

Est.
1841

YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

Dobson, Tom and Stephenson, Lisa (2018) Challenging boundaries to cross: primary teachers exploring drama pedagogy for creative writing with theatre educators in the landscape of performativity. *Professional Development in Education*, 46 (2). pp. 245-255.

Downloaded from: <https://ray.yorksja.ac.uk/id/eprint/7222/>

The version presented here may differ from the published version or version of record. If you intend to cite from the work you are advised to consult the publisher's version:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2018.1557240>

Research at York St John (RaY) is an institutional repository. It supports the principles of open access by making the research outputs of the University available in digital form. Copyright of the items stored in RaY reside with the authors and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full text items free of charge, and may download a copy for private study or non-commercial research. For further reuse terms, see licence terms governing individual outputs. [Institutional Repositories Policy Statement](#)

RaY

Research at the University of York St John

For more information please contact RaY at
ray@yorksja.ac.uk

Name of authors: Rd. Tom Dobson & Lisa Stephenson

Article Title: High boundaries to cross: primary teachers working with theatre educators in the landscape of performativity

Institution: Leeds Beckett University

Address: Leeds Beckett University, Headingley Campus, 109 Carnegie Hall, Leeds, LS6 3QS, United Kingdom.

Phone numbers: 0113 8123553 (Tom Dobson); 01138123621 (Lisa Stephenson)

Email addresses: t.w.dobson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk; l.s.stephenson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Challenging boundaries to cross: primary teachers exploring drama pedagogy for creative writing with theatre educators in the landscape of performativity

Introduction

This paper explores the ways in which primary school teachers can learn from other education professionals through shared experiences in what Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) describe as ‘landscapes of practice’. Broadly speaking, the landscape of practice we are exploring is education, but within this landscape our partnership project, sponsored by the United Kingdom Literacy Association (UKLA), involved the collaboration of professionals with different identities which brought to the surface different boundaries of practice: academics, working in a Higher Education School of Education; teachers, working in a one-form entry primary school; and theatre educators from a drama in education theatre company. In this sense, the landscape of practice which we articulate in this paper is what Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) would call ‘diverse’, involving different practices and different boundaries.

The main focus of this paper is the professional development of the teachers rather than us as academics or the theatre educators. The main reason for this focus relates to the initial aim of the project, funded by the UKLA, which was to focus upon how the use of process drama as a pedagogy could motivate and improve pupils’ creative writing across the curriculum. Methodologically, therefore, this meant we were set up to collect more data from the teachers who had prior knowledge of the pupils and were, therefore, able to comment on their subsequent engagement and writing. The aim of our project was negotiated between ourselves, senior leaders from the primary school and the theatre educators. Fundamentally, the driving force for the project was the school’s deputy

headteacher, who, working with his headteacher, had identified pupils' lack of motivation for writing across curriculum in their School Improvement Plan. Having worked with us as academics prior to this project and having worked with the theatre educators throughout his teaching career, the deputy headteacher initiated the bid for the project based on all three parties reservations about England's technical and prescriptive national curriculum (DfE 2013) as well as a belief that drama could re-engage pupils with writing.

From an academic perspective, in our funding bid we described engaging teachers in professional learning to use drama for writing as a disruption to the current rise of "strongly framed" pedagogy (Bernstein 1990) that is symptomatic of policy prescription and testing, which leaves children with little voice or choice when it comes to writing. We searched for articles to support this and found Lambirth's (2016, p.230) survey of 565 primary school children in South East England, which convincingly, and somewhat depressingly, concludes that children are now "alienated from writing" due to a focus upon the technical aspects of writing. We then placed this phenomenon within a wider global landscape of performativity in education by reading: "performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change based on rewards and sanctions" (Ball 2003, p.216). And we asserted that from an academic perspective working within this broader education landscape of performativity, the aim of our project was to create a space outside of, but not necessarily antithetical to, performativity, in order to really engage pupils in constructing stories and writing creatively through helping teachers to adopt a weakly framed, child-centred, drama pedagogy.

