

*Exploring Forum Theatre as professional
learning for high school teachers*

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(Research)

Statement of originality

This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

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Abstract

In the context of teacher professional development, policy trends in consistency and “quick fixes” have narrowed ongoing learning experiences in practice-based education. This thesis aims to contribute to the growing field of research that is exploring approaches to teacher professional development where interactivity, embodiment and critical reflection are the focuses of practice. Using Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre as a professional development strategy, this research took a mixed method approach of Critical Participatory Action Research, and the reflective and analytical processes of ethnodrama, to explore the considerations facilitators and participants using Forum Theatre make in creating efficacious conditions for professional development. The transcripts of video recordings from the workshops were parsed using participant logs, researcher logs and ethnodramatic coding that incorporated the concept of practice architectures as a lens. The results -- a list of considerations in facilitating Forum Theatre – have been presented as a Research-based Theatre script, with in-character research annotations contributing analysis, so that these considerations can be instructive for others also wanting to explore Forum Theatre in practice-based education.

Aim, research question and definitions

The broad aim of our study was to explore scenarios of high school teacher professional practice using Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre as a way for teachers to deepen their critical understanding of practice and pedagogy. It is my hope that our study contributes to the exploration of a growing number of ways high school teachers are professionally developed; to offer choice for teachers and professional development managers that resists the narrowing policy focus of consistency in the context of the Global Education Reform Movement (Sahlberg, 2011, pp. 176-179). Our study took the form of a series of workshops where participants co-constructed with the facilitator (also known as the "joker" in Boal's terms) Forum Theatre scenarios and performances. Video recordings and written logbooks of participants and researchers were collected as evidence and used to reflect on the development of the workshops and participants. The aim of our study was also to present findings in an accessible way and that were rich in the experiences of teachers. The study drew on ideas from Research-based Theatre to inform the focus of Forum Theatre as a model and to produce a drama script in the presentation of results and analysis (Belliveau & Lea, 2011, p. 334).

To achieve this aim, our study produced a scripted piece of Research-based Theatre that simultaneously illustrates, analyses and summarises what has been learned about the conditions of efficacy in using Forum Theatre. Our study achieved this through a mixed methodology, drawing from a thematic coding approach in ethnodrama (Saldaña, 2009), as well as a broader understanding of how to edit participant transcripts and researcher reflection into a dramatic script (Saldaña, 2018). This involved developing a closed series of workshop performances based on informal, first-hand research and synthesising these scripts with scripts of researcher

reflection and annotation to produce a more aesthetic experience for a professional audience (Beck et al., 2011, pp. 7-8).

To position Boal's Forum Theatre as an intervention within a more critical methodological framework, our study took the form of a Critical Participatory Action Research project (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014). This provided opportunity for participants to reflect on, shape and validate their understanding of self-selected moments (Saldaña, 2018, p. 69) that represented their professional practice, as well as to explore the potential of Forum Theatre as a tool of critical consensus in teacher professional development. Essentially, our study into teacher experiences was at the intersection of three frames:

- i. the methodological approach of Critical Participatory Action Research;
- ii. the pedagogical and practical perspective of Forum Theatre; and
- iii. the larger theoretical context of developing teacher practice through a lens of embodiment.

To assess the value of Forum Theatre as a useful approach to building understanding, Dwyer offers that 'we should worry less about measurement and more about understanding the kind of performance *conditions under which efficacy* is more or less likely to be achieved' (Dwyer, 2004, p. 208; author's emphasis). As such, the research question for our study was exploratory in nature, seeking to understand the **choices** facilitators of teacher professional learning can make in the implementation of Forum Theatre as a tool for teacher professional development.

Question: What can be learned about the conditions of efficacy (choices) in using Forum Theatre as a professional learning tool with a group of teachers for developing their practice?

To phrase this another way, the methodological goal was not one of testing efficacy, but of exploring, reflecting on and generating old and new approaches to the use of Forum Theatre in new contexts; and to add to the ‘arsenal’ (2002, p. 48) of critical professional learning tools. The exploratory use of Forum Theatre and professional development is not new, and our study contributes to a growing body of research that explores Forum Theatre in contexts of professional development and practice (Anumudu, 2017; Giesler, 2017; Stahl, 2018; Thambu & Rahman, 2017; Wooster, 2016). The need for teacher education and professional learning to embrace creativity whilst addressing the sociocultural context of education has been made clear through Ken Gale’s proposal to use critical theory as a basis that ‘might be used to define and to govern specific forms of practice’ (Gale, 2001, p. 103). It was the intention of our study to explore and refine this kind of practice using one of the approaches that Gale suggests in his writing: Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre.

Boal was himself a contemporary of Paulo Freire and the former’s Theatre of the Oppressed has its theoretical roots in Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Being developed contemporaneously to Paulo Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1970), Augusto Boal’s work with what he termed Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 2002) developed techniques for engaging and staging groups of people in a performative, critical dialogue with participants. This dialogue was in the mode of soft-scripted and improvised performance based on the lives of participants around a

common experience or idea. The shared aim of Forum Theatre is to codify ‘problems and contradictions in the lived worlds’ of participants (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 71).

Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre has been developed as a structured, interactive drama strategy that is scripted and revised by the audience. Boal challenged conventions of Western, twentieth-century theatre, seeking to subvert the separation of performer and audience and have these roles change as performance progressed. The “forum” refers to the theatrical conventions he created to allow immediate and interactive dialogue between players and audience to shape the theatre. Other dramatic conventions were (re)developed by Boal, like the “spect-actors” that redefine the porous relationship between audience and performance; as well as the “joker” (facilitator) who helps keep the interactions focused on ‘[the spect-actors] who know a little more [and to give them] a chance to explain it’ (Boal, 2002, p. 243). The goal of Forum Theatre, embedded in ideas stemming from Theatre of the Oppressed, has been to acknowledge and harness theatre as a tool in the empowerment of audience members to become protagonists in their own stories (Boal, 1979).

If Forum Theatre was one of Boal’s drama strategies, Theatre of the Oppressed was the conceptual underpinning developed by Boal:

‘The poetics of the oppressed is essentially the poetics of liberation: the spectator no longer delegates power to the characters either to think or to act in his place. The spectator frees himself; he thinks and acts for himself!’ (Boal, 1979, p. 155)

For Boal, the power was represented in the poetics and the power was pedagogical. This pedagogical potential was where new applications, such as teacher professional development in our study, could be explored and extended by participants reflecting

on practice. In the case of teacher professional development, Forum Theatre as a pedagogical intervention can provide the same opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively on problematic situations with no clear answers in complicated ideological contexts. This complication relates to how Elliot Eisner has identified flexible purposing as an epistemological standpoint from which education could benefit through arts-based research. Our study used this standpoint as a basis for knowledge exploration, capitalising ‘on the emergent features appearing within a field of relationships’ (Eisner, 2002, p. 6) – between existing uses of Forum Theatre in teacher education and observations that could suggest development through Critical Participatory Action Research.

Glossary list of definitions

The following is a list of definitions of relevant theatrical concepts and terms that are integral to this thesis. The definitions contextualise broader understandings of the terms and phrases to their use in this work.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed – a pedagogy that, in Paulo Freire’s words, ‘makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation. And in the struggle this pedagogy will be made and remade’ (Freire, 1970, p. 48). It underpins the purpose of Boal’s work in using drama to prompt reflection, and to remake the drama to pursue liberation. It also underpins the critical reflection of participant teachers in this thesis’ use of Forum Theatre in understanding the constraints of authority on their practice.

Theatre of the Oppressed – Boal’s broad term for the theatrical models and associated conventions he began to develop to ‘transform the spectator into the protagonist of the theatrical action and, by this transformation, to try to change society rather than contenting ourselves with merely interpreting it’ (Boal, 2002, p. 253). These models include Image Theatre, Forum Theatre and Invisible Theatre. Babbage supports Boal’s – and by extension this thesis’ – use of theatre as a potent pedagogical vehicle for critical reflection, noting that audiences’ aesthetic boundaries in theatre need not be constrained to ‘either realism or theatricalism, but can enter into a performance’s sense of reality at one moment and, at the next, appreciate an effect that they know [as spectators] to be ‘theatrical’ rather than lifelike’ (Babbage, 2018, p. 8).

Forum Theatre – a performance where audience members suggest scenarios and characters based on their own experiences of oppression. The audience members then cast themselves and play out this oppression to explore its subversion. This may involve audience members recasting themselves in roles and replaying scenes, with other scene partners having to adapt. There are several conventions and principles that underpin the purpose of Forum Theatre, for example, the oppression represented in the chosen scenario is familiar to the whole audience (Babbage, 2018, p. 24) and that it is realistically possible for the oppressed protagonist to liberate themselves (Boal, 2002, p. 254).

The ‘joker’ in Forum Theatre – the facilitator of the Forum Theatre, ‘whose function is to ensure the smooth running of the game and teach the audience the rules; however, like all the participants in Forum Theatre, the Joker can be replaced if the spect-actors do not think he or she is doing a fair job, and virtually any of the ‘rules’

of the game can be changed if the audience wants' (Jackson, 2002, p. xxiv). In the context of this thesis' project, the 'joker' is the researcher actively prompting participants to consider the Forum Theatre workshop 'rules'.

The 'spect-actor' in Forum Theatre – Boal's play on words describing the role of the audience member in Forum Theatre as someone 'who takes part in the action in any [but ideally a performative] way; the spect-actor is an active spectator, as opposed to the passivity normally associated with the role of audience member' (Jackson, 2002, p. xxvi). In this thesis' workshops, the spect-actors are the teacher participants enacting and reflecting professional scenarios. An important extension of how a spect-actor is defined generally, participants are considering how teachers can be simultaneously oppressed and oppressors in their practice.

Research-based Theatre – the broad disciplinary term that encompasses the formation of knowledge in and through the interplay of research and theatre: 'the research continuum, which distinguishes between the many types of research used to inform research-based theatre, and the performance continuum, which distinguishes between the different kinds of performances, audiences, and purposes of a given research-based theatre piece' (Beck et al., 2011, p. 1). The embodiment of knowledge that the theatrical continua necessitate in research epistemology is how Forum Theatre is used to explore the embodied practice of teacher participants in this thesis.

Theatre in Education – Wooster defines Theatre in Education broadly as 'using theatrical tropes in order to educate...not the educational theatre that instructs and insists but rather it facilitates thought, presents dichotomy and frees young people to

undertake critical analysis' (Wooster, 2016, p. 14). These tropes can be understood as drama activities or performative experiences, such as in a Forum Theatre workshop. This definition of Theatre in Education has participants engaging in 'tropes' decontextualised from a traditional conception of watching and learning from theatre performances. It is only in the last couple of decades that Theatre in Education has been embraced in the training of practitioners as part of higher education programs (Flitsos & Medford, 2009).

Applied Theatre – the 'applied' in Applied Theatre suggests a praxis in the process of performance and knowledge making:

'Beyond using performance as a way of representing and presenting research within communities, applied theatre can be a process of research which informs and shapes every stage of the research process' (Anderson & O'Connor, 2015, p. 36).

In that it has been shaped methodologically by Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed, this thesis presents a piece of Applied Theatre using the mixed methods approach of Critical Participatory Action Research and ethnodrama.

Literature Review

This literature review seeks to draw the conceptual intersections of our study together. The first area of review is concerned with embodied practice and practice-based education as it relates to the teaching profession, with a focus where possible on high school teachers. A cross-section of elements of practice from this literature was used to inform the Forum Theatre workshop design and coding process. The second area of review is concerned with the use of Forum Theatre as a model in professional development across a range of disciplines. In the field of education, this review focuses on where Forum Theatre has been applied to teacher development and the conditions of efficacy that might be discerned from past applications. Other disciplines' uses of Forum Theatre in the development of practice are also explored where methodological overlap in Critical Participatory Action Research or Research-based Theatre occurred. Other theatrical models that arose during a review of the literature are also considered within the broader context of practice development and efficacious conditions. Ultimately, these efficacious conditions reflect the preparation of a workshop facilitator and shape how Forum Theatre is used in terms of teacher practice. Lastly, this literature review collates an existing understanding of key studies that suggest starting points for the design and use of Forum Theatre as a strategy in practice development. This aligns with the overall aims of our research study as it is this body of knowledge that our study seeks to add to within the context of high school teaching.

Embodiment and practice-based professional education

Teacher practice is at the intersection of practice-based and embodied practice research, with interactions between the two reflecting traditional issues of professional development/learning (Mockler, 2013). This interaction has been

characterised in discourse around teacher professional learning as stemming from ideals of teacher quality (Churchward & Willis, 2019). Moreover, the assumptions embedded in the way we have measured teacher quality through student achievement have their own causal issues, and have led teacher professional development towards a narrowing field of delivery modes (Hardy, 2018). In response, a critical approach to teacher professional development is needed: one that problematises practice and the context of practice (Molla & Nolan, 2020); as well as addressing the multi-dimensional nature of practice and supporting teacher agency in learning (Mockler, 2013).

These critical approaches – as they are multi-dimensional and cross-disciplinary in their origins – are numerous and comprise an ever-expanding field of potential avenues of research, underpinned by critical theory and critical pedagogy (Bishop & Vass, 2020; Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Kemmis, 2012). Trede and McEwan distinguish the term “*critical* professional identity” as a way of recognising that some professionals have a conscious and purpose-driven identity based on a questioning and reflective awareness of dominant discourses and ideologies that may have gone unquestioned by colleagues (2012, p. 27). For teachers, complicating this development of a critical professional identity has been a tension between a desire to develop and act critically, and a need to meet a growing range of standards and expectations often at odds with questioning dominant discourses of teacher practice (Lowe et al., 2019; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Schatzki has theorised this tension in his definition of practice architectures:

‘A practice is a nexus of doings and sayings. Sayings are a subclass of doings, namely, all doings that say something about something. ...Examples are typing on a keyboard, moving one’s hands hither and thither, uttering the words

“Your exam begins now,” and thinking that a sunset is beautiful. As these examples suggest, most basic doings and sayings are bodily activities.’ (2012, p. 15)

Teacher professional development that focuses on practice is saturated with these sayings-reflecting-doings. These practice architectures are comprised of distilled, bite-sized lists of aphorisms released in easy reading summaries by education research authorities: lists of ‘what works best’ (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2020); ‘best practice principles’ for teacher education (Ingvarson et al., 2015); and prioritising ‘national and international research...in good practices’ (Holt et al., 2011, p. 5). What are not usually emphasised, however, are the practice architectures of how to embody and develop the doings under the sayings (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014). It is here that embodied practice can go further to consider how those interrelated activities of doings coalesce into a practical understanding and how teleoaffective experiences can ground the value of a critical approach (Schatzki, 2012, p. 17).

These embodied practice architectures can be a(n abstract and concrete) place where professional development can reflect on the fundamental activities of the classroom as they relate to the body: fostering an awareness in teaching practice mediated by the body and the physical world. Green (2015) helps us re-imagine teaching bodies in this way by drawing on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze as a way of “thinking the body”: a return to Schatzki’s sayings based in doings within practice-based education. Here, Green also problematises the nature of teaching practice in a classroom space: ‘the challenge here is one of avoiding unities and identities, and hence *thinking bodies*’ (2015, p. 122), seeking to explore and elaborate on difference in practice through a critical lens. Markauskaite and Goodyear note this diversity at

the tertiary level in terms of professional practice courses, university teachers, and a range of different answers about how to craft expert practitioners (2017, p. 47).

Perhaps this is because answers on how to develop practice are as diverse as the bodily activities that form the basis of professional practice. Markauskaite and Goodyear themselves characterise all of these examples as varying combinations of mind, body and materiality; or mind, action and the wild or untameable (2017, p. 48).

Another way of approaching how the body and the physical mediate our practice is through the connections between embodiment of practice; critical possibilities of practice; and the position of practice within (and in response to) current professional development discourses for teachers. As this happens, elements emerge of what developing embodied teaching practice looks like. Reid and Mitchell evoke an idea of teaching bodily hexis – the sociopolitical realised in the actions of the teaching body (Reid & Mitchell, 2015). A cumulation of dispositions and activities, hexis could be viewed as teaching practice played out and sustained in the body of the teacher. That is, a way to reflect on how a teacher's bodily hexis is developed intersubjectively and over time. The use of Forum Theatre in our study as a tool for drawing out this active and reflective intersubjectivity – that is, encouraging participants to *perform* rather than *playout* – needed to sensitise participants to how their teaching was constructed around their bodies. Luckily, Boal offered a way to do this as part of introducing participants to Forum Theatre through 'restructuring muscular relations' (Boal, 2002, p. 50).

Boal further establishes the value of the physico-embodied in Forum Theatre:

'Objects and dress should be real, charged, clear, stimulating.... Every movement of

every actor is significant' (Boal, 2002, pp. 263-264). In our exploratory study, an awareness of this embodied physicality helped contextualise conditions of efficacy that relate to the physical practice of teaching. Echoing this awareness, Babbage's critique of Boal's work emphasises the intrinsic importance of the physical, as well as mental and social, to participants of Forum Theatre (Babbage, 2018, p. 103). Higgs couches critical discussions of the purpose of practice in professional standards and ideas of global citizenship (Higgs, 2012). Green and Hopwood can provide theoretical commentary around bodily-focused elements of practice and how it relates to practice development (Green & Hopwood, 2015). Juxtaposed, Higgs and Green and Hopwood present approaches to practice-based education that outline a context that is committed to a range of core principles that include authenticity, collaboration, reflexivity and relevance to the real world. This literature provides a clear connection between practice development principles and embodiment, through which we considered choices that helped to design and deliver Forum Theatre in exploring aspects of teacher practice, including the embodied.

Markauskite and Goodyear's work *Epistemic Fluency and Professional Education* reviews practice-based literature for its taxonomic depth in understanding how practice-based approaches have developed through research. In the categorisation of embodied practice as a move to a 'reflective-embodied project', Markauskite and Goodyear characterise this turn as an ontological response from 'representation to performativity' (Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017, p. 54). They acknowledge that these accounts of practice ground themselves in 'the physical world and socio-material practices' (2017, p. 54) that resonate with the interactive materiality of embodied practice. The ontological response, however; does not preclude the epistemological:

‘What is more at stake is the question of what else is needed when recipe principles and core knowledge fail to provide a sufficient basis for acting effectively as an expert professional practitioner. The main pedagogical suggestion that underpins this onto-epistemic project is that curriculum should be organised around core professional practices, meaning-making, reflexivity and identity’. (Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017, p. 55)

These elements of embodied practice are currently not explicit in the Australian Professional Teaching Standards. As Reid and Mitchell note in their case study “A Portrait of Inexperience”, a difficulty teachers face is a silence in standards discourse around quality teaching when it comes to embodied practice:

‘the idea of an ‘appropriate’, standardised, individual teaching body is taken for granted within normative discourses of the (good) teacher reified in the language of career-stage professional standards, such as the Australian National Teaching Standards.’ (Reid & Mitchell, 2015, p. 90)

Any research in teaching practice should be cognisant of a tradition of minimising or ignoring the role of the body in prominent practice-based research for teachers. This is further reason why Forum Theatre was chosen as a way to explore the body in teacher practice in our study.

