chapter three.

Having set the systems of analysis in place that were to be used, the thesis turned to describing the potential application of Orality and D/discourse to theatre in community in general (in chapter four) to establish how the two models of analysis might work. Following this, the thesis turned specifically to PT (in chapter five) and expanded on the concepts that were presented in chapter one of the thesis. The purpose here was to pinpoint the specific dynamics and working methods of the concept of PT to determine the ways in which the teller’s story or narrative found its reflection in the enactment presented by the PT troupe or company.

Chapter six presented an example of a PT performance (namely teller’s story and enactment playback). It was critical to apply the orality approach of analysis to both the teller’s presentation and the PT enactment presentation, and then to do the same with both presentations, using the discourse analysis tools. In this way two sets of data could emerge. On the one hand the information contained in the teller’s utterances could be determined using both analytical models so as to determine similarities and differences around that information, and then the same could be done with the enactment. The second, and particularly important set of data for this thesis could come about by comparing and contrasting the data from the teller’s set of utterances with the data from the enactment of performance moments. In this way the potential miscommunication, or mis-reflection could possibly be determined.

The mode of analysis, although somewhat mechanistic, allowed for trends and emphases to develop. Each utterance moment was analysed according to its most dominant Oral formulae and discourse marker or tool interpretation and then these occurrences were added together to show which strategies were more prominent and which least prominent. The tables containing the raw data for this analysis were presented in chapter six.

Chapter seven set out to attempt to interpret these trends and tendencies between the dominant themes and meanings as they applied to the compare and contrast approach between the teller's utterances and the PT performance enactment moments. The overall findings from the comparison are generalised and presented in the section of this chapter that follows. As will be pointed out in the limitations of this study, however, it must be borne in mind that these are generalised. However, they do show trends around potential areas of miscommunication between the two parties, in the sense that the potential (or, perhaps more accurately, following the analysis, misunderstood as) "inchoate personal" circumstances presented by the teller in the story might, in fact, not be made as "critically conscious" as it presumed by the PT theory suggests it does⁷⁹. Alternatively, the "critical consciousness" assumed by the PT company might not be as reflective, or capture the crux of the "inchoate circumstances" as it is assumed to be.

8.2. General Findings

This study seems to suggest a number of concerns in the claims made, and these are presented below. Inevitably, therefore, each finding suggests potential interventions that the PT moment can engage with, refine, adopt, and adapt, or refute.

8.2.1. The change in medium

It must be accepted that the mode of presentation for the teller is mostly oral and therefore the medium is an acoustic one. As soon as one acknowledges this, then the mode of information presentation differs, and in this sense the orality analysis is most useful. From the data and interpretation, one begins to realise that the sequencing of events (following the additive idea) becomes central. In this sense, events are piled one next to another as 'this happened... then that happened' as a type of sequence.

⁷⁹ Quotations from Fox (2003:50).

Secondly, it becomes clear from the teller's data that there are regular checks put in place to determine whether the audience is following the line of events and may be following that what happened could in fact have happened in that way. In this manner both the connection and the shared lifeworld recognition is present and manifest. All three of the dominant formulaic moments are important for remembering.

However, critically, they are also very important so that audience members (both the audience members and the PT company) can 'imagine' or, more specifically, 're-imagine', using their own lifeworlds. the circumstances that are being potentially 'triggered' by the teller's event narration. In this sense the emphases that might be re-imagined depending on the discourse analysis of the teller's utterances, as, now the audience members have to decide what discourse marker to use to interpret a particular acoustic utterance.

However, the medium of enactment is acoustic (through words and through music), visual and kinaesthetic (movement, images, props). On the surface, this seems to be a potentially good development, as more senses can be brought to bear in the enactment, fleshing out what might seem to be a 'single stream of information.'

However, I argue that there are also limitations to this, because by presenting a stream of multiple pieces of information in the enactment, one can actually limit the choices in the imagining or re-imagining that the audience might undertake on their part. This point will become important in the consideration of what to make, 'critically conscious' in a point to be discussed, below. Put another way, the act of imagining or re-imagining is now almost solely in the hands of the decisions made on what to enact, by the company. An example of this can be found in the rather literal embodiment of the religious, by kneeling with the hands together, thus arguably taking away from the intensely spiritual experience imagined from the word prayer. As such, the choice of media or modes of enactment changes the potential choice of information to be utilised in the enactment moment, a matter which is explored in the following finding.

8.2.2. The problems of enactment choices

Given the above argument, the enacting company is caught between two modes of interpretation and presentation. On the one hand they are reliant on the triggers or cues that are provided by (or concluded from) the teller and the teller's story. Thus, the company will draw on their interpretation(s) of the information and emotive qualities

contained in the events told by the teller. (The concern around the lens applied to the act of interpretation is engaged with in the next section).

On the other hand, the PT company is, by definition, a theatre company, steeped in the conventions, practices and strategies of theatrical performance and the forms and ritual of PT. Included in these are, arguably, the past experiences of what ‘worked or did not work’⁸⁰, theatrically in performance. For example, as PT is an improvisational act, such improvisation is not necessarily spontaneous but is steeped in the ‘languages of the stage’ and past experience, framed by the troupe’s socio-cultural backgrounds. Strategically, the company potentially has a ‘performance vocabulary’ on which they can draw in similar situations. In this sense, theatre has its own discourse markers that are different from storytelling discourse markers. Put another way, storytelling has its own performance Discourse, as does the theatre have its own performance Discourse(s).

Two examples from the analysis in this dissertation suggest this. Whereas orality in storytelling suggests that events are presented/related sequentially, the one following the next, the theatrical has two binding opportunities. On the one hand the tradition has it that the one event causes the next event (a stimulus-response imperative for the logic of the action sequence) and the company has to make this manifest for that logic to be present (whereas in storytelling it is taken as a given). On the other hand, the theatrical process allows for an action to be either metaphorised (as, in the example analysed with the running in circles) or for an action to be repeated for emphasis (as the circle running again demonstrates).

From this analysis, one can see how carefully such a transition from one medium to another needs to be undertaken. However, perhaps the most difficult matter is raised in the next finding.