Within this context, therefore, in this paper we draw upon the data collected with the teachers to use Clarke's model of teacher identity (2009) in order to articulate the ways in which the majority of the teachers often apprehended insurmountable boundaries between themselves and the theatre educators as well as exploring why this was the case. We feel that

in articulating the ways in which these boundaries were conceived by the teachers, we can bring to the surface some important points for the undertaking of future collaborative projects which actively promote new learning through boundary crossing.

Boundary crossing and teacher identity

From an academic perspective, we see professional identity as “constitutive texture” resulting from participation in a landscape of practice (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015, p.19). As mentioned above, this landscape is “diverse”, involving the participation of different professional identities all experiencing the landscape quite differently. At the same time, Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) highlight how these landscapes are paradoxically constituted as both “flat” and “political”: flat because they are experienced locally by groups in a way that becomes accepted as normal; and political, because despite the lived experience of flatness, within this landscape there is always power and a hierarchy at play, with some identities silenced and others valued and heard. This undulating landscape caused by the political dimension means that within the landscape boundaries exist, which serve to keep practices apart: “because of the lack of a shared history, boundaries are places of potential misunderstanding and confusion arising from different regimes of competences and commitments, values, repertoires, and perspectives. In this sense, they are like mini-cultures” (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner 2015, p.19).

Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner’s (2015) key idea is that learning occurs through crossing boundaries and experiencing other mini-cultures – an often uncomfortable manoeuvre that involves moving away from the safety of the familiar and everyday experience of a flat landscape. For Clark, Lang, Leat, Lofthouse, Thomas, Tiplady and Woolner (2017), in order to create the right conditions to help individuals move away from

the comfort of the flatness of experience, the hierarchies at play within a landscape need to be silenced as much as possible so that pure collaboration can occur. It is at this point, they argue, that boundaries between practices are not merely identified through difference but actively surmounted and crossed as learning takes place through a “hybridisation” of practice (Clark et al. 2017, p.245).

As most of the data collected for this project pertains to the teachers’ experiences rather than us as academics or the theatre educators, in order to think about the ways in which individuals experienced boundaries we draw upon Clarke’s (2009) model of teacher identity. For Clarke, there are four key operations in teacher identity: the substance of teacher identity (a belief in who you are as a teacher); authority sources (for example policy and testing); self practices of teacher identity (for example a teacher’s pedagogy); and telos of teacher identity (a teacher’s view of the ultimate purposes of their practice). Clarke’s model is illuminating as it not only allows us to think about individual influences upon teacher identity, but it also allows us to think about the relationship between authority sources and telos and in doing so explore the political or hierarchical nature of the education landscape as described by Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015). Without reference to Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner’s theoretical underpinning, Clarke’s model was recently adopted by Reeves (2018), who highlighted how within a context of performativity, the teacher becomes a technician rather than someone who is driven by their ideological values (telos). We are interested in the extent to which the teachers were able to resist the authority sources of performativity through working with theatre educators within this landscape in order to transform their practice.

Drama as a pedagogy for writing across the curriculum

From a practice-based perspective, both the school's senior leader and the theatre educators' self practices in using drama in schools, aligned with the substance of their identities as well as their telos, meant that they believed deeply in the power of drama as pedagogy, both as a way of engaging pupils in co-constructing stories, and as a way of feeding creative writing. From an academic perspective, as former teachers and academics who still engage in drama and creative writing school based practitioner enquiry (see Author 1 and Author 2 (2017) for example), our belief in the pedagogy was similarly related to those different aspects of our teacher identities. However, our belief was also informed by our practices as academics, who were able to build an argument based on evidence in order to satisfy the requirements of the funder (UKLA) in our initial bid. This evidence-base is explored in detail in our paper on pupils' writing (Author 1 and Author 2018), but in order to provide a rationale for the pedagogical approach we were promoting in school, and in order to satisfy the needs of this paper, some key points are presented in the paragraph below.