Critical Participatory Action Research and theoretical groundings in the “critical”

With Forum Theatre’s aesthetic dimensions must come its political ones. This dichotomy is the legacy of critical theory in Boal’s development of the theoretical underpinnings of Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1979). The connection with Paulo Freire’s pedagogy is significant (Babbage, 2018, pp. 16-18)

and relevant in explaining our study's deployment of Critical Participatory Action Research as part of its methodological framework.

Kincheloe notes Freire's views on teaching as 'always political', encouraging teachers to 'position social, cultural, economic, political, and philosophical critiques of dominant power at the heart of the curriculum' (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 70). It was through much trial and error that Freire developed his pedagogical approach for democratising and codifying syllabus knowledge so that it remained accessible for all participant learners (Freire, 2013). One of these approaches was the idea of "culture circles", which Brookfield provides a useful definition of in the context of adult education:

'The adult educator's task is that of helping people articulate their experience in dialogic circles and then encouraging them to review this through the multiple lenses provided by colleagues in the circle. On the basis of these collaborative critical reflections on experience adults re-enter the world to [take] critically informed actions that are then brought back to the circle for further critical analysis' (Brookfield, 2000, p. 38).

Extending on his work of developing culture circles, Freire offered conventions of this learning process as he and his participant learners 'attempted through group debate either to clarify situations or to seek action arising from that clarification' (Freire, 1970, p. 40). Boal emulated this process of consensus-building or "conscientization" using performative situations and approaches in Forum Theatre, to pursue Freire's common goal of authenticity on behalf of his participants (Freire, 1970, p. 39). In exploring Forum Theatre as a way of developing teacher practice, this process of conscientisation was a part of the development of workshopping practice and embedded in Schatzki's understanding of practice architectures (Schatzki, 2012).

Even studies that have sought to prioritise what Dillon characterised as teachers' skills development (Dillon, 2008) have conceded the intrinsic value of addressing inequitable practices for and by teachers. Morrison, Nilsson and Lepp noted in their study working with preservice teachers to develop relational skills that it's 'vital that future teachers understand not only how people learn, but also how emotional investment and power relationships operate in school contexts' (Morrison et al., 2013, p. 64). Toivanen, Komulainen and Ruismaki noted that creative performative pedagogies were useful for improving and training teacher interaction skills, but also had the ability to 'reshape our mental pictures and representations of reality' (Toivanen et al., 2010, p. 60). The aim to recognise criticality in the aesthetic approach of Forum Theatre was our study's answer to this intrinsic value and part of positioning the research to be aware of political dimensions of practice.

Uses of Forum Theatre in tertiary education and professional development

Used in the field of education, Boal's Forum Theatre offers an embodied rehearsal of experience, critical reflection and knowledge from participants, and the opportunity to explore and revise approaches in teaching practice. Souto-Manning, Cahnmann-Taylor, Dice and Wooten noted that open-ended, theatrical situations 'for which there are not immediate answers are ideal for exploration with this critical performative approach to teacher education' (Souto-Manning et al., 2008, p. 323). Dillon noted Forum Theatre challenges the disruptive dichotomy between the 'primary focus in teacher education on teachers learning skills [and] techniques' as distinct to an often-secondary focus on the 'teacher's own personal development and consciousness' (Dillon, 2008, p. 190). Whilst Forum Theatre was the focus of our study, a broad range of drama workshop models were consulted to prepare for the

workshop delivery and to provide an initial understanding of choices that create efficacious conditions.

Forum Theatre has been used across a range of different contexts in the research and development of professional education and practice (Desai, 2017; Dillon, 2008; Gale, 2001; Rymes et al., 2005; Sappa & Barabasch, 2020). Often seized upon to structure and scaffold rehearsal and reflection in disciplines requiring complex interpersonal skills, Forum Theatre has been a prominent model for roleplay in medicine and nursing, social work, education, government project and policy management. The term “roleplay” is used here to differentiate between the focus on interpersonal skill development and the more holistic aim of Forum Theatre performance as a critical means of problematising and co-constructing solutions. A number of these studies cited here are exploratory in the former sense: seeing value in skills development, but not considering the critical aspects of Forum Theatre or its roots in Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1970), or critical theory more broadly. With a grounding in embodied practices and methodologies, there is a socio-material dimension to approaches like Forum Theatre for both participants and researchers that should be considered in projects of this kind (Green & Hopwood, 2015; Higgs, 2012; Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017).

Dwyer’s cautionary examination of a use of Forum Theatre in a university campus setting was a valuable place to start when considering the value Forum Theatre could provide participants in exploring conflict: he warns against the mistaken correlation that ‘the greater the number of onstage interventions, the better the quality of *learning* in a performance’ (Dwyer, 2004, p. 200). For researchers, any metric for evaluating the use of Forum Theatre risks losing sight of the deeper, semantic

complexities of Forum Theatre for participants; and why the aim of this thesis' study has been exploring efficacious conditions. With these conditions, Joker and participants are 'crucial in shaping the ideological contours of the [Forum Theatre] event' and this shaping happens on a conscious and unconscious level (Dwyer, 2004, p. 201). In the same paper, Dwyer refers to a Forum Theatre project call 'Boundaries' from a college in Vancouver, Canada, whose goal was to devise Forum Theatre around themes of sexual harassment that could be turned into provincial resources for universities and other schools. Dwyer observed a failure of male-identified participants to identify with oppressor or observer roles as potential agents for change, and instead these male-identified participants were observed spect-acting as oppressed female protagonists:

'It is in some ways encouraging that such a large number of male audience members engaged with the scenarios and no doubt their interventions were motivated by all sorts of good intentions. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the way this particular Forum Theatre project mobilised its male audience did mean that for a lot of the time women were watching men show them how women could behave in order to avoid being oppressed – by men. This is not exactly a novel situation for women to be in, nor an obviously liberating one.' (Dwyer, 2004, p. 203)

This immediately raises the very difficult charge of ensuring a critical awareness in the joker (Boal, 2002, p. 243) as they facilitate the plethora of moving parts in each Forum Theatre scenario: casting, discussion, spect-acting interventions, direction and prioritisation of competing audience interests are all going to have impacts on participant interpretations of the workshop. Indeed, this kind of critical ignorance in the role of the joker requires groundwork and trust-building to remedy as part of a Theatre of the Oppressed program. Boal writes extensively on this process of trust-

building in *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (2002) with a large range of activities dedicated to drama ensemble development with interpersonal trust exercises, as well as exercises to build collaborative knowledge through physicalisation (and the senses). This critical awareness and these activities directly informed the design of introducing participants to the Forum Theatre workshop in our study.

Continuing with Dwyer's evaluation of the design and facilitation of Forum Theatre workshops, several studies offered more advice for this project in answering the question of efficacious conditions. Hewson reflects that as researcher-joker in her study with preservice teacher participants, there were opportunities for the joker to challenge gender hegemony and play 'the devil's advocate' or be replaced by an audience member (Hewson, 2007, pp. 9-12). Indeed, this supports Boal's original design of the process that the joker be played by one of the actors – or someone with appropriate socio-cultural knowledge -- and that spect-actors 'who know a little more get the chance to explain it' in the reflection on performance (Boal, 2002, pp. 244-245). A recent study by Desai supports this suggestion to share responsibilities within the identified roles of Forum Theatre, observing in his study with preservice teachers that the 'teacher educator can act as the "joker" in these discussions to push dialogue; however, more often, the dialogues take their own paths since everyone has an opportunity to share and offer their views' (Desai, 2017, p. 231). Harlap concurs in her study on Forum Theatre that any use of critical pedagogy must involve an interrogation of teacher (joker) voice in its roll of drawing out and questioning student (spect-actor) experience (Harlap, 2014, p. 220). This interrogation of teacher voice or "sayings" was extended in our study through the aforementioned "doings" and "relatings" of practice architectures to consider how we can critically discuss teacher embodied practice (see Table 2 under Methodology).

Focusing specifically on studies that look at teacher education, Eriksen, Larsen and Lerner (Eriksen et al., 2015) considered the connection between pre-service teacher engagement in professional learning and the reflective capacity of students to engage in co-constructive dialogue. The study explored theatre modes as a way of facilitating 'a more open-minded approach when communicating' and 'be[ing] able to evaluate an action by relating it to the experience they had when using theatre modes' (Eriksen et al., 2015, p. 82). The evidence to show these claims focused on qualitative, reflective methods able to demonstrate active connections between participant experience of the roleplay and Forum Theatre with participant teachers' own experiences in the classroom. The juxtaposition in this reflection could be a first step in relating performative experiences to the embodiment of practice and the empathic modes that often accompany this awareness of self and other. An international pilot study (Vittoria et al., 2014) concurs with this intersection reflective methods through 'laboratory' experiences of Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed, particularly in considering 'transformative learning': recognised here as an analogous purpose to praxis and the goals of critical pedagogy. It explains that within the Forum Theatre model, there are modes of revision and clarification that generate 'a reflexive change in the original schemes of meaning [during and after Forum Theatre]...when the new interpretation effectively brings an entire perspective of meaning into question' (Vittoria et al., 2014, p. 6153). Both studies emphasise value in a reflective component of research design for participants, if iterative action and co-constructive learning is to be achieved. This reflective component was considered as a way to bridge reflexive and embodied modes of practice in teaching through Forum Theatre scenario design.

The research led by Harman developing Critical Performative Pedagogy recognises the importance of reflexive teacher education ‘as necessarily including experiential activities, readings and collaboration that promote dynamic and multidimensional exploration of social theory, language identity, and self-inquiry’ (Harman et al., 2016, p. 229). Harman notes that performance (particularly the semi-improvised kind that Forum Theatre constructs) is by its nature dialogic and includes the embodied dimension of participant positionalities highlighting ‘the ways in which [participant teacher] bodies have been marked, tracked and scripted by institutional power relations’ (Harman & McClure, 2011, p. 381). This performative pedagogy informed how our study explored Forum Theatre: as a dialogical tool that has multiple iterations of reflection, collaboration, discussion and rehearsal of teachers’ practice. The potential dialogue between spect-actors and colleagues, researchers and participants, and the reflective self-dialogue of teachers all create a rich network of ‘thinking about how teachers can learn to appropriate and challenge a variety of social discourses in developing their professional identities’ (Harman et al., 2016, p. 232).

Other theatrical models, structures and frameworks

In his paper assessing the contemporary state of Theatre in Education, Wooster notes that educators and practitioners ‘no longer have the access to the necessary research and rehearsal time where facilitation [of] skills can develop’ (Wooster, 2016, p. 13). Because of this parallel de-emphasis of rehearsal time in teaching and preparation, it is becoming increasingly difficult to answer calls for a creative approach to teacher education that facilitates the longer process of professional thought and critical analysis (Wooster, 2016, p. 14).

Reflecting on other theatrical models and approaches within Theatre in Education and Applied Theatre, a broader understanding of roleplay and dramatic play is valuable when considering collaborative and reflective modes of developing practice. Uggerhoj (2008), in his paper on the use of creativity, roleplay and theatre in social work, outlines similar issues of evidence-based practice being narrowly defined by administrative interests in the field of social work, and calls for a reconsideration of how multi-disciplined approaches can enrich and strengthen an epistemological basis. Uggerhoj echoes the dialogical value of Forum Theatre as ‘a training ground for action not only in these performances, but for action in life’ (2008, p. 56). To echo this emphasis on the importance of dramatic play as a form of training, Friedmann explored a constructivist relationship between play and learning – or learning to play – in her thesis with elementary teachers practising classroom management (Friedmann, 2012). Based on this consideration of play, she calls for teacher education programs to include ‘improvisation, acting [and] directing’ to ‘help stretch teachers’ imaginations, collaborative skills, and require a flexibility of how to use their bodies and voices’ (Friedmann, 2012, p. 204).

Whilst Forum Theatre has been the focus and conceptual basis of our study’s workshops, Jo Salas’ model of Playback Theatre (Salas, 1993) was useful in exploring how to encourage first time participants to engage with workshop scenarios. The section on “Being a Playback Actor” (pp. 45-64) – particularly principles of readiness, expressiveness, teamwork and setting boundaries outlined by Salas as ‘forbidden zones’ (p. 50) – was instructive for the workshop facilitator in discussing expectations with participants at the beginning of the workshop process. For example, these “forbidden zones” are a set of social boundaries in workshops co-constructed between facilitator and participants. This metalanguage helped develop

prompts for facilitator and participants in our study at the outset of the first Forum Theatre workshop: adding another avenue in exploring efficacious conditions in the preparation of ethical participation.

An analogous application: Forum Theatre developing practice in nursing

There is a small collection of studies on the use of Forum Theatre in the professional development of nursing students and nurse practitioners; these studies are analogous to our study due to the intersection between developing professional teaching practice and exploring critical approaches. In a review of the application of drama to nursing education, an emphasis on practising values -- as opposed to the theoretical study of values within a practice (“doings” and “relatings”, not just “sayings”) – has been argued for, as well as the need for professional development and practice education to examine (and possibly reframe) the ‘tension between theory and pract[ice]’ (Arvekle et al., 2015, p. 12). This review’s discussion of *embodiment* was a key theme in, and was analogously instructive for, our study’s exploration of embodied practice in doings and sayings of practice architectures. It notes the possibility of applied drama in the development of professional practice to ‘learn the art of entering into the patients’ experiences in order to form a helping union’ (Arvekle et al., 2015, p. 16); and, conversely, discusses the limitations of applied drama where participants only role-played or performed the healthcare professional, instead of accessing patients’ and relatives’ perspectives. This aspiration to be empathic in applied drama was useful for the purposes of our study where the facilitator was prompting post-performance reflection with participants discussing critical approaches to professional learning and practice.

A closer examination of the “client” role in Forum Theatre for nursing education can illuminate assumptions of role in professional development and give a deeper insight into how this could relate to the embodied and the critical. A 2013 study used Forum Theatre to explore issues that arose between mental health service providers, mental health service users or “clients”, and lecturers in nursing education with the aim of unpacking stigma in mental health as it relates to the complex network of communication between these participant roles (Wilson, 2013). Similarly, a 2012 study piloted the use of Forum Theatre in teaching end of life care through dramatic simulation to undergraduate nursing students (Tuxbury et al., 2012). In both studies, the focus was on a critical re-creation of believable professional scenarios where practice could be simultaneously demonstrated, reflected on, improved, and iterated into future similar scenarios, whether they be fictive or based in the reality of the practice modelled. Some studies made these connections through different thematic terms, for example Forum Theatre providing a ‘dynamic learning environment’ for tertiary education in professional practice (Middlewick et al., 2012, p. 139); or the understanding of ‘professionalism’ through Forum Theatre scenarios with a mixture of experience-based, improvisational, and scripted rehearsals of practice (Brett-MacLean et al., 2012, p. 1). This examination of the dynamic nature of role as examined by Forum Theatre spect-actors was important for our study in appreciating the polysemantic nature of participant reflections on practice in and of role.

Lessons in efficacious conditions from past studies using Forum Theatre

The following are studies that used Forum Theatre as a strategy with a range of participants. They are provided here to outline where our study began in developing and exploring efficacious conditions of the Forum Theatre model in research: not finding causal relationships from a list of correct answers to workshop design but

collating a list of conditions for consideration within each unique context of applying Forum Theatre – as outlined in the discussion of Dwyer above (Dwyer, 2004). These studies provided a starting point for our study's use of Forum Theatre that were further reflected upon in conducting the workshops and producing the ethnodramatic script.

The more compelling of these studies of Forum Theatre drew a connection between efficacious conditions and data (Bhukhanwala & Alleksaht-Snider, 2012; Dwyer, 2004; Harman & McClure, 2011; Mitsumura, 2012). Whilst not based in teacher education, Dwyer's study characterised this connection well: 'This linguistic data is good evidence...of the ideological investments of various stakeholders in the performance event.... [W]e can certainly gain a good sense of how they think these lessons might be applied' (Dwyer, 2004, p. 208). Similar qualitative and talk-based analyses were used by Mitsumura (2012); Harman and McClure (2011) through video of sessions, field notes, curriculum materials; and Bhukhanwala and Alleksaht-Snider (2012) through video of sessions, participant reflections and interviews that were able to provide convincing analysis each stage of the Forum Theatre model as they practised it. Qualitative methods like these will also be used by our study to develop an argumentative logic when it comes to refining Forum Theatre in teacher education through aspects of design-based research (Reimann, 2008, pp. 38-44).

Other studies continued Dwyer's caution of the necessity of a critically aware approach and the facilitation of efficacious conditions that involve and empower participants. A study using Forum Theatre in downtown Montreal explored the social tensions between homeless people and other dwellers (Hamel, 2015). In this use of Forum Theatre, the public sphere acting as a site of critical reflection (Kemmis,

McTaggart, et al., 2014) was being catalysed and embodied as the physical site of an urban centre. Interestingly, the study provided commentary on what it perceived as a 'protagonist-antagonist' relationship within Forum Theatre and claimed it might have 'undermined the collaborative effort required in an action research initiative by pitting one set of actors against the other in a rather one-sided version of the downtown area' (Hamel, 2015, p. 39). Hamel provided a condition of efficacy for her study: to have clear reasoning as to the purpose of the protagonist-antagonist conflict discussed and agreed upon by facilitator and participants. When the facilitator loses sight of this purpose – as Hamel hints their joker did during the process – participants feel alienated in the co-constructive process. This condition of efficacy became a core consideration for the facilitator of our study's workshops in Forum Theatre and their co-constructive potential.