8.2.3. Whose critical consciousness is it, anyway?

It is inevitable that the PT company has to make decisions at every moment of the playback enactment as to what to present, or leave out, how to present it, what needs to be presented literally, by metaphorisation, by imitation or even by mimesis. In the

⁸⁰ The notion of ‘what worked and what did not work’ is complex and may be simplistically described as that which occurs in the staging that connects with, or has an impact on an audience (whether such a connection or impact has to do with meaning, emotional strength, aesthetic interest or whatever).

previous section this was argued around the dynamics of the theatrical performance, and, given the improvisational nature of the process, this can be followed. But, as soon as the intended characteristics of offering an enactment that might foster “critical consciousness” (Fox 2003:50) enters the consideration, then a number of problems and concerns are foregrounded. These are offered here simply as a way of attempting to pinpoint them, rather than to offer solutions (as I believe there are none that are generalisable, except maybe for a clearer awareness of the concerns and an in-group and company contextual way of working with these concerns). Perhaps the clearest example of a missing ‘critical consciousness’ engagement in the example I used in this analysis, was the potential misdirection of attention or the mis-reading of the focus of the teller. Whereas the strongest trend in the teller’s story drew attention to the teller themselves (arguably in a search for empathy), the enactment drew attention to the theatre Discourse. In short (and accepting that this is based only on the one example), the empathy that the teller evokes seemed to want to be downplayed in the enactment and, possibly, replaced by attention to the performance dynamics and (perhaps) the skill at enactment.

This leads me to pose these questions: in this example, what type of ‘critical consciousness’ could be reworked or presented? What type of deeper meaning about life or the story beyond the affirmation of the right to tell stories, have they listened to respectfully and then possibly enacted, could arise? The second question is the loaded one, in my view, as this steers the PT process into the company having to make decisions around a number of social, political, gender, race, class, age and historical matters; matters of Discourse. Such matters speak directly to identity, and a teller’s being-in-the-world. Inevitably, such decision-making on the part of the company members is going to be based on their own ‘being-in-the-world’ and activated in performance, which therefore implies preferences, agendas, and the like from either the individual member of the company or the declared point of departure of the collective. The only other alternative is to consider the idea of universal values, meanings, likes and dislikes and aesthetic norms and standards. In the light of the decolonial thinking and in a country as diverse as South Africa, for example, one can immediately see this problem, and, indeed, in the example used, there was no comment (or very little) on what the teller’s very specific situatedness implied.

Of course, choices are always difficult to make, and one cannot, practically, make a variety of choices for enactment moments so that the same event can be enacted differently so as to offer different critical consciousness alternatives for consideration. Nevertheless, and finally, from this analysis one can see that, theoretically, the power position on the critical consciousness raising lies with the playback company, despite the fact that the teller initiates the process. It is as if the teller ‘hands over’ the power position to the company by telling the story.

8.3. Shortfalls of the study

Critically there are a number of shortfalls to this study that limit the generalisation of the findings. Firstly, the study was conducted using only one example from one PT company. Furthermore, that one example was taken from a range of stories at a particular PT performance event that was clustered around a very open-ended thread of coherence. Thus, the example may not be a typical one. The implications are that different stories, and different companies might yield different results or findings.

Secondly, and resonating with the first limitation, this study did not engage specifically with the social, political, or potentially agenda-driven nature of the company. The study limited itself only to the telling and the enactment. Thirdly, the choice of using two models for analysis proved, at times, cumbersome, and at times led to an individualised interpretation of utterances. However, it was anticipated that, by doing this, I could compare and support decisions made using one analytical frame by employing another, which proved to be the case, by and large. Nevertheless, applying the orality formulae to enactment proved interesting and valid, as was applying discourse analysis to the telling moment.

Also, the analysis centres on one story. Analysing more than one story would have allowed for contrasting and comparing stories, allowing me to look for recurrent patterns in the companies' responses to stories. A further shortcoming was that the teller was not engaged as part of the research either through an interview or questionnaire, which could possibly have given another point of reference against which to validate my analysis. The voices of the playback troupe were also not included.

Finally, the example used was embedded in both a South African landscape, and a particular university's landscape, and this may have had an influence on the telling

and the enactment. Thus, contextualising the company might have shown different results.

8.4. Possible further research

The shortfalls of the study open up avenues for further research in the domain of PT. This study has pointed out the potential areas of miscommunication, misinterpretation or misreading that might occur in the transition between the teller's utterances and the enactment utterances by using the orality formulae and the discourse markers. It would make sense, therefore, to enhance the training of the PT company to recognise such markers and formulae more effectively and to translate these markers and formulae into the enactment medium. As such, a training programme can be devised and tested to determine the efficacy of such a recognition programme.

Secondly, the impact of the socio-cultural and political frame or agenda of a PT company and its interventions could be explored and documented, as this could directly impact on the choices made in the development of 'critical consciousness' in the audience and company in general. Together with this, surfacing different red threads that could be compared with each other across different performances would lead both to a deepening understanding of a chosen 'critical consciousness' stance by the company, and the way this was enacted. Investigating the interplay of discourse markers such as identity, practice, significance, connection, relationship, politics and sign system and knowledge and the orality characteristics could be explored.

Thirdly, this analysis used orality and discourse analysis to attempt to discover findings around miscommunication or misreading. Other systems of analysis (such as Structuralism and Semiotics, and Narrative Theory) would enhance (or counter) the findings from this project.

Fourthly, including the teller's and playback troupe's voices and bringing it in relation to the analysis may be another avenue for further research.

Finally, a particularly important further research project, in my view, would be to delimit the type of audience (that is, non-company members) to engage in the PT moment. Thus, selecting audience members according to specific age, gender, language, cultural, locality (and so on) parameters would lead to important discoveries around audience expectations, experiences, and engagement with 'critical consciousness.'

8.5. Conclusion

I am grateful to have been able to undertake this study as the complexity of the communicative act, and the layering of meaning-making and performance dynamics has greatly enhanced my appreciation of what Playback Theatre has set out to do and does. The findings must be read as an effort to pinpoint places, domains and strategies that will enhance an extraordinarily powerful and communal experience.