Firstly, in contrast to the strongly framed pedagogy influenced by the prescriptive curriculum and testing, we defined drama as a weakly framed pedagogical approach which utilises drama processes to facilitate children actively co-constructing meaning as they fluidly move between the roles of authors, actors, directors and audience (Edmiston 2003). The benefits of children actively co-constructing meaning through drama from a writing perspective has been summarised in a literature review (Dunn et al. 2013, p.253) in terms of: increased motivation to write; greater quality and quantity of writing; more complex registers used; and greater empathy with characters. Following an initial conversation with the school's senior leader, who was interested in pupils writing in the drama, we also situated this kind of writing as "dramatic textual events" (Crumpler 2015) and were keen to emphasise how this could spontaneously occur at moments of tension (Cremin et al. 2006).

Teacher development

This rationale and evidence base was also useful when it came to involving the school's upper primary school teachers (those teaching children between 7 and 11 years of age) in the project and as academics we shared this evidence with the whole school at an in-service training day on drama for creative writing, which took place at the beginning of the project. In building a programme for teacher development for our initial bid, as academics we also looked at the evidence base for teachers learning to use drama and, more generally, approaches to enabling teachers to cross boundaries and make changes to their self practices.

In terms of developing teachers' use of drama pedagogies, we were aware of recent evidence from the United States (Rosler 2014) and New Zealand (Wells 2016), which provided evidence for a longitudinal approach to teacher development whereby ongoing support from theatre educators was provided for the teachers. For Rosler (2014), a three and half year project demonstrated how teacher immersion in drama pedagogy with theatre educators was not sufficient to change practice. Rather, teachers in Rosler's study needed to be able to reflect upon drama experiences when they and when the theatre educators were leading the sessions.

Rosler's findings in particular chime with much of the more generic literature on teacher professional development in relation to coaching and mentoring. For Cordingley, reflection through "learning conversations" (2005) between a teacher and a mentor which involve the mentor "actively listening" (2006) is key; for Lofthouse (2017), good mentoring involves "stimulating", "scaffolding" and "sustaining" learning conversations. It should be said here that whilst we have acknowledged the need for learning conversations to take place across a landscape without hierarchies in order to facilitate boundary crossing, because boundary crossing was not an initial shared goal for the project, the learning conversations which took place between the teachers, the theatre educators and the academics sometimes

aligned more with Lofthouse (2017) and Cordingley (2005, 2006) in so far as the teachers were often positioned as mentees and the theatre educators and academics as mentors.

Project design

The project took place over two terms (spring and summer term 2017) in a small West Yorkshire primary school, where the deputy headteacher who initiated the project was employed. As mentioned above, the project started with a full day of in-service training on using drama for creative writing. This involved a range of input from different participants, covering different practices within the education landscape: academics and the school's senior leader provided a rationale for the pedagogy, drawing upon both self practices and the evidence base outlined above; the theatre educators provided a weakly framed immersive drama experience for all the teachers and teaching assistants, including the senior leader; the academics, the theatre educators and the senior leader then analysed the drama experience, focussing on specific conventions used as well as ways in which creative writing could be embedded within the drama.

In line with the school improvement plan, the four teachers who taught pupils aged between 7 and 11 years (years 3, 4, 5 and 6) were required to take part in professional development and were approached to be participants in the research project. As academics, we followed our University's ethical processes, which are in line with those of the British Education Research Association, and sought the participants' informed consent to take part in the research project, outlining that they could withdraw their data from the project at any time without detriment. In order to protect their confidentiality, the teachers in the project are referred to throughout this paper by the year group they taught (e.g. Y3 Teacher).

Y3 Teacher, who was also the deputy headteacher and the initial driving force for the project, was naturally more motivated to participate than the other teachers. Whilst the other

teachers were obliged to take part in this teacher development as it was part of the school improvement plan, they were all willing participants in the research project and they talked with enthusiasm about the learning they were undertaking. At the beginning of the project, we asked the four teachers some closed questions as part of a baseline interview in order to find out about the substance of the teacher identity in relation to teaching experiences as well as their self practice of teacher identity in relation to confidence with and use of drama. This information relating to their teacher identities is presented in in Table 1.