Burgoyne provided a similar reasoning in her lessons for instructors including Boal's delineation of an '*oppression* against which one can struggle [versus] *aggression* which one cannot evade...[o]ppression is very often interiorised; *the oppressed can still liberate themselves*' (Boal, 2002, p. 254; author's emphasis). Boal is not arguing for the responsibility of the oppressed to liberate themselves, but that empowerment and hope start from a place of resistance: where every stakeholder (including the oppressed) in Forum Theatre is able to contribute to liberation. In Burgoyne's study of tertiary students participating in Forum Theatre to explore a social issue, the topic of sexual assault was approved by majority vote and scenarios of inescapable aggression were allowed to be scripted as part of the workshop by the joker (Burgoyne et al., 2016). This polarised the group and demonstrated two noteworthy choices of implementing Forum Theatre and supporting the safety of participants: (i) a consensus approach to topic selection and decision making needs to be democratic,

inclusive and co-constructive when considering approaches that cross power and class divides; and (ii) facilitators should build that consensus around the limitations of form as an ongoing discussion for Forum Theatre participants; specifically, oppression and aggression. These principles were implemented in initial discussions with our study's participants around ethical and safe participation in the Forum Theatre workshops.

Boal himself acknowledged that 'Forum Theatre is still in its infancy, and much research and experimentation will be required before this new form reaches its full maturity' (Boal, 2002, p. 253). Indeed, the interaction (and limitation) of form and practice was a key focus of our study with a basis in embodied practice, as well as some other recent studies that have joined Boal's "experimentation". Powers and Duffy described the possibilities of Forum Theatre in the classroom to achieve 'agency', a goal that was analogous to empowerment and liberation in our study's workshop scenarios (Powers & Duffy, 2016). Their study on the use of Forum Theatre with pre-service teachers sensitised themes of intersectionality and identity politics as a way of exploring a reflexive and critical teaching practice:

'For the [pre-service teaching] students in the study, apprehending and reflecting on their own multiple identities and the privileges or oppressions that accompany them encourage them to situate their identities within larger systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Such contextualization may create small openings to understand how the personal, interpersonal, and structural collide within identity factors.' (Powers & Duffy, 2016, p. 69)

Pragmatically, this means for facilitators that any use of Forum Theatre needs to be responsive to ongoing systems of power, privilege and oppression being recognised, reflected on and rehearsed in the workshop scenarios. By virtue of its goal to develop

a critical consciousness, it can't be possible to know for certain what these are going to be and how the group is going to catalyse around these systems in the process of Forum Theatre. Despite this, this critical engagement with participant exigence is a necessary component of Forum Theatre. In support of this critical exigence, Harbrecht's thesis asserted a distinction between role-play and Forum Theatre and emphasised that Forum Theatre gives 'intimate significance to [beginning teachers'] narratives...and fosters an appreciation of their thoughts and needs about their training and professional development' (Harbrecht, 2013, p. 44).

When Powers and Duffy instruct us in the need for Forum Theatre practitioners 'to balance [Forum Theatre's] aesthetic and pedagogical attributes' (2016, p. 69), they're reminding us of the intrinsic relationship between the aesthetic engagement of the performance with the reflexive and iterative pedagogy of the workshop's rehearsal and collaboration. This point of balance can be an opportunity for researchers seeking to explore Forum Theatre, as in Hakkarainen and Vapalahti's study (Hakkarainen & Vapalahti, 2011) that used video-supported Forum Theatre where community participants recounted their historical experiences to video recordings that were then used as script materials and live resources in subsequent Forum Theatre workshops. A number of the video-supported Forum Theatre participants reported value in watching and making videos for each other and future students of the course (Hakkarainen & Vapalahti, 2011, p. 321); the mode of the video sought to capture the iterative learning of the workshop and extended collaboration to future cohorts. Furthermore on an aesthetic-pedagogical balance in the context of embodied practice for teachers, Wooten and Cahnmann-Taylor explored Forum Theatre's role in assisting 'pre-service teachers [to] navigate the consequences of ventriloquized, racialized discourses in a...teacher education classroom' (Wooten &

Cahnmann-Taylor, 2014, p. 179). Part of the way this study navigated this aesthetic-pedagogical balance was confronting the underlying embodiment of race that was coded, removed and “ventriloquised” into language that had unchecked power in classrooms over students and teachers. The study used Boal’s own Rainbow of Desire strategy (Boal, 1995) to stop the performance and call for a physical representation of character motivation; this was supplemented with Wooten and Cahnmann-Taylor’s process of a “reality check” to prompt a consistent critical confrontation between embodiment in performance and a reflection or readjustment of the representation (Wooten & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2014, p. 184). The connection between Wooten and Cahnmann-Taylor’s studies is in the pursuit of using Forum Theatre to embody experience; and that Forum Theatre, as critical pedagogy, is intrinsic to the aesthetic, embodied process.

In Hakkarainen and Vapalahti and Wooten and Cahnmann-Taylor’s studies, the designs of the Forum Theatre workshop interventions were clear adaptations of Boal’s process for developing Forum Theatre scenarios (Boal, 2002) integrating his knowledge of choices by (in this case, researcher) facilitators to create efficacious conditions. Moreover, the specific idea of using the form of performance to extend embodied teacher identity was a direct inspiration in our study for the warm-up activities that adapted new variations of Boal’s exercises and prompt participants to perform their practice architectures – doings and sayings (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014) – in the workshop.

Uses of Forum Theatre in children’s education and attempts in cause-effect methods

A few studies on the use of Forum Theatre in the education of children were worth consideration as they related to the practice architectures – doings and saying – of

teachers that could (and did) emerge in performance. Hammond's study (2013) and Gourd and Gourd's study (2011) both focused on democratic education and empowering student voice in schools through Forum Theatre. The focus was on how teacher practitioners could 'use Forum Theatre to practice and develop democratic dispositions and skills' (Gourd & Gourd, 2011, p. 403) within student communities – of which teachers are a part. Hammond's study went further in its findings to warn against the potential for tokenism in the delivery of Forum Theatre and for facilitators to be adequately aware of power imbalances that act as barriers to emancipation for participants (Hammond, 2013, p. 7). This warning further reinforced the need for a consideration of facilitator choices and efficacious conditions in the delivery of our Forum Theatre workshops, as well as a need to sincerely communicate to workshop participants that they have input in the way Forum Theatre workshops run.

Lizzio, Andrews and Skinner (2011) offer further considerations in the variation of responses from participants to Forum Theatre. Their study used a questionnaire score to draw conclusions about a range of scripted Forum Theatre scenarios presented to students facilitated by teachers. Whilst we did not emulate the Likert scale used by Lizzio, Andrews and Skinner to gauge student perception of engagement and value, it was instructive to note the authors' conclusions about the range of different responses and how 'students appraise and respond [to Forum Theatre scenarios] quite differently' (Lizzio et al., 2011, p. 97). If the aim of any research investigating Forum Theatre is to explore the multitudes to participant reflections and responses (or the range of joker-facilitator responses), the scoring used in this study would be complimented by qualitative approaches that capture the

richness of participant response beyond an aggregated mean. This richness is why our study opted for a qualitative evidence focus.

Whilst not all of these studies have been direct analogues of what our project aims to contribute in its understanding, they were educative cases in preparing efficacious conditions for a Forum Theatre workshop model, and keeping this model aligned with Boal's critical focus and aesthetic aims. It is this richness in exploring the choices to facilitate efficacious conditions of Forum Theatre that our study contributes; to balance the 'issue-audience questionnaires' in studies like Lizzio, Andrews and Skinner that seem to 'produce inconclusive or superficial results' (Kershaw, 1992, p. 3) and that over-aggregate in understanding the implementation of professional development models like Forum Theatre. Rather than metric scores, the evidence presented by our study seeks to make a contribution to what can be learned about using Forum Theatre that is accessible and flexible in its theatrical presentation of a script – to offer the chance for success through choices that facilitators and participants can make in a range of contexts.

Methodology

Our study took a mixed methodology approach, drawing on ideas from ethnodrama in the coding, analysis and presentation of evidence as a theatre script (Belliveau & Lea, 2011; Saldaña, 2009). It also drew upon Critical Participatory Action Research (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014) as a framework for exploring the critical underpinnings of Boal's Forum Theatre (Babbage, 2018; Boal, 1979). This framework assisted in ensuring that the focus of the Forum Theatre was 'not whether participants have followed the steps faithfully, but whether they have a strong and authentic sense of development and evolution in their practices, their understandings of their practices, and the situations in which they practice' (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 18-19). Our study, as an exploration, is best defined here by Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon as one that didn't follow steps to improving practice, but became aware of and negotiated conditions with participants in the performance of their teaching practice.

Critical participatory action research as a methodological framework
I chose Critical Participatory Action Research as a methodological framework for our study because of its intent to connect a responsive and reflexive practice with the situations participants might pose and explore as part of a Forum Theatre model. The "critical" component of this framework intersected well with the pedagogical basis of Boal as a contemporary of Freire, and Boal being influenced by Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1970) in the development of Forum Theatre (Boal, 1979). Ewing supports the value of action research here as a methodology based on 'an inter-related set of philosophical assumptions, rather than a technical process that must fit one set of particular conventions' (Ewing, 2011, p. 71). Whilst the Forum Theatre model could itself be a technical process, it was not our

methodological approach here. Our goal was to explore Forum Theatre as a model of practice development with action research providing a suitable approach for participant ‘teachers unpacking their personal theories’ and iterative reflection exploring the ‘tacit’ nature of this evidence (Ewing, 2011, p. 74).

For Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, the “critical” in Critical Participatory Action Research – and, indeed, the roots of critical pedagogy – can be accounted for in Habermas’ idea of public spheres wherein ‘technologies of communication...are freed from spatiotemporal contextual limitations and made available for multiple future contexts’ (Habermas, 1987, p. 184). The contexts that Habermas is referring to here can be presciently read as a myriad of digital, artistic and performative media spaces that have proliferated and become available for public input during the internet age. Giroux (2011) would extend the scope of public spheres mediated by technology to include popular culture, particularly popular culture’s ability to be mediated through mass distribution and participation within a sociocultural context. I make this connection here because Forum Theatre, and drama as a pedagogical discipline, is interactive and also free of the limitations of broadcast media to which Habermas alluded (and the pedagogical potential to which Giroux alluded). In the context of professional development, the public sphere of the powerpoint presentation has limitations and is stifled in its one-way communication, whereas the public sphere of the workshop can build critical consensus. The public sphere of Forum Theatre bases this communication not just in the conceptual and social, but embodied realms through a consideration of practice architectures (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014; Schatzki, 2012). To return to Habermas, interactive models like Forum Theatre allow participants to engage in another public sphere to which they may not have existing access, and the liberty to play roles within that sphere. Therefore, the aim of our

study was not a one-size-fits-all approach to professional learning, but to contribute (in the sphere of professional development) to the ‘virtually present web of communicative contents’ that drive a democratic, reflective and critical participation (Habermas, 1987, p. 184).

How the evidence from Forum Theatre explores (embodied) practice
Participants aimed to become conscious of, and represent, what Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon define as categories of ‘practice architectures’: the cultural-discursive, material-economic and social-political arrangements that ‘enable and constrain [teacher-participant] practices’ (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 55-56). A summary of the Critical Participatory Action Research process – as adapted from progenitor cycles of action research involving planning, acting, observing and reflecting – were drawn from The Action Research Planner as follows.

- Initial reconnaissance of practice in the current context of the research.
- Adopting a critical stance by establishing a public sphere to discuss changes in untoward practice.
- Communicative action to reach intersubjective agreement and consensus.
- Acting to change practices that are untoward.
- Document, monitor and reflect on changes to decide on the next course of action. (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 85-86)

Our study emulated this process in Forum Theatre workshops with the teacher participants, and discussed how this process was commensurate with, or was limited by, development aims of practice in the negotiated timeframe of our study.

Saldaña has situated the role of ethnodramatic research as giving ‘readers a vivid sense of “being there”’ and drawing on the basis of many modes of ethnographic

research using “thick” or “rich” description (Saldaña, 2018, p. 28). I have drawn upon Saldaña’s ethnodramatic approach to coding, editing and presenting transcripts of a Forum Theatre workshop for this precise reason: to give readers of this thesis (and the play within) an opportunity to immerse themselves in the narrative experience of the workshop. This opportunity is in the scripted participant experiences below that represent their practices of negotiating, facilitating and making efficacious choices through Forum Theatre. Saldaña’s definition of action research in this ethnodramatic context is also one that extends conventional ethnographic practices of observation, analysis and situating the researcher, to ‘work collaboratively, cooperatively, and democratically with participants to investigate key sources of conflict and to strategize solutions to improve their personal lives and environmental conditions’ (Saldaña, 2018, p. 29).

To illustrate Saldaña’s words here, the improvement of material-environmental conditions can be considered through reflection on the practice architecture of material-economic “doings”, and how they interact with our understanding of teacher hexis (Reid & Mitchell, 2015) as a part of any teaching scenario represented in Forum Theatre. To put it more simply, these practice architectures helped us code questions for reflection for the workshop facilitator, participants and during the analysis of transcripts (see Table 2 below). The embodiment of the material-economic is at the cross-section of “sayings” and “relatings” in Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon’s practice architectures paradigm, and is something that was also implicitly reflected upon by the facilitator in discussions with our participants in the workshops. This reflective iteration is evident in the presented script’s duality of the researcher: (i) a facilitator character reflecting on “sayings” and “relatings” along with participants during workshops; and (ii) a researcher character retroactively

reflecting on these architectures as a narrator, and as a way to sustain awareness of doings, sayings and relatings in exploring efficacious conditions.

Participants and ethics

Recruitment was difficult. A number of professional teaching organisations were contacted, as well as universities that were training teachers, and online teacher contact networks. This communication was in-line with the ethics approval process outlined in the University of Sydney's *Research Code of Conduct* (2019). Of the participants that did respond to those initial advertisements, most declined to be a part of the study and cited a range of reasons including the impact of Covid-19; too many work commitments and administrative duties; and a fear of the dramatic. These recruitment difficulties are worth noting here as they speak directly to a different kind of efficacious condition for Forum Theatre as practice development: teacher time, disposition and availability before the workshop process has even begun.

Eventually four participants and the researcher-facilitator committed to the study, which was smaller than original anticipated. A convenience sampling process was used, as our study's aims were exploratory and do not seek to make generalisable claims based on the representative natures of participants. There was, however; an initial aim and encouragement in advertising to recruit participants for exploration around experiences of beginning teachers and the transitional moment of pre-service to graduate teaching practice. This was abandoned when recruitment became difficult, and it was decided to allow whoever joined the study to set the critical focus as a group through consensus. This was in-keeping with Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon's Critical Participatory Action Research approach: to establish a public sphere

amongst participants as part of the workshop process (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 89-99; Chapter 5 under "Reconnaissance"). This ultimately fed into the initial workshop design details below.

Of the four participants, two were beginning teachers who had been teaching for two to three years. Two were experienced teachers (more than eight years teaching each) who had both served in leadership roles within schools. All participants were drawn from two schools in the same region, and all were currently employed as teachers in New South Wales, Australia. There was a past professional connection between one of the experienced teachers and both beginning teachers. Three were currently teaching in the humanities disciplines. One in the sciences. One had experience teaching Drama. Three had experience leading and designing professional development for colleagues at the whole-school level. All four were known to the researcher before the study and had prior professional connections.

Again, these details are not to make claims of representativeness, but to provide a context through which we can understand the process of reflexivity in Forum Theatre for these specific participants. Indeed, these details of the participants' context may not even correlate to why participant narratives unfolded the way they did in these workshops. But they modelled the choices and conditions (relevant to the research question) that the facilitator of Forum Theatre reflected on relative to their own (shared) context of developing teacher professional practice.

Workshop and protocols design

The design of the workshops was influenced methodologically by the participants' initial hesitations around "doing drama". This was somewhat anticipated by me as

the researcher, but it only became clear how much it would impact the experience of Forum Theatre for our participants in the first workshop. I'll elaborate on this more in the script below presenting evidence of this, as I think it was a meaningful part of our study's findings exploring conditions and choices.

The following outline of the workshops was adapted from the Critical Participatory Action Research process outlined in Chapter 5 of Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon's *The Action Research Planner* (2014, pp. 85-114) to illustrate how Forum Theatre will be used to focus on practice. Our study centred around evidence collected from three Forum Theatre workshops held over the span of one high school term. The group size for the study was initially capped at twenty to 'encourage more active participation on the part of reluctant individuals' (Sappa & Barabach, 2020, p. 164) and this cap was easily maintained with recruitment difficulties. Initial information on the process and purpose of this Critical Participatory Action Research was provided to potential participants, as well as the opportunity for them to ask questions of what participation would entail. Each workshop ran for two and a half hours with the following structure.

1. *Reconnaissance* – 40 minutes – Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon cite this as establishing a common 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1987) in which a critical exploration of practice could take place. Boal's *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (2002) provided a series of drama-based activities (see "Image Theatre") that established group cohesion and facilitated discussion around experiences and practice (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 89-99).
2. *Planning* – 20 minutes – This step involved a discussion to agree and focus on what our "goal" of the workshop was. Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon explain it as revisiting and discussing 'the social and educational values and commitments

that inform your work' (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 100). With our Forum Theatre model, this took the form of a starting scenario of practice to explore and refine; then quickly soft-scripting a scenario relating to shared teacher experiences that was performed and further refined. It was drawn from any doings or sayings the warm-up activities brought up in Step 1, or material carried over from a past workshop.

3. Break of 10 minutes.
4. *Enacting the plan and observing how it works* (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 105-107) – 50 minutes – This step was where the Forum Theatre performance took place. The scenario from Step 2 was replayed and refined as participants became 'spect-actors' in the drama to refine the practice being performed. The 'joker' – person trusted by the group to facilitate; the researcher for most of our workshops – guided the Forum Theatre and discussion.
5. *Reflection* (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 108-112) – 20 minutes – Participants reflected in a semi-structured journal entry designed to identify moments from the performance that responded to the focus of our planned scenario.

This planner model was later refined into the following workshop structure (Table 1). This refinement process needed to maintain the flexibility required in creating a public sphere with workshop participants (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 149) to identify a shared focus of teacher practice. It also needed to maintain Boal's process of Theatre of the Oppressed as a way into Forum Theatre work: 'physical warm-up and disinhibition of the spect-actors by means of games and exercises, then Image Theatre work, and finally the Forum Theatre piece[s]' (Boal, 2002, p. 19). The timing and structure of the workshops reflects an integration of these influences.

Table 1: Timing of Forum Theatre workshop for high school teachers

3:30pm til 4:30pm	Drama games and warm-up activities • Housekeeping • Selecting a critical focus
4:30pm til 5:30pm	Forum Theatre scenario • Devising scenario based on critical focus • Performing the scenario • Re-working the scenario
5:30pm til 6pm	Logbooks and reflection discussion

The workshops were negotiated with the participants to be run on a weekday after school. The workshops were held in a school hall where two of the participants worked. About a fortnight separated each workshop, though one had to be postponed and one participant couldn't attend the last workshop. "Housekeeping" included:

- discussions around safety and wellbeing in the workshops including checking-in and the right to refuse or renegotiate participation in any activity, at any time; and
- ethics and anonymity with the expectation to anonymise shared experiences.

