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**THE EFFECTS OF AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON THE
CREATIVE PROCESS OF BRITISH THEATRE IN EDUCATION**

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INTRODUCTION

In 1965, Gordon Vallins, the Education Officer of Belgrade Theatre Company in Coventry decided with his colleagues that they would establish a specific long-term relationship with the schools in the region to recruit new audiences in a way which was different from the usual practice. The theatre team consisting of actors and educationalists founded the first Theatre in Education company and started a theatre movement in Britain which has been offering children and young people education and entertainment through experiencing and participating in a live theatre event.

Theatre in Education is a theatre art form created for educational purposes that offers learning opportunities through an aesthetic medium inviting children and young people to participate actively in an artistic experience. The term Theatre in Education (also called TIE or educational theatre) covers a wide range of programmes that differ from each other in several ways. The venue of the programme can be either a theatre building or a school; the length of the programme can be between an hour and several days. The training background of the practitioners can be either theatrical (professional or non-professional actors) or educational (teachers or student teachers) or both (actor-teachers). The style and the artistic means used can differ considerably, just as the degree and nature of audience participation.

Audience participation is a key constituent of educational theatre and its function is related to the total commitment to pedagogy and the clear educational philosophy which TIE has evolved during its forty-year-long history. Theatre in Education advocates a “child-centred approach” to education that considers the audience’s age, needs and interest and builds upon the children’s existing experience in terms of the subject matter and the theatrical form of the programme. Most of the representatives of

the TIE movement believe in the “learning by doing” or “learning through experience” educational approach which emphasises the learning potential of personal involvement in activities. The expression derives from John Dewey (quoted in Courtney 42) who developed the “Project Method”, in which the children’s active involvement in their own learning is based on problem solving and personal discovery. In the Project Method, the students are not seen as recipients of the knowledge imparted by the teacher, but are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, and the teacher has a consultative and guiding function in the learning process. Another pedagogy influencing the TIE movement is Paulo Freire’s educational philosophy of “transitive learning”, in which the learner is the “subject” (the active participant) of the learning process, together with the teacher (see Vine 111-12). The teacher in this pedagogy is not considered as the only source of knowledge but rather as the enabler in shared “praxis” (action and reflection) of learning. Active, committed involvement in the action and critical reflection have an equally important role in the success of the learning process.

Due to its incontestable pedagogic value, which derives from the audience’s active intellectual, emotional and physical engagement with live theatre experience, most representatives consider TIE as an educational medium in the first place. The most frequently researched aspect of TIE is, therefore, the exploration of the learning outcomes of specific programmes in which the researchers focus on and evaluate how useful the learning opportunities, provided by educational theatre, are for the children in comparison with other teaching methods. Case studies analyse the value of specific TIE programmes by educational criteria (see O’Toole, Jackson, Redington, Oddey, Campbell, Bury et al., Allen et al.). Ken Robinson discusses TIE programme evaluation methodology with the same educational approach. He claims that the objective model, frequently used in education, in which the correlation between the objectives and the

outcomes are measured, is inappropriate for evaluating TIE programmes because the actual short and long term effects of a programme may be more important than the initial aims (253-55). He emphasises that the change in the audience's behaviour or attitude cannot be the criteria for TIE programme evaluation since a programme certainly will not solve the [social] problems raised: the key function of TIE is to raise an issue to be discussed. He suggests that the company should do both formative evaluation, which helps to develop the programme, and summative evaluation, which reflects the overall effects (258).

Theatre in Education shares its commitment to pedagogy with Drama in Education, an educational medium that applies dramatic activities and theatre form for pedagogic purposes. In Britain, Theatre in Education and Drama in Education developed separately, but are closely interrelated both in their joint pedagogic views and in their methodologies. They differ from each other in one main constituent: TIE provides a live theatre performance but educational drama does not. As participatory TIE frequently applies activities, techniques and methods developed in educational drama classrooms, it is relevant to summarise briefly the key moments and representatives of DIE history influential in the development of Theatre in Education.

Drama in Education and TIE

When schoolchildren participate in dramatic activities creating a fictional context, taking roles, and experiment with, perform and respond to drama as a part of the curriculum in order to develop personal, social and artistic skills, this is called Drama in Education. There are several terms in use representing similar concepts: DIE, educational drama, classroom drama, informal drama, developmental drama, curriculum drama, creative dramatics, creative drama, role drama, improvisation or process drama – the distinctive features are clearly described by Cecily O'Neill in *Drama Worlds* (xv).

They all share the common characteristics that no prior script is used and the work is not presented to a separate audience, although, as curricula develop through the age ranges, more textual drama is included. Most employ different improvised activities such as games, dramatic exercises, improvisation, role-play or process drama.

Although using dramatic activities for educational purposes dates back to the ancient times, as analysed in detail by Richard Courtney in *Play, Drama and Thought*, drama is generally regarded as a new subject in the school curriculum and a young discipline that has been trying hard to gain acceptance among traditional academic disciplines since its first appearance in Britain in the 1950s. Before the 1950s, dramatic activities in British classrooms were identical with either school theatre making or with a presentation of literature texts. The approach was literature- or stage-centred, and, in this sense, the function of the teacher was similar to the director's role in the theatre. Caldwell Cook, one of the pioneers of dramatic education at the beginning of the twentieth century, broadened this general approach, formulating the main principles that the post-World War II educational drama practice applied. In *The Play Way*, he considers acting as a means of learning on the basis of three principles: firstly, most effective learning derives from doing; secondly, spontaneous effort and free interest enhance learning; and thirdly, the natural means of children's learning is play. In his view, the teacher's function is not to impart instructions, but to assist the children to develop their expressive abilities and their inherent self-discipline (see Courtney 44).

Peter Slade is the first theoretician in the history of British educational drama who discusses child drama as an extension of early childhood make-believe play, finding its roots in developmental psychology and completely isolating it from any traditional theatre connotations. Slade claims that child drama is art in itself, the inherent part of the child's personality in a completely developed form, but which is not

practised because of the opposing requirements of the formal school environment. He believes that the teacher's task is to notice art in children and allow them to express their creativity with the minimal teacher's intervention. His exercises to encourage children's free expression through their spontaneous physical response to music and the teacher's verbal stimuli as well as to liberate creativity by encouraging language flow and movement flow have proved to be influential on the practice of generations of drama teachers for decades (63; 74; 93-104).

Though Brian Way shares Slade's interest in psychology and advocates isolating classroom drama from theatre skills acquisition, his pedagogical aims with drama are different from those of Slade's. Way puts the emphasis on the personal development of the individual in his methodology with regard to the personal resources of concentration, senses, imagination, physical self, speech, emotion and intellect as points on the circle of a human being (10-13). He agrees with Slade that "all people are fundamentally creative" (Way 3), but reckons that the level of creativity, which he calls the "personal level of readiness and experience", is different with each individual and may be "primitive" (3). Unlike Slade, he claims that development is necessary *not* for the sake of expression but for the sake of achieving the state of full personality.

Tracing the origins of Theatre in Education in children's theatre, Redington describes Peter Slade's experimental activities as an actor at the Pear Tree Players Theatre Company (32-3), and also Brian Way working as an actor at the Old Vic and the West of England Children Theatre Company in the 1940s (33-4). Independently of each other, both key exponents and pioneers of Drama in Education worked in/with a participatory form of theatre that, in its aims and format, resembled Theatre in Education.

The concept that educational drama is rooted in the young child's fantasy/make-believe play appears to be a lasting and valid theory even nowadays. Neil Kitson and Ian Spiby describe the main child-play types (functional, constructive, game with rules and dramatic – socio-dramatic), claiming that drama is an extension of the socio-dramatic type of child play. Both in dramatic play and drama, the child acts out social interactions by means of symbolic representation and experiments with patterns of behaviour, communication and roles, and these activities function as rehearsal for life situations (34). Considering the views of the developmental psychologist, L. S. Vygotsky, Kitson and Spiby expound that children playing by themselves operate up to a “naturally determined level”, whereas an adult's challenge can expand the learning potential of the activity. The same concept applies to educational drama, where the teacher's intervention, in structuring the drama, provides learning opportunities (38). Children's dramatic playing by themselves tends to be narrative, concerned about the sequence of the actions: “what happens next?” One function of the drama teacher is to slow down the narrative, concentrating on the situation, the characters, the ways of symbolisation and the problem. The other characteristic of the “undisturbed” dramatic playing is that the children frequently suggest “magic solutions” that make drama flat. The teacher's role is to stop easy solutions of problems, channelling real threat of failure and encouraging the struggle to overcome difficulties in order to increase the learning potential and the excitement of the drama (17-8).

As McGregor, Tate and Robinson point out, educational drama always has an underlying purpose and the participants take on roles, which intentionally challenge and extend their real social roles (13). They argue that intellectual development and emotional development are entirely interrelated, and that the strength of educational drama from the aspect of learning is that it offers complex opportunities for cognitive

and affective development in a protected way, because “as if” behaviour provides the necessary distance for exploring, expressing and communicating ideas, attitudes and feelings (23).

Michael Fleming identifies more apparent differences between the child’s dramatic playing and educational drama with regard to the consequences of actions, the structure, the awareness of signification, the dramatic form, the usage of narrative and the language. In the child’s dramatic playing, no attention is paid to the consequences of actions and there is no goal to complete the activity. Repetition of certain movements and absorption in the activity for its own sake can be observed; the narrative flows spontaneously and the language often consists of incomplete sentences, similar to everyday speech. In educational drama, on the other hand, the consequences of the actions are important and the structure works towards fulfilment. The participants are aware of signification even if they do not address an external audience. Dramatic focus and form give the drama an aesthetic quality and its narrative is controlled by the structure. As opposed to the child’s dramatic playing, educational drama works with complete sentences and heightened language (82).

Kitson and Spiby suggest that in order to understand the psychological nature of the educational drama experience, we should compare it with the simplified model of how professional actors create a character. The process of creating a character moves from the cognitive state towards the affective, starting with reading, understanding and studying the text, understanding the feelings, sympathising, empathising and identifying with the character. This way of learning is complex and difficult because actors need to transfer from the state of understanding feelings to the state of feeling them for themselves. Stanislavski’s training system prepares actors for developing “emotion memory”, the capacity to store, select, recall and re-live real past experiences which are

analogous to the character's situation, and this technique helps the actors to transfer from the cognitive to the affective state when they create a part. Kitson and Spiby argue that although the ingredients of the drama process are the same (understanding and identification), the sequence in the drama class needs to be the opposite, working from affective to the cognitive, similarly to the process of identification with a good film or theatre. This way, drama teachers can avoid the danger of children imitating emotional behaviour, and they can promote their learning from an affective experience (20-23).

The relationship between cognitive and affective learning has been a frequently debated concern of educational drama. Drama practitioners and theoreticians can be characterised by their choice whether they consider knowing or feeling more important. Dorothy Heathcote is the first representative in educational drama history who reckons drama as “a process of change” (115) in which reflection and generalisation play a significant role in learning from the experience. Her pedagogic interest lies no longer in the individual as it was with Slade and Way but in the group. She constructs complete dramatic stories for the children to enact, which have structures similar to that of a play. She uses whole-group drama to provide a specific blend of affective and cognitive learning opportunities by living-through experience, posing a dramatic situation with deliberate tension and planned surprise for the children to respond to. She renews the dynamics of the drama class through what is known as the “teacher-in-role” technique, radically transforming the nature of stimuli that the drama teacher offers to the children. In order to build belief and enhance the children's involvement, Heathcote's teacher-in-role creates fiction, enters it and makes it work as well as controls the activity from within the drama. The pupils relate to the established fictional situation by entering the fiction taking roles. Instead of the traditional teacher-pupil relationship, she offers partnership that assumes risk-taking in terms of being exposed to improvisation in a

fictional situation while sustaining a role, but, at the same time, also allows the teacher to keep in full control through the status of the character she plays. Heathcote's other significant device, the "Mantle of the Expert" method allows a slower context-building process and replaces the sudden theatrical effect of the teacher-in-role convention with a gradual belief-building and role-taking procedure. With this approach, Heathcote's priority, gaining knowledge in different subject areas by the living-through experience of drama as an educational tool, becomes accessible for the non-specialist teachers.

Gavin Bolton, a disciple of Heathcote, who shares Slade's opinion that dramatic activity derives from the child's symbolic make-believe play, formulates a conceptual framework in which he categorises contemporary classroom drama practice and describes their characteristics (*Towards a Theory* 5-20). The first group of activities (Type A) are exercises with a sense of purpose, clarity of outline, repeatability and defined rules; Type B is the open-ended, unstructured dramatic play in existential mode with children in role, and Type C is theatre defined as "communication of an end-product to an audience" (19). He offers a fourth category of dramatic activity based on the practice of his own and that of Heathcote's, and calls it "Type D drama". It is a combination of the three categories taking the shape of a complete dramatic story enacted as if it were a play with a fixed structure and with an improvised text. Bolton defines this type as "drama for understanding" (38), which is "primarily concerned with learning at a subjective level of meaning" (32). He explains that learning about the theme and the content of the drama can be achieved on the basis of emotional experience, when "the play for the children" representing Type B dramatic playing and "what happens next" orientation, is accompanied and supplemented by "the play for the teacher" with educational goals and the structure for the experience. The teacher's function is to provide the educational goals and the structure "folded in" the drama,

either in exercise or theatre form. This kind of complex drama activity is frequently referred to as “educational drama” as it provides learning opportunities about particular aspects of a selected topic or as “process drama” that does not result in a theatre production. Bolton considers reflection a decisive part of educational drama and suggests that the most effective form may be when reflection is part of the dramatic activity itself. On the basis of Heathcote’s and Bolton’s theory and practice, the concept of educational drama as an effective method for teaching other subjects such as History, Literature, PHSE (Personal Health and Social Education) and Citizenship throughout the curriculum has become widespread, though perhaps challenged by specialist drama teachers.

Heathcote’s device, the teacher-in-role technique provides Bolton with a starting point from which to compare educational drama and TIE, since the teacher in the first and the actors in the second represent characters in the activities with which the pupils are engaged. Bolton observes that when the drama teacher plays a role, s/he structures the experience, combining the experiential and the theatrical/showing modes that would be incompatible without this technique. A participatory TIE production offers a similar combination of modes with greater emphasis on detailed pre-planning and a fixed structure; and it is the disadvantage of TIE that the degree of flexibility, to adjust to the needs of the group, is less than that of the drama teacher’s. The teacher’s option to vary being in-role and out-of-role promotes the children’s reflection during the experience, and it leads to a “change of understanding”, which is accepted as the most important pedagogic objective of both DIE and TIE. Bolton claims that meaning making takes place on three interdependent levels; the contextual, the universal-thematic and the personal, and the audience will respond to them in a holistic and integrated way (*DIE and TIE: a Comparison* 39-47).

Jonathan Neelands shares the most important views and principles of educational drama with Heathcote and Bolton, but while Heathcote's and Bolton's living-through dramas always operate naturalistically "at life-rate" (Heathcote 70), Neelands opens up opportunities for non-naturalistic forms of expression. He offers elaborated and categorised ways of working with drama and theatre forms by which the teacher can structure the children's dramatic experience, and he calls these techniques "dramatic conventions". Neelands restores the status of theatre, which Slade and Way excluded from drama classrooms, redefining and broadening the concept as follows:

Theatre is the direct experience that is shared when people imagine and behave as if they were other than themselves in some other place at another time. This definition seeks to encompass all forms of creative imitative behaviour from the loose and spontaneous imaginative play of young children through to the more formal experience of the play performed by actors for an audience. (*Structuring Drama Work* 4)

Neelands defines "Aesthetic learning – skills, concepts and knowledge relating to the art-form" (78) as an equal educational objective along with personal and social learning. He stresses that educational drama is an arts-process, which has its learning potential in the participants' "conscious and critical realisation of the relationships created between the content-area" and the selected theatre forms (i.e., the conventions used) (62). He also suggests that students, while involved in theatre, should be offered "the power and experience of being artists" (82) by which he means they should be given the opportunity to explore and experiment with the artistic form of expression.

Not only by his phraseology, but also by all his theory and practice, Neelands's work has been instrumental in transforming the aesthetic thinking about educational drama, which is also the greatest concern of another theoretician-practitioner, David Hornbrook. In strong opposition to the free expression – personal development – living-through experience – drama for learning moral or curriculum issues – structuring the story by conventions line of educational philosophy and drama methodology that Slade – Way – Heathcote – Bolton – Neelands approach represents, Hornbrook offers the first critical analysis of the history of educational drama. He argues that when the main aim of drama is either personal/social skill development or exploration of issues, the progression in the subject of drama becomes irrelevant and cannot be assessed; consequently, drama becomes marginalised or may indeed disappear from the school curriculum. He claims that drama, having lost its status as a subject in its own right in the National Curriculum in England and Wales was due to the naïve belief in its omnipotent power as an educational tool for other subjects. Hornbrook's argument is that drama education, like music or art education, should focus on the acquisition of the art form, providing opportunities for learning about theatre and developing drama skills, "to equip young people with an understanding of actors, theatres and plays" (12). Andy Kempe describes Hornbrook's practice as working with texts and exploring the relationship between a dramatic text and the creative process of drama by setting up a situation around the core question of the play. He starts working on creating characters from the conflicting views represented in the play, and after building up a dramatic context, the group explores the key issues of the text through improvised drama. Hornbrook's understanding of the dramaturgy of the play gives the group guidance in structuring the drama, and this way the participants acquire and apply dramaturgical skills in practice while gaining personal experience in creating drama.

School and theatre have an ambivalent relationship represented in these contrasting educational drama models, which all indicate an overt historical shift of emphasis, completing a whole circle by first abandoning and later re-approaching theatre art. This ambivalent relationship is also reflected in the theoretical debates characteristic of the last fifty years in drama education, summarised by Fleming. The first controversial issue is the distinction between “drama” and “theatre” that is different from the traditional interpretation of drama being a literary genre that would cover written texts of playwrights and theatre being the art form of performing on stage. Views specific to drama in education define theatre as communication to an audience whereas the process of drama is seen as the experience of the participants without sharing it with spectators. As most educational drama exponents claim the presence of an audience non-desirable, theatre as communication to an audience has been excluded from most classrooms. Fleming argues that all drama experience contains some kind of sharing when the participants become the spectators of the other participants’ actions, so in this sense we cannot deny the presence of the audience (15). Cecily O’Neill agrees with this view, but approaches the question from a different angle, claiming that, as the participants are at the same time spectators, this implicit presence of the audience makes process drama a theatre form (118).

The other contradiction that Fleming contends is between the advocates of “process” and “product”, which is in close connection with the “drama versus theatre” dichotomy. Many educational drama theoreticians believe that the pedagogic value of drama lies in the learning that can be achieved during the process of planning, negotiating and thinking about the issues raised and through the emotional impact that the drama process has on the participants. They claim that developing the work into a finished product has a negative effect on the children, so it is unnecessary if not

harmful. On the other hand, others argue that creating a complete production, which can be performed and evaluated, enhances learning in a complex way. Fleming suggests that the problem should be considered as shifting emphasis between two aspects of the same phenomenon, since the concept of product presumes a process involved, leading to the product; as well as process can be seen as product if, for example, there is a video record made of a drama lesson process (17).

Meanwhile Bolton, who used to be a committed representative of process drama, arguing against all kinds of product, twenty years later comes to a conclusion that is similar to Fleming's: "It may be mistaken... to leave the impression... that *process* is to be seen as an alternative to *product*, for they are *interdependent*, not polar, concepts" (*Acting in Classroom Drama* 261). In a recent conference paper he even claims that in spite of the arguments throughout the last fifty years history of educational drama, all dramatic activities are rooted in theatre, admitting that "It is all *theatre*" ("It is all *theatre*" 21).

Both TIE and educational drama advocate educational views based on the "learning by doing" principle. Consequently, both share children's participation as the most important common characteristic feature. As the main concern of both educational drama and TIE is the quality of children's participation, both share the problem of how to involve the children and how to provide a suitable authentic fictional context for identification that would make participation meaningful and promote learning.

One of the most important differences between educational drama and TIE is the means they use to involve their client groups. The drama teacher prepares for and conducts the class alone. Although there are plenty of sources to help her/him to decide on the content and find suitable topics for drama, finding both the appropriate form for the content as well as structuring the work are more problematic, especially in respect to

process drama. On the other hand, the responsibility to create an authentic context in educational theatre rests with the TIE company, which can employ a long creative process with a full range of artistic theatrical means, starting from a devised or written play text through highly skilful acting of several actors, up to a completely elaborated performance. During the preparation phase the topic is matched to the educational aim, and the artistic form is fitted to the content of the programme by a shared effort of the whole team. The conduct of a TIE programme resembles the situation of team-teaching with the whole company sharing responsibility.

Another distinction between the two is that in educational drama, the experience of the children is always participatory, while in TIE it is receptive and participatory at the same time. Active participation is a prerequisite in the drama classroom, so the children do not need to switch between the receptive audience mode and the active participant mode, which is a characteristic disadvantage of TIE. In educational drama the children create the experience, the plot of the drama and the characters for themselves, all facilitated by the drama teacher. There is no prewritten text to learn and all dialogue is improvised, thus the event is ephemeral and non-repeatable. The pedagogic value derives from the structure that carries the educational objective, the focus and the stimulus for participation. Educational drama provides a structured opportunity for reflection. The experience and the reflection are equally important; learning cannot derive from one without the other. The TIE company, on the other hand, through its show, produces a complex, artistic effect for reception and a structured theatrical stimulus for active participation. In TIE, the company plays the teacher's role of structuring the experience providing learning opportunities in a symbolised dramatic context. The value of the TIE experience for its audience derives from the theatricality

of the event, from the possibility of participation and from the educational objective, in which the children confront the content of the piece. The pupils in TIE can

question what they see, challenge what they are told, look at the contradictions of a concept and creatively 'role play' a situation. The audience is empowered to make decisions, to choose a course of action, to listen to various points of view and to elect a way forward for themselves. (Oddey 123)

The proportion of the reflection in TIE may be none or significantly less in comparison with the receptive and participatory (passive and active) experience. The opportunity for reflection depends on which type of participation the programme provides.

The practice of the audience's involvement has altered several times throughout the history of TIE. During the first period of the Belgrade TIE from 1965 to 1972, the company experimented with a whole range of programme structures, from acted-out stories with the children's active participation through creative drama workshops to theatre presentation preceded or followed by an actor-teachers' team teaching in characters (Redington 42-83). The way of working, in organisational and artistic/educational terms, evolved by the Belgrade TIE Company, was followed by TIE companies founded in Bolton, Leeds, Glasgow, Greenwich, Edinburgh and Nottingham.

Examining the organisational characteristics of the educational theatre movement from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, Tony Jackson claims that there is a direct connection between the changing pattern of funding and the format of the TIE programmes. In the 1960s the TIE companies were funded partly by the Arts Council through the theatre's board of management, and partly by the local education authorities

(LEAs). Thus, the companies enjoyed a relatively independent status from the educational system and from the theatre as well. Moreover, they could build up a close relationship with the schools, and had the opportunity to make valuable use of the resources of the theatre at which they were based. This system of funding enabled the companies to design participatory class-size programmes rather than apply the auditorium-size format of the conventional children's theatre. The class-size format reflected the philosophy of TIE, advocating "theatre for social change" that became characteristic for the whole growing TIE movement (18-22). By the 1970s, TIE companies covered nearly the whole country, and alongside the companies attached to regional repertory theatres, independent non-profit-making TIE companies were set up, which received grant aid directly from the local authorities and the Arts Council. Some of the local education authorities established TIE companies of their own (for example, the Cockpit TIE team, London), and the new formats of funding encouraged innovative changes in the content and form of the programmes. The most important features of this second period of development were the dramaturgical devices "that put the children right at the heart of the events with responsibility to investigate, interrogate and make decisions that had repercussions for the characters involved" (Jackson 23) and the experiments with theatrical form. The formation of the Standing Conference of Young People's Theatre (SCYPT) in 1975 to represent the interests of TIE companies as well as the increasing number of programmes dealing with contemporary social issues showed a growing politicisation of educational theatre.

In the 1980s, significant changes in that key distinguishing feature of TIE, the participatory format, took place. Jackson explains this phenomenon as the shift away from participation programmes to performance-only pieces by the majority of TIE companies because of financial pressures and also loss of confidence in the participation

method. On the other hand, due to the influence of educational drama, especially the work of Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton, as well as Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre methodology, a few firmly-established companies redeveloped participatory programmes. They emphasised the importance of the children's control over the problem-solving process and the pedagogic value of the structured opportunity for reflection (Jackson 26-28). Studies by Chris Vine, Alison Oddey, Ali Campbell and Andy Hickson also highlight Boal's influence in the 1980s and Steve Ball's research conducted in 1995 proves that numerous TIE companies continued to use Boal's techniques regularly in the early 1990s. Several TIE directors stated that they or the actors in their companies had attended Boal's workshops and that Boal's methods had inspired the rehearsal process and their TIE programmes as well.

The difficulties in raising the necessary funds for running TIE companies in the early 1990s became a general problem. As Tony Jackson's analysis shows not only the "labour-intensive" audience participation was under threat but the whole TIE movement struggled for survival. The advantage which had previously derived from the dual funding system, i.e., grants given by local education authorities or school governors on the one hand, and funds provided by Arts Council and latterly by Regional Arts Boards on the other hand, by the 1990s turned into a bitter debate about whose responsibility it was to fund educational theatre. Since neither the educational nor the theatrical side was able or willing to be the only provider due to the economic slump, TIE suffered substantial reduction and the companies had to find other sources of income. As a result, new methods of funding, partnerships and ways of working emerged. Reflecting upon this new situation, Jackson has claimed that, due to the diversification at ideological, dramaturgical, financial and organisational levels from the 1990s on, "it is probably no longer possible to speak of a single TIE movement" (30).

Ten years after Tony Jackson's statement, it is relevant to re-define the position of Theatre in Education and investigate whether audience participation has remained a core constituent of the genre in contemporary British TIE.

The Role of the Audience in TIE

Audience is a prerequisite of theatre; if there is no audience present we cannot speak about a theatrical performance. Erving Goffman, a representative of social psychology, analysing the "theatrical frame", applies "role theory" to define the concept of audience through its social functions (688-739). Investigating the theatrical frame in terms of the actions and social roles of the actors and the audience, he makes a distinction between a character, (e.g., Hamlet) and the character's social roles (Hamlet as the prince, the son of Gertrude, the lover of Ophelia, the friend of Horatio) as the functions of the character, and defines the dramatic character by identity with a life story, specific characteristics and several functions (697). He claims that the person playing a part on stage presents a doubled identity: a dramatic character with social roles on the one hand, and, on the other, the actor's identity, including social roles as the "actor" such as remembering the text, cooperating with the other actors, expecting prompts or the response of the audience (697). Goffman describes two distinct functions for the audience: the role of the "theatregoer" and the role of the "onlooker". The former carrying out activities not related to the events on stage (ticket booking, arriving late, buying drinks in the interval, applause), the latter being in touch with the fictional world when empathising with and reacting to the characters' dramatic actions. The curtain-call signals that the fiction is over, the characters disappear, and the audience as theatregoers thank the actors for their performance (698). Goffman's definition that "... the audience has neither the right nor the obligation to participate directly in the dramatic action occurring on the stage" but is in the position of the privileged onlooker is frequently

referred to in theatre semiotics (Elam 88). However, this definition is only partly applicable for Theatre in Education.

The theatregoer role of the audience is strongly modified in TIE. As opposed to the conventional audience that chooses to go to the theatre, it is not the children's free choice but part of the school curriculum for them to go and see a TIE programme. This obligation belongs to the participants' student role, and can be more precisely interpreted through an additional "frame", the school frame, which is present in TIE together with the theatrical frame.

The privileged onlooker role of the TIE audience is complemented by an additional social role, which can be defined as the function of the participant or the player role. As a result, the code of audience behaviour is also altered in TIE in comparison with that of the conventional theatre. The programme might include physical activities, problem solving and role taking. TIE audience as players enter the fictional world of the play, either remaining themselves or representing fictional characters, depending on the nature of the actual programme, in order to interact with the characters represented by the actors. These interactions usually spring up spontaneously without rehearsals, and, consequently, they are neither predictable nor repeatable. The dialogues are not learnt but improvised, and even if the players represent fictional characters, the depth of characterisation is closer to role-play than to acting. A TIE programme might require the players to interact not only with the characters, but with each other as well, either within or outside the realm of the fiction.

The activities of the audience in TIE are not negotiable. They are the givens or the "rules" of the programme itself, and even if the actual active involvement is voluntary, the TIE audience is supposed or expected to follow the rules of the

programme. The obligation to accept rules, whatever they are, is, again, a characteristic of the school frame rather than that of the theatrical one.

Conventional theatre can be entirely enjoyed without any preparation on the audience's part. Due to the cultural norms, theatregoers know what they are supposed to do, and how they are expected to behave, and it is the personal decision of the individual to gain or not to gain preliminary information about the play and the show. The audience of participatory TIE programmes, however, needs to be "initiated". This feature should also be interpreted within the school frame. The students frequently get a specific "training", either from the company preceding or introducing the programme, or from the class teacher to prepare for the appropriate behaviour and the expected activities.

The thesis statement and the research methodology

Members of audience attending a participatory TIE programme are both the recipients and the co-creators of the theatre event and their contributions exert apparent effects on its creative processes and its artistic product. Audience participation in TIE governs the whole creative process including auditions, playwriting/devising, the actors' work of creating and building characters and the rehearsals. The actual interactions between the actors and the audience considerably modify the artistic product: the play, the performance and the acting process. Therefore, I interpret audience participation as the most decisive factor of TIE which, driven by an explicit pedagogical aim, becomes an integral artistic constituent of the theatre programme. The nature and the structure of participation vary and, thus, the influence that the students' contributions exert on the dramatic entity change accordingly. The TIE team (especially the actors, but also the director and the playwright) must be capable and ready to invite, structure, elicit, guide

and control the participants' creative contributions as well as incorporate them into the process of the performance.

During the forty-year history of Theatre in Education, practitioners and scholars have provided descriptions of the work, historical investigations and educational evaluation of TIE but the artistic aspects of audience participation and its effects on the creative process have not been explored so far. As this research has not been undertaken by the British academic community, I anticipate that my investigation, being available to existing TIE companies in Britain, will provide analytical data which will support or question their rehearsal and performance practice.

A bi-product of this research would be that it becomes available to the theatre community in Hungary. There are three distinct theatre communities in Hungary which might benefit from this research. In their future vision they might decide that TIE could provide another strand in their overall concept of individual philosophy and their audience development strategy. The three strands, children's theatre companies, regional theatre companies occasionally providing productions to children and young audiences as well as the existing Hungarian TIE companies would benefit from having available this platform of research should they ever consider widening their current remit or widening their current audience base. It would also form the platform for any new company which wished to specialise in this particular area of theatre.

In order to explore how audience participation affects the creative process and the artistic product of TIE, I designed and carried out research applying a qualitative, interpretive approach suited to the particular circumstances of an educational theatre study. Qualitative inquiries are frequently applied to address complex Arts Education issues (Courtney 112), and the interpretive approach is claimed to be suitable to provide insights into artistic processes, especially in theatrical contexts (Taylor 36-7).

I collected data by studying documents, by formal and informal interviews with key informants to gain their interpretations and by direct observation. These methods are compatible with an educational theatre study in which the practitioners' subjective viewpoints and reflections on their own particular experience can be compared with each other, with the data gained from the documents and with the performance analyses of participatory TIE programmes.

I selected the artistic policy documents of forty professional TIE companies, which all specify their work as educational theatre, for examination. (The list of companies with the sources of their electronic publications can be found in the list of Works Consulted; all the references and quotations in Chapter 1, unless stated otherwise, are based on these online documents on the companies' web-sites.) The term "professional" in this study is meant in a double sense: it refers to trained practitioners who graduated from drama schools or theatre studies departments of universities as well as to those who practise Theatre in Education as their full-time or part-time jobs. The expression "educational theatre" implies the overt pedagogical and developmental aims these theatres intend to achieve with their programmes as opposed to theatres offering "entertainment" to their audience.