(Table 1 near here)

Once we had recruited the teachers, for half a day a week for six-week periods, the theatre educators and the academics worked with each of the four class teachers and their classes. In the initial phases, the theatre educators took a lead in planning and delivering the sessions, with class teachers and academics observing, speaking to groups of children, and then engaging in learning conversations with the theatre educators and academics, which in turn led to the planning of subsequent lessons. As the sessions progressed, the teachers became increasingly involved in the planning and teaching of the lessons, initially through team-teaching and co-planning, before finally teaching and planning sessions independently. Whilst the six week period was relatively short for professional learning and development, we would point out that teachers collaborated with each other as well as, to a lesser extent, the academics and theatre educators throughout the two-term project. This included a follow-up in-service training day at the beginning of term 2 as well as more informal learning conversations and sharing of practices.

Throughout this process, a wide range of data were collected, mainly in relation to the pupils' writing and their experiences of the lessons. In relation to this paper, however, detailed lesson observations of each taught session were recorded by the academics. At the bottom of each written observation, key reflections which emerged from the subsequent

learning conversations were noted by the academic, thus capturing the points of view of all practitioners who had participated in some way in the landscape of practice. Furthermore, the four teachers were interviewed three times by the academics, at the beginning, middle and end of the project. These interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Following Miles and Huberman's (2014) approach to qualitative data analysis, key themes in relation to the observations, reflections and interviews were identified through a process of coding. From an observation perspective, the codes used were based upon Bernstein's notion of "framing" (1990), with lessons broadly categorised as either weakly, moderately or strongly framed by the teachers and theatre educators depending upon how much control over the construction of the story the children were afforded. Using this form of categorisation, we were therefore able to think about how the weakly framed, child-centred process drama was being adopted and adapted by the teachers in their self practices of teacher identity. In terms of the interviews and learning conversations, we used Clarke's (2009) model of teacher identity to create four codes (substance; authority sources; self practices; telos) in order to explore why and how the teachers' practice (and in part the theatre educators' practice) was as it was and how and why boundaries of practice were at times crossed, apprehended and repelled. These codes were then collapsed into specific which are presented below under the subheadings of: self practice as strongly framed drama; authority sources and the prohibition of boundary crossing; crossing boundaries and the telos of teacher identity; theatre educators and the insurmountable boundary.

Findings and discussion

Self practice as strongly framed drama

The three Teachers (Y4, Y5 and Y6) who were both less experienced and less confident with using drama as aspects of their self practice were much more likely to take a strongly framed

approach to their use of drama within the landscape of their practice. Indeed, in lessons which they either co-planned and team-taught or, towards the end of the 6-week period, planned and taught independently, observational data show that all of the lessons were either moderately or strongly framed, with pupils given “pockets of freedom” to construct their own ideas around story, character and setting through the teachers’ use of drama conventions. Here we define drama conventions as specific techniques like hot-seating, freeze frames or conscience alley that are often employed discretely by the teacher within a broader lesson for a particular purpose. For example, an observation of the year 6 class showed how the teacher asked the children to use the freeze frame conventions to develop a structure for their story and how this “generated ideas for the writing piece”.

The use of conventions like the freeze frame is in a sense antithetical to the practice of process drama which is responsive, child-centred and weakly framed. In the interviews, these three teachers all talked about why they valued the conventions and how they felt the conventions could become part of their self practice. In line with Rosler (2014), Y6 Teacher talked about how the explanation of the conventions rather than the immersion experience during the initial in-service training day had been of greater benefit to him as he could see how they could be “practically applied in the classroom”. For Y4 teacher who had limited experience of using drama, by the end of the project she felt that the conventions were “something I have already thought about for my planning next year”. With Y5 Teacher, the conventions were a timely reminder of how she could teach her lessons and following the in-service training she had them written down “on a sheet of paper, ready to put them up to remind myself to use them”. As well as their practical application within the landscape of the self practice of these teachers, the relation between the strongly framed nature of the drama conventions and the teachers’ apprehension of authority sources within the education landscape is explored through the analysis of interview data below.