A key principle of the workshops here was to establish the expectation early on that our focus in the Forum Theatre performances was to generalise the experience being represented; and to protect the identities of any colleagues, administrators or students that these experiences might be based on. Participants were encouraged to change details of names or identifying features of characters when sharing and

devising scenarios, or in the words of the workshop: “it shouldn’t be wholly based on a true story, but we have to believe it could be”.

A review of the efficacious conditions of Forum Theatre from the above literature helped construct the methodological design of this project, as ethical agreements and approaches (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 168) to this kind of action research – and the use of Forum Theatre as a model – are necessary for participant safety. Further principles of Forum Theatre models that have not yet been mentioned and are directly related to the methodological design of the workshops are mentioned here:

- The critical awareness of the joker in facilitating group exploration during the Forum Theatre. This also extended to the preparation of Boal’s games that facilitate the development of group cohesion (Boal, 2002), as well as the trust of participants to contribute honestly and safely during and after any reflective workshop sessions.
- Further to the above point, the critical awareness of the researcher throughout the project to be sensitive to participant input and needs (Boal, 1995).
- Keeping the space flexible and negotiating any materials, props, accessibility concerns with the participants in advance of and during the workshops (Banks & Rifkin, 2014, p. 8).
- The specific activities within the process of Boal’s warm-up → Image Theatre → Forum Theatre structure (Boal, 2002) should be able to be adapted and negotiated by consensus to the specific needs of the group, provided the aim of Forum Theatre as a critical tool is communicated and maintained (Midha, 2010).

- In the explanation of the workshops and negotiating ground rules and consensus-building approaches, the facilitator and group should ‘delineate areas of power and responsibility’ (Rifkin, 2010, p. 25) around inclusive practices. For example, do participants know the difference between a majority-rules group decision and a consensus decision?

These previous lessons in efficacious conditions and facilitator choices for Forum Theatre, as well as these further principles directly relating to methodological design mentioned here, informed our study’s Forum Theatre model.

Data collection

The following is a list of evidence that was collected with participant permission during the workshops to capture the ways we explored developing teacher practice through Forum Theatre.

- Facilitator (researcher) logs that reflected on decisions and events of the study including administrative, design, pedagogical and ethical dimensions. This log was kept digitally and followed Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon’s recommendations for journal-keeping in Critical Participatory Action Research (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 175-176).
- Video recordings of the workshops. Cobb and Gravemeijer (2008) recommend this kind of data as an effective way to ‘formulate testable conjectures about both significant shifts in student reasoning and the means of supporting and organizing [sic] these shifts’ (Cobb & Gravemeijer, 2008, p. 70). Participant teacher written reflection helped to identify key moments of video recording that were transcribed, and were analysed to identify any choices made by the joker-facilitator in delivering the Forum Theatre, as well as any shifts in participant thinking on practice relevant to these choices.

- Participant reflective journals were semi-structured using the same questions for each workshop. As Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon outline, participants were encouraged to reflect on: ‘anticipated and unanticipated effects, intended and unintended effects, and side effects’ (Cobb & Gravemeijer, 2008, p. 108) to the changes made by spect-actors to the performed practice. The questions were:
 1. What did the workshop focus on that explored teacher practice?
 2. Please describe one (or two) moment(s) from the workshop that illustrate this focus.
 3. What prompted this moment(s) in the workshop?
 4. Do you have any other suggestions or ideas for what you would change when doing the workshop again? If yes, please outline.
 5. Any other notes (optional).

Recording of the workshop activities included both warm-up and Forum Theatre segments, and were useful in being able to transcribe and represent the data dramatically alongside annotations from the researcher. Recordings of participant reflection and logbook reflection were decided on as evidence to assist the inversion of the researcher’s gaze and to allow participants to co-construct an understanding (Lundie & Conroy, 2012) of the practice narratives that unfolded in the workshops. Participants’ input into selecting moments of importance from the workshops was sourced from these logbooks and they have been used to represent participation in, and analysis of, Forum Theatre in the following ethnodramatic script (Saldaña, 2018, p. 69). This selection has been corroborated, and the analysis extrapolated, from the researcher perspective as well, though primarily guided by participant reflection.

Limitations

In her article, Bannan-Ritland outlines what she calls an ‘emerging paradigm for teachers’ professional development’ where design-based principles might be better suited than the ‘quick visible results’ expected by administrators and policy-makers responsible for setting the teacher development agenda (Bannan-Ritland, 2008, pp. 246-247). This impasse was a frustrating tension for our study as a small-scale exploration in Forum Theatre: trying to work with a model ‘of a magnitude and complexity not likely to be addressed by brief training sessions’ (Bannan-Ritland, 2008, p. 247), but limiting itself in scope to what could very well be described as “brief training sessions”. Therefore, further research in this area may wish to consider how long-term projects might yield more compelling evidence in how Forum Theatre is a means of exploring the development of teacher practice.

As a further limitation on methodology, the iterative nature of Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon’s Critical Participatory Action Research cycles was not able to be achieved in the limited number of workshop sessions, meaning the pacing of participant reflection from ‘communicative action’ to ‘chang[ing] practice’ was not fully possible (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 85-86). The methodological focus became smaller iterations of discussion and rehearsal within three Forum Theatre workshop sessions. This slight, but meaningful, shift in methodological focus was in-line with the participants’ consensus thinking on what the time was most valuably spent doing in terms of using Forum Theatre to explore their teaching practice.

Ewing also offers that participant expectations of practice in and of development can be a limiting factor on exploration as well. Whilst Ewing and Kemmis agree on participants being explicitly involved in action research as a collaborative and co-

constructive exercise, Ewing leaves room for situations in action research where this may not always be possible: 'Without explicit peer or student input, changes of course may be more minimal although still worthwhile' (Ewing, 2011, pp. 71-73). It was worth reflecting on this over the course of my workshops, as the limited time commitments of participants meant the ideal depth of critical participation was not always possible.

Findings and analysis as Research-based Theatre script

To reiterate Ewing's point about the inter-relatedness of action research's philosophical assumptions, '[p]ersonal practical theories inform action. The experience of the action informs the personal practical theory. The two are always inextricably and reciprocally related' (Ewing, 2011, p. 74). This relationship characterises why an iterative and qualitative approach to data collection is useful in the Forum Theatre cycles. It also demonstrates how aforementioned studies limit understanding by selecting to a quantitative metric of the perceived participant value of Forum Theatre (usually in the form of a questionnaire) as a summative impact point of data. A qualitative approach, like our study's, more deeply understood the different ways this reciprocal relationship between action and practice (which we could understand as praxis within Boal's critical aims) developed for participants individually and collectively.

This is the main reasoning behind why key moments from the Forum Theatre workshops have been represented dramatically and selected with participant logbook validation: to pinpoint these reflexive moments as identified by both participant and researcher. The interactive ethnodrama of Forum Theatre presented and edited as a Research-based Theatre script also allows for an integration of annotation and

theory. The moments from the workshops have been distilled through moments of logbook reflection and post-workshop discussion. Saldaña's 'thinking narratively' has been used in the methodological design of our study by employing 'the devices and conventions of exemplary literary writing for the reportage of rigorous, systematic investigation' (Saldaña, 2018, p. 113). Whilst the creative dimension of this standard was intimidating, it was a powerful approach when the purpose of our research was to present the rhetorical narrative of data from a sound qualitative perspective.

To achieve this in our study, an analytical matrix was adapted from Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon for the purpose of making accessible, and transparent, the initial creative process behind organising and selecting moments of data to present as Research-based Theatre script. The original table was a matrix of critical questions that sought to extend researcher understanding of practice architectures around the thematic axes of the 'cultural-discursive', 'material-economic', and 'social-political' (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 81-82). For our study, Table 2 has been adapted for our purposes below and contextualised to the broad themes agreed upon by participants during the Forum Theatre workshops. This matrix approach was particularly apt for the development of the ethnodramatic transcript and analysis because the practice architectures were tension points in the critical representation of power in our participants' Forum Theatre. These practice architectures have then been appropriate catalysts for checking the participant and researcher selected moments from collected logbooks and revisiting the recordings to edit a rich narrative moment for the reader. As Saldaña outlines when thinking narratively in this way, '[i]t reflects carefully on how the power and nuances of language don't just communicate but influence and affect things in motion...and how you as the researcher retrospectively interpret what was spoken' (Saldaña, 2018, p. 117). It is

then also implicitly corroborated by the audience of the script itself, as researcher annotation (and characterisation) are rhetorically scrutinised against the verbatim representation of workshop moments and reflectively tested against – or perhaps “filtered through” – each audience member’s understanding of (teaching) practice.

Table 2: Practice architectures analysis matrix adapted from Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon for Forum Theatre workshops on teacher practice

Elements of teaching practices	Practice architectures
<i>Sayings (communication in semantic space)</i> What do teachers say as they practice? What ideas are most important to be said or repeated in teaching? What language or ideas to teachers use in practice and reflection? How do these sayings change during practice or reflection?	<i>Cultural-discursive arrangements (may enable or constrain others')</i> Where does this language/do these sayings come from (e.g. texts, policies, professional communities)? Who speaks this language in schools? Who speaks it most/least fluently? Is there contestation among school community members about the language or key ideas?
<i>Doings (activities, often producing or achieving something, in physical space-time)</i> What are teachers doing physically? Are there sequences or connections in use of space or practice?	<i>Material-economic arrangements (may enable or constrain others')</i> What physical spaces are being occupied or focused on in the doing of teaching?

What physical gestures or expressions occur or are reinforced in practice?	Are particular objects or set-ups being used in teaching practice? Are objects and resources adequate?
<i>Relatings (relationships in social space, especially relationships of power and solidarity)</i> How do the teachers relate to one another in practice and reflecting? Are there systems of positions, roles or functions? Are relationships of power involved? Are there relationships of solidarity or belonging in teaching practice? How are these expressed in moments of practice (i.e. in doings and sayings)?	<i>Social-political arrangements (may enable or constrain others')</i> What social and administrative systems of roles, responsibilities, functions, obligations, and reporting relationships enable and constrain relationships in teaching practice? Do school community members collaborate or compete for resources? How does this change over time and circumstance? Is the communicative space a public sphere? What do our observations tell us about practice traditions in teaching (i.e. 'the way we do things around here')?

Adapted from (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 81-82).

These practice architectures have been chosen to align with Boal's original aims for Forum Theatre as 'a theatre which liberates' (Boal, 2002, p. 19). Therefore, the joint contribution of Forum Theatre and our study should not be to impose a positivist

agenda on the measurement of practice, but to broaden possibilities in developing teacher practice; to liberate through choice and find other ways of doing, saying and relating. Ultimately, this table of practice architectures has been used as a methodological checkpoint for participant and researcher selected moments. It has prompted analysis and consideration within a critical theoretical context. Saldaña describes this process of constant, reflexive justification as producing *analytic memos*: a code ‘not just as a significant word or phrase you applied to a datum, but as a prompt or trigger for written reflection on the deeper and complex meanings it evokes’ (Saldaña, 2009, p. 32). Saldaña is also careful here to distinguish a useful difference between analytic memos and field notes – in the case of our study, the researcher contributions to recorded reflections and any researcher written logbook entries at the time of the workshops – as separate perspectives of evidence (contemporaneous and retrospective). Field notes are for rich moments of insight adjacent to specific moments; analytic memos are for a post-data collection perspective that draw broader connections to theory and research question(s) (Saldaña, 2009, p. 33).

Ideally, it was the completion of this ethnodramatic process (of maintaining a separation of verbatim representations of workshop moments) that attempts to imbue the following Research-based Theatre script with verisimilitude (Mieniczakowski, 2019, p. 8), and yet provide my narration as researcher with an awareness of – and, indeed, an attempt to harness – my ethnographic subjectivity. What this looks like in the presentation of evidence is trying to preserve the verbatim quality of the ethnodramatic transcript in the form of a dramatic performance script (Beck et al., 2011, p. 3) -- integrated and edited with research annotation as dramatic performance. The presentation of a script is a corroboration of key conceptual

research ideas against the mimesis of the workshops and my subjectivity as researcher (Mienczakowski, 2019, p. 12).

The process of parsing qualitative evidence

This corroboration mentioned above required multiple parses of the collected evidence with a systematic approach to building a convincing representation of the research narrative presented in script form. Far from accepting common connotations of narrative as fictive, this approach to research aims to harness the perceived realities of participants and researcher: as the primary mode through which teachers can understand and reflect on their practice. We cannot understand this practice without engaging with the exploratory narratives of the performances in the workshops or how we rehearse these moments in conversation or planning (or in liminal moments of our day, for example, driving to work). Tracy supports this idea of ‘iterative analysis’ as it:

‘alternates between the emic, or emergent, readings of the data and an etic use of existing models, explanations, and theories. Rather than grounding the meaning solely in the emergent data, an iterative approach also encourages reflection upon the active interests, current literature, granted priorities, and various theories the researcher brings to the data’ (Tracy, 2013, p. 184).

The aim of our study was to listen to participants’ doings and sayings, and then provide exploratory accounts (via the character of the “RESEARCHER”) to answer the research question and highlight moments of choice that facilitate conditions of efficacy in these Forum Theatre workshops. The collection and organisation of this evidence is done narratively precisely for this reason: its value is as a single example of the “emic” to the “etic”, an illustrative narrative with which others can juxtapose their practice and Forum Theatre facilitation.

That is also not to say that our narrative approach lacked rigor. ‘Thinking narratively’ in research, as Saldaña phrases it (2018), requires a systematic approach to parsing and coding of collected evidence across multiple perspectives and sources. In the case of our study, video/audio recordings, participant logbooks and researcher reflection have been juxtaposed to create a rich and varied perspective. The ethnodramatic methodological approach allows for this juxtaposition in the presentation of results as well: a simultaneous and vivified presentation of past and present; reflexive and reflective; with the dialogical extended to performance-audience interaction and consideration.

As the evidence has been parsed, Table 2 has been used to locate narrative beats for the participants. In recordings and logbook reflections, “plot points” have been identified in the research narrative to help with what Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon have described as ‘event sampling’ in Critical Participatory Action Research: ‘to gather evidence about a number of different topics [as they relate to practice architectures embedded in Table 2] systematically over time’ (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 180). The result of this parsing was corroborated across the different sources of evidence from the workshops, and then sequenced using Saldaña’s suggestion of ‘a mixture of both vivid research-related and personal stories...woven throughout the [research] to embed the knowledge as narrative structures in...memory’ (Saldaña, 2018, p. 103).

What this meant for our study was understanding that the rhetorical impact of the ethnodramatic approach was going to be based in presenting most events in performance script chronologically (just as participants (and researcher and

audience) experienced them) in the systematic introduction and development of the Forum Theatre model. As Tracy attests, '[c]hronological organization has the benefit of showing the trajectory of your analysis, illustrating how the data were collected and interpreted over time' (2013, pp. 185-186). For our series of Forum Theatre workshops as they appear the script, the trajectory of the narrative has been revisited multiple times (for example, during the workshop excerpts through the character of "BRO" and after the workshop excerpts as the character of the "RESEARCHER"). In its presentation below, this trajectory has been represented in layers through these character perspectives and the conventions of theatre (including revisiting the narrative a third time in the role of the audience). Not only is this a way of thinking narratively, and a way of rigorously parsing the evidence, but it is a part of the iterative nature of Critical Participatory Action Research: a process of integrated iteration, where roles in research and participation support each other and are not isolated from one-another (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 9).

Results and analysis presented as Research-based Theatre

Setting

The stage is minimally set: six grey/black drama “blocks” occupy the performance space in a henge circle. Offset downstage left is an office chair.

The henge formation and the chair can be separately lit by overhead profiles/spotlights as they represent two different locations: the school hall where the Forum Theatre workshops took place and the RESEARCHER’S office.

There is a screen or are screens visible (or a projector) that will have text prompts and images appear on them from time to time.

Notes on referencing and formatting

Any references in the following script will appear on the screen. While their effect is mostly rhetorical during the performance (unless explicitly referred to in the narration), a reference list should be made available to the audience, or included in the program, should they wish to review it.

Where square brackets appear in the dialogue, I’ve had to insert words or phrases for clarity because the lines are out of context. I have endeavoured, wherever possible, to use the participant’s own wording of the original subject from elsewhere in the recordings to reflect the participant’s diction and intent.

Participants and/or “characters”

RESEARCHER – *Bro from his perspective **after** the Forum Theatre workshops, watching back and analysing. This character represents the retrospective analysis*

of the narrative evidence, making connections between choices made in facilitating the workshops and the methodological and critical theory.

*BRO – Bro from his perspective **during** the Forum Theatre workshops as facilitator. This character is meant to provide contemporaneous insight into his mind while facilitating.*

PARTICIPANTS –

CARLA – Female, 20s.

JAYNE – Female, 30s.

PHAEDRA – Female, 20s.

NOAH – Male, 30s.

Note: Pseudonyms were selected using a random name generator.

BOAL – Voice only. Author of Games for Actors and Non-Actors (2002).

Prologue

Spotlight on RESEARCHER standing downstage centre. He is wearing a lab coat, thick glasses and a wig that is styled into a rather wispy shock of grey hair.

Dispersed amongst the henge formation are the PARTICIPANTS. They are frozen in tableau: waiting as if the workshop is about to start. Lights on the PARTICIPANTS are dimmed.

RESEARCHER

Good evening, teacher colleagues, or if it is not evening, let's pretend that it is for the sake of the theatre. My name is Bro Reveleigh and I'm a student doing my Master of Education by Research at the University of Sydney. I'm also a high school Drama and English teacher and this thesis is my first foray into research. I've decided that part of my thesis will take the form of a play or "Research-based Theatre", where instead of describing in writing what has happened in my research, I am going to show you through performance. The intention of this is to be able to weave selected moments and analysis into a coherent narrative that 'posits plausible relationships in and among the codes' (Saldaña, 2018, p. 13) I've selected of prominent teacher practice.

Gestures to screen.

You'll also see these references appear during this play, as they would in a written thesis, to uphold the academic integrity of my commentary; to give credit, where necessary, to ideas I'm referencing in my commentary; and, hopefully, have some rhetorical impact on what I'm presenting to you. A full reference list is available on request.