SOURCES CONSULTED

- Adderley, D. 2004. Why do tellers tell. Available: www.playbacktheatre.org. Accessed: 10 April 2014.
- Akhutina, TV. 2003. The theory of verbal communication in the works of MM Bakhtin and LS Vygotsky. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology* 41(3-4):96-114.
- Alcorta, CS & Sosis, R. 2005. Ritual, emotion, and sacred symbols. *Human nature* 16(4):323-359.
- Anderson, B. 1996. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. New York: Verso books.
- Archibald, JA. 2008. *Indigenous story work: Educating the heart, mind, body, and spirit*. Canada: UBC press.
- Austin, J. 1962. *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Austin, J. 2013. Performative utterances, in *The Semantics-Pragmatics Boundary in Philosophy* edited by Ezcurdia, M. & Stainton, RJ. Ontario: Broadview Press.
- Bage, G. 2012. *Narrative matters: Teaching history through story*. London: Routledge.
- Banks-Wallace, J. 2002. Talk that talk: Storytelling and analysis rooted in African American oral tradition. *Qualitative health research* 12:410-426.
- Banks-Wallace, J. 1998. Emancipatory potential of storytelling in a group. *The Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 30:17-22.
- Barber, K. 2007. *The anthropology of texts, persons and publics*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Barker, RL. 2008. *The social work dictionary*. Washington: NASW Press.
- Barolsky, K. 2009. Breaking the Silence. *The Telling of Untold Stories in Playback Theatre Training: Combating Stigma and Denial Concerning Sex, Relationship and HIV/AIDS*. MA. University of the Witwatersrand.
- Barolsky, K. 2021. Doing white differently? Playback Theatre and whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 26(2):224-239.
- Bauman, Z. 2013. *Community: Seeking safety in an insecure world*. Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons.
- Baumann, G. 1992b. Ritual implicates 'others': Rereading Durkheim in a plural society in *Understanding Rituals*, edited by Daniel de Coppet. London: Routledge: 97-116.
- Bell, C. 1992. *Ritual theory, ritual practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, C. 1997. *Ritual: perspectives and dimensions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Berg, BL. & Lune, H. 2012. *Qualitative research methods for the social science*. Boston: Pearson.
- Biakolo, EA. 1999. On the theoretical foundations of orality and literacy. *Research in African Literatures* 30(2):42-65.
- Biddle, BJ. 1986. Recent developments in role theory. *Annual review of sociology* 12(1):67-92.
- Bigelow, M. & Watson, J. 2013. The role of educational level, Literacy, and orality in L2 learning. *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition*, edited by Gass, SM & Mackey, A. London: Routledge: 461-475.
- Blair, R. 2015. Notes on Empathy, Cognitive Neuroscience, and Theatre/Education, in *Performance* 2(1-2):1101.
- Blatner, A. 2003. Psychodrama, in *Play therapy with adults* edited by Charles E. Scharfer. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc: 34-61.
- Blatner, A. & Blatner, A. 1988. *The art of play: An adult's guide to reclaiming imagination and spontaneity*. New York, Human Sciences Press.
- Blatner, A. & Blatner, A. 1991. Imaginative interviews: A psychodramatic warm-up for developing role-playing skills. *Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama & Sociometry* 44(3):115-120.
- Bolton, G. 1985. Changes in thinking about drama in education, in *Theory into practice* 24(3):151-157.
- Bolton, G. 1993. Drama in education and TIE: a comparison, in *Learning Through Theatre: New Perspectives on Theatre in Education* edited by Jackson, T. London: Routledge.
- Bowell, P. & Heap, BS. 2013. *Planning process drama: enriching teaching and learning*. London: Routledge.
- Brandt, D. 2011. *Literacy as involvement: the acts of writers, readers, and texts*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Braund, M. & Ahmed, Z. 2019. Drama as physical role-play: actions and outcomes for life science lessons in South Africa. *Journal of Biological Education* 53(4): 412-421.
- Brown, D. 1998. *Voicing the text: South African oral poetry and performance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, D. 1997. Poetry, history, nation: the praises of Shaka kaSenzangakhona. *English in Africa*. 24(1):7-36. Available: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/40238834>. Accessed: 24 June 2020.
- Brown, G. & Yule, G. 1983. *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Brown, D. & Zinkin, L. 1994 *The psyche and the social world: developments in group-analytic theory*. London: Routledge (The International library of group psychotherapy and group process).
- Brownell, J. 1994. Teaching listening: Some thoughts on behavioral approaches. *The Bulletin of the Association for Business Communication* 57(4):19-24.
- Brownell, J. 2010. The skills of listening-centered communication, in *Listening and human communication in the 21st century*, edited by Wolvin, AD. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Bruner, J. 1991. The Narrative Construction of Reality. *Critical Inquiry* 18(1): 1-21.
- Bucholtz, M. & Hall, K. 2004. Language and identity. *A companion to linguistic anthropology* 1:369-394.
- Bundy, P. 2006. Using drama in the counselling process: The moving on project. *Research in drama education* 11(1):7-18.
- Burr, V. 1995. *An introduction to social constructionism*. London: Routledge.
- Butler, J. 2011. *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Caillois, R. 1961. Man, play, and games. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Carlson, M. 1996. Performing the Self. *Modern Drama* 39(4):599-608.
- Chandler, D. 2017. *Semiotics: the basics (2nd edn)*. London: Routledge.
- Chinyowa, K. C. 2000. More Than Mere Storytelling: the pedagogical significance of African ritual theatre. *Studies in Theatre and Performance* 20(2): 87-96.
- Chinyowa, K. 2010. From passive spectatorship to critical citizenship: towards a paradigm shift for community-based theatre practice in Zimbabwe. *African Performance Review* 4(2):54-65.
- Chinyowa, K. 2011. From oral literature to performance analysis: Towards an aesthetic paradigm shift. *Contemporary Theatre Review* 2(1):60-70.
- Chomsky, N. 2013. *Studies on semantics in generative grammar*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Chomsky, N. & Lightfoot, DW. 2009. *Syntactic Structures*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. Available: De Gruyter <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110218329>. Accessed: 24 June 2020.
- Claycomb, RM. 2003. (Ch) oral History: Documentary Theatre, the Communal Subject and Progressive Politics. *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, March:95-122.
- Clayman, SE. & Loeb, L. 2017. Conversation analysis and the study of language and politics, in *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Politics*, edited by Wodak, R. & Forchtner, B. New York: Routledge:276-290.