Authority sources and the prohibition of boundary crossing

The observational data also showed that Y4, Y5 and Y6 Teachers' use of strongly framed drama conventions was always accompanied by a strongly framed approach to writing. In each of the lessons we observed, and in contrast to the research presented to them by us as academics (Crumpler 2005, Cremin et al. 2006), the writing always took place after the drama and the drama, therefore, was always positioned as a way of generating ideas for the writing and not vice versa. Furthermore, the writing that took place was always strongly framed in terms of both what the pupils were required to write about and how they were required to write about it. For example, in a Y6 lesson following a drama experience of a voyage to the Galapagos Islands with Charles Darwin, the whole class were then instructed to write diary entries from the point of view of their character and with specific, national curriculum related, grammar and punctuation objectives. In a Y5 lesson following an experience in a Dickensian poor house, each child was required to write a diary entry from the point of view of Pip (a character which only one class member had experienced), with, once again, specific grammar and punctuation objectives.

Despite the fact that the project had been initiated by their school's senior leadership team, in reflecting upon these lessons and the use of drama within their self practices, all three teachers cited authority sources relating to policy in the form of the national curriculum and national testing as reasons why they adopted a strongly framed, conventions-driven approach to drama in their self practices. Given that national testing takes place in year 6 at the end of primary school, it is perhaps not unsurprising that the constricting forces of authority sources upon self practice were less explicitly articulated by Y4 and Y5 teachers. For the Y4 Teacher, rather than directly citing policy and testing as a direct influence, she instead talked about how she "hope[d] the children's writing would meet the spelling,

punctuation and grammar expectations”. For the Y5 Teacher, she demonstrated a consciousness of how the strongly framed use of drama in the form of the conventions is “very controlled” and how this means they can be used to teach lessons with predetermined, specific objectives.

For Y6 Teacher, however, the potential adoption of a weakly framed practice, as demonstrated by the theatre educators, was definitely perceived as being restricted by national authority sources. In the initial interview with Y6 teacher, he articulates this restriction in terms of authority sources prohibiting his telos and altering his self practices: “I would love to do more drama, but do I spend time doing that or do I spend time teaching the children the grammar they need to meet the assessment criteria?” This tension between telos and self practice was referred to constantly in our interviews with Y6 Teacher and in our final interview with him, Y6 teacher articulates how the use of drama as self practice did not fit within the wider education landscape of performativity:

“What I found before doing the drama, when we were focusing on a more technical knowledge amongst the children, was that their writing was becoming technically better but their imagination was seeping out slightly. Now their imagination has gone back up, but their writing, the technicality of their writing, has worsened. So it is that difficult balance because from where I look at it as a Year 6 teacher at the moment I am getting pieces of writing that are stimulating as a reader to read, but then I know that they will need severe redrafting if I am to use it as a piece of evidence.”

Here the dichotomy between telos and authority sources is complete – Year 6 Teacher cannot cross boundaries into the landscape of the theatre educators due to the political nature of the education landscape where authority sources required technically accurate writing as evidence of effective teaching in schools. The implication is that even the adoption of the

strongly framed drama conventions into teacher self practice can run the risk of outcomes which would not be acceptable to wider authority sources as they would require “severe” editing. According to Year 6 Teacher, learning and professional development of this nature, therefore, cannot take place as a result of hierarchical nature of the political landscape of education.

Crossing boundaries and the telos of teacher identity

That it was Y3 Teacher who more readily altered his self practice during the project was perhaps unsurprising: as a teacher, he was both very confident and experienced in using drama as a pedagogy as part of his self practice; as a senior leader in the school, he was integral to initiating and developing the research project as a result of the telos of his teacher identity. These factors relating to his teacher identity meant that Y3 Teacher’s self practice altered throughout the project in two key ways as he crossed two key boundaries.