More on my topic of research in a moment. First, what does an audience watch in Research-based Theatre? If you are reading this, you have just transitioned, rather hastily, from the academic prose of my literature review and methodology chapters to the active imagining of a theatre set. Some of you can literally see me onstage as I say this and only need to transition with the dimming of the house lights. Either way, your suspension of disbelief is impressive – and subtler – in pretending the person onstage is actually me and not an actor. *(smiles)* Although, how would you know either way? Regardless of whether you are imagining or actually viewing this, this heuristic is the nature of this kind of ethnographic research: there are certain things that I must do to give the play verisimilitude (Tracy, 2013, pp. 123-124), but any “truth” is, ultimately, the result of you comparing what I present here with your own experiences of practice. I welcome this comparison.

For example:

As the RESEARCHER speaks a short list of dot points appear on the screen to summarise what he says.

- What the participants say in this play is what they *actually said* in real life in the workshops – verbatim. I transcribed their lines from video and audio recordings. I think this is important to our study because the participants have offered their words of reflection and practice for their rhetorical value (Saldaña, 2018, pp. 104-110). They want to convince you of their particular understanding as it might align or differ with other colleagues.
- There should also be some methodological underpinning as to why I have selected the moments you will see from the workshop. There is: I decided on

Critical Participatory Action Research as a guiding framework – this is a form of action research that ‘aim[s] to throw light on the pre-conditions that shape current practices’ and aim for a broader social value in contexts of practice (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 2).

- *(begins to take off coat, wig and glasses)* And no cheap theatrical tricks to enhance the rhetorical impact of these moments. I think you want the moments you see to be earnest highlights of the Forum Theatre workshops. My narration needs to be honest and build trust with you, particularly about the fact that what I offer is subjective in the context of the research; it’s my perspective for you to consider alongside your own (Tracy, 2013, pp. 39-40).

This last point is why I have decided to split myself into two characters: not out of ethnographic tradition, but to corroborate my own experiences from the workshops through what’s described as a ‘patchwork’ ethnographic lens (Günel et al., 2020, pp. 2-3). This mimics a teacher’s embodied duality in practice: looking back on themselves in the fast-paced, decision-making environment of the workshop or lesson.

A doppelgänger BRO walks onstage and waves to the audience. He is costumed identically to RESEARCHER Bro.

BRO

(To Researcher)

Nice shirt.

RESEARCHER

(To BRO)

Thanks. *(Gestures to frozen workshop scene.)* Would you mind?

BRO

Sure.

BRO joins frozen scene.

RESEARCHER

(To audience)

So, what's my research about? Well, this was the slide I used to introduce my topic to the workshop participants during our first session together.

The following slide appears on the screen as "Figure 1".

Figure 1:

Research questions

— — —

Broader Question: What can be learned about the **conditions for efficacy** in using **forum theatre** as a professional learning tool with a group of teachers for **developing their practice**?

Conditions for efficacy

- What should we change to make this work?
- What could we try or experiment with?

Forum theatre

- Augusto Boal's model

Developing teacher practice

- What do you want to focus on?
- *(What could teachers focus on?)*

At the start of the first session, the participants and I talked through some of these terms, particularly what “conditions of efficacy” meant, and how these choices might support the likelihood that the Forum Theatre was valuable for a professional teaching context. Simply put: the main idea is to explore what choices we can make when doing Forum Theatre together; and in being conscious of these choices, understand how they might apply to different situations of Forum Theatre (Dwyer, 2004, p. 208). In this way, there is no “correct” or “most effective” choice, but knowing when and how other people have made a range of choices related to facilitating Forum Theatre can be instructive for varying contexts and conditions. You’ll see these choices appear throughout the play and they will look something like this.

The text “Choices: they will appear something like this” appears on the screen. The text of the “choice” slides should be unique from the text in other slides to emphasise its importance in answering the research question.

During this first workshop session, I was excited to be talking about my research with colleagues in the workshop environment. But it became quickly apparent to me that my participants didn’t engage in this material in the same way I do. At least not yet? I felt the need to move to a more practical mode: my first “choice” as it applies to my research question in exploring conditions of efficacy. It was the end of the school day, and my participants weren’t here to “do” a lecture. They were here to do “drama”.

The text “Choice: participant expectations about “doing drama”” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

There was a certain excitement and trepidation about the dramatic aspect of what we were about to do. At least, that's how I interpreted the nervous laughter, quick glances to size each other up, and clarifying questions at the start of the first workshop. I shared much of this trepidation being new to what I was about to do – as a researcher – as well: knowing you are being recorded adds another layer of reflexive scrutiny, as any ethnographer is well-aware.

I'd learned, from reviewing similar studies using Forum Theatre, how necessary it was to establish expectations of safety and wellbeing too (Midha, 2010; Rifkin, 2010).

The following slide appears on the screen as “Figure 2”.

Figure 2:

Safety (risks) and wellbeing in workshops

- **No one has to do anything with which they are uncomfortable.**
 - We will negotiate another way to do it as a group.
 - Everyone needs to be included, as long as they still want to be.
- **Be cautious with material you share, if you aren't ready to share it.**
 - We can take a quick time out to come up with other material or change focus.
- **Everybody/Every body is different. Always check-in.**
- **Covid measures.**

RESEARCHER

These expectations should be reviewed by anyone facilitating a Forum Theatre workshop as part of the conditions of efficacy for any workshop environment. They

weren't presented as rules, but as things to negotiate, add to and agree upon. In this group of participants, no additions were made, but we talked through what they meant.

A lot of administration up-front, but an important part of the process. Regardless, I could tell I was losing them. They'd come here for a drama workshop and that initial energy – and probably anxiety – was starting to flag. I made the choice that we needed to get into something that would break the ice and set the tone practically. It started with some basic “warm-up” exercises...

Lights up on the workshop scene with BRO and PARTICIPANTS beginning to re-enact warm-up activities. The text “Workshop 1” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

It started with some breathing exercises.

Warming-up

BRO and PARTICIPANTS breath slowly in-through-nose and out-through-mouth. They are standing in a circle.

RESEARCHER

Then with a clap being passed around the circle.

A quick clap is passed around the circle and reversed. The next line can be started halfway through this action.

RESEARCHER

I noticed the laughter started to move from polite and nervous...

The clap begins to reverse direction randomly. JAYNE breaks the silence with a giggle because she breaks the rhythm. PARTICIPANTS begin to laugh and verbalise quietly their investment in the game. They continue to do so as RESEARCHER narrates.

RESEARCHER

...to an easy kind of laughter in dramatic play where mistakes don't matter as much. Indeed, Boal prepares us well for this in working with 'non-actors'. He has written his 'arsenal' of games to prepare participants inexperienced in drama. For Forum Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed, he frames this preparation using the idea of 'two unities'. I'll let him explain...

BRO and the PARTICIPANTS progress to a more complex version of passing "energy" to one-another by throwing it with unique actions across the circle. They also become silent while miming the game so the voiceover can be heard. When an action in the game is thrown, one must catch it using the same kind of movements. BRO and PARTICIPANTS must then throw the energy to someone else in a contrasting way.

BOAL

(Voiceover)

'...the first unity [is] the unity of the physical and psychic apparatuses.' '...ideas, emotions and sensations are all indissolubly interwoven. A bodily movement 'is' a

thought and a thought expresses itself in a corporeal form. This concept is easily grasped in its most obvious manifestations – the idea of eating can induce salivation, the idea of making love can product erection’ –

RESEARCHER

Or any ‘physiological arousal’ –

BOAL

(Voiceover continued)

[Sure.] ‘...love can bring a smile to the face, hate can produce a hardening of the features...’. ‘The second [unity] is that of the five senses – none exists separately, they too are all linked. Bodily activities are activities of the whole body. We breathe with our whole body, with our arms, our legs, our feet, etc., even though our respiratory apparatus takes a leading role in the process. We sing with our whole body, not just our vocal chords’ (Boal, 2002, p. 49).

A pause while BRO and PARTICIPANTS unmute themselves and begin adding sounds to the activity (or rather, the sounds were there the whole time and are now audible to the audience post-voiceover). The RESEARCHER should still be audible in his next line.

RESEARCHER

These unities that Boal describes are at the heart of teacher practice and the aim of our study: to explore new ways of professional learning through an embodied understanding of practice or teaching ‘hexis’ (Reid & Mitchell, 2015). Even these

warm-up activities produced some interesting practice narratives for us to reflect on...

BRO

Alright, let's stop there for a moment.

PARTICIPANTS pause the game and listen to BRO.

BRO

Here's where we bring in our "teaching" thing, alright? Um...instead of a noise, you have to say a teaching phrase. Completely out of context...um...you might lean heavily on a teaching stereotype or you might...it might just be like a behaviour management cue. Or it might be a thinking noise.

CARLA and PHAEDRA laugh to each other as they recall/reflect on what this might mean. Although it's inaudible what was said between them, their laughter affirms some kind of understanding.

BRO

It could be anything. So, when someone says it to you, you just have to parrot it back to them. Okay?

JAYNE

Okay.

BRO

So, it still keeps the same pattern, it's not like you have to have a conversation—

JAYNE

Can you do an example?

BRO

Yep, so, I go...(very loud thinking/attention getting noise).

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene as RESEARCHER speaks.

RESEARCHER

This moment annoys me. It wasn't a very good example because it wasn't clear to anyone what my noise was meant to be out of context – even though that's what I asked for. If I attempt to account for what I was thinking: I was aiming to illustrate that teacher 'bodies perform actions, but the repertoire of actions is learned and is intelligible as part of a social practice. ...Bodies perform doings and sayings that constitute particular actions' (Green & Hopwood, 2015). I wanted to position us as a group to be receptive to this by showing that *any* generalised "doings and sayings" of teaching could be thrown around out of context here and recognised by the group. We can mark it as another choice that I had planned for before the workshop.

The text "Choice: planning activities to have relevance to teacher practice" appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

But what I failed to plan for was my illustrative example. I can see I haven't been particularly illustrative for Jayne. I'm also very conscious at this point of Noah still standing in a neutral stance; he hasn't quite relaxed yet.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

JAYNE

And I have to repeat it?

BRO

Yep.

NOAH

So, are we catching too?

BRO

Yep, so I might look at Jayne, and I might go "Ah (*loud attention-getting noise*), everyone!"

JAYNE has started to copy my sound pre-emptively to "catch" it.

JAYNE

(Mimicking)

Ah, everyone!

JAYNE is also trying to gesture the throw and catch motions. BRO and PARTICIPANTS then freeze and workshop scene lights dim.

RESEARCHER

It turns out that neglecting to prepare an example for this activity was okay. The participants were able to navigate the improvisatory nature of my facilitation.

The text “Choice: the tension between preparation and encouraging an improvisational workshop environment” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

It reduced the stakes for them recalling their own improvisations and teaching practice repertoires. This could be, perhaps, because it mimics the improvisational environment of the classrooms they lead (Holdhus et al., 2016). Regardless, it became another design choice that I hadn’t foreseen in my preparation.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

JAYNE

(To PHAEDRA; punctuates with a gesture of left index finger to temple indicating eyes)

Look at me.

PHAEDRA

(Repeats but doesn’t look at JAYNE)

Look at me.

BRO

Say it back to Jayne first, and then you can look at someone else and do something completely different.

PHAEDRA

Oh.

(Correcting; back to JAYNE)

Look at me.

(Turn to CARLA)

Ah, boys...

ALL laugh. BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

This moment intrigues me. There's a tension or juxtaposition here that creates comedy for us. Why? I think laughter can be a clue for participants, facilitators and researchers that we collectively recognise something deeper. By its very nature, the comedic effect of a dramatic irony in our own performances in workshops can be useful threads to follow for reflection. It is based on the underlying assumptions of these "doings and sayings" of practice (Green & Hopwood, 2015, pp. 21-22) that we recognise in each other as teachers.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

CARLA

(Repeats as laughter dies down)

Ah, boys...

(To BRO; quick and growling tone, accompanied with a clap for attention)

Boys at the back.

BRO

(Repeats)

Boys at the back.

(To NOAH, contrasts previous with a softer tone and gesture; almost like a question)

Alright, that's good.

NOAH

(Repeats)

Alright, that's good.

(To JAYNE, more definitive tone; though the smile on his face suggests his character is a little disingenuous or he is humouring the "student")

That's a good thought.

ALL laugh. BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

Again, laughter here. As the participants warmed-up to the activity. Their doings and sayings quickly began to become intrinsic to their performative contributions. That is to say, in terms of Boal's unities, that what they were saying became linked with what they were doing to say it – with gesture and the physical characteristics of voice. The

simultaneity of these aspects of practice allowed what might be described as a sense of play for these participant teachers, and how this can help activate an understanding and reflection on practice (O'Grady & Smyth, 2017).

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

JAYNE

(To NOAH, not as part of the activity, unsure)

You don't say that!

(Repeats, as part of the activity, but to CARLA)

That's a good thought.

BRO

Okay, you've got to say it to Noah, though. Catch it from him.

JAYNE

Oh, uh.

(Repeats to NOAH; with a kinder tone)

That's a good thought.

(To CARLA; contrasts with a stern instruction)

Now sit down.

ALL laugh at contrast. BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

Jayne is starting to play with the parameters of the game. There's a short narrative that has developed in the two lines and it's played for comedic effect. This narrative is starting to represent a collection of doings and sayings in teaching, or what could be described as a 'practice architecture' (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014). Just as a facilitator would with discussion, I felt my role here was making choices to manage the flow of the activity and the performative contributions representing these practice architectures (Kemmis, Heikkinen, et al., 2014, pp. 160-161).

The text "Choice: facilitator reminds of shared expectations and instructions of performance and discussion" appears on the screen.

In this case, this activity built to a narrative from the doings and sayings: a general context we were familiar with as teachers in the classroom.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

CARLA

(Repeats to JAYNE)

Now sit down.

(To BRO)

I'm waiting.

RESEARCHER

(Said quickly without pausing the scene)

The practice narrative was extended again!

BRO

(Repeats to CARLA; plays it up with hands on hips)

I'm waiting.

(Out of character)

Uhh...

BRO pauses to think. NOAH slaps the side of his legs in a kind of involuntary “come on” gesture. Lights dim on workshop scene with RESEARCHER still lit to indicate the workshop scene is paused.

RESEARCHER

This moment is also worth noting in terms of a choice that I'm quickly thinking through as facilitator.

The text “Choice: providing choices and not leading the group on themes” appears on the screen.

I could sense a clear narrative about an unruly Year 7 class – with a disruptive group of boys at the back. When I was watching the video recording back, I noticed that I ruined the rhythm a little when I hesitated to think about the merit of redirecting the narrative. This is because, at the time, I was worried about us stagnating on a single narrative of behaviour management. This had been an issue noted in other cases of Forum Theatre facilitation (Hamel, 2015; Harman et al., 2016; Wooten & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2014). I wanted to open-up the narrative choices for the group. As behaviour management was my example when I was explaining the activity, I

thought that it might be meaningful to explore other viable narratives before settling on our Year 7 class as a possible Forum Theatre scenario.

Lights up and workshop scene resumes with BRO and PARTICIPANTS.

BRO

(To PHAEDRA)

Open up your books, Year sev-ehn (*drawn out*).

RESEARCHER

(Aside)

I went with continuing the narrative.

PHAEDRA

(Repeats, initially to JAYNE but corrects to repeat back to BRO halfway through; this, gets a small laugh)

Open up your books, Year sev-ehn.

(To JAYNE)

Eyes at the front.

JAYNE

(Repeats to PHAEDRA, but with some prompting gesturally from NOAH)

Eyes at the front.

(Makes a shrug/facial expression about forgetting to repeat back to sender)

PHAEDRA

(Agreeing with expression, out-of-character)

Yeah, I keep doing it too.

JAYNE

(To BRO, in-character)

And don't forget to do your reflective journals.

BRO

(Repeats to JAYNE)

And don't forget to do your reflective journals.

(To NOAH)

Because they're worth 20% *(hand gesture to punctuate importance)*.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS laugh at the developing narrative. Lights dim and workshop scene is paused.

RESEARCHER

Judging by the laughter and play, the participants were clearly enjoying this narrative that they were building out of a teacher's attempts to start – or perhaps finish? – a Year 7 class. Even across subject disciplines, the sayings and doings of practice are identifiable and can be used as a way to bridge common understandings of practice (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014). From my perspective, the laughter seemed to indicate a play and enjoyment of constructing the narrative.

The text "Choice: paying attention to the group's indicators of engagement in a workshop; discussing these explicitly" appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

If I were to facilitate the process again, I would add an explicit moment of reflection as a group on what we're doing and saying when things are going well in the workshop activities. I wonder how this choice would shape our reflective practice if explicitly explored? Perhaps it would be introducing an understanding of teacher hexis when conceptualising professional learning and practice (Reid & Mitchell, 2015). Let's skip ahead until after the group had completed some of the activities.

Later in Workshop 1

As the RESEARCHER says this last bit, PARTICIPANTS move into new positions, but still in a circle. The text "Later in Workshop 1" appears on the screens. Lights up.

BRO

Of the activities so far, what are we learning about ourselves? Possibly about—surface level stuff about teaching. Could be nothing as well—

CARLA

(Answering)

Memory. Remembering what someone said and mimicking that, like making sure you're paying attention so that you can...

BRO

Is that more of a Drama game thing? Or more of a teaching thing? Or both?

CARLA

Both, I think. Listening to what a kid is saying. Sometimes I find it hard to focus when a kid is telling you a lot.

(To self)

Like focus! Focus! What are they saying?

(To group)

You have to pay attention.

Murmurs of agreement from JAYNE, NOAH and PHAEDRA. Lights down and pause workshop scene here except BRO narrates – and is lit with a spotlight – this time.

BRO

(Joining the RESEARCHER'S scene)

Can I say something?

RESEARCHER

Sure.

BRO

(To audience)

At this point, I'm feeling the participants become more comfortable with the rhythm of alternating between activity and quick verbal discussion. The laughter is still present, so I feel like we can move towards problematising our first scenario for Forum Theatre.

(To RESEARCHER)

Is that what you are still thinking watching the recording back?

RESEARCHER

(To BRO)

In a way. Watching it back, I'm annoyed with the level of involvement you – we – are having as the facilitator in the workshop. Is it too much?

BRO

What do you mean?

RESEARCHER

A lot of the discussion is littered with our brief annotations and reflections.

BRO

In the moment, I'm conscious of scaffolding. I think we need to have some input. The complex nature of our professional work requires organisational infrastructures of communication and cooperation (Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017, p. 28). Teachers, like us and these participants, are used to working in a hierarchical organisation. The assumption is that someone is giving direction. This cooperation and communication reflects participant assumptions of the facilitator as a supervisory role.