The sample to be discussed is representative in every respect. There are both old and new companies among them, the year of their foundation ranging from 1967 to 2002. The oldest of all, TAG (Theatre About Glasgow) in Scotland was established only two years after the first TIE company had come into existence in 1965. Ten companies were founded in the 1970s, and they have been working continuously since then (GYPT: Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre, Interplay, Half Moon, Unicorn, Gwent, M6, Quicksilver, Small World, Spectacle and Snap), twelve were set up in the 1980s, the peak decade of the TIE movement, and eight started in the 1990s.

Far Out Productions, the youngest company of them all, has been working in the East Midlands since 2002.

The sample TIE companies are quite evenly located all over Britain. Obviously London with nine companies (Unicorn, GYPT, Half Moon, Quicksilver, Oily Cart, Image, TIE Tours, NT Education and Bigfoot) and Leeds, which has a TIE tradition historically, with three companies (Interplay, Blahs and The Theatre in Education Company) appear to be centres of educational theatre. Birmingham may be considered another TIE centre of England where three companies (Round Midnight, Catalyst, Language Alive) can be found. Other TIE groups work in different parts of England, for example, in Rochdale (M6), Holmfirth (Figment), Yorkshire (Pilot, Yorkshire Women), Hull (Magic Carpet), East Midlands (Far Out Productions), Plymouth (Barbican), Stoke-on-Trent (Black Cat), Kent (Channel, Blunderbus), Darlaston (Gazebo), Brighton (Spindrift), Bishop's Stortford (Snap), Leicester (Speakeasy) and Norwich (Tiebreak). Nationally touring educational theatres of long tradition can be found in Scotland (TAG) and in Wales (Gwent, Small World, Spectacle, and Clwyd Theatr Cymru).

The companies work with a wide range of organisational background, some belonging to arts centres and learning centres (Barbican, Gwent, Catalyst, Language Alive and The TIE Company) or mainstream theatres (NT Education, Bristol Old Vic) while others operate as independent receiving venues (Half Moon) or touring companies. Their financial background is also diverse. They are either revenue-funded groups receiving money regularly from Arts Councils and local authorities or project-funded ones, whereas some companies work in a commercial way on the basis of their incomes. The way of funding is reflected in the price of the programmes and the wages they can offer to their actors. As a result of different organisational and financial backgrounds, the size and the operational fields of the companies vary significantly,

ranging from multi-functional big companies to small-scale, one-or-two-productions-a-year groups, thus the sample is representative in this sense as well.

Unlike any other kind of theatre event, educational theatre programmes are not publicly accessible. They are mostly held in schools and the audience exclusively consists of the students and the teachers of the particular school that the company visits. The schedule of the school tours is not advertised anywhere since the schools book the programmes, often contacting the company directly long (2-4 months) before the visit and negotiating the exact date. I gained access to observe and video-record the TIE programmes (strictly for research purposes) by personal connections with the artistic directors of the companies. They also made documents available and helped to make useful contacts with other TIE teams. The members of the companies and the casts proved to be very helpful and keen to show their work and share their experiences.

I selected programmes for analysis which met a range of criteria simultaneously. These programmes are all driven by overt pedagogical aims, contain some kind of audience participation that most typically represents the participatory structures characteristic of educational theatre. The venues are schools and the members of the audience are children or young people that attend the programmes as part of their school activities. The performers are trained professional actors and the programmes represent high educational and artistic quality.

Since the necessary information on the creative process could only be gathered from the practitioners themselves, I designed a complex and quite flexible data collection method. I conducted semi-structured interviews with the artistic directors and actors of the sample TIE companies observed, whilst also sending out written questionnaires to a number of educational theatre companies, in order to broaden the scope of the inquiry.

Some artistic directors provided information both by interview and by questionnaire; in such cases the questions were adjusted accordingly in order to be complementary. Other directors chose either the oral or the written format; while the actors preferred giving an interview. Most written responses were sent back by the artistic directors of the companies; there was only one actor who replied in writing and one TIE practitioner who did not specify her exact position at the theatre. As one of the respondents explained, the reason why actors are reluctant to answer questions in writing is that the TIE companies do not have any permanent company members who would spend time in the theatre office in between shows, and the guest actors appointed on a project basis are actually around only during the rehearsal period when they are too busy to fill in questionnaires. The other obstacle described by a TIE practitioner was that more than thirty years of educational theatre experience proved to be impossible to be crammed in a questionnaire form, therefore, he offered to give an interview to provide a more detailed insight.

The overall view of the inquiry shows that all possible formats of audience participation are present as natural and popular constituents of the programmes in contemporary educational theatre practice, and every respondent has considerable experience in most participatory models. It is clear from the responses that all the artistic directors who provided data have been or are still involved in participatory TIE as performers, too. Thus their opinion and experiences represent both sides of the coin, the director's points of view and the actor's as well. The artistic directors and the team leaders of the sample educational theatres listed several distinctive skills and qualities of the actors that they would look for when casting a participatory TIE programme and reported about their company's auditioning methods. Some of the respondents described the process in general; others specified how they found actors that met the requirements

of particular programmes. Most directors also gave the rationale behind the procedures and explained which particular skills they would usually test in the process and why and also described the rehearsal processes and the methods of preparation for audience participation.

The collected information reflects upon the artistic processes as well as the attitudes and values of the practitioners, therefore, I did qualitative and interpretive data analysis. The method applied to interpret data gained from the documents, interviews and questionnaires is “key-word analysis” as described by David Nunan (*Research Methods* 145-47). The key-words identified are printed in *italics* in the dissertation. The analysis started with the identification of the problem areas, issues and topics cropping up in the interviews and the documents, and then I grouped the information into main categories and sub-groups and, finally, selected the most relevant issues for comparison and further discussion. The performance analyses focus on the actor-audience interactions from the actors’ perspective and explore the effects of audience participation on play structures, performances, acting and the TIE actors’ work.

CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW AND TYPOLOGY

The Artistic Policy of Contemporary British TIE

“Artistic policy” is an umbrella-term used in this study to comprise the priorities, the concepts, the values and the philosophy stated in a document (called “mission statement”, “company policy statement” or “artistic policy statement”) in which the companies define their aims and objectives, declare what they want to achieve with their programmes, and outline their philosophy underlying their work. It serves several purposes at the same time. First, it encourages the company itself to clarify the direction it wants to take, thus promoting the process of the programme design. Second, since it is publicly accessible, it provides a source of information about the company for the potential or actual audience. In addition, artistic policy documents can be the starting point for assessment of the success of the programmes both by the company and by the authorities.

The artistic policy documents of the TIE companies display a colourful picture and provide rich material for analysis. Though the length of the documents may vary from the one-sentence-long general mission statement to a detailed explanation underpinned by arguments, all reflect the way of thinking and the conceptual awareness of the practitioners who run the companies. In each case the artistic policy is more than just a formal requirement or a mere commercial advertisement to sell tickets. The artistic directors or the members of the core company, who are responsible for formulating their artistic policy, take the opportunity and offer the “poetics” of their educational theatre in these documents. Key concepts and ideas shared by all of them indicate common characteristics of the genre and the versatility of the style and the tone of wording highlight the specific features and the uniqueness of each company. The

artistic policy of the sample TIE companies is related to three main areas: target audience, aims and artistic aspects.

All companies emphasise the importance of *respecting children and young people*, and aim to match the content, form and style of the programmes to be *relevant* and *accessible* to the targeted age group of the audience. The value of respecting children not only reflects a general humanistic approach which considers children as equal human beings or “full individuals in society,” as the artistic policy of Quicksilver puts it, but also represents a child-centred educational philosophy that takes the child’s needs and interest into consideration.

By defining the target audience, the artistic policy answers one of the main questions: to whom does the company offer its services? TIE programmes, as a rule, are designed for an audience of a distinct age range. Some TIE companies specialise in performing only to a particular age group. For example, Oily Cart plays to the very young, Quicksilver for those between 3-11, Blunderbus to 5-11 and Unicorn to 4-12 year-olds. Other companies perform to several different age groups of children and young people between 3 and 21, but with a clear indication of the target audience’s age whom they intend to address by each programme. While the concept of *relevance* refers to the theme of the programmes selected to be of interest and of a genuine “hot” problem for the targeted age group, *accessibility* comprises more than one aspect of the aims. The attention span of the targeted age group is also taken into consideration as reflected in the length of the programmes. For example, Spectacle offers *The Lazy Ant* a 30-minute play with music, song and dance to 3-5 year olds, and presents *Hide & Seek* a 45-minute performance with a response workshop to 6-8 year olds. The second aspect is the way of presentation, i.e., the style of the programme tailored to the age of the audience. The third aspect appears when Bigfoot, Magic Carpet, Round Midnight, Snap,

TIE Tours aim to provide *access* to theatre for those who would not experience live theatre otherwise. Other companies clarify more exactly whom they want to address reaching out for specific and often neglected target audiences such as the very young and those with learning disabilities (Oily Cart), “people whose dominant sense is not necessarily sight” (Interplay), disadvantaged and marginalized groups in different regions and cultural contexts (Small World) or “those who society has made powerless” (GYPT). Unicorn’s *Accessworks* project enables “young people in hardship to enjoy the arts at little or no cost to themselves”. The emphasis on *equal treatment* and *equal opportunities* (Quicksilver, GYPT, TIE Tours) as well as *multiculturalism* (Quicksilver, TIE Tours, Half Moon) are frequently recurring values, sometimes phrased specifically, like “all sorts of shows for all sort of kids” (Oily Cart). The intention to work in close *partnership with young people* (Snap, Half Moon) as well as *with schools and teachers* (Spectacle) and the purpose of developing *long-term relationships with the schools in the city* (Blahs, Unicorn) indicate a particular theatre – audience connection characteristic of TIE.

When the companies formulate their aims answering such questions as why they make TIE and what they intend to achieve with it, all companies declare their belief in the *power of live theatre* as an aesthetic and educational medium in which *entertainment and education* go hand-in-hand to inform and entertain young people. All companies take into consideration that their particular audience might experience theatre for the first time ever, and all consider it important to *take responsibility for the first live theatre experience* they provide. Some highlight priorities referring to *teaching theatre art* itself. Quicksilver claims that they aim to create an awareness of theatre in children as a powerful medium for creative expression and cultural development. Blahs wants to demonstrate how theatre plays an essential role in how we learn about ourselves and the

world through emotional engagement with the subject. GYPT, Small World, Bigfoot and M6 mean to develop young people's theatre and drama skills and Snap wants to "push back the boundaries of theatre" in order to attract new audiences.

The second group of their aims point to the development of the audience's *life skills*, namely to stimulate young people's curiosity and concerns (Blahs), to enable young people to work co-operatively and to take control over their learning and lives (GYPT), to develop children's basic social skills, communication skills, teamwork, confidence and thinking as an individual (Bigfoot), to empower children to increase their self-esteem and self-awareness (Quicksilver, GYPT), to "assist young people in their understanding of a range of issues and concepts" (M6), "to help them to explore the world around them and discover their potential" (Unicorn) or "to inspire... individuals and communities to explore and express ideas and needs, voice opinions" (Barbican).

The intention "to enable young people to question the world in which we live" (GYPT) and "helping them to question what they see, hear and experience" (M6) leads to a third category, the *political and social aims* that are explicit in a few cases, especially with companies rooted in a tradition characteristic of the 1970s. Small World emphasises the importance of "exploring and effecting social change" and "reflecting local and global concerns", Barbican intends "to provoke social and cultural change" through the involvement of young people in artistic activities and M6 aims to "challenge racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice through productions and working methods". Some companies also add a specific aspect to the generally accepted value of multiculturalism advocating the aim of "enabling young people to respect, share, understand, enjoy and celebrate others' culture" (GYPT) as well as "promote international cultural links through theatre and to learn from other cultures" (Small

World). The fourth direction of aims, which is *company self-development*, is implicit in most artistic policies, but there are only two overt references in the available material which show the intention to increase the company's understanding of children (Quicksilver) and to understand current concerns in the classroom (Spectacle).

By clarifying the ways and means by which they want to achieve their aims, the companies define the artistic aspects of their policies. All companies share the commitment to a high level of *professional quality* and declare the importance of *full research* for each production. In addition to the numerous general statements referring to professionalism, some specify the means they apply in order to *maintain quality*, for example, by monitoring the work (Bigfoot, NT Education, Quicksilver), by recruiting new, fresh, talented practitioners (Bigfoot) or by seeking advice and positive criticism from teachers (Quicksilver). TIE Tours takes a different approach to the problem. They identify specific professional requirements that the company expects their actors to fulfil to maintain quality. The list contains adequate preparation both in terms of research and presentation skills, teamwork or, in other words, the ability and willingness to work together in partnership, and non-stop learning since building a character should be a continual process. They also stress that each performance should be kept fun, alive and fresh, as well as that company members should accept and “embrace” the challenge and difficulties inherent in the nature of TIE work.

A distinct artistic aspect of the companies' policy is what kind of plays they use for their programmes. Certain companies declare that they usually create new material for their own purposes instead of transforming a playwright's text into a performance. The reason for using the methodology of devising in TIE is that educational aims and the specific age of the target audience as well as participation can be taken into consideration in a flexible way. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the most characteristic way

of working in TIE was *group devising* when the whole company took part in making the play along with presenting a *theatrical statement* by collective effort. The devising process, which was not exclusively a TIE method but applied by community-based, site-specific, experimental or political theatre groups as well, included a mixture of research, brainstorming ideas, discussions and improvisation. Some TIE representatives were deeply committed to group devising, such as, for example, Alison Oddey, whose *Devising Theatre* became a practitioners' handbook of the field. She explained that the artistic drive for devising "is to be able to make a personal statement within a group context, to feel that one is part of the making of a theatrical experience, not an interpreter of something already written" (27). David Pammenter, another expert on devising, emphasised the social aspects of the motivation for group devising, such as the local relevance of the programmes and the need for TIE to reflect actual changes of society (54).

On the other hand, group devising has been objected to by some arguing that the process is too time-consuming and that most actors are reluctant to participate in phases of work beyond actual acting, i.e., in research and play creating. Referring to the 1970-80s, in 1993 Lowell Swortzell criticised the scripts that were effective only when the devising group performed them due to the lack of an individual dramatic voice and distinction. His dramaturgical concerns were that sketchy characters occurring in TIE plays had little lasting effect, and the incomplete conclusion, though it left space for the audience's decision-making and problem-solving, was disappointing aesthetically because the audience always anticipates resolution (241-3). Jim Mirrione, a TIE playwright, offers a "recognisable methodology that may serve as a flexible model" (90) which addresses the most characteristic problems of creating original material for TIE. He claims that the first step in the pre-scripting phase is answering a series of questions

regarding the educational purpose and the expected effects of the programme on the student audience, and suggests that preparation should involve research on both the issues and the audience's needs. When selecting the topic, the TIE playwright should seek "educationally sound as well as dramatically charged" material, characters and conflicts (74), also considering "whether or not that material has dramatic possibilities" (79). Mirrione gives dramaturgical advice on the scripting phase too, indicating that the TIE playwright should first construct a working scenario to be discussed with "professional consultants", i.e., teachers, the director and the programme manager. He claims that a critical viewpoint must be presented in the script, without which the inclusion of educational content is not enough. He raises the problems of language usage and play structure, as well as indicates some aspects of characterisation.

In recent TIE practice, presenting *new and original writing* is an essential constituent of work with most TIE companies with a wider variety of different creative methods applied than in previous decades. Group devising is still an apparent form of working (Gazebo, GYPT, Gwent, Magic Carpet), less dominant though than it used to be in the 1970s and 1980s. Some companies devise programmes for a specific audience (Oily Cart, Snap) or with the intention of providing "real educational value" by co-operating with schools and advisers (Gwent). Sometimes a playwright or a writer working in close partnership with the company is involved in the devising process (similarly to the method described in Mirrione's model) like, for example, Daniel Morden, a professional storyteller in *The Crooked House* devised by Gwent Theatre or Andy Loudon in *The Travellers Project* (Snap).

Tiebreak, M6, Quicksilver and Channel regularly commission new writing, while other companies commission plays on a project basis. For example, TAG commissioned *Playing with Fire* by Maya Chowdhry and *Dr Korczak's Example* by

David Grieg. *The Tinderbox* by Charles Way was co-commissioned by Gwent Theatre and Unicorn. Half Moon commissioned Adrian Page's *Gotcha!* and Helen Kelly, who has been appointed as Associate Artist for Channel in 2002/2003, was given a commission to write *Spooky Little Girl* for the company. Other companies invite back particular authors to work with them several times (Anthony Peters with Magic Carpet, Mike Kenny with Interplay, Mark Ryan with Spectacle).

Two companies (Channel and TAG) encourage new writing in a specific partnership with young playwrights in their areas. Channel offers a networking and development group under the *New Perspectives* programme, providing opportunities for writers to have their plays read and publicly performed by professional actors and work with established writers on specific projects. TAG together with BBC Scotland Radio Drama commissioned a unique collaboration between three Scottish young writers' groups from Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Skye working together to create plays for both radio and stage within the framework of the *TAGlines* project. Several TIE companies have their house playwrights and some artistic directors write or devise plays for their programmes.

The artistic policy documents contain references to the characteristic or preferred theatrical style of the companies. Many groups believe in the *variety of styles and techniques*. Magic Carpet incorporates circus and variety skills, clown, slapstick and physical theatre elements. Small World intends to increase the status of puppetry by using giant puppets, and Blunderbus combines live music, puppetry skills with high-energy storytelling. Oily Cart, Round Midnight, Small World and Quicksilver like experimenting with different techniques, Snap uses new technology and classic theatre together. Gwent offers a combination of theatre in education, storytelling and music while Quicksilver applies "a fusion of the epic and the intimate" combines with

original music and strong visual impact. Boal's Forum Theatre and Image Theatre techniques appear to be especially frequent and popular as used by most companies either in the main body of the programme (Gazebo, GYPT, Tiebreak, Bigfoot, Figment, NT Education) or during the workshops following the performance. Magic Carpet, Blunderbus, TIE Tours and Channel also emphasise the *flexibility of the sets* as an important feature that helps the company to perform in non-theatrical venues and circumstances.

Content Areas of TIE Programmes

The values, priorities, concepts and philosophy stated in the artistic policy of the sample TIE companies manifest themselves in their actual programmes. Regarding their content I have identified three distinct TIE programme types in the documents: issue-based, curriculum support and story-based educational theatre programmes. Practitioners frequently use the term "issue-based" when a Theatre in Education company selects a social problem of global or local concern and creates a programme focusing on and presenting this problem for consideration and discussion or in order to provide their young audience with a deeper insight. "Curriculum support" and "story-based" are my categories to typify the other content areas of the programmes.

Issue-based TIE was especially characteristic of the 1970s and 1980s when Theatre in Education was deeply committed to the problems of society and took responsibility in encouraging its young audiences to share this commitment. The subject matter was often a social problem, contemporary or historical, and the content of the programme was deliberately political, though presented mostly "without giving a pat answer" (Redington 2). Social and political awareness permeated the majority of the TIE programmes so much that Lowell Swortzell claimed with hindsight in 1993:

The TIE movement in England originated not only in education and theatre, but also in politics, so from the outset teams sought subjects they held to be important, urgent and controversial. TIE made its reputation as a power that could address social conditions and define current problems in communities or school districts. [...] TIE proved to be so effective at this sort of latter-day agitprop presentations that *issue-based* programmes became its speciality, its trademark, its purpose. [...] Much of this work was vigorous, moving and often intensely political, yet still theatrical, the kind of presentations we came to say TIE does well. [...] Even now [in 1993], TIE can still explore expertly the arenas of dissent, although seldom with the same flame of commitment it generated in the 1970s when the cause often literally leapt from the stage to demand our attention and reaction. (246-47)

Besides Swortzell, other theoreticians such as Redington and Jackson also claim that the TIE movement was deeply rooted in and grew out of the political climate in the 1960s-70s, and as such was a kind of “product” of that period (Redington 28, 115-19; Jackson (18, 26-27). All suggest that without that specific political situation TIE would not have come into existence and would not have begun to flourish. Tracing the theatrical origins of TIE, Redington refers to Brecht, Piscator, Planchon, Littlewood and Wesker as influential artists as well as to the Federal Theatre Project in America and the political theatre groups in Britain as the ancestors of TIE (20-27). Interestingly, she makes the comparison on the basis of the left-wing political commitment of these artists and theatre movements, but makes no attempt to analyse their artistic impact on the theatrical forms of TIE. As opposed to Redington, who accepts the socio-political

commitment as a natural and necessary ingredient of TIE, Jackson comments on the political idealism of TIE with apparent reservation. He draws attention to the influence of Marxist views of social problems and education on the TIE philosophy, claiming that with some groups this influence led to “blind alleys” and “misconceptions” about the role of theatre in the society, and about its capacity to make direct social changes (24). On the other hand, some practitioners like Tony Graham think that the strength of TIE even in the 1990s was its political radicalism.

If the political roots, role and commitment of TIE had proved to be so essential as these views reflect, presumably the whole TIE movement would have ceased with time passing, or at least issue-based programmes should have disappeared due to the changing political climate in Britain. However, as the documents prove, issue-based TIE is still a popular and frequently applied type of programme in Britain today. Twenty seven of the forty sample companies produce issue-based TIE regularly and altogether about forty issue-based programmes were on offer at the time of writing this study.

The ideology behind these programmes and the political drive and direction have changed considerably in comparison with those of the 1970-80s. How a TIE company relates to addressing political issues in their programmes depends on how they see the role of theatre in the society. The more a team believes that the function of theatre is to challenge the establishment and have a direct influence on political and social changes, the more directly political their programmes would be. This political directness, which often led to simplification or didacticism and was criticised by outstanding representatives of the field during the history of TIE, seems to have disappeared. Even those of the sample companies whose phraseology in formulating their aims derives from the 1970s raise issues that are not only big social problems in general, but are also

supposed to be the personal problems and concerns of young individuals in their target audience.

There are frequently recurring issues present in the current programmes. The tension between *refugees* and existing communities is the topic of two programmes by GYPT (*Inside Out* for 9-11 year olds and *Nila's Story* for 11-14 year olds), and of two others by Small World. *Diogel?/Safe?* is a complex project about refugee integration for Welsh children in primary and secondary schools. Activities include: research of stories of refugees who are settling in Wales, performances in schools, drama workshops to explore the issues raised and facilitation of young people to produce their own performances for the wider community. The other Small World programme, *Moving!* is an interactive show about the same issue for 8 to 13 year olds that uses puppets and actors that has toured in schools all over Britain. Subtle and overt racism is highlighted in two TIE Tours' programmes (*Race!* and *33 Skins*) and in *Playing with Fire* by TAG for 14-15 year olds.

Several programmes focus on *bullying*. TIE Tours raises the issue of bullying to primary school age children (*Disadvantage*), in terms of victimisation in *Silent Scream Showshop* and in connection with peer pressure in *Breakthrough*. Round Midnight discusses the same issue in *Freak*. As a part of the *Speak Out!* project on bullying, Spectacle presents *Good For Nothing* by Paul Swift to ten-year-old children (a group of maximum 30 at a time), preceded and followed by participatory workshops.

Environment is a reoccurring issue in three Figment programmes: *Mission Possible*, a 75-minute play written by Michael Addison, tackles issues of pollution, energy wastage and recycling; *Aliens From Nid*, a 70-minute play by Simon Aylin, looks at litter and waste reduction, both aimed at 7-11 year-old children, while *Where on Earth?* by Simon Aylin, explores issues of recycling is designed for 10-11 year-old

children. Responsibility of the individual for the environment is discussed in *Manifesto De la Selva*, a shadow puppets programme by Small World.

Five companies deal with *drugs* and related themes: Channel runs a programme about drug and substance awareness for 5-8-year-olds (*Alice's Curious Adventure*), Round Midnight about drugs and juvenile crime (*Babyface*), TIE Tours about drug misuse with young people (*Angel High*) and Tiebreak about drug, alcohol and peer influence for 11-14-year-olds (*Fast Eddy*). Figment offers two drugs awareness programmes aimed at 9-11-year-old children: *I Wanna Be...* is written by Michael Addison, and *Up To You* devised by the company allows the participants comprehensive interaction with the issues.

Quite a few programmes are based on *sex* and relationships: *Seriously Curious* by Barbican; *Crossing the Line* by Snap is about sex in connection with drug, alcohol and personal boundaries; the topic of loyalty in relationships appears in *Frankie & Johnny* by Blahs; AIDS is discussed in *Sun, Sand and Sex* and *It ain't What You Do* by Round Midnight. NT Education's Forum Theatre programme, *Wam Bam!* focuses on teenage pregnancy.

Other issues occurring in the programmes are: health education and skin cancer in *Sun Stories* by Yorkshire Women; young people's mental health in *E. O. C.* and *Check Your Head* by Round Midnight; *Dased and Confused* is Figment's developmental drama programme for 14-18-year-olds, dealing with mental health issues. Tiebreak performs *Out of the Woods* to 11-12-year-olds about conflict resolution, and GYPT raises the issue of violence in the family for 9-11-year-olds in *STOP*, while Round Midnight deals with youth homelessness in *Stories of Johnny*. *I Dare You* is a rail safety play and *Runaway* written by Michael Addison is an anti-truancy Forum Theatre project aimed at 9-13-year-olds by Figment. Bigfoot offers

issue-based participatory TIE of one-day performances using Forum Theatre. The issues dealt with are: racism, bullying, citizenship, friends, family and relationships, sex and drugs.

In extended versions of issue-based programmes TIE companies address a complex social problem and design large-scale projects that last for years consisting of several phases and sub-projects. GYPT designed a programme *Voices* in which young refugees and asylum seekers participated in theatre projects in London. The tensions between teenagers and elderly people were explored in a well-documented multi-phase project *Generation X* by Small World. Citizenship, on the occasion of the launch of the independent parliament of Scotland, was the central issue in *Making the Nation* project by TAG in Glasgow.

The second type of TIE programmes is closely related to the school curriculum aiming to promote classroom work by involving young people in live theatre activities. This programme type, which has its predecessors in the previous decades of TIE described by, for example, O'Toole (146-58), Redington (47-56) or Swartzell (247-48), will be called further on *curriculum support* TIE which can be divided into three sub-groups: single-subject-based, cross-curricular and play-based programmes.

Programmes belonging to the first sub-group focus on one single subject. Science is in the centre of Magic Carpet's *Moon Magic* a participatory space adventure programme for 5-11-year-olds in which the venue becomes a space shuttle, and the audience are the passengers on a trip to the Moon. Devised by the company and directed by Jon Marshall, the programme, which offers learning opportunities about science in an imaginative and exciting way, has been accepted as a Science Year Branded Project. *History Alive* is a curriculum support for Key Stage 1 (5-8-year-olds) by Black Cat, and Channel offers two history-based programmes, *Rocket Man* and *Distant Voices*. Both

Simply Shakespeare for 5-10-year-olds by Black Cat and Booster Cushion's programme, *Big Book Tales* focus on literacy. Channel presents a numeracy programme called *Puzzle Palace* to 5-7-year-olds.

Cross-curricular programmes, forming the second sub-group, promote classroom work in more than one subject. For example, *The Crooked House* by Gwent, which is an interactive storytelling production addressing domestic issues for 6-9-year-olds, can be built in Speaking and Listening, Creative Writing, Language Development, Imaginative Play and Drama, PHSE and Religion Education at Key Stage 1 in Years 2-3. Another cross-curricular programme is Gazebo's *Whose Right for the World?* This citizenship programme for 16-17-year-olds addressing personal responsibility in a social context is designed to be integrated in History, Drama, English, PHSE and Citizenship curriculum in Years 10-11.

Some TIE companies offer programmes based on classical plays (mostly by Shakespeare) which are either in the English curriculum or part of GCSE (in England and Wales) and Higher Drama (in Scotland) exams with the intention of bringing the classic texts closer to young people. These belong to the third sub-group. Black Cat tours *Romeo and Juliet* as well as *Macbeth*; Interplay provides *The Winter's Tale* and Blahs *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Winter's Tale*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Othello*. Two plays by Shakespeare, *The Tempest* and *Measure for Measure* and three by Brecht, *The Threepenny Opera*, *The Good Person of Szechwan* and *Mother Courage* are on at National Theatre Education. TAG produced *Antigone* by Sophocles in a new version by Sara Woods to 14-year-olds and above, as well as a 60-minute adaptation of *Julius Caesar* using Shakespeare's language in an undiluted form to 7-11-year-olds, both as constituents of *Making the Nation* project. TAG also presented *The Good Person of Szechwan* by Brecht to 13-year-olds and above. All of these play-based programmes

contain the performances tailored to the age of the audience accompanied by workshops or education programmes to explore the topic, the structure and the characters of the plays.

Numerous educational theatre programmes – forming the category of *story-based* TIE – are adaptations of classical or contemporary stories for children such as, for example, Gwent’s production *The Tinderbox* or *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice* and *Wild Thing* by TAG. Blunderbus offers *Elmer The Elephant*, *The Wonky Donkey*; *The Birdman*; *Rainbow Fish* for 3-7-year-olds. Quicksilver’s story-based programmes are *The Wild Girl*, *Sea of Silence*, *Fathers and Eggs* and *Upstairs in the Sky*; Snap presents *The Flight of the Firebird*; and Interplay produces *Sita and Rama* by Mike Kenny. Another source of adaptations are well-known novels or short stories dramatised for the stage: for example, *A Christmas Carol* by Booster Cushion and Blahs’ programme based on *Silas Marner*.

It is clear from the artistic policy documents that all programmes offered by the sample TIE companies are more than just a show. The performance in the centre of each TIE programme is always accompanied by at least one, or frequently even more, additional programme parts, such as research involving the teachers, preparatory workshops, post-performance discussions, post-performance workshops and follow-up work. Most companies provide *Teacher’s Packs* (also called *Teacher’s Notes*, *resource packs* or *educational packs*) in addition to their programmes supplying schools with resource material connected with the programmes for further exploration. A characteristic example of more-than-one additional programme parts is a Spectacle’s programme, *Good For Nothing* by Paul Swift that consists of four components. Pre-work phase is a lesson preceding the production day when the company introduces the children to the play’s issues, and they fill in a questionnaire about their experiences of

bullying. The second phase is a whole-day event in which the theatre performance is followed by an immediate workshop including a discussion of the performance and a creation of the contract against bullying. The resource pack provides the teachers with exercises further exploring the issues of the play, which is the third phase of the project. The last step is a follow-up workshop several weeks after the performance in which the pupils re-visit their anti-bullying contract.

With some companies, additional programme parts make up specific formats of long-term relationships with the schools and with the audience involved. Each company labels this kind of service differently, and obviously the content is slightly diverse. Snap offers Residency Days, while Blunderbus calls it an All Day Experience. Blahs, however, stays in schools for *a week's residency*, and Unicorn's education team have worked intensively with 10 inner-London primary schools for twelve months. The TIE Company elaborated a unique 30-hour (10-session) course called Community Art and Social Learning Course that starts with the performance of the company's current play and ends in the participants' production of a short play they create for a particular audience.

The most important characteristic feature of all these programmes, which makes them "more than just a show", is audience participation that considerably influences both the creative processes and the artistic products of educational theatre. Ten participatory TIE programmes serve as examples to demonstrate how the students' active involvement affects the play structures, the performances and acting in contemporary educational theatre practice.

Figment's drugs awareness programme *I Wanna Be...* directed by Michael Addison, includes a pre-show questionnaire, a 45-minute play, a 75-minute workshop, a teacher's support pack and evaluation designed for one class of 10-11-year-old pupils

(not more than 30 children at a time). The team consists of four actors (two male, two female) all playing several characters.

Snap's *Crossing the Line* directed by Dianne Hancock is related to the PHSE curriculum tackling the issues of drink, drugs, relationships and sex. The programme, presented in a Residency Day format in which the performers and facilitator work between the performance parts with the participants through workshop and discussion exercises, is open to 12-15-year-olds with a maximum group size of 200 students per day. The programme is accompanied by a resource pack that goes through all the main issues covered, with exercises, classroom activities and preparatory work. In addition, Snap invites teachers from the schools booking the programme to a training day, where the facilitator of the project explains the residency day, answers any questions they might have, and they can also see parts of the play before the company visits the school. Snap works with a three-plus-one cast: three characters played by two actresses and an actor plus the extras played by the multi-functional facilitator.