Firstly, whilst already confident with using drama, Y3 Teacher became more weakly framed in his use of drama as the relationship between his planning and his experience of the lesson altered. An example of this is a lesson towards the middle of the project in which Y3 Teacher had planned for a lesson that would build upon prior learning about the Romans. Y3 Teacher began the lesson by introducing the children to a Roman wall and by adopting the role of the narrator of the wall who alluded to a variety of stories that might have taken place there. He then encouraged the class to think of what these stories might have been and the children co-constructed stories of the wall in self-selected groups. The children relished this opportunity and rather than asking them to feed back their ideas in order to then introduce a story relating to Roman times, Y3 Teacher decided to let the children “run with it”. In reflecting upon the lesson, the fact that none of these stories acknowledged the original historical context did not worry Y3 Teacher and neither did the fact that he had “only got

through about one third” of his original planning. For Y3 Teacher, the way in which the children were “highly engaged”, using their “imagination” and developing their “social skills” in “negotiating” their stories was of much greater significance. In this lesson, as well as in other lessons, Y3 Teacher altered his self practice by deviating from his planning in order to be more child centred. In doing so, he crossed the boundary into the landscape of practice of the theatre educators in using process drama.

The second way in which his self practice was altered was in the way in which Y3 Teacher utilised this weak framing to encourage the pupils to write within the fiction. In this lesson, therefore, once the children had shared their co-constructed stories with the rest of the class, they were “excited to write and they literally run to get their journals and writing pens, talking to each other about what they are going to write”. The subsequent writing, therefore, was also weakly framed as the children decided on the genre they wanted to use and in doing so the act of writing became an act of problem-solving (Bereiter and Scardamalia 1987) in so far as the children were deciding upon how best to convey their embodied experiences. This is a radically different approach to teaching writing than the strongly framed approaches adopted by teachers within a context of performativity which often leads to children being “alienated” from writing (Lambirth 2016). Reflecting upon this, Y3 Teacher indicated the extent to which he had crossed another boundary in enacting the practice captured in some of the research papers shared with him by us as academics (e.g. Crumpler 2005, Cremin et al. 2006) as he brought drama and writing closer together:

“I am attuned to creating opportunities in the drama to write and I am really interested in how children respond to those opportunities but also how I as a practitioner can mix those opportunities in. You know like the idea of the DJ mixing one track into another.”

Y3 Teacher was also acutely aware of how this different approach to teaching writing also required a different kind of participation from the children themselves in the landscape of their education experiences. Given choice and freedom to decide when they write, what they write about and how they write it means that, “the children are going against everything they’ve experienced with writing – it goes against the grain. It’s a massive cultural shift.” For Y3 Teacher, therefore, his boundary crossing also requires the children to leave their mini-culture of learning within the landscape of performativity in order to cross boundaries with him.

Theatre educators and the insurmountable boundary

Y3 Teacher’s boundary crossing in relation to his self practice in bringing weakly framed drama and weakly framed writing pedagogies closer together also served to illuminate the ways in which the theatre educators apprehended boundaries within their own landscape of practice. As indicated earlier, at the start of the project the lessons were planned and taught by the theatre educators with the teachers taking largely observational roles. In the Year 3 class, one such lesson involved the theatre educators positioning the children as Roman soldiers on a boat heading for England. The theatre educators read a poem to the children to encourage them to think about how the Roman soldiers might be feeling on the boat and then asked them to think for a moment about what they might write in a letter home. For Y3 Teacher, who was interested in bringing the writing into the drama, allowing the children to think about what they might write without giving them the opportunity to write was a mistake: “It’s that bit. He needs to prompt them to write.” Indeed, Y3 Teacher felt so strongly that the children were ready to write that he intervened at this point, asking the teaching assistant to hand out their writing journals to the children. This became a slightly protracted procedure with the teacher assistant first locating the journals and then “dropping

them on the floor”. For Y3 Teacher, the teaching assistant’s gesture and body language distanced the subsequent act of writing from the experience of the drama:

“You don’t just throw the journals on the floor to them! For me when [the teaching assistant] dropped the books on the floor it killed that moment.