The text "Choice: being critically conscious of power in teaching practice architectures; discussing and acting on them in the workshop" appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

It's something I'm still stumped on looking back on the recordings as well. There are later moments where the participants begin to make decisions in the direction of the workshop themselves, but I feel this is a larger choice that facilitators and participants could subvert critically with more workshops than we have. I've gone back and had a look at some of the literature that also suggests a more egalitarian approach for workshop groups in Forum Theatre (Desai, 2017; Eriksen et al., 2015).

BRO

Well, possibly something that could be refined for next time. Unfortunately, I have to stick to the script. Will we look at the moments leading into the first attempt at Forum Theatre?

RESEARCHER

Alright. Just let me set the scene.

BRO rejoins workshop scene, BRO and PARTICIPANTS are still paused with lights dimmed.

RESEARCHER

After the midway break in our first workshop, my colleagues were receptive to knowing more about Forum Theatre. They were asking questions about it and were motivated, whether out of interest or anxiety, to know what they needed to do when performing. Again, we should recognise here this motivated disposition could very much be due to either pre-existing connections with me as the researcher; or each participant's interest in practical, drama-based activities.

The text “Choice: acknowledging existing relationships and contexts conducive (or resistant) to Forum Theatre and professional learning” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

Anyone using Forum Theatre or similar models should consider whether participants are open to the idea that drama-based workshops can help them with professional practice. Participants hostile to this idea cannot iteratively reflect on their practice because there is an epistemological barrier, as it is with any professional learning: teachers need to be given the opportunity to have deep knowledge of, and be persuaded of, any potential innovation in their professional development (Bannan-Ritland, 2008). That was what I was conscious of achieving here: the warm-up activities and the questions were intended to lead participants to start asking me questions about, and be persuaded of, Forum Theatre. After this choice, we were able to begin exploring a very brief summary of Boal’s model.

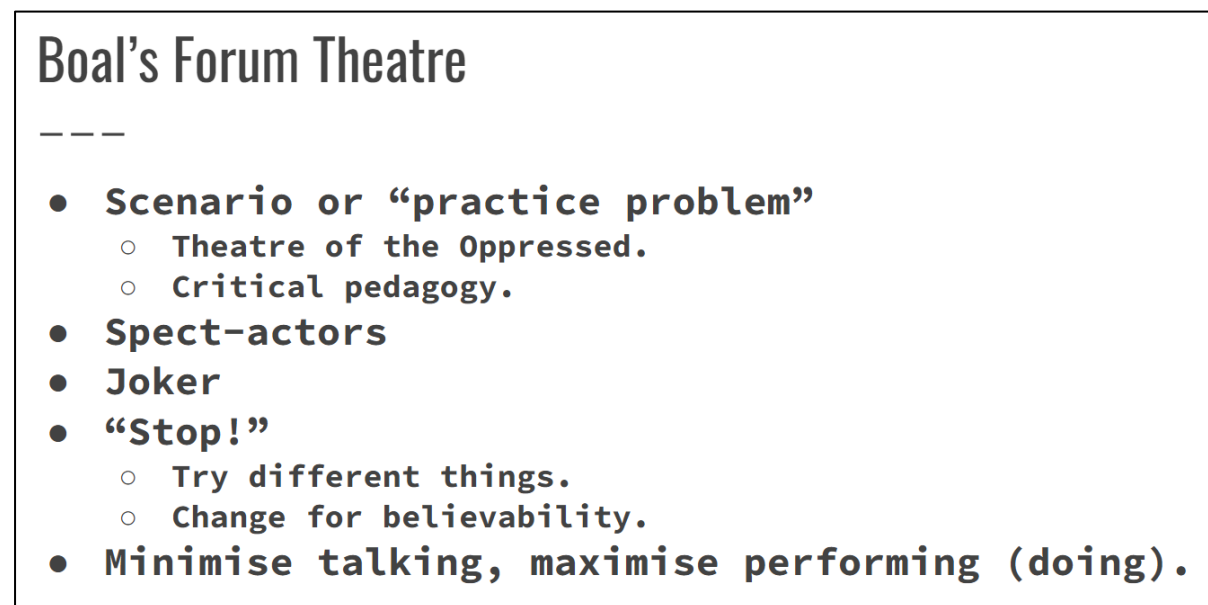
The text “Later still in Workshop 1: Setting expectations through reflective discussion and consensus” appears on the screen for around ten seconds. Lights up on the workshop space, and BRO and PARTICIPANTS animate and arrange blocks in a semi-circle so that they can see what’s being projected. PARTICIPANTS and BRO are seated on blocks by the time BRO begins.

BRO

So, I wanted to make sure that everything we need to know while learning Forum Theatre is on a single slide.

The following slide, “Figure 3”, appears on the screen.

Figure 3:



BRO

I don't want us to have to pause and go through slides to pick this up. Because of that, I had to strip away a lot of stuff, so there might be things on the fly that we encounter that we have to talk through to make it work. But I think that's part of the workshop model, that we're trying to negotiate those things to make it work for a teaching context. Because, in my lit review research, Forum Theatre is used a lot by medical faculties at universities (Arveklev et al., 2015; Brett-MacLean et al., 2012; Wilson, 2013) to replay patient-doctor interactions, which I think is interesting—

NOAH

Or nurses—

PHAEDRA

Beside manner—

BRO

Yes, exactly. Because there's a pretty strong power dynamic between doctor and patient – and there is in teaching as well – and we can position it like school leader-classroom teacher; classroom teacher-student; student-student; teacher-teacher; teacher-parent; because all of those power dynamics are different in those relationships too.

Lights dim and BRO and PARTICIPANTS move the blocks out of the way and stand in a circle again.

The text “Choice: drawing connections to analogous professional contexts inside and outside teaching” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

Again, looking back I can see here a choice in the way the facilitator and the participants are relating the doings and sayings of their practice to other cases of practice as a way of understanding, theorising and accounting for their practice. Here, participants are reaching across a professional divide to analogise about power and the systems of ‘roles’ – doctors, nurses, patients – and ‘physical spaces’ – a bedside – that form practice architectures (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 81-82). Alongside this analogising was also a clarification of Forum Theatre conventions by me as the facilitator.

The slide of “Figure 3” reappears.

As the slide including these conventions suggests, there were a number of moments spread out across the workshops – but particularly in the first workshop – where I as the facilitator clarified what could and shouldn't be done. The following is a montage of me doing this taken mostly from the first workshop.

The text “Choice: setting the parameters within the workshop on the conventions of Forum Theatre” appears on the screen. This will stay on the screen for the duration of the montage.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

BRO

What we need to do is we need to take some of the things we were talking about from previous activities, and kind of focus it down to one area that we want to make a scene out of. And this focus area might carry over into other weeks, or we might just pick a new focus area next week. Whatever we feel is going to be beneficial. That's what I mean by “scenario”.

Lights quickly punctuate a jump in time in the montage.

BRO

“Spect-actors”. A mashed-up term. Yeah, so it's a play between actor and spectator. So, in Forum Theatre, everyone's a spectator until someone jumps into the performance and becomes an actor. So, the idea is, rather than traditional-actor-traditional-audience split, the fourth wall is porous, and you can jump in and out at any time.

NOAH

Okay...

BRO

So, if there's someone doing a scenario and you're like "Stop!", I'd like to replay that bit because I think I've got something to add, then you can tag anyone in the scene at any particular time—

Lights quickly punctuate a jump in time in the montage.

BRO

You can talk as much as you want in the performance, but we can't just stop and talk for ten minutes. Once we start, we want to enact it, and explore it in the performance.

Lights quickly punctuate a jump in time in the montage.

BRO

We're learning by doing rather than learning by talking.

Lights quickly punctuate a jump in time in the montage.

BRO

The facilitator is the joker. Like a deck of cards. Pushes tension. Focuses the group. That would be me for today, but I'd really like to end this [series of workshops] by sharing the role.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I talk too much. The curse of many educators. As I watched the recording back of this section, I could tell there was some impatience or disengagement here from participants. Rocking on feet. Eye contact wandering. It was a choice I made to set the expectations and see if there was any negotiation or amendment needed. None seemed to be necessary? I think facilitators need to be mindful of this choice and how different groups of participants would react, as not every facilitator can be this prescriptive with their participants at the start of the process (Burgoyne et al., 2016). I could feel myself talking for too long by this point, so I made a choice to prompt discussion for the next part...

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. The text “Choice: the tension between prompting participant input and being succinct and defined in Forum Theatre conventions” appears on the screen. Lights up on workshop scene.

BRO

Before we make a decision [about what our Forum Theatre is going to be based on], let's just go around the circle and name one or two things that resonate with you from the last hour.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I know! I talk too much! I'll let it play out in a moment, but I can't help but interject here: the change after this point was sudden, and I noticed the group being more still and attentive in terms of agreement noises and eye contact as they listened to what resonated with each other. I'm not going to claim why this was: it could have been the tension of having to perform whatever they were going to agree upon; or a genuine concern beginning to form for each other's experiences; or the impatience of having to wait for me to set everything up verbally before they could start. From *my* perspective as a facilitator, *I* felt my choice to go from prescriptive talking to prompting this discussion was a key moment – you can tell by the way I rock back on my heels in a physical display of how excited I am; a mannerism of mine I noticed on the recording –

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze and the shift in atmosphere is noticeable. Lights up on workshop scene.

NOAH

That conversation – I've forgotten what activity it was – the one where we were talking about the—

CARLA

--the cycle of it; the one about what it means to be a teacher and, like, what order you do it—

P-J

Yeah, what activity was that? The freeze frames?

BRO rocks back on his feet, as described by the researcher above. BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

(Pointing at BRO's heels)

See! The heels mean I'm keen!

Lights down in workshop scene. PARTICIPANTS clear the space and JAYNE and NOAH prepare first frozen image. The text "Detour: quick flashback" appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

Anyway, the participants are referring to one of the warm-up activities where they presented a series of freeze frames – tableaux – based on our professional teaching context. Let's see them...

Lights up to reveal the first frozen image of an arm wrestle staged on a stack of blocks. NOAH is looking at their clasped hands and JAYNE is looking at the floor in concentration. Both are in a kind of combat stance that's symmetrical. It creates a powerful image. Lights down.

Lights up. NOAH is now seated on the blocks and is staring off into the distance above the audience. His body language is partially receptive to JAYNE who is standing next to him and pointing to something, trying to keep his attention. She is looking at him intently. Lights down.

Lights up. NOAH and JAYNE have swapped positions and NOAH is standing where JAYNE was and shrugging but is excited. JAYNE is seated where NOAH was and is pinching the upper ridge of her nose in frustration. She can't help but animate a shake of the head as her freeze settles. Lights down.

JAYNE and NOAH leave the space. PHAEDRA and CARLA pre-set centre stage staring out to the audience as they debrief.

RESEARCHER

We debriefed on these shapes with the participants in the audience. Here were some interpretations...

PHAEDRA and CARLA are lit in the pre-set positions with spotlights.

CARLA

Is it a metaphor for the struggle of teaching?

PHAEDRA

Competitive?

CARLA

Between students and teachers?

PHAEDRA

Battle between executive and government?

PHAEDRA and CARLA

Paperwork.

BOTH laugh.

CARLA

Uphill battle against all the unnecessary paperwork?

PHAEDRA

Reluctant to engage with PL.

RESEARCHER

(Aside)

Eventually, Jayne and Noah clarify their intentions.

JAYNE and NOAH step into the light.

JAYNE

What it's like to be in an executive. Coming in with an agenda and your ideas and them getting swayed and pulled and swayed.

NOAH

In the second image...[I was] just doin' a powerpoint again. Reluctance and frustration.

JAYNE

In the third image, the boredom filters down to the faculty.

Lights down. PARTICIPANTS reset to previous scene with BRO.

RESEARCHER

Even if those interpretations are incompatible, the value of the Forum Theatre is heuristic, allowing participants to arrive at their own personalised reflection from a polysemic image (Boal, 2002). It is a choice, here, for the facilitator to develop these activities that allow for rich and varied accounts of these performed doings and sayings. It's an interplay between practice, merging participant consciousness, and the possibilities of meaning and practice (Green & Hopwood, 2015).

That digression to the freeze frame activity lays the groundwork for selecting a topic. Let's return now to the moment in Workshop 1 where the participants are deciding on their first Forum Theatre scenario...

The flashback text reverts to "Figure 3" on the screen. Lights up.

BRO

So, [it's important] what order we do our job in [as well as what content we teach]? Basically? We could play around with that. Anything else kind of resonate or jump out?

CARLA

Yeah, I think the other thing was definitely the symbolic arm wrestle. I think and the up-hill battle against things that aren't critical and ideas—

JAYNE

Power balance too—

CARLA

That was the other thing I thought of...but definitely that cycle or order of what we're doing in teaching.

BRO

Okay. Alright.

(Looks to JAYNE)

Jayne?

JAYNE

Well, I'm always about professional learning, so I thought, our [performance] resonated with me. What we did in our [freeze] frame. Just how much [the organisation of our job] impacts staff. What happens at all different levels [of school management] and, so I don't know...but I like the ordering—

PHAEDRA

I like the order[ing of our job, as an idea, as well]. I liked the warm-up activity we did [re-enacting teacher voices in the classroom] and then everyone was like “ah, we're not being very positive”. So that kind of stood out.

General agreement from PARTICIPANTS and BRO.

BRO

Remember again, we don't have to stick to one—

CARLA

We can mix and match, but, we can show *that* in the executive stuff inside the sequence—

JAYNE

Or not even just executive, but all staff; teachers in general...

CARLA

Yeah.

PARTICIPANTS freeze, BRO rocks back on his feet and overbalances to step next to the RESEARCHER. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I like this bit. See?

(Gesturing to rocking on heels)

The participants' conversational pace in this part is quite fast. It's hard to keep up with because so much is aligned in the moment; aligned between perspectives. I didn't think it would happen this quickly.

(To BRO)

Do you want to tell them what you're thinking here?

BRO

Sure: I remember being excited here because Carla just took the facilitator or “joker” role as part of the workshop. Just briefly, it was a moment where the power dynamic started to shift from facilitator running the workshop to participants taking ownership and making decisions. For me, this moment represents a dynamic interplay between participants collaborating and communicating that can be observed in practice-based education (Higgs, 2012; Hutchings & Loftus, 2012; Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017, pp. 54-61).

RESEARCHER

I’m going to identify participant discussion here as a choice, but note that the choices and conditions we’ve discussed so far are mostly facilitator-centred. The conditions of efficacy for Forum Theatre won’t always be choices centred with the facilitator.

The text “Choice: participant discussion and consensus as the driving process of workshop decision-making” appears on the screen. PARTICIPANTS unfreeze and BRO re-joins the workshop scene. Lights up.

NOAH

So, are we voting?

JAYNE

I think we should just start—

BRO

I'd rather a consensus, so we all need to make a concession somewhere; but rather than a majority rules thing; we all need to agree on something. It sounds like we had pretty positive—

JAYNE

I think we could go far—or further with the cycle of teaching and at what points... whether that's programming or assessing—

RESEARCHER

(Aside)

Again, this time with Jayne, taking on the facilitation role.

CARLA

Like different settings of teaching? Or the fluidity of the role?

(Makes hand gesture to compartmentalise space)

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

Consensus through negotiation and clarification helps include all participant voices in the expectations of the Forum Theatre scenario (Midha, 2010; Rifkin, 2010). That said, it's difficult to figure out a reliable way of knowing when you have succeeded, failed, or partially succeeded with participants. I tried as a facilitator through checking-in with participants to share their thoughts, but I can see why this won't always work and participants may not have the basis of trust required to share.

The text “Choice: endeavouring to include all voices in consensus discussions and decisions; knowing if you have been successful for all participants” appears on the screen.

This consensus discussion also included a physical aspect, too. Physical presence and gesture were intrinsic to what and how Carla was trying to communicate.

(BRO repeats CARLA’s gesture)

In fact, watching back a lot of the recordings, there are segments that rely on deep contextual knowledge and the presence of gesture to communicate at the speed and level of understanding required for consensus decisions of this nature. What I mean by this is the workshop scenes would be hard to view even staged like this (*gestures to workshop scene*) out of context because they require the immediacy of knowledge that comes with the embodiment of being present in a workshop (Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017, pp. 103-105). The following montage continues to focus on negotiated parameters of the first Forum Theatre scenario...

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

BRO

The trick is, it’s thirty seconds to a minute in a particular scene—

CARLA

Oh, so staying in the one place?

BRO

Well, the reason I'm limiting it that way is, if we did those three frames as three different scenes, that's a two-and-a-half-hour workshop—

Lights quickly punctuate a jump in time in the montage.

JAYNE

Could those three frames be one scene?

BRO

Yeah. Yeah, they could be. So, could you put us in a scene where those three frames would come up? Like, where that story would come up? For example, I'm thinking of, like, what if you're having a conversation with your head teacher, and they're not happy with the level of detail in your...

JAYNE

(Agreeing, finishing the sentence)

Programming...

NOAH

(Agreeing)

That seems like it's a context that could speak to professional learning from the point of view of a head teacher and the way we conceive of the order [of teaching practice] and what's—

JAYNE

And their understanding of it? That they can reflect on.

NOAH

Yeah.

BRO

(To CARLA and PHAEDRA)

Does that make sense to you?

PHAEDRA and CARLA shake their heads unsure.

BRO

Maybe? It's okay if it doesn't—

Lights quickly punctuate a jump in time in the montage.

PHAEDRA

[Negotiating program content] is like, a casual conversation, like “I want to do this ping-pong ball activity with Year 12”; [then a head teacher] might be like “yep, sounds great”.

CARLA

But [we go through] a feedback seq--process, of going to a head teacher and asking, like, will this fit into the program? What are your thoughts on it? Dunno.

PHAEDRA

Yeah.

BRO

Is there someone you'd be worried to suggest that to? Someone higher up the chain?

RESEARCHER

(From outside the scene, to BRO, unheard)

Careful, Bro! You're leading here and we both don't like it.

PHAEDRA

Maybe school leaders.

NOAH

What's the worry? Is it because in the ping-pong example you're spending money on it? Or is the worry about the pedagogy of it? Do you know what I mean?

PHAEDRA

I feel like they'll just ask: "why are you doing that?"

CARLA

Yeah, "too much fun". "Do practice papers".

PHAEDRA

We're trying to make revision fun.

BRO

I think maybe we've identified our scenario then. What I suggest we do is we want to focus it on that point of conflict because we want to explore ways around that.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

This convention of Forum Theatre is unavoidable. Choices to stage the scenario have to be centred around this point of conflict or oppression (Boal, 1979).