- Cohen, AP. 2013. *Symbolic construction of community*. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, D. 2018. *The development of play*. London: Routledge.
- Colman, AM. (2009). *A dictionary of psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Collier, K., 2005. *Spotlight on role-play: Interrogating the theory and practice of role-play in adult education from a theatre arts perspective* (Doctoral dissertation). Available: <http://hdl.handle.net/10453/37316>. Accessed: 11 November 2017.
- Connelly, FM. & Clandinin, DJ. 1990. Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational researcher* 19(5):2-14.
- Conrad, D. 2004a. Exploring risky youth experiences: Popular theatre as a participatory, performative research method. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 3(1):12-25.
- Conrad, D. 2004b. Popular theatre: Empowering pedagogy for youth. *Youth Theatre Journal* 18(1):87-106.
- Coplan, A. 2011. Will the real empathy please stand up? A case for a narrow conceptualization. *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 49:40-65.
- Cristina, B. 2015. Narrative Cultures, Situated Story Webs, and the Politics of Relation. *Narrative Culture* 2(1):27-46.
- Cuff, BM. Brown, SJ. Taylor, L. & Howat, DJ. 2016. Empathy: A review of the concept. *Emotion review* 8(2):144-153.
- Czarniawska-Joerges, B. 2004. *Narratives in social science research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Dalrymple, L. 2006. Has it made a difference? Understanding and measuring the impact of applied theatre with young people in the South African context. *Research in drama education* 11(2):201-218.
- Dauber, H. 1999. How Playback Theatre works: A matter for practical research, in *Gathering Voices: Essays on Playback Theatre*, edited by Fox, J. & Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing:157-171.
- Dauber, H. 1999. Tracing the Songlines: Searching for the Roots of Playback Theatre, in *Gathering Voices: Essays on Playback Theatre*, edited by Fox, J. & Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing:67-78.
- De Fina, A. & Johnstone, B. 2015. Discourse analysis and narrative. *The handbook of discourse analysis* (2nd edn), edited by Tannen, D., Hamilton, HE. & Schiffrin, D. John Wiley & Sons, Inc:152-167.
- Andrew, DH., Hull, TD. & Donahue, JA. 2009. Storytelling as an Instructional Method: descriptions and research question. *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning* 2:6-23.
- Delanty, G. 2010. *Community*. London: Routledge.

- Dennis, R. 2004. *Public performance, personal story: a study of playback theatre*. Doctorate, Griffith University. Available: www.playbacktheatre.org. Accessed: 15 June 2010.
- Dennis, R. 2007a. Inclusive democracy: a consideration of playback theatre with refugee and asylum seekers in Australia. *Research in drama education* 12(3):355-370.
- Dennis, R. 2007b. Your story, my story, our story: Playback theatre, cultural production, and an ethics of listening. *Storytelling, Self, Society* 3(3):183-194.
- Dennis, R. 2008. Refugee performance: Aesthetic representation and accountability in playback theatre. *Research in Drama Education* 13(2):211-215.
- Denzin, NK. & Lincoln, YS. 2000. *Handbook of qualitative research*. California: Sage Publications.
- Durant, A. 1984. The concept of secondary orality: observations about speech and text in modern communications media. *The Dalhousie Review* 64:332-353.
- Duranti, A. & Goodwin, C. 1992. *Rethinking context: language as an interactive phenomenon*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ebewo, PJ. 2017. Applied theatre as an alternative communication approach for the development of rural communities in Africa. *Communitas* 22:75-86.
- Edwards, JA. 1993. Principles and contrasting systems of discourse transcription, in *Talking data: Transcription and coding in discourse research*, edited by Edwards, JA. & Lambert, MD. New York: Psychology Press.
- Edwards, JA. 2003. The Transcription of Discourse, in *The handbook of discourse analysis*, edited by Schiffrin, D. & Hamilton, HE. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Elliott, R. Bohart, AC. Watson, JC. & Greenberg, LS. 2011. Empathy. *Psychotherapy* 48(1):43.
- Erickson, F. 2015. Oral discourse as a semiotic ecology. The co-construction and mutual influence of speaking, listening, and looking, in *The handbook of discourse analysis*, edited by Tannen, D. & Schiffrin, AD. Oxford: WILEY Blackwell.
- Erickson, F. 2002. Culture and human development. *Human Development* 45(4):299-306.
- Fairclough, N. 1989. *Language and power*. London: Longman.
- Fairclough, N. 2003. *Analysing discourse: textual analysis for social research*. London: Routledge.
- Farrell, TJ., Soukup, PA. & Ong, WJ. 2012. *Of Ong and media ecology: essays in communication, composition and literary studies*. New York: Hampton Press.
- Feldhendler, D. 2007. Playback theatre: A method for intercultural dialogue. *Scenario*. Available: <http://scenario.ucc.ie>. Accessed: 9 June 2019.