How do you recapture that moment? It took hours to build up to that point and then it’s gone.”

After the lesson, this opportunity for writing was discussed by the theatre educators and Y3 Teacher. Interestingly, the theatre educators did not agree with the Year 3 Teacher’s perspective that the children should have been allowed to write at this point in the drama. For one theatre educator, there was the sense that whilst they were on the whole engaged in a weakly framed drama pedagogy which allowed children to co-construct meaning, writing was not afforded the same significance as the drama in so far as he felt they “didn’t have time” for the writing. This prioritising of drama over writing in their landscape of practice was even more evident in the reflection of the other theatre educator who felt that “you lost something by letting them write.” From the theatre educators’ perspective, therefore, whilst their self practices in relation to process drama aided subsequent writing, writing itself was seen as a subsequent activity, one which was to some extent bounded in an adjacent landscape of practice, one whose boundary was necessarily insurmountable.

Conclusions

This project highlights three key factors which inhibit and facilitate boundary crossing in the education landscape. Firstly, in line with Reeve (2018), it is clear that even when teachers are encouraged to change their practices by school senior leaders, the boundaries between

their self practices and the practices of others can be seen to be insurmountable as a result of the wider education landscape of performativity. This broad landscape of practice means that more weakly framed practices like process drama are adapted by teachers to fit in with their own strongly framed self practices which they feel are mandated by policy and testing. As our small scale project suggests, when teachers are in a position whereby their own teaching is directly monitored through national standardised testing, these authority sources are perceived by teachers experiencing the landscape to become even more deterministic in prohibiting the crossing of boundaries into child-centred pedagogies like process drama.

Secondly, it would seem that for successful boundary crossing to take place within this wider landscape of performativity, it is necessary for the teachers involved to have identities, which, in terms of substance and telos, are already aligned with the practices they are looking to adopt. With Y3 teacher, his prior experiences of drama pedagogy and his instigation of the project with the theatre educators and academics meant that the development of his self practice was already under way and he was, therefore, able to reflect upon his self practice without apprehending the boundaries experienced by the other teachers. Indeed, Y3 Teacher was so open to reflect upon his self practices that he did not apprehend either a boundary between his practice and process drama or a boundary between process drama and writing. This meant that the learning conversations which took place after the lessons did not involve Y3 Teacher invoking authority sources to establish boundaries or a rigid perception of a substance of teacher identity which limited self practice. Instead, they involved a focus on the children and an acknowledgement that their experiences of the education landscape would have to alter in order to ensure that his self practice was transformed through the hybridisation of practices.

Thirdly, Y3 Teacher's boundary crossing highlights the ways in which other partners within the project were less open to changing their own practices and crossing boundaries. In

this instance, the self practice of the theatre educators had become so aligned with their telos and substance of their specific identities that they were unwilling for it to be altered to incorporate writing. On the other hand, that Y3 Teacher's boundary crossing brought this into focus and that the theatre educators began to articulate their own rationale for creating boundaries within the landscape of their practice could be seen as a first step to the theatre educators altering their self practice. Admittedly, theatre educators crossing boundaries was not a primary concern of what was to all intents and purposes a teacher development activity, but there is an argument to be made that one-directional approaches to teacher professional development are unlikely to be successful.

According to Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015), a one directional approach where the onus is upon the teacher to change their self practice establishes a hierarchy within landscape of practice, which in turn can heighten boundaries as experienced by individuals within the landscape rather than promote boundary crossing (Clark et al. 2017). A move away from a hierarchical approach is supported by the interim evaluation of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Teacher Development Fund (Curee 2018), which is now looking to support projects which involve arts companies as well as teachers in a process of professional development. Within a broader education landscape of performativity, and in light of the mixed success of this partnership project, adopting a flexible approach to data collection (Clark et al., 2017) whilst encouraging all partners to cross boundaries and not just experience the flatness of their own landscapes appears to be a progressive move. Indeed, for boundary crossing to be transformational and result in hybridisation of practice (Clark et al., 2017), it is important that partners do not become entrenched in the way they experience their own participation in the education landscape. For academic partners in this project, more involvement in practice could have helped reposition the reading of the academic texts; for theatre educators in this project, more encouragement to reflect upon their perceptions of