After the reference has appeared on the screen, the text "Choice: centring themes and scenario ideas on points of conflict or Boalian oppression" appears. BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

JAYNE

Yeah, [to PHAEDRA] so you're saying a head teacher wouldn't do that, so you'd have to go—

BRO

At some point there will be someone that says, "that's a little too much fun, maybe we need to go back to the syllabus"...?

CARLA

Yep.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I tried to be cautious here and not add too much of my own voice; I just wanted to summarise a previous talking point that characterised how this process of proposing a program direction functioned. More broadly, I wanted our workshop process to answer the call for multi-disciplined approaches to teacher professional learning that included creative expression and allowed for necessary rehearsal time where facilitation skills in practice could develop (Uggerhoj, 2008; Wooster, 2016). That is, I didn't want to be prescriptive. Looking back, there's far more of my voice in there than I wanted, but maybe a gradual "scaffolding" of the process; multiple iterations of trial, error; and negotiation was a valid choice?

The text "Choice: how quickly you move through iterations of trial, error and negotiation in learning Forum Theatre with participants" appears on the screen.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

NOAH

Yeah, because I don't think my head teacher would be like—I think my head teacher is like your head teacher and would say yes—

JAYNE

My head teacher would question it, but I think also be very supportive.

BRO

Well then maybe a head teacher isn't the right person to put in this scenario, maybe it's a deputy—

PHAEDRA

(Agreeing)

Which is more of a power dynamic as well...

PHAEDRA

Could it be about approving an excursion you're putting forward? Like they're saying "no" to a V-O-R process?

The text "Variation of/to Routine (VoR/VtR): common acronyms used by NSW schools to describe the administrative process of organising an excursion or incursion" appears on the screen briefly before reverting.

CARLA

(Laughing, agreeing)

Yeah, like a VtR.

PHAEDRA

Yeah, like a sport activity? Something you're putting forward and they're saying "no".

NOAH

You're trying to picture an idea where—a context where a teacher has already succeeded somehow and is trying to pitch for it to continue or develop—

JAYNE

--as a program?

NOAH

--to someone who's at a higher level. That's another similar idea. I don't know if I—
I've been in that situation.

JAYNE

And you've got to show an evaluation for—the impact of...

BRO

Are we moving towards excursion? Or are we moving towards evidence and impact...

NOAH

I think the excursion thing can do that too because excursions are often—it's often
asked what the academic legitimacy of the thing is.

JAYNE

The purpose, yep.

BRO

Okay, just to help us out with anonymity, we might make it a NESA authority...

*The text “NESA stands for New South Wales Education Standards Authority”
appears on the screen briefly before reverting.*

BRO

...so we'll say, a curriculum advisor for NESAs, has come to the school. At least, just for now, it will help us disassociate personal stuff—

CARLA

(Agreeing, nodding)

...Attachment...

BRO

(Nodding with CARLA)

--because I want to focus a little bit more on what you're saying and doing. Like a more generalised context...so we'll say a NESAs curriculum inspector has come into the school to advise about the relevance of particular excursions, and you are one of the teachers that they've called into the office to discuss your V-O-R and its relevance.

PARTICIPANTS all speak in agreement: "yep", "sounds good". Lights down on workshop space.

RESEARCHER

As you can see, I settled on filling in some details as I re-summarised the discussion. We could always revisit the scenario details later – and, indeed, we did. With a scenario established, the participants began their devising. We're going to jump ahead now because the participants agreed on a different approach for a scenario in Workshop 2, but I wanted to show you this conversation we just watched because it directly relates to my research question and the conditions of efficacy—

“Figure 1” appears again on the screen.

--that is to say, what are the choices we can make in Forum Theatre workshops for teachers to explore their practice? We’ve seen so far that these choices are in a constant state of flux and should respond to the context of each case, as well as the everchanging conditions of participants.

As I watched the recordings back, I had the thought of wanting to extend our study into critical ethnodrama, which would have meant I could take this script back to my participants in further workshops and perform iterations of it to refine the moments of choice and explore further interpretations (Saldaña, 2018). Unfortunately, there’s only so much you can do in a Masters. Perhaps this is an avenue for further study.
(beat) Let’s move on to Workshop 2...

Workshop 2

Lights up on workshop space. BRO and PARTICIPANTS are animated in conversation, as well as seated in a circle on the blocks, but they are muted while the RESEARCHER speaks. The text “Workshop 2: Intervening in the scenario”.

RESEARCHER

Workshop 2 began with a discussion that re-iterated expectations and reflections on the previous workshop. Here is an exchange which I, and the participants, felt captured the main considerations of this reflection and eventual scenario...

PARTICIPANTS and BRO become audible.

NOAH

One thing I was thinking about was—and this is just personal—I'd like to do this delivered by a professional,

(To BRO, BRO shakes his head in disagreement at “professional”)

like you,

(To ALL)

at the intersection between theory and practice and just professional discussions between teachers, because they're a big part of how you learn things on the job, but they can be a tricky area. I guess it's because we have different attitudes to figuring out how we go about figuring out what you do in classes. Theoretically speaking, or practically speaking. That's the topic I'd really like to do it on.

Other PARTICIPANTS voice agreement.

BRO

So is it fair to say [our Forum Theatre should have] a classroom focus, maybe?

NOAH

No, professional conversations *between* teachers *about* classrooms.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I took it as a good sign that Noah was disagreeing with me to clarify what he was saying. I think it meant he was comfortable enough with the group to trust his

disagreement would not be taken personally. Something I could have been more explicit about at the start when establishing group expectations.

The text “Choice: an expectation not to take disagreement personally, but as an opportunity to work towards a common understanding” appears on the screen. BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

JAYNE

Dialogue [between teachers].

CARLA

So, like, in a staff meeting or in professional learning?

BRO

Yeah, or a discussion of a piece of content?

NOAH

Yeah, we have to work together, and even micro-level decisions potentially yield that conflict.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

By now, the group was in a comfortable rhythm, bouncing ideas off one-another. My role as facilitator grew smaller as the group grew more confident in reaching agreement about the scenario they wanted to explore, which eventually settled

around the professional conversations Noah had described. This iterative approach of reflective discussion at the start and end of each workshop fitted a paradigm of design-based research (Reimann, 2008, pp. 38-39) that informed why I planned to start Workshop 2 in this way. The goal was to make adjustments to process and content as we explored Forum Theatre.

The text “Choice: an iterative approach to using reflections to refine the Forum Theatre model across the workshops” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

Moving forward, we established our scenario for Workshop 2: a head teacher wanted to prescribe a booklet of activities to all Year 10 teachers for the sake of teaching consistency in the faculty; a goal that some colleagues felt ran contrary to shared aims of differentiation and professional trust. I was asked to play the head teacher so that participants could focus on exploring what they would do and say in the scene. The scenario is set during a lunchtime faculty meeting. In our re-enactment here, we’ve labelled everyone to make it easier for you to follow who their characters are. Let’s watch...

PARTICIPANTS and BRO are now wearing large A4-sized labels of their character’s names or a description on their front and back e.g. BRO’s says “Head Teacher”; NOAH’s says “Frank”. BRO is miming eating a sandwich. Everyone else is seated around the staffroom central table. BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

NOAH

Sir, would you like to lead this session?

BRO

(With mouthful)

Oh, yeah, just let me...

(Swallows mouthful)

BRO nonchalantly places the activity booklets, the source of the scenario's tension, down on an imaginary table. PARTICIPANTS sustain the mime by picking up a copy of the booklets and pretending to read.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene. The text “Choice: playing with light gesture and staging in Forum Theatre” appears on the screen.

RESEARCHER

I was amazed that the group participants so readily extended the offer of my mime! Watching this back, I was reflecting on how disarming a sense of play can be for teacher participants (Friedmann, 2012; O'Grady & Smyth, 2017).

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

BRO

Thank me later! I've put together this booklet. I haven't changed much, but it's basically all the activities from our Year 10 program in the same sequence, in the booklet. It's got all the reading and resources in there. It's got all the practical instructions and activities for any practical lessons you want to run. It's got all the

theoretical readings and homework prompts in there; that we would usually set in there. And it's even got suggested submission points for those of you who use your Google Classroom for that. But it's all in there. So, I've put it together for us because we were talking previously in our faculty meeting about consistency—

NOAH

(Cautiously, not agreeing)

Yeah.

BRO

--and doing the same thing because we want to make sure we're on the same page for Year 10, so it's all in there—

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

It's at this point the scenario pauses, and I'm told to refine my role. My head teacher needs to be more prescriptive in telling teachers to use the booklet, as that was perceived as more believable to the scenario.

Spotlight on JAYNE and PHAEDRA while scene is frozen. They do asides.

PHAEDRA

(Aside, to RESEARCHER)

You're the head teacher giving us the booklet.

JAYNE

(Aside, to RESEARCHER)

You're telling us we have to do it. *(beat, while thinking)* Because that happens.

Spotlight down on JAYNE and PHAEDRA.

RESEARCHER

Interestingly, as I watch this scene back, whoever is speaking often uses hand gestures as a way of easing the potential conflict their words might bring. A sort of rounding gesture, almost like we're all smoothing pottery. Again, I reflect on how our professional bodily habitus is, at once, verbal and physical (Hopwood, 2015, pp. 62-64). We communicate so much, so quickly with our whole body.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

NOAH

Um...Just looking through this,

(Mimes booklet pages turning)

...it looks like—yeah, thanks for giving suggestions for when the student could submit it and how. I'm just wondering: these are just suggestions, right? For when they should be submitted?

BRO

Well, in our last faculty meeting, we were discussing the idea of...ah...we've sequenced out – across the school – when our assessment tasks land in the school calendar. We had a lot of parental complaints around the idea that we had all the

junior assessment tasks in one week. It was too much of a bottleneck for a fifteen-year-old to juggle and manage. So, in the same way we've spread out our assessment tasks, I was thinking that, because we are such a large faculty, in terms of student intake for Year 10, that we can also think about where the choke points are in terms of homework, to make sure that we're not doubling up or competing with each other across the classes.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I was surprised at how easily I was able to construct this improvised script. It's not something Boal spends a lot of time trying to explain, and I think it's better accounted for through an improvisatory lens of drawing on established professional schemata (Sawyer, 2011, p. 6). That is to say, we recycle scripts we've used and refined from our professional doings and sayings in practice. That's why "architectures" of practice works well as a metaphor: they're plans to build on concept and reiterate on previous designs.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze and are ALL still in-character. Lights up on workshop scene. The text "Choice: drawing upon personal scripts of teaching practice and placing them in the abstracted context of the Forum Theatre scenario; testing their veracity with the group" appears on the screen.

JAYNE

(Still in character)

I feel like we may have also agreed that we were going to pull back on our homework across the faculty, as well? Was that a consensus in the faculty? I wasn't sure that those submissions—

BRO

Well, I think I have. I've only suggested three homework submission points.

CARLA

(Raises hand)

Can I just ask, for my literacy class...? I'm just looking at the booklet now, there's a few things that look quite tricky. How do we differentiate that and...you know...

PHAEDRA

(Agreeing with CARLA)

I'm not sure my class is going to be able to get through all of this...

CARLA

I'm in the same position as Frank (*gestures to NOAH*), I don't know if my class will do those tasks at those specific times...like am I able to pick and choose things for my particular class? Because, you know, I've got the literacy class...(*gestures to PHAEDRA*) you're in the same...

PHAEDRA

Yeah, I don't think my class will be able to get through all this either...

BRO

Well, I think everyone has students they need to differentiate for in their classes, so with that in mind, I think we need to find a balance between when the submission points are going to be, and when we can differentiate class tasks or practice tasks or smaller pieces of writing within those classes—

PHAEDRA

So—

BRO

(Gently but assertively continues in-character, speaks over PHAEDRA)

– But I think part of being in a school environment...

BRO pauses to see impact of assertive tone. BRO and PARTICIPANTS all break character for a moment and giggle.

JAYNE

(Out of character)

Jeez. You sound like a head teacher...

CARLA

(Out of character)

I'm getting the same feeling I get in staff meetings. My hands are sweating. I'm grabbing the chair.

(Mimes along with shaking hands and grabs chair to steady herself)

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I took a risk here to antagonise the participants in-character by speaking over Phaedra. I felt I could take this risk because we'd reached a point of comfort with performance as a group. At the same time, I measured that against Jayne and Carla's quick asides about having a physical reaction to performing the scene.

The text "Choice: balancing the responsibility between antagonism in the performance and care for group members in their set boundaries and limits" appears on the screen.

There's a responsibility for facilitators, and ultimately, all participants, to create what we collectively engage in as a believable Forum Theatre piece, but not push ourselves into areas of trauma or aggression (Boal, 1995, 2002). We were quick to jump back into character...

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene. ALL are back in-character for the scenario.

BRO

So, part of being in a school environment is having to negotiate those deadlines and being able to differentiate for our students for those deadlines.

NOAH

Sorry, yeah, that's all well and good but we don't all teach the same subjects at the same points in the year, so when someone's marking, say, this task (*gestures to*

booklet), right? I'm also marking this other task from Year x extension. So, it's all well and good to say that you can mark that task then, but it's not just the students it's also us and our workloads.

Pause – there is a silence to punctuate the tension.

JAYNE

Are we using the data from the tasks? So, once they're submitted, what are we supposed to do with that?

BRO

I think the suggested tasks in the booklet are iterative. It's not like they're three completely different tasks; they should feed into the common assessment at the end.

CARLA

So, like checkpoints?

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

It's interesting to note here that Carla waits for the others to lead the resistance because we agreed her character is on a temporary contract. That is, she doesn't share the same job security as the others. This clarification was an important detail to Carla in making the power dynamics of our imaginary staffroom believable in a New South Wales context. It was a choice here for how the socio-political

arrangements of practice architectures can underpin the doings and sayings between teachers (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 153-156).

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

PHAEDRA

I'm worried about fitting in all the class tasks that are suggested in here, though; like, can we just choose the ones that are going to fit best with our class at the time?

BRO

Well, no, I think we need to be selecting the ones that are sequenced to the particular week or part of the booklet so that we can check-in with any students that fall behind as well, particularly with covid going on in the background; we want to be able to set them clear expectations for what they need to be catching-up on when they get back to school.

PHAEDRA

Yeah, because my class is middle to low ability, anyway, like they're only just the next step up from Carla's, I don't think they're going keep up with all the tasks and get them all done...

CARLA

I agree, I don't think it's realistic...

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

It was here a development arose in the model. Noah called “stop” to the Forum Theatre to discuss out-of-character and...well, I’ll let him explain...

Spotlight on NOAH, BRO and CARLA as they speak.

NOAH

(Animated, with interest, strategising with colleagues)

I’m thinking about, like, none of this [conversation] matters. Like, this conversation does not matter in the sense of like, if there’s power enough to institute [the booklet, then], I feel like this isn’t the time or the place that it needs to change.

BRO

What is that conversation and where does it happen?

CARLA

(Epiphany, answering)

Ah! So, [that] would be like: Phaedra and I talking after class [as we walk to our cars]...

Spotlight fades.

RESEARCHER

The group prompted me as facilitator to take into account that the conflict and discourse that drove this scenario happened over a sequence of interactions. Boal himself advises the model’s scenario should be built over a series of images that

catalyse around the core dramatic tension of the subject (Boal, 2002, p. 256). The teacher participants recognised that the doings and sayings of practice – and the accompanying tensions of the scenario – typically occur over multiple conversations and locations.

The text “Choice: when devising Forum Theatre scenarios, consider all the moments when relevant to practice” appears on the screen.

In teaching practice, these conflicts play out over multiple conversations, not just in one scene or location. They are interrupted, and shaped, by a timetable dictating our presence and attention. Therefore, our Forum Theatre re-enactments need to take this into account. We decided to follow Carla’s suggestion and see another scene of her character – from the position of no job security -- talking to Phaedra’s character who had a permanent position...

Lights up on CARLA and PHAEDRA walking to their cars. BRO, JAYNE and NOAH have all exited the space.

CARLA

Oh...my...god...

PHAEDRA

That meeting was the worst.

CARLA

(Retching noise)

Booklets!

PHAEDRA

I'm so sick of booklets.

CARLA

(Voice lowers a bit)

Are you doing it with your class?

PHAEDRA

I don't...I don't think we're going to get through it.

CARLA

Yeah, look, it was pretty big.

PHAEDRA

We're not going to get through all of it. I think I'll probably just do the main points from each week that make up the task...

CARLA

The main three from each week...I feel like we should say something.

PHAEDRA

Yeah, but who are we going to say something to?

CARLA

Well, you, me and I feel like Frank also feels that way...

PHAEDRA

Yeah, but who do we talk to? Because the head teacher is obviously saying that we need to do the booklet, but...

CARLA

Do you reckon the head teacher will sway? Like, if we brought it up with him in a meeting or something?

PHAEDRA

We already brought it up in the meeting today. Like this is the tenth time that this has happened. It's still happening again. You're right, though; the class is not going to get through it.

CARLA

I just feel that if there's four of us that feel this way, that something should be done about it...

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

Comfortable with the option to “cut to” the next moment in the scenario, the group then decided to perform the next day at recess in the staffroom. The four discuss and decide on strategies to approach the head teacher and propose alternatives in-

character without him present. I just want to show you a quick snippet of this scene because I didn't say anything as facilitator or head teacher.

The text "Choice: deciding to stay silent or be absent in and out of character" appears on the screen.

I was absent from the scene, which ended up giving the participants the freedom to explore, in-role and through discussion, a critique of practice architectures relevant to the booklet. Also, note the playfulness that Carla and Noah sustain through gesture from the previous scene as a way to extend play in modelling the faculty discussion (Friedmann, 2012; Grossman et al., 2009).

Lights up. BRO is not in the scene. THE PARTICIPANTS are seated around the scenario's staffroom table, in-character. NOAH (as Frank) is mime-reading a newspaper. CARLA and NOAH sustain hand gestures from previous scenes. They unfreeze.

CARLA

(Feigning annoyance, half-in-role)

Frank, can you stop reading for a second?

NOAH

(Puts the paper down)

Sorry.

JAYNE

What's wrong?

PHAEDRA

I'm worried about the booklets.

CARLA

Me too.

PHAEDRA

I don't think my class is going to get through it. They can make the checkpoints, but they don't have the ability to complete all the tasks in there.

NOAH

Yeah, I thought one of the interesting things about Jimmy's speech, was that he implied that all students would be catching up or behind. That language was interesting...