Speakeasy's *Respect* directed by Andy Reeves is another issue-based drugs awareness programme for 12-13-year-olds. The company usually visits one school a day running two or three subsequent 90-minute sessions (a 30-minute show followed by a workshop) with 60-90 students participating in each. The cast consists of two actresses and an actor facilitating parts of the workshop in turn.

GYPT's *Inside Out* directed by John Wood explores the relationship of new arrivals to existing communities. The programme has two versions aimed at two different age groups of the target audiences. The junior version lasting for 1 hour 45 minutes is for 9-11-year-olds presented to a class (25-30 students) and the senior version running for 1 hour 30 minutes is for 11-14-year-olds, sixty at a time. Both

versions contain participatory elements and the programme structures are similar, but the participatory activities are entirely different.

TAG's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* directed by James Brining is based on a well-known story and investigates the problems of breaking rules and social behaviour. The small-scale school tour programme of less than an hour is presented to a class of seven-year-old children, not more than thirty at a time. Three actors and two actresses perform and four of them share facilitation of the participatory activities.

Catalyst's *Looking Good* directed by Iain Smith is a health education programme for 9-11-year-olds about enabling children to accept with confidence the changes within themselves and their relationships during puberty. The two-hour programme is presented by three actors to a class of 25-30 students at a time.

The TIE team of Clwyd Theatr Cymru (CTC) performs *And Now What?* for 13-14-year-old students. The group-devised programme directed by Sarah Argent explores the issues of choices and values and the implications of decisions young people make at important moments of their lives. Sixty students take part in the two-hour-long programme interacting with the cast of two actors and two actresses.

Peter Arnott adapted *King Lear* for 9-11-year-olds and TAG's programme directed by Guy Hollands is presented to a hundred students at a time by two actors and two actresses. The whole-day programme starts with four simultaneous three-hour workshops in the morning led by the actors with 25 students in each as a preparation for the one-hour interactive performance in the afternoon. The programme, accompanied by a comprehensive resource pack, is related to the Environmental Studies, Expressive Arts and Personal and Social Development elements of the 5-14 Curriculum focusing on Shakespeare's language, characters and the plot of the play.

One class of maximum thirty 10-year-old students takes part in Blahs' *Silas Marner* programme, an adaptation of George Eliot's novel directed by Anthony Haddon. The company usually visits each school on four subsequent weeks with four separate but closely related sessions, each lasting for 1 hour 45 minutes. However, the programme is sometimes presented as a one-off lesson compressed in a 2-hour single session. The team consists of four actors (two male, two female) playing all the characters in turn and also constantly swapping facilitation and narration.

The National Theatre Education team's Forum Theatre programme, *Wam Bam!* written by Susie McDonald, has been designed to contribute to the "Sex and Relationships" element of the PSHE curriculum for thirteen-year-olds on issues around teenage pregnancy. From sixty to ninety students at a time take part in the two-hour-long programme that includes a 25-minute performance, a small-group discussion about the issues of the play after the show and a Forum session. The members of the cast (three actors and three actresses) lead the small-group work whereas the Forum session is facilitated either by director Daniel Rachel or the playwright (who is also the co-director of the show) in turn.

Classification of Actor – Audience Interactions

Audience participation in TIE means that the students, individually or in groups, engage in direct two-way interactions with the cast and/or with each other in relation to the fictional world of the play. Concerning what the students actually do, the nature of this involvement can be verbal, physical, role-taking or the combination of the three. Another aspect of classification is how the activity is related to the play: the students' involvement can be either reflective or progressive referring to a subsequent phase of the dramatic story. However, as all these activities are two-way interactions between the students and the actors, it is not sufficient to classify the activities only from the

audience's point of view or with regard to the dramaturgy of the play. From the actors' perspective, the most significant factor is whether they take part in the interaction in-character or out-of-character. In this regard, three main categories can be distinguished: actors out-of-character facilitate audience participation (type 1); actors in-character interact with the audience (type 2); and actors in-character facilitate participation (type 3). In the first interaction type the actors do not act, but carry out a social function as facilitators; these interactions do not directly affect acting. In the interactions of type 2, the characters either communicate with the students as themselves (this formulates the sub-category A) or in roles (sub-category B); while type 3 interactions are the combination of 1 and 2. The students' contributions in type 2 and 3 interactions have a substantial impact on the acting process and modify the actors' tasks.

Type 1: Out-of-character facilitation – The members of the cast facilitate students' participation out of character in a separate workshop or within the process of the show. The students either respond as themselves or take roles contributing verbally, physically sometimes combining the two modes. Type 1 interactions mostly resemble a drama class with actors team-teaching. In-show or workshop discussions, question-and-answer sessions, brainstorming ideas, offering opinions, giving advice, making decisions are verbal actor-students interactions. While workshop discussions are always reflective, in-show verbal activities are either reflective or progressive. In physical activities, the actors coach the group work when the students create mime sequences, still images or other movement exercises. Role-taking activities are verbal when the students take on roles and contribute by saying what a character would think or say; physical role-taking is, for instance, when the students represent a character's feelings by still images. In complex role-taking activities only the children take on roles to enact

scenes among themselves with the help of the actors as facilitators during the workshop or the show.

Type 2/A: Character-student encounters – Actors in-character interact with the students who without role-taking ask questions, give advice, solve problems, make decisions and carry out tasks. Although the activities are similar to the activities in type 1 participation, in this interaction type the students address the characters directly and their in-show contributions affect important dramaturgical elements such as the plot, a character's actions or the resolution in advance. Usually, a separate facilitator (another actor out-of-character who is not involved in the scene) conducts participation.

Type 2/B: Character-role encounters – Actors in-character interact with the students who take complementary roles such as, for instance, classmates of the protagonist or children from the village where the plot is located. Alternately, the students take over one of the characters substituting the actor and stepping in the scene. The actors in these interactions improvise in-character, while the students role-play the situations. As opposed to the character-students encounters in type 2/A, these interactions remain completely in the fictional context of the play. Similarly to type 2/A, a separate facilitator coaches the interactions.

Type 3: In-character facilitation – The actors improvise in character as in type 2, but the interactions contain the actor's additional function as the facilitator of the activity. This is the most complex and challenging interaction type for the actors.

Most programmes contain several participatory activities and often combine the main interaction types above. The choice of the interaction types significantly affects the actors' work and the acting process.

The Participation Models

A participatory TIE programme contains both performative elements and participatory activities. The frequency of participatory phases, their disposition in the process of the programme and the way they are structured reflect a recurring pattern. Further on, I will call the structures by which the performative parts and the participatory activities are interlocked “participation models”. I have identified four distinct participation models and I have labelled the first three categories as the “post-show-workshop”, the “inserted activities” and the “merged participation” models. The fourth participation model is Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre. Boal’s methodology was immensely influential on the development of British Theatre in Education in the 1980s, and the investigation of the contemporary TIE programmes has shown that it is still a widespread practice. Its dramaturgy and the effects of audience participation on the acting process, however, have not been analysed so far.

In the post-show-workshop model, audience participation is clearly separated from the process of the performance in terms of timing and organisation. The central educational aim of this model is to stimulate the exploration of the issues presented in the performance. In order to provide the audience with some time for considering the theatrical experience, participatory activities take place after the show and the students’ involvement is mostly analytical and reflective, even if the workshop contains physically active and role-taking elements. This analytical and reflective nature and the exact purpose of the participatory activities can be summarised best by the questions they pose: “Why did the character act like that?” “What was wrong with the character’s decision?” “What should the character have done instead?” – all aimed at the students’ eventual understanding of the situation.

In the inserted activities model, the audience is involved in verbal, physical and role-taking activities built into the process of the performance in a way that allows for immediate identification with the situation and the characters, inviting the students to make decisions and solve problems at dramaturgically highlighted or emotionally charged moments (dilemmas, turning points). During the participation, the students face the questions: “How does the character feel at the moment?” “What should the character do as the next step?” “What would I do in the character’s situation?” As the role-taking activities tend to offer the students roles that are “on the other side” compared with their everyday position (e. g., the asylum-seeker’s role is offered to the members of the existing community), participation is directed at understanding the situation from the other’s point of view.

The performance and the participatory elements in the merged participation model are interwoven in a way that they are completely inseparable, and one would not make sense without the other. The audience contributes verbally, physically and in-action to the performance in full co-operation with the actors and each other. The students and the actors are partners in a process of co-creation bringing the dramatic narrative to life while answering the questions: “How does the character feel at the moment?” “What are the character’s thoughts at the moment?” “How are/can the character’s emotions and thoughts be expressed?” “What would the character say in this situation?” This participation model uses a moderate pace of gradual context building and a wide variety of activities which include entering the fictional world, taking on divergent roles and swapping perspectives from time to time. Participation is aimed at the students’ understanding the characters, their relationships, motivations and their problems, providing an insight into the complexity of the dramatic story and the theme.

The fourth model of audience participation identified is Forum Theatre. The rules of Forum Theatre structure the whole programme including the dramaturgy of the play and the audience participation in the Forum session. The actors present a devised play, the “anti-model” that shows the protagonist, the central “oppressed” character in an “oppressive situation”. The aggressive behaviour of the other characters, the “oppressors” leads to a state of crisis and the anti-model stops there. In the “Forum” part of the programme, the “Joker”, who is the contact person between the company and the audience, after introducing the rules, invites the audience to solve the protagonist’s problem. The show is replayed and the “spect-actors” are encouraged to shout “Stop!” at any moment and, by replacing the protagonist, try alternative actions or behaviour to improve her/his situation. Each “intervention” of the spect-actors (a spect-actor’s active participation by acting out her/his idea) alters the plot and the actors improvise the new version accordingly. Only the protagonist can be replaced by the spect-actors. The given social circumstances of the problem and the protagonist’s motivation cannot be changed by the interventions, but the spect-actors can alter the characteristics of the protagonist’s motivation and reactions. The actors playing the oppressors have to be consistent to their characters’ motivation trying to achieve their initial objectives and keep the story on the original track, but, at the same time, they must encourage the spect-actors to make attempts to break the oppression within the plot frame. The Joker, in co-operation with the spect-actors, should make sure that the route offered by an intervention would improve the protagonist’s situation and develop the plot further, and it is the Joker’s responsibility to help the audience realise if the spect-actors offer unrealistic, “magic” solutions, which should be avoided. In Forum Theatre, action is in the focus: verbal contributions alone are not appropriate, and tasks involving pure physical activity are not included. The only form of audience participation is individual role-taking in front

of the rest of the audience. Although the participatory phase follows the performance and the two are completely isolated, the structure of participation in Forum Theatre differs considerably from that of the post-show-workshop model. The students take part in the same performance, replayed with the central character's modified text, actions, attitude, behaviour, and communication strategy. Thus, participation can be considered as the re-creation of the situations with different outcomes, especially in terms of the altered power dynamics of the characters. The questions this participatory structure poses are: "What should the protagonist do to improve the situation?" and "How can I improve the protagonist's situation in her/his place?" aiming at understanding oneself in the situation. Forum Theatre offers the audience a whole-group experience in a specific way. Contrary to the other three models in which participation explores issues, problems or situations from several diverse aspects with the participants taking different opposing roles, in this model, the students never switch perspectives. All of the students are invited to play one and the same character, and focusing on just a single highlighted character and just one problem promotes keeping the audience's minds on the same track. Feeling safe and thinking along with the others in the group is important, because replacing the protagonist is a complex, challenging and highly-focused individual task. The student's production is reflected upon and even evaluated by the rest of the audience, in terms of whether it improved the protagonist's situation or not. Sometimes Forum Theatre may appear as a single technique along with other participatory activities in the post-show-workshop and the inserted activities models.

All models of audience participation in educational theatre invite the students to act in three senses of the word: they take actions, take roles, and act upon the theatrical product contributing actively. The nature of their contributions, however, varies in each model. The students *explore* the dramatic entity in the post-show-workshop, *develop* it

in the inserted activities, *co-create* it in the merged participation and *change* it in the Forum Theatre models in the course of the audience-actors interactions. Therefore, the degree of the influence audience participation exerts on the artistic product also varies in accordance with the participation model.

CHAPTER 2 – EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION ON CASTING, DEVISING AND REHEARSALS

Audience participation, the improvisational interaction between the students and the actors in TIE programmes does not happen spontaneously on the spur of the moment. Careful consideration, setting the educational aims, planning, designing and structuring participatory activities precede and complement the devising/playwriting procedures and the rehearsals. Audience participation is central to the entire creative process of educational theatre and the whole creative team is responsible for the opportunity with which they provide the young people attending their programmes. TIE actors, instrumental in initiating and conducting audience participation, must be capable of and prepared for working in partnership with the students.

Actors' Skills and Participation

In conventional theatre forms, usually nothing else is expected from the actors than acting skills and talent. They are auditioned for certain parts and the one whose skills are found to be the most suitable for the part would get it. The requirements due to the participatory nature of the programmes are far more complex in recruiting TIE actors. The ability of acting is only one constituent, not necessarily seen as the most important one, which the TIE directors look for. The candidates applying for a job at TIE companies are expected to demonstrate *acting skills*, *teaching skills* as well as *personal* and *interpersonal qualities*.

The concepts of “skill” and “quality” in the subsequent units are meant slightly more specifically than the everyday usage of these words. “Skill” refers to the ability to

do something that can be acquired or learnt and also improved while “quality” indicates a characteristic that is intrinsic and special in a person; a feature that cannot be acquired if someone has not got it, but can be improved if the person was born with it.

Acting skills

At first sight, it might seem trivial to emphasize that TIE actors need to possess acting skills, and that the better the actors, the more likely they are to be offered a job in a TIE programme. It is also obvious that all the TIE artistic directors try to work with the best possible actors available. The majority of the TIE directors believe that to get a job in educational theatre candidates should be good or very *good actors*. Some directors consider acting in general focusing on characterisation; others specify some further acting skills to be displayed. Andy Hickson would seek actors with an ability to *sing or play a musical instrument* and with *dance or movement experience*. Paul Swift mentions *ensemble-acting* and expects the actors to be able to *work on the script unaided* as well as to *take and respond to direction*.

High quality acting and the actors’ full command of their craft are vital in all the four participatory TIE models. Since in the post-show-workshop and the Forum Theatre models the show-parts do not contain participation, the acting process in the performances in these two models is free from any unpredictable elements. The “closed” format and structure of the performance only requires “pure” acting. However, the non-theatrical environment, the spatial disposition of the audience and the usage of the acting space – the consequences of invited audience participation serving to establish a direct and two-way contact between the actors and the students – do have crucial implications for the acting process. Every programme I observed was held in the school hall or gym without using a stage; the acting area and the “auditorium” were not separated architecturally by platforms, rostra, curtains, or separate entrances for the

performers. Moreover, they do not distinguish between the stage and the auditorium by lighting the acting area and leaving the audience in darkness.

The performances all apply the “acting in the round” technique that sharply differs from acting on a box-stage and requires special compositional considerations on the director’s part as well as extra attention from the actors. The distance is diminished or it completely disappears between the audience and the actors that bears consequences for the acting style and techniques. The actors have to adjust to this intimacy in terms of each aspect of their art, from the volume of speech through the extent of expression and the physical means of characterisation up to even their make-up or their level of concentration. They have to look and sound natural and behave authentically playing face-to-face within touching distance of the audience.

In the participatory phases of the programmes, actor-audience interactions identified as types 2 and 3 in Chapter 1, substantially exceed conventional acting and require additional skills from the actors. During the character-students’ and character-roles’ encounters and in the case of in-character facilitation the actors stay in character and *improvise* at the same time. While improvisation in general means being in role without the aid of a pre-written script, in TIE, improvisation for the actors also implies being consistent with each facet of characterisation displayed in the acting process. Thus, they must be able to combine improvisation with acting. Practitioners describe this fundamental ability of TIE actors as *sustaining the character while interacting with the audience*. When TIE actors in character engage in interactions with the students, the improvisation (including text, actions, behaviour, emotional reactions, register, style of speaking, voice, movement, body language etc.) must be subordinated to and matched with characterisation. Slipping out of character may put authenticity, belief and participation at risk.

This kind of improvisation is considerably different from role-play in which the representation of an attitude is more important than the detailed portrayal of a personality. It is much closer to another kind of improvisation used in actor training and in rehearsals to enhance the building of a character. There, the script-based portrayal is being deepened and enriched through putting the character into additional situations and improvised scenes. The technique of maintaining characterisation while leaving the script behind is similar in both, but in a training or rehearsal situation in-character improvisation is always experimental and is a part of a learning or creative process; the improvisers are all actors in character. However, in a TIE programme in-character improvisation takes place as an organic part of the artistic product, with the active participation of the audience as co-improvisers.

Most artistic directors stress how crucial it is for the TIE actors to be excellent improvisers and some take the ability to sustain the character while improvising as a primary criterion of selection. Other directors add that during improvisation the actors have to be able to fulfil the teacher's functions from within character. For example, Michael Addison, Jon Marshall and Iain Smith expect the actors to carry through educational messages, to control the group and challenge participants in character.

Improvisation is not just giving but taking as well; and the directors' expectations reflect the two-way nature of the participatory process. Jon Marshall, for instance, finds it crucial that the actors have to be able to incorporate the students' contributions into the artistic process; and, according to Anthony Haddon, complementary to competent questioning, they have to be able to encourage the students to question them from within their character.

In his interview Adrian Jackson gives a vivid description of the in-character improvisation process and the skills that the actors need:

The analogy would be: when you rehearse a play normally you would have an empty vessel at the beginning and you would fill it. Maybe leave a little bit at the top for what happens every night, as a colleague throws a line slightly differently to you. For Forum you only fill the vessel half-way. [...] You must create the best possible space for the intervener's idea. Each time you perform, you fill the vessel and then the next day, you tip out the same amount and start again with the vessel at the same level again and let the audience fill it up. Good actors, however they are trained, will grasp that opportunity, excitement. Good actors talk about risk and have to be open to improvisation. (Interview)

The skills of improvisation in front of an audience, staying in character while improvising with young people as co-improvisers as well as in-character facilitating or controlling a group of students are demands present in all participatory models, but to a different extent in each. The post-show-workshop model tends to apply the least in-character improvisation in the most flexible kind of activities. In the workshops of Figment's *I Wanna Be...*, Snap's *Crossing the Line* and Speakeasy's *Respect* hot-seating, extra scene-improvisations and "foruming" a particular moment of a scene are the most frequent in-character improvisation formats. Isolated from the performance process and outside the structure of the play, all these activities require role-playing rather than in-depth characterisation from the actors. In the inserted activities and merged participation models, the show always goes on with the students' contributions built in, thus in-character improvisation and facilitation must be entirely consistent with characterisation. Forum Theatre is the most demanding model: in-character

improvisation is the only form of actor-audience interaction in which characterisation must be both consistent and flexible at the same time.

Excellent acting, improvisation and in-character improvisation skills are essential and must be accompanied by the TIE actors' teaching skills and personal/interpersonal qualities that most directors state to be of equal importance for TIE.

Teaching skills

Teaching skills regarding the TIE actors' work requirements is an umbrella term used with a specified meaning by the TIE practitioners. It does not mean that the TIE actors should be teachers either by qualification or by experience, although a lot of TIE actors have arrived from or continue their career in education. To emphasise the pedagogical roots, the connections and the expertise needed in TIE, the members of TIE teams have been frequently referred to as "actor-teachers", especially in the first period of the TIE movement, and the term is still in use with quite a few companies. This word-usage highlights the similarities but slightly disregards the differences between the teachers' jobs and the educational side of the TIE actors' work. Although teachers and TIE actors alike work with children or young people in an educational context, and they share the ultimate aim of the students' development and learning on the basis of similar educational values and views, the TIE actors are in a different position and have other responsibilities than that of the teachers. To mention just a few differences: TIE actors are not in charge of the class in the same way as teachers are, they do not know the students individually and do not follow their long-term development; they do not impart knowledge in a conventional way, and their work with the students is non-evaluative. While a teacher generally goes into a classroom alone, TIE actors usually

work in teams; team-teaching in education, however desirable it would be, is at least as rare as a one-actor cast in educational theatre.

When artistic directors state that the actors have to demonstrate teaching skills, most emphasise the significance of out-of-role *facilitating* and *workshop-leading* skills. These requirements correspond precisely with my observations of the programmes: three of the four models contain substantial out-of-role facilitation and workshop-leading elements involving the entire TIE team. Only one of them, the Forum Theatre model applies a separate facilitator (the “Joker”) that cannot be an actor from the cast. Usually, the director of the programme facilitates the participatory Forum session.

In the post-show-workshop, inserted activities and merged participation models all members of the cast are involved in leading the workshops and facilitating participation. The actors have to be able to manage the group and help the students join in and carry out verbal, physical and role-taking activities. They are expected to make participation easy and encourage involvement as well as engage the students mentally, emotionally and physically in the activities. The actors also have to be able to give accurate information, challenge superficial or magic solutions and acknowledge the students’ contributions in a non-judgemental way. Additionally, they should keep in control without having the formal status of an authority. Anthony Haddon specifies *workshop planning* and the skill of *questioning* as the main factors of the educational side in the TIE actors’ work. The ability to question skilfully is crucial in order to ask thought-provoking questions and elicit answers.

Michael Addison and Peter Wynne-Willson list the most characteristic *problems* that the TIE actors usually encounter and are required to overcome *during the process of audience participation*. They both mention that the lack of response is often the biggest obstacle. Generally, *getting people involved is difficult* from about the age of 13-

14 to about 60, when they prefer keeping to the usual adult audience's behaviour expected in conventional theatre: they watch and keep quiet. However, working with 10-11 year olds, the actors often face just the opposite problem that can be called *over-contribution*. The children of that age are quite happy to make comments all the way through the show even when the company does not want them to do so. As Michael Addison explains, it is not a discipline problem but rather due to the novelty of the children's very first theatre experience. Even when participation is invited, some participants do not realise that others might want to have a say, too, and so make their contributions too long. The actors facilitating have to decide for how long to let it go on and how they may try to stop it. Other kinds of problematic situations are when the *contribution* is *unrelated* to what the actual topic is, or when the groups are *over-dominated by individuals*, so that quieter members of an audience are squeezed out. *Going at a compromised pace with the work* to involve each child equally, regardless of their intellectual qualities, is another difficulty that the actors must overcome.

Sometimes *controlling a situation* where a group is very excited can be problematic. Peter Wynne-Willson remembers, for example, a group of 15-year-olds whose "excitement boiled out of the school hall, and who locked the school gates, preventing staff from leaving!" Annalyn Bhanji emphasises in her interview that a key demand is that the actors have to be able to cope with a group. However, mere coping does not seem to be sufficient: TIE actors have to take the lead and function as group-leaders when working with students in participatory programmes.

Considering the TIE actor as a group-leader working with the audience, which is a "small group" in a socio-psychological sense, reveals a crucial feature of TIE. "Small group" or "face-to-face group" is a term used in group-psychology for a circle of people in which the participating individuals perceive all the other members directly and

interact with each other continuously or regularly (Rudas 16). The audience in TIE is definitely a small group in a psychological sense, especially when the companies work with a class-size format. The students have been together for months or years; relationships have been built up, friendships have been developed and destroyed, and the social hierarchy has inevitably been established. Even when it is two classes or a whole year group participating in a TIE programme together, the students know who is who in the audience; they can tell who the brave ones will be to stand up first to contribute; they will know who volunteers just to get a laugh, and they are aware why they do not feel safe enough to participate. The group structure has been developed long before the TIE company meets the audience.

Quite frequently in conventional social group contexts, a group-leader is present at the beginning of the formation of the group and, following its development, has enough time to explore, adjust to and have an effect on its dynamics. The actors in the participatory phases of the TIE programmes have to function as group-leaders of face-to-face groups although, unlike their teachers, they do not know the students individually and are not aware of the social network of the group. A TIE actor has got very little time to “learn” the audience. The actors facilitating have to establish a constructive leader – group relationship at the very beginning of the first participatory activity, otherwise they would fail to involve the students. The process includes observation, perception of the group dynamics, fast interpretation of the students’ behaviour and signals as well as a conscious and skilful choice of the most appropriate status to be played. As Keith Johnstone explains in *Impro* (35-36), it is not playing high status that makes a teacher or a group-leader efficient and accepted by the group but the skill to lower and raise their status from time to time. This particular skill requirement is

referred to in a practitioner's interview with different wording such as "handing over the control to the group" (Annalyn Bhanji).

Facilitating and workshop leading are usually shared or swapped within the cast, even if a separate facilitator co-ordinates the programme. Consequently, the actors have to be able to work in full co-operation with each other, not only in the performances but in the participatory parts of the programmes as well. In this regard, the team operates as a small group which interacts with another small group, the audience.

The difficulty for the actors derives from the demand of working simultaneously as a member of one small group (the team) and as a leader of another small group (the audience) which should continuously and smoothly interact with each other. The actors must be constantly conscious of the status they play in both directions and, at the same time, must be in command of the status-switches that are necessary to facilitate participation and keep in control of the students' group.

Interacting with and functioning as the leader of a face-to-face audience group, both individually and as a member of the cast, make TIE acting absolutely specific and require actors' preparation and training to acquire and develop the necessary skills.

Personal and interpersonal qualities

The artistic directors listed numerous personal and interpersonal qualities that might enable the actors to fulfil the fairly complex duties and tasks that go with participatory TIE. In the written and oral responses, intellectual and emotional qualities have been pointed out as important features that TIE actors are expected to have. Some directors claim that *intelligence*, in general, is indispensable; others draw attention to the necessity of *quick and lateral thinking*. It is useful if a TIE actor is *able to analyse* and, in some companies, *a good sense of humour* is also a condition of appointment.

Awareness and *understanding* belong to the next group of criteria that the practitioners claim to be crucial for TIE. The actors must be aware of their double roles both as educators and artists all the way through; they are expected to understand the principle of purposeful theatre, the educational aims, the function and the structure of audience participation, and also the ways of avoiding didacticism by trusting the power of drama. Recognition of both the hardship and the benefits of TIE is desirable, and the actors need to be prepared to learn from the experience (Andy Reeves). Peter Wynne-Willson adds that awareness and understanding should be accompanied by the actors' *instincts* for this kind of work. An actor emotionally suitable for work in educational theatre should be *sensitive* and *able to empathise*; s/he needs to *have a flexible approach* and be *willing to take risks*.

Some interpersonal qualities and skills seem to be even more important than the personal ones: most company leaders declare it is decisive how a TIE actor relates to other people in general; and also in particular including the company and the audience. *Generosity* and *selflessness* are highly appreciated, and it is good if the actors *care* about people; they inevitably must be *good at listening* and have to be *open* and *non-judgemental*. Concerning the work with company, the directors try to find actors who can *get on well with everybody*, who are able to *work as an ensemble* and are willing to "put their own needs on one side" (Annalyn Bhanji). They are also expected to be able to *trust each other* and, as Andy Graham emphasizes, they should not try and direct the other actors within the performance.

In relation to the audience, child centeredness and the willingness to work in partnership with young people maintaining an equal status are the most important factors. Actors have to display a natural ability to communicate with young people and they are expected to be genuinely *interested in* what the students can offer and say.

Company leaders look for actors who *like children* and *enjoy working with them*. It is desirable if they are able to *trust* the audience and they have to make sure never to talk down to or patronise young people. Iain Smith draws attention to the demand of authenticity in relating to students, saying “Children smell a phoney very quickly and will make their lives very hard!”

Another separate group of personal/interpersonal qualities can be summarised as the requirements of the actors’ *commitment* to their specific mission of being TIE actors and to the organisational-technical side of the work. A job offer at a TIE company seems to be conditional on the applicants’ way of thinking and attitude, which is quite unusual in theatre and in the arts in general. It is not sufficient if the TIE actors are capable and willing to fulfil the artistic and educational demands, it is also taken into consideration how they relate to the philosophy of the company, whether they agree with the approach, and if they are enthusiastic about the circumstances and the way of working. Aptitude is not enough: TIE actors are expected to believe profoundly in TIE.

The demand of commitment is not a new phenomenon in the educational theatre context; it emerged with the TIE movement coming into existence and has been present ever since, overtly or implicitly, in the literature on TIE, in the practitioners’ statements as well as in practical TIE work. It is a complex and quite controversial issue and can only be fully comprehended by a careful dissection of its components. The account of the directors’ views on what exactly they expect the actors to be committed to is revealing. Some believe that the actors should demonstrate a genuine interest in the issues of the programme and become passionate about the performance (e.g., Andy Hickson); others claim that the actors should be committed to education and identify with the ethos of the company (e.g., Andy Reeves); and there are artistic directors who

would preferably appoint actors with political views somewhat akin to their way of thinking (e.g., Paul Swift).

This theoretical-ideological group of criteria contains justifiable but also idealistic or unrealistic expectations. To start with the actors' political opinion, it has been discussed above how significant the TIE practitioners thought the political stance and the direct and tangible social efficiency of educational theatre to be in the 1970-80s. Nowadays, the demand of the actors' political commitment seems to be a fossil from such old times; and the attempt to test the actors' political views, when recruiting a cast for a TIE project, appears to be quite naïve and irrelevant.

More relevant demands are the actors' interest in the topic and the enthusiasm about the programme. It is beyond doubt that creativity thrives best when the artists are fully engaged in what they do. However, it is questionable if it is really indispensable for the actors to be thrilled by the methods of drug-prevention or be active anti-bullying warriors in order to be suitable for and be successful in a TIE programme with this theme. Or should actors always love the production to be good in it? Probably they need not. It might just be a committed practitioner's fairly overstated expression of what the ideal situation would be rather than an attainable target.

A more realistic expectation is the commitment to education and to the ethos of the company. Considering the difficulties of the job, it is essential to find actors who can believe in the educational potential and usefulness of the work they do. Otherwise, TIE actors would find themselves face-to-face with a group of young people, sometimes without the safety-net of being in character, personally representing something they do not believe in; or in a position of arguing convincingly in favour of something they disagree with or do not care for. Without the commitment to the company's educational and artistic views, a TIE actor's work would be unquestionably harder. On the other

hand, the actors' commitment and belief in the value of their work transforms into energy and enthusiasm that will eventually reach and energise the audience.

The last group of the artistic directors' demands, which can be categorised as the actors' commitment to the practicalities and the way of working in TIE, seems to be the oddest of all the criteria. What kind of job can be on offer in what sort of theatre where a professional, trained actor's appointment is subject to requirements like whether someone is able to get up early (Andy Reeves) or is happy to load the van and put up the set twice a day (Kitty Parker)? These demands might seem trivial at first sight, but, considering the conditions of TIE work, they are absolutely vital. Indeed, it is surprising that nobody has mentioned the TIE actors' (including actresses) physical strength needed to carry all the heavy items of the set or a driving licence for big vans as basic requirements for getting a job in TIE.

An average day of a TIE tour is totally different from a normal working day of an actor in other theatre forms. Snap's Residency Day tour starts at about 7.00 am every day depending on the distance they have to cover. On arrival at school at 8.00 am the team puts up the set. After the school staff briefing at 8.40 and the students' registration led by the teachers in the classrooms, a whole year of 150-200 students and their class teachers enter the school hall, and at 9.15 the programme starts. The performance consists of three 30-minute parts each followed by a 35-minute workshop session. After Performance Part 1, one half of the students participate in Workshop 1 with the theatre team in the performance hall, while the other half return to their classrooms to take part in the Activity Session led by the staff. At the end of the 35-minute phase the two groups swap. Performance Part 2 starts at 11.15 followed by Workshop 2 that the theatre team leads for the whole year group of students. Performance Part 3 starts at 1.15, and is followed by Workshop 3 that ends at 3.15 and the Residency Day closes

with a short debrief when the school staff give feedback to the company and discuss any problems or further questions that might have emerged during the programme. The team arrives back in Bishop's Stortford at about 5.00 pm.

TAG's *King Lear* is also a whole-day programme. The team sets off at 7.00 am and after a 100-130-km drive, the actors do the workshop from 9.00 to 12.30, then the participatory performance in the afternoon. GYPT, CTC and Speakeasy run their programmes twice a day in the same school, GYPT and CTC with a lunch break and Speakeasy with a 30-minute break between the two. Blahs' morning and afternoon sessions are held in two different schools, NT Education's and Catalyst's programmes take the whole morning finishing about 2.00 pm.