- Feldhendler, D. 2008. Playback Theatre, Life History and Biographical Research, in *Wo Geschichten sich begegnen–Gathering Voices*, edited by Dauber, H. Kassel: Kassel University Press.
- Finnegan, RH. 2012. *Oral literature in Africa*, Cambridge: Open Book Publishers.
- Floyd, JJ. 2010. Listening: A dialogic perspective, in *Listening and human communication in the 21st century*, edited by Wolvin, AD. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell:127-140.
- Fox, H. 2007a. Playback Theatre, in *Interactive and improvisational drama: varieties of Applied Theatre & Performance*, edited by Blatner, A. & Wiener, DJ. New York: iUniverse.
- Fox, H. 2007b. Playback theatre: Inciting dialogue and building community through personal story. *The Drama Review*, 51(4):89-105.
- Fox, J. 1999a. Epilogue: The journey to Deep Stories, in *Gathering voices: essays on playback theatre*, edited by Fox, J.& Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing: 194-197.
- Fox, J. 1999b. A ritual for our time, in *Gathering voices: essays on playback theatre*, edited by Fox, J.& Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing: 116-134.
- Fox, J & Dauber, H.(eds). 1999. *Gathering voices: essays on playback theatre*. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing.
- Fox, J. 2003. *Acts of service: spontaneity, commitment, tradition in the nonscripted theatre*. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing.
- Fox, J (ed). 2008. *The essential Moreno: writings on psychodrama, group method, and spontaneity*. New Platz: Tusitala Publishing.
- Fox, H. & Leeder, A. 2018. Combining theatre of the oppressed, playback theatre, and autobiographical theatre for social action in higher education. *Theatre Topics* 28(2):101-111.
- Friesen, N. 2018. The genealogy of the textbook as an educational form: Orality and literacy in education. *Explorations in Media Ecology* 17(4):411-435.
- Furniss, G. & Gunner, L. 2008. *Power, marginality and African oral literature*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gallagher, K. & Rodricks, DJ. 2017. Hope despite hopelessness: Race, gender and pedagogies of drama/applied theatre as a relational ethic in neoliberal times. *Youth Theatre Journal* 31(2):114-128.
- Ganyi, FM. 2014. Orality, Literacy and Pedagogical Implications in Traditional African Societies: The Bakor Experience in Cross River State, Nigeria. *International Journal of African History, Cultures and Traditions* 1(2):60-81.
- Garvey, C. 1990. *Play*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- Gee, JP.1991. A linguistic approach to narrative. *Journal of narrative and life history* 1(1):15-39.
- Gee, JP. 1999. *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*, New York: Routledge.
- Gee, JP. 2011a [2004]. *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*, London: Routledge.
- Gee, JP. 2011b, 2014. *How to do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit*, New York: Routledge.
- Gee, JP. 2017. Identity and diversity in today's world. *Multicultural Education Review* 9(2):83-92.
- Geertz, C. 1980. Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought. *The American Scholar* 49(2):165-179.
- Gintsburg, S. 2020. Living through Transition: The Poetic Tradition of the Jbala between Orality and Literacy at a Time of Major Cultural Transformations Vivir en la transición: la tradición poética de. *RILCE* 36:1434-54.
- Goffman, E. 1967. *Interaction ritual: essays on face-to-face interaction*. Oxford: Aldine.
- Goffman, E. 1990 [1959]. *The presentation of self in everyday life*. London: Penguin.
- Göncü, A. & Perone, A. 2005. Pretend Play as a Life-span Activity. *Topoi* 24(2):137-147.
- Goody, J. 1961. Religion and ritual: the definitional problem. *The British Journal of Sociology* 12(2):142-164.
- Goody, J. 1977. *The domestication of the savage mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goody, J. 1987. *The interface between the written and the oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goody, J. 2010. *Myth, ritual and the oral*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gough, DH. & Bock, Z. 2001. Alternative perspectives on orality, literacy and education: A view from South Africa. *Journal of multilingual and multicultural development* 22(2):95-111.
- Guest, G., Namey, EE. & Mitchell, ML. 2013. *Collecting qualitative data: a field manual for applied research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Gumperz, JJ. 1982. *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gunner, E. 2017. Forgotten men: zulu bards and praising. *African Languages/Langues Africaines* 1976, 2(24) :71-90.
- Gunner, E.1979. Songs of Innocence and Experience: Women as Composers and Performers of "Izibongo", Zulu Praise Poetry. *Research in African Literatures*,

10(2):239-267. Indiana University Press. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/3818990>. Accessed: 24 June 2020.

Hall, K. & Nlepp, C. 2015. Code – Switching, Identity and Globalization, in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed), edited by Tannen, D., Hamilton, HE. & Schiffrin, D. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Havelock, E. 1991. The oral-literate equation: A formula for the modern mind, in *Literacy and orality*, edited by Olson, DR. & Torrance, N. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 11-27.

Havelock, EA. 1979. The ancient art of oral poetry. *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 12:187-202.

Havelock, EA. 1986. *The muse learns to write: Reflections on orality and literacy from antiquity to the present*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Havelock, EA. 1987. The Cosmic Myths of Homer and Hesiod. *Oral Tradition* 2(1):31-53.

Hérbert, L. 2011. The Functions of Language, in Louis Hérbert (dir.), *Signo* [online], Rimouski (Quebec): <http://www.signosemio.com/jakobson/functions-of-language.asp>. Accessed: 11 November 2015.

Heidegger, M. 2008. On the essence of truth, in *Truth: Engagements across philosophical traditions* edited by Wood, D. & Medina, J. London: Blackwell Publishing, 243-258.

High, S., Little, E. and Duong, T.R. eds. 2014. *Remembering Mass Violence: Oral History, New Media and Performance*. University of Toronto Press.

Hoesch, F. 1999. The red thread: Storytelling as a healing process, in *Gathering voices: Essays on playback theatre* edited by Fox, J. & Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing: 46-66.

Hodges A. 2015. Intertextuality in Discourse, in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed) edited by Tannen, D., Hamilton, HE. & Schiffrin, D. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Holstein, J. & Gubrium, J. 2000. *The self we live by. Narrative identity in a postmodern world*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hornby, AS. 2010. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English*. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Horowitz, R. & Samuels, SJ. 1987. *Comprehending oral and written language*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Huizinga, J. 1999. *Homo ludens: a study of the play-element in culture*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Hutt, J. & Hosking, B. 2004. Playback Theatre: A Creative Resource for Reconciliation. *Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts. A Virtual Collection*, Brandeis University.

- Hutchby, I. and Wooffitt, R. 2008. *Conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Hutchby, I. 2017. *Conversation analysis*. *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, Nov 29:1-9.
- Jackson, A. 2007. *Theatre, Education and the Making of Meaning: Art or Instrument?* New York: Manchester University Press.
- Jakobson, R. 1960. Linguistics and poetics, in *Style in language* edited by Sebeok, TA. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 350-377.
- James, P., Nadarajah, Y., Haive, K. & Stead, V. 2016. *Sustainable communities, sustainable development: Other paths for Papua New Guinea*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Jennings, S. 2017a. *Creative play with children at risk*. London: Routledge.
- Jennings, S. 2017b. *Creative play and Drama with Adults at Risk*. London: Routledge.
- Jones, RH. 2012. *Discourse analysis: A resource book for students*. New York: Routledge.
- Jordaan, O. 2015. *Performing Synergy: the use of Playback Theatre in exploring personal and dominant discourses amongst adolescents*. MA Dissertation, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- Jordaan, O. & Coetzee, M-H. 2017. Storying worlds: using playback theatre to explore the interplay between personal and dominant discourses amongst adolescents. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 22(4):537-552.
- Kern, R. and Schultz, JM. 2005. Beyond orality: Investigating literacy and the literary in second and foreign language instruction. *The Modern Language Journal* 89(3):381-392.
- Kemp, R. 2012. *Embodied acting: what neuroscience tells us about performance*. London: Routledge.
- King, ML. 1968. I have a dream. *Negro history bulletin* 31(16). Accessed: 28 September 2014.
- Kirby, M. 1972. On acting and non-acting. *The drama review: TDR*, 16: 3-15.
- Komito, L. 2011. Social media and migration: Virtual community 2.0. *Journal of the American society for information science and technology* 62(6):1075-1086.
- Kowalsky, R., Keisari, S. & Raz, N. 2019. Hall of mirrors on stage: An introduction to psychotherapeutic playback theatre. *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 66:101577.
- Labov, W. 2008. Oral narratives of personal experience. *Cambridge encyclopedia of the language sciences*, 546-548.