Pause – for thought.

RESEARCHER

(Aside)

Noah felt my head teacher character needed a name. He landed on Jimmy.

JAYNE

...And that [our classes] had the skill level to be able to catch-up on their own. If they were going to be away...

CARLA

Yeah, I'm worried about my class. Do you feel like that as well?

JAYNE and NOAH

Yeah.

JAYNE

Yeah, I mean, I have experience with booklets before that have been both successful and unsuccessful. This one is very full of information, so...

PHAEDRA

Yeah, I think it's good that it's all there, but we should be able to pick and choose and have the autonomy depending on the pace of the class. (*tongue-in-cheek, ironic*) The teaching standards are "know the students and how they learn".

JAYNE

Would we feel like we can propose an alternative to the booklet?

CARLA

I'm still happy to do the booklet, I just want the autonomy to choose the timeframe...like, we all "have to do it at the same time"...

PHAEDRA

Yeah...

NOAH

Do you think Jimmy would be more willing to listen if we were able to...(*gestures in small circles to come up with the right word*)...poll the students about their views on how it should be structured?

CARLA

I feel like you two should bring it up and Jimmy will listen to you guys.

NOAH

But, if we were to bring it up, would you be willing to talk to your classes about the booklet and about the structure of the course and get their thoughts and feelings?

CARLA and PHAEDRA

Yeah.

NOAH

Because we'd need that evidence...

JAYNE

We could propose that.

PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights down on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

What's really interesting to me here is that this scene is situated *before* the confrontation of protagonists and antagonist. There was a collective choice here,

suggested by Noah, to focus on performing and rehearsing the conversation where the participants would strategise their proposal to end the conflict.

The text “Choice: embodying through playing and being “playful” our teaching selves in preparation before moments of conflict; too meta?” appears on the screen.

An addendum to how teaching practice develops, we observe that even some of the planning between teaching colleagues is rehearsed and scripted in an ontological play (Hopwood, 2015, p. 54). In this case, it was in the staffroom before the conversation with the head teacher. In the Forum Theatre scenario, the participants are simultaneously playing and “playful” versions of themselves as they rehearse, and reflect through embodied rehearsal, their practice in this conflict. There is a depth that becomes difficult to sustain if discussed explicitly with the group. Perhaps it would be possible with more time for participants to be reflective in their ontological awareness across multiple sessions, as it’s a mode of thinking that requires rehearsal itself. Regardless, the choice to perform moments of strategy through conversation turned out to be a necessary part for this Forum Theatre scenario for the participants in embodying their practice.

A number of interactions happen after this scene, including a preliminary interview between Frank and Jimmy while Jimmy is supervising playground duty. But for the purposes of focusing on our research question, we’re going to move now to the third and final workshop, so we can see the remaining choices that are made in approaching the scenario’s resolution.

The text “Workshop 3” appears on the screen. JAYNE leaves the stage and joins the audience, symbolically.

Workshop 3

RESEARCHER

Several weeks had passed since the second workshop as we had to postpone it for a number of reasons. Jayne was unable to attend the rescheduled session, unfortunately, but encouraged us to continue in her absence. Our remaining participants agreed they were invested in the booklet scenario from Workshop 2, so we decided to work towards a resolution.

The text “Choice: the iteration of using action research to frame Forum Theatre when exploring teacher practice means reviewing and revising as a group for each workshop” appears on the screen.

We reviewed where we were up to...

Spotlight on PARTICIPANTS as they speak.

CARLA

Where were we? We roleplayed or “Forum Theatre-ed” the scenario with the booklets?

PHAEDRA

We didn't get to having the meeting.

Spotlight down.

RESEARCHER

We still did our warm-ups to establish our sense of play, and then we tackled the meeting with head teacher Jimmy. The oppression of the booklet presented a challenge and many attempts in the scene were tried (Boal, 2002). Some repeated and some iterated over multiple encounters with the head teacher in the scenario. Participants had the tools and shared Forum Theatre meta-language to be able to keep pace with each other. Their only difficulty seemed to be keeping the head teacher's name consistent...

The text "Choice: participants continually co-construct and reaffirm the conventions of Forum Theatre and the voracity" appears on the screen.

Lights up on PARTICIPANTS and BRO.

NOAH

Francis!

PHAEDRA

Steven!

CARLA

Jimmy?

BRO pulls a face.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

We eventually approached the moment of resolution in the Forum Theatre scenario, where the participants were able to confront me as head teacher on a contradiction in the values embedded in my arguments. On the one hand, I was saying we needed to implement a booklet for consistency. On the other, I'd admitted it was mainly for compliance, and not so much for the educational value of the booklet itself. We played the contradiction, as often the sayings, doings and relatings of our teaching practice may have sedimented into contradiction long ago, and only become apparent after critical reflection (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 63).

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene with ALL still in character.

PHAEDRA

Francis, you know you don't believe in the booklet.

BRO

I believe in the idea that we need to have a consistent, united front to what we're doing.

PHAEDRA

I agree with that too. But could we do that in a different way? What parental concerns are we addressing? Can we address those in a different way without doing the booklet?

CARLA

Can we take it to exec? If we're all in agreement?

BRO

(Frustrated in-role)

When we walk into a meeting with exec or parents, they need to see product, they need to see instructions, they need to see submission points. So, what is it?

CARLA

The Google Classroom.

BRO

Yeah, okay. But isn't that just the digital booklet with the submission points already set up?

CARLA

No, because the digital booklet is restricting. Each different class has a different Google Classroom.

PHAEDRA

But can we say we need to have the autonomy to be able to adapt our lessons depending on the circumstances? Depending on how the kids are responding to them? We can't give [the exec] a clear cut "this is exactly what's going to happen" because it won't; because the kids...if they don't understand [it then we can't] continue on with [the booklet activities].

BRO

Ok, *(beat)* you're saying we're adapting [the booklet activities] to your classes. I'll make that concession -- that's part of differentiation -- but what are you adapting it from? What is that consistent core that's going to be common to all three classes that we can say all three classes are doing?

PHAEDRA

Well, they're all studying Romeo and Juliet and they're all going to come out with an essay at the end.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene.

RESEARCHER

I was surprised we'd made it this far without addressing the specific differences in how the scenario would play out across subject areas.

The text "Choice: discussing and/or resolving differences in practice and subject for inter-subject participant groups of Forum Theatre" appears on the screen.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

NOAH

Yeah, that's a good point. If you focus on the *(clicking to recall)* Dylan Williams model of assessment we can differentiate in terms of those processes, but we can keep the

product the same, and that can be the pitch, is that: the overall product is still the essay regardless.

PHAEDRA

Which is going to support them for the HSC...

NOAH

And we already have the scaffolds for that essay. It's not like we'd be changing those...

CARLA

Do the parents want to see evidence of learning throughout?

BRO

If a parent or executive member comes to me and says, "what is the Literacy Class doing in Week 3 of this Romeo and Juliet unit?" I want to be able to say "It's this and it's building towards this", and I want that answer to be pretty similar for the other classes...

PHAEDRA

Can we just say we'll follow the structure of the booklet in terms of "we're looking at this, this week", "we're looking at this, this week", "we're looking at these terms next week" (*gestures structure*)? So, we're all looking at the same themes and terms and structure as we go, and so we're still on the same track...?

BRO and PARTICIPANTS freeze. Lights dim on workshop scene. Spotlight on BRO to emphasise relevance of RESEARCHER annotation.

RESEARCHER

And here we are. The moment that requires me to concede as the antagonist-oppressor of this Forum Theatre scenario. It's no longer plausible or believable for me not to make a concession based on the character I've been playing. With the weight of context and narrative that our group has collaborated to construct together, I must concede or be accused by the group of acting outside believability (Boal, 2002).

The text "Choice: balancing the group responsibility of reviewing scenario believability (according to group perception) and discovering the thresholds of oppression through the performance workshop" appears on the screen.

BRO and PARTICIPANTS unfreeze. Lights up on workshop scene.

BRO

So essentially, we're agreeing on theme and we're agreeing on end product? We're in lock-step week-by-week with certain focuses.

CARLA

(Enthusiastic with my concession)

Hmm! Okay...

PHAEDRA

Exactly, we can still do that. We just have the autonomy to adapt it depending on the class.

CARLA

So, there's a schedule...

NOAH

We could even tie the themes to a list of scenes.

BRO

(Conceding)

Alright.

RESEARCHER

And *(end of)* scene!

RESEARCHER makes an improv gesture: miming bringing the curtains down. PARTICIPANTS mimic this gesture, as they did in the workshop. The lights on the RESEARCHER go down and crossfade to a tight spotlight that frames the three PARTICIPANTS and BRO, who come out of character for their annotations.

CARLA

I felt some satisfaction then.

PHAEDRA

I felt satisfied.

BRO

Yeah, you've just talked me down. My motivation from the start was always trying to think about the head teacher having pressure on the other side [from exec and school leadership] dictating my actions because I still see myself as one of you.

NOAH

And, you got a promise of some form of consistency and communication.

CARLA

Yeah.

BRO

Yeah, because that was always my goal. It wasn't necessarily the booklet, it was the consistency behind it. That's what you pushed me back to.

PHAEDRA

Yeah, the evidence. The consistency.

NOAH

Which is fine because now anytime I go off-script [from the booklet] there it looks plausibly deniable.

(Pause)

Isn't there a dimension in which I'm satisfied because you changed your mind?

(Pause)

If we were the ones who gave ground instead of us convincing [the head teacher], that would have felt less satisfying.

In Summary

Spotlight down. Lights up on RESEARCHER. The text “In summary” appears on the screen. BRO steps into the light and stands with RESEARCHER.

BRO

And with that, the participants agreed we had reached a satisfying conclusion to the scenario.

RESEARCHER

In summary, this series of workshops presented us with a narrative of choices and conditions when using Forum Theatre in exploring teacher practice. This script identifies twenty-seven moments of choice that I, as the researcher, reflected on when reviewing the recordings and parsing reflection from logbooks and participant discussion at the beginning and end the workshops.

BRO

These choices are in response to our study’s research question...

The text “What can be learned about the conditions of efficacy (choices) in using Forum Theatre as a professional learning tool with a group of teachers for developing their practice?” appears on the screen.

BRO

...with an emphasis on exploring the choices that might lead to conditions of efficacy for teachers wishing to try Forum Theatre as a way of escaping the tyranny of the

powerpoint. I'm sure we all hope to explore more resonant options for our professional learning.

RESEARCHER

The list of choices isn't meant to be exhaustive, but supplementary to the explorations of a growing body of research in the areas of embodied practice and teacher professional development. It is available as an appendix, for your reference.

(Appendix may be distributed as program or via QR code)

Our hope is that these choices -- and the experiences of the participants in these workshops -- add to the growing body of research that is exploring new avenues of professional learning for teachers. Learning that engages us as autonomous, professional, embodied beings in our schools, with our students, and each other.

BRO and RESEARCHER

Thank you.

Lights down.

Post-play conclusion

To reiterate, the aim of our study was to explore what could be learned by using Forum Theatre as a professional learning tool with high school teachers for the development of practice. Through transcripts of the workshops parsed with an ethnodramatic approach and using practice architectures as a lens, I have edited and annotated this piece of Research-based Theatre and I present it as a contribution to the fields of practice-based education for teachers and uses of Forum Theatre in Critical Participatory Action Research.

Our study sought to respond to the following question.

What can be learned about the conditions of efficacy (choices) in using Forum Theatre as a professional learning tool with a group of teachers for developing their practice?

The distillation of choices in seeking efficacious conditions – drawn from a review of similar studies in the literature and iterated and supplemented with the experiences of our Forum Theatre workshops – comprises this contribution integrated into the script. A summary list explored in the Research-based Theatre script is provided in the appendix that follows. Below, though, are a few key reflections for practitioners wishing to explore Forum Theatre in a professional teaching context: as part of a rich, collaborative, and performatively embodied professional experience. This selection has been informed through arising thematic connections made in the ethnodramatic process drawn from workshop evidence.

In summary, these key reflections were:

1. *Most of the choices identified in facilitating the Forum Theatre emphasised the importance of participant input, validation, and trust in the process.*

To reiterate, the focus of our study was to explore the choices that arose and consider the complexities of these choices, for both facilitator and participants, in using Forum Theatre. It was not about selecting the best choice as a one-size-fits-all approach, but acknowledging that each time Forum Theatre is employed, many of these choices will have to be negotiated and different decisions will be made based on the needs and purposes of the participants coming together. Bannan-Ritland supports participant input, validation and trust as part of the professional learning process in her model of Teacher Design Research: '[t]he teacher is part of the team that generates the existence and function of the innovation' (Bannan-Ritland, 2008, p. 250). In her paper, she provides a way of accounting for what our Forum Theatre workshops provided participant teachers: the opportunity to explore their own critical autonomy in shaping and practising professional learning. She also helps us clarify what we mean here by "trust", not a blind faith in the models of others, but a trust in allowing input and validations throughout the professional learning process:

'[T]he teacher is not implementing an outsider's product or process; rather, he or she is putting into effect his or her own theories about an intervention as expressed in the (co)designed intervention and is implementing the intervention across a number of generation-and-testing cycles. The teacher's cumulative decision to accept or reject the innovation is based on multiple design cycles.' (Bannan-Ritland, 2008, p. 250)

The iterative nature of Bannan-Ritland's Teacher Design Research has parallels with the iterative approach in Critical Participatory Action Research (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 90-92). The iteration across our workshops was a limitation of our

study as there were only three, and with Bannan-Ritland's commentary, a fair evaluation of the limitation of the professional development explored by our participants. More time or opportunity for iteration in reflection, discussion, and performative exploration would have extended opportunity for participant input, and even facilitation (for example, the trial of participant "jokers" as a convention of Forum Theatre).

2. Forum Theatre is not just a means to rehearse, but a mode of critical reflection informed by collaborative self-development.

The learning drawn from participation in Forum Theatre is shaped by several choices made before any action even begins. In understanding efficacious conditions, a collaborative workshop culture is critical for 'teachers [to] be able to discuss their teaching and their work in a 'safe' environment of peers, all of whom aim to act as co-mentors and co-mentees' (Kemmis, Heikkinen, et al., 2014, pp. 160-161). Positioning the joker-researcher-facilitator as expert is also a limitation on the potential to achieve this dynamic and collaborative professional development of co-mentors and co-mentees. For any future facilitators of Forum Theatre, the summary list from our study contains several decisions that need to be considered before or during the very beginning of the group coming together, to establish a collaborative, egalitarian space of learning. To reiterate, *The Action Research Planner* shaped our study's design of critical reflection, by categorising the sayings, doings and relatings of teacher practice (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, pp. 175-176). The Planner would be a worthy start for any other interested practitioners or indicative of the need of a similar structure for thematising critical reflection in action research.

3. *There is a relationship between the improvisatory mechanisms of teacher practice and our ability to negotiate tension in hierarchy.*

By improvisatory mechanisms, I am referring to what Sawyer outlines in his discussion of creative teaching: ‘Expert teachers engage in *disciplined improvisation* – they have mastered the knowledge base of expertise identified by these scholars, and at the same time, they know how to apply this expertise in improvisational practice’ (Sawyer, 2011, p. 9). It’s evident from the presented script that I take for granted the improvisatory nature of the workshop and Forum Theatre in its initial stages. Whilst our study does identify this as a choice to be aware of, there is potential to focus on the relationship Sawyer establishes here in his definition between disciplined improvisation and practice. Disciplined improvisation could be understood here to be the sayings, doings and relatings within the structure the profession provides through the social, material and political (architectures). Even though labels of “expert” were contrary to the collaborative culture of the workshops, our participants still used Forum Theatre as a disciplinary structure to experiment, reflect and refine improvisatory elements of practice. Therefore, I would argue for a greater potential in Sawyer’s definition here than simply viewing an improvisatory standard as a measure of expertise, for a more nuanced, critical understanding. These improvisatory mechanisms, and how they can function within the critical reflection of practice architectures, may provide yet another way of accounting for the dynamics of participant professional learning in future research on embodied practice.

To reiterate this last point, it is my hope that our study’s exploration contributes to, and continues the momentum of, all research trying to make more room for the

development of teacher practice that isn't driven by superficial policy exercises, but by teachers themselves.

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Appendix

Appendix A: List of choices from the Research-based Theatre script

This list is offered as a summary reference of the choices made by the facilitator, or the workshop participants, in response to the research question. For more context of each choice, please refer to the scripted section of this thesis.

- Participant expectations about “doing drama”.
- Planning activities to have relevance to teacher practice.
- The tension between preparation and encouraging an improvisational workshop environment.
- Facilitator reminds of shared expectations and instructions of performance and discussion.
- Providing choices and not leading the group on themes.
- Paying attention to the group’s indicators of engagement in a workshop; discussing these explicitly.
- Being critically conscious of power in teaching practice architectures; discussing and acting on them in the workshop.
- Acknowledging existing relationships and contexts conducive (or resistant) to Forum Theatre and professional learning.
- Drawing connections to analogous professional contexts inside and outside teaching.
- Setting the parameters within the workshop on the conventions of Forum Theatre.
- The tension between prompting participant input and being succinct and defined in Forum Theatre conventions.

- Participant discussion and consensus as the driving process of workshop decision-making.
- Endeavouring to include all voices in consensus discussions and decisions; knowing if you have been successful for all participants.
- Centring themes and scenario ideas on points of conflict or Boalian oppression.
- How quickly you move through iterations of trial, error and negotiation in learning Forum Theatre with participants.
- An expectation not to take disagreement personally, but as an opportunity to work towards a common understanding.
- An iterative approach to using reflections to refine the Forum Theatre model across the workshops.
- Playing with light gesture and staging in Forum Theatre.
- Drawing upon personal scripts of teaching practice and placing them in the abstracted context of the Forum Theatre scenario; testing their veracity with the group.
- Balancing the responsibility between antagonism in the performance and care for group members in their set boundaries and limits.
- When devising Forum Theatre scenarios, consider all the moments when relevant to practice.
- Deciding to stay silent or be absent in and out of character.
- Embodying through playing and being “playful” our teaching selves in preparation before moments of conflict; too meta?
- The iteration of using action research to frame Forum Theatre when exploring teacher practice means reviewing and revising as a group for each workshop.

- Participants continually co-construct and reaffirm the conventions of Forum Theatre and the voracity.
- Discussing and/or resolving differences in practice and subject for inter-subject participant groups of Forum Theatre.
- Balancing the group responsibility of reviewing scenario believability (according to group perception) and discovering the thresholds of oppression through the performance workshop.