It could be argued that it is nothing more than the normal way of working in a touring company. Small-scale touring companies in Britain usually work by job-sharing: driving and loading the van, as well as putting up and dismantling the set are the part of the actors' job. They are also responsible for their props, costumes and masks; there is no stage management or crew to help the actors' work. The same applies to the actors working for most of the TIE companies. TIE actors, however, having done the technical duties, must be in full potential of their artistic means and educational arsenal at 9 o'clock in the morning to perform to and engage 30-150 young people in participatory theatre activities. This is definitely not expected from any other actors in any other theatre forms.

TIE is not just a specific art form; it is a lifestyle for its practitioners. It can be a tiresome, demanding and challenging way of making theatre which requires a high level of extra artistic and educational skills as well as specific personal qualities; at the same time, it is a socially useful and efficient artistic service assisting young people that should deserve support and acknowledgement. The most essential prerequisite should

be to guarantee of working conditions that make TIE actors' life easier, rather than imposing extra burdens on them like van driving or stage management.

It has been noted that the TIE actors do not complain about these additional responsibilities. In an environment in which 70-80 per cent of Equity members are unemployed, many actors are happy to ply their trade in TIE. However, I note that many would leave this particular theatre genre if more conventional acting opportunities presented themselves (though there is an initial reluctance to confess this is the case).

Educational theatre is not acknowledged properly in terms of finances or professional recognition. I have been advised that a TIE company cannot compete with other acting opportunities. (Figures were quoted of television paying 5-10 times as much and adverts, with their residuals, paying 20-40 times as much as TIE. While it is difficult to give a direct comparison from the TIE actor to the stage actor when, for example, if the TIE actor is employed on Equity rates and there can be little difference in weekly wages, it can be stated that the opportunities for the TIE actor to move to a higher level of income are almost non-existent compared with the stage actor.) The status and the reputation of TIE are very low in the profession; no fame, no attention from the media, no publicity, and no career prospects go with an actor's job in educational theatre. The directors' demand of the actors' commitment to educational theatre seems to be justified: only the actors' genuine devotion to the mission of TIE might outweigh the disadvantages of the genre.

Auditions and Participation

In Britain, where the arts funding system is not in favour of maintaining permanent theatre companies, only a few mainstream theatres (The Royal National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company and Dundee Theatre) appoint actors for a longer period than the rehearsals plus the performances of an actual production. Other theatres,

including most Theatre in Education companies, contract with actors on a project basis, and the selection is mostly done through auditions. Not all the TIE companies hold auditions, though. Quite frequently, the artistic directors offer work to actors that their colleagues recommend or they know having seen them in other theatres' productions; and they would also invite back actors whose work proved to be appropriate when they were involved in previous programmes.

In conventional auditions, the actors are usually expected to prepare one or two "audition pieces" that can be monologues or other extracts from literary texts, and perform them in front of an audition panel or the director of the project. Due to the requirements of participatory programmes, the auditioning processes are more complex and skills other than acting ability take on an added importance.

The priority of values is one of the most problematic questions in TIE casting. The directors' responses, in which acting requirements of TIE are noted explicitly, reveal a full scale ranging from "a certain amount of talent" (Andy Reeves) to "they must be shit hot actors" (Anthony Haddon). Though the statements indicate how good the actors should be, they also imply the directors' standpoints concerning to what extent they give priority to acting ability in comparison with other qualities and skills. Would they choose a better actor with poorer teaching or communication skills, or do they prefer excellent workshop skills even if the acting capacity is weaker? This is a crucial dilemma and the decision to be made has massive implications for both the artistic quality and the educational efficiency of the programme.

Some practitioners claim that the actors being "absolutely right for the part" is a much more important factor than the workshop skills that can be learnt from the more experienced members of the cast during the programmes (Kitty Parker). This approach is indisputably favourable for the artistic value of the performance as the more suitable

the actor is for the part, the better the portrayal of the character is likely to be, thus giving the audience a long-lasting theatre experience. However, the demands of the workshops are rather challenging for the actors. In participatory TIE, simple out-of-character facilitating and, in particular, in-character interactions with the audience presuppose a careful preparation and a high level of specific skills to be acquired prior to the school tour. Otherwise, the whole programme, especially the audience participation, will inevitably suffer.

At the other end of the spectrum, some TIE directors focus their attention exclusively on the actors' teaching skills and personal/interpersonal qualities and seem to neglect the requirement of outstanding acting abilities. This extreme, however, jeopardises both the artistic standards and the participatory components of the programme. If the actors do not play their parts convincingly enough to capture the audience through their art, it is not likely that the students would be willing to join in the activities in any form. Authenticity of acting and in-character improvisation is the prerequisite of the students' involvement. Additionally, an actor lacking the necessary advanced-level acting skills will not be able to cope with the non-theatrical environment, the inclusive spatial disposition of the audience or the in-character interactions with the students which all charge the actors with extra artistic demands.

In British TIE, there is no standardised audition system with conventional methodology or generally accepted "code of conduct" of selection that would be the same or similar in each case. Although the audition procedures are quite complex, the audition panels would not attempt to test all the skills that the directors have identified as desirable. The tasks and exercises at the auditions always reflect the artistic directors' (and the company's) views and priorities in two ways: firstly, the actors should demonstrate skills that the artistic director (and the company) regards as most

important; secondly, the actors should demonstrate they have skills that cannot or would not be acquired or improved in the preparation/rehearsal process but the directors consider necessary for the particular participatory TIE programme. The artistic directors have developed audition practices based on personal experience and the particular needs of the given project.

Michael Addison, Artistic Director of Figment Theatre in Holmfirth, explains in his interview that the company's audition methods have changed slightly since the foundation of the company in 1995. In the early years of Figment, the applicants were asked to prepare a game or an exercise and explain it to the company members on the panel. Nowadays, their auditions take a whole day and are held in co-operation with the local youth theatre. The applicants work with a group of eight children for about half an hour each running a workshop for them that contains pre-prepared games and character building exercises. The audition panel and the youth theatre leaders observe the actors working with the children and the youth theatre leaders' feedback is also taken into consideration in the final decision. The artistic director admits that sometimes they find very good workshop leaders whose performance skills are weaker than their teaching skills, and, on the other hand, the best actors are frequently not prepared appropriately for running workshops with children. Another important aspect of the selection at Figment Theatre is how well the actors work as an ensemble so they are asked to work together devising short scenes and images in the second phase of the audition. The applicants' ability to work as a part of a team is necessary because the actors contracted with Figment Theatre are involved in the creative process of devising the programmes in addition to performing and leading workshops. As the company undertakes regional and national tours, this ability also becomes vital when the actors have to live together for a longer period of time on tour.

As a result of the high percentage of unemployment in the acting profession in Britain, a lot of actors seek jobs in educational theatre if they cannot find more preferred kinds of employment. The artistic director of Figment considers it important “to try and wheedle out people who aren’t really interested in Theatre in Education” during the audition process, though in his interview he does not specify any particular method for doing it. He has stressed, however, that they often try and re-employ a pool of actors that they have already worked with and who have proved to be committed to the educational aims and values of the company. The artistic director claims that giving the actors a year-long contract would be desirable, but due to the project-based funding system, the longest period of appointment they could offer was a five-month contract for a drug education programme that consisted of 130 performances taken to primary schools.

Paul Swift, project director of The Theatre in Education Company in Leeds, who has been involved in TIE as an actor, playwright, director and company leader for more than thirty years, recounts the usual audition practice of The TIE Company in his interview. They hold two-day auditions, testing first the applicants’ acting skills; this is followed by improvisation exercises in which the panel tries to find out how people deal with difficult issues. As the director explains, they do not ask the actors to put on characters; they ask them to find the person within themselves; to put themselves into that situation rather than to create characters artificially and put them on. If someone brings in an audition piece, they would try to re-direct it to move the actors away from creating a character and would get them interacting with the panel. The next phase is devising to find out what people’s thoughts are about material, how people approach political issues, what people’s views are politically; and artistically how to make

material into plays. Their more recent audition practice is to use scenes from the play they are working on, including improvisations and talking about the content.

Adam Annand, the TIE team leader at GYPT in London, has been on the audition panel several times since 1996 when he became a core member of the company as a TIE actor. He makes it clear in his interview that it is not easy to get a job at GYPT, and the audition process is fairly complex because it involves acting, intellectual work and also participatory bits. The applicants prepare two contrasting audition pieces and they are expected to stay in role after performing them and to engage the audition panel with the characters. As most programmes are group devised, the second step is a short improvisation workshop to check if the applicant will be able to contribute to the devising. Then the next phase is a half-an-hour workshop about educational aims and planning participation to see how they would engage young people in certain topics. For the refugee project, *Inside Out*, the audition was even more specific. The team wanted an exile artist who had a personal experience of the situation. Although there are not too many professional exile actors available in the UK, they looked for someone who had possibly had some participatory theatre experience, too. There were about six actors to select from. Colombian actor John Morales, instead of performing his pre-prepared audition pieces, chose to present improvisations and got the part. In the first piece he used Spanish to show how much he could make himself understood without sharing the language; in the second he engaged the audition panel in a role-play turning them into customs officials while he played an immigrant. As the team-leader explained, the skills that the actor displayed in the audition were exactly the ones that the company needed most for that particular programme.

Iain Smith, Artistic Director of Language Alive!/Catalyst in Birmingham, describes in his interview that their auditioning process consists of three phases. The

first selection is based on the application forms including the actors' photos. Then the applicants prepare individual pieces on a theme suitable for a given age-group, and they are called in for an all-day audition. First, they perform their pieces alone, then, they start to work in small groups devising a complete participatory TIE programme. The groups get a theme and an age-group, and they have 3 hours to decide what the educational aims and objectives of the programme should be, devise the scenario, and plan the participatory activities that the programme should contain. The audition panel moves around watching the applicants working together because the actors' co-operative skills are also taken into account in the final selection. This audition day closes with the performances of 2-5-minute extracts from the devised piece containing participation, which are explained to the panel and the other groups. 3-4 actors are short-listed and invited back for interviews the following week. Before the interview starts, the actors are asked to do a short individual improvisation exercise. They are given an object to use to create a story; then they take on a character, and do a one-minute improvisation in character around the story. This tests how they can use their creativity under pressure. The interview is quite complex since it includes questions about personal experiences and interests, and also inquiry about drama practice, theory and the philosophy of TIE work. The panel also wants to make sure that the actors' ambitions and expectations of the job match with the possibilities and the needs of the company.

Director Daniel Rachel and Susie McDonald, playwright and co-director of *Wam Bam!* describe in their interviews how they cast the NT Education's Forum Theatre project. The two-day audition was preceded by the first selection based on the actors' photographs seeking actors who look young enough to play thirteen-year-olds and are right for the types they had to play. The applicants' previous educational theatre or

Forum experiences were also taken into account as an advantage. The first day procedure started with the presentations of the pre-prepared audition pieces to check their basic acting skills, and that was expanded into improvisation exercises, including in-role improvisations. Through the improvisations the directors intended to find out how quickly the actors could react to unexpected situations and if they were able to think on their feet. Next day they read scenes from the play and worked on these scenes together to find out if the relationships within the group were right and the actors could work as a team. The group-work included testing the actors' communication and workshop-leading skills.

From the descriptions of the audition procedures a definite pattern has emerged. The activities in each audition procedure clearly reflect the directors' skill requirement priorities that are closely interrelated with the participatory models in which these directors and their companies usually work. There are one or two core skills in the centre of the attention in every audition model and the other skills, if tested at all, count less in the final decision. In the post-show-workshop audition model (Figment), the actors' workshop-leading skills are in the centre of the selection process and their skills of group-devising are also tested; while in the Forum Theatre audition model (NT Education) acting and improvisation are the main focus. In the inserted activities audition model (GYPT, Language Alive, and The TIE Company), in-character improvisation is regarded as the actors' absolutely crucial skill for TIE and the panels also focus on the actors' group-devising skills. In this audition model, the actors' intellectual abilities are also investigated.

The problem with these audition models is that too much emphasis on one or two requirements leads to failing to test the other core skills which are equally important. But what exactly do the directors think of the skills that are not tested? Are

they regarded as irrelevant or do the directors intend to improve them in the rehearsals? For example, an audition which contains workshop-leading exercises with the audition panel or with the group of other applicants shows that priority is given to the actors' workshop-leading skills. The fact that workshop-leading with children is not tested suggests that the actors' existing expertise in working with children is either considered less important or the directors suppose that it is possible to be mastered in the course of the preparatory process and the rehearsals.

The second version raises some further questions. The usual rehearsal period in Britain is three weeks long; it might be a little longer if the programme is devised. Is it feasible to acquire the skills that have not been tested in the auditions? Does the rehearsal period contain training for the actors to acquire the skills that they do not have? Is it a separate process or is it held as a part of the rehearsals? The answers to these questions have considerable implications for the preparation and the rehearsals for the actual programme.

Devising, Actors' Preparation and Rehearsals for Participation

Educational theatre companies apply two main methods to create a programme for participatory TIE: they either use a play script that is completed prior to the rehearsals or devise the play and the performance together by the shared effort of the entire cast through discussions, research and improvisation. In both cases, invited audience participation is central to the process. When a prewritten play is performed, participation is designed alongside the performance in the rehearsals; in the case of group-devising, participatory activities are designed prior to or along with the play. Quite frequently, the play devising process is inseparable from the rehearsals.

The characteristics of the devising processes tend to vary project by project and the artistic directors all keep the devising phase experimental without defining overall

“recipes” for their methods. However, some directors who usually work in particular participation structures may develop a working pattern as their preferred practice in their subsequent programmes.

Michael Addison at Figment may occasionally involve the actors from the very beginning of the devising, but in the majority of their projects the 2 or 3 core members of the creative team do preliminary research, develop the basic structures and clarify some ideas in a written form before they engage actors in the process. The choice whether the company works from a prewritten script or devise the play together with the performance is not the artistic decision of the theatre, but is frequently prescribed by the various bodies commissioning or funding their projects. The company has rarely got complete creative freedom. When they work for big business firms, people responsible for funding may want to exercise control over the play text to ensure it is politically correct or to influence artistic decisions beyond their competences. Education authorities or health organisations tend to be more flexible than business employers, but they also require access to the script at an early stage of the devising process and frequently intervene to put across their message, even at the expense of compromising the artistic quality of the play. Sometimes the company has to make changes following the authorities’ advice on national and local strategies, policies and guidelines. The whole creative process including the playwriting plus the rehearsals cannot be longer than 3-5 weeks. When the project is not commissioned, the devising process can take as long time as the creative team needs and it is the artistic director’s decision when exactly they finish the scripting phase and finalise the play text. In these cases the creative process need not fit in the usual 3-5-week block and the preliminary phase of planning, research, discussions and devising might take as long as 6-7 months. When the actors join in, the artistic director usually spends the very first day with transforming

the cast into a firm ensemble by Boal's image games and image theatre exercises. In each project, he gears these exercises towards the actual issue of the particular programme. For example, while devising *I Wanna Be...* he asked all the cast members to present images of what they wanted to be when they grow up and transfer these into short sound and movement sequences which they eventually built into the performance. Even if they join in later on, the actors are all involved in researching the issues of the programme, in creating the dramatic stories to be presented, in developing and altering the dialogues and in devising their characters. They also choose the particular physical style of the performance in an ensemble way and incorporate the new cast members' ideas and additional skills in the characters and the show. The artistic director emphasises the importance of creating the show and the workshop together so that the actors should get a better insight into how the two are interrelated. They usually spend half a day rehearsing the performance and then the other half working on the workshop. He claims that performance is "merely a stimulus" and "the majority of the learning comes through the workshop" (personal interview).

Anthony Haddon, the artistic director of the Blah Blah Blah! Theatre Company frequently dramatises classic stories and usually starts devising their TIE programmes by structuring audience participation first of all. Instead of doing participatory work on "big" plays, he believes in presenting "a tiny bit of theatre" as a basis for building up signs gradually. He considers it crucial to provide the audience with sufficient time to "move as a group through a process" and also to "check in with everybody that they're in the same place" (personal interview). He involves actors in the devising process from the very beginning and the team selects which characters they want the audience to meet, decide on the roles that the students will take and elaborate the circumstances of these encounters. The activities contain various "trails" to build up tension, for example,

the students might find a note leading to a piece of costume before they actually meet a character. The team chooses the motifs of the story and the central questions which will be the foci of the participation structure and then they develop the performative elements around the participatory activities.

Silas Marner, the Blah's group-devised project matured over 3 years and went through several restructuring during this time. The company devised the first 8 hours' worth of workshop material in 2 and a half weeks and then ran three subsequent two-month tours of the TIE programme. The original plan was to "use the TIE programme as research and development for playwrights so that they can take their time to understand how the story works with the age group that we want them to pitch it at. So they listen to the age group talking about the story before they write the plays." However, the play did not reflect the process and could not hit the dramatic power of the workshops so the director eventually decided to perform the final version of the group-devised material instead of the playwright's text.

Adrian Jackson, the artistic director of Cardboard Citizens Theatre Company starts devising plays for their Forum Theatre programmes based on the cast members' experiences and true stories. The group working together exchange stories, then they organise and structure the collected material into short scenes and, finally, the artistic director writes up the final text. He makes sure not to have people play their own stories and strives to transform and develop the material into a coherent and authentic theatre piece rather than following the absolute literal truth of the original story. His approach to the function of Forum Theatre has changed slightly since 1991 when he founded this professional theatre of homeless and ex-homeless people. At the beginning, their programmes focused on the possibilities of taking direct actions and explored how to deal with specific situations, but now, with the experience of having devised and written

10-15 plays, he directs the company towards creating more metaphorical and analogical pieces. The company sometimes experiments with commissioning playwrights but, similarly to the Blahs' artistic director, Adrian Jackson is also discontent with the plays he gets. In his interview he claims that most playwrights fail to understand how the plays for Forum Theatre should be structured and how a space should be created for the audience to fill in and complete the playwright's story differently. This dramaturgical demand of Forum Theatre should not be seen a restriction but, instead, as an opportunity that gives a selfless and generous playwright an artistic fulfilment.

Most TIE practitioners consider *research* as an essential element of the actors' preparation. When TIE actors are involved in group-devising they function as playwrights (even if a commissioned playwright or the director writes up the final script) and thus they also have a share in research as a natural part of the process. Some directors (e. g., Iain Smith, Dianne Hancock, Michael Addison) would also make sure that the actors joining in at a later phase of the creative process (with a new cast, for example) have had at least some input into the research of the programme. As Michael Addison explains in his interview, the sense of "group collaboration" regarding research is important because their intellectual investment gives the actors the feeling of ownership of the programme and enables them to make necessary changes later on.

Research might take three directions: the actors do research on the issues of the programme, the characters of the play and also on the target audience. Research on *the topic and the issues* of the programme might involve studying such diverse themes as the Romans, the Pharaohs, environmental issues, drugs or relevant aspects of sex education, to pick out just a few examples at random from the entire range.

In educational theatre, the entire cast as a team and the individual actors must be precisely informed and have a deep insight into the particular issues of the programme

by the time they meet the audience. First, because they must be able to impart a certain amount of accurate and up-to-date factual information; second, they must be able to answer any questions posed by the students; and third, they need to rely on their knowledge when improvising within the topic during the participatory bits of the programme. The TIE actors' knowledge does not remain in the background; it is actively engaged in the process of interactions with the students.

These complex functions explain why the artistic directors find the TIE actors' intellectual qualities so significant. General knowledge on a given issue is not sufficient and without specific research the actors cannot be expected to be experts, for example, in history or drug prevention. That is why their actual existing knowledge is not examined at the auditions, even if the topic of the programme has already been set. The actors' intelligence, their willingness, ability, interest and ambition to explore and learn about issues, however, are indispensable for doing the necessary research. And they must have a special skill to draw on the information gained in the process of interactions with students.

Sharing the results of the preliminary research with the students takes different forms characteristic of the participatory models. As the Forum Theatre model does not allow for any "lecturing" or lengthy discussion activities, imparting facts about contraception and safe sex in NT Education's *Wam Bam!* is built in the show. Between the scenes while some actors rearrange the set accompanied by pop-music, others, out of character, "announce" some relevant information. Since the play text contains these "announcements", the actors do not face any particular challenge, unlike Snap's team in the *Crossing the Line* workshop where the actors must be fully informed of the issues of the programme (drink, drugs, relationships and sex). They must also be prepared to tackle the most unpredictable questions because the students are invited to write down

anonymously any of their personal concerns about these topics and the team responds to them in the Ballot Box exercise. The Residency Day format within the post-show-workshop structure provides the company with a “safety-net”. Some time is allocated for preparation at lunchtime when the members of the company read the students’ questions, select the relevant ones and decide on the distribution (who is going to speak about which issue) as well as the sequence of the answers. Selection is always necessary to exclude immature or embarrassing questions encouraged by the anonymity of the exercise.

The second type of research referred to as *research on the character* in the practitioners’ written responses is a kind of preparation that must certainly be familiar to each actor, as it is present in every form of theatre: it is building a character. However, the process of building a character on the basis of a prewritten play-script is considerably different from creating a character through improvisations typical of group-devised TIE. In script-based theatre, the *dramatis personae*, having already been brought into existence by the playwright, are hidden in the dialogues, and the work on the character starts with exploring the text and disclosing the information built into the play. The creative process that takes place in the imagination of the playwright in the conventional theatre, in group-devised TIE is transferred into the rehearsal room to be carried out through improvised actions of the actors. Creating and building characters in an improvisational in-action process helps the actors keep in character during the improvisational phases of the programme in two ways. Firstly, it develops the actors’ sense of ownership of the character, similarly to what happens with the research on the issues. Secondly, the actors become familiar with the in-character improvisation process and, getting in practice, improvisations with the audience would feel as the extension of the devising process.

The directors' opinions vary regarding the question: Which method of devising and building a character would prepare the actors most efficiently for the in-character improvisation? Their diverse approaches to building a character precisely reflect the participation models that these directors usually apply in their programmes.

Michael Addison believes in devising fully rounded characters with a complete background, including details that will not necessarily appear in the performance. In rehearsals, hot-seating with related or strange questions is a frequently applied technique to stimulate this kind of character-building process. His preference in devising and building a character is bound to the post-show-workshop participatory model that he uses in his programmes. The participatory activities in this model tend to be analytical, focusing on why the characters got into a certain situation and why they acted the way they did. Thus, devising fully rounded characters and their detailed background helps the actors in the workshop phase when they facilitate a discussion analysing the characters' motivation and also when they improvise in character, for example, in a hot-seating exercise.

When there are more characters in the play than actors in the cast, outward characterisation is a possible way to indicate that one actor is playing several different characters. Finding specific physical features and developing a complete character through improvising around these characteristics is a way of devising a character which can be especially useful in the inserted activities participation model. In his interview Adam Annand gives an account of creating a character in this way in *Inside Out*. Jerry Jones, the Journalist, who became a central figure of the programme, came into existence when the actor casually started to play with a jacket hanging on a coat hanger. The character grew out of a peculiar way of wearing the jacket which also determined the actor's movement and body language. As he played several characters, keeping to

the physical features helped him to maintain the characterisation while improvising with the students in the participatory activities. Adam Annand's experience is that very few trained actors understand what staying in character means; they would expect to be asked questions as in hot-seating, but, as the actor explains in his interview, in-character improvisation in the inserted activities participation model is a reverse process. It means that instead of simply answering the students' questions, the actors in character put questions to the students while fully engaging them in the improvisation. He defines audience participation as holding on to the best improvisations of the devising and the rehearsal process, and doing them with the children.

Anthony Haddon claims in his written response that, in participatory TIE, working in role rather than in a fully rounded character can make the actors "be relaxed enough and open enough to listen to the children and take on their ideas and improvise with their ideas." This approach is closely interrelated with the programme structure that he applies in *Silas Marner* involving the actors in swapping characters from time to time in a fixed rotation sequence. In this programme the structure of the dramatisation and the nature of the participatory activities would not allow for the linear development and portrayal of the characters. Working in role supports the actors to play one and the same character in turn, and each situation role-played this way adds a feature to, or opens up a complementary perspective of, characterisation. The novel serving as the springboard and resource for the exploration "backs up" the specifically split and shared characterisation. The fully rounded characters of the novel are put together piece by piece through the shared effort of the actors and the students by the end of the programme.

Adrian Jackson thinks it is completely unnecessary to elaborate the characters' background and the details which do not appear in the play when working in the Forum

Theatre model. As he expounds in his interview, only “the visible part of the iceberg” is useful in characterisation, and nothing exists that does not go into the play. His stance is closely interrelated with, and can be interpreted through, the devising method he applies and the acting style of his programmes. He and his company always start devising by sharing true stories as regards the targeted central problem of the programme, and although the final piece is always fictional and deliberately detached from the literal truth, the original lived-through experiences of the actors support both the characterisation and the in-character improvisations with the intervening audience. As the devising is based on analogous situations which have been recalled and shared with the group, “the visible part of the iceberg” is sufficient for characterisation, and the actors do not need intricate background details for the improvisations because they can draw on their real experiences any time. The acting style of the performances is non-naturalistic applying quite a lot of comic and stylised elements, which also explains why the director finds the linear detail-to-detail character-building unnecessary for his group-devised Forum programmes.

Another Forum Theatre practitioner, Daniel Rachel, however, finds it essential to elaborate the characters’ complete life-story cautiously, and he applies Stanislavskian techniques to help the actors build characters even when he directs plays written definitely for the purposes of Forum Theatre. Considering the play as a skeleton, he and his cast work on the characters’ relationships, and create their background stories of family, school and friends in addition to rehearsing the scenes. He is sure that the actors can gain a thorough understanding of the play and their characters through trying how their characters would relate to different situations outside the play. This understanding becomes crucial for the improvisational Forum sessions with the participating audience.

The director seems to have resolved a fundamental acting dilemma of Forum improvisations. The actors' task is quite complex to find the right balance between consistent characterisation and adjust to the modified communication strategy of the replaced protagonist when the students attempt to improve the situation. Usually, it is the actors' responsibility to decide on the spot how their characters would react to the variety of trials, how long they should keep resisting and at which moments, if ever, they would yield and alter their original behaviour. Experienced actors can rely on their instincts of how to be truthful avoiding both the too easy solutions and the unmanageably difficult ones as well as fulfil the educational aims and encourage participation at the same time. As the *Wam Bam!* cast consists of young actors quite inexperienced in Forum Theatre, Daniel Rachel discussed each character's vulnerable points with them in the rehearsals, and the actors decided what kind of audience's intervention would make the character listen to somebody or crumble. He believes it is very rare that the students find the Achilles' heel of the characters in their improvisations, but these preliminary decisions help the actors deepen the characterisation and keep in character in the Forum sessions.

Quite paradoxically, consistent characterisation in the participatory phase of a TIE programme may lead to failing to achieve the educational objectives, as illustrated through an example provided by another practitioner:

An actor in role as a 12-year-old who has been causing trouble with his friends in the local neighbourhood, in hot-seating and Forum Theatre was just too argumentative for the participants who eventually started to give up trying to keep him out of trouble. From his perspective he felt he was being true to his character, but he hadn't fully grasped why he was in

school in the first place doing work about peer influence and gangs i.e., his educational objectives. From the pupils' perspective he was very convincing and funny, but ultimately he wasn't listening to them so they chose not to care about him. That is a very difficult position from which to return! (Iain Smith)

Though the director's point regarding the manifest failure in conveying the educational message is understandable, the actor playing the part cannot be blamed for consistent characterisation. When the educational objectives can only be attained at the expense of truthfulness of the portrayal, the possible problems presumably lie in the dramaturgy of the programme rather than in acting. One problem can be the structure of the play failing to match the educational intention. If the ultimate aim is to alter a character's attitude, the motivation for change must be built in the play in some form (for example, as a problem, a dilemma or a wrong decision). When a dramatis persona is happy in the given situation, s/he would not listen to anyone's advice to change her/his behaviour, and if challenged, would react defensively. Another source of failure may be the choice of the participatory activities in comparison with the educational aim. If the director's intention is to encourage the students to give advice to or challenge a character, hot-seating – which is questioning the characters exploring their thoughts, feelings and the motivations of their actions – is not the most appropriate activity. Furthermore, a preliminary decision on the character's soft point in the rehearsals (similarly to Daniel Rachel's preparation technique described above) could have helped the actor in the Forum Theatre activity to find the desirable balance between consistent characterisation and achieving the educational objectives of the programme.

The TIE practitioners reporting about the preparations for audience participation are convinced that if the company means to convey the educational message of the programme efficiently, the actors need to be familiar with the audience for whom they perform. In addition to studying the issues of the programme, practitioners declare *research on the target audience* and their patterns of behaviour in relation to the issues to be another crucial constituent of the actors' preparation. Audience research should be carried out in two separate areas. The actors need to explore the particular social context of their audiences and also have to gain an overall understanding of a specific age group.

The social setting in which the programme is delivered might affect the company's work in unexpected ways if the actors are not aware of the cultural background of the audience. The artistic director of Figment Theatre mentions the following example:

In the area we're in here there's a very diverse cultural background. We work at some schools where there may be 100% Asian children and some schools are predominantly Afro-Caribbean. So that's always a consideration for us and the cast to try where ever possible to bring actors and artists in who are from those cultures. If not, then to actually go to schools and teachers who are from that background. The main example with *I Wanna Be...* and the drugs education would be that there is a sense of denial amongst some of those cultures as far as alcohol is concerned. In the Asian culture they are not meant to drink, yet there is a drink problem. So when you go into a school they say you don't have to talk

about that, whereas the education authority is saying it's a major problem. And likewise with smoking. (Michael Addison)

School research before or during the devising or playwriting process, which has always been a widespread preparation technique for TIE (see, for example, Mirrione 77), may be a solution for the problem, although the time constraints as well as the possible arrangement difficulties might hinder companies undertaking such study trips. As the analysis in a case study I conducted in Scotland showed (Sz. Pallai 76-7), visiting schools, meeting and working with the children that are likely to be the members of the audience of the TIE programme provide the company with invaluable experiences. It gives the actors an insight into the nature of working in an educational environment, enhances their understanding of the age group and offers them an opportunity to practise communicating with young people.

It is obvious that professional actors cannot be expected to be qualified teachers and they are not necessarily familiar with the educational implications of working with a particular age group of children or young people. While educational training or qualification is not expected when a TIE job is offered to an actor, teaching experience can be an advantage but is not the condition of the appointment. General knowledge may prove to be outdated very fast in a world where four-year-olds are already computer-literate. Theoretical and empirical research to understand young people as well as training and/or practice to work with them are indispensable for participatory TIE because – as one of the practitioners emphasises in his written response –: “Without understanding how 14 year olds (for example) relate to or experience sex, it does not matter how well you understand the subject, you run the risk of failing to connect with your audience” (Iain Smith).

The problem of research raises some fundamental questions. The practitioners do not specify when exactly the research should be conducted. Do the actors undertake research before or during the rehearsal period? Is there extra time devoted for research or is it taken from the rehearsals? Is the rehearsal time in TIE longer than the usual 3-week period due to the necessary research? It certainly should be longer but the length of the rehearsal period carries considerable financial implications.

However, acquiring the necessary educational knowledge and skills in a three-week-long rehearsal period is rather unlikely to substitute for the specialist training. Quite paradoxically, some practitioners mention *experience of this type of work* as the *solution*. Iain Smith claims that “the better one knows the young people to be worked with, then the easier this process gets”, but at the same time he ensures that the cast is led by a *lead teacher-actor with facilitating experience*. It is generally considered to be an important factor that the actors should *support each other* in the participatory phases and that, particularly, the experienced actors are supposed to help the less experienced members of the cast.

Other practitioners offer more pragmatic solutions to reduce this problem. Kitty Parker, for example, would provide the actors with a well thought-through *workshop plan* to work from; and some artistic directors appoint *educational specialists* to prepare the actors for their teacher’s role and help the company to plan the workshops. Anthony Haddon brings in a Drama in Education expert to teach the actors about open questioning because he considers the acquisition of questioning techniques as the main element, “the cornerstone” of participatory theatre. Others do the preparation for facilitating audience participation during the rehearsals.