boundaries between drama and writing could have led to a hybridisation of practice and a greater understanding of teachers writing practice in a landscape of performativity; for teachers in this project, being involved in the initiation of the project could have increased motivation and then seeing others entering the landscape of practice and reflecting upon and possibly altering their own self practices could have made the boundaries erected by performativity seem a little less insurmountable.

This project was funded by the **United Kingdom Literacy Association**

Reference List

Aitken, V. (2007) The “Relationship Managers”: Towards a Theorising of the Teacher-in-Role/ Student Relationship. *Journal of Artistic and Creative Education*, 1.1, pp.86–105.

Author 1 and Author 2 (2017) Primary Pupils’ Creative Writing: Enacting Identities in a Community of Writers. *Literacy*, 51.3, pp.162-168.

Bernstein, B. (1990) *The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse*. London: Routledge.

Bereiter, C. and Scardamalia, M. (1987) *The psychology of written composition*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ball, S.J. (2003) The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18:2, pp.215-228.

Clarke, M. (2009) The Ethico-politics of Teacher Identity. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 41(2), pp.185-200.

Clark, J., Laing, K. Leat, D., Lofthouse, R., Thomas, U., Tiplady, L. and Woolner, P. (2017) Transformation in interdisciplinary research methodology: the importance of shared experiences in landscapes of practice. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 40.3, pp.243-256.

- Cordingley, P. (2005) The role of mentoring and coaching in teachers' professional development. *Education Review*, 18.2, pp.68-75.
- Cordingley, P. (2006) Talking to learn: the role of dialogue in professional development. *Education Review*, 19.2, pp.50-58.
- Cremin, T., et al. (2006) Connecting drama and writing: seizing the moment to write. *RiDE*, 11.3, pp.273-291.
- Crumpler, T. (2005) The role of educational drama in the composing processes of young writers. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 10.3, pp.357-363.
- Curee (2018) *Teacher Development Fund: an independent evaluation of year 1 pilot programme*. Curee. Available from: < <https://www.phf.org.uk/publications/teacher-development-fund-year-1-pilot-evaluation>>
- DfE (2013) *The National Curriculum in England – Key Stages 1 and 2 Framework Document*. London: Crown. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425601/PRI_MARY_national_curriculum.pdf>
- Dunn, J., Harden, A., and Marion, S. (20013) Drama and writing: 'overcoming the hurdle of that blank page'. In: M. Anderson and J. Dunn, eds. *How drama activates learning: contemporary research and practice*. London: Bloomsbury, pp.245-259.
- Edmiston, B. (2003) What's My Position? Role, Frame, and Positioning When Using Process Drama. *RiDE*, 8.2, pp.221-229.
- Lambirth, A. (2016) Exploring children's discourses of writing. *English in Education*, 50.3, pp. 215-232.
- Lofthouse, L. (2017) Improving Mentoring Practices through Collaborative Conversations. *CollectivEd*, 1.1, pp.10-11.

- Miles, M. and Huberman, M. (2014) *Qualitative Data Analysis – 3rd edition*. London: Sage.
- Reeves, J. (2018) Teacher identity working in neoliberal schooling spaces. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 72, pp.98-106.
- Rosler, B. (2014) Process Drama and Professional Development. *Youth Theatre Journal*, 28.2, pp.104-114.
- Wells, T. and Sandretto, S. (2016) “I’m on a journey I never thought I’d be on”: using process drama pedagogy for the literacy programme. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 19.2, pp.180-195.
- Wenger-Trayner, E. and Wenger-Trayner, B. (2015) *Learning in Landscapes of Practice: Boundaries, Identities and Knowledgeability in Practice-Based Learning*. Oxon: Routledge.