- Ladkin, D. & Taylor, SS. 2010. Enacting the 'true self': Towards a theory of embodied authentic leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly* 21(1):64-74.
- Ladousse, GP. 1987. *Role play* (Vol. 3). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Laitinen, A. 2002. Charles Taylor and Paul Ricoeur on self-interpretations and narrative identity. *Narrative research: Voices of teachers and philosophers*, 57-76.
- Landy, RJ. 1994. *Drama therapy: Concepts, theories and practice*. Springfield: Charles C Thomas.
- Lapadat, JC., Black, NE., Clark, PG., Gremm, RM., Karanja, LW., Mieke, LW. & Quinlan, L. 2010. Life challenge memory work: Using collaborative autobiography to understand ourselves. *International Journal of Qualitative Method* 9(1):77-104.
- Lawrence, RL. and Paige, DS. 2016. What our ancestors knew: Teaching and learning through storytelling. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 14(9):63-72.
- Lord, AB. 1986. Perspectives on recent work on the oral traditional formula. *Oral Tradition* 1(3):467-503.
- Lord, AB. 1987. Characteristics of Orality. *Oral Tradition*, 2(1): 54-72.
- Maritz, GU. & Coetzee, MH. 2012. Creative Synergy: Using Community Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry for Young People's Critical Participation in HIV Prevention and Education. *Youth Theatre Journal* 26(2):133-145.
- Mbeki, T. 2005. I am an African. *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship* 17-18. Accessed: 28 September 2014.
- McAdams, DP. and McLean, KC. 2013. Narrative identity. *Current directions in psychological science* 22(3):233-238.
- Mccord, K. 2009. Improvisation as communication: Students with communication disabilities and autism using call and response on instruments. *Australian Journal of Music Education* 2:17-26.
- McKenna, T. 1999. Layers of Meaning: Research and Playback Theatre—A Soulful Construct in *Gathering voices: Essays on playback theatre* edited by Fox, J. & Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing:172-184.
- Mckenzie, J. & Street, A. 2017. Philosophical Interruptions and Post-Ideational Genres: Thinking Beyond Literacy. *Inter Views in Performance Philosophy*. London: Palgrave:117-124.
- Merriam, SB. 2009. *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mlama, P. 1995. Oral art and contemporary cultural nationalism, in *Power, marginality and African oral literature* edited by Furniss, G. 7 Gunner, L. New York: Cambridge University Press: 23-34.

- Morgan, N. & Saxton, J. 1989. *Teaching drama: a mind of many wonders*, Cheltenham: Thornes.
- Moran, GS. & Alon, U. 2011. Playback theatre and recovery in mental health: Preliminary evidence. *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 38(5):318-324.
- Narayan, K. & George, M K. 2003. Personal and folk narrative as cultural representation, in *Inside interviewing: new lenses, new concerns* edited by Holstein, JA. & Gubrium, JF. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Nicholson, H. 2005. *Applied drama: the gift of theatre*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Norrick, NR. 1997. Twice-Told Tales: Collaborative Narration of Familiar Stories. *Language in Society* 26(2):199-220.
- Nisbet, R. 2014. *The quest for community*. Open Road Media.
- O'Neill, C. 1985. Imagined worlds in theatre and drama. *Theory into practice* 24(3):158-165.
- O'Neill, C. 1995. *Drama worlds: a framework for process drama*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- O'Toole, J. 1992. *The process of drama: negotiating art and meaning*. London: Routledge.
- Okpewho, I. 1992. *African oral literature: backgrounds, character, and continuity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Ong, WJ. 1999. Orality, literacy, and modern media, in *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society* edited by Crowley, D. & Heyer, P. London: Routledge, 60-67.
- Ong, WJ. 1980[1979]. Literacy and Orality in Our Times. *Journal of Communication* 30:197-204.
- Ong, WJ. 1982a. Oral remembering and narrative structures, in *Analyzing discourse: Text and talk* edited by Tannen, D. Washington: Georgetown University Press:12-24.
- Ong, WJ. 2002[1982b]. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. London: Routledge.
- Park-Fuller, LM. 2003. Audiencing the audience: Playback theatre, performative writing, and social activism. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 23(3):288-310.
- Park-Fuller, LM. 2005. Beyond role play: playback theatre and conflict transformation. International Playback Theatre Symposium. Available: www.playbacktheatre.org. Accessed: 10 March 2014.
- Pellegrini, AD. & Smith, PK. 1998. The Development of Play During Childhood: Forms and Possible Functions. *Forum on Play: Development of Play* 3(2):51-57.

- Peltoniemi, S. 1997. Listening with The Body on The Stage of Playback Theatre. Available: www.playbacktheatre.org. Accessed: 20 February 2014.
- Piaget, J. 2002. The language and thought of the child. London and New York: Routledge.
- Piaget, J. 2013. Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood. Hoboken: Routledge.
- Pinker, S. 2003. *The language instinct: How the mind creates language*. London: Penguin.
- Poplack, S. 2001. Code-switching (linguistic). *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioral sciences* 12:2062-2065.
- Poplack, S. 2010. Contrasting patterns of codeswitching in two communities, IN *Codeswitching* edited by Heller, M. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton: 215-244.
- Prendergast, M. and Saxton, J. 2020. Applied Theatre and Education: We Are Not-Yet.... *Canadian Theatre Review* 181:8-12.
- Prentki, T. & Preston, S. 2009. *The applied theatre reader*. New York: Routledge.
- PU, MM. 2006. Spoken and Written Narratives: A Comparative Study. *Journal of Chinese Language and Computing* 16(1):37-62.
- Raji-Oyelade, A. and Oyeleye, O. 2020. Introduction: The Postproverbial Agency: Texts, Media and Mediation in African Cultures. *Matatu* 51(2):29-240.
- Rappaport, RA. 1999. *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reddy, V. & Butler, J. 2004. Troubling genders, subverting identities: interview with Judith Butler. *Agenda* 18(62):115-123.
- Robin, BR. 2015. The effective uses of digital storytelling as a teaching and learning tool, in *Handbook of research on teaching literacy through the communicative and visual arts* (vol 2) edited by Flood, J., Heath, SB. & Lapp, D. New York: Routledge: 457-468.
- Roussou, M. 2004. Learning by doing and learning through play: an exploration of interactivity in virtual environments for children. *Computers in Entertainment (CIE)* 2(1):10-32.
- Rowe, NA. 2004. *Personal Stories in Public Places: An investigation of playback theatre*. Doctorate, University of Bristol. Available: www.playbacktheatre.org. Accessed: 10 March 2014.
- Rowe, NA. 2007. *Playing the other: Dramatizing personal narratives in playback theatre*. Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Ryan, GW. & Bernard, HR. 2000. Data management and analysis methods, in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Densin, N. & Lincoln, Y. Thousand Oaks: Sage: 769-802.