TIE practitioners specify the *unpredictability* of audience participation as the most important characteristic element that also makes the preparation process “harder”

than conventional rehearsals. The practitioners also highlight that some actors find it exciting and others are worried by there being elements outside their control, and that most actors, especially the ones who work in this environment for the first time, find this unpredictability quite threatening. The respondents enumerate a great deal of golden rules and suggestions that make it easier for the actors to cope with the unpredictability of participatory TIE. The most important is that the actors should be able to take what they get, and be open and responsive to the needs of the audience. Peter Wynne-Willson emphasises that an important role of a director in this context is reassurance.

In close connection with the unpredictable nature of audience participation, most respondents mention *spontaneity* as another specific element that distinguishes acting in TIE from acting in a conventional theatre. The need to interact spontaneously with the audience in the improvisations makes participatory theatre “a more natural process than performance” (Peter Wynne-Willson), in which the actors are prepared for the situations likely to emerge but they have not learnt the text nor have they rehearsed the dialogues in which their characters engage. These features combined with *playfulness* make some actors feel participatory TIE to be like the extension of children’s play or a big game.

Spontaneous interactions between the actors in character and the audience also *modify the balance of fiction and reality* for the actor, so unambiguously separated in conventional theatre. The responses reveal that the practitioners perceive this balance differently. Wynne-Willson feels that acting in participatory TIE “is a real contact with real people” while Jon Marshall treats the audience members “as another character in the play” whose responses and contributions alter his actions.

Most practitioners highlight the *physical closeness of the audience* as a sharp contrast to mainstream theatre acting; some consider it as an advantage that makes

communication easier and more intimate; others think it may break the spell. Other points of resistance to participatory TIE are that the actors feel artistically compromised by having to introduce themselves out of role and by changing behaviour on advice from pupils.

The practitioners report about specific preparation and *rehearsal activities* of four distinct types used either individually or linked together to prepare the actors for the interactions with the students. Only one director claims that the preparation for the participatory bits of their programmes is the same as the rehearsal for the show itself (Andy Hickson).

Some practitioners use *exercises, role-play and improvisation* to develop or brush up the actors' improvisation skills to be utilised in the workshops or in participatory phases of the programmes. The directors sometimes consider the improvisational games and exercises of the same importance as the actual rehearsal: Michael Addison, for example, refers to a drugs education Forum Theatre programme of Figment Theatre when the company spent a whole week of a two-week rehearsal process with ensemble-building and improvisation exercises because they knew that the actors would strongly need to rely on the skills they could acquire in this way.

Some directors involve all the actors in detailed *discussions of possible situations* that may occur and of the students' wanted and unwanted responses. Others rehearse all the possible outcomes, either with the director pretending to be the audience and giving responses when asked or doing so called *dummy-runs*, when the actors giving the pupils responses act as "audience" for each other. These techniques all imply that the company tries to predict their audiences' potential behaviour. On the other hand, some slight doubts are also expressed concerning the efficiency of these techniques. For example, one of the practitioners believes that "too much dwelling on

all the possibilities of what might happen can be unhelpful because it encourages the programme to be restricted to our understanding of what young people may do.... Too much prediction can narrow the possibilities” (Peter Wynne-Willson).

Anthony Haddon approaches the same technique from the opposite angle. He and his company try out the facilitation and questioning each other in role not in order to predict how the audience might respond but rather to enable the actors to improve their own questioning skills which would help them to “cope with monosyllabic quiet children and also handle very precocious imaginative children”.

The most popular and most frequently applied preparation method is having *try-outs* or *pilot performances* in schools with pupils of representative groups of the audience before the actual tour would begin. All of the respondents refer to this type of preparation process, either as their regular practice or as something that sometimes happens but would be ideal to have on all occasions. Tim Webb’s practice, which he calls “workshop rehearsal”, is a particular variation of these try-outs: they would rehearse any performance involving significant audience participation for at least 6 weeks and spend a minimum of two weeks of that time in active workshop with members of the potential audience.

Practically none of the TIE companies provides specialist trainings which would prepare the actors for the complex demands of educational theatre acting beyond the actual rehearsals. An exception is Adrian Jackson at the unequalled Cardboard Citizens Theatre Company, who offers an actor training course combined with Forum Theatre practice to his company consisting of homeless people. Andy Hickson runs a TIE course at TIE Tours Company, but it is not aimed at training actors for his programmes; it is an open service for anyone applying (and paying). Other artistic directors creating

their programmes rely on the actors' skills, preliminary experiences and training background in the rehearsals.

The devising period in the case of group-devised programmes could be and is sometimes used as an opportunity for some more specific training but it seems to be quite a frequent practice that the actors taking part in the devising are only appointed for the length of piloting the programme (i.e., for one series of performances to try in schools to see if it works). Then, after the necessary changes based on the pilot, either an entirely new cast is recruited or the artistic director inviting back one or two members of the original cast completes the team with newly contracted actors.

Sometimes, specialist trainings are held within the framework of the rehearsals, as it has been discussed in connection with Anthony Haddon inviting an educational specialist to train the actors for facilitating the Blahs' *Silas Marner* programme. Daniel Rachel, the director of the NT Education's Forum Theatre programme, also ran three full days of training using Boal's techniques to make the actors understand what Forum Theatre means, and after a two-week conventional rehearsal period (blocking the play, rehearsing and dress rehearsals) and the trials of the Forum possibilities, in which they made up the characters' background stories, etc., he also held a training in workshop-leading – all taken from the three-week rehearsal period.

CHAPTER 3 – EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION ON PLAY STRUCTURES

The TIE play structure is always closely interrelated with the structure of participation. The participatory activities are chosen to fulfil the main educational aim of the programme and always define the structure of the play. Some participatory activities call for particular play structures, and other specific participation types require differently structured plays. The participatory models identified in Chapter 1 indicate a pattern concerning how the two are matched together.

Play Structures in the Post-show-workshop Model

In the samples of the post-show-workshop model, there are no conflicts developing and resolved between the characters; the characters are in conflict with themselves. Though peer pressure plays a considerable role in the problems emerging, the central characters have nobody else to blame for their failures but themselves and their wrong decisions. Figment's *I Wanna Be...* is based around the concept of drugs being obstacles to children's ambitions and presents four separate stories, each showing a problem that the central character faces. The dramaturgical link between these isolated stories is their identical pattern starting with the central character's ambitions: Jamie wants to be rich, Melissa dreams about a beautiful wedding, Willy wants to be a footballer and Nicola wants to be a pop star; followed by an intention and a plan to accomplish the goal (gambling, getting a boyfriend, joining the school team) then an outside distraction (friends lending more cash for gambling, offering drinks and cigarettes or the bullies' action) that creates a dilemma. Snap's *Crossing the Line*, which is a more complex construction, presents the relationship of three teenagers, Abbie,

Robbie and Tash through the eyes of the characters. Each part shows the same story from a slightly altered angle with additional events unfolding gradually, and the new elements commented on by the central figure explain the characters' behaviour in the previous scenes. Speakeasy's *Respect* deals with the problem how children get in touch with drugs for the first time and the play is structured by short scenes presenting the most important moments and motifs leading to Jaz and Kevin's decision to try some drugs.

The main driving force and the dramatic focus of all these plays are the characters' decision-making processes that have led to failure or crisis. Figment's *I Wanna Be...* presents four unrelated decisions of different characters; Snap's *Crossing the Line* shows a series of connected decisions of one central character, Speakeasy's *Respect* focuses on one single decision made by two characters. A typical technique applied to disclose the characters' thinking processes in all these plays is soliloquy.

The characters look back after the crisis and tell their stories through soliloquies and the flashback technique in Snap's *Crossing the Line*. They step out of the situation from time to time, share their thoughts and feelings and comment on the events happening to them, and, in this way, they provide direct insight into why and how they come to behave as they do. This technique belongs to the first kind of soliloquy described by Martin Esslin:

Soliloquies and monologic speech can be of two kinds: either the character debates with himself, with the audience merely overhearing his innermost thoughts; or he actually addresses the audience directly. In the first case the character is acting upon himself ("changing his mind"), in the second he is acting upon the audience. (*The Field of Drama* 84)

Revealing these decision-making processes and all their consequences is the fundamental dramaturgical device on which the students' participation in the workshops is based. The reasons for failure are explored with the advantage of hindsight by such activities as discussions, hot-seating, advice-giving, improvisation of additional scenes or Forum Theatre technique in which the students can consider what else the characters could or should have done to avoid the troubles they had got into.

In Speakeasy's *Respect* the two kinds of soliloquies are combined and supplemented by an additional narrative technique: the characters tell the audience what happened after the scene presented, reveal their concerns and thoughts and, from time to time, the actors step out of their characters and talk to the audience directly, comment on the events out of character, ask questions and impart information. However, none of these techniques are intended to develop into immediate interactions. The actors do not expect the students to respond even if they ask questions and the actor facilitating makes this "rule" explicit in the introduction at the very beginning of the programme. Participation is invited and welcome only after the show. Speakeasy's workshop activities are similar to that of Snap's: question-and-answer sequences, hot-seating, replay and foruming of a scene and an extra scene improvisation serve to highlight and explore the most significant moment of the play.

In Figment's *I Wanna Be...* the actors develop the second kind of soliloquy into real dialogues with the audience. Each story contains one or two questions the characters ask (for example, "would you like to have a lot of money? What do you want to be? Have you got a light? Have you got a fag?"), and invite the children to respond, and these questions return in the workshop, serving as a springboard for discussion. Another audience involvement device to be used in the workshop is built in the

performance: in Nicola's story the bullies start to chant Nicola's name, the children are encouraged to join in – and they always do. When the facilitator of the workshop poses the question how many bullies there were, the children will eventually realise that they joined in the bullies' action.

Play Structures in the Inserted Activities Model

The plays performed in the inserted activities model are structured to allow for the audience's immediate reactions to the situations at the turning points of the plot or at the moments of the characters' dramatic dilemmas. The activities are inserted into the course of the performance that stops at these points and continues when the participatory phase is over. The activities give emphasis and shed light on these significant moments through posing a question and providing the students with a certain aspect for exploration.

TAG's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* is constructed around one key decision and its implications. The children confront the central character's dilemma at the moment when it occurs (should Frances, the main character open the magic book despite the sorcerer's prohibition?); discuss in groups what results would come from a decision (what would happen if she opened the book?); and tell the others their opinion (would her decision be right or wrong?). Before Frances makes a decision, the children give her advice and they are also involved in a mime exercise helping her out when she gets into trouble as a result of her decision. The audience actively participates in the resolution of the play: the children suggest how the company should finish the story (will the Sorcerer dismiss Frances or not?). In this sense, the audience functions as a playwright: their contributions alter important dramaturgical elements and complete the play as an artistic product.

The procedure of designing the programme structure in the inserted activities model is similar to structuring educational drama by choosing the dramatic frame of the action and focusing the dramatic moment (see: O'Toole *Dramawise* 34-47). The problems that the playwright or the devising company face is also akin to that of the drama teacher: how to engage the students, build up their belief in the dramatic content and make them ready for contribution by the time the programme requires. As opposed to the post-show-workshop model which provides the audience with a completed artistic experience and some time to consider this experience before active reflection, in the inserted activities model the students are invited to join in the actual process of the drama. The prerequisite of meaningful participation at the dramatically charged moments is a cautious context-building phase preparing the students mentally and emotionally for the cardinal participatory activities. Each programme observed in the inserted activities model applies a different context-building technique closely related to the play structure and the subsequent participation phases.

TAG's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* applies the dramatic framework of a fictional school to build a context which is very close to the pupils' everyday life experience. At the beginning of the programme, the actress who plays the main character is sitting on the floor among the children, and another actress is sitting on a chair behind the class with a notebook and a pen in her hand. An actor comes in, and introduces himself as the new teacher of the school and introduces the actress as his Supervisor. He announces that a science class with experiments is going to take place and asks the pupils to keep to the rules on the board. The children are engaged in normal, everyday classroom activities: they are asked questions, which they answer, go to the table and to the board or get tasks to do. The framework develops the children's empathy with the main character, as they accept the fictional situation that Frances is one of them, an ordinary

child who is their classmate. She, as an enthusiastic and naughty child, keeps interrupting the Teacher, talks loudly and answers questions when she is not asked, goes to the table and touches everything she should not. When the Teacher gradually loses his temper and humiliates Frances rudely in front of the class, she rushes out of the class never to come back. The Teacher runs after her to bring her back. At this moment of the programme, the Supervisor takes over the class, apologises for what happened and asks the children about Frances's and the Teacher's behaviour. Questions like "Is she naughty or just curious?" "What made her get into trouble?" "Why did she leave?" help the children to consider and discuss a fictional situation that is just like reality. Talking about the characters develops the students' empathy with them. Discussing the events (what happened and why) encourages the children's reflection during the experience and promotes their understanding at an early stage of the play, as well as generates their interest in the next actions. The usage of this technique introduces the convention that the action will stop sometimes, and the children's active verbal and in-action participation will be expected in addition to their watching a show. After the discussion phase, the Supervisor asks the children if they want to know what happened to Frances afterwards. She starts to read out the story, which gradually comes to life presenting the adventures of Frances at a magician's castle.

In TAG's programme the students interact with each other, the facilitators and the characters, but they never take roles and the context-building participatory phase is designed to prepare them for these out-of-role interactions. The dramatic framework provides the transition between the real and the fictional contexts by a realistic imaginary situation ("as if" science class) and by additional characters (the Teacher and the Supervisor) that are not parts of the original story. These characters involve the students in this transitional situation to meet the main character, who has stepped out of

the story for the sake of this encounter, and the children follow her into the fictional world of the story. The dramatic framework is incomplete: at the end of the programme neither the characters, nor the students return to the imaginary school. The educational considerations prevail over the dramaturgical ones. The imaginary school situation serves rather as a context-building transition than a consistent dramatic structure.

In other programmes of the inserted activities model, in which participation includes role-taking, the context-building participatory activities pave the way for the in-role interactions in the opposite direction. The characters stay in the fiction and the students enter the world of the play to meet the characters. In the introductory exercise of the junior version of GYPT's *Inside Out*, the students are asked to imagine what they would take with them if they had to leave their home, and their lives were in danger because of war. There is an imaginary suitcase, with all the necessary clothes packed in, and with a small empty space. The students mime taking the most important personal objects off an imaginary shelf and placing them into their suitcases. 5-6 volunteers tell the class what they have in their suitcases and the Facilitator selects a student to show the mime sequence to the whole group. She gives the student more instructions like "You are in a hurry, your life is in danger. Close your suitcase, pick it up quickly, run and freeze". The Facilitator invites the group to look at the still image and give ideas about how the person might feel. Then the play shows the difficulties of two young Colombian asylum-seekers, Maria and her brother Joaquim in Britain who were forced to leave Columbia because of a war.

This introductory imagination and mime exercise serves as a warm-up helping the students first of all to tune in to the topic. Its other function is to provide the students with the context of the play, offering a physical activity in which they can imagine and explore a situation for themselves that will be decisive for the central characters later in

the play. They are asked to identify with a fictional situation from the perspective of its participant. With this exercise, some processes of the students' presupposed further involvement, such as using imagination creatively, participation in verbal and physical activities as well as expressing and interpreting emotions are introduced.

The second sequence of participatory activities, which also belong to the context-building phase, explores the central character, Maria's first day at school. The students individually offer ideas that Maria can be worried about and create a still image of their ideas in small groups, then they act out the scenes (putting the images in motion and adding sounds) of Maria's worries. In the first scene created by the students, Maria is being bullied: a student steps in as Maria and five others take the roles of the bullies. In the second, Maria does not understand what is going on and the others do not understand her: the actor playing Joaquim teaches one student who is taking Maria's role to say "I don't understand" in Spanish, while two other students say: "Go away, we don't understand you". Then, standing in a circle, the students make a statue of Maria's feelings at that moment, and another of how she felt in Colombia. Two students show their images to the whole group. Then a student in Maria's role expresses her feelings that the group suggests (isolated and sad) by body language (still image) and the students give advice and offer her help to make her feel better. In this participatory phase, all the students take on roles: they either represent Maria or her classmates, and they interact with each other in-role. In terms of the educational objectives of the programme, developing the students' empathy with an asylum-seeker started in the first participatory exercise in which the children imagined what they would do and how they would feel in the position of someone who is forced to leave home. There, they were not yet asked to empathise with a particular person, a character, but only with a situation as the first step. The process of role-taking here is the second step towards raising the

students' awareness of the situation from both perspectives: that of the main character of the play and that of the existing micro-community of a fictional class. The roles of Maria's classmates and the situations in which Maria meets them are the creation of the students, thus it can be considered as their artistic contribution to the fictional world of the play and the performance.

The senior version of GYPT's *Inside Out* applies a third kind of context-building phase. The programme starts with the Facilitator leading a discussion about how it feels going to a new school in the middle of a term where one does not know anybody, and does not even understand the others' language. The Facilitator's questions focus on both sides, including what the students would think of a newcomer who is different and does not fit in as well as on the problems and emotions the newcomer might experience.

While the students in the junior programme are involved in an action-based, non-verbal, physical activity (a mime exercise), the invited contribution of the audience in the first participation phase of the senior version is exclusively verbal. There, the audience find themselves right in the middle of a (fictional) problematic situation, involved personally through the physical activity. The question they face sounds like "How do I feel now in this situation?" In the senior programme, however, the students consider a problem in a generalised way and from an outside position: "How would one feel in a situation like that?" and although the performance, later on, will specify this generalised approach for them through the story, they are still likely to keep their "outsider" or "spectator's" position until, at least, the next participatory phase. By the decision to open the programme with discussion, the company not only gives up the artistic means of a "theatrical" start, which seems to be quite a usual practice in TIE, but they also choose an approach different from that of the junior version in which the

“learning by doing” principle and an activity characteristic of educational drama are applied.

The most important consideration underpinning this choice of only verbal involvement is the age of the audience. An exercise containing physical activities like mime, which is undoubtedly appropriate for 11-year-olds, would be certainly more than questionable for 14 year-old students. (See the problem discussed by McGregor, Tate and Robinson 128.) Another decisive factor is the number of students taking part in the programme: a mime exercise can neatly be carried out with 25-30 students, but would be problematic to manage effectively and may not work with a group of 60. The difference between the lengths of the two programmes (the senior version is 15 minutes shorter) is of less importance, but also plays a part in this choice: a discussion is less time-consuming than an exercise containing physical activities. As GYPT has a long-term relationship and works regularly with the schools they visit, the TIE team’s previous experience of the actual school might have also been taken into consideration: a short-cut question and answer session is more similar to a classroom situation, thus it can be easier to facilitate with a “difficult” group.

However well-thought-through and justified the choice of the senior version introductory activity, some disadvantages can be observed in comparison with the activity applied in the junior programme. In the mime exercise all the students are equally involved, while in the discussion, just because of the nature of the activity and the number of students, only a few can take part actively. The mime sequence does not include high attention focused on an individual student: they all work on their own at the same time, not watching each other, while in the discussion the students contributing speak in front of sixty young people.

The senior version contains three phases of audience participation evenly positioned at the beginning, middle and end of the programme. No physical activities are included; the opening and the closing sequences require only verbal contributions, while the main Forum Theatre exercise in the centre of the performance invites the students to take Maria's role; and this complex role-taking activity is carried out in front of the whole group. The following sequence of scenes illustrates how the participatory phases are integrated into the play in the junior version.

Opening the programme

Participation phase 1: Leaving home

Scene 1 – In the restaurant: The Owner reads the news about refugees. The Boy goes to school.

Scene 2 – Columbia: Maria and Joaquim at school. The war

Scene 3 – The Boy in the street

Scene 4 – Columbia: Joaquim and Maria pack and say goodbye to their parents.

Scene 5 – The Journalist, Jerry Jones writes an article

Scene 6 – Immigration Office: Joaquim and Maria ask for asylum

Scene 7 – The Landlady's house: Joaquim and Maria rent a room; write a letter to parents, want to post it, meet the Boy

Scene 8 – The Journalist

Scene 9 – Maria goes to school

Participation phase 2: Maria's first day at school

Scene 10 – The Journalist

Scene 11 – Maria and the Boy at school

Scene 12 – Joaquim spent the money, the Landlady's suggestion about working

Scene 13 – The Journalist

Scene 14 – Getting a job at the restaurant

Scene 15 – Joaquim and the Boy make friends

Participation phase 3: Maria and the class

Scene 16 – Restaurant – Joaquim is arrested because of working illegally.

Participation phase 4: Maria's problem - Whole-group improvisation

Scene 17 – Maria and Joaquim in jail; The Journalist writes an article about
asylum-seekers caught working illegally.

Participation phase 5: Debate with the Journalist

Scene 18 – Maria and Joaquim write a letter to their parents

Closure of the programme

For a younger audience, (9-11-year-olds) the context-building process is slower and contains in-action involvement. More frequent and more varied types of activities are offered that include physical activities (mime, sculpture, still image) and split versions of role taking (some students present the character's image or movement, others add the spoken words) mostly in pair work or small-group work format. The transition between the participatory phases is also smoother in the junior version: the mime – still image – still image into motion – role-play sequence makes the role-taking process slower, providing the students with more opportunity for in-depth participation. The senior version lacks this gradual transition: there is a big gap between the first and the second participatory activities, and it bears consequences on the actor's tasks when they interact with the students and facilitate participation.

These alterations of the participatory activities, all underpinned by educational considerations, are reflected in the play structure. Complete scenes are inserted or cut: the senior version does not contain any of the classroom scenes which occur in the

participatory phases of the junior programme (*Maria's first day at school, Maria and the class, Maria's problem*). Extra characters and roles are added or left out: Maria's classmates and their teacher do not appear in the senior version. Certain aspects of the story-line are emphasised or dropped: peer pressure or the role of their classmates in Maria and the Boy's relationship is not represented in the senior version at all, but the development of this relationship is strengthened and refined in comparison with the junior version. The modified activities affect the significance of particular scenes in the structure of the play, their atmosphere, certain aspects of the plot, as well as the characters' relationships, motivation and portrayal. For example, the second participatory phase of the senior programme follows the scene when Maria, as a result of an argument provoked by the Boy at school, loses her temper and hits him. At this point in the scene, Maria (in-character) asks the audience whether she was right having behaved like that or if she might have had some other choices. The students are involved in a discussion first, and then, applying Forum Theatre technique, the scene is re-run with volunteers who are invited to try out different tactics in the role of Maria to avoid the fight.

The TIE team's decision that this particular scene is examined through Forum Theatre technique brings about changes in several dramaturgical aspects of the scene itself as well as in the whole play. In comparison with the scene of Maria and the Boy in the junior version, it is expanded and becomes more significant in the senior programme. The main character's wrong decision leading to her aggressive response must be a serious issue if the team expects the students to replace it by a more reasonable one. The atmosphere of the scenes is quite different: in the junior version it is light and playful, while in the other there is an increasing tension caused by the Boy's seriously offensive and painful statements. The greater emphasis on the scene calls for

changes at the plot level, too. In the junior version, the Boy takes the initial step teasing Maria and she reacts by shoving him away; while the dialogue in the senior version begins with Maria approaching the Boy for help, since he is the only person at school she knows. When Maria fails to understand that the Boy does not want to be seen in her company at school, his behaviour grows more and more offensive, eventually leading to her aggressive response. The motivation of the characters is more elaborated in the senior version, too. The Boy's fear of what the others might say and his peers' pressure play an important part in his offensive behaviour, and Maria's aggressive response is underpinned by her disappointment and pain caused by the Boy's refusal. These are all new motifs in comparison with the junior version.

By all these changes in the atmosphere, the plot and the characters' motivation, the scene grows to be the centre of the play and also the most important part of the performance. Its significance is also highlighted by the students' participation in the Forum exercise, which is the only role-taking activity in this version. The exploration of the scene through the Forum technique, however, sets up an unforeseen dramaturgical trap. The protagonist has got a problem: she is isolated. Trying to solve her problem, she makes a wrong decision (fighting back), which makes her situation even worse (although its consequences are not referred to later on in the performance.) The students are invited to find alternatives for Maria's behaviour but the real source of her problem is not her behaviour but that of the Boy. Taking the role of Maria and considering what she could have done in this situation is only one side of the coin. Is it not the other character, the Boy, whose behaviour the students should alter this time? Why not provide the students with a change of perspectives, as in the junior version where the programme structure invites the audience to put themselves into the position of both newcomers and members of the existing community as well? Forum Theatre technique

does not allow for alternating perspectives and the only role that the students can take is that of the protagonist. Therefore, using Forum, as the only role-taking activity of the programme, is an inappropriate choice here, especially because the dramaturgy of the scene (and the play) does not match the dramaturgy of Forum Theatre.

In addition, the educational disadvantage of this decision is that in this structure of participation very few students can be actively involved. Actually, on the occasion I witnessed, there were only three volunteers out of the sixty students to try Maria's role. The ones who did have a try were exposed to the high focused attention of the rest of the audience without the aid of a gradual or in-depth role-taking process preceding the Forum activity.

Play Structures in the Merged Participation Model

As opposed to the other three participatory models in which the dramatic content of the plays is usually issue-based, the programmes in the merged participation model are frequently based on classic stories or play-texts. This model, in which actors and students work in close partnership to bring the story to life together, is especially apt to familiarise the audience with pieces of literature that represent worlds and characters remote from their everyday lives. Reducing the distance between the audience and the piece is two-directional. The adaptation makes the story suitable for the age-group, both in length and comprehensibility and a step-by-step context-building participatory process prepares the students for entering and eventually understanding the fictional world. Co-creation of the dramatic story may be rehearsed or improvisational, but the participatory activities dominate in the programme over the performative parts both in length and significance.

In TAG's *King Lear*, which is the "rehearsed" variant of the merged participation model, invited audience participation governs the adaptation of

Shakespeare's play. The programme consists of two parts: a pre-show workshop and a performance. The three-hour workshop serves as an extended context-building process and contains elements similar to rehearsals. After a short introduction, it starts with the actors performing the first scene – this time without costumes and set – as a trailer for the show, and then the students get into four groups each led by an actor. They explore the plot, the characters, Shakespeare's language and the world of the play as well as the situations and the problems inherent in the play through games, exercises, movement and mime, role-play, active storytelling, text-work, discussions, teacher-in-role and hot-seating. They devise their roles which they will take in the performance, rehearse how to behave as courtiers at the royal household, as Lear's knights and as poor heath-dwellers, when and how to react to the other characters' cues and practice the movement and the sound effects by which they will contribute to creating the performance along with the actors. In the one-hour-long performance, these explored, understood, pre-prepared and separately practised participatory elements are merged with the actors' performance. The students participate in the events in roles and witness the main characters' actions from the changing perspective of courtiers, knights and heath-dwellers. The play is adapted to match this participation structure. Peter Arnott's TIE version reduces the plot focusing on four main characters and their relationship: Lear, Cordelia, Goneril and Edmund and thus highlights the consequences of Lear's decision. Cordelia functions as the link between story and the students: her in-character narration written in modern English explains and connects the seven scenes performed in the original.

Invited audience participation determines most dramaturgical aspects of the immediate version of the merged participation model in which the students' improvised contributions are joined together with the actors' work. Blahs' adaptation of *Silas*

Marner selects the motifs of George Eliot's novel that are most relevant for the age-group with which the company works. The whole programme focuses on the relationship between two main characters, Silas and Eppie, and is structured around age-bound central themes: the emotional interdependence of the parent and the child; questions of parenthood; parental responsibilities and problems from the child's perspective; what makes a "real" father – blood, the wealth to be offered, or the care given to the child; and values and priorities in a child's decision-making situations.

These themes predominate both in the shortened (one-session-long) and the full (four-session-long) versions of the programme over the more "spectacular", adventurous or romantic facets of the novel that could also have called for theatrical representation. Both versions focus on the relationship of Silas and Eppie, making the weaver and the little girl unquestionably the central characters of the novel adaptation and the participatory programme.

The final dramatic dilemma ("Should Eppie stay with Silas?") that the students are faced with and the actual participatory tasks that they are invited to carry out (such as to finish the story, to make a decision in Eppie's role and report about it in a piece of creative writing) are closely interrelated with the focus of adaptation and also define the structure of the programme. All the performance elements and each participatory activity in the course of the programme prepare, lead to and support this ultimate decision to be made by the students.

As neither of the central characters' ages could be matched with that of the students (as it was with the other three models), an extra character of the audience's age was devised and inserted in the play. Employing the character of Adam, a boy from Raveloe, reveals the educational-artistic way of thinking of the devising team and also sheds light on the methods of adapting the novel for this specific performance style.

This character's dramaturgical function is to link the fiction with the student's reality. Adam belongs to the fictional world of the story, possesses first-hand information because "he was there", but did not take part in the actual actions. A character like that can comment on the events from an outsider, nevertheless "expert" position providing a particular perspective which is different from that of the main characters and also that of the writer. Adam's character functions both as a *dramatis persona* and a narrator at the same time. One of the ultimate objectives of the participatory activities is to enable the students to understand and empathise with the fictional characters of the novel and Adam's function is to liaise between the students and the characters. He represents a 10-year-old child's way of relating to the world and people of the story and the students can easily adopt his perspective. In addition, Adam leads the audience into the fictional context of the novel offering the audience the additional roles of the imaginary children in the village where the story takes place.

Another special consideration regarding the adaptation is the cautious context-building process to guarantee that the students should familiarise with and enter the fictional world of the novel gradually. The moderate pace of the context building is maintained in spite of the time constraints in the shortened version; all the context-building activities of the full version are kept at the expense of the "colourful" and "exciting" parts of the narrative about the love of Godfrey and Nancy, their lives in the Red House as well as the crime committed against Silas's treasure, which are completely skipped. Right after the introduction, which consists of a couple of sentences in an elevated style shared among the four actors creating a "story-telling" atmosphere and also encouraging the students' contributions to explore, bring to life and complete the story, the students are invited to participate. They meet the main character: one of the actors puts on a coat and picks up a big, heavy sack, and starts to walk around

the acting space slowly. His movement is accompanied by narration. The Facilitator asks the children to describe the character: what they can observe about this person's way of walking, his emotional state expressed by body language and movement, and also what they think of his situation and what kind of animal he reminds them of. Then the Facilitator gives basic information about the character and his situation: his name is Silas Marner, he had to leave his home, he is looking for a place to live and the village where his story takes place is called Raveloe.

There are two unusual aspects for the actors in this activity. Firstly, the character is separated from the text, but the actor doing the movement has to be in perfect harmony with the narrative provided by another actor. Secondly, he has to maintain the acting process working simultaneously with the students who make comments on his character and interpret whatever he expresses. These tasks require extra concentration and careful listening from the actors.

This technique differs radically from the character-description exercise in the post-show-workshop model. In Snap's *Crossing the Line* each group gets a character from the play to discuss for a couple of minutes and the groups are asked to agree upon three words that characterise their figure best. When they are ready, one student from every group describes Abbie, Robbie and Tash one after the other, while the actor playing the character in question stands on a chair. Unlike in *Silas Marner*, in which the students' reflections are based on their first impressions without knowing what happens to the character later on, in *Crossing the Line* the students are familiar with the whole story by the time they participate in the activity. Although it is the first participatory activity in both programmes and the actors are in character when the students' reflections take place, the dramaturgical function of this exercise diverge in the two models. In *Crossing the Line* the characters are out-of-situation and the students'

contributions do not become the constituent of the play; while in *Silas Marner* the character appears in the first situation of the dramatic narrative thus the students' descriptions develop the exposition of the play.

The merged participation model applies context-building activities also differently from the inserted activities model. Although this first participatory exercise in Blahs' *Silas Marner* invites the students to contribute only verbally, this involvement is radically different from the verbal introductory exercise applied in GYPT's senior programme. There, the starting point is a problem in general; here, the discussion is stimulated by an actual live image to be observed, a here-and-now encounter with the main character of the story represented by an actor.

As the students' reflective verbal participation plays a significant part throughout the whole *Silas Marner* programme, it is important to notice that most question-and-answer sessions draw on the actual direct experience provided by the actors. Another example for this technique is when the Facilitator introduces a new character of the story, a two-year-old child, represented by a doll in an old ragged dress. The Facilitator asks the students to imagine that the doll is a toddler. The toddler is passed round, each student holds her for a couple of minutes. They discuss what her dress looks like and why and also what they would do if a two-year-old child came to their house and began to cry. They take turns in trying to improvise different ways to calm and comfort her while the Facilitator moves the doll and provides her sounds.

The play in this immediate version of merged participation model is a specific blend of storytelling and drama: the narrative units are not merely informative or descriptive, and their function is not just to connect the dramatic elements. Narration (both the text itself and the way of presentation) always contains increasing tension and prepares for the dramatic situations. The narrative phases are either the starting points

for the story coming to life providing the context, or running side-by-side with the images or movements, interpret or comment on their meaning. The structure of the programme is as follows:

SHORTENED VERSION

Introduction

Participation phase 1: Meeting the main character - Questions and answers

Participation phase 2: A boy from the village - Storytelling in character with the students physical and vocal involvement to create context

Participation phase 3: Silas Marner's Cottage

Scene 1 - A day of Silas

Participation phase 4: Silas Marner's life and the children of Raveloe

Questions and answers 1-2, Still images - Group work

Scene 2 - Silas Marner's treasure - Mime sequence of Silas counting his gold

Participation phase 5: Silas and his money

Scene 3 - The scream of loss

Participation phase 6: The scream of loss

Participation phase 7: Meeting a new character

Scene 4 - Molly's death; Eppie arrives at Silas Marner's house

Scene 5 - Silas meets Eppie

Participation phase 8: What problems might Silas have with a two-year-old toddler?

Scene 6 - Silas as the father of Eppie

Participation phase 9: How should Silas look after Eppie?

Scene 7 - 17-year-old Eppie at Silas' house

Participation phase 10: Finishing the story

Closure of the programme

FULL-LENGTH VERSION - the last session of the four-part programme

Participation phase 1 (same as Participation phase 7 above) - Meeting a new character

Scene 1 (same as scene 4) - Molly's death; Eppie arrives at Silas Marner's house

Scene 2 (same as scene 5) - Silas meets Eppie

Participation phase 2: Looking after a child

Participation phase 3: The children of Raveloe - Snowman-building; Silas at the Red House

Participation phase 4: Godfrey at the body of his dead wife

Participation phase 5: The children of Raveloe about Silas bringing up a child

Participation phase 6: What to do with a two-year-old toddler?

Scene 3 (same as scene 6 above) - Silas as the father of Eppie

Participation phase 7: How should Silas look after Eppie?

Participation phase 8: Life in the Red House - Whole-group pre-prepared improvisation

Scene 4 - Snapshots from Godfrey and Nancy's lives of their past 15 years

Participation phase 9: The secret of the stone-pit

Scene 5 - 17-year-old Eppie at Silas' house - Mime sequence with narration

Participation phase 10: Finishing the story

Closure of the programme

The invited audience participation determines the dramatisation and also the structure of the programme. In the immediate version of this model, there are considerably less separate, "performance-like" scenes, and the proportion of the participatory phases is much higher than in other models of TIE programmes. The non-participatory, "closed" scenes are quite short, and nearly all of them are mime

sequences with narration. It is not just the frequency of participation, but also the length, the content and the nature of the students' contribution that are specific in this programme.

Seven closed scenes present the whole narrative in the shortened version, while five scenes are performed in the fourth session of the programme, but there are equally ten participatory phases in both versions indicating that the company gives priority to audience participation as opposed to the presentational elements.

Participatory units prevail over the conventional presentational elements but participation always springs from the students' immediate experience as an audience of a performed moment of the story. In this programme, it would not be possible to separate the performance and the participatory elements or miss out the participatory activities to run the performance on its own. Nor would it be possible to set up the participatory phases as an educational drama workshop leaving out the presentational parts of the programme. Unlike in the post-show-workshop and the inserted activities models of educational theatre, performance and audience participation in this model are interwoven in a way that one would be incomplete and would not work without the other.

A wide variety of activities and techniques are applied to involve the students mentally, physically and emotionally. The consecutive participatory activities allow for several switches of perspective: the students can draw on their existing experience responding as themselves or they can relate to the events taking the points of view of different characters, such as Silas Marner, Godfrey, Eppie or the children of Raveloe.

The children are offered different roles, though role-taking is not the equivalent of the full representation of a character in a realistic way by acting out a situation applying movement, speech, and emotional expression at the same time. Instead, the

verbal, physical and emotional means of expression are distributed and shared in a specific way: when the students perform a situation through movement and mime, the Narrator adds the speech; when the actors express the characters' actions and emotional states without words, the students provide the spoken text. The participating students thus contribute to the artistic process in a creative way verbally, physically and in-action, co-operating either in-role or as themselves with the actors, through an idiosyncratic job-share. The students are the partners of the actors in these activities but the co-operation is neither pre-prepared, nor rehearsed, and the students' contributions are entirely spontaneous. The actors' improvised co-operation with the participating audience, whose creative contribution is an integral part of the performance and the acting process, is a distinctive feature that distinguishes this immediate version of merged participation model from other models of participatory TIE.

Play Structures in the Forum Theatre Model

The dramatic content of Forum Theatre is always issue-based and the issue is selected to be relevant to the target audience's needs and interests. When the company has access to the audience prior to the Forum programme, the selection of the issue can be with the involvement of the recipients or tailored to their preferences. If it is appropriate, the spect-actors' true stories or problems may be used as the material of the play. Since Forum Theatre usually operates with a devised play to be composed by the company, the creative process of the play devising is instrumental in the success of the programme. The construction of the play has to follow set dramaturgical rules, to be considered during the devising. The starting point for the construction is an "oppressive situation", which should be selected carefully avoiding unalterable physical aggression in which the protagonist has no other choice than violence. Even if it is predictable that the situation would eventually turn into inevitable tragedy, the play should present the

phase of the events when the process can still be stopped or altered. The existence of alternatives in the situation is the most important dramaturgical rule of Forum Theatre.

This rule is connected to Boal's interpretation of crisis, which he defines as the state that carries both danger and opportunities of choices for the main character (*Legislative Theatre* 64-5). The anti-model presents a complete, finished story line, including the series of choices the protagonist made, and these errors of the main character end up in a Boalian crisis. The spect-actors' interventions will forward a variety of decisions that will open up possible divergent routes of the plot, other than those the protagonist had chosen by wrong decisions. These possible routes need to be considered during the devising process and a great variety of optional moments for interventions should be built in the play.

Boal raises the question of manipulating the spect-actors through speaking about the protagonist's "errors", and claims that in order to avoid manipulation, the Joker should only suggest doubts about the protagonist's behaviour, and it is the audience that should justify if the protagonist committed errors or not. The manipulation of the audience, seen as a moral dilemma by Boal, is rather an aesthetic problem of didacticism rooted in the dramatic structure of the Forum Theatre. It occurs when the devisers are tempted to offer too straightforward solutions to encourage the audience's participation by creating situations with only black-and-white options for the protagonist to choose from. Without this polarisation of the choices the protagonist (and the children who take the role of the protagonist) would face a more dramatic dilemma. The aesthetic value and the learning potential of the devised plays would be increased and the pitfalls of didacticism would be avoided.

Another dramaturgical difficulty might derive from characterisation. The first question to be asked when devising a Forum character is what makes an oppressor be an

oppressor. Boal suggests: “The text must clearly delineate the nature of each character, it must identify them precisely, so that the spect-actors can easily recognise each one’s ideology” (*Games* 18). The dramaturgical implications of a character’s recognisable ideology are explained more precisely in a chapter on dramaturgy of *Legislative Theatre* (53-85). Boal’s starting point is that in order to provide a conflict without which theatre does not exist, there must be an obstacle in the way of the protagonist’s will. When this obstacle is invisible (i.e., the protagonist is in conflict with “the Society” or “the Power of the State”), the devisers have to personify the abstract oppression creating concrete representatives of the concepts.

Creating the oppressors’ dramatic characters to be representatives of abstract concepts (like “political power”, “authority” or “educational system”) rather than making them lively, multidimensional individuals with clearly marked motivations, easily results in stock characters, clichés or caricatures. Identifying dramatic characters only with their social position and ignoring their personal characteristics, which can be either in harmony or in contradiction with their social status, may lead to a simplistic dramaturgical interpretation and could suggest that the oppressors of the Forum dramaturgy are necessarily villains. In a good play, all the characters have their own truth: each character can explain why they are right from their own point of view. The more it is so, the more exciting the conflict is. It is their relationship and the social context of the play that show who is right and who is wrong objectively, and the moral judgement of the playwright and the director (or of the company in case of a devised play) is completed by the audience’s judgement. So, creating flesh-and-blood, lively, complex, realistic people with clear motivations and objectives as the oppressors’ character, instead of emphasising or exaggerating only negative features, is especially important if Forum is to be applied in an educational theatre context. When the

protagonist is a child and the oppressors are adults (parents or teachers), simplified characterisation implies that the educational focus will shift away from the protagonist's responsibility of decision-making.

Forum Theatre dramaturgy is a simple construction in which the situation is clearly based on the difference of the characters' status or, in other words, their dominant or submissive behaviour. The power dynamics of the situation are easily recognisable: the protagonist plays low status and the oppressor plays high status; the conflict derives from the oppressors' misuse of their high status interfering with the protagonist's interests. The crisis is generated from the stabilisation of the given power dynamics: the oppressors are not willing to give up their high status, and the protagonist is not capable to raise her/his low status.

The Forum dramaturgy implies that the oppressor is "wrong", even if her/his actions are well motivated, and the protagonist is "right" in spite of her/his errors or faults. The play guides the audience, stating whom they are expected to empathise and identify with, which is an aesthetic/moral constraint of the Forum dramaturgy that can be even frustrating to some kinds of audience. But, at the same time, by this restriction in the anti-model, Boal shifts the audience's decision-making from the spectators' aesthetic/moral level onto the participants' level of actions. It is not enough to identify with the protagonist mentally and emotionally, the audience is supposed to act on behalf of the character, making practical decisions in action. The spect-actors' decision-making and problem-solving through action is integrated into the dramaturgical structure of the Forum as a rule, and this distinct feature makes Forum Theatre specific and different from any other dramaturgical models.

In NT Education's *Wam Bam!*, the dramaturgical rules of Forum Theatre are applied in a strongly modified way. The considerations defining the play structure

demonstrate what effects invited audience participation has on the dramaturgy of a prewritten play.

The play presents the story of Skye, a thirteen-year-old girl and her problem that derives from her decision to go in “an adult relationship” with her fifteen-year-old boyfriend, Ashley. In spite of her brother, Tony’s warning, Skye has unprotected sex and becomes pregnant. The play is structured as follows:

- Scene 1 At home – Tony, Skye and the girls; Mum coming home
- Scene 2 Tony talks to Ashley about Skye
- Scene 3 Tony and Skye – Skye’s grand plan
- Scene 4 Tony and the girls
- Scene 5 Drama group – Skye leaves with Ashley
- Scene 6 At home - Tony and Skye 24 hours later – “It’s too late.”
- Scene 7 At home - 2 weeks later, Skye – she might be pregnant
- Scene 8 Mum, Skye, Tony – “How many times did I tell you?”

The first two scenes function as an exposition: we get acquainted with the characters, their relationship and the theme that the play explores. From Scene 1 we learn that the relationship between Skye and her mother is full of tension: her mother does not like Ashley and thinks Skye is too young to have a boyfriend anyway. It becomes obvious that their bitter argument is not the first one and though the mother is genuinely concerned about her daughter, neither of them can find the right way of talking to each other. Scene 2 introduces Ashley and shows that he does not take life, including Skye, too seriously.

The situation leading to the crisis of the play is presented in Scene 3. Skye tells her brother about her plan to have “an adult relationship” with her boyfriend. As this situation is the starting point for audience participation in the Forum session, its dramatic structure deserves closer attention. At the beginning of the scene the central character reveals her intention to act and, in spite of her brother’s desperate attempt to dissuade her, she carries out her plan. She is strong and determined in doing what she wants and there is no obstacle in her way to achieve her goal. She decides to have sex and does not mind becoming pregnant: she argues that having a baby would be a good excuse to leave school early and prove to her Mum she is a better mother.

This situation does not follow the Forum rules as they are suggested by Boal. According to the dramaturgy of Forum Theatre, the play should present an oppressive situation that manifests itself in the characters’ unequal positions: the protagonist is “weaker” in a way, i.e., s/he has less physical, mental, emotional, social or will-power than the antagonist. In an oppressive situation the antagonist is an active, dominant character and the protagonist is a passive, submissive character; and the tension derives from the antagonist’s action to achieve her/his objective. The “stronger” antagonist wants something that interferes with the protagonist’s interests and the protagonist is not able to defend herself/himself. The antagonist becomes an oppressor. The oppressive situation is the prerequisite of the play being “forumable” (this expression is frequently used by the practitioners to indicate a play is suitable for Forum).

Wam Bam! does not present an oppressive situation. There is no oppressor whose aggressive behaviour would be a pressure on the protagonist. The play does not contain any scenes of Skye and Ashley so the audience does not know anything about their relationship. The boyfriend could be, but is not shown, as an oppressor in the play. Skye, the central character, has got a problem but no dramatic dilemma or alternative is

built into her decision-making process. Her motivation is clear, she has got no questions, no doubts and she does not seek advice: she is sure about what she is doing. The crisis derives from her wrong decision, but such definite decisions may only be altered at the risk of didacticism or not at all. One cannot solve a problem without realising there is a problem, and the audience cannot help the main character to improve her situation if she is happy in her situation.

The playwright finds an unusual way out of this dramatic cul-de-sac that she has created. She gives an important dramaturgical function to a quite marginal character: Tony, Skye's brother. He cares, he is worried and he tries to help so he is a perfect "potential ally". (The term is used in Forum Theatre to indicate that a character is the protagonist's friend and in a conflict would take the protagonist's side.) He identifies with Skye's problem, which is not a problem for her until the last moment of the play, and it gradually becomes his problem. His failure to prevent Skye from becoming pregnant poses the question what else he could have done and said to protect his sister. He has got a problem for the audience to solve: he becomes the protagonist of the Forum session.

With this device of shifting the attention from the main character to the role of the potential ally, the playwright has avoided two potential pitfalls, a dramaturgical and a practical one inherent in the Forum structure. When an actor plays the protagonist, due to her/his external-internal characterisation and acting techniques, it is the dramatic character that we see. The actor's question is: "What would this character do in this situation?" If we accept that a dramatic character's actions are determined by her/his personal characteristics, then, theoretically, it is not possible to change her/his actions without transforming her/his personality. When a spect-actor enters the situation to change the character's actions in the Forum session, it is not the dramatic character that

we can see during the intervention but the spect-actor in the situation of the dramatic character. Similarly to a role-play, in which the attitude is enacted, the spect-actor's question is: "What would I do in the situation of this character?" The altered behaviour and a different decision are characteristic of the spec-actor's personality. It is another personality who acts differently. The original protagonist could not have made different decisions from the ones s/he made: the character disappears in a dramaturgical sense.

Boal rejects this dramaturgical principle; he agrees with the approach of Brecht who claims that it is not personal characteristics, but the social situation that determines and dictates the dramatic character's actions. As an answer to the question: "How to replace a character without transforming it into another?" Boal offers two fixed points that the spect-actors cannot change: the given social circumstances of the problem and the character's motivation (*Games* 239). The spect-actors can change the "characteristics of the motivation", and they can decide "how to do what one has to do" (*Games* 240).

In *Wam Bam!* it would have been completely unrealistic to invite the students to alter the main character's decisions or actions: a girl like her would not do anything differently because the motivation for change has not been built into the character itself, its portrayal or the play structure. Any alteration would have resulted in magic solutions or didacticism. Choosing another character to be the protagonist in the Forum session has been a good artistic decision by which the company avoided a quite serious ethical dilemma as well.

It might be problematic for thirteen-year-old girls in a school environment to be seen in the shoes of a character who has unprotected sex and becomes pregnant. The students who have a real experience of the situation might want to talk about it but

without being identified. Taking over the main character's role may be felt or seen as naming themselves as someone in this situation.

Adrian Jackson in an interview emphasises the responsibility of the company in ensuring that the theatre experience is emotionally and socially safe for the participants, especially when the audience's real situation and problem are likely to be similar to those of the main character in the play, especially in a play about sexual abuse. His suggestion based on his practice is to choose another character for the protagonist (for example, a friend) instead of the character who is in trouble and forum the possibilities of how a friend can be helpful and improve the main character's situation (Adrian Jackson, Personal interview).

The NT Education's version of Forum Theatre in *Wam Bam!* is a good example to demonstrate how actual audience participation influences or even change the original play. The students take the role of Tony, Skye's brother, when they try and improve the situation. The following sequence of scenes illustrates which situations were replayed in the two Forum sessions and what content areas were touched upon by the intervening students.

FORUM 1

Scene 4 *Tony and Skye with new Tony*

Version 1 "Did you ask if he loves you? If he loved you, would he protect you and use a condom?"

Version 2 Consequences: Ashley won't stay with her if she has a baby

Version 3 He might have diseases. "Have you asked him about it?"

Version 4 "You will lose family if you have a baby, and be alone if Ashley leaves you; have sex but be protected."

Extra Scene - Tony talks to Mum about Skye's plan; Skye comes home

Version 1 Tony tries to get help from Mum to stop Skye

Version 2 similar

Version 3 similar

Scene 5 Tony and the girls (Skye's friends)

Version 1 Tony tries to get help from Amber and Faith to prevent Skye having sex

Version 2 Tony tries to get help from the girls to persuade Skye to use a condom

Version 3 similar

Version 4 similar

Scene 3 Tony and Ashley

Version 1 Tony tries to persuade Ashley to wear a condom by physical threat

Version 2 so as not to make Skye pregnant

Version 3 so as to be protected from infection

FORUM 2

Scene 4 Tony and Skye with new Tony

Version 1 "You are too young"

Version 2 "Have sex, but be protected"

Version 3 "You won't be able to bring up a child"

Scene 3 Tony and Ashley

Version 1 Tony tries to persuade Ashley to be protected

- Version 2 Tony says to Ashley that Skye will leave him if he is not doing something about protection; Ashley calls Skye; she says it's not true
- Version 3 Tony, after an angry argument, hits Ashley
- Version 4 Tony tries to persuade Ashley to wear a condom so that he himself is protected from infection
- Version 5 Tony explains to Ashley he might be unaware of having a disease; the scene reveals that Ashley is totally ignorant and has no information

Both Forum sessions start with examining the possible alternatives of Scene 4. When the students experiment with different strategies in the role of Tony to convince Skye, these interactions create a quite peculiar change in the dramaturgy of the scene. Skye listens to but rejects all of Tony's arguments. Her decision remains a definite one, most of her replies starts with "yes, but". Skye plays high status, dominates the situation and turns down the new protagonist's attempts to make her change her mind. Remaining consistent to the original characterisation (and rightly so), Skye's character, that is the *protagonist* of the original play, becomes an *oppressor* in the Boalian sense in these situations. Skye in the Forum sessions turns to be her own oppressor, which is a dramaturgical trap (presumably unforeseen by the creative team) inherent in the choice of another protagonist different from the one in the original play.

Making another character the protagonist of the Forum sessions obviously derives from pedagogical considerations and provides the students with plenty of learning opportunities. In Tony's role the participating students can share their knowledge and impart factual information important for everyone in the audience. They can practice reasoning and develop communication skills; consider and discuss issues in the safe framework of a fictional context.

However, this choice results in a dramatic/theatrical disadvantage. The invitation for participation focuses on the possibilities of the content of Tony's arguments: what Tony should say to improve the situation. Consequently, the students' interventions result in mostly only-talking scenes of giving advice which are quite predictable and flat in terms of the drama and its theatrical expression. The problem is not the quality of the students' contribution or the educational value of the task that they are invited to do. The problem is rooted in the dramaturgical function of Tony's character: he cannot do anything but give advice. His role is *per se* verbal and marginal; he cannot take an action instead of his sister. The play is not about Tony but Skye. A dramatically more exciting route could have been taken by making Skye's character and her situation slightly more complex and suitable for being the protagonist of both the play and the Forum session.

Plays and Participation in the Models

One of the most important "rules" of participatory TIE is that the age of the audience determines the age of the central character(s) of the play: they are, in each model, of the same age as the target audience. This increases the chance to involve the students mentally and emotionally because it is easier to identify with someone of the same age and imagine "what I would do in this situation", and also physically, when the audience is invited to do something in the position of the main character. When the central characters' ages cannot be matched with that of the students (in the case of adaptations or classical play texts), an extra character of the audience's age may be devised and inserted in the play to link the fiction with the students' reality.

The audience's age is also decisive in each model in terms of the issues and the problems presented as well as the plot and the language usage of the plays: they reflect the students' world and everyday life in a realistic way.

When one and the same play is performed before different age groups, the characters' ages and also the participatory activities are adjusted accordingly. As these alterations strongly modify the play structures as well, invited participation has proven to have a direct effect on TIE plays through the age of the audience, especially in the inserted activities model.

Invited audience participation has an effect on the plays through the central educational aim of the programme. This aim directs the choice of the main activities and the play is constructed to contain the structural elements that provide opportunities for participation. The participatory models can be characterised by the main activities, the central educational aim and the key elements of the dramatic structure as follows:

post-show-workshop model:

- activities/aim: analysis and reflection to understand the situation;
- key elements: decision-making processes that led to failure or crisis;

inserted activities model:

- activities/aim: immediate identification, decision-making and problem-solving to understand the situation from the other's perspective;
- key elements: characters' dramatic dilemmas, conflicts, turning points

merged participation model:

- activities/aim: co-creation of the story in co-operation with the actors in order to understand the characters;
- key elements: dramatic storytelling leading to highlighted moments and situations enacted; perspective switches;

Forum Theatre model:

- activities/aim: re-creation and change of the situations in-action in order to understand oneself in the situation

- key elements: the main character's wrong decisions and the characters' established, unequal power dynamics.

The play texts of participatory TIE programmes are less completed artistic products than other play texts in dramatic literature, though to a different extent in every model. Plays in the post-show-workshop model have the most complete and intact dramatic structure of the four models. Contrary to the plays in the Forum Theatre model that stop at the moment of the crisis, they display the entire dramatic narrative including the resolution. Once the key element of the dramatic structure to provide opportunity for participation is built in, the play does not go through alterations. The students' contributions in the exclusively reflective activities of the workshops do not exert a direct influence on the plays; invited audience participation affects only the playwriting or the devising process.

Three crucial dramaturgical features characterise the plays in the inserted activities model. First, the play structure is matched with the participation structure in order to create space for both reflective and progressive activities. Second, the exposition of the play allows for gradual context-building participation. Third, the play structure is incomplete, the turning points and dilemmas open up branches of divergent directions for the plot, the characters' relationships, behaviour and motivation. The possibility to "branch out" from the first progressive participatory activity must be inherent in the play. The characters' decisions and the solutions of their problems and also the resolution of the play are in the hands of the participating audience thus the students develop and complete the play by their creative contributions.

The plays in the merged participation model are subordinated to the central educational aim and the participation structure of the programme to a greater extent than

in the other models. In case of adaptation of classic stories or play texts, audience participation is designed and structured first. The main aim of participation is an informed co-creation and (re)presentation of the dramatic story for which the slow and gradual context-building phase of the programme prepares the students. The play structures are usually episodic and narration connects the episodes which are selected to point to the ultimate question of the programme. Actual audience participation does not modify the play structure, but has an effect on the performative elements through the roles that the students take. The frequent swap of perspectives on the participating students' side is an essential educational-artistic characteristic of the merged participation model.

Forum Theatre is the only model of the four in which the dramaturgy of the play is strictly regulated and precisely clarified. It offers a dramaturgy in which the audience participation is inherent, and works like a recipe; i.e., if the company follows the rules of devising Forum Theatre as described and taught by Boal, they will automatically build the possibilities and the methods for audience participation into the play. The key elements of this dramaturgy are the main character's wrong decisions and the characters' established unequal power dynamics. In the Forum Theatre model, although the original play remains intact when firstly presented, it is incomplete with its resolution-part missing and showing the protagonist in a state of crisis. In the course of the participatory Forum session, the central character's modified text, actions, attitude, behaviour and communication strategy eventually bring new text, new actions, new directions of the plot and additional situations into the play. By the time the audience supplies the play with resolution, it has been transformed into another play with the same characters featuring in it. As opposed to the actor's complex characterisation

while playing the protagonist, the students replace her/him through role-play that strongly alters the character's personality.

Audience participation modifies or completely changes the actual dialogues in three models, either by the companies' pre-planned alterations, or by the improvised interactions between the actors and the audience.

CHAPTER 4 – EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION ON THE SHOW

Size and Disposition of the Audience

Some companies perform for not more than thirty students at a time; others take sixty, ninety or even two hundred. The size of the group taking part in the programme definitely affects the educational side of audience participation: the smaller the size of the audience, the more students can and are willing to participate. In the programmes presented to one class of thirty students each participant can be and is always involved, while when there are 60-100 students in the audience only a few “brave” ones take part. Activities in which the students work in pairs or small groups may counterbalance the disadvantage of large audience size since participation is safer, more intimate and more inclusive in small groups than individually in front of the whole audience. However, both pair work and small group activities are also extensively problematic to orchestrate with large number of students.

The size of the audience significantly influences both the educational and the artistic sides of TIE actors’ work. The more students participate, the more difficult it is to create the appropriate intimacy of atmosphere that would encourage participation and offer a chance to give voice to everyone’s ideas. A larger than a class-size audience requires team teaching techniques carried out with considerable classroom management skills on the part of the facilitator and the actors. With fewer students, there are more opportunities for the facilitator and actors to establish a direct two-way contact and address the students individually. In addition to the workshop management requirements, the number of students watching the programmes influences the spatial

disposition of the audience in relation to the acting area and the spatial disposition determines the proximity as well as the dynamics between the actors and the audience in the performative phases. The greater the distance, the more exaggerated “theatrical” means of expression are applied to capture and hold the students’ attention.

The number of students attending a programme is not model-dependent. Examples of both the class-size format and larger audience sizes occur in each model. Figment’s *I Wanna Be...* in the post-show-workshop, TAG’s *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*, GYPT’s junior version of *Inside Out*, as well as Catalyst’s *Looking Good* in the inserted activities and Blah’s *Silas Marner* in the merged participation models work with the class-size format. Speakeasy’s *Respect* in the post-show-workshop, the senior version of GYPT’s *Inside Out* and CTC’s *And Now What?* in the inserted activities, and also NT Education’s *Wam Bam!* in the Forum Theatre models involve sixty to ninety students. TAG’s *King Lear* in the merged participation and Snap’s *Crossing the Line* in the post-show-workshop models work with the largest audience sizes: one hundred and up to two hundred each.

Most companies strive for an inclusive spatial disposition of the audience in all the four models, but the possibility to reach this is closely related to the number of the students to be placed. In Figment’s *I Wanna Be...*, TAG’s *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*, the junior version of GYPT’s *Inside Out* and Blah’s *Silas Marner* 30 students sit in a circle on the floor which is an inclusive format. All are equally involved in what is happening in the performance and can all see and hear each other as well as each other’s reactions. Their attention is strongly focussed on the acting space, and even a glance or a whispered remark to a peer sitting beside them would break the “magic” circle of involvement. The circle format and the almost empty acting space are also appropriate for the activities: they allow for a smooth transition from the performance mode into the

participation mode and do not require “changing the set” after the show or between the performative phases. The exception in this category is Catalyst’s *Looking Good* that applies a conventional “frontal” audience disposition to perform the play and the students walk away from the set to a separate space to carry out the small-group-work activities.

In Snap’s *Crossing the Line*, NT Education’s *Wam Bam!* and the senior version of GYPT’s *Inside Out* 60-90 students sit on chairs placed on three sides and in CTC’s *And Now What?* on four sides around the performance area. The U or square shape is an attempt of the company to be inclusive, but sitting in rows of chairs allows the students in the second and third rows “to take a back seat” both literally and figuratively speaking. Friends and groups of friends or classmates sit together and, although they are not in a dark auditorium but in full light and accompanied by their teachers, it often brings about problems of discipline which the actors have to face and overcome. As the students can hide and distance themselves from the events of the play, the actors need to apply more theatrical devices to attract and maintain their attention. The danger of losing a lot of students’ attention in the third and fourth rows increases even more when a programme is presented to this size of audience in a “frontal” format without using a stage like, for example in Speakeasy’s *Respect*.

In spite of the large number of participants, the most audience-involving format is TAG’s “promenade performance” of *King Lear* in which there is no auditorium at all, but “all the world’s a stage”: the students enter the acting area at the beginning and stay there all throughout the performance taking different roles and keeping in-role even when they watch the main characters’ actions.

The Interaction Frame

If a TIE company intends to rely on the audience's active contributions in the course of the programme, the students need to know right at the beginning what the team expects them to do. Educational theatre seems to have established a standardised convention to solve this problem. In each programme observed, the team leader or one of the actors greets the students, introduces the company and informs the audience of the "rules of the game". This introductory speech convention is outside the dramatic tradition of theatre, though applied in Brechtian and other epic theatre forms with the Narrator as a *dramatis persona*. While in a way destroying the "magic" beginning of a theatre performance, it is an important educational device to indicate that the students will be talked to in the programme, not only through the play and by the *dramatis personae*, but also by the performers and the facilitator addressing the audience directly from time to time. The information these introductory speeches impart is equally significant, making clear what the students may expect as well as what they are expected to do as a participating audience and why. This second function is the equivalent of Neelands' "learning contract" in educational drama (*Making Sense* 27), which serves to promote the students' willingness to participate. Additionally, the facilitator focuses the students' attention on particular aspects of the performance by setting and distributing exact tasks for the audience. The TIE philosophy of "theatre with purpose" and the audience's "purposeful watching" also manifests itself underlying the practical side of this third function.

The length and the exact content of these preparatory speeches vary from brief greetings to more lengthy introductions and tend to be particularly detailed when the programme lasts all day or consists of several performative and participatory phases. For example, in Snap's *Crossing the Line* after greeting the students and introducing the

company, the facilitator outlines the structure of the residency day and explains that the actors are going to present three interrelated stories, each from the point of view of its central character. She draws the students' attention to some "deliberate tricks" the company built into the play and wants the students to spot, for example, the non-chronological sequence of the scenes, the repetition of some events, and that the characters might not tell the truth. She makes an important point, warning the students not to mix the actors up with the characters they play: at certain later phases of the programme the audience will have a chance to talk to the characters of the play, but at other times they will communicate with the actors, out of character. The facilitator also asks for the students' input in order to make the most of the day.

Most introductory speeches are improvised thus finding the most appropriate wording, the right tone and the register are the responsibility of the actor who greets the students on behalf of the company. Some actors also elicit the students' response in order to introduce the two-way interactions. A few introductory speeches are the part of the prewritten play script and the actors capture the students' attention by the way of their delivery. Especially companies working in the merged participation model tend to "heighten" the language of the introductory speeches and ritualise addressing the students when they start the programme. Both Blahs in *Silas Marner* and TAG in *King Lear* apply theatrical openings in which the informative elements are combined with and matched to the style of the performance. An extract from their introductory speech illustrates how TAG's team starts their programme.

INTRO to *King Lear* (spoken by the cast)

Everybody gets old. And sometimes, when people get old, they say silly

things. Like young people. Usually that doesn't matter too much. People say things all the time. Teachers, parents, television. They talk and talk and talk. Sometimes we don't listen. Sometimes, we don't understand. But what happens if that old person is a King? Or a President, or a Prime Minister, who says a silly thing? They can start a war. It can be terrible.

Words get old too. Old and weak. "Terrible" is an old word. People say it all the time...That lunch was terrible, that football game was terrible, see her in River City, she's terrible. But terrible used to mean more than that. It meant terror. It meant fear so bad you can't speak. You can't move. You can't even think.

This is a story written when words were young. You might not understand all the words. But we believe you will feel them, how strong and true they are. This is the story of an old person who says a terrible thing. And what happens to him and his family. A King. King Lear.
(Peter Arnott 1)

The introductory speech convention paves the way for the students' reflection which is always the organic part of the programme in participatory TIE. Reflection is structured differently in the models. In the post-show-workshop and the Forum Theatre models, all activities of the workshop and the Forum session are reflective, thus these models do not demand a final summary. In the inserted activities and merged participation models the last participatory activity contains verbal or in-action recapitulative feed-back from the students. For example, in the junior version of GYPT's *Inside Out*, the Facilitator asks the students how Maria might feel having been

arrested before he announces the end of the programme, thanks the students for their attention and contributions and reminds them to write up Joaquim and Maria's story as they want it to be presented in the newspaper, as if they were journalists. This closing phase invites a brief, reflective, verbal participation of the audience, providing the students with the opportunity to summarise their experience and wind down.