- Sajnani, N., Linds, W., Wong, A., Ndejuru, L. 2014. Turning Together: Playback Theatre, Oral History, Trauma, and Arts-Based Research in *The Montreal Life Stories Project in Remembering Mass Violence: Oral History, New Media and Performance* edited by High S., Little E. & Doung T R. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 91-110.
- Salas, J. 1983. Culture and community: Playback theatre. *The Drama Review: TDR* 27(2):15-25.
- Salas, J. 1993. *Improvising real life: Personal Story in Playback Theatre*. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing.
- Salas, J. 1999. What is “good” playback theatre, in *Gathering Voices: Essays on Playback Theatre*, edited by Fox, J. & Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing: 17-35.
- Salas, J. 2009. Playback Theatre: A Frame for Healing, in *Current Approaches in Drama Therapy*, edited by Johnson, DR. & Emunah, R. Springfield: Charles C, Thomas, Publishers: 445-460.
- Salas, J. 2006. Doing Playback Theatre in a Foreign Language: Learning Language, Learning Culture, Learning Identity. Available: www.playbacktheatre.org. Accessed: 20 February 2014.
- Salas, J. 2020. Enacting testimony: Trauma stories in Playback Theatre in *Trauma in the Creative and Embodied Therapies: When Words are Not Enough* edited by Chesner, A. Routledge: 19-29.
- Salen, K., Tekinbaş, KS. & Zimmerman, E. 2004. *Rules of play: Game design fundamentals*, Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Sapir, E. 1921. An introduction to the study of speech. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Citeseer.
- Sawyer, RK. 2004. Creative teaching: Collaborative discussion as disciplined improvisation. *Educational researcher* 33(2):12-20.
- Sessions, LF. 2010. How offline gatherings affect online communities: when virtual community members ‘meetup’. *Information, Communication & Society* 13(3):375-395.
- Schechner, R. 1974. From ritual to theatre and back: The structure/process of the efficacy-entertainment dyad. *Educational Theatre Journal* 26(4): 455-481.
- Schechner, R. 1993. *The future of ritual: writings on culture and performance*. London: Routledge.
- Schechner, R. 2003. *Performance theory*. London: Routledge.
- Schechner, R. & Appel, W. 1990. *By means of performance: intercultural studies of theatre and ritual*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Schiffrin, D. 2001. Discourse markers: Language, meaning, and context, in *The handbook of discourse analysis* edited by Tannen, D., Schiffrin, D. & Hamilton, HE. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 54-75.
- Schiffrin, D. 1996. Narrative as Self-Portrait: Sociolinguistic Constructions of Identity. *Language in Society* 25(2):167-203.
- Scribner, S. & Cole, M. 1981. *The psychology of literacy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Searle, JR. 1976. A classification of illocutionary acts. *Language in society* 5(1):1-23.
- Searle, JR. 2000 [1965]. What is a speech act? In *Perspectives in the philosophy of language: a concise anthology* edited by Robert, JS. Toronto: Broadview: 253-268.
- Sibanda, R. & Kajee, L. 2019. Home as a primary space: Exploring out-of-school literacy practices in early childhood education in a township in South Africa. *South African Journal of Childhood Education* 9(1):1-10.
- Soukup, PA. 2004. Walter J. Ong, SJ: A retrospective. *Communication Research Trends* 23(1):3-23.
- Soukup, PA. 2005. Looking Is Not Enough: Reflections on Walter J. Ong and Media Ecology. *Proceedings of the Media Ecology Association* 6:1-9.
- Soukup, PA. 2007. Orality and literacy 25 years later. *Communication Research Trends* 26(4):1-33.
- Stacey, C. and Mason, N. 2019. Composing, creative play and the ethical incomplete: practice-based approaches in Ethnomusicology. *SAMUS: South African Music Studies* 38(1):19-40.
- Stephens, J. and McCallum, R., 2013. *Retelling stories, framing culture: traditional story and metanarratives in children's literature*. London: Routledge.
- Stevenson, A. 2010. *Oxford dictionary of English*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tannen, D. 1982. *Analyzing Discourse: Text and Talk*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Taylor, P. 2003. *Applied theatre: creating transformative encounters in the community*, Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Taylor, S. 2013. *What is discourse analysis?* London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Theriault, SA. 2009. The Development of Theatre: Peter Brook and the Human Connection. *Inquiries Journal/Student Pulse* [Online],1. Available: <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/a?id=101>. Accessed: 10 March 2015.
- Thomas, AJ. & Schwarzbaum, SE. 2016. *Culture and identity: Life stories for counselors and therapists*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