Reflection in the inserted activities and the merged participation models sometimes takes forms other than verbal contributions. CTC's *And Now What?* closes with the students considering how happy or unhappy the characters are at the end of the play. Volunteers place the pieces of costumes that symbolise the characters on a happiness-scale in a ritualised way and explain the rest of the audience why they think so. The last participatory unit of Blah's *Silas Marner* follows a mime sequence with narration. Silas brought up Eppie successfully who is now 17. She has a simple but happy life with Silas. Godfrey has decided to tell Eppie that he is her real father and ask her to live with them in the Red House. Godfrey is on the way to Silas Marner's house. Should all the secrets come to light or should they be kept hidden? What decision would Eppie make? Would she leave Silas or stay with him? The students are invited to finish the story as they wish, by different participatory activities in the full and the shortened versions. In the shortened version, they work in groups to decide what Eppie would say if she learnt the secret and what Silas would say to Eppie and Godfrey. The sentences created are shared with the whole group in the form of "dubbing" the still image. The actors provide the still image and the students give them their voices and words. By way of closing the programme, the Facilitator explains that the book written by George Eliot ends completely differently and suggests that the children might want to find out how. In the full version, the students are asked to choose if they want the secret to be revealed or kept hidden and express their decision by a non-verbal symbolic action. Those who

agree that Godfrey should tell Eppie the truth will put a bone on the chair, those who think it is better if Eppie does not learn about her wealthy real father, will leave the bone covered under the chair. This symbolic and non-verbal expression of the students' opinion, instead of a simple discussion, serves multiple purposes at the end of the programme. Firstly, from an educational aspect, it is an in-action participation that reflects the learning-by-doing educational philosophy of TIE. Secondly, from an artistic point of view, the strongly ritualised and non-verbal ending completes the programme's theatricality, and since the ritual is carried out by the students, it involves them in a ritualised theatre act to close the programme for themselves. Finally, and presumably most importantly, the ritual generates the necessary dramatic tension for the ultimate conclusion that the participating children should arrive at. As a follow-up activity, they are invited to finish the story and answer the question in a piece of creative writing whether they would, in Eppie's role and position, stay with Silas Marner or leave him to live in wealth in the Red House with her real father, Godfrey Cass. (Excerpts and samples of the students' responses quoted in the company's pedagogical evaluation of the *Silas Marner* programme can be found on their web-site.)

The counterpart of the introductory speech convention is the characteristically TIE-way of closing the programmes. Only few programmes finish with conventional "theatrical" ending; the performances usually close with the facilitator announcing the end and thanking the students for their contributions. The timing of the facilitator's announcement frequently prevents the audience from applauding and the actors in most programmes do not take a curtain call. This deliberate neglect of a theatre convention signifies a considerably altered audience – performer relationship: the actors do not expect a ceremony where the audience thanks them for their production. Instead, they

express their acknowledgment that the students have worked creatively in partnership with the company.

In-character Interactions in the Models

Audience participation affects the process of acting most when the actors take part in the interactions in character. Several participatory activities contain in-character interactions or in-character facilitation and the same activities appear in more than one model. However, the acting technique in the activity goes through significant alterations as a result of the “rules” of the model in which it is applied. Some activities are incompatible with particular models.

Post-show-workshop model

In Snap’s *Crossing the Line* workshop a student improvises a scene in which Robbie meets his brother, Steve and talks to him about his date with Abbie. As the show does not contain such a scene, and Robbie’s brother is only mentioned but does not appear in the play, his character is taken on by the actress who plays Tash. The actress does not take any steps towards an individual characterisation of Steve. She does not indicate any personal feature (way of speaking, movement or temperament) of the role, but instead, identifying with the role’s social position (elder brother), their relationship (playing higher status, telling Robbie what to do) and the situation (trying to persuade him to join the lads) improvises the dialogue. This kind of improvisation is simple role-play as opposed to acting. John O’Toole explains the difference between the two:

Role-taking may be distinguished from the characterisation work of actors in a theatre by the role-taker being permitted to behave in ways entirely normal to him or her, which will then be appropriate to the role.

This is much more negotiable than a part in a scripted play, and can affect the very narrative of the drama. [...] A participant “steps into the shoes of another” in order to experience *subjectively* some aspect of that other, or the situation in which that other is found. (*The Process of Drama*, 86)

Although role-play is generally considered to be “less difficult” than acting, and is widely used in educational drama classrooms as an accepted means of working with children and young people even with no preliminary dramatic experience at all, it can be quite a challenge for actors when carried out in front of an audience. The most demanding side is to improvise the exact words on the spot in accordance with the given circumstances and the situation. While in acting the dialogue is the starting point, in improvisation it is an end-product. That is why testing the actors’ improvisation skills at the auditions and improving them in the rehearsals are central to the TIE creative process.

Extra scene improvisation is a typical activity of the post-show-workshop model and sometimes also occurs in the Forum Theatre model. In some programmes the actors improvise extra scenes playing the same characters in the workshop as in the show. While in the post-show-workshop model, for example, in Speakeasy’s *Respect*, the actors’ technique is role-play in these extra scenes, in the Forum Theatre model the characterisation is maintained consistently in the improvisations.

In the workshops of Speakeasy’s *Respect* and Snap’s *Crossing the Line* the audience is invited to ask any questions which the characters answer in a hot-seating session. In Snap’s programme the students are divided into three big groups, each joining one character of the play for the first turn of the exercise and, after a 7-8-minute

phase, they swap groups while the students stay at the same place in the same group. Speakeasy's hot-seating session takes place in front of the whole audience.

“Hot-seating” is a common technique used widely in drama education, in drama workshops, in actor training and sometimes also in the rehearsals of traditional performances as well as in TIE. In educational drama and drama workshops, it is a learning tool for all the participants, both the questioner and the questioned: a convention to find out more about a character, to explore hidden values, motivation and other aspects of a role and to help characterisation (see: Kitson and Spiby 62; Neelands, *Beginning Drama* 94; Fleming, *Starting Drama Teaching* 95-97). In actor training it is an exercise for the trainee actor to acquire characterisation skills and in rehearsal rooms it is a means to promote the creative process of building a character.

In the process of a TIE programme, hot-seating is a twofold technique. On the one hand, it provides the students with learning opportunities: it helps them to make sense of the performance they have seen, to gain a deeper insight into the characters' motivations, to clarify uncertain points of the story or to explore the character's way of thinking whose standpoint is questionable. On the other hand, from the actors' point of view, it is a complex and demanding way of performing in front of an audience. The hot-seating session is strongly performative although the activity is not part of the show. The actors are in character, so they have to be consistent with the features by which they have been portraying these characters in the performance. However, some means of outward physical characterisation are taken away by the very nature of the hot-seating technique. Since they are bound to stay seated, they are deprived of characterising through movement even if it was an important means in the show. To remain authentic, the same speech style, register, voice, posture, body language, gestures must be applied and they have to keep to the same way of thinking as the character displayed in the

show. In other words, the actors have to maintain their characters that the audience knows quite well, having observed and dealt with them for the whole programme. In this regard it is acting. However, the actors perform without the aid of a prewritten text, so making up what they should say on the spot engages them in improvisation. Hot-seating is a specific kind of improvisation. Most of the time it is accomplished out of the context of any particular fictional situation, and, since the students remain themselves, not taking on roles, these fictional characters do not have fictional partners to relate to either. The improvisation takes place in the context of real young people asking questions addressed to fictional characters about fictional events. In hot-seating it is even possible to “drop” the outward representation of the character, neglecting to maintain, for example, the characteristic way of speaking or gestures, without losing the believability of the character if that character’s attitude is kept consistent. It is exactly what happens when the hot-seating technique is used in educational drama. Once the character is established, either with or without outward features, the implicit mutual agreement between the person questioned and the rest of the group, represented by the “hot seat”, will maintain the character. Whoever is taking the seat, will “be” the character, and the only task of the person sitting there is to role-play the appropriate attitude and the character’s way of thinking.

In Snap’s *Crossing the Line*, the actors employ very few sharp outwardly physical means of portrayal, and, apart from Tash’s dynamic movement and brisk-walking and Robbie’s odd dancing style, characterisation mostly derives from the characters’ responses to the situations and from relating to the other characters. In comparison, the most dominant element in the questioning sessions is the improvisative verbal content, the actual answers that the characters give to the students’ questions. As some questions tend to relate to the plot, the actors have to “remember” all the facts of

the characters' life story in detail, even the ones that did not occur or were referred to but not completely clarified or specified in the play. They either rely on the clues taken from the play and fill in gaps (as, for example, Robbie with the details of his brother's accident) or make up the entire story from their imagination, as Abbie did talking about her first lovemaking with Robbie. In this regard, the creative process is extended by adding some narrative elements and completing the background information of the play, and the students are involved in the writing process as co-writers contributing by their questions.

The newly improvised story-bits then infiltrate into the existing body of the narrative as "facts", and when similar types of questions occur, the actors recall their previous responses as if they have recollected "memories", or they alter and refine them at will, but do not need to reinvent the plot on the spot. It is apparent that the actors grow more and more confident and fluent in their responses to the recurring questions in the subsequent turns and sessions. However, some of the students' questions are entirely unpredictable, which maintains the freshness and the excitement as well as the challenge of hot-seating for the actors.

Other questions touch on the characters' motivation, the rationale behind their actions, and their opinion about other characters or their emotional response to the events. The answers given on the occasions I witnessed fully reflected the attitude, the way of thinking and the logic of the characters, but none of the three actors attempted to express any emotional identification in the improvisation. The hot-seating technique applied in the post-show-workshop model and in that particular phase of the workshop after a whole series of analytical exercises, allows the characters to take the narrative way of looking back onto the events of the play with "hindsight" and with an emotional

distance, so the level of identification and the intensity of emotional expression are the actors' choice.

In the hot-seating sessions of Snap's *Crossing the Lines* and Speakeasy's *Respect*, the actors who answer the students' questions in character also facilitate the exercise for themselves. They select the next student to put the question and handle the discipline difficulties when necessary. A lot of unforeseen factors might emerge that affect the atmosphere of the question session: the students either take the exercise seriously or might misbehave; there might be irrelevant, silly, provocative, embarrassing, offensive or even hostile questions posed, especially in the case of a negative characters like Tash or Tess. The actors either facilitate the questioning in character or slip out of the character to take on the teacher's role for these facilitating moments. The distinction between the two is slight and delicate, but it can be clearly "seen" and "felt" and can be interpreted through the status – dominant or submissive behaviour – that the actors choose to play when they respond. When disclosing the thoughts, feelings, values, events of the characters covered that far, the actors play an equal or low status, and when they feel it necessary to keep in control, they instinctively raise their status and switch to "play teacher". Hot-seating, however, implies a quite complex, generally reverse teacher-student relationship: the students are the examiners and the actors take the exam, partly because they are cross-examined in character, partly as actors striving to meet the requirements of improvising authentically in front of an audience. The strongest challenge for the actors to face in the hot-seating technique is that while maintaining their characters, they have to relate to their audience as to individuals and as to a group at the same time: something that requires preparation and training.

Hot-seating is an activity typical of the post-show-workshop model. It is incompatible with the merged participation model and unusual in Forum Theatre. When it is built in a programme constructed in the inserted activities model, the disposition of the activity must be cautiously fitted into the structure of the play and the characterisation must be entirely consistent.

Inserted activities model

The junior version of GYPT's *Inside Out* applies a brisk role-questioning exercise similar to the hot-seating technique, but also different from it in quite a few ways. In the participatory phase which explores the developing relationship between Maria and her class at school, the actress stays in Maria's character and, as if they were Maria's classmates, the students can ask Maria any questions they want. The first considerable difference between the two activities is that, as opposed to hot-seating in which the questioners remain themselves, in this role-questioning exercise the students represent a fictional group of children and in-role interact directly with a character of the play. The roles of Maria's classmates are not at all individualised and can be very close to the students' real personalities in terms of their attitude and their state of mind. Even so, the mere process of role-taking on the audience's side creates a fictional situation, i.e., "Maria is talking to her peers who are interested in her experiences and feelings" that would not appear in other versions of hot-seating. The students enter the fictional situation in-role and, as they relate to the character within the situation, it can enhance their emotional and mental involvement. At the same time, it modifies the dynamics of the actor-audience relationship, too. For these couple of minutes, the students become the actor's active partners in carrying out a fictional situation as well as the character's fictional partners within that situation.

The spatial arrangement of the exercise is also different from the usual hot-seating format. Maria is standing surrounded closely by her “classmates”. The proximity suggests a more relaxed and informal atmosphere than, for example, that of the formal, public and exam-like questioning sessions in Snap or in Speakeasy’s workshops in which the students remain in their spectators’ position, while the actors questioned sustaining their characters perform to them. The intimacy created and reinforced by the spatial arrangement encourages empathic questions on the students’ side and also supports the actress to keep in character in a natural way.

Timing and the position of the role-questioning exercise in the structure of the programme define its objectives as well. A hot-seating session after a performance cannot be anything else but reflective as in Snap’s and Speakeasy’s workshops, while placed in the middle of the performance, like here, preceding two important participatory phases, it serves to open up new dimensions of the play for the students, and prepares them for the next participatory bits. From the actor’s perspective, it helps the actor deepen characterisation whilst improvising the answers to the students’ questions.

In the junior version of GYPT’s *Inside Out* when the students hear the news about the decision of the Immigration Office to arrest Maria, the Facilitator asks the students to think of the last sentences that they, in the position of her classmates, would tell Maria when she is leaving school. Then the class-teacher leads Maria round the class, and the students say goodbye to her one by one.

The technique applied here is a version of the dramatic convention called “ritual” frequently used in educational drama (see Neelands, *Beginning Drama* 97). Its function is to slow down the action and create an emotionally charged situation in which the students in role can express their response and reaction to the fiction, and

relate to the character they might, by this time, like and understand. As they are last time in-role in the programme, the students, by this ritual, say goodbye to their roles as Maria's classmates, too, and sum up how they feel as in-role participants before they depart from the fictional situation.

The actress playing Maria stays in character throughout the whole sequence maintaining all her means of characterisation. In this regard, she is acting, but she also makes up her textual responses on the spot, in accordance with the "cues" she gets, improvised by the students in role as her partners. In this situation, however, the greatest challenge for the actress is not the spoken words, but to sustain and express the appropriate emotional state of the character while reacting to the students' individual statements regardless the intensity or the exact nature of the impulses that they offer. These impulses can be quite varied depending on the students' actual level of emotional involvement in the situation. (See Morgan and Saxton 22-35)

In GYPT's *Inside Out* the actors lead different kinds of activities in character both with the students as themselves and also when they take roles. Each interaction affects the acting process in a different way. In a whole-group improvisation of the junior programme the students stay in-role as Maria's classmates while the Boy tells Maria about Joaquim having been arrested because of working illegally in the restaurant. The students engage in an in-role improvisation commenting on the bad news, giving advice to Maria and trying to solve her problem. As the closure of the improvisation, Maria explains why she thinks she must join her brother in jail. The (real) class-teacher is also involved in the improvisation: at the end of the scene she comes in to take Maria with her to the "head-teacher's office". Two actors take part in the whole-group improvisation and both of them facilitate it in character (Maria and the Boy). The Boy brings up different ideas that could save Maria and encourages the

others to join in, while Maria seeks advice in despair and tries to consider which of her classmates' ideas seem to be possible to carry out. The difficulty for the actors in this improvisation derives from the balance they have to maintain between their characters' age-bound (10 year-old) way of thinking and their adult way of thinking driven by educational considerations. They have to decide on the spot how to respond to the students' ideas (for example, "Maria should hide" or "offer money for releasing her brother"), how to impart necessary information (e.g., what the British law contains about asylum-seeking children) and how to reject unrealistic, magic solutions without being too "clever", didactic or discouraging.

Another in-character facilitation activity in GYPT's *Inside Out* is the Journalist's interaction with the students which is significantly diverse in the junior and the senior versions. In the junior programme, after the scene that shows Joaquim and Maria in jail, the Journalist, while writing his report about the latest news, in-character asks the students to give their opinion whether people like Joaquim and Maria should be punished for breaking the law. As the students build up arguments in defence of the characters, the Journalist playing the devil's advocate involves them in a debate, and finally offers them the possibility to write an article in his newspaper about the story in the way as they think about it. The students are not in role in this phase but they take part as themselves interacting verbally with a quite controversial character of the play. While in the previous participatory parts the most highlighted objectives of the exercises were to develop empathy and to express mental and emotional involvement, this exercise calls for the students' reflective thinking as well, and their reasoning skills are engaged and developed in this improvisation.

As for the actor, this participatory phase seems to be the most challenging and complex artistic task in the programme. On the one hand, the Journalist is an

unambiguously negative character, played by exaggerated, nearly caricature-like means of characterisation: strange and funny movements and gestures, a specific, speeded-up way of speaking and characteristic word-usage. These features have to be maintained consistently while communicating with the students. In addition, the character's unsympathetic way of thinking, attitude and behaviour also need to be sustained to remain authentic. On the other hand, the actor has to counterbalance the students' growing frustration, anger and hostility, which the Journalist's behaviour generates in order to hold their attention and willingness to keep arguing and trying to convince him.

The means that the actor uses to strike the proper balance can be clearly isolated. He genuinely listens to the students and keeps in control at the same time. He always acknowledges the students' contribution by repeating or interpreting what was said, and this technique gives him time to think on his feet, and also to express that he is considering the argument. All his responses, however, are rejecting both in respect of their content and his way of delivery. He plays high status, talks to the students from the position of a "knowledgeable adult", teases them, sometimes makes mocking comments or deliberately misinterprets and misuses some of their arguments. Although he tends to soften the external means of characterisation slightly, especially his movement is less exaggerated and more natural during the process of the debate, he consistently maintains the overall communication style of his character. The Journalist is arrogant, provocative and keeps representing a standpoint that ignores the main characters' perspective as well as the students' growing understanding and empathy with those characters. The actor operates with increasing the tension between the Journalist and the students. He heats up the debate, and when it reaches its climax, instead of giving in, coming to a consensus or offering any kind of resolution, he cuts it off saying that if the students are so clever, they can write an article about the story in his newspaper. This

device fulfils a dual function: one is to hand over to the students the responsibility of expressing their opinion in a written form, thus to raise the status of their reflection. The other function is to offer a springboard for the class-teacher for a written follow-up activity. The timing of this closing sentence needs careful consideration and sensitivity on the actor's side. He has to perceive the moment when the students are absorbed enough emotionally, but the discussion has not yet been exhausted, so that the effect of the experience should be likely to last long enough to provide the students with a strong drive to take an action and write an article.

In the junior version, the Journalist is a consistently negative character representing a hostile attitude towards the asylum-seekers, and the students engage in an argument against this way of thinking. All the actor's external means of characterisation (the exaggerated, caricature way of movement and speech or his ritualised physical actions) suggest that this character would not modify his views even as a result of the most efficient reasoning: his dramaturgical function is to involve the students by provoking them. In the senior version, all the Journalist's scenes are the same, except for the last, when his boss wants him to rewrite the latest article to make it even stronger and the Journalist realises that he might have been unfair and pushed too far. In the last participatory part of the programme he seeks advice from the audience what he should do to be loyal to both the main characters and his boss. The motif of getting in trouble with his boss in the end, and changing his attitude for the "better" in the last minutes of the scene makes it possible to invite the students' contribution in the format of seeking their advice.

This shift in the character's attitude, however, contradicts the portrayal throughout the whole performance: there is no motivation to show why the Journalist would change his mind and question what he has done so far. He has not got in touch

directly with the main characters so he cannot be affected by experiencing personally their story in any way. Even the style of acting, especially the gestures, the movement and the ritually repeated physical actions of writing articles highlight that people like him are not likely to do so. The dramatic dilemma created this way does not seem realistic, and consequently, it generates unrealistic contributions from the students, too. They are offered to switch perspective here, but the team's intention with this option is not quite clear: why should the students empathise with a character like the Journalist and consider his problems? Or is the team's message to be conveyed that people like this Journalist eventually get in trouble either with their bosses or with their guilty conscience? Do they, really?

The very nature of this interaction is most challenging for the actor who facilitates participation in character. Seeking advice is just the opposite of provoking an argument in terms of the dynamics of the interaction. The Journalist is unquestionably in charge of the process and he can easily keep to playing high status when he provokes an argument in the junior programme. However, seeking advice in the senior version means that he has to play low status exposed to the quite good sense of justice and fairness of the students who, empathising with the main characters of the play, have grown to dislike the Journalist pretty much. Needless to say, how much harder it is for the actor to keep in control, and how much more advanced skills are required from him to facilitate in character while playing low status, in comparison with the high status player Journalist of the junior version.

Playing a role of low status and to facilitate the drama process from within this low-status role is quite a well-known technique of Drama in Education described and analysed by several experts. It is generally considered to be a very efficient technique, though even its advocates warn that "the teacher needs confidence (in herself and the

class) in order to relinquish her authority. [...] She must be prepared to accept what the class gives. She is on a tight-rope without a net!” (Morgan and Saxton 43-4)

The risk that the drama teacher takes is high in spite of the fact that s/he knows the class very well. S/he can step out of the role and re-establish the real teacher-students power dynamics any time if something goes wrong. For an actor, the degree of risk is even more substantial when lowering his character’s status in the course of an interaction with the audience. Even if the company returns to a school regularly, there is very little chance that they would perform to the same class and meet the same students again. The actor does not know the students s/he works with and lacks the authority s/he could rely on outside the fictional context. In addition, s/he is not supposed to drop the character, even if the students say or do something unexpected or inappropriate. In this particular case, the actor remained in character and kept in control skilfully throughout the whole participatory phase. However, the technique applied raises essential questions regarding preparation and training for this kind of direct interactions with the audience. An awareness of the difference between the two techniques and their implications is indispensable when the actors are involved in facilitating verbal participation in-character.

In-character facilitation is characteristic of the inserted activities and the merged participation models. Both require entirely consistent characterisation as opposed to the post-show-workshop model, in which, if in-character facilitation occurs occasionally, it is the actors’ choice whether to maintain characterisation or to slip out of character and role-play when facilitating the interactions.

Merged participation model

In the immediate version of merged participation model, the complementary narrator’s function increases the complexity of in-character facilitation. In Blahs’ *Silas*

Marner Adam introduces the location of the story by showing the audience the most important places of the village, the market, the church, the Rainbow Inn, the Red House, the stone-pit on the “map” of Raveloe and also describes some people who live there. In addition to the narration, he brings the places and people to life by movement and mime and involves the students in the process. Their activities include mime as well as providing sound effects to accompany Adam’s storytelling. Meeting and interacting with Adam combined with the students’ active physical and vocal involvement in “building up” the village, which is a familiar educational drama technique applied to establish the context for drama, is the first step for the students to enter the world of the fiction.

The actor in this unit plays a triple role: he functions as actor, facilitator and narrator at the same time, telling and enacting the story in character while he facilitates participation also from within character. Strong mime and storytelling skills are indispensable, and his storytelling style must be matched with the means of Adam’s characterisation (voice, speech, dialect, word usage, emotional state and tone), entirely different from the “neutral”, out-of-character narration. The responsibility of engaging the students in imaginative and physical activities for the first time in the programme also lies with him, and it is even more of a challenge due to Adam’s equal status with the students. It is not an authoritative adult, which would be the case with a teacher or a “simple” actor facilitating, but a fictional boy who asks them to shoe a horse or sing out “amen” on their knees at church.

In a couple of minutes, the actor as Adam establishes a friendly relationship with the students, creates an inviting, playful and safe atmosphere for their contributions and orchestrates their participation while maintaining the rhythm, the pace and the intensity of the narration and the scene, without any preliminary negotiation or rehearsal with the

participants. It is clearly visible that the students grow to like him, respond to his jokes with laughter and willingly join in the activities that he offers. In each moment of the interaction, he can engage the students with the fiction, maintain precise characterisation and sustain captivating storytelling at the same time.

In a subsequent participatory unit the students switch perspective and take the role of the village children. Firstly, they participate in a mime sequence in role: led by Adam, they build a snowman near Silas's house. Adam tells and presents to the children of Raveloe how Silas went to the Red House with Eppie and how he met Godfrey.

The actor playing Adam fulfils a triple function in this part again, similarly to the context-building phase: he consistently maintains characterisation while facilitating participation from within the character of Adam, and he also carries on with the in-character narration telling and enacting the story. Adam's narration in this part is even more expressive and intensely physical than in the previous session because its dramaturgical function is to create and increase tension before Silas Marner makes his final decision about the little girl's future.

The next in-character facilitation is also carried out by the actor in character of Adam. He facilitates the "agree-disagree" game in which the students in role of the children of Raveloe discuss Silas as a potential parent. Adam represents the perspective of those who disagree with the idea that Silas Marner would be suitable to bring up a child, and another actor represents the perspective of those who think Silas would be a good parent. They kneel facing each other and the students in role of the village children join and physically gather around the actor whose point of view they can accept. They are encouraged to provide arguments and reasoning to support the perspective they take. When anyone changes his/her mind, s/he goes to support the other group.

The game format gives the TIE team the opportunity to run the debate in a very playful but at the same time entirely dramatic way. A double interaction takes place in which each student is in role arguing with each other and also with the two actors in character. As for the actors, both take part in two simultaneous situations, one being the rehearsed, pre-prepared scene in which their partner is the other actor in character, and the other situation is improvised with the students in role. The actor playing Adam takes the lead initiating new arguments in contradiction with the other character, and simultaneously fulfils an additional function facilitating the students' participation. The challenge for the actor playing Adam derives from the ambiguous standpoint that he represents. He has to balance between arguing convincingly for his character's perspective and encouraging the students to consider both perspectives and also elicit counter-arguments.

The disposition of this activity in the structure of the programme and the perspectives that the students are offered to take here suggest that dramaturgically all the participatory processes point directly to the ultimate decision-making, and prepare the students for the most significant problem of the programme. The students in this game can consider Silas's situation from the position of the informed outsiders from within the fiction. They can choose from two stances: one side is sympathetic with and, relating to the situation emotionally, trusts the central character; the arguments on the other side are rather rational expressing doubts and reservation with regard to Silas. The students take sides according to their actual level of engagement with the fiction and their momentary level of understanding and identification with the main character. This phase provides the basis for a discussion about the problems that Silas Marner might face, and the next participation phase.

In the next participatory unit the students give advice to Silas about how to make his house safe and suitable for a child and help him to put their suggestions into practice through mime and improvisation. An actor facilitates participation in-character and improvises trying out each idea of the students. Then the students take part in a discussion. The students participate in this unit without role taking and interact as themselves with the actors who are in characters of Silas Marner and Eppie, the three-year-old girl.

On the actors' side, in-character improvisation requires consistency in maintaining the characterisation without the aid of the prewritten text as well as extra attention and careful listening to the individual students, and also the capability of accepting them as partners in the improvisation. The two actors have to fulfil divergent functions. The one, who plays Silas and facilitates participation at the same time, has to rely on the students' initiatives, accept their suggestions and transform their verbal contributions into manageable in-action tasks that can be tried out. The challenge again is to be non-selective and non-judgemental, even if the idea offered by a student would be unacceptable for the character. Silas would not let Eppie cry unnoticed, but when a student advises him to do so, he has to try and ignore her. If Silas asks for the students' advice, he is supposed to take into account all the suggestions given to solve his problem. The actress playing Eppie, on the other hand, has to find the right balance between accepting and rejecting the ideas offered. It means that the educational-artistic decision – which solution she lets to be efficient with the little girl and for how long – is in her hands. For example, when a safety fence is built for her, Eppie climbs over; when it is built higher, she does not stop crying etc. She has to be imaginative and inventive in her reactions (as three-year-olds really are) to make it difficult enough for the students to solve Silas's problem, and also to encourage more and more clever contributions. In

addition, the seesaw improvisation is two-directional with Silas and the students as her acting partners.

In some activities, the students' contributions are incorporated into the acting process by a particular technique. After a mime sequence of Silas counting his gold, a discussion takes place while the gold-counting mime sequence is repeated. How does Silas feel about his money? What does he think? What does he say? The students suggest what Silas might think and say and Silas utters as well as enacts the statements one by one, as if they were his thoughts and words. This is an educational drama convention called "thought-tracking", though in a more complex and strongly theatricalised form. The representation of the character in a particular situation is shared between the actor and the students in a specific two-directional way. Firstly, the students interpret what they see the actor doing and hear the Narrator saying, and understand what is going on in Silas's mind. Then they take the character's perspective imagining his thoughts and feelings, and although they are invited to express them verbally, the actual role is not offered to them to take and act out. The physical and emotional representation of the character remains with the actor. So far, it is not more than the simple educational drama convention. Theatricality comes in when the actor repeats the students' words and brings them to life. The text is added to the non-verbal acting process, as if the students prompted the lines one by one, and the actor implements the additional text to complete his movement, body language, gestures and facial expression that represent the situation and the character's feelings. In this sense, the students are co-creators completing the so far incomplete process with the exact words missing. This acting process is the opposite of the conventional way where all the non-verbal means of expression derive from the exploration, interpretation and presentation of the pre-written words of the character.

The greatest challenge for the actor derives from the immediacy of this technique. He has to perform the students' lines authentically, adding the appropriate intonation, volume and emotional tone, and match them with his movement, gestures and facial expression, without having the opportunity to experiment with and practise the text or at least think it over. Another challenge is rooted in the educational stance of the company advocating that all the students' contributions are equally welcome and should be accepted. There are no right or wrong answers and no initial selection is made measuring the appropriateness of the students' contributions. This principle related to this technique increases substantially the degree of artistic risk that the actor has to face, and considerable flexibility is required from him to be able to bring to life even the most unexpected or extreme suggestions. On the other hand, it is important to mention that the safety net, which serves to counterbalance the artistic risk of this technique, is the programme structure itself. Even in the shortened version, a very slow and completely gradual context-building process (meeting the main character, building up the village, furnishing the cottage, observing Silas's life, etc.) is offered to help the students to accept and engage with the fiction, and empathise with the central character. By the time of this activity, the students are supposed to reach a level of engagement that would stimulate appropriate and meaningful contributions to the shared thought-tracking exercise.

A similar technique is used combined with narration and out-of-character facilitation after the mime sequence of Silas discovering that his money has been stolen. The scene is accompanied by the other actors singing the Loss-song and ends with Silas' scream of loss. The students describe the scream of Silas, and then they create a text-movement-sound composition in four groups to express the feelings of Silas at the moment of loss and to describe his scream. Each group is facilitated by an actor. When

the students give descriptions of Silas Marner's scream and his feelings at the moment of loss, the actor who facilitates the students' contributions repeats the students' statements one by one in a heightened style adding the same emotionally coloured tone and expression that is always used by the Narrators telling the story. This technique highlights the importance of the students' thoughts, and giving them the same status as that of all the other texts in the programme, it unifies and builds them in by the mode of the actor's expression. Similarly to the previous technique, when Silas talked to his gold, it also makes the students co-creators, but now the perspective that they take is different. Instead of adding the character's exact words and thus identifying with his perspective, they take a sympathetic outsider's perspective reflecting on the character's emotions. The technique requires similar improvisational skills from the actor to that of the shared thought-tracking exercise, but this time he improvises out of character as a narrator while he facilitates the process as well.

Forum Theatre as a single technique and as a model

Forum Theatre is a self-contained model of audience participation, but its central activity is frequently used as a single technique combined with other activities within the post-show-workshop and the inserted activities models to explore a particular motif of the play; similarly to the convention used in educational drama under the same name without capitalization (described e.g., by Kitson and Spiby 62). However, the acting processes of the activity differ in the two models.

In Snap's *Crossing the Line* workshop the students offer ideas how they would change the story to improve the situation of the characters. The scene then is replayed in its altered version with a student joining the actors in the acting space and dictating the new lines that the character should say while the actor performs them accordingly. This

activity combines an unconventional variant of Forum Theatre exercise with the shared thought-tracking technique discussed above.

The new text is not the actor's improvisational words reflecting an altered situation, but is "prompted" to him line-by-line as if it were written, but without allowing him to prepare for presentation. He has to perform the new text authentically on the spot, for instance, adding the appropriate intonation, volume and emotional tone and also adjust his whole behaviour and emotional state, find the facial expression, gestures, movement to match the newly prompted lines. So far, it is a similar technique to that of the thought-tracking in *Silas Marner*. However, the actor here also has to relate to another character and to the situation in which they are. The actor improvising in the role of the brother is also in a strange, though in a way less difficult, position than the "doubled Robbie". Having two partners in the same character, one saying the words which the other echoes in an exaggerated and shaped way, slows down the dialogue, giving the actor more time to reply, but breaks the natural rhythm of the dialogue. The process resembles the situation of two people talking with the help of an interpreter: the actor playing Robbie is the interpreter, the student is the foreigner who understands but does not speak the language and the other actor playing the brother is the native speaker. The natural flow of the conversation keeps faltering, as the talking parties need to hold back their reactions until the interpreter translates the message. As a result of the out-of-rhythm dialogue, the actors' technique in this interaction is closer to role-play than to acting.

The inserted activities model calls for a different improvisation technique. In the senior version of GYPT's *Inside Out*, the actor playing the Boy in the forumed scene has to keep to his character consistently while everything around him is changing: he gets a new partner (either male or female) in Maria's role, to whom he needs to relate

and adjust, just as if the student were another performer. He has to understand the idea that the student offers as well as the underlying intention and decide on the spot which route he should take in his response to serve the educational aim best. Maria's text becomes completely different improvised by the student so the actor must change his lines in the dialogue accordingly in order to make sense. The most difficult challenge for the actor, however, derives from the changing power dynamics of the scene in the course of the re-run versions. He must perceive exactly how "strong" or "weak" psychologically the new Maria is, what manoeuvres she uses to get her way, and the actor should play his status refined accordingly. The shift must be psychologically true, and, at the same time, the actor has to find the delicate balance between maintaining his character consistently, which is the artistic requirement, and altering his original behaviour to achieve the educational objective.

Usually, in the scenes that are examined through Forum technique in other programmes, for example, in Speakeasy's *Respect*, the protagonist is "oppressed", in other words, plays low status and displays submissive behaviour while the other character is the dominant one in the situation. When the protagonist is replaced, her status is raised and the character is empowered by assertiveness: she will be able to stand up for herself. In this particular scene, however, the power dynamics are different: the problem is that Maria stands up for herself, but chooses an inappropriate way to do so. Therefore, when the students take over Maria's role, they all try and play lower status experimenting with different tactics, which makes the actor's task interacting with the students even more complicated. How to relate to a more and more submissive protagonist that would be appropriate both educationally and artistically?

Strangely enough, in the particular programme I observed, the more submissively the student-Maria behaved, the more aggressive and rude the Boy's

reactions grew. This shift contradicted the characterisation preceding and following the Forum phase, and also felt psychologically unjustified. Even the participating students perceived and commented on this move, saying that although their original intention was to take the Boy's remarks easy and avoid a fight at all costs in Maria's role, they felt the Boy's behaviour was very frustrating and unfair. Though the exercise offered the students the opportunity to experience and understand Maria's feelings, it did not result in finding effective tactics to improve her situation, which would have been the aim of applying the Forum technique. The character of the Boy, however, changed considerably on that particular occasion and became more negative in the process of the interactions between the actor in character and the audience in-role.

As opposed to the post-show-workshop model, in which role-playing technique is entirely acceptable when certain scenes are formed, in the inserted activities model the actors have to improvise consistently maintaining all the elements of characterisation but without the "expansion" of the character which the Forum Theatre model requires.

With the first spect-actor going onto the stage to take over the protagonist's role, the rehearsed and fixed scene becomes completely unpredictable. Improvisation requires flexibility in giving and taking, the partner's offers have to be accepted and the changes in the partner's tone, verbal or non-verbal expression and actions should be reflected upon. The Forum rules require that the oppressors should not change the objectives of their characters, should be consistent with the coherence of their characterisation and should make an effort to keep the story on the original track. But following this Forum rule easily results in ignoring the new partner's altered behaviour, or in terms of improvisation "blocking" the partner. It is not only strictly forbidden in improvisation, but also would lead to the failure of a Forum session, as it would not

make sense to run a Forum session if we supposed the transformation of the protagonist's situation to be impossible. Boal's advice is that "actors must be extremely dialectical" (*Games* 237) encouraging the spect-actors to break the oppression and hindering them to achieve it at the same time. He leaves it to the actors to find the balance between the consistency of characterisation and the flexible usage of improvisation techniques. This demand, in its aim pedagogic in the first place to enhance the students' learning to find more difficult solutions, poses significant artistic challenge regarding characterisation. The actors need to "stretch" and refine the portrayal in the improvisations without crossing the borderline of their characters' personalities.

In NT Education's *Wam Bam!* the choice of the different protagonist greatly affects the actors' work in the improvised scenes of the Forum. It seems much easier for the rest of the actors to keep in character than it would be in a usual Forum. As the students only experiment with the variations of reasoning in the role of Tony, it is only the rational thinking of the other characters (Skye, Ashley and the Mum) which the students try and affect. As Tony does not alter his behaviour or challenge them emotionally, the actors in the improvisations do not need to find the balance between adjusting their behaviour and keeping to the characterisation. They can simply agree or disagree and reject or take Tony's advice.

Acting Techniques and Participation in the Models

The processes of actual participation affect the elements of acting to a different extent in each model imposing distinctive tasks on the actors. The acting techniques in the interactions also reflect the modified requirements of the models. For example, in the post-show-workshop model (in Snap's *Crossing the Line* and Speakeasy's *Respect*) the actors may choose to role-play in the hot-seating sessions or in the forumed scenes,

but in the inserted activities model (in GYPT's *Inside Out* and Catalyst's *Looking Good*) the characterisation must be consistent because the show goes on after the activity.

In the post-show-workshop model, the students' contributions do not exert any influence on the show, but some activities may open up and complete the background context of the play, deepen the actors' understanding and, indirectly, enrich the portrayal of the characters. Thus, the benefit of the contributions can be utilised in the subsequent performances with the next audience. In comparison with the other three models, the actors are involved in significantly fewer in-character interactions in which they are expected to maintain the character to a lesser extent while interacting with the audience. The most frequently applied technique in the interactions is role-play rather than full-rounded characterisation. In the in-character interactions of the post-show-workshop model, the actors improvise in front of the audience outside the actual situations of the play and the process of the performance and all activities are reflective. In-character facilitation is exceptional; the bulk of the interactions is out-of-character facilitation.

The effects of audience participation on the acting process are much more direct and tangible in the other three models than in the post-show-workshop model as a result of the students entering the fictional world and actually physically stepping into the acting space. The actors often improvise in character with the students in role. In the inserted activities model, participation considerably modifies the acting process through altering the wording of the dialogues, the characters' spatial disposition, their relationships, the power dynamics and their attitudes; the atmosphere of certain encounters, the emotional load of particular scenes, as well as the tone and the delivery of speech. Some of these alterations can be expected, others spring from the moment,

completely unforeseen and the actors adjust to the new elements and improvise accordingly.

The students' contributions and the co-creative process is a structured and choreographed component in the performance style of the merged participation model. Each participatory element fits in a gap that has been left blank for the students to fill in. There is always something missing that the students are invited to provide: "actors" to play the people in the palace, the king's soldiers or the poor; the children from the village, ideas to try out, images to demonstrate feelings, words that a character thinks or says, as well as movements and mime to show actions. These contributions are integrated into the acting process through the actors' ritualised improvisation.

The integration process from the actors' perspective differs considerably in the "rehearsed" variant (*King Lear*) and the immediate version of the merged participation model (*Silas Marner*). In the former, pre-prepared, separately practised elements are merged. In the latter, the improvised, unforeseen fragments are joined together: the students' words are acted out by the character or repeated by the Narrator; the students' images or movements are put together with the character's words or are accompanied by the Narrator's storytelling, etc. In this improvisational process, the actors rely on and adjust to the students' creativity, while constantly matching their contributions with the artistic style of the performance. The immediate version of the merged participation model is absolutely unique from the actors' point of view: they keep swapping perspectives while playing different characters. This particular programme includes a specific style of acting, too, in which the means of characterisation are shared with the students; the actors are continuously expected to listen to, react to and incorporate the students' contributions into the acting process in a heightened, artistically shaped form. This acting style requires an elaborated and cautiously designed "choreography" of

characterisation, with one constituent always improvised: either the words or the image. Furthermore, they all carry out three different functions of actor, facilitator and narrator; either in turns or combined: narrator in character, facilitator in character, narrator and facilitator out of character as well as narrator plus facilitator in character. It is also the narrators' task to highlight the students' contributions, merging them with the actors' work by means of the distinguished performing style.

There are two shows performed in the first and the second parts of the Forum Theatre model. The first performance is definite, complete and has been thoroughly rehearsed. Actual audience participation makes it a completely new performance of a totally different play. Every scene in which the central character is taken over by a student is an improvisation that has a considerable impact on the rest of the performance. For the actors staying in their character while improvising, even the other actors, who play the same characters as before in the first show, will be genuinely different: they all adjust to the new protagonist in every possible aspect. The show-part of the Forum Theatre model is simpler for the actors because the functions are distributed, and the closed-structured performance is separated from the participatory part. The first part of the programme is pure conventional acting in character for the whole company; the facilitator is not involved in the performance and does not take on roles either. Except for the lead, whose role as the protagonist is taken over by the students in turn, the Forum session with the audience's interventions is rather complex for the actors. The whole performance is replayed again (quite a demanding task, even on its own), and besides acting, they improvise in-character adjusting to their new partners, the new attitude of the protagonist, new text, new actions, new directions of the plot, additional situations that all create new power dynamics between the characters. They are expected to stay in character and be consistent in every tiny feature,

while each aspect creating the fictional world of the performance is constantly being modified around them. Meanwhile, they have to encourage and support the students' contributions through expanding and stretching their own possibilities of characterisation as well as find the limits of their characters' personalities while experimenting with them in the interactions.

Restructuring the Programme

In participatory TIE, work on the programme continues after it is presented to an audience for the first time. Some companies try out the piece with students before the official opening of the programme or before the school tour starts, others reserve some days with no performances for extra rehearsals during the school tour. Most directors and also the actors involved monitor the programmes regularly and hold formal or informal team-meetings to discuss the problems and make the necessary changes. The artistic and educational implications of audience participation demand a prolonged creative process, but the extent of the ongoing work varies according to the models.

Programmes constructed in the inserted activities model need restructuring after the premiere and also between the subsequent performances more often than programmes in the other three models, regardless the educational or artistic quality of the particular programme. The need of restructuring derives from the nature and the complexity of the model itself, but certain alterations inevitably improve the artistic/educational efficiency as well. Restructuring usually affects the dramaturgy of the play, the participation structure, the actor-audience interactions or the combination of the three.

The creative team of *And Now What?* at CTC scheduled their school tour with an additional rehearsal day inserted after the first day of performances and they went back to rehearsals after having performed the original version of the programme twice.

At the end of the first week, one more restructuring proved to be necessary in the light of the team's experiences with the students. A comparison of three subsequent versions of the programme illustrates how the company altered the participation structure and the play as well as how the actor-audience interactions changed in the restructured programme.

Original version

Introduction

Characters talk to their groups

Scene 1 In 2004, on the beach – the friends meet when they are 30

Scene 2 In 1991, on the beach - the night of the exam results and the tragedy

Scene 3 That afternoon - what happened at home?

Ben's story, Seren's story, Ioan's story, Caryl's story

Scene 4 The funeral

Scene 5 Three days later, on the beach - The promise

Participation 1 - What shall I do? - The characters ask for the students' advice

Scene 6 The dilemmas – Soliloquies with the students ideas built in

Ioan, Caryl, Ben, Seren

Scene 7 In 2004, on the beach - friends tell their life stories to each other

Participation 2 - How happy are the characters?

Q&A describe your character

Who is the happiest and why?

What they should do to be happier? Facilitator asks for the students' advice

Scene 8 The decisions - Soliloquies with the students' ideas built in

Restructured version 1

Introduction

Scene 1 Ben introduces the characters

Scene 2 - What happened at home in the afternoon of the exam results?

Ben's story, Seren's story, Ioan's story, Caryl's story

Scene 3 The night of the exam results and the tragedy on the beach

Participation 1 - What shall we do now? Who shall I tell about the tragedy? What shall

I do with my life? - The characters ask for the students' advice

Scene 4 The dilemmas - Soliloquies with the students ideas built in

Ioan, Caryl, Ben, Seren

Scene 5 The funeral

Scene 6 Three days later, on the beach - The promise

Scene 7 In 2004, on the beach - the friends meet when they are 30

They tell their life stories to each other

Participation 2 - How happy are the characters?

Q&A describe your character

Who is the happiest and why? Facilitator asks for the students' opinion

Restructured version 2

Introduction

Scene 1 Ben introduces the characters

Scene 2 - What happened at home in the afternoon of the exam results?

Ben's story, Seren's story, Ioan's story, Caryl's story

Participation 1 - What shall I do with my life? - The characters ask for the students'

advice

Scene 3 The dilemmas - Soliloquies with the students ideas built in

Ioan, Caryl, Ben, Seren

Scene 4 The night of the exam results on the beach and the tragedy

Participation 2 - What shall we do now? Who shall I tell about the tragedy? - The

characters ask for the students' advice

Scene 5 The dilemmas - Soliloquies with the students ideas built in

Ioan, Caryl, Ben, Seren

Scene 6 The funeral

Scene 7 Three days later, on the beach - The promise

Scene 8 In 2004, on the beach - the friends meet when they are 30

They tell their life stories to each other

Participation 3 - Facilitator asks for the students' opinion

Q&A describe your character

Who is the happiest and why?

What has each character gain or lose by telling Gareth's mum what actually happened that night on the beach?

The play tells the story of four Welsh teenagers, Ioan, Caryl, Ben and Seren, who celebrate their exam results in August 1991 and face the question of what to do with their lives in the future. Celebration and drinking ends with the death of their peer, Gareth and the tragedy, which was their fault, changes their relationship for ever. The play applies narrative techniques: the characters tell the audience their stories which come to life as they speak. It covers three dramatic dilemmas, a general, an immediate and a long-term problem: the characters have to make choices about their careers, have to decide right after the tragedy whether to reveal or conceal why Gareth died and also whether to keep or break their promise that they gave each other. All the three dilemmas provide opportunities for inserted audience participation and the three versions differ most in the choice of their central dilemma.

The original play focuses on the characters' general problem: audience participation is structured around the characters seeking the students' advice what they

should do after school; should they stay in the village with their families and work there or should they try and get a place at a college or university and leave home. In the second participatory activity the audience evaluates the characters' choices symbolically placing them on a happiness scale and also gives them advice again on what the characters should do to become happier. The problem with this participation structure is that the dilemma is too broad and the students' perspectives of the "on-looking outsiders" from which they advise the characters at this particular phase of the play inevitably lead to superficial contributions. In the original version the tragedy remains entirely marginal.

The first restructured version brings the characters' immediate moral dilemmas and the consequences of their decisions into the focus of the participatory activities. They turn to the audience for advice at the most emotionally charged moment of the play, right after Gareth's death, thus the scene and the subsequent actor-student interactions become the climax of the play. In-character facilitation combined with the characters' sustained emotional state of shock, despair and confusion engage the students in the situation and develop their empathy with the characters which leads to more in-depth contributions. The problem with this version is that this very intense participatory activity is the first in the programme and its disposition in the middle leaves the students unprepared for the interactions.

The second restructured version redresses the balance containing three participatory phases evenly positioned at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the programme. The activity of the original version (advice-giving on the characters' career choices) is re-inserted as the first participatory phase thus preparing the audience for the second, more intense participation. The third, long-term moral dilemma inherent in the play comes into focus at the end of the third participatory phase in a discussion

about what each character would gain or lose by telling Gareth's mother what actually happened that night on the beach.

Changing the focus of participation altered the central theme and also the ultimate message of the play. Accordingly, the play structure also needed reconstruction. The original play structure is non-chronological: it starts in 2004 when the friends meet thirteen years after the tragedy. Flashback is used to show the night of Gareth's death, the day of the exam results and the funeral. The last scene takes place again in the present and the dramatic story is continued from the moment it stopped in the first scene. This play structure is incompatible with the inserted activities participation model in which the ultimate aim is that the students should develop the dramatic story by their contributions. Especially the particular activity in which the students suggest what the characters should do as a next step after Gareth's death requires a chronological sequence of the scenes. Thus, the play structure had to be adjusted to the participation model even at the expense of a dramaturgically more complex and more exciting composition in order to make the participation structure and the interactions work.

The activities in the three versions are same: the students give advice to the characters; but the content of the exercise and the techniques that the actors use in the interactions slightly alter in accordance with the modified participation structure. For the actors each variant is complex and challenging. The audience is divided into four groups and the actors facilitate in character: each character talks to 15-20 students, listen and respond to their suggestions. They also have to remember everything that the students say because immediately after the interactions they improvise soliloquies based on the conflicting pieces of advice they get. The soliloquies take the form of thinking aloud and the actors weave in not just the gist of the students' thoughts, but also their

exact words, expressions and sentences. Thus, the students contribute as “co-playwrights” in the interactions.

This technique is somewhat akin to the shared thought-tracking activity used in Blah’s *Silas Marner*. However, in *Silas Marner*, another actor facilitates the process in which the actor incorporates each student’s lines one by one, nearly simultaneously with the utterance; while here the actors in character facilitate the activity for themselves, listen to all the suggestions first and select the ones they build in their speeches. This activity is more complicated in terms of the in-character facilitation, remembering the suggestions and composing a coherent text with no time to think; but it is nevertheless safer due to the opportunity to select from the contributions. Even the extreme or inappropriate contributions can be utilised as an educational tool: it is a revealingly powerful effect to hear one’s idea echoed word-by-word as a character’s thought, performed by an actor in front of the whole audience. The educational power of this activity is fully exploited in the second restructured version in which the students learn the “rule of the game” during the first, emotionally neutral (career advice) activity; taste the joy and the responsibility of their inbuilt suggestions and, with the experience of how important their creative contributions for the characters are, they take part in the same activity in the next, emotionally charged moment of the play.

From the actors’ perspective, the contexts of the two activities and the characters’ emotional state in the interactions differ considerably: seeking career advice is out of situation, rational and emotionally neutral; asking for tragedy-handling advice remains in the actual situation of the play and the actors have to sustain the characters’ emotional state in the interactions. However, an expert questioning technique is vital in both variant: the actors elicit the “raw material” for their speeches. Only open

questioning lead to creative contributions and help the actors fulfil their functions as “co-playwrights”. Composing soliloquies of “yes” and “no” answers is not possible.

In the original version it is problematic to gain the audience’s empathy; in the first restructured version it is difficult to maintain the emotional state and at the same time to keep the ideas on the right track and elicit responsible contributions as the students do not yet feel the weight of their suggestions. The second restructured version strikes the balance for the actors as well. The interactions are built up gradually: in the first neutral activity they can test the water with the students and also tune in the open questioning and composing the speeches; and then they “add” the emotional colours in the second interactions.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS

Paradoxes of Participatory TIE

Theatre in Education is applied theatre: a specific genre of theatre whose interdisciplinarity permeates each moment of its creative processes and each facet of its artistic products. The most characteristic feature of participatory TIE, that the company invites the audience to contribute actively to the programme, is driven by educational purposes in the first place, but also leads to contradictions and artistic dilemmas which the creative team has to resolve. The following paradoxes of participatory TIE comprise the most essential theoretical and practical artistic dilemmas of the genre and the reflections on contemporary practice focus on the characteristic problem-areas.

Paradox 1: creation in the absence of the co-creators. Participation in TIE implies that the students' involvement exceeds the conventional individual receptive-interpretive audience's functions and takes the form of verbal, physical and role-taking interventions in the theatre event insomuch that the artistic product of TIE is incomplete without the students' co-creative contributions. Paradoxically, the role of the audience is that of the co-creators, but the creative process takes place in their absence. The actual completion of the artistic product is shifted from the creative process to the presentation phase and the theatrical product becomes complete in the course of the actor-audience interactions. Therefore, the companies have to counterbalance the absence of the students during the creative process.

In contemporary practice the companies generally solve the educational side of this problem: most of the devising and rehearsal procedures rightly focus on what the students will do in the participatory activities. Cautiously designed fixed participatory structures (the models) determine for the "absentees" whether they explore, develop, co-

create or change the dramatic entity. However, contemporary practice lacks a consistent and coherent methodology for the actors' preparation for the interactions: the creative process (including the auditions, the play devising and the rehearsals) is far too arbitrary and experimental. In other words, the actor-audience interactions are educationally structured from the students' perspective, but the actors need more structured guidance for the artistic decisions they are supposed to make in the interactions.

Paradox 2: spontaneity vs. predictability of audience contributions. Even when the framework of participation is cautiously designed, the actual interactions between the actors and the audience are spontaneous, thus unpredictable. Paradoxically, the more times the company performs the programme, the more predictable and even over-familiar the audience's reactions become to the cast in the long series of school tours. Therefore, the companies strive to counterbalance unpredictability in the rehearsals, but have to maintain spontaneity in the actual interactions.

In contemporary practice, preparation for the unpredictable frequently fritters away a lot of artistic energy and takes up a lot of rehearsal time. The actors' fear of the unknown is rooted in their script-based training and their lack of experience in improvisative theatre. Once the rehearsals finish some actors tend to relate to the programme as "ready" and the necessary changes after the formal opening of the programme feel and seem as failure. Sometimes, some actors' routine creeps into the interactions in the course of a long tour.

Paradox 3: participation by choice vs. by rule. "The first condition of theatre is that it is by choice" (Neelands 44) in terms of both receiving and making the theatre experience. Paradoxically, TIE audience has no choice in either function: attending a TIE programme is a school-bound activity for the students and they are supposed to contribute actively and creatively as the programme structure requires. As the

prerequisite of creation is the creator's intention, the TIE team has to "persuade" the students to participate and gain the students' willingness to co-operate by the artistic and educational means of the programme. Therefore, the creative team must elicit and structure audience participation and the actors must be capable of facilitating it, which requires specific skills on the actors' part.

In contemporary practice it is hard to find qualified actors with all the necessary interaction skills, therefore, either acting skills or teaching skills are the priority of casting. This is the most serious problem of the genre in which the gap is huge between the optimum expectations and realistic possibilities. The artistic directors strive to counterbalance this shortage by providing the inexperienced actors with some preparation and practice for the interactions taking time away from the rehearsals. These short-term efforts unquestionably serve the particular programme as an emergency aid; but do not substitute for specialist training. The other method is to invite back actors with TIE experience, but the extant funding system prevents the artistic directors from offering the actors long-term contracts and developing a permanent company, however desirable it would be.

Paradox 4: young vs. experienced cast. The "rule" of TIE is that the main characters' ages must reflect the target audience's age. Paradoxically, young characters in the TIE plays and also the circumstances of TIE work demand young cast, but the complexity of the genre requires highly experienced and skilled actors.

In contemporary TIE practice actors young enough to look authentic tend to be inexperienced; if they are employed, a lot of rehearsal time is taken up to train them to acquire their missing skills. Due to the hardship of the work and the circumstances, most qualified actors do not take on TIE work at all or leave TIE as soon as they get a better offer.

Paradox 5: collective art form vs. individual responsibility of the actors. Theatre in general is a collective art form; educational theatre with its audience participating is even more collective: in addition to the artistic product, the company shares the creative process with the audience to a different extent according to the participatory model. Paradoxically, the more collectivistic the model, the more individual responsibility taking it requires from the actors when they make artistic decisions in the interactions and function as “playwrights”, “dramaturges”, “directors”, “group-leaders” and “co-actors” in the improvisations.

Contemporary practice does not address this problem at all. TIE actors have to draw on their skills and talent without any structured training or genuinely sufficient preparation. They rely on their instincts and sixth senses, improve in the process and gain experiences “by doing”. I would argue that the only efficient long-term resolution of the problem could be a specialist TIE training focusing on the actors’ core skills vital for participatory TIE:

- acting (characterisation)
- in-character improvisation
- group-leading in and out of character
- working with different age groups of children and young people
- working as part of a team
- group-devising and structuring participatory activities
- understanding the artistic-educational nature of TIE

Paradox 6: audience size and the artistic/educational quality. TIE is a socially useful art form. The more students have access to participatory TIE, the better, but

paradoxically, increasing the size of the audience is counter-productive for participation and corrupts the artistic quality of the programme.

The optimum audience size both artistically and educationally is not more than 30 students at a time, but the class-size format has financial implications; in contemporary TIE practice most companies do not have access to necessary funding.

A Model-centred Typology of the Creative Process of TIE

Contemporary TIE practice faces a lot of artistic dilemmas which partly derive from the paradoxes of the genre, and partly from the practicalities rooted in the present circumstances of TIE work in Britain. Some of these problems cannot be solved without essential changes in the funding system or in the organisational structure of educational theatre – both inevitably falling outside the competence of the present study. Reconsidering some other dilemmas rooted in the paradoxes of the genre, with a different approach, however, may be instrumental in resolving some artistic problems.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I analysed TIE programmes related to the four participatory models which I identified and classified in Chapter 1. The same model-centred approach is applicable to formulate the typology of the creative processes of educational theatre. The participatory models of educational theatre differ in respect of

- the complexity of structuring the participation matched with the play structure
- the complexity of the preparation/rehearsal requirements for the interactions
- devising and rehearsal time required
- minimal and optimum frequency of interaction types
- the actors' skills requirements
- devising and rehearsal methodology most efficient for the model
- model-bound requirements of restructuring and monitoring the programmes

- artistic advantages and disadvantages of the model
- the creative team's level of experience necessary to make the model work.

The post-show-workshop model is comparatively simple to structure: it consists of a show plus a drama class focusing on the central wrong decision(s) of the play. Working in this model, devising is not necessary: a pre-written script can be performed if the play is structured to suit the model. If devised, no need of the actors' involvement in the devising: it saves the actors' energy and rehearsal time. Once the play is suitable to stimulate participation in the workshop, the show can be rehearsed separately. Therefore, working in this model requires the shortest rehearsal time of the four models with a rehearsal methodology same as in conventional theatre. If necessary, this model allows for isolating acting from workshop-leading so that neither side of the programme (artistic and educational) should be compromised. If the cast's skills are single-sided, actors and workshop leaders can be different people thus, separate auditions can be held for the actors and the workshop-leaders. In addition, this model can do without in-character interactions with the audience if the actors are not up to it or are not comfortable with in-character improvisation or in-character facilitation. Only the workshop needs (if any) restructuring and monitoring on tours. The inevitable disadvantage of the model is that it is the least artistically exciting participatory structure of the four, both for the audience and the team. The post-show-workshop model can be recommended to inexperienced or new companies to start with.

The inserted activities model is very complex and demanding regarding both the creative process and the actual course of the programme. The participation structure and the activities have to be devised prior to or parallel with the play: "inserted" does not mean "inserted when the play is ready". Very few playwrights can work successfully in this model and it is nearly hopeless to adjust a pre-written play script to its

requirements. Consequently, devising is a useful method to create the play in this model, but the process tends to be time-consuming and fiddly as there is no elaborated “recipe” of how to do it most efficiently. The actors do not need to be expert devisers: the process can be led by a dramaturge, director or playwright, but the actors’ creative contribution to the devising is desirable. This model contains all the three interaction types, therefore, all the members of the cast must be skilled actors, workshop-leaders and improvisers and also must have a good practical sense of dramaturgy on which they can draw when making artistic decisions in the interactions. After the first series of performances several restructurings may be necessary and monitoring and also regular feedback are vital for both the artistic and the educational quality. The greatest disadvantage of the model is that it is the easiest to get it wrong. To work in the inserted activities model can only be recommended to highly experienced companies.

Merged participation model is again a very complex and demanding model. Artistically, it is the most exciting of the four providing the team with opportunities to experiment with several activities and theatrical forms which can be highly symbolic and poetic. Except for the TIE adaptation of classic plays, group-devising is crucial in this model and participation structure as well as the activities have to be devised prior to or parallel with the performative parts. A long and demanding creative process can be expected and the actors’ full intellectual and creative input is indispensable. The model contains all the three interaction types; therefore, all members of the cast must be skilled actors, workshop-leaders as well as improvisers and additional skills, such as storytelling, in-character narration etc., are also necessary. Once the performative and the participatory elements are constructed properly adjusted to the model requirements, the structure will hold the programme, thus, no on-foot restructuring or in-action dramaturgical decisions are required from the actors. However, alterations may be

necessary at the beginning of the tour and monitoring the actors' work is vital. A disadvantage of the model is that an advanced level of all the skills is indispensable for the whole cast and the model requires a very good director. The merged participation model is strictly for excellent professionals!

The Forum Theatre model is simple to structure, but the dramaturgical rules of the model must be followed precisely. From an artistic aspect, simplicity of the dramatic structure is definitely disadvantageous. The nature of the situation, reduced to only two clearly recognisable antagonistic forces clashing, as well as the power dynamics interpreted from only one aspect, which is the social situation of the characters, weakens the artistic effect. Polarisation and inflexibility of status indicate the lack of complexity in the characters' relationships and need to be compensated by the richness of characterisation and a subtle, psychologically underpinned motivation system of the characters. In other words, the simplified dramatic structure is a skeleton and other artistic means of drama (the problem, the context, the characters, the plot) should add flesh and blood to the play. However, artistic disadvantages serve educational purposes. On the recipients' side, the situation is easily recognisable. The intention of the characters and their relationship are not difficult to follow and the pattern in the protagonist's decision-making errors invites participating. On the devisers' side, the rules formulate a firm structure that is easy to construct and is applicable to any issue. Structural restrictions are safe guidelines for devising. They help to structure the opportunities for the audience participation and, at the same time, leave space for enriching the skeleton of the play at will. Guided group-devising is recommended and it needs a lead dramaturge-director experienced in the model's dramatic structure. Actors with script-based training background and student actors can improve their improvisation skills in the devising process and the model is also suitable for a cast of

non-actors: student teachers, drama teachers and amateur actors can improve their acting, dramaturgical and devising skills in the creative process. The director of the programme facilitates the Forum sessions, thus the actors do not need teaching skills at all. However, preliminary improvisation exercises are necessary to make the devising and the rehearsals and also the interactions easier for the actors. One actor of the cast (the one who plays the protagonist) can do without an advanced level of improvisation, thus, if a member of the cast feels uncomfortable improvising in front of and with the audience or lacks the necessary in-character improvisation skills, s/he can nevertheless play the lead. However, the rest of the cast must be excellent in-character improvisers. A well-constructed and forumable play does not need restructuring, but monitoring the Forum sessions and feedback is vital for the actors and for the artistic quality of the programme. Forum Theatre is an excellent tool for the company to learn the genre of participatory TIE, but the disadvantage of the model is that the first Forum session with the audience is scary even for the most experienced improvisers.

The model-centred approach to the creative process of educational theatre, as outlined above, is not meant to be prescriptive at all; I would argue, however, that model-awareness throughout the whole creative process can save a lot of artistic energy and rehearsal time. Actors' skills requirements coded in the model structure may inform model-conscious casting and auditioning; rehearsals adjusted to the demands of the particular participation model may facilitate actors' preparation for the interactions. TIE actors' flexible approach to the improvisative nature of the genre is indispensable: they have to come to terms with its unpredictability and also be capable of improvising. However, the extent of the unpredictability of a programme depends on the choice of the model. Restructuring is necessary and should be seen as an extension of the creative process after the co-creators joining in; monitoring to keep the programme lively and to

maintain spontaneity is also vital in this genre. However, the restructuring required after the first performances is definitely model-bound.

Considering the relative difficulties or advantages-disadvantages of working in particular models I do not intend to qualify the models. A participatory model on its own cannot be evaluated: one model is not “better” than the other; and both excellent and poor programmes can be created and presented in all the four models. The model-approach to the creative process may contribute to a consistent creative methodology that can eventually lead to artistically more efficient devising and rehearsal periods within the realistic given situation of participatory TIE.

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