- Thompson, J. 2003. *Applied theatre: Bewilderment and beyond*, Oxford: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Townend, J. & Walker, E. J. 2006. *Structure of language: Spoken and written English*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.
- Tribus, Angela C. 2017. "The Communicative Functions of Language: An Exploration of Roman Jakobson's Theory in TESOL". *MA TESOL Collection*. 723. https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection/723. Accessed: 30 September 2019.
- Turner, RH. 2006. Role taking: Process versus conformity, in *Life as theater: A dramaturgical sourcebook* edited by. Brissett, D. & Edgley, C. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Turner, V.1995[1969]. *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. Chicago: Aldine publishing.
- Turner, V.1979. Frame, flow and reflection: Ritual and drama as public liminality. *Japanese Journal of religious studies* 6(4):465-499.
- Turner, V.1980. Social dramas and stories about them. *Critical inquiry*, 7(1):141-168.
- Turner, V.1982. *From ritual to theatre: the human seriousness of play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.
- Turner, V.1988. *The anthropology of performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Tuwe, K. 2016. The African oral tradition paradigm of storytelling as a methodological framework: Employment experiences for African communities in New Zealand. In *African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) Proceedings of the 38th AFSAAP Conference: 21st century Tensions and Transformation in Africa*. Accessed: 30 September 2019.
- Tyson, L. 2006. *Critical theory today: a user-friendly guide* (2nd edn). New York: Routledge.
- United Bible Association. 1994. *Good News Bible: With Deuterocanonical Books*. Nairobi: [sn].
- Van Dijk, TA. 1982. Episodes as units of discourse analysis, in *Analyzing discourse: Text and talk* edited by Tannen, D. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 177-195.
- Vannini, A. 2009. Stories and storytelling. *Encyclopedia of Communications Theory* June 2014 ed. Thousand Oaks: SAGE:935-37.
- Verheijen, GP., Stoltz, SE., van den Berg, YH. and Cillessen, AH. 2019. The influence of competitive and cooperative video games on behavior during play and friendship quality in adolescence. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 91, February:297-304.

Whisnant, C. 2012. Foucault & Discourse: A Handout for HIS 389. Available: https://webs.wofford.edu/whisnantcj/his389/foucault_discourse.pdf. Accessed: 20 February 2015.

Wilshire, B.1982. *Role playing and identity: The limits of theatre as metaphor*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Wood, LA. & Kroger, RO. 2000. *Doing discourse analysis: methods for studying action in talk and text*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Woodruffe-Burton, H. & Elliott, R. 2005. Compensatory consumption and narrative identity theory, in *NA-Advances in Consumer Research* edited by Geeta, M., Akshay R. Rao & Duluth, MN. 32:461-465.

Woolard, KA. 2006. Codeswitching, in *A companion to linguistic anthropology* edited by Duranti, A. Malden: Blackwell publishing:73-94.

Yotis, L., Theocharopoulos, C., Fragiadaki, C. & Begioglou, D. 2017. Using playback theatre to address the stigma of mental disorders. *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 55:80-84.

ZÁNKAY, A. 1999. The teller's story and personal growth, in *Gathering Voices: essays on playback theatre* edited by Fox, J. & Dauber, H. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing:187-193.

Zanjam, NS. 2011. *Language and interpretation in Playback Theatre in a multilingual society: Drama for Life Playback Theatre Company, MA Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa*.

Appendix A

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Dear Participant

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY: ORALITY IN PLAYBACK THEATRE: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

I am Ngefor Shella Zanjam, a researcher at the University of Pretoria conducting research in Playback Theatre under the supervision of Prof Allan Munro and Prof Marié-Heleen Coetzee of the Department of Drama, University of Pretoria. The research seeks to critically analyse storytelling and Orality in Playback Theatre performances using oral formulae and D/discourse structures as analytical tools.

I am requesting permission to use your story in this performance as data for the research. You are given the assurance that all information received will remain confidential and that your participation will remain anonymous. Your contribution to this study is extremely important to ensure the success of the research. Your participation in this research study is, however, voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time without negative consequences. Note that only pseudonyms or codes will be used in the research report and after the study is completed, the data will be stored in Room 2-16, Drama Department archive for 15 years.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact:

- Professor Allan Munro (supervisor)
 - Cell: 0828230819
 - E-mail: allan.munro@wcsisp.co.za
- Professor Marié-Heleen Coetzee (co-supervisor)
 - Cell: 0825529908
 - E-mail: marie-heleen.coetzee@up.ac.za
- Ngefor Shella Zanjam (Researcher/Student)
 - Cell: 083 513 1052
 - E-mail: ngeforshe@gmail.com or shellybright2004@yahoo.co.uk

PLEASE COMPLETE:

☐ **Consent**

- I have read this consent letter and I voluntarily give my consent to participate in this study.
- I also give my consent that the information provided by me in the performance may be utilised for research purposes.

Participant's full names:

Participant's contact details:

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B

CONSENT FORM FOR ACTORS

Dear Participant

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY: ORALITY IN
PLAYBACK THEATRE: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

☐ **Description of the research**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Ngefor Shella Zanjam under the supervision of Prof Allan Munro and Prof Marié-Heleen Coetzee of the Department of Drama, University of Pretoria. The research seeks to critically analyse storytelling and Orality in Playback Theatre performances using oral formulae and D/discourse structures as analytical tools. Attached is a summary of the research.

☐ **Protection of confidentiality and voluntary participation**

You are given the assurance that all information received will remain confidential and that your participation will remain anonymous. Your contribution to this study is extremely important to ensure the success of the research. Your participation in this research study is, however, voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time without negative consequences. Note that only pseudonyms or codes will be used in the research report.

☐ **Your participation**

Your task is to participate in a semi-structured one on one interview and you might also be approached later informally with questions if necessary. Data will be collected through a video recording of the performance while the interviews will be audio and notes taken.

Should any further research stem from the data you provided, the researcher will ask for your consent again.

☐ **Potential benefits**

Once the data has been analysed, a summary of findings will be presented within the thesis and will be readily available to participants and participating institutions. Should these institutions require further engagement the researcher would, as far as is

practical, be willing to meet with them to give more comprehensive feedback. In this way, your contributions to the research may indirectly benefit you and your institution in future.

☐ **Data Storage**

Data will be stored in Room 2-16, Drama Department archive for 15 years.

☐ **Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact:

- Professor Allan Munro (supervisor)
 - Cell: 0828230819
 - E-mail: allan.munro@wcsisp.co.za
- Professor Marié-Heleen Coetzee (co-supervisor)
 - Cell: 082 552 9908
 - E-mail: marie-heleen.coetzee@up.ac.za
- Ngefor Shella Zanjam (Researcher/Student)
 - Cell: 083 513 1052
 - E-mail: ngeforshe@gmail.com or shellybright2004@yahoo.co.uk

Please send the completed consent back to Ngefor Shella Zanjam by email.

Yours faithfully

NGEFOR SHELLA ZANJAM

RESEARCHER/STUDENT

PLEASE COMPLETE:

☐ **Consent**

- I have read this consent letter and I voluntarily give my consent to participate in this study.
- I also give my consent that the information provided by me in the interview may be utilized for research purposes.

Participant's full names:

Participant's contact details:

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____